

THE SOVIET

Devoted to the Interests of the Working Class

VOL. 1 NO. 9

EDMONTON, ALTA., APRIL 24, 1919

BUSINESS MANAGER, BOX 1682

The Peace That Passeth Understanding

A FANTASY BY JOHN REED

Scene: The Salon de l'Horloge in the Palais d'Orsay, Paris—meeting-place of the Peace Conference. At back a heavily-ornate mantel of white marble, surmounted by a Clock, above which rises the marble statue of a woman holding a torch; by some called "Victory," by others "Liberty," "Enlightenment," "Prohibition," etc. The Clock is fifty years slow.

The dialogue is carried on by each Delegate in his native tongue—but this presents no difficulties, as all understand one another perfectly.

During the action of the play incidental music may be provided, consisting of patriotic airs played softly.

Discovered: Seated at the Peace Table, President Wilson, Premiers Clemenceau, Lloyd-George and Orlando, and Baron Makino, the Japanese Delegate. As the curtain rises there is general laughter, in which Orlando does not join.

WILSON.—I had no idea the lower classes were so extensive.

That explains my speech at Turin. I said, "The industrial workers will dictate the peace terms. . . ." (Renewed mirth. Orlando looks sour).

ORLANDO (gloomily). Corpi di Bacco! Yes. You put me in a hell of a fix* I was forced to suppress that speech. We almost had a revolution! You must remember that the Italian workingmen are not educated—we have no Samuel Gompers.

LLOYD-GEORGE—(to Orlando). Oh I say, old cock! Don't take yourself so seriously. They're always talking Revolution—in England, too—but so long as we can keep them voting . . .

CLEMENCEAU (to Wilson, with Gallie charm.) Saperlotte! What a man! And that League of Nations—quelle idee! At first I thought you some sort of Henry Ford. . . . Who but you could have explained that Balance of Power and the League of Nations are identical!

WILSON. Yes, yes . . . May I not insist that ^{to say} the phrase we must strive to attain? The advertising business is very highly developed at home . . .

MAKINO (with Oriental suavity). All the same Open Door in China.

WILSON (modestly). A trifling achievement. Why in America, my second campaign was won by the phrase, "He kept us out of war." (General hilarity).

ORLANDO (pounding the table). Per dio! That's what we need in Italy! Couldn't you make another trip explaining that Italian treaty the Bolsheviki published?

LLOYD-GEORGE (briskly). Well, gentlemen, I am reluctant to interrupt this pleasant diversion, but I suggest that we get to work on what our American colleague calls "the solemn and responsible task of establishing the peace of Europe and the world." (Laughter). I don't want to be late for the Folies Bergeres; going to the theater is another method of government which we have learned from Mr. Wilson. (He bows to the President).

CLEMENCEAU (taking his place at the head of the table). The Peace Conference will now come to order. Let the room be searched.

(The Delegates look under the table, behind curtains, tapestries, pictures, and the statue above the Clock. Orlando emerges first from beneath the table, holding the Serbian Delegate by the ear)

ORLANDO (severely). What are you doing here? Don't you realize that this is the Peace Conference?

SERBIAN DELEGATE—But we fought in the war.

ORLANDO—That was war! This is peace! (The Serbian Delegate is ejected).

(Clemenceau drags from behind the Clock the Belgian Delegate).

CLEMENCEAU (shaking him). Eavesdropping again, eh? How many times must you be told that this is a private affair!

BELGIAN DELEGATE—But the War was about us, wasn't it?

CLEMENCEAU—War? War? Don't you know that the war is over? (The Belgian Delegate is ejected.)

(Concealed in the folds of tapestry Makino discovers the

Teheko-Slovak Delegate.)

MAKINO (indignantly). Once more and you'll be de-recognized!

TCHEKO-SLOVAK DELEGATE—But the Fourteen Points—MAKINO—They have not yet been interpreted. Run along now back to Siberia and shoot Bolsheviki until you're sent for! (The Teheko-Slovak Delegate is ejected.)

(Lloyd-George appears, grasping the Rumanian Delegate by the collar).

