



### THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

#### To Forward Readers!

We have endeavoured during the course of the War to keep the radical movements of this country thoroughly informed with respect to the attitude of our Comrades and brothers in enemy countries, believing that a proper understanding of each others outlook would do much toward cementing those relations which were so abruptly broken off on the declaration of war, and thereby pave the way for the development of the "New International" and the forcing of a Democratic peace. (a peoples peace).

Notwithstanding the obstacles that have been placed in our way by the refusal of passports to Socialist delegates by over zealous imperialists—we are now in possession of the general attitude of Socialists in all belligerent countries.

Stockholm convention could not be held on account of the before mentioned fact. Comrade Troelstra was not permitted to take part in the Labor Party Convention in England. Comrade Henderson was refused passport to Switzerland ostensibly for the same purpose, and Margaret Bondfield was not permitted to visit the United States. The peace proposals embodied in the following declarations are a complete vindication of our suspicion, i. e. That a workers peace is considered by capitalist governments to be a greater menace than a continuation of War. We sincerely hope that the radical movement in this country will not be behind in adding volume to the demand so unitedly expressed in the manifesto of their fellow workers in other countries. Ed.

#### GERMAN MAJORITY.

Scheidemann declared to Troelstra that the German majority has always been in favour of negotiations, not on a basis of the military situation, but on the general principles of a Socialist Congress. The main point remains the constitution of a League of Nations, in order to prevent new economic war, abolish armaments, and make the world safe for democracy. With regard to the concrete points, the German majority does not refuse to recognise the Alsace-Lorraine question, and in the case of Belgium they have declared in favour of complete independence. They are of the opinion that the question of indemnities for the little nations who are unable to restore themselves ought to be settled by a general fund, for an extra day of war is more expensive than the payment by one nation. They are, in other words, willing to adopt as a basis of discussion the proposal of the neutral Socialists formulated at Stockholm under the chairmanship of Branting and Troelstra, and they agree without reserve to the convocation of an International Conference. They agree also that Troelstra, Branting, and Huysmans should arrange to convoke this conference, and accept Berne or any other Swiss town as the place

of meeting. It appears they are ready to discuss the question of the origin of war, though they are of the opinion that this debate will not be conclusive. They reported that the Minority Socialists have announced their views at Stockholm as being favourable to a quick peace, and they do not care much about territorial questions, which, in the case of a general settlement by the creation of a League of Nations, are of secondary importance.

#### GERMAN MINORITY.

The Minority Socialists of Germany have declared anew that they remain true to their declaration of Stockholm.

In these declarations they demand general disarmament, economic freedom, equal rights for all citizens, protection of national minorities, the abolition of secret treaties. They demand, further the restoration of Serbia, liberty of the Polish people, the plebiscite for Alsace-Lorraine, the complete restoration of Belgium, the colonial status quo. In theory, they are in favour of a united Jugo-Slav State, of a united Poland, of a complete change of colonial policy. But they are of opinion that war cannot give us these reforms, and they accept a certain modification of views, not because they do not see the injustice of the status quo ante, but because the main object is to finish, with a clean peace, a bloody world-war.

#### HUNGARY.

The party in favour of the territorial integrity of Hungary, of the complete independence and restoration of Belgium, of an independent Serbia connected with the sea, of an understanding on the Alsace-Lorraine and Macedonian questions, of a united Poland if possible; and for the general questions they agree completely with the Inter-Allied Memorandum.

The Hungarian party declare, moreover, that they never accepted a truce with the Hungarian Government, that they demanded an international gathering from the beginning of the war, and that they never supported either annexations or indemnities.

#### Austrian Socialists' Reply.

The following is a summary of the declaration handed by the Austrian Socialist leaders to comrade Troelstra for transmission to the Allied Socialist and Labour Parties:—

"The attitude of the Austrians is that the war should not be prolonged for any national or territorial demands, not even for demands which are completely justified. Their declaration includes: (1) League of Nations which shall carry out international disarmament, subject all disputes between States to a compulsory arbitration tribunal, and oppose the united force of the whole League of Nations to every State breaking international law; (2) no annexations whatever, the solution of all disputed territorial problems on the basis of

the self-determination of nations; (3) no contributions, equal freedom of economic development for all nations, avoidance of economic war of every description.

