

# THE LIVING AGE

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## A WEEK OF THE WORLD

COUNT BERNSTORFF'S memoirs, dealing as they do mainly with 'the war before the war' in America, possess exceptional interest for our people. The extracts we publish this week, in connection with the first installments of the *Vossische Zeitung's* review of the book, do not deal with the most critical days of his Washington service, when the fate of the war was balancing between American mediation and American intervention. That chapter of diplomatic history has been more discussed than any other in Germany; and what Count Bernstorff had to tell regarding it has already been made public in his evidence before the Committee of the National Assembly to investigate responsibility for the origin and conduct of the war.

Our readers will be interested in learning, in a later number, what the former Ambassador has to say regarding the conspiracies to blow up American munition works and otherwise to interfere with industries serving the Allies; and regarding German propaganda against the United States in Mexico and South America.

IN a recent issue we referred to the complaints of official incapacity and avarice heard from those regions of

devastated France which are now in process of reconstruction. This week we print an article in a similar strain by a visitor to the recovered territories of Italy. War's prodigality and waste create habits which survive the arrival of peace. Instances of official extravagance and incompetence in the reconstruction areas are perhaps inevitable; but they are peculiarly to be lamented, because they not only cause needless suffering to those who already have suffered much, and unnecessary expense to overburdened treasuries, but also tend to make the frontier zones of the former belligerent powers areas of permanent social discontent.

THE revival of anti-Semitism throughout Europe is but one phase of the tide of hatred which, for the moment, submerges the old continents. Among the curiosities of future historical literature will be, doubtless, the writings of men who explain the origin of the World War by the rivalry and hostility of Roman and Orthodox Catholics on the Serbian border; or who ascribe the war and the subsequent revolution solely to Jewish machinations. Supporters of both theories are already in the field. Distrust of the Jews, culmi-

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nating oftentimes in extreme hatred, is a class sentiment among the peasantry of a great part of eastern and central Europe. But it is doubtful whether that sentiment would manifest itself in violence and persecution unless encouraged by leaders from other classes of society. It is being sedulously promoted for political reactionary purposes in Austria, Hungary, and Bavaria, where the cleavage between the country proletariat and the city proletariat is very obvious, and it is being met by an aggressive Socialist campaign among the peasantry.

While this division is less marked in the Latin countries, it is important enough to shape the policies of the revolutionary parties. We have already commented upon the extension of radical agitation among the peasantry and rural laborers of Spain and Italy. In the latter country outbreaks have occurred in which a number of estates were burned.

French Socialist papers report that similar unrest prevails among the tenant population of Southwestern France. At Saint Vincent de Tyrosse and Penchorade revolutionary peasants have participated in disorderly demonstrations under the Red flag. They have formed societies to work in union with the organized city proletariat. The tenants (*métayers*) demand that certain unpopular taxes shall be abolished, and that the clauses in their contracts requiring them to pay rent in kind shall be canceled.

WE trust we shall not be accused of promoting Bolshevism because we publish this week an article by Lenin. It is addressed to people who have rather different intellectual background from that of the readers of the *LIVING AGE*; but it should none the less do more than gratify intellectual curiosity. It shows what the Bolshe-

vist leaders consider the weak points in the armor of the established order, and discloses somewhat the line of strategy they propose to follow.

The article is translated from a well-printed illustrated quarto periodical of nearly one hundred and fifty pages, which is issued regularly by the Moscow Government in Russian, French, German, and English. The copy in our hands was brought out of Odessa after its recent capture by the Red army, where great quantities of this and other Bolshevik publications had been assembled for proselyting purposes.

Lenin's description of Soviet Russia as the first government in history 'truly representing the majority of the people' may be compared with the following account of a Moscow election, by a British officer recently returned from that city:

A Bolshevik candidate would be put forward, and on supporters being asked about eight hands would be put up and perhaps about a thousand against. The chairman would then politely state that he would be glad to have the signatures of those who were opposed to the Bolshevik candidate. Not a man, for obvious reasons, would come forward, and the friend of the people was consequently elected.