RUMANIAN DELEGATE—But you promised us Transylvania! LLOYD-GEORGE (testily). In the Wilsonian sense! In the Wilsonian sense! (The Rumanian Delegate is ejected.)

(During this time Wilson is in the fire-place, thrusting up the chimney with a poker. Three persons come rattling down, covered with soot. As they are seized by the Delegates and brought forward, they can be identified as the Armenian Delegate, the Yugo-Slav delegate, and the Polish Delegate.)

ARMENIAN DELEGATE—We thought the independence of Armenia—

WILSON (firmly). May I suggest that the Conference take note of the ingratitude of this person? At this very moment we are raising a Relief Fund in the United States!

ORLANDO (to the Yugo-Slav). What do you mean, butting in here?

YUGO-SLAV DELEGATE—But thousands of our people fought in the Italian army.

ORLANDO—Well, what more do you want?

CLEMENCEAU (to the Pole). You be careful, young man, or we'll take away your pianist and give you a flute-player!

(The Armenian, Yugo-Slav and Polish Delegates are ejected.)

MAKINO (to Wilson). I think somebody's calling you.

(Wilson crosses over and opens the window. A shrill clamor of Spanish voices from the Delegates of the Central American Republic can be heard.)

WILSON (loftily). We are here to see, in short, that the very foundations of the war are swept away. . . . Those foundations were the aggression of great powers upon the small.

DELEGATES OF COLOMBIA, PANAMA, SAN SALVADOR, NICARAGUA, GUATEMALA, SANTO DOMINGO, etc.—How about the taking of the Panama Canal? Why do the United States Marines control elections in Nicaragua? Why does the American Government disregard the decisions of the High Court which the American government set up? Why did the United States abolish the Santo Domingan Republic and set up an American military dictatorship? Nicaraguan canal-route—Brown Brothers—United Fruit Company—etc., etc.

WILSON—Nothing less than the emancipation of the world will accomplish peace. (With a noble gesture he sweeps the Latin-American Delegates off the sill and closes the window).

CLEMENCEAU (wiping the perspiration from his brow).—The Peace Conference is now safe for Democracy!

WILSON—Select classes of men no longer direct the affairs of the world, but the fortunes of the world are now in the hands of the plain people! (Laughter).

MAKINO—It is worth coming all the way from Japan just to hear him!

CLEMENCEAU—Now, gentlemen, before we get down to dismembering Germany, fixing the amount of the indemnity and stamping out Bolshevism, I should like to ask Mr. Wilson to interpret some of his Fourteen Points. . . . Of course we know it's all right, but there is anxiety in certain quarters. . . . Rothchild telephoned me this morning.

For instance, will our distinguished colleague explain how in hell* he proposes to get around Point One—Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view?

WILSON—Well, gentlemen, are we not "openly arriving"? Everybody knows that we're holding a Peace Conference. And then the word "understanding"; that means something people

*Inferno di uno fixo—Trans.

*Comment diable—Trans.

can understand. Assuredly it is not our intention to establish that kind of a peace! (Applause from all.)

LLOYD-GEORGE—Point Two has been bothering the Admiralty a bit—Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants. It sounded to us just a little pro—well, pro-any-nation-except England, if you catch my meaning.

WILSON—May I not call attention to the fact that Great Britain consists of England, Scotland and Wales? "International"—do you follow me? What could be more international than England, Scotland or Wales? (Cheers and hand-shaking among the Delegates, and especially among Lloyd-George.)

MAKINO—As to Point Three—The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers, and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance. You see—our interests in China—our position in the Pacific—

WILSON—Really elementary, my dear fellow. May I not direct attention to the innocuous phrase, "so far as possible?" You and I, Baron, are aware of the possibilities. . . . And while we are upon this subject, consider Point Four—Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will reduce to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety. Why do you think I slipped in "consistent with domestic safety?" (The applause is absolutely deafening.)

LLOYD-GEORGE—Mr. Wilson must make a lecture tour explaining who started the War!

CLEMENCEAU—Just to clarify Point Five—about the colonies, you know—

LLOYD-GEORGE AND MAKINO. Ah!

