

## THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

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Published by the Workers' Suffrage Federation.

696 OLD FORD ROAD, LONDON, E.

Telephone: EAST 1787.

Annual Subscription - Post free, 6s. 6d.

Back Numbers, 2d. post free.

All business communications should be sent to the

MANAGER, 696 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

Vol. IV., No. 32.

Sat., March 23rd, 1918.

### LENIN'S PROPHECY

The annexationist terms which the Central Empires have forced on Russia have given the Allied Governments and their Jingo supporters an opportunity to cry: "We told you so; here is proof that we must win the War, lest Germany do this to all of us." The Allied Prime Ministers have issued a statement declaring that "they feel it to be their bounden duty to take note of the political crimes which in the name of a German peace have been committed against the Russian people." They say:

"Our own ends are very different; we are fighting in order to finish once for all with this policy of plunder and to establish in its place the peaceful reign of organised justice."

But the Secret Treaties convict the Allied Governments of duplicity, and prove their aims to be identical with those of Germany. The new-found sympathy with Russia which Mr. Balfour, President Wilson, and other Allied statesmen are now professing, was not forthcoming during the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. If the Allied Governments had there backed the Bolshevik efforts to secure a just peace, on the basis of no annexations, no indemnities, the right of the peoples to decide their own destinies, a general peace on that basis might have been arranged.

The Allied Governments did not support Russia at Brest because they did not, and still do not, desire a just peace; like Germany, they are fighting for plunder. How falsely sound their denunciations of the German invasion of Russia in the West, in view of their efforts to arrange for a Japanese invasion of Russia in the East! Mr. Balfour, in the House of Commons on March 14th, admitted the intent to procure a Japanese invasion, but untruthfully pretended that "the Japanese would be the friends and not the enemies of Russia," and that the invasion would not be undertaken "with any hope of gain." Such speeches are made in order that the Press may report them to still the doubts of good and guileless people outside the House. His words did not deceive the Government's Jingo supporters, whose interruptions clearly showed their determination that if there is to be a chance of plunder the Allies shall get as much as they can of the spoils. The plea of Lance-Corporal Lees Smith that the Allies should not take advantage of Russia's defeat and helplessness fell on deaf ears.

Whilst America and Japan are still supposed to be discussing the wisdom of an Allied expedition into Russia from the East, it is reported that Japanese and Chinese have actually begun the invasion by joining the Russian counter-Revolutionary forces which are fighting against the Bolsheviks at Blagovestchensk in Siberia.

The Press is loud and constant in predicting woe and disaster to the Bolsheviks; yet those glorious indomitables continue to surmount the storm. It is evident that they command the support of the majority of the Russian people, and that their majority is growing and consolidating. It was predicted that the Soviet Congress would overthrow Lenin because his Government had decided provisionally to submit to the German peace terms, the country not being able further to resist; but the Congress ratified this action by 704 votes to 261, with 110 abstentions. In that Congress, 732 of the delegates were Bolsheviks, 238 Social Revolutionaries of the Left wing, who in most things support the Bolsheviks though a proportion has dissented on this question of the peace terms. The remainder of the delegates represented seven other parties. The entire Congress only numbered 1,084.

Can the Russian Socialists maintain their Revolution in face of the lawless determination of the capitalists of all the great Powers to destroy it? That is the question which Socialists everywhere are asking. The opportunists declare that if the Revolution is overthrown, and already they appear convinced that it cannot stand, the futility of the Bolshevik policy will be demonstrated thereby; and their own contention will be established that the right course for Russians was to content themselves with the abolition of the Czarism and to allow, even assist the upgrowing of an extensively rooted capitalist regime, like that of Britain and America, to be retained until some far distant time when the civilisations of mankind will

somehow pass almost imperceptibly into Socialism. That is emphatically not our view, for even should the Bolsheviks never have come to power or have maintained their administration but for a day, we believe the fact that a Socialist Government had existed somewhere, sometime, would have heartened all subsequent efforts thereto.

But the Bolshevik Government is still with us, and the Bolshevik manifestoes confidently insist that so far from being crushed in Russia, the Socialist revolution will shortly spread into all countries. And in spite of all the sloth and apathy which oppresses us in these countries where ignorance still enchains the workers, the Bolshevik view is not merely a case of a wish having fathered a thought, but is broadly based on a calm, scientific reading of the cataclysmic changes through which this unfortunate world of ours is passing, and of the long struggle of mankind to dominate matter which has animated the development of our species and brought us here from the far-off age of the cave man.

