

# The Revolutionary Age

A Chronicle and Interpretation of International Events

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## The Paris Commune, 1871—1919

THE agonizing but inspiring struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors is as old as human history. It is as brutal and tragic, as human and magnificent, as life itself. It is a struggle in which and through which man's finest instincts have been expressed, have tried to break the shackles imposed upon life by oppression and inequality.

All through history there are the scars of this great struggle. They are proletarian scars, transfigured by the beauty of aspiration. In one form or another the struggle flared up, and was beaten down. Always beaten down—the cross and the prison, the rack, the fire and the gallows being the answer of the oppressors to the rebels. Always beaten down—but arising to inspire new struggles, again to arouse the masses to action, to teach the new rebels the more effective methods of struggle. The early Christian Communists, crushed by the unity of feudal church and state, were the ideologic inspiration of the Communist movements of the middle ages. The great Spartacus, implacable but human, a slave who towered infinitely above his masters, lives again in our day in the revolutionary movement of Germany—the Spartacans. Despised but unconquerable, overwhelmed but irresistible, the rebel-slaves struggle, and each new struggle inspires the future and is born again.

The Paris Commune was crushed, completely. But it did not die. It is alive in our day, active and implacable. The Commune! The Communists! They are the terror of the bourgeois reaction. The Commune controls in Russia—that terrible mystery to the oppressors, that flaming star of hope to the oppressed. The Communists are shaking the Government of the People's Butchery in Germany, and the world of Capitalism unites against the Communists. The Commune! The Communists! Everywhere they are the inspiration of the proletarian revolution; everywhere they are the rallying cry of the most resolute elements of the Socialist proletariat.

The Paris Commune was crushed. It was the revolt of the proletarian masses against class mastery; it was the attempt to use the collapse of Bonapartism for action and the conquest of power by the proletariat. It challenged equally Thiers and Bismarck—bourgeois France and Junker Prussia. The Commune was life striving to realize life, its majesty and inviolability; to complete the struggle of the ages, to end class rule. And Thiers and Bismarck, bourgeois France and Junker Prussia, united against this menace. The former enemies became allies against the revolutionary proletariat and communism. Are not the bourgeois enemies of yesterday an indivisible unity today against the Commune in Russia, against the developing Commune in Germany?

It was a tragic struggle. The Communards met the cannon with their bodies and starvation with a jest. Thunderbolts of iron were answered with the thunderbolts of proletarian courage and the revolutionary ideal. Isolated, starved, overwhelmed, the struggle went on against Thiers and Bismarck physically, against the world spiritually. There were no men, there were no women, there were no children—just rebels. When the walls were conquered, the Communards held the streets; conquered off the streets, they made each house a fortress and every person an army. Driven back, always back, they held the corners and the alleys and the cellars, until overwhelmed by sheer physical exhaustion and the numerical superiority of the enemy. And they were all made prisoners. Prisoners? No, they were made victims. They were tortured. Men, women and children were shot in droves, mercilessly and systematically.

### MARK ON THE COMMUNE

The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.... The Commune was formed of the various municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally workingmen, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time. Instead of continuing to be the agent of the central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of State disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. Public functions ceased to be the private property of the tools of the central Government. Not only municipal administration, but the whole initiative hitherto exercised by the State was laid into the hands of the Commune.... The Paris Commune was, of course, to serve as a model to all the great industrial centers of France. The communal regime once established in Paris and the secondary centres, the old centralized Government would in the provinces, too, have to give way to the self-government of the producers. In a rough sketch of national organization which the Commune had no time to develop, it is clearly stated that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet, and that in the rural districts the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia, with an extremely short term of service. The rural communes of delegates in the central town, and these district assemblies were again to send deputies to the National Delegation in Paris, each delegate to be at any time revocable and bound by the *mandat impératif* (formal instructions) of his constituents. The few important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has intentionally been misstated, but were to be discharged by communal, and therefore strictly responsible, agents. The unity of the nation was not to be broken; but, on the contrary, to be organized by the Communal Constitution, and to become a reality by the destruction of the State power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior to, the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence.... The Communal Constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the workingmen, the natural trustees of their interests.... It was essentially a working class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labor.—Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*.

amid the indifference or applause of the world. The masters knew no mercy; they who accused the Communards, falsely and vilely, of savagery acted as savages even would not act. It was the vengeance of the master class—the vengeance of the master class at all times against its slaves who rebel. Today, the bourgeois still froth about the savagery of the Commune; but they say nothing about the thousands of men, women and children who were massacred at Pere la Chaise, who were often hurried alive, who were transported to French Guiana. Today, the bourgeois froth about savagery in Russia; but they are quiet about the bloody actions of the bourgeois White Guards in Finland, about the savagery of the masters in Germany. "Shoot on sight"—that is the order of the bourgeois—"Socialist" government in Germany, approved by the world of Capitalism. Capitalism trembles at the menace of Bolshevism; but what a vengeance will be their's should Bolshevism collapse! But it won't....

The Paris Commune was the most mature expression of the proletarian revolution up to that time. The tendency of the French Revolution, among the masses, was to go beyond the bourgeois parliamentary state, with its division between legislative and executive, and to organize a completely new state, the federated communes, uniting all functions of government in the masses. That was the immature tendency of the sections and communes of the French Revolution, which the Paris Commune established in practice.

The contribution of the Commune to revolutionary theory and tactics consisted in developing a *new type of state*, by means of which the proletariat could accomplish its emancipation. The Commune annihilated

the machinery of the old state—its army, its police and its bureaucracy, independent of and imposed upon the masses, the instruments of repression used by the state to coerce the working class; and the Commune, moreover, abolished legislative and executive functions as *separate functions*, these being united democratically in the Commune. The Paris Commune demonstrated in actual practice that the first task of the militant proletariat is the conquest of power by the revolutionary proletariat—the annihilation of the old bourgeois state and the construction of a new proletarian state. On this head, N. Lenin wrote in April 1917: "As to the revolutionary organization and its task, the conquest of the power of the state and militarism: From the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx shows that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made machinery of the state and wield it for its purposes.' The proletariat must break down this machinery. And this has been either concealed or denied by the opportunists. But it is the most valuable lesson of the Paris Commune and of the Revolution in Russia of 1905. The difference between us and the Anarchists is, that we admit the state is a necessity in the development of our Revolution. The difference with the opportunists and the disciples of Karl Kautsky is, that we claim we do not need the bourgeois state machinery as completed in the 'democratic' bourgeois republic, but the direct power of armed and organized workers. Such is the state we need. Such was the character of the Commune of 1871 and of the Soviets of Workmen and Soldiers of 1905 and 1917. On this basis we build." The new proletarian state of the Paris Commune functioned as a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, precisely as in Soviet Russia in 1917-1919.

The Commune was the final magnificent act of the first revolutionary period of the proletarian movement, while it simultaneously, through its practice of proletarian dictatorship and the new state, projected the phase of the final revolution of the proletariat. But the International Socialist movement that developed after the crushing of the Commune was pacific, moderate, reformistic and nationalistic. It repudiated the lessons of the Commune, became a wholly parliamentary movement, imagining that Socialism could be introduced by means of parliamentary activity on the basis of the bourgeois state, that this state could be used as the instrument for the emancipation of the working class.

The rough shock of the accomplished proletarian revolution in Russia and of the developing proletarian revolution in Germany is awakening Socialism from its parliamentary dreams, from its acceptance of the bourgeois state. *The practice of the proletarian revolution in Russia and in Germany is the practice of the Paris Commune amplified and organized in accord with the newer forces of today.* The amplification consists largely in making industry—the organized producers—the basis of the new state. The Commune is again in action, in its final form, implacable and unconquerable. The Commune! Proletarian Dictatorship! The Revolution!

The Paris Commune was isolated. The international proletariat was not awake, did not respond to the call of the Commune. But the Commune in Russia has sent the flaming call to proletarian revolution throughout the world. And there is answer to the call! The Russian Commune has its natural ally in the awakening international proletariat. The final struggle is on! But—Socialism must reconstruct itself in harmony with the experience of the Commune—1871-1919.

# The Revolutionary Age

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*We need to have the clear party note sounded now and our position sharply defined as an uncompromising revolutionary party if we are to take and hold our rightful place in the international movement. We have got to plant our party upon the rock if it is not to be swept away in the oncoming tempest.—EUGENE V. DEBS, February 15, 1919.*

## Lenin on Imperialism

IN this issue *The Revolutionary Age* starts the publication of *Imperialism—the Final Stage of Capitalism*, by N. Lenin. This great study, which will be completed in about twelve instalments, is an important contribution to Socialist economic theory. It is a clear, unassailable analysis of the economic basis of Imperialism, of its character and purposes. On the basis of economics, of the facts of production, Lenin proves that Capitalism has become parasitic and is verging on collapse, that Imperialism is the final stage of Capitalism. In other words, Imperialism has brought the objective conditions for the Social Revolution, for the final struggle against the capitalist class. Lenin's study clinches the point, and, together with his pamphlet on *The State and the Revolution* (just published by *The Class Struggle*) contains the whole content of the position of revolutionary Socialism. They require serious study by the Socialist who wishes to adapt theory and practice to the requirements of the revolutionary epoch into which the proletariat has now emerged.

## Reaction Prepares

THE American proletariat is in a state of awakening, of general unrest. Peace has loosed serious economic problems which Capitalism appears incompetent to solve, Congress impotent to understand. Dastardly economic conditions are ahead. Revolutionary ideas and concepts of revolutionary action are making their impress upon the minds of the American workers. Strikes assume a more menacing character. Revolutionary agitation is active. The answer of the government and Capitalism is—repression, as usual. The Espionage Laws, more repressive than the Alien and Sedition Laws of the early days of our Republic, are still in force, in spite of the fact that after the signing of the Armistice President Wilson told Congress, "Thus the war comes to an end." The government has released some political prisoners and lowered the sentences of others, but the majority are still in prison: while those who have secured "clemency" are not the ones of revolutionary convictions. The campaign for drastic laws against agitators is developing large scope, and Congress will pass these laws; in some states, as in Oregon, laws have been passed that prevent agitation, compel it to become secret. A period of severe repression is coming, is here. Reaction prepares; we must prepare the proletariat and Socialism.

