

## Is It Peace or More War?

By WILLIAM STEWART.

think it is about time attention was directed to the utterances of a gentleman named Mr. Leslie Urquhart. He is described as being "at the head of large Siberian mining enterprises," and on the strength of that commendation evidently considers himself qualified and entitled to advise the British people as to what should be their policy and conduct towards Russia. If the British people allow their government to act upon this gentleman's advice, they will probably find that they have only come to the end of one war to begin another similar to that in which the nation was involved against the French revolutionists, a war which may be equally discreditable and disastrous.

How far Mr. Urquhart is qualified to give advice may be judged from the fact that so long ago as 12th December, 1917, speaking as chairman of the Irtysh Corporation, Ltd., he declared: "The Bolsheviks are on the point of collapse; Russia is rising again; the country is coming back to common sense, and the sufferings of the deluded masses this winter will finally complete their downfall, and that of all other extremist elements, to my mind this is certain and bound to take place very soon." That was eleven months ago. The Bolsheviks were on the point of collapse. And now, on 7th November, 1918, the Bolsheviks are apparently so far from being on the point of collapse that Mr. Urquhart thinks it necessary to advise the Allies almost in so many words to declare war against the Bolsheviks. His summing up of the situation means, in his own words, "openly arraying ourselves against the Bolsheviks and treating them for what they were, the exponents of a creed fatal to all we had ever known as civilization. This again implied armed force, a great Allied effort from the Murman coast, from

Siberia, and through the Dardanelles"; and further, "a force overwhelming relatively to any possible operation that the Bolsheviks or Germans could offer could be sent by the Allies to the south of Russia and to the Caucasus." A nice little missionary programme which the happy people who have been rejoicing over the coming of peace will do well to ponder over, and which, taken in conjunction with Mr. Churchill's naive suggestion that it may be necessary for the British forces to police Europe, opens up quite an exciting prospect for the democracy of this country. In a word, it means war. While the peace bells are ringing! War to suppress revolution. It is Pitt and Castlereagh's policy over again, a policy which had its reflex at home in the violent suppressions of every kind of civil liberty. And this is the cool proposal of Mr. Leslie Urquhart, who is so little capable judging of the nature of the forces at work in Russia that he thought the Bolsheviks were on the point of collapse eleven months ago.

To his audience in Glasgow last week Mr. Urquhart presented an alarming and lurid picture of Russia under the Bolshevik. Well, I suppose no one imagines that Russia is at present an earthly paradise. It has too recently emerged from bloody war, and from even bloodier Czarism, for that. For that matter Great Britain itself is not a superlatively comfortable country to live in. No country is under Capitalism. It is all a matter of comparison. With what are we to compare Russia's present state? With the conditions under the Romanoffs? or with its problematical condition after the Irtysh Corporation and its like have begun fully to exploit its resources for the advantage of foreign dividend hunters? And if the Russian people are minded to try to establish Socialism without passing through all the stages of the Capitalistic purga-

tory, what right have we to interfere? We, who have the memory of the child labour and the sweating system, and who still live in Capitalism's slums. I hold no brief for Bolshevism. I think that probably it would not be a suitable kind of government for this country—though a continuance of parliamentarism such as we have had during the last four years may compel us all to remodel our conceptions of the science of government—but I agree with Mr. Asquith that it is not our business to prescribe to other countries their form of government. I think that applies to Russia, even though it may be true as Mr. Urquhart says, that "Russia and Siberia open a field for commercial and industrial development greater than any other country in the world." For that very reason I would leave Russia to the Russians. Under Socialism they will develop their country in their own good time and for other purposes than the enrichment of people who have not the slightest intention of either working or living in Russia, and for whose interests I do not think it is the duty of this country to go to war or to maintain armed expeditions. Now that the war with Kaiserdom has ended, now that the German people have agreed to the wishes of our rulers and have established a democratic form of government, I think we are entitled to a long, long period of peace. And I suggest that the first duty of British democracy should be to demand the withdrawal of British troops from Russia. If the Irtysh Corporation want a war, let them raise their own troops. A shareholders' battalion would make a good beginning, with Urquhart as Colonel—or Drum Major perhaps. The armament shareholders of all countries might be invited to join up. A proper cosmopolitan hell-fire legion for the maintenance of permanent and universal anarchy."—From The Forward, Glasgow, Nov. 16.