We pair with Lenin's interpretation of world conditions an amusing skit, taken from the principal German language paper of Budapest, which illustrates a conception of Americans and American designs not uncommonly held by Europeans — or at least exploited in their press.

PREPARATORY to the anticipated resumption of trade with the rest of Europe, the Bolshevik masters of Russia have issued strict regulations for controlling railway labor in the Soviet Republic. According to *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* of February 23, it is ordered that all workmen employed in the maintenance of way and

in repair shops, shall report for duty within ten minutes of the sounding of the first factory whistle. Twenty minutes are allowed at mid-day for luncheon. No employee is permitted to leave his work during labor hours, or to read a newspaper or to discuss politics during that time. If an employee fails to report for duty three days in succession, or three days in any one month, without good excuse, he is to be dismissed immediately. No furloughs or vacations are permitted.

Workers are forbidden to present complaints directly to their foreman. They must bring them to the attention of the Division Inspector, or the Shop Manager, who will transmit them to the higher authorities. Workmen must obey the orders of their superiors strictly and without protest. Whenever the good of the service demands, individual employees or groups of employees may be transferred to another place of employment. Heavy penalties are inflicted upon employees who disturb their associates or create disaffection in the workshops. Not only the individual employee, but the trade society to which he belongs, is held responsible if he neglects his duties. The piece work system of payment is reestablished. Strikes are illegal and treasonable and will be sternly suppressed. Persons inciting strikes will be tried and sentenced within twenty-four hours. There is no appeal or pardon from the judgment of the court. The intentional injury of tools and machinery — such as putting sand in bearings — is punishable by the severest penalties.

PRAVDA, an official Russian Bolshevik paper, uses as a text a cartoon in a French newspaper, representing a workman standing in front of the desk of a public official, who is putting certain formal questions to him. When

the government representative asks, 'What is your profession?' the workman replies: 'Striker, like all workmen.' The Bolshevik comment is significant:

In the unprecedented wave of strikes, which has started in Europe and America, the old, rotten trade organizations and their 'leaders' struggle helplessly. These pitiable pigmies are unable to stop the powerful rush of the waves of proletarian revolution. The strike of millions of English railway men, the grandiose strikes of American longshoremen, of German metal workers, and of Italian workmen of almost every trade have a world-wide historic significance. This strike wave sweeps over all Europe, just such a wave as preceded the proletarian revolution in Russia. It is the same 'strike excitability' which brought terror to the Russian traitor Socialists, the Mensheviks, two years ago.

Ample evidence is at hand to show that the Communists are inciting 'outlaw' or 'runaway' strikes in order to attain a political object. But their success in creating widespread disorders is due primarily to the derangement of prices and wages, and the principal, immediate cause of that derangement is a depreciated currency. This is true in the United States and Japan as well as Europe. The first and most urgent task of those who would buttress up the existing order is to reduce the present inflation and stabilize prices. But there is another element — a moral element — in proletarian unrest abroad, which does not exist to an equal extent in this country. To quote again from a Soviet source — for the Bolsheviks have a master knowledge of proletarian psychology:

Humanity has not gone mad. The bloody lesson which the Imperialists gave to the workmen of all countries between 1914 and 1919 will not be forgotten. In this senseless imperialistic slaughter millions and millions of people perished. But the lesson was not lost for the proletarians of all countries. The workmen will no longer be slaves; the workmen will not leave the power in the hands of the class which led the whole race to slaughter, which converted Europe into a world cemetery, which brought upon all humanity the tortures of hunger and cold.

In conclusion, indeed, there is hunger. An eye witness of the recent Spartacan revolt at Essen, writing in the *Manchester Guardian*, confirms what the whole world knows at last:

This revolution is an affair much more of vitamins than of politics. The ration preceding the Kapp incident throughout the region was three pounds of bread a week and some potatoes. Meat was unprocurable. Only children under two years old were supplied with milk. The salary of a worker in the mines was up to 50 marks a day. Skilled workers in the Krupp works received 40 marks a day.

