

torship for the workers over the capitalists, the usurers, the former landowners and other lovely products of the old bourgeois regime, that it is the most radical, the most revolutionary of all the existing groups and parties. "Through the inexorably firm government of the Workers, to Communism" is the watchword of our party. And the program of our party is the program of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

## The Strike and the Class Struggle

(No. 2)

Some of our "wild and infuriate" friends, by taking a clause out of the third paragraph under the above heading in issue Vol. 1, No. 15 of the "Soviet" and considering it out of connection with the rest of the sentence and the whole paragraph, have sought to make it appear that we were knocking strikes. The whole article conclusively shows the contrary. It is stated that strikes like the last one stir the mental activity and develop the solidarity of the working class for the completion of the work we have on hand. Neither is the conclusion drawn therefrom correct that we expect anything more from parliamentarianism than from strikes. Neither form of activity is of value, except as similarly they develop class intelligence and consciousness of strength. One very clear proof of this is the fact that as soon as we force higher wages and better conditions, the master class force up still faster the cost of living.

The meagre result of such working class effort are inseparable from a system of unionism that has been outgrown by the economic development, and which, therefore, has to a large extent become reactionary, not to say positively vicious. Two phases of the old unionism must be given special emphasis:

- 1st. The denial of the fundamental fact of the class struggle.
- 2nd. The power possessed by long range and undemocratic executives.

The first vitiates much union activity by obscuring both the issue and the road along which, to harmonize with the evolutionary process, we must travel. It blinds us to plain facts and paralyzes all efforts to obtain real security. The latter becomes especially glaring in its inefficiency when the methods followed by the old unionism of North America are compared with other methods in other countries where only there has been any real and adequate progress.

Let us look at Russia. Just now we know that Russia is a risky problem. Outside of the few who keep thoroughly informed on what is there going on, there is little real knowledge either of the present situation or the past course of events. For this we can thank not only the "kept press", but the hostility of slimy conventional labor official organs.

"Ten Days That Shook the World" by John Reed, has been an eye opener to every working man who has read it. It is very nearly two and a half years since the czarist regime collapsed, and more than a year and a half since the capitalist "shack" being reared by Kerensky, came tumbling about the ears of its silly and incompetent devotees.

"Brest-Litvosk," forced upon the soviet administration the chaos inherited from Kerensky and the hostility of our capitalist governments, failed to crush them or benefit their enemies; and allied hostility, the decimation of Finland and Siberia by the White Guards and other proteges of the allied governments, and the blockade of Russian ports, have prevented them from extending their control over the outlying and thinly settled provinces, and tho these things have produced great hardships by cutting off access to all markets, Russia proper is more united, and on the whole, is in a stronger position than at any time in modern years.

Rebels in arms and plotters against the government have suffered; but loyal Russians and sojourners who are not plotters of reaction find themselves in greater security under Soviet control than at any time in the days of autocratic peace.

The one thing in this recent Russian history that impresses the working class student more than any other has been the universal and awful "fall down" of the professional union leaders. The urge to the November revolution came from the bottom—from the working class membership. Everywhere it was bitterly opposed by the officials. The mass moved not at the urge of their union "leaders"—but in opposition to them. The first revolution got nowhere because it was betrayed by its leaders to the bourgeoisie and, except in words,

the capitalist class in Russia, as it is fast proving everywhere else, was bankrupt. Kerensky was its chief fakir more than anybody else.

One after another, before the workers' organizations could get anywhere they had to repudiate their malingering executives and put new men whose souls were in revolution, and who were subject to recall on short notice, in charge of affairs. The old executives not only balked, in some cases they tried to resist the will of the majority by force—and for a time had to be imprisoned.

The most reactionary were the officials of the better paid trades—those whose organizations most resembled our inelastic A. F. of L. When the Soviets of Petrograd would send aid to their comrades in Moscow, to man the trains they had to call for volunteers from the running trades who would defy the interdiction of their Executives. Volunteers had also to be called to operate the telephonic and telegraphic communications about Petrograd and with the military front operating against Kerensky's impotent advance.

Whenever the appeal of the revolution, however, reached the rank and file, even the members of these unions proved loyal to the revolution, and their sullen, reactionary officials, reduced to the ranks, with unwilling feet followed where they had not the courage to lead.

To the last these reactionaries pinned their faith on the peasants Soviets. Vain hope. Of all the industrial elements in Russia the peasants had been most betrayed by the faint hearted bourgeois reformers. Because of the wide extent of Russia the All Russian Peasant Soviet was the last to be assembled. And here it was that Lenin and Trotsky scored their greatest triumph. The last hope of reaction faded away before the insistent demands of the peasants for the immediate possession of the land, the little farms and homes in which for so many years they and their ancestors had been the exploited slaves of a merciless master class.

Has not all this a moral for the working class of other lands?

The leaders of the old form of unionism, represented in North America by the A. F. of L., are utterly middle class in mentality. Now the very "sanity" of these fellows so loudly praised by the valets of the master class, is the one thing above all others that will make violence so difficult to avoid. The new order might come in peaceably were it not for the utter befogment to the middle class and mediocre minds.

Cosmic forces wait for no man, much less the mentally befuddled labor leaders and citizen committees. With a working class, intelligent and conscious of its position, reactionary officials are powerless. Without such a working class the falling of the old system will find us unready and either the opportunity will pass only partially utilized or it will result in defeat and necessitate long years of preparation to recover the lost ground. If we pin our faith to other than working class intelligence and class conscious will, long and dreary will be the road to emancipation.

## Yesterday and Today

Yesterday was the day of the Great Falsehood—the last day of its power.

For ages, man has spider-like, thread by thread, diligently woven the strong cobweb of a cautious philistine life, impregnating it more and more with falsehood and greed. Man has to feed on the flesh and blood of his fellow men and the means of production, the weapons in the struggle with nature, are merely a means to oppress men,—this cynical falsehood was looked upon as immutable truth.

And yesterday this road brought mankind to the madness of the all-European war. The red glow of this nightmare threw a light on all the ugly nakedness of the ancient entrenched falsehood, and now we see the old world shaken to its foundations, shattered to pieces; its obscure secrets exposed, and today even those who were blind have opened their eyes and see the utter ugliness of the past.

Today is the day of reckoning for the falsehood which reigned yesterday.

The violent explosion of the people's patience has destroyed the outworn order of life, and it cannot again be re-established in its old forms. Not all of the outworn past is annihilated, but it will be—tomorrow.

Today there is a great deal of horror, but it is all natural and comprehensible. Is it not natural that people infected by the strong poisons of the old order—alcohol and syphilis—should not be generous? Is it not natural for people to steal,—if theft was the fundamental law of yesterday? Is it not natural, that tens, hundreds, thousands of men should be killed, after we had been accustomed for four years to kill them by the millions? The seed of yesterday brings fruit today; the present day is brutal, but its brutality is not the offspring of today. Malice is created by the power of men; everything comes into existence through men. Among the ruins of the past is clearly visible every force that held it together, and everything that