

[*Le Populaire* (Paris Radical Socialist Daily), April 26]

## RUSSIA AND EUROPE'S RECONSTRUCTION

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As disciples of Marx we were convinced that the first cannon shot of the World War announced the doom of the capitalist system. To be sure, capitalism was not so highly developed in Russia as in western European countries. Feudalism, bureaucracy, and Tsarism still reigned over us. Moreover, our bourgeoisie had little importance or power. Consequently, the middle classes were not able to oppose vigorous resistance to the proletariat, who were filled with deeper indignation and rage by their war suffering than the masses of any other country.

When the Bolshevik revolution occurred, the first measure taken by the Soviet Government was to socialize land, workshops, factories, and banks, and to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat. This explains why our government at once found every other government in the world arrayed against it. Our effort to restore peace immediately created the most resentment. German imperialism replied by taking the offensive in Southern Russia, Esthonia, and Finland, and imposed upon us the hateful treaty of Brest-Litovsk. We have been much criticized by the Entente for signing this treaty. I know that. But in spite of every objection the Communist party, upon the advice of Lenin, accepted the treaty in order to gain time—to win a breathing spell. His prophecy that its provisions would speedily be annulled by a German revolution came true.

Every effort of the Entente to crush us has been as futile as that of Ger-

many. The conspiracy of Jaroslav, the Czecho-Slovak campaign, and the civil wars in the Valley of the Don and in the Ukraine, have failed. I attribute the ill success of these efforts to the fact that the Russian people comprehended that they were all part of a great scheme to reestablish Tsarism and private property in land.

However, we have been obliged to fight fourteen different governments allied against us by Entente intrigues. They have sent troops of every race and color, including negroes, to fight us on the Murman coast, at Archangel, Odessa, and Nikolayef. During these past two years the situation of Soviet Russia has been very similar to that of France during the great Revolution. Like the latter country we have been forced to take up arms against a world of enemies, all of whom we have finally checked. The most dangerous of them, Kolchak, Denikin, and Judenich, have been completely crushed by the Red army.

However, for a time our victory seemed very uncertain. Ruined by four years of warfare, Russia was stripped of the provinces which furnished its most important raw materials. It was facing enemies with well-organized finances, great technical equipment, and military experience. I attribute our victory over these to our Communist organization—only that could have crushed capitalism—and to the admirable loyalty of the Russian people and their perseverance and determination. The

combative instinct and enthusiasm of the peasants and working people rose almost to a paroxysm. They enrolled in the formations of the Red army with a spirit of exaltation: they have given their lives by thousands for the great cause of Socialism. These sacrifices have united them firmly. The peasants, who for the most part are not Communists, have never lived so well as they do to-day, and they now comprehend that the Soviet system suits them better than any other. At the outset our Red armies were defeated partly because they lacked technical equipment, but largely on account of the distrust and hostility of the peasants. But since the latter understand the real purpose of the counter-revolution, which is to reëstablish the throne of the Tsars, to restore the great landlords, and to subject the commons again to capitalist exploitation, the peasants firmly believe that the Soviet Government is the only organization which will defend sincerely their interests and those of the other working classes.

Judenich, Kolchak, and Denikin did us invaluable service in the territories which they temporarily occupied. Consequently whenever we advanced against them our armies received great accessions of recruits from the country through which we passed. The peasants flocked to our standards, asking only an opportunity to exterminate the 'Whites.'

I am informed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Red army, General Kamenief, a distinguished general of the old government who has entered the service of the revolution, that the Communist party by its superhuman efforts has been a prime factor in bringing about this triumph of Soviet Russia. The nucleus of the Red army was composed originally of industrial workers who were members of that

party. It is they who have communicated to the peasants, who now form the bulk of our forces, the fervent enthusiasm which distinguishes them. Face to face with such men the Tsarist officers and their 'White' troops had no chance whatever.

Now the more intelligent diplomats of England and France are beginning to see that the grain and the raw materials of Russia are indispensable for the reconstruction of Europe. So I consider that Soviet Russia is approaching the end of the belligerent period of its organization. Neither the Allies nor the countries bordering upon us are eager to resume the struggle. We have not as yet made peace with Poland and Finland. I do not at this moment expect them to take the offensive. In case they do we shall be on our guard, and we shall defend ourselves the easier because the annexationist ambitions of Poland and France have inspired bitter resentment among all classes in Russia, including the bourgeoisie and the old civil servants, who are otherwise hostile to our régime. Yes, even the exiles would resist such aggression.

