

Freedom

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NOTES.

The Armistice Terms.

The terms of the armistice granted to Germany, Austria and Turkey are terms of conquest and humiliation—as bad as the Brest-Litovsk Treaty denounced so much in Allied countries. The Austrian Empire has broken to pieces, the Turkish Empire is reduced by half, and Germany loses Alsace-Lorraine, the Rhine Provinces and her Polish Provinces. There is no question of “self-determination.” The populations are treated as of no account. The British Empire acquires Egypt, Mesopotamia, and probably most of the German Colonies. France will now rule Germans, and Italians will rule non-Italian peoples. Russian territory occupied by Germans and Turks is not to be handed back to Russian control, but is to be occupied by the Allies, to assist them in their war against the Russian Soviets. The gold taken from Russia by Germany is to be handed to the Allies. The whole of the German Navy is either to be disarmed at home or given over to the British Navy. And the people of Germany and Austria are to be starved by blockade until they form Capitalist Governments suitable to the Allies. Thus does Might triumph over Might, and sow seeds for future wars. Yet the *Star*, with that hypocrisy for which the *Cocoa Press* is notorious, had the audacity to say: “The terms of the armistice are now before the world, and the world is marvelling at their lenity, their magnanimity, their chivalry.” As the German people will also have to pay enormous indemnities to the Allies, it will be a generation or two before they can recover from the effects of these terms. But Revolution may upset all these plans of Allied Capitalism before many months are over.

Churchill on Possible Disorders.

Speaking on November 8 on the question of the change from war to peace industry, Winston Churchill said a complete stoppage of war work would not be justified on public grounds. Although “Germany comes to the council table handcuffed and incapable of resuming the struggle, yet we shall not be entitled to dismiss altogether from our minds the possibility of considerable disorders breaking out.” As a result of the overthrow of the Central Powers, a complete breakdown is threatened, or is operative, of “respect for constituted authority.” And he said: “Russia, Persia, the Balkans, Turkey, China and Mexico are all in various stages of anarchy, disorder, and distress. Russia is the most melancholy spectacle of weltering chaos which a vast community has ever presented, and the victorious Powers must amend the state into which the world has fallen. In plain language this means that “the war to end war” has made it necessary to fight further wars so as to re-establish “constituted authority” and wipe out Bolshevism and Socialist Republics and “make the world safe for plutocracy.” If there is no Revolution in this country or France to prevent it, the Spring of next year will see the Allies invading Russia in force. This will serve the double object of overthrowing the Bolsheviks and providing an excuse for continuing conscription and the most important regulations under the Defence of the Realm Act, which can be used in cases of disorders in England or Ireland. Winston Churchill never mentioned disorders in the British Isles, but he had them in mind. As Home Secretary, he swamped the railways with soldiers during the railway strike six or seven years ago, and he belongs to that class which thinks bullets are a good diet for strikers, so he intends to keep a supply in stock.

Their Reward.

After the workers and soldiers in this country had spent a full week in rejoicing at the great triumph of Liberty, Justice and Right over the brutal forces of Might and Tyranny, they woke up. They suddenly realised that Peace hath her sacrifices no easier to bear than War. To almost a million people it meant unemployment in a week or two, and no wages in place of the high wages they were then earning. With prices of food steadily increasing, the outlook was black indeed. But immediately and without hesitation the Government came to the rescue. With that generosity with other people's money for which they have

been noted during the war, they launched a scheme of “Out-of-Work Donation for Ex-Service Men and Civilian Workers,” under which men over 18 will be paid 24s. a week for 13 weeks in the next six months; women over 18 to get 20s. a week; boys and girls under 18 get half those rates. In addition, 6s. per week will be allowed for the first child under 15, and 3s. each child after. So a married man will get 36s. per week for himself, his wife and three children for the first 13 weeks, and afterwards they will live on what they saved during that time. If they feel hungry they can read Lloyd George's speeches on the future of this great and glorious Empire, or reckon up the profits of Government contractors during the war. In any case, the Government deserve great credit for their generous attempt to prevent the spread of Bolshevism and to reward those who, with Lloyd George's and God's help, gained such a splendid victory.

