

Thousands Hear Simpson in Monument Nationale. Montreal

Before an audience of nearly three thousand our comrade Jas. Simpson addressed a meeting held under the auspices of the Social Democratic held in the Monument Nationale on Sunday, Feb. 17th, 1918 on the British Labor War Aims, and there ensued a demonstration with cheering and applause. Below we print the report as it appeared in the Toronto Telegram, Feb. 18, 1918:

Disappearance of Capitalism

"The workers of Britain," he said, "abhor the imperialism of their country as much as all the countries of Europe detest the German junkers. They have adopted an internationalist policy which will exclude no people—not even the Germans."

What the workers wanted was the disappearance of capitalism—German or British. To prevent wars in future it was necessary to democratize all countries, abandon all imperialism, suppress secret diplomacy and place international politics, as well as internal politics, under the control of an international league, supported by public opinion.

The British workers demanded that in the next treaty of peace the Governments agree to a league of nations to prevent war and the establishment of an international supreme court which will decide the difference between nations, and the preparation of an international law for regulating difficulties between nations.

Millionaires the Obstacle.

"What we wish," he declared, "is that militarism cease, that munition factories be abolished, that financiers no longer have capital between themselves to build factories to military propaganda. The great obstacle to the peace of the world has been the millionaires."

"Since we do not wish imperialism," continued Mr. Simpson, "some may think that we want nationalism—No, what we want is internationalism—the accord of all nations."

"There are not many differences between the Bolsheviks and the British workers," he declared. "The press has tried to belittle the Bolshevik Government, but it is well to recognize that the sentiment of the Russian people is at bottom that of the British workingmen."

They were wearied of czarism in Russia. They had enough of capitalism. The workers have torn power from the capitalists which the latter had tried to seize at the revolution. They have dethroned the bourgeoisie for fear of a second French revolution. What the British workers want is just what the Bolsheviks have attained—the nationalization of all the great public institutions—such as the railways and the banks.

"Wisely Overthrew Them."

The speaker said that when the Czar was dethroned in Russia, the bourgeoisie tried to get control of the revolution to bend it to their own ends, but that the Soldiers' and Workmen's Councils seeing the designs of the bourgeoisie, wisely overthrew them, saying that they would not have a repetition of the French revolution. After gaining power they had nationalized the banking institutions of the country. They had told the owners of the factories:

"We will appoint you superintendent at a good salary, but we will take over the factory. You are a good man to work for the community as superintendent. We will see that you do not suffer economically. You will be well fed, well clothed and well housed, and your children will be well educated, but we will take your factory and operate it for the benefit of the people of Russia. The Czar said that the giving up of a man's life was for the common good. We will take the wealth of the nation and use it for the com-

mon good."

Rather Be a Bolshevik.

The land, including the fifty million odd acres of the Czar had been taken over by the Government and each owner allowed to retain .37 acres, quite enough to keep any one man busy all the time. The remainder of the land would be divided among those able and willing to live on it.

"I tell you, I would rather be a member of the Bolshevik Government doing that (great applause) than be a member of the British House of Commons, permitting their lords and earls and dukes to hold on to their big estates (applause), while their people, mothers and daughters are standing in queues, a quarter of a mile long, awaiting to get a quarter-pound of butter a bit of sugar and a little tea."

Won't Stand It Long.

Voice—"How long are they going to stand it, Jimmy?"

"Who?"

Voice—"The British public."

"Not very long, if I understand the working-class mind in the mother country. They recognize their power, but they want to exercise it at the right moment, and in the most effective way they can to bring results."

Sheer Hypocrisy.

Mr. Simpson then dealt with food rationing as it was in England and in other countries, saying that it was sheer hypocrisy for heads of governments, which permitted such situations to arise, to criticize Lenin and Trotzky with 160,000,000 people to govern because order had not been brought out of the chaos in three months. He gave some of his experiences in London restaurants under the present rationing system, and the difficulty he had getting enough to eat in restaurants for the poor, where prices were fixed, whereas he was allowed to get all he wanted in the Savoy Hotel at the high prices charged. The workers of Great Britain were insisting that the rationing should apply to the rich as well as to the poor, if it were to be endured, and the Government was hastening to comply.

Breed Discord.

The speaker repeated that Lenin and Trotzky had done more to breed discord and discontent in Austria and Germany than all the other nations in the world together. If the Bolsheviks could be turned loose and allowed entry into Germany and Austria, it would not be long before there would be in those countries a revolution just as complete as in Russia.

Mr. Simpson traced the change which has taken place in the attitude of the British working class towards the question of an international council of workers to discuss peace. Sixteen months ago, when he had been in Great Britain, there had been a desire for a conference, but the British Labor representatives had angrily refused to meet German representatives at the same table. Since that time they had come to see that if they were fighting German autocracy, their measures should be taken so as to show those desiring democracy in Germany just what they were fighting, and that it was not the annihilation of Germany which was desired. So the British Labor party had stated its war aims, and so compelled the British Government to be more explicit than ever before. Men like Ramsay

MacDonald, once hounded by the Imperialist press, were now in stronger favor than ever.