## The Mooney Strike

THE preparations for the general strike on July 4 to demand the release of Tom Mooney are not very apparent. Somewhere, somehow the whole thing is being sabotaged. It was stupid, in the first place, to designate July 4, a national holiday. But it was done, in ways that are dark and mysterious. It is up to the radical elements in the labor movement and the Socialist Party to assume control of this movement, to see to it that there are large demonstrations on July 4 and a general strike on July 5. The locals of the Socialist Party, unless they are yellow, must develop a campaign to get the unions to strike, to get unorganized workers to strike. This is one of our most important issues at this moment. *And we must broaden the scope of the strike to include the release of all pol-*

*itical prisoners.* This protest strike, if it is general in action and in demands, will mark a new chapter in American labor history—the first American political strike. The political strike is a necessary instrument of the proletarian struggle: the workers must use their economic power for political purposes.

## Fear Chastens Them

THE Allies threatened all sorts of reprisals against Germany. Ebert, Scheidemann & Co. warned the proletariat that if it didn't behave, if it became Bolshevik, the Allies would crush Germany. But, while the Bolshevik menace in Germany was still largely potential, the Allies were rigorous and implacable. But now that Bolshevism in Germany is developing new power, the Allies are more considerate, are making concessions, are abandoning their threats of terrible reprisals. They dread Bolshevism as the devil dreads holy water, and fear chastens them. Capitalism respects power alone, a threat to its supremacy will immediately alter its policy. The proletariat must recognize this fact; it must develop that *class power* which alone can wring concessions from Capitalism and ultimately annihilate the accursed system.

## A Bourgeois League

THE League of Nations, mythical bringer of a mythical universal peace, is promoting a sort of civil war in each nation. The belligerent groups disagree about the League—but they agree on one thing: the promotion of bourgeois supremacy. How this is to be accomplished is the basis of the disagreements.

The proposed Constitution of The League of Nations is suffering more at the hands of its friends than at the hands of its enemies. This alone would indicate its inherent defects.

Does an opponent charge that too much power is given the other nations?—the friends of the League answer: the Executive Council controls, and of the nine members five will represent Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and the United States. This being so, it is not a League of Nations, but an imperialistic alliance against the nations.

Does an opponent of the League charge that it invades national sovereignty?—the friends of the League answer: not at all, each nation is still sovereign. But national sovereignty must necessarily wreck a League of Nations: Capitalism cannot relinquish national sovereignty, hence any real League is impossible while Capitalism endures.

Does an opponent of the League charge that it compels disarmament?—its friends answer that disarmament is to a point "consistent with national safety." The interpretation of this could allow for large armaments.

The New York *World*, in its March 6 issue, declares that the arguments used against the proposed Constitution of the League of Nations are in substance identical with the arguments used against the Federal Constitution, and infers that inasmuch as the Federal Constitution "worked," the League Constitution will "work." Precisely—work to promote the bourgeois supremacy.

The Constitutional Convention, which adopted what is now the Constitution of the United States, was a reaction against the ideals of the American Revolution. The men with real revolutionary spirit violently opposed the Constitution, which was the expression of a counter-revolutionary movement to repress the masses and democracy. The protection of property rights was the dominant idea of the Convention, the general opinion being that "property is the main object of government." This opinion was crystallized in the Federal Constitution and Government, which have worked—to promote bourgeois supremacy and property rights.

Let us cite "authority." Woodrow Wilson, now President of the United States, says in *Division and Reunion*:

The federal government was not by intention a democratic government. In plan and structure it had been meant to check the sweep and power of popular majorities. . . . The government had, in fact, the interest of the mercantile and wealthy classes. Originally conceived in an effort to accommodate commercial disputes between the states, it had been urged to adoption by a minority, under the concerted and aggressive leadership of able men representing a ruling class.

The *World's* comparison, while maladroit for its own purposes, is very appropriate. It indicates, unconsciously, the bourgeois motives of the proposed League of Nations. The Peace Conference is a counter-revolutionary body: it abandons even the ordinary bourgeois liberal ideals that provided the war its ideology. The League of Nations "is meant to check the sweep and power of popular majorities" (in action through actual or potential proletarian revolution), it has "been originated and organized upon the initiative and primarily in the interest of the mercantile and wealthy classes . . . urged to adoption by a minority, under the concerted and aggressive leadership of able men representing a ruling class."

The League of Nations, under Capitalism, is necessarily bourgeois. It is a tragic deception, a cynical betrayal of the aspirations of the masses. A League of Socialist nations—that is the purpose and the struggle of the revolutionary proletariat.

## Tragic Lessons

THE conscious German proletariat, marshalled by the Spartacan communists, is engaged in a tragic struggle against the bourgeois—"Socialist" reaction. Acquiring new energy and initiative out of its previous defeats, the revolutionary proletariat of Germany has for two weeks been fighting a desperate fight in the general civil war that has flared up in all districts, and particularly in Berlin.

It is an implacable struggle. The Government of the People's Butchery, the gangsters of Ebert, Scheidemann & Co., have organized efficiently the massacre of the Revolution. They have disarmed all the revolutionary troops; they have placed the "loyal" troops under control of the brutal officers of the old regime; and, under the direction of the "Socialist" Noske, these troops are crushing the revolutionary masses. And this government, which is massacring the Revolution, which was responsible for the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, which has issued the order "Shoot on sight" and is murdering prisoners, has the impudence to accuse the Spartacans of "savagery." In its massacre of the revolutionary forces, the Ebert-Scheidemann government has the support of Junkerism and Capitalism in Germany, of the Allies, of reaction in all the world. *This is their Socialism!*

The struggle which is now raging in Germany has universal consequences; and it has particular consequences for Soviet Russia. The Allies are afraid to send sufficient troops to crush the proletarian Socialist republic; but they are developing a new policy against Russia: *to use the bourgeois—"Socialist" government of Germany in an offensive against Soviet Russia.* Open avowal of this new policy has been made in certain quarters. Food is being rushed to Germany. Secretary Lansing the other day delivered an address in Paris which the Boston *Globe* thus summarizes: "We have won. German militarism is smashed. Germany is suffering. When we look at devastated France we see how Germany deserves to suffer. But now we find ourselves in a unique dilemma. Germany has no money to pay damages, and, unless we lift her out of the mire, we shall have a second Russia on our hands." The German Government must be used and aided to crush Bolshevism in Germany; then, it is being declared, it will be used to crush Bolshevism in Russia: Marshall Hindenburg is reported as organizing an army for the job. After the Ebert-Scheidemann gangsters finish the dirty work, they will be discarded by the imperialistic reaction, which will take control; after Germany has done the job of crushing Socialist Russia, she will feel the weight of impositions by the imperialistic League of Nations. That is the plan. The revolutionary struggle of Socialism is international. . . .

It won't work, we feel confident. The revolutionary masses in Germany have not spoken their final word, by any means; Socialist Russia can take care of herself; and the struggle has not yet started in other nations. . . .

But the situation is tragic, and instructive. The "Socialism" of the social-patriots is being used to crush Socialism, to do the hangman's job for the imperialistic bourgeoisie. These "Socialist" hangmen use means and a savagery that the bourgeois would not dare use: the camouflage of Socialism deceives the masses. Is it clear that the "Socialism" of the social-patriots, of majority Socialism in Russia and Germany—everywhere—is the worst enemy of the proletariat in action?

That is not all. The "centre" Socialists, the Independents captained by Haase, Kautsky & Co., are equally betraying the proletarian revolution. They hesitate and compromise. They attack the Ebert Government, but they refuse to direct the action of the proletarian masses. They use revolutionary phrases but avoid revolutionary deeds: and this demoralizes the masses. They swing to the left, and at the crucial moment of action they hesitate and swing back to indecision and compromise. The Independents are masters of words: they are petty bourgeois in spirit and action.

The lessons of the German Revolution are tragic, but useful. Clearly, emphatically, they indicate that "right" and "centre" Socialism are equally unfit to direct the proletariat to the conquest of power, are the betrayers of the proletariat. Revolutionary Socialism must wage uncompromising war upon this "Socialism" as an indispensable preliminary to the emancipation of the proletariat.

## Mass Action

IT is necessary that the Left Wing of the Socialist Party appreciate clearly its own policy and tactics. We are still in the stage of disagreement, of discussion; but by means of these we shall approach a clear understanding necessary to become a power in the proletarian movement.

An important difficulty is that the old disputes still rumble in the minds of many comrades. We must test our old ideas in the light of contemporary events, recognize that the old ideas of revolutionary action have been supplemented by the experience of the proletarian revolution in action. There is a tendency to accept old ideas as Bolshevik, the policy of the Left Wing of yesterday as being the policy of the Left Wing of today. But much water has passed under the mill since five years ago: theory has met its complement in practice; and it is necessary that we discriminate between the old and the new, adopt a policy in accord with the requirements, theoretical and tactical, of contemporary conditions. The source of revolutionary practice is not the theory of yesterday, but the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia and in Germany,—accepting but the old conceptions.

An essential phase of the Left Wing movement, of revolutionary Socialism, its tactical basis, is mass action. But old meanings are read into this term, and many refuse to recognize its fundamental character. *The Proletarian*, organ of the comrades of the Detroit Socialist Party, says in its March issue:

What is mass action? Is it just our old friend Direct Action come back with a new suit of clothes? We will do well to inquire into its meaning before accepting it. At present it seems to be the rallying cry for all the elements who have repudiated the old parliamentarism. . . .

In his recent book, *Revolutionary Socialism*, Louis C. Fraina tells us that "mass action is not a form of action as much as it is a process and synthesis of action. . . . Mass action is the instinctive action of the proletariat, gradually developing more conscious and organized forms and definite purposes. . . . Mass action is the proletariat itself in action."

Austin Lewis, in *The New Review*, June, 1913, says: "Real mass action is outside the sphere of parliamentary action; it has nothing to do with the election of men to political positions, and yet is in the highest degree political."

