

THE CANADIAN FORWARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

Correspondence—

All correspondence should be addressed to

THE CANADIAN FORWARD,

397 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Canada.



SOLDIERS BREAK LOOSE IN TORONTO.

Pandemonium, Sabotage, Mob Rule, these are some of the terms most frequently heard in these strenuous time in Toronto the good. The cause of all the commotion is attributed by — Tomie Church the mayor — and the "Daily Mail" to the effect of Socialist agitation. It might be advisable to advise these fool scribes, that the tactics of direct action as applied to the soldiers is a natural corollary to the capitalist method of settling disputes as exemplified by the European War, in the practice at which the returned soldiers are past masters. It is not remarkable that this imputation should be laid at the door of the Socialists, as we have so often stated that we are responsible "even" for Sun-spots.

From this course of reasoning we are responsible for organizing the soldiers in order to break up our meetings some two years ago in the city of Toronto, Guelph, and Winnipeg, and didn't the capitalist press go into hysterical eulogies over these acts of violence. — Just so long as the soldiers restricted their actions to supporting the designing political reactionaries who were using them for their own nefarious purposes it was a patriotic duty. —

Now that the boot is on the other foot they howl about the sacredness of property etc. etc. Well, so far as we are concerned they can stew in their own fat. They are responsible for the outbreak in giving moral sanction to the principle of direct action in the first place. The plea of the "Alien Enemy" wont work in this instance as the premises attacked are the property of Allied subjects—being Greeks, it is therefore quite natural that in order to cloak their own misdeeds that the responsibility should be laid upon the wicked Socialists.

The Soldiers are getting pretty well used to this lying camouflage and will sooner or later realize that their interests are directly in alliance with those who compose the rank and file of our movement.

SUPPORT WORKING CLASS CANDIDATES.

Our movement has always sought to achieve its object by peaceable means. It is a record of congress proceedings that wherever there is a constitutional means at the disposal of the workers to accomplish their desires, that constitutional means should be applied. We do not hold ourselves responsible for every hooligan outrage committed by the workers, whether they are uniformed or otherwise. Our movement has provided an exemplary character during the course of the war—no charges of rioting or destruction of property having been laid against any of our members during the past four years. The worst for which we have been charged has been expression of opinions which did not coincide with the views of the Political and Judi-

cial administration of the country. If the returned soldiers will take our advice, we would suggest that the election of "Will Varley" to the provincial legislature would do more to remove the injustices from which they suffer than any number of violent acts they might choose to engage in. To strike terror to the heart of the ruling class, shear them of their power — to Rob, Exploit, and Fool the working class. However, there will be a nice bill for the city to pay — and the worst is yet to come.

SOCIALIST POLICY.

To the Editor, the Canadian Forward Comrade,

I should like to offer a few considerations on the questions which are suggested by Eugene Debs' article, "Socialists must change war policy", printed in the issue of the "Forward" from July 10th. I should like, particularly, to make a more judicial view of the position than that expressed in the article just alluded to.

It is easy enough to point to shortcomings in the behaviour of the German Socialist Party. But would it not be easy to do the same in the cases of the French and the English sections of the International? The German and the Austrian sections of the International have not cut heroic figures during the war. But can it be said that the French and the English sections have done so? In all these countries the majority section of the International entered into a **union sacre** with its ruling class and in all cases similar consequences have flowed from the union.

Not much good, I feel, will come from indulging in the luxury of denunciation and positive harm will be done if the denunciation is directed only to the behaviour of "enemy" Socialists. To confine denunciation to enemy Socialists is almost inevitably to play into the hands of reaction and imperialism at home. Much better is it, I feel, to try to educate some spirit of reasonableness and degree of understanding through which the International can be reconstructed and the war brought to an end.

For to end the war is the one really effective way of helping revolutionary Russia — do not let us lose sight of that. We know that the German Socialists have not saved Russia, and it appears from what information is available that they have not opposed the Russian Peace as vigorously as could have been hoped. But we also know that the French Socialist Party and the English Labor Party, for their part, failed to make any vigorous effort to send their own governments to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations and so bring an end to the war and security of the Russian Revolution. And it may be doubted whether this was not a more shameful failure than the failure of the German Socialists to secure better terms for Russia; for

at least it can be pleaded that the Russian settlement is, on the German Government's own admission (vide von Kuhlman's speech), not final and is open to revision, whereas the Brest opportunity for negotiations on the Russian formula is past and gone and has been followed by fresh sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of lives.