“Dora” and an Amnesty.

We hope a strong and determined agitation will be set on foot to abolish the restrictions that “Dora” has put on freedom of speech, press and pen, and also to demand an amnesty for all political prisoners. Now that the war is practically at an end, it will be difficult for the Government to uphold these restrictions on military grounds; but we notice that many speakers and writers are demanding the suppression of Bolshevik propaganda, one person defining Bolshevism as “the class war,” whilst a correspondent in the *Mail* said instead of Bolshevism it should be called “Anarchism.” At the present moment no news or telegrams can come through from the Continent except with the permission of the Censor. It is almost incredible to think that this country of forty million people should allow themselves to be treated as children who are not fit to know what is being done in their name by the Government. Regarding an amnesty of political prisoners, the C.O.s ought to be released at once so as to spare the lives of the so-called “Absolutists,” some of whom are in a dying condition. We believe that the heroism and silent suffering of these men will be remembered by future generations long after the exploits of V.C.'s and D.S.O.'s will have been forgotten. Wherever meetings are held a demand for their release should be expressed. Let us get them out.

“Direct Action” at Albert Hall.

The management of the Albert Hall received a severe shock when the Electrical Trade Union cut off the electric light as a reprisal for refusing the use of the hall for a *Herald* meeting. Their surrender was so abject that they agreed to let Lansbury and his “revolutionary supporters” have it for two nights running. The action of the electricians might be carried out by other Unions indefinitely. For instance, the railwaymen and miners might stand still for a day or two until the Government agreed to withdraw their troops from Russia and other places where they have gone to safeguard “law and order.” Compositors and machine operators might refuse to print telegrams from reactionaries in Russia, Germany, France and other places unless similar space was given to workers' organisations in those countries to put their side of the case. Trade Unionists might refuse to print or carry capitalist papers until the *Tribunal*, *Socialist*, *Satire*, *Solidarity*, *Freedom*, and other papers which suffer from the censorship and persecution of the military and police regained their liberty. But as a rule Trade Unionists are content with passing resolutions of protest about the wickedness of Northcliffe & Co. whilst taking their money for printing their papers. Let us hope that the delightfully simple example of the electricians will be followed on an ever-increasing scale by workers generally. It is as easy as dropping bits of paper in ballot-boxes, and is much more effective.

Peter Kropotkin.

La Bataille (Paris) of November 26 states that Peter Kropotkin is not in prison, as has so often been stated in the Press, but is enjoying full liberty in Tcharkov. We hope he will long enjoy the rest he has earned by a strenuous past.

SOCIAL REVOLUTION ON THE MARCH SOVIETS v. PARLIAMENTS.

Hearty congratulations to our German, Austrian, and Balkan comrades on the splendid successes they are achieving all along the line. It seems probable the Socialist Republic formed in the North of Germany will be pronounced Bolshevik, although possibly at first the South German Republic (a more Catholic district) will be run by the more moderate Socialists. But the Soviet form of organisation seems to be winning everywhere.

There is the same lack of information, thanks to the Censor, as was the case with Russia as to the economic and social results gained up to the present. We hope to have more details next month. But it seems evident that the Soviets have gained control in Berlin, and that the Spartacus group is steadily coming to the front, but at a much quicker rate than was the case with the corresponding Bolshevik group in Russia.

An interesting feature has been the capture by the Communist Group (Spartacus) of some of the big daily papers, and the issuing of them during several days as Bolshevik papers by the Soviet.

The Entente politicians seem to be definitely adopting the policy of trying to starve out the whole German population to prevent the success of our comrades there. As was the case in the Russian revolution the capitalist jingo papers are all for the calling of a Constituent Assembly, and it is now proposed they shall insist on this before sending supplies of food. It is extremely significant, the confidence of the Allies that a Parliamentary Assembly can be depended upon to trick the workers in some lawyer-like way out of any real changes, and how fearful they are of the revolutionary workmen's type of organisation—the Soviet. But on October 17 the Russian Bolsheviks said: "We are ready to come to the help of the German proletariat with bread and arms and revolutionary experience." A union of the existing Soviet and Socialist Republics may checkmate the Entente schemes. Incidentally this offer does not suggest a famished helpless Russia.