Anton Pannekoek defines mass action very completely thus: "When we speak of mass action we mean an extra-parliamentary political act of the organized working class by which it acts directly and not through the medium of political delegates. Organized labor fights develop into political mass action as soon as they acquire political significance. The question of mass action, therefore, involves merely broadening the field of proletarian organization."

The outstanding feature of the literature on mass action is a general haziness, a lack of clarity and a wealth of conflicting definitions. And at this time when the new tactics are being formed we must, above all, have clarity of thought.

At its state convention recently, the Socialist Party of Michigan, influenced largely by the Detroit comrades, adopted the following definition of political action: "We do not imply that political action is always confined within bounds of parliamentary procedure; nor that the means employed in waging the class struggle are everywhere the same. Political action we define as any action taken by the exploited against their exploiters to obtain control of the powers of state." This is more than hazy, it is seriously defective, in that it lays emphasis on "obtaining control" of the bourgeois state machinery, instead of *destroying it*,—which are two different things. The political power of the proletariat comes from out of the organization of the new proletarian state. Nor does the definition indicate what other forms of struggle there are which are included in political action. But the definition is correct in tendency.

A strike for higher wages or shorter hours clearly, is not included in "any action," its object is not to "obtain control of the powers of state." But if the strike is for a political object, to secure the franchise, or the release of political prisoners, or to overthrow the government, it is a political strike and comes under political action in the Marxist sense. Now a strike of this political character must be a mass strike, a political general strike,—and that is one phase of mass action.

Mass action develops out of the industrial action of the proletariat. Imperialism means concentrated, monopolistic industry; concentrated industry means large masses of workers massed in one plant, expropriated of their skill, and largely unorganized but disciplined by the machine process. These workers, deprived of skill and consequently of craft jealousy and divisions, act in terms of the mass, strike as a unit—the initial development of mass action. When this industrial action includes several plants, or several cities, and has a political object, it develops into real mass action. It is direct action, in the actual sense;

it is not "direct action" in the technical sense, since the Anarcho-Syndicalist exponents of "direct action" had no recognition of the political character of the proletarian struggle and the function of the new state during the revolution.

The quotations cited by *The Proletarian* (we excluded one as not characteristic) may be unified in this way: Mass action is extra-parliamentary; it is the proletariat itself in action through mass strikes, dispensing with parliamentary leaders except as these may recognize and become merged in the mass action; it is the instinctive action of the proletariat, since it develops in the shops, its initial forms determined by mass industry, and the proletariat's consciousness and action determined largely by the compulsion of industry; out of this industrial mass action develops political mass action against the state, for definite political purposes; it means the broadening of the field of proletarian action—which is precisely what is implied in the Michigan Socialist Party's conception of political action.

Mass action is a process and synthesis of action since, first, it develops larger forms out of the initial primitive form and includes large masses of the proletariat in action, and, secondly, since it becomes political in character at the moment of definite action for the conquest of power.

The conception of mass action developed in the Left Wing of the European Socialist movement, which provided the theory for an instinctive action developed by the proletariat under the compulsion of imperialistic Capitalism. The exponents of mass action have been Marxists of the first magnitude, who recognized Marxism not as a means of explaining the past, but as an instrument of action, as a dynamic phase of the proletarian struggle,—Marxists such as Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin, Pannekoek and Trotzky. Surely, the Anarcho-Syndicalist theoretical conception of "direct action" cannot be attributed to these Marxist adherents of mass action.

The final and complete form of mass action was described by Trotzky in *The Proletariat and the Revolution*, published in 1904:

We have got to summon all revolutionary forces to simultaneous action. How can we do it? First of all we ought to remember that the main scene of revolutionary events is bound to be the city. Nobody is likely to deny this. It is evident, further, that street demonstrations can turn into a popular revolution only when they are a manifestation of masses, that is, when they embrace, in the first place, the workers of the factories and the plants. To make the workers quit their machines and stands; to make them walk out of the factory premises into the street; to lead them to the neighboring plants; to proclaim there a cessation of work; to make new masses walk out into the street; to go thus from factory to factory, from plant to plant, incessantly growing in numbers, sweeping aside police barriers, absorbing new masses that happen to come along, crowding the streets, taking possession of buildings suitable for public meetings, fortifying those buildings, holding continuous revolutionary meetings with audiences coming and going, bringing order into the movements of the masses, arousing their spirit, explaining to them the aim and the meaning of what is going on; to turn, finally, the entire city into one revolutionary camp,—this is, broadly speaking, the plan of action. The starting point ought to be the factories and the plants. That means that street manifestations of a serious character, fraught with decisive events, ought to begin with *political strikes* of the masses.

That was precisely the course of revolutionary events in the proletarian revolution in Russia. The final revolutionary mass action breaks independently of the will of the conscious representatives of the masses, breaks loose spontaneously under the pressure of crisis and instinctive action. It is then the task of the Socialist to organize and direct. Theorized form, or purposes, of this final mass action is the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat functioning through the new proletarian state of the federated Soviets.

The Moscow *Isvestia* in October last year printed the following news which shows in what light Imperial Germany's attack on Russia was viewed by many German soldiers:

"From the German troops who camp on the demarcation line and, generally, in the occupied districts, daily come deserters and groups, who refuse to go to the French front. Lately the German soldiers armed with rifles go over to the Soviets and join the Red Army. A few days ago near Pskov, a party of deserters with rifles and two machine guns crossed the border and joined the Red Army. Another party—18 men—headed by a German officer, on their way to Russia fought a pitched battle with Bavarian detachments and fell in a heroic struggle. All deserters declare that they do not want to fight any longer for imperialists and are ready to die for real freedom, proletarian freedom. Together with the German group there was found another deserter—an Hungarian sailor escaped from Austria after the uprising in the Austro-Hungarian fleet."

## Bolshevikjabs

MUCH has been said and written about the proposed League of Nations, but so far as we are aware no one has ventured to explain how the International Police Force is going to be recruited without recognizing Ireland.

The Health Commissioner reports that there is no sleeping sickness in Boston, there is nothing remarkable in this fact when we consider that sleeping sickness presupposes a period of wakefulness. There is no sleeping sickness in the A. F. of L.

When we see all these denunciations of the aliens we cannot help wondering what would happen if the 17,000,000 aliens got annoyed and went home.

Now that the Committee on Public Information is ended we may expect that in the near future some information will reach the public.

If a man celebrates the Declaration of Independence on July 4 by getting drunk will he be a patriot or a criminal?

"Bolshevist Rising Feared in Bohemia Unless Food Arrives" says a headline. From this it would appear that famine causes Bolshevism but from reading the editorials in the bourgeois press on Russia and the German Spartacans we of course know that it is the other way round—that Bolshevism causes famine.

The Mayor of Buffalo is reported as saying that there are only 15,000 people out of work in the city and that often in the past this number has been exceeded without causing any comment. We would like to call "his honor's" attention to the fact that people are thinking more these days; besides the Kaiser didn't cause any comment among the German people until recently.

Cleveland H. Dodge is becoming so anxious about the starving Armenians that we are beginning to believe the Armenians must be excellent copper miners.

What with the proposed trip of Queen Marie of Rumania to this country and King Alfonso's plans to visit South America we are beginning to believe in the immigration restrictions.

Now that conscription is done away with—in Germany, we can congratulate ourselves on the death of militarism, of course we are going to have at least five big armies and as many navies, but these are for defense only so it's alright. Militarism is dead, long live universal military training.

Just when the League of Nations is getting on so nicely and peace is about to be signed we think it is most unkind of these unemployed people to be walking about the streets.

And talking about the signing of peace, when the signatures have all been fixed will it be correct to say that peace is finished?

Judging from the newspaper headlines the worst thing about war is the coming of peace. In fact it looks as if we would have to elect a commission to draw up a set of the rules of civilized peace.

Would it be correct to say that we are at present waging peace?

We suppose the opposition of the clergy to prohibition arises from a desire to save their jobs and a feeling of resentment that Congress should take on what has hitherto been their exclusive privilege.

Although we can understand that in these days of crashing thrones things are apt to be overlooked we fail to see why the Czecho-Slovaks, the Jugo-Slavs, and all these other peoples whose rights we were so anxious about a few months ago have suddenly dropped out of sight.

Is it that they have got their rights and are now trying to find out what to do with them or is it—but no, of course, not. Didn't one of them name its capital Wilsonstadt?

We know that George V is a democrat, and that Victor Emmanuel is at least not antagonistic to the word but we sometimes wonder whether or not the Mikado really understands politics well enough to feel at home in Tammany Hall.

And speaking of the Japanese we would like to know whether these guys in the League of Nations are the same Japanese as the kind we like so well in California?

# The Proletarian Revolution in Russia

By Gregory Weinstein

THE first stage of the Russian Revolution opens during the week of March 12, 1917. The second stage—that of a completed proletarian revolution—opens on November 7, 1917. But as the acorn contains in itself the mighty oak, so in March 12 are implicit the events and the conquest of November 7. The Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates in each stage were the determining factor, the force actual and potential of the proletarian revolution and the new communist society.

On November 7, 1917 an event took place in Petrograd which was destined to open the road to a new life for mankind. On that day in the capital of Russia—a state newly delivered from the rule of crowned despots and their favorites—the working class wrested power from the bourgeoisie, who, following the fall of Czarism in March, had taken over the reins of government. This served as a signal for a general uprising of the Russian proletariat and the great mass of the dispossessed peasantry who cast their lot with the industrial proletariat. City after city, province after province rose in revolt, and throughout the whole land the process of removing the bourgeois weeds from the fallowland of proletarianism began. The representatives of the "parliamentary-legal" form of government were forced to vacate under the pressure of the toiling people's masses. And they vacated, although not without a struggle.

The Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates took into their hands the governmental power. The people—the common people—became masters of the situation. The representatives of the working class and poorest peasantry took over the complex governmental machinery in order to utilize it in the interests of those who heretofore had been oppressed, exploited, persecuted and tortured.