CLEMENCEAU—Exactly what does it mean? Free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions the interests of the population concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined. Of course I take it that this does not apply to Chinamen or niggers.

WILSON—I think an exception might be made with regard to the negroid races and those Oriental peoples who are "incapable of self-government," as we say at home.

MAKINO—"Incapable of self-government"—what does that mean?

WILSON—It is the polite term for nations with large natural resources and no army or navy.

ORLANDO—Chinamen and niggers, eh? Well now—there's Albania.

CLEMENCEAU—Isn't there some doubt about the—er—origin of the Albanians? The lost Hittites? Were they not a slightly tanned people?

MAKINO—Or perhaps the Mongol invasions of antiquity. You were speaking of Chinamen.

WILSON—For the purposes of the Peace Conference, may we not regard the Albanians as Mongolian Hittites?

LLOYD-GEORGE (doubtfully) But the Irish—

WILSON (thoughtfully). The Irish vote in New York is not despicable. If I were to run for a third term—

LLOYD-GEORGE. The Irish are very literal.

WILSON (brightening). May I be permitted to point out the idealistic phrase, "the population concerned"? What is the "population concerned" in the case of Ireland? The English, naturally—are very much concerned, too!

LLOYD-GEORGE (admiringly). If I had only been brought up as a professor!

WILSON—At this point allow me to call your attention to the fact that the United States is also accumulating a few—er—shall we say "adopted children"? I have accommodated you gentlemen as regards negroids and Orientals; it is only fair that you permit me to add to the list our Latin-Americans.

CLEMENCEAU—By all means take your greasers.

THE OTHERS—Certainly, with pleasure.

MAKINO (diffidently). A delicate question, but one full of interest to my Government—

LLOYD-GEORGE—And mine—

MAKINO—The German colonies—in the Pacific.

CLEMENCEAU—And in Africa—

LLOYD-GEORGE (coldly). German colonies in Africa? Really, you must be mistaken. I don't recall any.

MAKINO—Our troops captured a place called Kiau-Chao.

CLEMENCEAU—But that is in China, isn't it?

MAKINO (blandly). Oh no—in Germany.

WILSON—Gentlemen, we cannot return to the old ways. I have made definite statements—that is, definite for me. For instance, I have said, "No nation shall be robbed. . . . because the irresponsible rulers of a single country have themselves done deep

and abominable wrong."

(All stare at him in astonishment.)

ORLANDO—But how do you propose to do it then?

WILSON—(softly, with a gentle smile). The League of Nations.

The League of Nations will take over the German colonies.

LLOYD-GEORGE—Preposterous! I refuse to accept—

MAKINO—The Japanese Government will not withdraw—

WILSON—One moment, one moment, gentlemen! The League of Nations turns over the colonies to agents—I have coined a word, "mandatories." You are the mandatories—

LLOYD-GEORGE—Responsible to the League of Nations? Never!

WILSON—Only in a sense. It is a Wilsonism. The League of Nations lays down certain rules for the administration of these colonies. Every five hundred years the mandatories report to the League. We are the mandatories—and we are the League of Nations!

(The Delegates embrace one another.)

MAKINO (to Lloyd-George). And the Pacific?

LLOYD-GEORGE—We English are a sporting race, Baron. Have you a set of dice?

(Immediately all produce dice.)

LLOYD-GEORGE—Thank you, I prefer my own.

MAKINO—I am used to mine, too.

(The telephone rings. Clemenceau answers.)

CLEMENCEAU (to Wilson). Gompers on the wire. He brings you greetings from King George, and wants to know what the Peace Conference has done about Labor.

(Wilson goes to the telephone.)

WILSON—Good afternoon, Samuel. I am as keenly aware. I believe, as anybody can be that the social structure rests upon the great working-classes of the world, and that those working-classes in several countries of the world, have, by their consciousness of community of interest, by their consciousness of community of spirit, done perhaps more than any other influence to establish a world opinion which is not of a nation, which is not of a continent, but is the opinion, one might say, of mankind. Cordially and sincerely yours, Woodrow Wilson. Please give that to the press. Good-bye. (He hangs up.)