This sum was out of proportion with the cost of foodstuffs. Butter costs 30 marks a pound, bacon 26, and an egg costs two marks. These prices date almost from the days of the armistice. Many workmen and their wives have not had a square meal for years. It is this hunger psychology which is the determining factor in politics here.

**SCHOOL-TEACHERS** of London, where salaries have not increased to meet the advance of prices, recently presented their grievances to a Committee of the County Council in a very emphatic way. They even proposed to teach 'some of the doctrines of life being taught in other countries' to their pupils if their petition for increased pay was not complied with within a week. Upon an inquiry whether this meant Bolshevism, the reply was yes. One teacher said in testimony: 'The man who sweeps my street doorway gets sixty-seven shillings a week. A man who shot the coals down my chute last week averages over six pounds a week. I, after twenty-seven years of service, receive but five pounds, fifteen shillings; and I had to give that man a shilling for putting in my coals.'

**LIVING** under a Socialist régime evidently has its complications. A correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* quotes the following regulations from a copy of the *Red*

*Paper*, the organ of the former Communist Government in Budapest.

Simplified (*sic*) proceeding for having broken windows replaced.

1. The tenant shall produce a certificate signed by the elected representative of the mansions he is living in, certifying that a broken window is to be replaced.

2. This certificate is to be countersigned by the Engineering Bureau of the Workers' Council of the district.

3. The countersigned certificate must be taken to the district glazier's office, whence an official will be dispatched to take the measures and work out the costs.

4. The ticket with the measures and costs must be taken to the central glazier's office, and the amount fixed be paid there.

5. The amount fixed having been paid, the central glazier's office will issue a labor card (*Arbeitskarte*), which must be taken to the district glazier's office.

6. Upon receipt of the labor card the district glazier's office will dispatch the workmen who will carry out the repairs desired.

The same writer says that since the reactionary, or 'white,' terror began in Hungary four thousand people have been executed and thirty-seven thousand interned or imprisoned. Official hangmen are paid by the piece!

A **BILL** for the compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes has been submitted to the French Chamber of Deputies by the Ministry of Labor. The main provisions of this project, which has not yet been adopted, make it compulsory for an employer or his representative to receive the complaints submitted by his working people within twenty-four hours of the presentation of a petition asking for a hearing. In other words, it becomes illegal for an employer to refuse to treat with his employees regarding their grievances. Where a conflict arises between workers and their employers, an attempt shall first be made to adjust it through a conciliation committee consisting of one or two representatives from each side. It is

provided that a judge may appoint members of such a committee in case either party fails to do so. In case a conciliation committee fails to agree, it shall make a report and the case shall be submitted to arbitration. During the arbitration proceedings it is illegal to cease work. Employers and employees who violate the act are to be subject to both fine and imprisonment.

Similar statutes are also proposed in Italy and Spain.

SIXTEEN years ago France broke with the Vatican, recalling its ambassador to the Holy See. Now, following the war and the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, the French Government proposes to reestablish these relations. The government's motives for this act are briefly stated as follows:

The supremacy of lay institutions has been finally established in our Republic and can never again be placed in question. The separation of State and Church has been established in our customs as well as in our laws. The Republic is, therefore, free to take any action which other motives may inspire in regard to its future relations with the Vatican. It considers that the time has now come to renew those traditional ties. France should be represented wherever questions of importance for its welfare are under discussion.

This year, when the treaties of peace that terminate the war are going into effect, is an especially opportune one for resuming such relations. Every modification of the frontiers of Central Europe involves religious problems. This is peculiarly true in zones inhabited by more than one nation, where conflicts of nationality and language are complicated by differences of faith. Many of these controversies have already been laid before the Roman curia and it is natural and proper that France should be represented there to support the demands of our allies and to back up the provisions of the treaty.

The new situation created in Syria, Palestine, Constantinople, and throughout the Near East, makes it necessary that we should be in accord with the Sovereign Pontiff in questions in which we are traditionally concerned, affecting a people whose political institutions are often intermingled with their religious legislation.

Even in France, the Peace of Versailles presents problems demanding immediate settlement, such as the application of the ancient Concordat to Alsace-Lorraine, and the fate of the missions in the former German colonies in Africa.