This was an expression of revolutionary will and heroism. By a mighty effort of their muscles, similar to that of the Parisian Communards, the Russian proletarians broke the chains with which the ruling class had bound them, and actively began the work of erecting the structure of a new society, a society free from oppression and parasitism. The Paris Commune, crushed by the bayonets of the slaves and hirelings of the cruel French bourgeoisie, has come to life again in the cities and villages of Russia, has come to life in order to live and hold high the revolutionary torch over the blood-soaked earth, lighting the way towards the kingdom of Socialist Brotherhood.

And this torch is still blazing. The Russian bourgeois class have not been able to extinguish it. Prematurely old, too weak for the task, they have crawled to the corners of the earth whence they whine out their slanders and venom at the creators of new life. From behind the bayonets of the invaders summoned to their aid one can see their wolfish forms and hear their howls for vengeance. All their hopes are centered in these bayonets. They are the only salvation; feverishly they cling to them hoping thus to regain their lost power and once again drive into bondage the people who have freed themselves from oppression.

\* \* \*

The revolution of November 7, which established the "dictatorship of the proletariat" was an inevitable result of the whole course of the Russian revolution. The consistent revolutionary forces of Russia were led to this step not only by the second act of the revolution, which began with the extremely vivid episode of the overthrow of the Romanoffs, but also by the first act, which took place in 1905. Even then, in 1905, the Russian bourgeoisie cut short the wings of the Russian revolution. Even then the disgraceful brand of a Judas Iscariot appeared as a black spot on its criminal forehead. In the face of a revolutionary upheaval it made a deal then with the decaying monarchy, and with the cynicism of an "honest" merchant betrayed the insurgent proletariat to the executioners of the Czar.

The period between the revolutions did not cause the Russian bourgeoisie to regret this step. On the contrary, it seemed to justify all the expectations and hopes. It began to grow stronger. Supported by government favors and by the high protective tariff, the industry of the country, which was in its hands, was expanding daily. This was hindered, it is true, by the extreme poverty of the internal market and by the infinite stupidity of the Czarist regime. But then it saw wide horizons of conquest and plunder beyond the borders of Russia and the cheering prospects of the world war in preparation.

But the war came and... brought nothing but bitter disappointment. The sores on the body of Russia which the Russian bourgeoisie had so diligently screened immediately cropped out. The lack of system and organization and the backwardness of the Russian economy, the rapacity of the big and small sharks, the corruption and treason of the ministers and officials of the Czar,—all this came to the surface. The armies

remained without food or ammunition, and the people were starving.

The patience of the people became exhausted and they finally burst into open revolt. Having no aims of their own in the war, forced into it by the criminal will and greedy appetite of the ruling classes, dying at the front and starving in the rear, the masses of proletarians and peasants rose to put an end to their suffering and misery.

The revolution was on, it was begun by the oppressed classes outside, and in spite of the will of, the bourgeoisie. And the fact that on March 12, that is three days before the first Provisional Government was formed the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies was already active in Petrograd, that while the bourgeoisie was hesitating awaiting the outcome of the battles on the streets of the capital, this organ of the revolutionary will of the people was making decisions and carrying them out, showing very clearly both the place where the revolutionary flame originated and its true character. The revolutionary fire began with the sparks that were smoldering in the Labor centers and it spread to the barracks. It fired with indignation and anger the hearts of all oppressed and injured. The flame reached out not only to the throne and those around it, but also to all those who supported the throne and who planned the criminal war at the expense of the blood and life of the people.

Czarism was conquered by the street and only then the Duma, this talkative body by the "grace of the Monarch," was forced to "meet" the street. The lower classes won out and then the upper classes began to hypocritically assert their solidarity with the lower classes. But their very first step, exposed all the falsehood of their assertions. In the provisional Government which was formed there was no place for representatives of the revolutionary people. For surely the nervous, weak Kerensky, this one hour revolutionist, who became a pitiful puppet in the hands of the Russian bourgeoisie can not be considered a representative of the revolutionary people.

And this first step was followed by others which emphasized more and more the impossibility of plotting national unity in a country where the revolution was accomplished outside, and in spite of the will of the bourgeoisie. It is not surprising therefore that the "honeymoon" of the Revolution was followed by a period of internal struggle which was persistent, sharp and full of constant conflicts and bitterness.

May 1, July 1, and September 10, these are the dates—guide-posts—which inevitably led to November 7. On Nov. 1, Paul Milyukov, the servant of the imperialistic Russian bourgeoisie, sent a memorandum to the Allied Powers, stating on behalf of the Provisional Government that Russia would carry on the war to the bitter end. This was followed by May 2 and 3 when the soldiers and workers protested, bringing sharply before the people the question of in whose hands the power should be—in the hands of the representatives of the bourgeoisie or of the organs of the revolutionary will of the people; the Soviets. On July 1, Kerensky's Government ordered an offensive, as if mocking the proletariat and the army who had persistently demanded the end of the war. On July 16, the workers and soldiers in Petrograd started an insurrection which was clearly directed against the coalition Government and which showed that the question of transferring the power to the Soviets can not be evaded by any compromises or political subterfuges. On September 10, the Kornilov mutiny, which was diligently prepared by the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and which aimed at the dissolution of the Soviets and the destruction of the revolutionary conquests of the people, took place. To this mutiny the workers, soldiers and poor peasants responded by closing their ranks more solidly around the Soviets, by clearing them of the wavering elements and by sending Bolshevik deputies in their places.

The remaining events of the first eight months of the Russian Revolution took place between these dates and their winding line marks the thorny road through which the Russian proletariat came to its dictatorship. The people demanded peace, and the bourgeoisie and its allies among the moderates in the Soviets were dragging out the war. The peasants demanded land and they were told to "wait for the Constituent Assembly," while at the same time the convocation of this Assembly was postponed time and again. The workers demanded human conditions of labor and the insolent bourgeoisie responded to this with the lock-out throughout Russia. All this was sanctioned by the Provisional Government, in which the Mensheviks and Right Social-Revolutionists acted their miserable part of screening the real ends of this systematic

sabotage with regard to the revolutionary aspirations of the masses of the people.

The revolution was in danger and had to be saved by revolutionary means. Such, indeed, was the revolution of November 7, 1917.

\* \* \*

The Revolution of November 7, 1917 brought the Russian proletariat into power. The great prophecies uttered by the fathers of Socialism have come true. The dictatorship of the proletariat has become a fact. The third, and greatest act of the Russian revolution has been set, an act which gave her such an additional impetus that her boundaries now extend far beyond the national confines, thereby attaching to her an international character and significance. The Revolution has become a Bolshevik—a Socialist revolution. The first step was an actual severance with those forces that had chained Russia to the war chariot of world imperialism.

The most vital and fundamental problem that the new Government faced was the cessation of hostilities. However, it was necessary, in the interests of the international proletariat, not merely to end the war, but also to reveal its inner meaning, to show that not only one side entered the war with the idea of plunder, but that also the other side, shouting about its high ideals, in reality was assiduously pursuing a policy of annexations. This was achieved through the publication of the secret treaties concluded by the Allies. The mask was torn off the "war for liberation." The fairy tale about the disinterestedness of the bourgeoisie in the "more democratic countries" vanished, and the repulsive face of the imperialist monster, greedy, rapacious and cruel, appeared before the world in all its ugliness. The international marauder received a staggering blow, and one of the most dangerous weapons they had been using was put out of action.

The publication of the secret documents decisively destroyed the last ties that bound revolutionary Russia with the imperialists of the Allied Powers. The Soviet Republic formed after the revolution of November 7, introduced a new type of foreign policy. The plots and intrigues of diplomats, their gambling with the lives of nations, were abolished. All the subsequent governmental measures of the young republic in the sphere of foreign policy have clearly emphasized her absolute sincerity, the purity of her methods, at the same bringing to light the falsity, ambiguity and greediness of the old diplomacy. The annulment of the State debts of Russia, the appeal of the Soviet of People's Commissaries to the governments of the belligerent countries regarding the peace question, the history of the peace negotiations with the Central Powers, and, finally, the attempt to end the war without assuming any obligations towards the German robbers,—all this to a certain degree united the world—German-Austrian and Allied—bourgeoisie against the Soviet republic, which dared to violate the "sacredness" of treaties and the half-decayed principles of international relations. The Allied diplomats, like Pontius Pilate, washed their hands of Russia, and handed her over to be devoured by the German birds of prey. But they went further than this, and began, at first secretly and later openly, an invasion, which, according to their plans, was to finally crush the Soviet Republic.

While the foreign policy of the Soviet government arrayed the bourgeoisie of all countries against the Russian Workers' and Peasants' Republic, its internal policy made the Russian bourgeoisie the most uncompromising, though impotent, foe of the republic. And there is little wonder in that: all the measures of the Soviet Government from the very day following the revolution of November 7, have been directed towards the expropriation of expropriators and towards the re-building of the economic-social structure of the country along Socialist lines. Socialism, indeed, was the light-house towards which the Soviets, with rare energy and the greatest self-sacrifice have turned their eyes. Along this difficult way towards the light-house, such measures as the transference of the land to the people, nationalization of finances, socialization of some of the industries and the establishment of a workers' control over others, were gigantic strides.

The Russian bourgeoisie is impotent to oppose these steps towards Socialism. Neither the sabotage of the intellectuals, nor the aid of the Czar's generals, nor the treachery of the pseudo-Socialist groups and elements have been of any avail. And neither will the bayonets of the Allied troops, avail.

\* \* \*

Many months have passed since the revolution of November 7th took place. The evil crowing of the foes of the Russian Soviet Republic has failed. It has not fallen. It lives and calls the whole world to a new life.

# The Peace Conference in Action

**T**HE characters: Lloyd-George, Clemenceau, Uncle Sam, Maupassant's France, Italy, Jugo-Slavia and Japan. The others, the supers, though still on their feet, are a bit shaky.

**JAPAN** (*walking around the table at which sit the rest of the performers; and while walking makes a noise with her slippers, gesticulating strangely, and now and then fixing her robe*):

Mikado, bānzai, and myself, banzai.  
Slap-grab: Manchuria shall be mine.  
Slap-grab: China shall be mine.  
Slap-grab, slap-grab,  
Grab!