LLOYD-GEORGE (looking at his watch). Can't we hurry along, old dears? I've a dinner engagement with half a dozen kings.

CLEMENCEAU—Point Six is, you will admit, the most important of all. The one about Russia—

(Chorus of groans, snarls and epithets in four languages.)

CLEMENCEAU (reading)—"The evacuation of all Russian territory." Does this mean by the Germans?

WILSON—That is hardly the meaning of the phrase. It stands to reason that if the Germans withdraw, the Russians might invade Russia.

LLOYD-GEORGE—It means that Russia must be evacuated by everyone except foreigners and the Russian nabality.

CLEMENCEAU (continuing)—"—and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy." Surely you don't mean—

WILSON—Certainly not.

CLEMENCEAU (continuing)—"—and assure her of a sincere welcome into the clutches—I beg your pardon, my mistake—into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing." Excuse me, but isn't there a little too much "independent domination" and "institutions of her own choosing" in the document?

WILSON—On the contrary. If you will note the present state of the public mind, I think you will realize that it is especially necessary at this time to repeat this formula as much as possible.

CLEMENCEAU (continuing)—"—and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she herself may need and may herself desire." Do I understand by that—?

MAKINO—The Omsk Government is already manufacturing vodka. So far as we can discover, Russia's only other need seems to be a Tsar—and we're arranging that as speedily as we can.

CLEMENCEAU—I see. I thought perhaps—

WILSON—Oh, no. May I not comment on the amateurish quality of European diplomacy? At home we think nothing of putting fifteen hundred people in jail for their opinions, and calling it free speech.

CLEMENCEAU (reading). "The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good-will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy." That sort of thing won't go down in France. We have billions in Russian bonds—

WILSON—May I call attention to the inexpensiveness of adjectives?

MAKINO—But there are a number of embarrassing nouns. What shall we do about Russia?

LLOYD-GEORGE—There is a flock of Grand Dukes out in the hall. Suppose we ask them in.

WILSON—It is inadvisable. One of them might be infected with Bolshevism—no one seems to be immune. Who knows that even we— (All shudder). If we learned the facts about Russia they might influence our judgment.

CLEMENCEAU—Let us pretend that Russia is divided among warring factions, and invite all of them to send representatives to a Conference at the headwaters of the Amazon—

WILSON (nodding)—You are improving. To confer with the representatives of the associated powers in the freest and frankest way.

ORLANDO—The Bolsheviki talk well.

CLEMENCEAU—Let them talk. There's nobody to hear them at the headwaters of the Amazon!

WILSON—This is one case when diplomacy can "proceed frankly and in the public view."

ORLANDO—But what about the other factions?

CLEMENCEAU (triumphantly)—Why, we are the other factions!

(The Clock strikes five).

LLOYD-GEORGE (with a start)—Dear me! Six points already. At this rate we'll have nothing to do three days from now—nothing but go home.

MAKINO (dreamily). I like Paris, too.

LLOYD-GEORGE—Just a word about Point Seven—Belgium, you know. That clause, "without any attempt to limit the sovereignty she enjoys." Isn't that a bit strong? Of course we can't permit—

WILSON—That is another matter for the League of Nations. That is what the League of Nations is for.

CLEMENCEAU—And Point Eight—Alsace-Lorraine. I hope you haven't any foolish ideas about "self-determination" in Alsace-Lorraine?

WILSON—Yes—for all except pro-Germans.

CLEMENCEAU—But the language of the paragraph is open to misinterpretation. It might create a precedent. You know, we intend to annex the Saar Valley, where there aren't any Frenchmen.

WILSON—Gentlemen, you seem to have overlooked the essential point—Point Fifteen, if I may be permitted the pun. I have covered it with such luxuriant verbiage that up to this moment no one in the world has discovered it. May I not call attention to the fact that nowhere in this program have I declared against the principle of annexation?

(Frantic enthusiasm).

ORLANDO—And Point Nine—A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognized lines of nationality?