We know that the German and Austrian Socialists have sometimes been shamefully acquiescent in or only weakly opposed to the schemes of their ruling classes. But do we not know the same, to a greater or less extent, of the French Socialists and the English Labor Party? Are these last now offering any effective opposition to the plans for Japanese intervention in Russia to crush the Bolsheviks and restore "order"? Have we any reason for hoping that, if the Entete governments decide to invade Russia and aid counter-revolution, their people will refuse to acquiesce in such action, or that French and English (and, we might add American) soldiers will refuse to participate in it?

The Germans are considered docile and spiritless, but at least there have been strikes and mutinies in Germany and Austria against the continuance of the war. Have there been any corresponding phenomena in France or England? It appears that there were some mutinous outbreaks in the French army last year. In England so far as we know, there have been neither strikes nor mutinies against the war; although, it should be mentioned, there have been some threats of strikes.

Then, again, did the documentary evidence as to the character of the war aims of the Entete which publication of the secret treaties supplied lead to any heroic or even vigorous action on the part of the English and French sections of the International? It should also be recalled that the English and the French have acquiesced in their governments refusing passports for a meeting of the International and more recently in the refusal of the English government to allow Dr. Troelstra to land in England; that time after time they have acquiesced in the rejection by their governments of peace overtures (The Stuttgart resolution specifically proclaims that, should war break out, it shall be the duty of each section of the International to direct its efforts to bringing the war to an end as speedily as possible); that the French Socialists have seen their government vote money to the anti-Bolshevik Ukrainian Rada that there is now a considerable section of declared jingoes in the French parliamentary group; that only three Socialists in the French chamber have generally voted against the war credits, and that in England even the Labor members who are also members of the I.L.P. (a body to whose idealism I pay profound homage) have not voted against the war credits.

I mention all these facts neither to excuse nor to condemn the majority sections of the International in France, Germany, England, and Austria, but rather to suggest that we shall be doing a disservice to the cause of humanity and peace, and thus to the cause of our Russian brothers, if we divert our activities from trying to bring the governments to peace negotiations on a democratic formula to denouncing the failure of any section of the International to live up to our hopes. I mention them in order that we may make a fair estimate of the facts and hence have

that measure of charity and, above all, that degree of understanding, which will enable us, in the first place to assist in making the International a strong force for early peace, and, in the second place, will enable the revived International to arm itself at what the war has shown to be vulnerable points, so as to prevent the peoples ever again being drawn into the sad and tragic circle of war.

Instead of railing at the shortcomings of the majority sections of the International, let us recognise that all these shortcomings are part of the same diabolical process which, once war has been declared, enables the rulers to keep the peoples pitted against one another. Once the people have joined with their rulers in might almost say, once war, no matter how it has arisen, is a fait accompli, and invasion is a possibility—each people finds itself caught in the net of its own fears. (The work of the newspapers is largely to stimulate these fears by displaying the enemy's intentions as sinister and by exciting hate and distrust of him.)

The people of each state is held by the fear that, if, to put an end to the sacrifice of their lives in the hell of war, they were to revolt against their ruling class, the enemy states would merely take advantage of the military weakness which the revolt would almost inevitably produce in their own organisation. It is asked that the German people, say, should revolt against their rulers. But, suppose they did so: can we feel assured that the English or the American people would act similarly and would not allow their rulers to force undesirable terms of peace on Germany? We cannot feel thus assured. And it is the fears which such lack of assurance (itself the result of fears sedulously cultivated by rulers and their press) produce that largely explain the seemingly helpless way in which the bleeding peoples are kept chained to the chariot of war.

Within each nation, too, the effects of a similar diabolical fate can be seen securing "national unity". Is a strike proposed with the object of forcing the rulers to adopt reasonable peace terms? The cry is at once raised that a strike would weaken the military organisation and so assist the enemy state to achieve its sinister designs; and, distrustful of the enemy, the men usually abandon the strike. It is declared that the strike would be treachery to the soldiers in the trenches. And the later, in their distrust of the enemy, would be ready to shoot the strikers; despite the fact that many of them might perhaps feel that their own lives and the lives of millions of their fellow-soldiers would probably be saved if their government could be forced to adopt more reasonable peace terms.

Truly the situation is pathetic. What is wanted to avoid it in the future? Firstly: moral courage; secondly: organization. But I cannot discuss that aspect of the matter at length now.

23 July.

S. Whitby

"You can't tell 'bout a display of authority," said Uncle Eben. "Many a man thinks he's doin' a fine job o' mule-drivin' when the mule is jes' hurryin' to get home." Washington Star.

"Young gabber made quite a long speech at the local last night."
"What was the talking about?"
"He didn't say."