**LLOYD-GEORGE** (*puts something in his silk top-hat, and speaks to himself*): Frightful! Such lack of culture! One can easily see she has come from the Far East: slap-grab, and again grab. Wait, I will show you how to slap and grab! I will build ships and ships, of such quantity and quality that you will be kept in your little island hole under the Rising Sun without a chance of ever getting out. And what a face! What manners! One is liable to become sick at the mere sight of her. (*Again puts something into the silk top-hat*).

**MAUPASSANT'S FRANCE** (*sits on the lap of Clemenceau, holding a champagne decanter in her hand*):

Do you recall the happy days  
And the magic of my lays?  
My tiny shapely feet  
And milky hands for you to greet.

**CLEMENCEAU**: Gentlemen, members of the Conference! Do you not see how sad is my beautiful France? And do you not divine the reason? It is because she has not Alsace-Lorraine! Oh, ma chere France, you do really need Lorraine, and you are yearning for Alsace. How sad are your beautiful eyes and how pale your face, and in your graceful form a forty-year old dream is abiding: Alsace! Lorraine! True, you are unhappy and your soul mourns, for your sufferings are deep and terrible, they are unlimited. (*Pours some wine*).

**MAUPASSANT'S FRANCE**:

Do you recall the happy days  
And the magic of my lays?

## A Musical Comedy in One Act By Grisha Korichnevy

My tiny shapely feet  
And milky hands for you to greet.

**CLEMENCEAU**: Of course! The legitimate desire of the companion of my ministerial heart could not be expressed more eloquently and with greater pathos than she just has. Is it not convincing? Are you not impressed by artless enthusiasm?

**ALL** (*save Japan*): Oh yes, indeed! It is very, very impressive. We are touched, touched very deeply indeed!

**JAPAN**:

Slap-grab: Manchuria shall be mine.  
Slap-grab: China shall be mine.  
Slap-grab, grab-slap,  
Grab!

**JUGO-SLAVIA** (*sits on a small chair and weeps bitterly*): I... I am so small and yet she abuses me (*pointing to Italy*). Yesterday Uncle Sam made me a present of a little cap and now Italy has taken it away from me. If she does not give it back to me, I will climb this table and scratch her eyes out. Her hat is so big that I could easily hide myself in it. Is it not enough for her? Give me back my little cap! (*Weeps*).

**ITALY**: Oh, you naughty girl! The milk is still on your lips, and here you come with those pretensions. Be glad that I have taken away only your little cap.

**JUGO-SLAVIA**: You Milan witch! (*Throws an ink-well at Italy*).

(Italy furiously attacks Jugo-Slavia, tears off her clothes, shoes, stockings, etc. Pandemonium breaks loose. Italy and Jugo-Slavia are attacked, now by one party, now by another.)

**MEPHISTO** (*his head appearing through the half-opened door, sings*):

The whole of humanity  
Worships one idol,  
The idol of gold.

While this idol is master  
I'm happy, and everyone dances  
In Satan's grand ball!

(The fighting increases. All faces are convulsed with excitement and fury. Through the back door with a heavy step enters a Russian Bear, leading a small Spartacan by the hand.)

**RUSSIAN BEAR**: Brrrr... Brrrr... Brrrr!

**UNCLE SAM**: What is the matter? Whadaymean, brrrr? Say something human.

**RUSSIAN BEAR**: Long live the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic!

**UNCLE SAM**: Well, my dear fellow, it is dangerous to talk with you. However, if you wish, let us go to an island. There we may have a heart-to-heart talk. Understand this, my dear uncouth fellow, you are a wild animal, and we of the higher breed can not talk to you in a respectable place. Get me?

(Mephisto runs in. Approaches the bear, bows and stands alongside of him. The bear does not notice him. Both sing, in different tunes.)

**RUSSIAN BEAR** (*sings*): Long live the Russian Socialist Federative Republic of Soviets!

**MEPHISTO** (*sings*):

The whole of humanity  
Worships one idol,  
The idol of gold.  
While this idol is master,  
I'm happy, and everyone dances  
In Satan's grand ball!

(The duet does not last long. Mephisto's bass grows weaker and fainter, lost in the bear's roaring. Satan changes now and then to a different costume. His final effort is made in the dress of a Stock Exchange broker. Broker-Mephisto suddenly, with a falsetto shriek, ends his song. His figure, hitherto of considerable size, begins to shrink rapidly and finally vanishes through the ink-well.)

(The bear and the Spartacan begin to dance. A chorus of English miners appears on the stage, surrounds the bear in a ring, and sing: "He's a jolly good fellow.")

(The strains of the International are heard behind the scenes. The merriment and dancing increase. The curtain falls slowly.)

## Debs — and the Struggle Against Reaction

**B**Y unanimous vote the United States Supreme Court has upheld the ten year sentence imposed on Eugene Debs by the Federal Court of Cleveland some months ago. The decision has been hailed with unqualified delight by the bourgeois press, though a few, more voracious than the rest, have cavilled at the fact that the constitutionality of the Espionage Act, under which thousands of men and women are already lying in jail, was not definitely established. Here and there a word has been grudgingly inserted about Debs' personal courage and integrity but unfailingly the writers have answered the call of their class, or, to be more correct, the class that employs them. There is a faint pretense that the confirmation of the sentence was a matter of military necessity or national emergency, but even the most brazen editorials hastily leave this phase of the subject.

The class conscious worker is, however, not deceived by any twist that the cunning of newspaper practice or the trickery of legal phraseology may employ. He recognizes the verdict as an act of war on the working class, he knows that Debs is not sentenced for the protection of the country, in the sense that the term is generally used, but for the protection of the present system of exploitation and robbery. Few if any have had the temerity to hurl the slander of pro-Germanism against Debs. The case is clear cut, for half a century Debs has fearlessly championed the cause of the working class, the class to which he belongs and from which he scorned to rise. In every crisis his voice, his pen and his powerful personality have urged the workers on towards emancipation. Every state in the union has been the scene of his labors, all over the country the people have flocked to hear his voice and never since he first set his face toward the sunlight of the new day has he faltered in his allegiance to the cause of the world's oppressed. It is because of his adherence to this cause that the sentence was first imposed and its imposition is now confirmed.

It is true that in its broad aspect the Debs' case differs little from the thousands of others throughout the country. Every conviction against a Socialist, I.

W. W. or other class conscious worker is backed by the same class tyranny, is an act of war by the capitalists against the workers. But in its more intimate phases the case stands alone. Debs, by his length of service, by his intellectual integrity, and above all by his limitless love, holds an unique position. He is the pulsing heart of the rebel wage slave. He voices the cry of the child worker for sleep, and play and sunshine—for childhood; he voices the dumb longings of the woman toiler for laughter, and love, and beauty—for womanhood; he voices the inarticulate demand of the slave man for leisure, and bread and home—for manhood; he voices the cry of humanity for economic freedom, for life. He is the soul of the American Socialist movement and the inspiration of every other conscious working class organization in the country, and his imprisonment is a gage flung at the feet of the workers.

The imprisonment of every member of our class is such a gage flung with patrician scorn in the path of the "rabble" but it is not to be expected that the workers have yet become sufficiently educated to view it in this light, a thousand incidents distract their attention from the main issue, Debs' case, however, is clearer cut. There can be but one answer to this assault on the workers, we must pick up the gage on the point of the sword of our economic might and hurl it back.

Three score years and ten is man's allotted span, Debs has already passed through sixty-four years of strenuous life and the imposition of a ten year sentence means that he, who loves freedom as it is given to few to love it, shall spend his declining years in a convict's cell unless the workers intervene. A general strike is the only reply to this latest act of bourgeois tyranny. This sentence is a blow struck in the class struggle by the opposing side and it must be replied to by the blow that the workers can make effective—the withdrawal of their economic power. A one day strike, a half hour strike, even a five minute strike will be sufficient to show that the workers mean business. The manifestation of class solidarity will be enough to ensure success. Debs will have secured

his greatest triumph if he can inspire such solidarity and labor will have marched forward many steps.

It may be that behind this act of the Supreme Court there lurks executive pardon for Debs but Debs can take care of that. If the workers of America allow the prison gates to close for one day behind Debs then indeed they are sunk in lethargy. Monarchical England gave MacLean five years only to release him in nine months at the demand of the workers, Imperial Germany gave Liebknecht four years and the workers burst open the prison gates before the term was over, Democratic America decrees ten years to Debs, what do the workers say?

The constitutionality or the unconstitutionality of the law matters not, what does matter is that the application of the law is a class act, an act of aggression by the bourgeois class against the working class in the person of its best loved spokesman. Bourgeois democracy is a fiction for working class consumption. The law, the impartial law, the will of the people's representatives, is invoked to cover a bourgeois offensive in the class struggle. It was so in the case of Mooney, in the case of Haywood, in the case of a thousand nameless ones, but in this case it must be clear to even the dullest worker. Debs is punished for his love and loyalty to his class, for his devotion to the highest ideals of his brothers.

Presidents and diplomats may speak of liberty in ever so idealistic phrases but so long as Debs is imprisoned even the most gullible must see that their words are a sham and a mockery. Bourgeois democracy and idealism is itself tearing away the scales from the eyes of the workers and this latest act is its greatest folly.

The workers must rely on themselves for their own salvation, the first step to the realization of their power lies open through this act. Not only can they free Debs and all his fellows throughout the country but in so acting they move to free themselves from industrial serfdom. The gage is thrown: Eugene V. Debs is to lie in jail for ten years... Take up the challenge workers of America, let the general strike be your answer and let it be swift and sure!

# Imperialism — the Final Stage of Capitalism

By N. Lenin

Translated from the Russian by Andre Tridon

## PREFACE

This book was written in Zurich in the spring of 1915, owing to the conditions under which I was working, I had only limited access to the French and English literature on the subject, and only very little material in the Russian language. I consulted, however, the most important English work on the subject, J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism*, which deserves careful reading. While writing this book I bore in mind the limitations imposed by the Russian censor: "ip. For that reason I was compelled, not only to confine myself to a theoretical, economic discussion of the subject, but to veil my frequent references to political events under the parables and allusions which Czarism compelled revolutionary writers to resort to, whenever they set out to produce "lawful" literature.