South Russia now wishes to reconstruct its shattered habitation. It wants a respite from suffering. We hope that this may be granted us by the coöperation of other lands, and above all of the manufacturers of England and America. If we have to depend on our own resources alone, it will take a very long period to recover from our present prostration. We shall be condemned to years of cruel suffering. Our country, to be sure, has become habituated to suffering by the trials through which it has lately passed, but if we suffer, all the human race will suffer too. One half of Europe is in ruins. The war has destroyed the normal relations between countries. Thousands of cities and factories and

railways must be rebuilt. Lack of coal and of raw materials is paralyzing industry even in the victorious nations. These needs, and especially the demand for food, can be supplied only with Russia's assistance. Consequently the resumption of normal relations with us is for the interest of all Europe. It tried for two years to crush us: now the time is come for the capitalist world to make terms with the Soviet Republic.

Such terms cannot be discussed except on the basis of equality. Soviet Russia has not been defeated. It cannot treat with other nations except subject to the conditions that the political and social principles upon which its government is based be recognized by those nations. I see in the capitalist newspapers that the delegates of the capitalist governments now assume the right to impose upon the Soviet Government conditions incompatible with the principles for which the Russian proletariat has been fighting for two years. After failing to crush us by force, they wish now to bribe us to a betrayal of our beliefs. Soviet Russia is not yet so badly off that it must purchase the resumption of diplomatic and consular relations by such means. It demands first of all that the military attacks upon it cease and that the blockade be raised. We require this not only of the Entente, but likewise of the governments which are our neighbors, particularly Poland and Finland, who are receiving military and financial support from the Allied governments.

Unless these two conditions are granted, there can be no resumption of commerce between the Soviet Republic and Western Europe. That would be rendered impossible in any case by the

necessity of using our railways to transport troops instead of to reconstruct our industries.

In case normal relations are resumed, our most urgent need is for locomotives. We have not less than a billion poods of grain (sixteen million tons!) which we can export. But we must have locomotives to carry it to the seaboard. Russia would have no difficulty in paying with gold and silver for its first deliveries of locomotives and rolling stock. Our future purchases, however, would have to be made in return for our commodities. We are ready to take practically all the pre-war stocks stored in Western Europe, and to pay for them with these raw materials.

We are also ready to negotiate with a view to granting concessions to foreign merchants and manufacturers. The development of our native resources — forests, mines, fisheries, and the like — offers most tempting prospects. The Soviet Government desires to develop these resources, and is ready to grant concessions to private enterprises which will utilize them. This applies particularly to our forests and fisheries. Such concessions will authorize the receiver to organize his undertaking with his own capital and equipment, and his own engineers and managers. Naturally he will have to observe the laws of the republic for the protection of labor. The profits of the enterprise will be shared between the Soviet Government and the grantee, for a fixed period, according to the terms specified in the concession. No tax will be levied on exportation. At the expiration of the contract the enterprise will become government property.

## AFTER SAN REMO

It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of the San Remo Conference for the world's political future. It not only settles for the time being the question of the Near East, which has disturbed the history of Europe for centuries and caused innumerable wars, but it has also given a new aspect to the question of Central Europe by inviting Germany to a Conference in Spa, to discuss questions of economic reconstruction. The political significance of San Remo lies in its striking revelation of England's world leadership. Under the guidance of that country the international situation has been so shaped, and great questions have been so settled, as to establish England's world suzerainty as firmly as a Gibraltar for an indefinite time to come. In the future some things may be done without consulting England, but nothing can be done against England's opposition.

England has thus attained the position which America, who really won the war, vainly sought at one time to acquire. Wilson's programme was directed as much against England as against Germany. He sought to make his English rivals as harmless as his German rivals. He planned to subordinate to the economic imperialism of the United States, Poland through Danzig, the Danube countries through Fiume, and Russia through Constantinople; and he sought to subject to the jurisdiction of the United States all the remainder of the world through the machinery of a League of Nations. In consequence of the premature dispersion of the German army, and the failure of France and Italy to support

him, Wilson was forced to face alone the skill which England had acquired by centuries of international experience. Under the compulsion of England, Japan, France, and Italy, he was made to sacrifice his Fourteen Points one after another in order to save the League of Nations, with the help of which he hoped eventually to recover them. Here again, however, he suffered a double defeat. The mandate idea was converted by English diplomats into a device for giving their country every colonial accession it wanted, and the League of Nations was made a threat against the Monroe Doctrine and United States interests on both American Continents. Wilson's complete failure abroad caused the rejection of the League at home. America refused to interest itself further politically or economically in Europe, and turned its attention anew to Eastern Asia and its Latin neighbors. Since that time an American Ambassador has been present like Banquo's ghost at European conferences, but he has frightened no one when he silently slipped into his place at the Council table. Wilson, meantime, has played the rôle of Jupiter in an Offenbach Opera, rolling an empty cask around behind the scenes to make imitation thunder, and summoned on the stage now and then by England when she needs him, as at San Remo in the Fiume and the Armenian questions.

Since Britain's most dangerous rival has thus been ejected from European affairs, and its attention diverted to the rising power of Japan in the Orient, England has acquired a free hand