Seamen Still Bitter.

Only Havelock Wilson of the Seamen's Union, with the personal bitterness because of drowned sailors, which prevented him seeing the question in its larger aspects, stood out against the last decision of the workers to have the conference. It should be remembered that many German Socialists condemned their own country for starting the war, but, no matter who was responsible, the Imperialistic ambitions and capitalist designs in all countries had been the foundation and cause of it. Imperialism and militarism were then analyzed practically synonymous terms, and to get a lasting peace it must be insisted on that there should be a complete democratization of every nation involved in the great international struggle.

Stood For Many Things.

The British Labor movement stood for the entire abolition of the policy of secret diplomacy and of

the idea of imperialism as a motive in foreign policy; for the reduction of armaments and international arrangement that armaments shall never more be under private ownership; for a league of nations to keep the peace, and to determine the economic conditions and standards of various countries, so that the whole world would stand equal in that respect; an international high court to decide on points of disagreement; an international legislature composed of representatives of every country of the world for the policy of self-determination, to decide whether Alsace-Lorraine, the German colonies taken, Poland and other parts of the earth shall go in with one country or another, or be independent; for the restoration of Belgium as a sovereign power; for the investigation by a special commission of military offences during the war, the leaving of nations for countries not yet ready for self-government under the international legislature until they are ready, and for Palestine for the Jews.

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finite co-operation in the future. The "Stand Patter" sees the uselessness of his position as he faces the powerful financial and industrial corporations, which not only endeavor to determine the wages of the workers, but are also in a position to control the prices of the commodities the workers buy, so that what is given with the right hand is taken away with the left, and the worker discovers that he is making progress backwards. The "Moderate" finds that while it is refreshing to anticipate some concessions from those who control his destiny, these concessions are rendered valueless in many instances because the workers have not the political representation to make legislation effective. The "Revolutionist" finds that organization is essential to the realization of his hopes, and to develop an organization requires the adoption of more than one course. He therefore, surrenders to the view that while the end he has in view is desirable, the means to that end may be by various methods of education, either purely academic or of a practical nature, such as demonstrating that even with a partial exercise of working class power concessions before unrealizable can be obtained.

Conference of All Radicals Desirable.

The responsibility for calling a convention of the Trades Unionists and Socialists in Ontario has been assumed by the Ontario Executive Committee of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, and as a result of a conference held the latter part of October, 1917, it was decided that owing to the nearness of the Federal elections it would be advisable to defer definite action in the effort to organize a Provincial Independent Labor Party until after the elections were over. It is now two months since the Federal elections and a second provincial conference of Trades Unionists, members of the Ontario Labor Party, and Socialists will undoubtedly be called soon. What is going to be the position of the Social Democratic Party when such a conference is called? If any official declaration is going to be made in behalf of the Social Democrats it will be necessary to have a conference of the representatives of the different local branches of the Party in Ontario. This should be called at as early a date as possible unless the various local branches wish to delegate their powers to the Dominion Executive Committee. If the policy to be adopted is to have Dominion-wide application where provincial action is being taken to organize Independent Labor Parties, it would seem necessary that a Dominion convention should be called. If this is impossible it would seem only proper that the Dominion Executive Committee should meet and make a recommendation to be submitted to a referendum vote so that members of the party attending the conferences to organize the Independent Labor Party would be in the position to speak with authority and not merely as individuals. Unless one or the other of these suggested courses is taken it is just possible that members of the Social Democratic Party will feel quite free to act on their own initiative, and, if in their judgment it is to the best interests of the working class political movement that they should co-operate in an organized way with the Trades Unionists and members of the Labor Party through the newly organized Independent Labor Party, very little fault can be found with their action. It is exceedingly important that this important matter should be thoroughly discussed by the members of the Social Democratic Party and that the best course should be taken in the promotion of a stronger working class political organization. The following propositions should be considered:

The Major Propositions:

- (1) Should the Social Democratic Party lose its identity entirely and become merged into the Independent Labor Party?
- (2) Should the Social Democratic Party retain its identity with a view to keeping the Socialist objective ever before the members of the Independent Labor Party and carrying on distinctive Socialist propaganda meetings?
- (3) Should the Social Democratic Party affiliate with the Labor Party on the same lines as the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain is affiliated with the British Labor Party, and accept the decision to have its members run as Labor candidates, and carry on its educational work as locals of the S.D.P.?

A clear discussion of these three propositions will give some idea as to what the Comrades think on the proposal to unite the Trades Unionists and Socialists, with other working class groups, for effective political action. If the example of British Columbia is followed, proposition No. 1 will be the course to follow. Proposition No. 2 does not permit of any co-operation with other parties at all. Proposition No. 3 has been proved satisfactory in Great Britain and could be made a practical proposition in Canada. To remove any possibility of differentiation in the different provinces, proposition No. 1 is the only policy to adopt in view of the action in British Columbia, Manitoba and Quebec, and likely to be taken in Alberta soon.