

A Message From Litvinoff

Ambassador to Great Britain From the Russian People's Government.

To the Workers of Great Britain. Comrades,—The Russian People's and Peasants' Government has done me the honor of choosing me as its representative in this country and has entrusted me, in this critical moment of history with the task of interpreting the desires and aspirations of Russian Revolutionary Democracy, and of keeping it informed of those of British Democracy.

To this end I consider it my first duty to put before you the real truth about the Revolution, particularly in its bearing upon the War.

Millions of men have been calmly doomed to death, whole countries to devastation, generations of workers, all the world over, to privation, and at last, one may hope, the masses are going to profit by their bitter lessons. Bled to death, bereft of millions of its sons, brought to the very verge of starvation and utter misery, but enlightened by years of Socialist propaganda and inured to revolution by former struggles, the proletariat of Russia suddenly arose and with one stroke freed itself of its bonds, and with the battle-cries: Peace! Bread! Land! Liberty! overthrew its rulers and oppressors. Here I should like to point out that the motto of the February revolution was Peace! and not Continuance of the War! as some people in this country would like you to think. It was, of course, the secret desire of the middle-class parties, involved in the revolution, but doing their best to distort its character, to continue the War. But it was not their revolution, it was the revolution of the working man and the peasant, in mufti and in uniform. For ten months the working men have been the guardians of the revolution, by the wide-spread network of their Soviets (Councils of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates) holding the real power in their hands, permeating the revolution with the social ideas of their class. Unfortunately, at first, some of their leaders were so ill-advised as to share the power with these middle-class politicians, who did everything they could to obstruct and arrest the further development of the revolution, to prevent the masses from realizing their political and social aims and to force them to remain still involved in the War. Ostensibly standing for peace, these politicians actually thwarted the peace movement by proceeding with the arrangements of secret diplomacy. They appealed to the proletariat of the Central Powers, but the obvious duplicity of their policy weakened their appeals, which met with little response, while at home their irresolute and wavering handling of the land question and other problems of the revolution caused disaffection and disillusion among the masses and fed the counter-revolution and reaction. Alive to the dangers of the prolongation of the War and of counter-revolution, the workmen and soldiers of Petrograd, Moscow, and other towns, found themselves compelled to break finally with the middle-classes and to restore full power to the Soviets. And so the second revolution, the true proletarian revolution of November, was brought about and a mighty class-war began in Russia, which is now going on. This second outbreak showed the capitalists and their lower-middle-class helpers a vision of its far-reaching possibilities and now it is that they would move heaven and earth, if they could, to crush the victorious Russian proletariat. No means are too low for them to employ. They shrink from nothing, not even from the com-

plete disorganization of the economic life of the country, not caring how much they add to the troubles already heaped on the people by four years of war.

In the teeth of this bitter struggle the working men of Russia are creating new forms of State organization, carrying on social reconstruction on a tremendous and lofty scale, providing homes for the homeless, introducing an 8-hour working-day, giving land to the peasant, taking control over industry, nationalizing the banks and insurance companies, rebuilding the social structure in every direction. To reveal to the world the Imperialistic nature of this war, the Secret Treaties have been published and decisive steps have been taken to bring about a general, just, democratic peace. The Soviets are forcing the Governments of all the belligerent countries to state clearly their war-aims, thus opening the way for peace negotiations. By giving complete freedom to all the small nationalities of the Russian Empire they prove the unselfishness and sincerity of their treatment of the national or no-annexation question. Their revolutionary propaganda among the German soldiers on the Western front and among prisoners of war is undermining the strength of German autocracy and militarism more effectively than military victories could, and has already provoked a strong peace movement in Germany and Austria. But these endeavors meet with opposition not only from capitalists in Russia, but from capitalists all the world over. The Russian Revolution, with its dash and vigor, has become the focus of the hatred of International capitalism, and now the prolongation of the war, in addition to its former Imperialistic aims, has another aim—to crush the Soviets and the revolution. And so the Russian workers are not only fighting their own battles, they are fighting your battles, too, and they will succumb, unless the workers in other countries come speedily to their help.

Realize this! The further prolongation of the war must lead to the defeat of the Russian Revolution and to the triumph of militarism and reaction everywhere. An immediate, just, democratic peace on the principle of "No annexation, no indemnities," and the right of self-definition to all nationalities will spell the downfall of militarism in all countries. This peace can be achieved, if only Labor will speak in full voice and act with all its might. Workers of Britain—Peace is in the balance! The Russian workers appeal to you to join them in their efforts to turn the scale. Labor—speak!

CO-OPERATIVE IDEAS.

"It is high time co-operative societies were realizing that the circulation of co-operative ideas is as important as the distribution of co-operative productions, and that the most effective medium for circulating co-operative ideas in this part of the globe is the "Scottish Co-operator." The aim of each society ought to be a copy of the paper for every co-operator, and we should not be content until this ideal is realized. It is only when the co-operators become conscious of co-operative idealism that they will attempt to emancipate themselves from profiteering, and the society which does not encourage the reading of co-operative literature is compromising with capitalism. Ideas are the fuel of progress."

While the statesmen of the opposed countries make "tactical" speeches against one another, heavy casualty lists continue to bring fresh burdens of anguish and bitterness to their populations. While the rulers man-

oeuvre for position, the number of the dead mounts. Four millions, five millions, six millions, seven millions. . . If those in power cannot feel the war to be a crime, when will they at least recognize it to be a folly?

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