AGRARIAN reform is no longer a mere theory in the politics of South-eastern Europe. Indeed, the social revolution has brought speedier results for the peasants of that region than it has for the industrial proletariat. More than five million acres in the old kingdom of Roumania have already been distributed to landless cultivators. A law has just gone into effect in Greece which provides for the subdivision of the Turkish feudal holdings in the recently acquired territories and their allotment in small parcels to the present tenants. In Jugo-Slavia, the cabinet has recently published an ordinance paving the way for radical land reforms. All large estates are placed under the supervision of the government and in case they are not properly cultivated, they are to be administered directly by the authorities. Men familiar with the sentiment of the peasantry in that country consider that this is only the first step toward the abolition of large holdings.

WE quote the following pessimistic picture from *Vanguardia*, a leading paper of Barcelona:

We have had neither a government nor a parliament in Spain for the past two years. We are without a budget. Our deficit is enormous and it is growing daily. We are exporting things we require for our use at home while no attention is paid to fixing prices. Assassination has become a business and goes unpunished. One town is without bread, another without light, another without oil, and still another without coal. For months productive labor has ceased, owing to strikes and lockouts. Each man does as he pleases regardless of the laws which usually govern civilized communities. Yet the country continues to exist in the midst of this orgy of anarchy. Its sons, rich and poor, capitalist and laborer, spend more than ever before, and waste their earnings on superfluous luxuries.

## COUNT BERNSTORFF'S MEMOIRS

### I

THE memoirs of Count Bernstorff, which have recently been published at Berlin, deal entirely with the period when he was Ambassador at Washington, except for a short introductory discussion of German foreign policy from the days of Bismarck up to the outbreak of the war. Bernstorff succeeded Count Speck von Sternberg as German Ambassador at Washington in the winter of 1908-09. Previously he had been Consul-General at Cairo. The following quotations from the book define the former Ambassador's attitude toward the various theories of foreign policy so vigorously debated in his country during the pre-war period:

To me Germany's future welfare depended upon liberal evolution toward a unitary and parliamentary government. This implied consistent friendship with and *rapprochement* toward England and the United States. I thereby adopted, to use a modern expression, 'the westward viewpoint.' To-day when we stand as mourners at the grave of our national aspirations and ambitions, I am more than ever convinced that a steadfast policy in that direction might have warded off the catastrophe that has befallen us. . . . Had we adopted such a westward orientation, we might have counted upon England's serving in a friendly way as a check on what I might call our explosive economic development. That would have been no disadvantage for us, in my opinion.

The truth is that we were growing too rapidly. We might have developed more solidly and substantially, though perhaps more slowly, as a junior partner of the British Empire. The policy of France and Japan since the beginning of the present century illustrates what I considered wise. We thus might have avoided overheating the boilers of our industrial expansion. We would not have surpassed England so quickly as we did by plunging ahead without restraint, but we would have avoided the deadly peril in which we

involved ourselves by incurring the enmity of all our neighbors. . . . I am convinced that England's commercial rivalry, upon which we must count in any case, would not have prevented friendly relations with that country if we had been willing to make common cause with its government against Russia.

The policy of keeping a free hand, which we followed up to the war, staked everything upon complete success. Prince Bülow, the father of this principle, would probably have been able to steer us through the danger zone which it implied without involving us in war. In that case we possibly might have become strong enough in a few years more to have placed that danger zone behind us, and to have reached a point where we were practically immune from military aggression.

Bernstorff uses the term 'danger zone' for the period in Germany's political and economic expansion during which its rivals and enemies would still weigh in the balance whether it were less dangerous to try to crush Germany by force or to permit it to expand peaceably.

These were in substance the opinions of Count Bernstorff upon German policy while he held a post where he was cut off by the enemy from cable and postal communication with his home government. He believed that Germany had passed the climax of its military and political success after the Battle of the Marne, and that it was consequently the first duty of the Imperial Government to conclude an enduring peace based on the *status quo ante*. In this opinion Count Bernstorff was strongly supported by President Wilson, who likewise believed that after the Battle of the Marne it would be impossible to settle the issue of the