

# WESTERN CLARION

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## Russia and the Powers

IN looking over the world events as they stand to date one can properly say that the first act in the drama of putting down the Bolsheviki is ended. It has ended with disastrous failure for the counter-revolutionary forces. Kolchak has quit, Denikine has been defeated and Yudenitch's forces have been exhausted, while the red army has driven its enemies before it on all fronts. In Russia, itself, the people have answered the call to keep the armies of the counter-revolutionists back, and given their support to the Soviet in its endeavor to organize industry and commerce. This has had the result that the Bolsheviki are more firmly in control of Russian affairs than they ever were.

The disastrous defeat of the armies hostile to the Bolsheviki has created a feeling of deep disappointment among the governments of Western Europe and America. The latter, as we know, had gone to a great deal of expense to help the counter-revolutionists. Indeed, for the last two years they have been expending much of their energy and resources in helping on the drive against the hated Bolsheviki. This scene has really occupied the center of the stage of world events for the last two years. The outcome of this conflict has overshadowed the issue at stake in the Great War. It might seem as if the Allies hastened to end the war so that they could give more attention to the Russians. To the Entente the victory of the Bolshevists was a greater terror than Prussian militarism; and the danger in the success of a working man's republic was greater than the existence of a capitalistic Germany, as a competitor in the scramble for world markets and spheres of influence.

It is thus with a great deal of chagrin that the capitalist nations see the curtain fall, for they had hoped by means of armies operating from the north and the east, and the south and the west, to build up a wall around Russia shutting it off from all communication with the outside, and locking up the wild-eyed, red-haired Bolshevik in the bleak plains of interior Russia, like a fox in a cage. But this deeply laid counter-revolutionistic scheme failed partly on account of the vigorous energy with which the Russians rose to defend the Revolution, and partly by the resistance given to the scheme by the war-weary proletariat of the capitalist nations concerned. This proletariat had learned from their experience in the war that the trench is not a place where the private meets honor and glory, but an inviting grave, and that capitalistic wars are carried on, not to solve the great problems of poverty and wealth, but to enrich the armament manufacturers and the profiteers, and to give more power and more influence to those capitalistic groups which carry off the victory. Thus, this proletariat was disposed to recognize a certain community of interests with the Russian working class, and, as enlightenment about Russian affairs grew, instead of passively abetting the imperialist schemes of its governments, it put down its foot and demanded the recall of the armies sent against Russia. So as things stand now the capitalist powers are not only chagrined over the victory of the Bolsheviki but they are deeply aggrieved at the "Bolshevistic" proclivities of their own proletariat.

But as the end of the first act never ends a play, so the capitalist powers have not given up in despair their attempt to quell the Russian Revolution. What definite steps will be taken to this end is not known yet. It will most likely be thrashed out at the first congress of the League of Capitalists which is soon to meet. What the august and sedate keepers of the destiny of nations will decide as a means to settle this problem seems to be in the nature of keeping

on building a fence around the Russians so as to effect, if nothing else, the prevention of the spread of Bolshevism, just as if the principles of Bolshevism and the spirit, which pervades and animates the Bolshevists, were a heavy gas that trailed along the ground and whose spread could be checked by the fire of machine guns.

This tactic, though it may seem puerile, is, under the circumstances the most favorable for the Powers to adopt. Their intention seems to be to erect a long line of subservient states from Finland through Dantzic to Odessa. The first section of this fence was built a few weeks ago when the Supreme Council gave Galicia to Poland for twenty years. The support of Roumania to this scheme is hoped for, if by no other means, than by giving her a title to Bessarabia. But the connivance of the Finnish Government seems to be a trifle uncertain, as this government has of late sounded a conciliatory note towards all Radicals. At all events, the Powers intend to mature a plan whereby the Finnish, Polish and Roumanian soldiers will stand as the guardians of western civilization, as it is called.

As for the eastern front it was expected that Japan would guard this gateway to the civilized world. But a recent anti-intervention feeling seems to have spread in Japan of late, so that the Japanese Government promises nothing definite. Besides, the Koreans have risen in rebellion so that Japan will probably have enough on her hands to keep her own subjects quiet.