## One-Big-Union Wins New Victory

VICTORIAN LABOR CONGRESS UNEXPECTEDLY INDORSES THE PLAN FOR ALL AUSTRALIA—ACTION IS THE RESULT OF TACTICAL MANEUVER.

Christian Science Monitor, Dec. 18.

Melbourne, Vic.—Having secured at the Congress of Victorian unions held to deal with the proposals for closer unionism, a victory as overwhelming as it was unexpected, the advocates of "One-Big-Union" for Australian labor unions are pushing forward with the formation of the new organization, which they claim will end in the establishment of the industrial cooperative commonwealth. As has been pointed out in The Christian Science Monitor, the One-Big-Union advocates had already carried the adoption of the scheme at a conference of New South Wales unions but looked for the Victorian congress to decline sanction to the proposal which would have the effect of postponing it indefinitely. The One-Big-Union advocates were at work for months past among the Victorian unions, spreading their propaganda, but even when the congress was assembled it looked as though the numbers were against them. An astute move by Mr. B. Mulvogue, leader of the One-Big-Unionists, however, led to victory.

Two schemes were officially before the congress—one providing for the linking up of Victorian unions into federation, this being the proposal of the moderates; and the other for One-Big-Union for Victoria, the proposal of the militants. The unions had already taken ballots in regard to these schemes and had instructed their delegates accordingly. Realizing that many of the delegates, while personally favoring One-Big-Union, would be compelled by instructions

to vote for the federation scheme, Mr. Mulvogue dropped his own scheme of One-Big-Union for Victoria and moved that the congress affirm the necessity of forming One-Big-Union for all Australia. As this proposal had never been discussed by the unions, delegates claimed a free hand and after forceful debate the resolution was agreed to on division by 111 votes to 34.

A remarkable scene was witnessed when the division took place. Seated upon the minority side of the Chamber were the representatives of the old form of craft union, many of which organizations are controlled from Great Britain—realizing as they saw the benches opposite filling with the representatives of such unions as the Building Trades, Australian Workers Union, Railway Workers and others, that unionism, as they had understood it, seemed vanishing in Australia. Triumphant cheering and singing "Solidarity Forever" (an I. W. W. song), were the men who assert that the mission of unionism is to abolish the capitalistic system and that this can be achieved by "repeated assaults on the citadels of capitalisms."

The galleries were packed with members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party and there was a sprinkling of men at one time familiar on I.W.W. platforms, who hailed the result of the vote with enthusiasm. A peculiar feature of the division was the fact that the Australian Workers Union delegates voted solidly in favor of One-Big-Union, though in reality their organization views the proposal rather indifferently. Its leaders point out that they already have the machinery for One-Big-Union without creating more. Moreover, as the organization has advocated One-Big-Union it cannot consistently oppose and it will, therefore, fall into line with the new organization. This is another point won for the One-Big-Union men, as the Australian Workers Union is the most powerful in Australian unionism.

Although the One-Big-Union men have secured an

initial triumph, the decision of the conference has yet to be debated by the unions individually, and from some organizations, such as the painters and plumbers, the One-Big-Union proposal is already encountering hostility. However, as the One-Big-Union has now gathered beneath its banner a majority of the unions in the two most important states and has secured the support of the Australian Workers Union and the transport unions, the claim of its advocates that when the organization is put into working form it will be powerful enough to compel the smaller unions to come in willy-nilly, seems well founded.

WHAT WE MUST DO.  
PARAPHRASED WITH APOLOGIES TO THE "NATION."

We are told that this was a war for democracy: very well, by its fruits we shall know it. It is for us to trace and note how near the democrats come to their professions. We were told that this was a people's war: very well, from now on it is for us to note the results, good or ill, which accrue to the people. We are told above all, that it was a war for liberty; very well, it is for us to note the precise outcome of political, economic and social liberty under it.

We are told, finally, that this war was not due to conflict of economic interests. We have been sternly forbidden to view that it was in any sense a banker's or capitalists' war. Very well, it is now our function to point out from time to time the marks that differentiate its practical outcome.

Having fought a war for democracy we shall now find out whether it is worth the enormous sacrifice. This having been a people's war we shall see how much the people will benefit by it. This war for liberty having been won by the people for democracy, we now start, or should do so, on a new era.

Our shackles and chains of pre 1914 will now drop from us—?