It is painful in these days of freedom to read over certain passages of this book in which the thought of the censorship prevented me from making certain definite statements or from enlarging upon certain important points. When I wished to say what Imperialism stood for on the eve of the Socialist revolution, when I wished to say that social-patriotism, that is lip-service to Socialism coupled with patriotic deeds, was a complete betrayal of Socialism, a desertion to the bourgeois camp, and that this schism in the labor movement stood in certain relations to certain concrete conditions of Imperialism,—I had to confine myself to allusions and suggestions, or to refer the reader to a reprint of the "illegal" articles I wrote between 1914 and 1917. There is a passage in particular where, in order to veil the reader, without running foul of the censor, what shameless lies are spread by capitalists and their allies the social-patriots (rather inconsistently attacked by Karl Kautsky), how shamelessly they protect the annexations brought about by the capitalists of their own nationality, I had to go to Japan for my illustrations. The careful reader will readily substitute Russia for Japan, and instead of Korea read Finland, Poland, Courland, Ukraine, Khiva, Bokhara, Esthonia and other territories inhabited by people who are not Great Russians.

I hope this book will be of assistance to the reader in studying the economic problem which must be considered closely if one wishes to understand rightly the present war and contemporary politics: the problem of the economic essence of Imperialism.

N. LENIN.

Petrograd, May 9, 1917.

IN the past ten or fifteen years, or let us say since the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Boer War (1899-1902) economists and political writers of the old world and of the new have more and more frequently resorted to the use of the word "Imperialism" in order to characterize the period in which we are living.

In 1902 there appeared in London and New York a book entitled *Imperialism* by the English economist J. A. Hobson. Starting from a social-reformist and pacifist point of view, essentially identical to that held by Karl Kautsky, Hobson wrote a strong and detailed analysis of the fundamental traits, economic and political, of Imperialism.

In 1910 there appeared in Vienna a book by the Austrian Marxist Rudolf Hilferding entitled *Finance-Capital*. While the author was mistaken in his views on the currency theory and made many efforts to reconcile Marxism and opportunism, this book contains the most valuable analysis of "the latest step in the development of Capitalism," as its sub-title reads. In reality the various articles on Imperialism published in recent years, and whatever was said on the subject in the resolutions of the Chemnitz and Basel Socialist Congresses (which were held in the fall of 1912, one a Congress of the Socialist International, the other a Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party), were inspired by the ideas in those two books.

We will endeavor to explain as simply as possible the relations between the fundamental economic manifestations of Imperialism. Important as the extra-economic side of the question may be, we shall not enlarge upon it.

## I

### The Concentration of Industry and Monopoly

The gigantic growth of industry and the remarkably rapid process of centralization of production in constantly larger organizations, are the most striking characteristics of Imperialism. We find complete and detailed information on that phenomenon in current industrial statistics.

In Germany, for instance, out of every thousand business firms there were in 1882 three large firms employing more than fifty employees, in 1895 there were six, and in 1907 there were nine. Those large firms employed, for the same years mentioned, 22%, 30% and 37% of the available labor. But the concentration of production proceeds more quickly than the concentration of labor, because in large industrial establishments labor is more efficient. This is proven by all the data we have on the subject of steam engines and electric motors.

If we bear in mind, also, that in German statistics the word industry is meant to include commerce and means of communication, we can draw the following picture: out of a total number of 3,265,623 firms 30,588, or 0.9% of all the firms, are large corporations. Out of a total of 14,400,000 workers, the larger firms employ 5,700,000, or 39.5%. Out of 8,800,000 steam H. P., they use 6,600,000 or 75%; out of 1,500,000 electric kilowatts they use 1,200,000 or 80%. (1)

Less than  $\frac{1}{100}$  of the firms use over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the available steam and electric power. The 3,197,000 small firms employing from five men up, and constituting 91% of the total number of industrial and commercial firms, use only 7% of all the steam and electric power available. Thirty thousand large firms employ almost all the available supply of human and mechanical power, three million small firms employ only an insignificant amount of either.

There were in Germany in 1907, 580 large firms employing more than 100 workers. They employed a total of 1,380,000 workers, or almost one-tenth of all the available labor, and almost one-third, exactly 32%, of the available steam and electric power.

Actual capital and the banks make the power of these few large firms irresistible, and the result is that millions of small, medium-sized, and even some of the lesser among the large firms, become the mere employes of a few hundred millionaire-financiers.

In another country, the United States, where Capitalism is extremely developed, the concentration of capital is even more marked. American statistics, however, employ the word industry in its narrowest sense, as concerns are listed according to their yearly output. In 1904 the number of large concerns with an output of at least \$1,000,000 a year was 1,000, or 0.9% of the total number of concerns which was 216,180; out of 5,500,000 available laborers these larger concerns employed 1,400,000, or 25.6%; and they produced \$5,600,000,000 worth of goods a year, or 38% of the total production for the United States which was \$14,800,000,000. Five years later, in 1909, the corresponding figures were: 3,060 large firms in a

total of 268,491, or 1.1%; 2,000,000 laborers out of a total of 6,610,000, or 30.5%; \$9,000,000,000 worth of goods, out of a total production of \$20,700,000,000 or 43.8%. (2)

Almost one-half of the entire production of all the industrial concerns of the United States is in the hands of 1% of the total number of concerns. And those three thousand gigantic corporations control 258 different branches of industry. This shows clearly that industrial concentration having reached a certain phase of development leads to absolute monopoly. For a few firms can easily arrive at some understanding among themselves, thereby making competition extremely difficult. This transformation of the competitive system is one of the most important, if not the most important phenomenon in the evolution of modern Capitalism, and deserves very close study. But first of all we must remove a source of possible misunderstanding.

According to American statistics, there are 3000 giant corporations interested in 258 branches of industry. That might mean to some readers that each branch of industry is being exploited by 12 large concerns. This would be a wrong interpretation of the statistical data. We do not find large corporations interested in every branch of industry; but one of the most important characteristics of Capitalism, when Capitalism has reached its highest degree of development, is a tendency to combination. By which is meant that various forms of industry are placed under a unified control. Let us take, for example, the transformation of raw materials, the smelting of ore, the manufacture of iron into steel, of steel into various finished products; or else the utilization of waste products or sub-products, the production of packing materials and so on, industries which are all of assistance one to the other.

"Combination," Hilferding writes, "compensates the various fluctuations of the market and therefore raises the average of profit. Secondly, it reduces the number of business transactions. Thirdly, it permits the attainment of technical perfection, which means higher profits than can be secured by independent concerns. Fourthly, it strengthens the position of the enterprises which have combined, against the independent ones, and protects them against competition in times of depression or crisis, when the prices of finished products are dropping quicker than the prices of raw materials." (3)

Heymann, a German bourgeois economist who has studied combinations in the iron industry of Germany, says that "independent firms are ruined by the high prices of raw materials combined with the low prices of finished products." "We see," he adds, "large coal mining corporations producing millions of tons of coal, combined into strong coal mining syndicates, and

closely allied to large steel plants which are in their turn combined into steel syndicates. Those giant combinations which may produce half a million tons of steel a year, which mine enormous quantities of ore and coal, which turn out enormous amounts of finished steel products and employ tens of thousands of laborers huddled in crowded workingmen's towns, who own sometimes their own railroad lines and their own seaports, are characteristic of the iron industry in Germany. And the concentration of industries is going on apace. Individual enterprises enlarge constantly their scope and size. More and more of them engaged in similar or different forms of industry combine into gigantic corporations backed or directed by half a dozen large Berlin banks. The development of the metallurgical industry in Germany confirms what Marx once wrote about concentration. Of course this applies to a country where industry is favored by protective duties and special transportation rates. The metallurgical industry of Germany is ripe for expropriation." (4)

Such is the conclusion reached by a good bourgeois economist. We must notice that he places Germany in a class by herself owing to the advantages which industry derives in that country from high protective duties. Such protection may hasten the process of concentration and the organization of monopolistic groups, trusts, syndicates, etc. But it is interesting to note that in England, a free trade country, concentration also leads to monopoly, more slowly it is true, and in a different form. This is what Prof. Herman Levy writes in a special treatise on "Monopolies, Cartels and Trusts," dealing with the economic developments in Great Britain:

"In Great Britain, the growth of industrial enterprises and their high technical level have a tendency to create monopolies. The concentration of industries makes the centralization of industries reach enormous sums; the result is that new corporations cannot be organized without a huge initial investment, and therefore fewer and fewer are being organized. Also, and this is much more important, every new enterprise which wishes to compete with the giant corporations created by industrial concentration must produce such an enormous quantity of goods that the sale profits will only be possible by increasing unusually the demand for these goods; if the demand does not increase, prices drop to a level which is disastrous not only for the new concern but for all its allies." In Great Britain, monopolistic unions of industrial enterprises, cartels and trusts only begin to be organized in one given industry when the number of the main competing enterprises is reduced to about "two dozen." In other countries, of course, protective tariffs make the organization of trusts much easier. "The influence of concentration upon the birth of monopoly in large industries appears here with crystal-like clearness." (5)

Half a century ago, when Marx wrote *Capital*, free competition was considered by the majority of economists as one of "nature's laws." Official science attempted through a conspiracy of silence to kill Marx's book, which by its theoretical and historical analysis of Capitalism proved that unrestrained competition leads to industrial concentration, and that concentration upon reaching a certain point results in monopoly. At present, monopoly is an established fact. Economists are blacking mountains of paper describing the various forms assumed by monopoly, and they keep shouting that Marx was wrong. But facts remain facts. And facts demonstrate that the difference we observe between various capitalist countries, for instance between those who have free trade and those who have protective tariffs, cause but insignificant variations in the form assumed by monopolies in those countries, and only slightly hasten or delay their appearance; and that monopolies due to the concentration of industry seem to be the absolute rule in the present stage of capitalist development.