In fact, the hands of the governments of all the capitalistic powers are tied by this very state of affairs. There is not one government in any of the countries, in which capitalistic industry has developed to the extent of creating an international psychology among the proletariat, that could send an army against Russia, no matter how much it would like to. That is the deplorable situation in which capitalist governments find themselves. It is for this reason they have to make use of soldiers from industrially backward countries, because the people of these countries are fettered by the nationalistic ideal, by virtue of which they link their personal fortunes with that of their national government, and narrow their sympathies to the confines of their own national state. This is, in truth, the only kind of army the capitalist governments can use, because it is made up of the only kind of men they can trust.

With such a feeble line of defense, though it is strengthened by a few battleships in some of the principal ports, it is hardly conceivable that the economic blockade against Russia can be maintained. For in spite of the power certain large financial interests which are firmly opposed to lifting the blockade may wield on credit markets, industrial concerns and transportation systems, this blockade has to be backed up by a considerable strength of armed force, which these interested parties cannot supply. On the other hand every one of the countries that are now denying Russia access to the markets of the world, have huge war debts which can only be liquidated according to their own exports by having exports exceed imports. At the present moment Russia offers greater opportunities for this trade than any other country on the Euro-Asian continent. For, above all things, it can pay for what it purchases, and does not need to go begging for credits. As one writer has it, "It has £25,000,000 in gold that it will release for foreign trade." It has tons of wheat for export, besides hides, hemp, timber and flax. It is just on such a market that the war-debt-loaded peoples of the Victorious Allies have to sell their products. The possibility which this trade offers is a tempting bait no trader can resist; it is

an opportunity for developing industry no government dare let slip. In other words, those governments which so haughtily erected the economic barrier against Russia, in order to put down the Bolsheviki, must now remove it so as not to be put down themselves.

But with the removal of the economic blockade the Big Five will have to recognise the Soviet government and make terms with it—just the thing which it galls them to do and which they would never have done had their military plans succeeded. However, because the capitalist governments seek peace with the Soviets does not mean that they love the Bolsheviki any the more or that they will stop working for their overthrow any the less. It simply means that they are compelled to change their methods of combat. They will use methods wherein the co-operation of the proletariat is not so open and conspicuous as it was in the military adventures. The fight will be concealed and the action more subtle.

This situation affords the setting at the beginning of the second act. The first act closed with an overwhelming victory for the working-class. The capitalists were decidedly defeated, though they were not annihilated. But this victory has shown how absolutely powerless capitalists are when they have to stand on their own strength alone, and on the other hand, how mighty the working-class are when they combine their strength. Indeed this is the first real great victory of the international proletariat.

C. M. C.

### War Versus Revolution

Eight hundred and fifty-one thousand one hundred and seventeen men of the British Empire were killed in the late capitalist war, 2,067,442 were wounded; 8,000,000 fought. Yet when we speak of overthrowing the capitalist system people say they fear a "bloody revolution."

### Clarion Maintenance Fund

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| W. Y. Welling .....           | \$ 2.00 |
| W. ....                       | 1.00    |
| Ex-Warrior .....              | 10.00   |
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| G. Darts .....                | 1.00    |
| C. E. Scharff .....           | 2.00    |
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11 February Total .....\$21.20

### Here and Now

W. Y. Welling, \$3; J. A. McD, \$4.50; W. Bennett, \$26; T. Robley, \$1; D. Stewart, \$1; J. Boychuk, \$1; S. T. J. Knight, \$3; J. J. Egge, \$3; A. E. Faulkner, \$3; J. Moon, \$4; Wm. Craig, \$2; J. Hutton, \$2.50; R. Sinclair, \$10.50; Wm. Moriarty, \$1; W. Healy, \$1; Mrs. Griffiths, \$1; C. E. Scharff, \$2.

The above list includes subscriptions sent since last issue, 2nd February. This list closed 11th February.