WILSON—You notice that I have not stated which nationality.

LLOYD-GEORGE—I must be going. What's left?

CLEMENCEAU—Only Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, Turkey and Poland.

ORLANDO—Give them half an hour tomorrow.

MAKINO—May I suggest that our American colleague write the statement to the press?

LLOYD-GEORGE (to Makino)—And while he's doing it, what do you say to a friendly settlement of the German possessions?

MAKINO—Charmed.

(Both take out their dice and while Wilson writes on a piece of paper, they throw).

LLOYD-GEORGE—Pair o' nines! Baby's got to have new socks! What's this for? The Caroline Islands?

MAKINO (with Oriental courtesy). The Carolines! Come seven! Roll 'em down!

LLOYD-GEORGE (snapping his finger). Come on—papa's watching! Choo-choo!

MAKINO—Come a-running, honey! Oh you eleven—

LLOYD-GEORGE—Yours, by Jingo! What'll it be now? Kiau-Chao?

MAKINO—The Marshalls.

LLOYD-GEORGE—Marshalls it is! Rattle them bones, boy! (They play).

WILSON—It's completed. Shall I read it? They assent.

WILSON (reading)—"President Wilson won another moral victory in the Peace Conference today. In spite of ominous predictions, his earnestness and eloquence, supported by the unselfish motives of the United States Government in entering the war, completely won over the representatives of the other powers. At present complete harmony reigns among the Delegates."

(At this moment the door opens and an attendant enters).

ATTENDANT—Telegram for Premier Orlando! Very urgent!
ORLANDO (opens it and reads slowly). "Revolution in Italy completely victorious. Rome in the hands of the Soviets." (All

are thunder-struck.)

(Enter attendant.)

ATTENDANT—Cablegram for President Wilson! Very urgent!
WILSON (takes it and reads slowly).—"You are impeached for invading Russia without a declaration of war."

(While they are staring at each other, enter another attendant.)

ATTENDANT—Telegram for Premier Lloyd-George! Very urgent!

LLOYD-GEORGE (reads).—"Sylvia Pankhurst made Premier. Do not hurry home." (Enter a fourth attendant.)

ATTENDANT—Cablegram for Baron Makino! Very urgent!

MAKINO (reads).—"Infuriated people, unable to get rice, have eaten the Mikado."

CLEMENCEAU (suddenly). Mark! (All listen. In the distance can be heard a confused and thunderous roar, which grows nearer, and resolves itself into a mighty chorus singing the "Carmagnole," the people of Paris marching on the Palais d'Orsay.)

ORLANDO—Does anyone know when the next train leaves?

MAKINO—For where? (General silence).

LLOYD-GEORGE—I feel a hankering to live under a stable Government.

WILSON—May I not suggest that there is only one stable Government now—at Moscow?

CLEMENCEAU (brightening)—I know Trotzky very well. I expelled him from France.

WILSON (thoughtfully)—My man Edgar Sisson was very intimate with Lenin.

ORLANDO—Is there a back way out of this place?

MAKINO—But we'll have to go to work!

WILSON (cheerfully)—Let us not be prematurely disheartened. Words are words in all languages—and Russians are doubtless human—and I still retain my powers of speech.

(Exeunt in single file through the window. The clock strikes six.)

SLOW CURTAIN.

Paris Workers Bear Red Flag On Jaures Day

BY SPEARMAN LEWIS

(Chicago Tribune Foreign News Service)

PARIS, April 7.—The red flag of revolution—unrest, soviet, socialism—anything of protest that you may wish to call it—made its unchallenged appearance on the streets of Paris yesterday.

Behind it, beside it, in front of it, marched men and women by tens of thousands. From the curbs of many boulevards and lesser lanes of travel other hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen and French women openly approved the marchers or gave them passive smiles of sympathy.

Rolling free and hearty from the throats of the marchers rose "The Internationale," the world famous song of the communist—the man who proclaims all workers brothers and defies the boundaries of states and nations. When they tired of the song they hooted Clemenceau, "the tiger" savior of France.