One can tell with relative accuracy when the crucial change from the old competitive Capitalism to the new Capitalism took place in Europe. It was at the dawn of the twentieth century. A recent book on the history of monopoly states that "before the year 1860 there were several isolated instances of monopoly in which is seen the embryo of the various forms of monopoly with which we are now familiar. But the actual history of the trusts does not begin until 1860. The first organization of large monopolies dates from the world-wide commercial depression which took place between 1870 and 1890. As far as Europe is concerned the period extending from 1860 to 1870 marked the final stage in the development of free competition. Then England completed the structure of the capitalist organization according to the old style. In Germany the older Capitalism entered into a struggle with the national trade and industry and began to assume its peculiar form. The great

change began with the panic of 1873, or rather with the depression which followed it, and which, barring a slight revival of commercial activity in the early eighties and an unusually strong but very short period of prosperity in 1889, affected those 22 years of the economic history of Europe.

"At the time of the short revival of activity which took place in 1889-1890, the trusts (known in Germany as cartels) took advantage of temporary conditions to enlarge their sphere of action. The result of that ill-advised move was a rise in prices which was quicker and stronger than it would have been otherwise, and most of those trusts went down in ignominious bankruptcy." Another five years of bad business and low prices followed, but the traders only saw in that depression a sort of pause preceding a new period of prosperity.

"And then a second chapter was opened in the history of the trusts. Instead of being a passing phenomenon, trusts show themselves one of the fundamental institutions in economic life. They invade one field of industrial activity after another, in particular the industries which utilize raw materials. As early as the beginning of the nineties, we notice the organization of the coke syndicate, on the model of which the coal syndicate was also organized, which was the last word in organization. The great revival of trade at the end of the 19th century and the crisis of 1903 were the work of the trusts, at least as far as the mining and iron industries were concerned. It was quite an innovation in those days. In our days, however, we realize that the largest part of our economic life is, generally speaking, no longer dominated by free competition." (6)

Accordingly, we can divide the history of monopolies into three periods: 1.—the period, extending from 1860 to 1870, marking the ultimate point in the development of free competition, and during which period monopolies were only in the embryonic stage. 2.—After the crisis of 1873, trusts began to develop rapidly, but even then they were exceptional phenomena, not established institutions. 3.—During the revival of trade which marked the end of the 19th century and the crisis of 1900-1903, trusts became the very foundation of all economic life. Capitalism then began to transform itself into Imperialism.

Trusts agree among themselves as to terms of sale, credits, etc. They divide the country into territories within whose limits they do not compete among themselves. They determine in advance the quantity of goods to be produced. They fix prices. They divide up the profits among the various concerns belonging to the organization, etc.

In 1896 there were in Germany 250 trusts (cartels), and in 1906 there were 385, comprising 12,000 concerns. (7) But we all know that those figures were far below the truth. Industrial statistics for the year 1907 show that 12,000 large German corporations used over 50% of all the available steam and electric power. In the United States, there were in 1900 a

total of 185 trusts, and 250 in 1907. American statistics divide all industrial enterprises according to whether they are owned by individuals, firms or corporations. Corporations in 1904 owned 23.6%, in 1909 owned 25.9%, or over one-fourth of all industrial enterprises. In 1904 these corporations employed 70.6%, and 75.6% in 1909, or three-fourths of all the available labor. In 1904 these organizations produced \$10,900,000,000 worth of goods, and \$16,300,000,000 in 1909, which is respectively 73.7% and 79% of the total production in the United States.

Trusts and cartels often produce 70% or 80% of the whole output of one given industry. The Rhenish Westphalian Coal Syndicate in 1893 mined 86.7%, and 95.4% in 1910 of all the coal mined in the region.

Monopolies of that type have gigantic incomes and their capacity for production is fabulous. In the United States the Standard Oil Co., the well known petroleum trust, was organized in 1900. Its capital was \$150,000,000. It issued \$100,000,000 worth of common stock and \$106,000,000 of preferred stock. Stockholders received the following dividends from 1900 to 1907: 48, 48, 45, 44, 36, 40, 40, 40 per cent.; or a total of \$341,000,000 in dividends. From 1882 to 1907 the net profits were \$889,000,000. Out of this sum \$606,000,000 was paid out in dividends, and the balance added to the capital reserve. (8) The Steel Trust, the United States Steel Corporation, employed in its various plants in 1907 as many as 210,180 laborers and clerks. The largest mining concern in Germany, the Gelsenkirchner Bergwerksgesellschaft, employed, in 1908, 46,048 laborers and clerks. (9) In 1902 the Steel Trust turned out 9,000,000 tons of steel a year. (10) In 1901, the trust produced 66.3%, and 66.1% in 1908, of all the steel produced in the United States. (11) It mined in the same years respectively 12.2% and 46.2% of all the iron ore.

An official report on the trusts made to the American government states that "the superiority of the trusts over their competitors is due to the huge size of their plants and their superior efficiency. From the very beginning of its organization the Tobacco Trust took all possible measures to replace manual labor by mechanical labor. It bought out for that purpose all the patents covering every detail of the tobacco industry, spending huge amounts of money on these purchases. Many patented processes were found to be imperfect and had to be improved by engineers in the trust's employ. At the end of 1908 two subsidiary concerns had been organized for the sole purpose of buying out patents. The trust also set up its own foundry, machinery plants and repair shops. One of these establishments, located in Brooklyn, employs some 300 people who devote all their time to trying out and improving new processes for the manufacture of cigarettes, small cigars, plug, tin wrappers, boxes, etc." (12) "Other trusts retain in their employ so-called developing engineers, whose duty is to devise new methods of production and to introduce technical improvements. The Steel Trust

offers to its engineers and workingmen high bonuses for suggestions tending to perfect the technique of production or to cut down the cost of production." (13)

The large industrial concerns of Germany have adopted the same means to promote industrial efficiency, especially in the chemical industry, which has developed so enormously in the past decade. In that industry the concentration process had brought about in 1908 the formation of two leading "groups" which in a way constituted a sort of monopoly. At first these two groups were allied to two groups of two large plants each with a capital of some twenty million marks: on one side the former Meister works, in Chochst and Kassel and Frankfurt on the Main, and on the other, the Alinine and Soda Works of Ludwigshafen and the former Baier Works in Elberfeld. In 1905 the first group, in 1908 the other group, concluded agreements with one more large chemical plant. The capitalization of each of the two groups rose to forty or fifty million marks, after which the two groups began to hold conferences, to discuss price fixing. In June 1916 a gigantic trust united in one organization all the chemical enterprises of Germany.

Thus competition is replaced by monopoly. We observe a giant process of socialization of all the industries. It is principally the technical side and the improvements in methods which are affected by that process.

We are very far from the old system of free competition between scattered traders, knowing nothing about each other, and producing merchandise for an uncertain market. Concentration has gone so far that it now enables us to take an almost accurate inventory of all the sources of raw material, for instance of all the iron ore fields, not only in one country but in groups of countries, even in the whole world. And not only are such resources fully inventoried, but they are put under one single control by giant monopolistic combinations.

Markets are appraised, too, and divided up among those great combinations. The monopolies secure the best of skilled labor, the best trained engineers, they purchase means of communication and transportation, railroads in the United States, steamship lines in Europe and the United States. Capitalism, in its imperialistic form, organizes a general socialized form of production, and actually drags capitalists, willy-nilly, consciously or unconsciously, into a new form of social production, takes them out of a world of free competition to put them into a world of absolute socialization. Production becomes communistic, but property remains a private affair. Socialized means of production remain the private property of a small number of individuals. The general structure of a system of free competition remains standing, but the domination of a few monopoly holders upon the rest of the community becomes a hundred times heavier, a hundred times more obvious, more unbearable.

(To be continued)

## Along the Descent to Disaster

By Alexander Stoklitzky

THE National Executive Committee of our party hardly had time to develop its opportunistic program of sending delegates to the conference of traitors at Berne. The rolling of the thunder of protests in our party at the actions of our "leaders," who by union with the treasonable "International" Conference have drawn our entire movement into the mire, is still resounding. These very same leaders are proposing to us a new undertaking which in its essence is as much opportunistic, and as harmful to the cause of Revolutionary Marxism in this country as the sending of delegates to the conference of Social-Traitors, who are still beating around the lackey—imperialists in their respective countries.

We speak of the American national inter-party conference on May 1, which is being called by the National Executive Committee of our party. On what ground does this committee think it is justified in pushing our party once more along the downward descent? Was the main motive in calling the conference the raising of public opinion in this country against the reaction? Is our party intending at this conference to unite all the American proletariat? If the last supposition is true, then why has our party in the person of its leaders failed to find a more striking slogan than the "petition" for Amnesty? Revolutionary slogans at the present historical epoch are uniting the Russian proletariat and the proletariat of all Europe. Are these slogans but empty sounds to our "Marxists" and are they unsuited for our proletariat.

Do our opportunists, by their naiveness, continue to believe in the influence of public opinion upon the action of Imperialistic bourgeoisie and do they still hope to persuade the enemies of the revolutionary proletariat to take the right way? What indeed do our leaders want to do at this inter-party conference? To pass colorless, thin resolutions? "No," they will say to us, "our resolutions will be revolutionary!" It is doubtful! Up to the present time we have failed to

notice the ability of our leaders to set out revolutionary slogans and demands. Even if we should suppose for a moment that our opportunistic elements will manage to formulate "something" resembling revolutionary ideas at the conference, we still have to depend upon the revolutionary spirit of the small bourgeois, pacifistic and patriotic elements called to this conference, Peoples-Councils, Non-Partisan League and other similar organizations of the liberal bourgeoisie, which are counter-revolutionary in the full sense of the word. Is the American Federation of Labor invited by our leaders to this conference for the purpose of supporting "revolutionary" slogans? It is laughable, and painful!

But let us suppose that this conference, convoked upon the initiative of the National Executive Committee of our party, will squeeze out from this opportunistic mixture several clumsy "revolutionary" resolutions. Then what? What good will these resolutions do? Will the imperialistic bourgeoisie of this country get scared of these high sounding words? Will they get scared of public opinion? Absurd! He who lives during the present epoch, who ponders over the situation, who from the experience of the Russian and German revolutions has learned something will say with confidence, that we have passed the epoch of words and resolutions, long ago, and that the only thing to which the imperialistic bourgeoisie is listening is the revolutionary mass efforts of the proletariat!