"Such a democratic peace (it says) cannot be attained by the victory of one or other of the Imperialistic groups of Powers. The declaration, however, emphasises the necessity for the speediest possible peace, even if it falls short of the demands of international Social Democracy. It asserts that peace by agreement is now possible. It opposes a peace based on victory, which would produce a desire for revenge and strengthen militarism and imperialism. The declaration urges the proletariat to press upon the belligerent countries the necessity for peace, this being the speediest way to obtain it.

"The declaration demands the reshaping of Austria-Hungary in a federation of autonomous nations and also the creation of a federation of free Balkan peoples. It rejects all annexation by the Central Powers of the border nations torn from Russia. It declares that Austrian Socialists will oppose the peace of Brest-Litovsk and Bukarest, both in Parliament and in the Press, and when Parliament discusses these peace treaties they will reject every provision for annexation or oppression. The declaration demands the restoration and indemnification of Belgium, leaving it an open question who shall bear the cost of this indemnification. "In view of the frightful sacrifice in the war, not only of money and property, but especially of life, we reject every prolongation of the war for any financial dispute whatever, and think a compromise must be concluded concerning the share of individual States in the cost of the reconstruction of the devastated small countries."

Finally the declaration asks for an International Socialist Conference in a neutral country.

#### Manifesto of the French General Confederation of Labour.

The French General Confederation of Labour recently sent a delegation to the Left groups of the French Chamber to express the views of their members on the internal and external situation. They have now issued a manifesto or letter to the deputies of the Chamber, of which the following are the principal passages:—

"In the situation now confronting the country the C.G.T. thinks it its duty to speak. By our delegation to the groups of the Left we wished to have removed the false impression that national defence is incompatible for the working class with its rights, its sense of dignity, and its duty of solidarity. . . For four years the working class, like the rest of the nation, has lived in ignorance of the current military and diplomatic events which are bound up with the very existence of the country."

After complaining of the false or misleading nature of the news supplied by the Press, the manifesto says that the C.G.T., feeling the danger of this state of affairs, has several times called on the Government to state publicly its war aims and to declare under what general conditions peace could be signed. But it has always been met with contemptuous silence or by the vaguest declarations.

The formula, 'Our aims are a just and durable peace,' must receive clo-

ser and more precise definition. Such definition has been refused, and at the same time we find annexationist campaigns carried on, and that proposals for peace have been rejected without the knowledge of the nation or even of Parliament." To counteract this, the C.G.T. demanded the right to take part in an international gathering, but it was refused, although other elements in the nation were accorded this right. Thus, in everything, "the demands of the working-class organisations were met with disdain and refusal."

In the meantime the situation became worse and worse. "Would the Governments of our country and of the Entente have weakened their national defence had they responded to the desire of the workers and published their war aims, and had they affirmed before the whole world that the peace treaty must give to all nations—belligerent as well as neutral— independence and security by the abolition of all militarism and all imperialisms and by the establishment of a Society of Nations? We do not think so." On the contrary, such diplomatic action would have been in accord with the desires of the peoples, and would also have had a good effect on the autocratic Governments of the Central Empires. "In combination with the international action of the workers it would also have awakened sympathetic echoes in the peoples of the Central Powers and hastened on the hour of peace. Even had this not been attained, at least the situation would have been cleared up, and the responsibility for the continuation of the war would have been fastened on the right shoulders."

The manifesto then deplores the military mistakes and the silence thereon, and demands that the Government and the Chamber should express their views on the general principles expressed in the resolutions embodying the views of the workers, adopted by the C.G.T. at Clermont-Ferrand and by the Inter-Allied Socialist and Labour Conference in London.

Finally, the manifesto demands:— An exact definition of the aims of the war and the general condition for peace; that no propositions for peace wherever they may come from, shall be dismissed without discussion, and that the entire nation be given the opportunity of watching and controlling the march of events, so that no chance of peace could be missed; that all repressive measures against opinions and free political public life be abolished, and that the liberty of the individual be guaranteed by an impartial application of the laws; that the working-class movement should be allowed full liberty of thought and action in national and international affairs.

We have given a pretty full account of this manifesto, partly because it so well illustrates the condition of affairs in France, and also because it shows the confusion of thought still prevalent in the workers' ranks. For there are still many leaders of the C.G.T. who believe quite ardently and in spite of everything in the "union sacrée." The manifesto, moreover, expresses in the view that nothing but good would have resulted had the Entente Governments made public just and noble war aims. Certainly—but whom are the C.G.T. appealing to? Are the war aims of France, Italy, England, and all the rest noble and just? Do they believe that

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