Gendarmes Are Silent

With the silent gendarmes looking on, chained to the curbs by the higher-ups, who were quick to pulse the temper of the throng, these thousands traversed unmolested a great section of Paris Sunday afternoon. Wise men sat in many corners Sunday night and Monday and tried their best to put a microscope glass upon it all and hunt the source whence it came.

The inspiration was a casual matter to the Americans in Paris, but to the Frenchman, in whose heart smoulders a protest of many weary years, the occasion centered in Jaures, the martyred leader of socialism. His slayer was recently acquitted. Many marchers on Sunday undoubtedly believe that Villian escaped the guillotine because the jury was of the hated "bourgeois" or middle class of wealth and influence.

Believe It Anyhow

It is quite probable that there is not a lick of truth in such an assumption, but the workers under the red banners have believed it more or less. Sunday's parade had as its announced purpose the delivery to Jaures' home of floral wreaths, and of a red bannered demonstration farther down the Avenue Henry Martin. Both were accomplished.

And in so doing for the first time in long forgotten years the red flag of the commune was flaunted proudly and fearlessly in Paris.

For the first time in long forgotten years soldiers of France in uniform—privates, captains, commandants, colonels—marched openly through the streets of Paris arm in arm with civilians, and in ranks above which floated no tricolor. The one flag was a red flag—and no police dared to raise a hand.

No Cavalry Charge

For the first time since years not forgotten—for it was 1870—there echoed down the streets of Paris the unbroken verses of the "Internationale." It has been tried before and just as surely came charging cavalry and broken heads and sabered backs. But Sunday the marchers sang it, every line—and then they hooted Clemenceau.

This in Paris, where sits the peace conference. This in a nation where less than six months ago shrines were built to the "Tiger of France." This against the premier who, in 1870, was himself a communist and who was tried and sentenced for his activities at the time as representative of the same spirit of protest against things that were.

Our car beat the parade's head up the Avenue Malakoff behind the arch through the Avenue Henry Martin and down the quiet Rue Eugene de la Croix to the little court in which nestles the Jaures home. "Pommander Walk" set the picture of the court before the world in that exquisite, sentimental comedy.

Lilacs and Pansies

Lilac bushes burdened the little areaway with their first spring fragrance. Pansy beds were at every doorstep. Brick walks had been scrubbed and dusted till they ached. The atmosphere was of flowers and spring and simple homes. And half a mile away marched the men in honor of Jaures by tens of thousands and every man a potential powder match.

On Jaures' doorstep stood four men. Three were in the soft black, flat top Fedora, flowing black tie, pointed beards, and bell-like black overcoats and suits to match that we have come to associate with the Parisian journalist. So they were—editors of the three great Socialist newspapers of France. The fourth, I swear, was my barber.

By common understanding the parade did not leave the boulevard at the point nearest the Jaures home. The committee delivered the wreath.

Crowd Before Bust

At the Place de la Henry Martin, stands a bust of Jaures, a great congestion occurred. His marble bust was buried in red flowers, worn by two of every three you met on the boulevard. Our car, in which were two American colonels, a lieutenant, secretary to a peace commissioner, and two photographers, attracted no more attention from the marchers or gendarmes than if we had been snug at home. The mind of marcher was on other things.

With the congestion at its greatest a big sightseeing truck filled with doughboys plowed through the crowd. A doughboy, in perfect good nature, called to our chauffeur and asked him, "What in hell's it all about?" and our chauffeur answered, "Damned if I know."

And that is exactly the attitude of mind today at the Hotel Crillon, at the Quai d'Orsy, or wherever sit those few through whose hands wind the slender threads of destiny. They do not know just what it means or how to answer it.

Statesmen at Sea

They frankly ask:

"Does it mean merely a protest against the verdict in the trial? Does it mean the first rumble of open discontent with the delay in peace proceedings? Does it presage a fall of the ministry that was great in war, but has lost the workers' confidence in peace? Does it go deeper to the foundation of the state?"

All feel the answer will soon be written. The red flag has been unfurled in the capital of the world. Whether it was to mark a passing protest or to warn of tomorrow is for the wise men to guess.