We know that our opportunists will grab these last words. They will call this "Cringing petty-bourgeois" Conference an active mass effort of the proletariat. But will this conference, which is leaning toward the compromise of liberals and proletariat, be able to adopt and bring into being one of the methods of emancipation of the international Revolutionary Proletariat, the general political strike, which in its logical devel-

opment, means the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Are our opportunists ready for this move? Will they be able to come from words to deeds? No! Of course not! They will tell us that it is not time yet, our movement still needs the compromise and the reforms of the petty bourgeoisie.

What can we expect from those who called this "Cringing petty-bourgeois" conference that is not of the opportunistic fluid? And all these empty, worthless schemes, pushing our party down the descent, are enacted in the epoch when the world war is beginning to bear its fruits.

Neither the compromises with the small bourgeois pacifists, nor the moderate line in action with the counter-revolutionary American Federation of Labor, will be able to satisfy the demand of the moment, the historical break of capitalist society. We, like the Russian Bolsheviks and the Revolutionary Marxists in other countries once for all reject the compromises with the petty bourgeois liberals and keep apart from the elements leading us to disaster.

Neither the resolutions of the "Cringing petty-bourgeois" conference, nor the expressions of good wishes of the fleeting petty bourgeois elements will be able to save our comrades from the claws of reaction. They will be saved only by the revolutionary mass effort of the proletariat. We must throw away not only the opportunists and the small bourgeoisie, who try to cling to the proletarian movement and poison it with its bankrupt ideology, but also we should clean our ranks from that "mire," which pushes our party on the road of the German Scheidemanns, the Russian Mensheviks and the Social-Patriots in other countries.

Before trying to pass any slogan on to the masses our party must call its Emergency Party Convention in order to explain once for all its own position. To delay this convention is to desert the International Proletariat.

# Worker's Control in America

By John Reed

**I**N every large Soviet of Workers' Deputies in Russia, in the Factory-Shop Committee of every important Russian industrial plant, there is usually some Russian who has worked in America, and who is valuable because of the knowledge he has picked up here of highly-organized industrial production.

However, the fact remains, that in spite of the technical efficiency of American industrial workers—considerably greater than that of Russian workers—workers' control of industry would be very difficult here.

This is, because the American skilled worker is so specialized and so driven, that as a rule he only knows his business as a cog in the machine. This is particularly true in such plants as the Ford Factory in Detroit, where a man goes on operating a stamping-press eight hours, day after day, week after week, turning out a moon-shaped little piece of metal whose use he does not even know, and the relation of which to the other manufactured parts is a mystery to him.

He has, for example, no idea of the relation of his function to that of the axle-maker, the piston-rod department (if there is such a department), the assembling department. And naturally he has no conception of the various preliminary processes of production which precede his—the rolling-mills, the smelters, railroad transportation, iron and coal mines.

He knows nothing of the cost of the article he is manufacturing, nor the cost of the whole article of which it is a part. He hasn't the slightest idea of the value of the plant he works in, the depreciation in value of machinery and buildings, the amount of profits made by the owners, the capitalization of the business, or the amount of dividends paid out. If he is class-conscious at all, he knows he is being robbed and exploited on the job; but he hasn't the slightest conception *how much*. If you were to ask him how much his labor actually produces, he couldn't tell you. He cannot calculate a fair wage for himself. And when he goes on strike for higher wages, he does not base his demands on *what the business can pay him* but on *what he needs to live on*—which is the wrong way to go about it.

The financial aspect of the problem, however, is secondary. What is immediately necessary is that the workers *learn their places* in the vast machine of industry. I will explain why.

In the highly-complicated organization of modern American industry, as I have pointed out, the worker is in the position of a private soldier in an autocratic army: he fills a place, does what he is told to by his superiors and does not reason why. He has no access to the office where the books are handled. He doesn't know what orders come in, or the price paid for them. When the factory is running full, he works overtime; when times are slack, or when, for some political reason the boss closes down the plant, he is simply fired. The boss tells him that without a high tariff the factory will close down—and so he votes the Republican ticket. . . .

Take it a little nearer to him. Over him is a foreman, almost as ignorant as he is, whose interest it is to keep the workers speeded up; over the foreman, a superintendent, for the same purpose, who understands the relation of the different branches of his department, but not very much about the relation of his department to the other departments. Over the superintendent, we'll say, the factory superintendent, or the manager, who understands the relation of the different departments to one another. Over the highest superintendent the managing director of the plant, who understands the relation of the factory to the market and competing factories; and over him the Board of Directors, who understand the relation of the business to the financial system. . . .

Every technical function is in charge of a specially trained technical man—chemists, engineers, book-keepers—whose work cannot be understood by the workers, because it requires a special education.

Now if the Revolution were to come tomorrow, and the workers of America found themselves in control of industrial production, what would happen?

The Board of Directors would be ousted, and the office-force—clerks, book-keepers, stenographers, statisticians, etc.—who consider themselves members of the capitalist class, and not workers at all, would go away. This must be expected, and for the moment it is not of great importance. It will not be to improve a new system of distribution of products in the Industrial Commonwealth. . . .

The important thing, however, is to keep industry going in each factory.

What will the technically-trained engineers, chemists, industrial organizers, efficiency experts, and so forth, do? It must be understood that these specially-trained men have been educated in capitalist schools, that they depend entirely upon the capitalist class for their livelihood. The greater part of them will also

leave the factory—although not for long. These are primarily scientists; they want to do their work—and if Workers' Control can give them their same jobs, with the greater freedom which the Industrial Commonwealth will afford them, they will stick.

Meanwhile, what about Workers' Control? Workers' Control means literally what it says—control by the workers. But in order to control a highly-complicated mechanism like a modern industrial plant, the workers must know what it is they are doing. Delegates from each department will have to meet immediately and form a committee to carry on production, with a full understanding of the relation of their departments to each other.

For instance, they must know the answers to questions like these:

How many men are necessary in each department to carry on the present volume of production?

How many hours must each man work?

What are the essential functions of the factory? How much and what kind of raw materials are used?

Where do they come from, and how are they transported?

Which of the technically-trained men are necessary to production?

What are the relations of the factory to the railroads, the mines?

I merely suggest the first burning questions which arise in the minds of workers, whose first (and right) instinct is to keep their industry running.

Of course committees must be immediately elected to cooperate with the organizations of control in the mining and transportation fields, and to meet the representation men, to consider the problems of distribution of products. . . .

At the present time the American Trade-Union system intensifies the workers' ignorance of the process of production, by dividing the different crafts into water-tight separate compartments, whose most intimate contact is when they squabble over "jurisdiction." These craft unions scab on one another, fight one another, and all combine against the unorganized but essential day-laborers at the bottom of the scale.

In an Industrial Union, *the identity of all crafts employed in one branch of industry* is emphasized.

However, the Industrial Union, although absolutely necessary to the Industrial Commonwealth of the future, does not solve the immediate problem of how the workers in each factory shall be ready to take control of that factory and run it.

When the departmental delegates meet to form a committee of Workers' Control, they must have all the available information about their own departments, and in addition, they must understand how all the departments fit in together in the general scheme of manufacture. For instance, the punch-press men must not immediately vote to reduce their hours from eight to four, while the furnace men demand a 50 per cent. increase in wages, and the machinists insist upon the abolition of piece-work. Whatever changes are made in the factory must be based on the whole process of manufacture, and with a knowledge of the needs and demands of other groups of workers in other lines. . . .

It can readily be seen that what we propose is nothing less than to lay right now the broad foundations of the Industrial Commonwealth, in which the world will be ruled, as Russia is now ruled, by a dictatorship of the actual workers, determined to get the full product of their labor, and to pay profits to nobody. It is obvious that any organization with the avowed purpose of seizing control of industry by force would be suppressed at once. And we do not advocate the formation of any such organization. It is unnecessary; for the Revolution will not come until the vast majority of the working class in this country is ready for it—and until that time the seizure of separate factories by the workers would be futile. . . .

But there is a way to prepare for the day when Labor takes over the factories. This is by organizing *right now*, in all factories, committees of workers composed of delegates from each shop, to make a detail study of the relations of one department to another.

These committees must not only study the processes of producing the article they manufacture, but must also find out how much it costs to produce each section of the article, and the completed whole; how much time it takes; and the difference between the cost price (which includes production of raw materials, transportation, labor, depreciation, and overhead charges), and the price at which the article sells. Only in this way can Labor arrive at an understanding of its rightful share—all it produces.

Our comrades in the industries have in this knowledge the most formidable means of propaganda possible. No worker who hears and understands how fearfully he is robbed at his job (figures which cannot be disproven) can remain outside the Left Wing of the Labor Movement. And if, at the same time, the value of political action is explained to him, he must—he cannot avoid it—join the Socialist Party and affiliate himself with the Left Wing.

American workers will not be so apt to make the mistake sometimes made by the Russian workers in the first days of the Revolution—the mistake of thinking that they can run industry without technically-trained men. However on the other hand, when they *do* take control of industry in America, they will discover more technically-trained men here who are willing to work with them than they did in Russia. Already in this country the lively interest of engineers, efficiency experts and other scientific men in the possibilities of Workers' Control of Industry, is startling. Every honest industrial scientist knows perfectly well that the capitalist system, with its network of selfish private interests, its corruption, its commercial rivalries, hinders the development of science, and actually obstructs production.

From time to time in *The Revolutionary Age* we intend to publish detailed analyses of certain American industries, to show what waste, inefficiency and graft there is under the capitalist system, what useless destruction of life and happiness, of human strength and natural riches—and then to show how all this can be eliminated under intelligent Workers' Control during the proletarian dictatorship which is coming.

The workers must not make this mistake that industry under the Socialist Order will produce *less*; it will, as a matter of fact, produce infinitely more, and distribute products communistically to the working class—with all the minimum of effort that scientific management and new machinery make possible, and with all the results to the workers.

It is not only necessary to plan the political downfall of the capitalist class, but also to get into the minds of the workers some conception of the industrial frame-work which will underlie the new Socialist political commonwealth which is to rule during the dictatorship of the proletariat, and afterward to succeed it.

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