A multitude of people seem to be wondering if this General Election is going to prove the last one in connection with a British Parliament. Irish Labour Organisations and Sinn Feiners seem to have decided that it is more antiquated than that, and so far as they are concerned they consider the last election took place several years ago. Many signs seem to point to the probability that we are witnessing the final stages, and that these will soon be passed in the disappearance from the world of Capitalist Parliamentary Government. And what a huge fraud it has been all the time, with its pretence of looking after the interests of the whole community, of safeguarding freedom, justice, and the rights of all! So plausible did all these pleas seem that it even deceived our brilliant friends the Guild Socialists. All through the history of representative Government clear-sighted thinkers have seen and proclaimed what a horrible mockery it was, but it is only quite recently that great masses of people in capitalist countries have come to understand the reality of this, and to see that if not always, or even often intentionally, it was none the less certainly in its actual working out the support of privilege, exploitation and mastership, and the bitter foe of all real human progress, of all the wonderful possibilities that the intellectual and mechanical development of the last century or two had put within man's reach.

The results of the activities of the politicians who make up the political State machine, all parties included, have been so incredibly bad that words fail even approximately to describe them, or to express a fraction of the contempt thoughtful men and women in all civilised countries are beginning to feel for politicians.

Who could have imagined a few years ago that the final result of all the Socialist propaganda carried on in connection with the political Labour Party and the big funds expended on Labour candidatures would culminate in such a success as having eight members of their Party in the Government, and that this should be the worst reactionary period during this generation, that the Government of which they were members should set out to crush the first definitely Socialist Society as soon as it appeared, and are preparing to play this part wherever Socialism begins to win in any part of the world. Lloyd George says he is not afraid of vested interests, but of vested prejudices. Henderson writes that a strong Labour Party would be a bulwark against revolutionary disorders, whilst Roberts, Barnes, Hodge and Co. talk still more stupid and reactionary nonsense. Fortunately, Social Revolution is on the march, and the opinions of these people will soon lack even antiquarian interest.

Compare this with the results obtained in twelve months by revolutionary Soviets in Russia, or in as many days by revolutionary Soviets in Germany, Austria, or the Balkans, who

have profited by the revolutionary experience of their Russian comrades.

As Lenin well says: "The history of the Capitalist Parliamentary and the Capitalist Constitutional countries shows that a change of ministers means very little, for the real work of administration is lodged in the hands of a colossal army of officials, and this army is permeated with the anti-democratic spirit. By thousands and millions of threads it is connected with the landlords and the capitalists, and is dependent upon them in every way. This army breathes only the atmosphere of capitalist relations with which it is surrounded. It is congealed, shrivelled with age, stiff and inert; it is powerless to escape from this atmosphere, unable to think, feel, or act otherwise than it has always acted. This army is imbued with admiration for rank and for certain privileges of 'State' service, and its upper strata are enslaved by Stocks and Bonds to Financial Capital, in a measure acting as its direct agents, the executors of its interests and influence.

"The history of the War is very instructive in this, as in many other respects. It is now clear as day how the invisible power, the class owning and dominating the economic apparatus in all countries, owned also the representative Government, and through it tried to perpetuate secret diplomacy, financial speculation, capitalist exploitation of the masses, all factors inevitably leading to both internal and external wars, and all this in the name of the people."

To attempt by means of this old thoroughly bureaucratic apparatus, which thwarts everything democratic, the carrying out of any serious reform is a huge delusion, a deception of the people.

Social Revolution has now spread in various stages of development in a broad, unbroken line across two continents, from the Pacific to the North Sea, from Vladivostok to Hamburg, and everywhere the instrument for realising the Revolution is proving to be the Revolutionary Soviet. Representative assemblies are everywhere the rallying cry and centres for all kinds of counter-revolutionary elements—militarists, capitalists, landlords, and their hangers on.