My most vivid recollection of the parade was at its close. Behind us for miles stretched a black river of marchers.

"See," shouted a man who leaped on the curb for a better look, "today we show ourselves, our strength; next time we shall use it."

Chicago Daily Tribune, April 8

Labor Trouble In Italy

(Edmonton Journal)

Northern Italy is experiencing a spell of labor trouble, the workmen at Milan, Bologna, Turin and Genoa, the principal manufacturing cities, having gone on a twenty-four hour strike. Earlier in the week at Milan there was fighting in the streets between socialist and anti-socialist groups, in which four persons were killed and several wounded. Troops had to be called out to restore order.

Labor troubles are also brewing in the department of the Seine, France, of which Paris is the capital.

A one-day strike has been called for May 1 by the general federation of labor to put forward the federation's program, which calls for an eight-hour day, political amnesty, non-intervention in Russia, lifting of the state of siege and the censorship, and the return of constitutional guarantees.

A general strike is threatened if the government and the employers do not meet the demands of the federation.

Enlightenment Spreading And You Can Help

The dreaded disease (as the press terms Bolshevism) is spreading in every country in the world. Even democratic United States has caught the infection, as the following letter will evidence. The writer, a reactionary slave, unable to advance with the times, is yapping out the cry of his masters. Here is a letter from the Boston Herald, March 18th:

We in the factories feel the Bolshevism menace in the very air. It isn't hazy or indefinite or academic. It's real, organized and practical. The men are reading The Revolutionary Age as they eat their luncheon; they sing revolutionary songs at their work; they hoot and jeer as employers and visitors walk through the buildings; they circulate notices calling for a nation-wide strike to free Moonsey; they post on their benches circulars calling for freeing of the "political prisoners;" they have let it be known by underground methods that labor will not take the fifth Liberty loan; they have endorsed and financially supported the Lawrence strike, in defiance of its repudiation by organized labor in Lawrence and by the secretary of labor; they openly announce their intention of forcing a revolution and taking over control of industry.

So we see that agitation is spreading in the shops and in the plants where the workers are beginning to think and read and discuss and pass the word on. We learn from the United States that groups of workers in the shops and factories form into small groups to finance agitation amongst their workers. One group has distributed 10,000 of the "Revolutionary Age"—a paper printed in the United States in the interests of Socialism and explaining Bolshevism—and also two thousand Bolshevik pamphlets in one plant alone and the same is being done in thousands of other shops and factories. The workers of Canada must also be right on the job and therefore we hope that they will see to it that hundreds of copies of the Soviet are distributed amongst their fellow-workers. Form into small groups or committees, collect funds; turn them into the Business Manager of "Soviet," P. O. Box 1682, Edmonton, and have a bundle sent for distribution. In this way by our combined efforts we can reach thousands of workers who will be glad to have the paper and will soon become sufficiently interested to try and spread the information and help as far as their means will allow to finance same. Now, boys, all dig in and work for the purpose of educating your fellow wages-lave. Remember, that upon their enlightenment depends the success of the struggle. Donations and subscriptions to Box 1682, Edmonton, Alberta.

Weighty Problems of The Alberta Solons

The major portion of the time of the present session of the Alberta Legislature has been well spent in explaining and discussing two great problems. First, who received the rake-off from the Mennonites, and second, the Boudreau-Boyle booze comedy. In Russia the Soviets waste their time discussing the best methods for the production and distribution of wealth; but then they are only ignorant peasants and workers and cannot be expected to measure up mentally with the legislators of Alberta. The question of man's primitive needs: food, clothing and shelter is too paltry and materialistic to engage the attention of real "big" men; only the godless and degraded Bolsheviks would discuss such matters.

Annihilation of The "Great Man" Idea

The one accomplishment of the peace conference is the utter annihilation of the great man theory. In Paris Wilson croons; Lloyd George sings and Clemenceau growls, while the peoples of Europe seemingly unaware of their very existence, are making the world safe from further predatory wars of capitalism, by instituting social ownership of the natural resources and the means of wealth production.