Russia has often been named unconquerable. Imperialistic ambitions have again and again found their grave there. As Napoleon discovered, her climate and her vast undeveloped stretches of territory are her allies against invasion. The conditions which are cited as reasons for Russia's inability to continue the War, are the conditions which defy the conqueror. Mr. R. C. Martens, a well-known Russian merchant and one of those Russian apologists who would assure themselves and the Allies that Russia may shortly be brought back to the capitalist fold and become a fruitful source of wealth to the enterprising capitalists of the Allied nations, has written a leaflet, "Justice for Russia." He there explains that Russia possesses only half a mile of railway to every 100 square miles of her land, as compared with nearly 20 miles in this country. During the War the Russian railways have degenerated, the rails and the rolling stock have fallen into decay. It is difficult for the Russians to repair the railways; it is still more difficult for an invader to do so. Before the War, Mr. Martens tells us, Russia had only one factory to 150 British factories, though her population is 180,000,000 and ours 45,000,000. Therefore Russia was largely dependent on other countries for manufactured goods, and even those industries which she had—mining, engineering, chemicals, textiles and so on—were dependent on Germany for their supplies of tools and machinery. For the German invaders, hard-pressed by the waste and toil of war in maintaining their own industries, how is it possible to provide equipment for the industries of Russia? And if the Allies are the invaders, the difficulties will nevertheless be formidable. The world shortage created by the War will operate in their case as in that of the Central Empires. Moreover, a glance at the map brings home to us that a War might be fought and lost or won in the Vladivostok region without affecting Petrograd unless, as has been the case in the War, the Baltic ports were blockaded and Western supplies cut off. Whether the armies be those of Russia or the Central Empires, the transport difficulties which paralysed Russian military activities and are causing starvation to her people, will face the invaders in intensified form. Mr. Martens explains that on his visit last year to Samara, the centre of the Russian grain trade, he saw the people standing in long flour queues, because the railways had failed to bring fuel, though the granaries were full and modern mills perfectly equipped. The hostility of the native population always increases such difficulties in the cases of invading armies, and the Russian workers and peasants who have learnt the solidarity to overthrow their own rulers will meet the invaders as the armies of great Powers are not met when they send punitive expeditions against more primitive peoples. We greatly mistake the temper of the Soviets and of those whom they represent, if the invaders of Russia do not find the subduing of the Socialist populations of the Russian Empire a more difficult task than any hitherto attempted by any invaders; for in every other War the people have been pawns; in the War against the Russian Socialist Republic the people are principals. The peace with Germany is no peace: Germany is still trying to conquer the territories ceded to her and the people of the territories retained by Russia are preparing for the next trial of strength with Germany. The Left Social Revolutionaries are already preparing to fight against the Germans. We believe that ultimately it will be found that industrial solidarity is the strongest weapon of the Russian as well as of all other workers.

The Bolshevik resolution, which was adopted by the Soviet Congress just concluded, expresses its deep conviction that:

"a workmen's revolution is near, and that the victory of the Socialist proletariat is assured in spite of savage measures due to Imperialistic intervention."

Lenin declared the peace with Germany to be but a temporary respite during which the

Socialists could prepare themselves without interference from Germany, for the time when the other European workers will join the Russians in the struggle for Socialism. The Bolsheviks still believe that when the necessary point of exhaustion and war-weariness has been reached the other peoples of Europe will awake as the peoples of Russia have done. And, looking at the map of this Eastern hemisphere, seeing that in spreading from Petrograd to Vladivostok Bolshevism has travelled across the greatest breadth of it, for in actual mileage Petrograd is much nearer to London than is Vladivostok, considering that the great causes which have created the Bolshevik revolution are operating all over Europe; does it not seem at least possible that Lenin's prediction will come true? Meanwhile strikes are again breaking out in Austria, and there is said to be much fraternisation amongst the Italian and Austrian troops. War feeling has never been strong in Italy.

Lenin is not alone in his prediction; Lord Lansdowne, who has been watching the affairs of Europe a long time, sees the red light too. Lord Lansdowne is a hard old man not easily moved to pity. We saw him curtly brush aside the old-age pensioners in St. Stephen's Hall, who stretched out their feeble, trembling hands to him in piteous appeals. He watches Europe not, as Lenin does, in the interests of the people, but in the Conservative interest, in the interest of those who are wealthy and privileged by the accident of birth, or are endowed with an unusually strong acquisitive power, the grossest, least worthy of all the talents. Lord Lansdowne is carefully playing the game of the privileged class against the workers. He sees that the War is becoming dangerous to the capitalism for which it is fought; that the War spreads like a fire and grows more and more difficult to extinguish. As the class-conscious worker sees what is hidden from his unawakened comrade, so Lord Lansdowne discerns that which does not appear to the less intelligent Jingo capitalist, who merely thinks of the dividends which he will be able to pile up through the extension of Allied and the restriction of Enemy trade and territory.

Lord Lansdowne's record as an opponent of progress should make his standpoint clear to all of us, yet we find Socialists adopting Lord Lansdowne as their leader, regardless of the fact that he and such as he, if they are allowed a hand in the making of peace terms, will build the peace on the very foundation and in the self-same spirit that have created the War. The Lansdowne policy differs but in detail from the Lloyd George-Northcliffe policy: it is the policy of oppression and future war. The Lenin Bolshevik policy is the policy of lasting peace. The League of Nations, of which there is now so much talk, will not ensure world-peace or the freedom of weaker nations, so long as competitive capitalism endure. A League of Socialist Peoples is what we want; not a League of Capitalist Governments. Meanwhile we must devote our energies to the study and propagation of Socialism. The revolt of the peoples will assuredly come, but only Socialist knowledge can save the revolt from futility.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

### FINNISH GREED

Finnish capitalists, whose country was so lately released from Czarist oppression by the Russian Socialists, are showing themselves to be as greedy of territory as any other race of capitalists. They are endeavouring to snatch the Kola Peninsula from Russia, and the Aaland Islands, where the people are said to have expressed a wish to be annexed to Sweden. Finland is also demanding a part of Norway, and offering Norway a bit of Russian territory in exchange.

### REVOLUTION AND DRINK

Mr. J. R. Clynes, M.P., the one-time cotton operative, who has become assistant Food Controller, told Parliament on March 12th, that he did not think teetotalism could be reckoned on as a means of winning the War. He thought it was "a matter of speculation whether the abolition of vodka had not something to do with the state of discontent, which brought about the Revolution in Russia," we think it had! But surely Mr. Clynes should rejoice at that!

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