"In the first place, the Soviet is a local body, of the people and with the people. A member of the Soviet represents no more than about five hundred votes. He can be at any time replaced; he is always in sight—no invisibles allowed. Furthermore, the Soviet works 'centripetally'—the central body is controlled by the local constituent bodies. In this respect the Soviet government may be compared to a central meteorological bureau, whose usefulness and efficacy, whose very reason for existence, is determined by the workings of the local weather bureau. The Soviet, being close to the people, must express realities literally, as the people itself expresses them. It is probably the most important contribution of the Russian Revolution."

It has been an impressive feature of recent developments that as soon as this practicable alternative to capitalist governments and capitalist society showed itself at work numbers of women who worked hard to gain the vote had, even before some of them could use it, grasped with an almost intuitive rapidity the main facts of the situation, have frankly given up their previous ideas, and have now nothing but scorn for the antiquated deceptive Parliamentary institution, and are keenly working to make the triumph of Soviets universal.

In Russia there are several signs that the Bolshevik Soviets are not merely maintaining their positions but are getting stronger. On October 21 the Moderate Social Democrats (Mensheviks) practically came over to Bolshevik ideas. They announced their approval of the Bolshevik Revolution, and declared they would take no part in any coalition with capitalistic leanings, even though it might sail under democratic colours, and asserted themselves in agreement with the Soviet Government in its efforts to free Russia from foreign invaders. This conversion of the Mensheviks to Bolshevik views is very significant of the present position in Russia, as all the delegates, except about a dozen elected for the Constituent Assembly that never met, were either moderate Socialists or Bolsheviks and their allies. This destroys all plausible pretences for the intervention asked for by Kerensky, Axelrod, and others, as well as the hypocritical claims of militarists and capitalists that they were going to rescue the real Russia from tyrants, etc. What about the Coalition Liberals' electioneering leaflet on Bolshevism with its imbecilities supposed to be based on piercing appeals from these very Mensheviks? The mental calibre of the authors of electioneering literature seems to reach a very low standard, yet there may be people who do not know the facts who will be taken in by this leaflet. They should read the reply given by Tchicherin, the People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, to a protest presented by the Neutral Ambassadors against what they called the Soviet "Reign of Terror."

The present size of FREEDOM, unfortunately, will not allow the printing of this in full. He says they have produced no single definite case, but have merely repeated the romances and calumnies of the Russian bourgeoisie against the Red Army.

"Do these representatives of the Neutral Powers realise that already for four years an international war has been raging; a war into which the peoples of the whole world have been hurled by a small clique of bankers, generals and bureaucrats, for whose pleasure and gain the workers are stamping one another out and cutting one another's throats? Are they aware that in this war, not only have millions been killed in the trenches, but even unprotected women and children have been murdered by the bombing of unfortified towns by both belligerent camps? Do they know that one of the warring nations condemned millions to death from starvation by cutting off the bread supply, hoping thereby to force the other party to beg for peace to prevent the starvation of its children? Have they heard that the war lords have imprisoned hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens in enemy countries, where far from home they are forced to do hard labour, and are deprived of every means of legal defence? Further, have they no tidings of the capitalists in belligerent countries who have robbed the peoples of the right of assembly, the right to strike, and the freedom of the press? The bourgeoisie is waging a reign of White Terror there against the workers, silencing every attempt at protest either by imprisonment or by sending the workers to the front, where every thought of their human rights will be stifled within them!

"Did the representatives of the Neutrals ever hear anything about the shooting down of the Sinn Feiners in Dublin, or the murder without trial of Skeffington, and several other Irishmen? Do they know of the White Terror in Finland, of the tens of thousands who were shot, of the tens of thousands of workers languishing in prison against whom no charge ever has or will be made? What of the murdered masses of workers and peasants in the Ukraine, and of the wholesale shooting of the workers by the 'good' Czecho-Slovaks, these hirelings of the Franco-British Governments? The Neutral Governments heard of all these crimes without dreaming of a protest, for are not they themselves ever ready to shoot down the workers should they demand their rights or revolt? One need hardly recall the recent military suppressions of workers' demonstrations in Denmark, in Norway, in Holland and in Switzerland. Even before there is a rumour of revolt the military is called into action.

"We advise them not to threaten us with the indignation of the civilised world, whilst they are besmirched from head to foot with the blood of the workers, but to tremble before the just anger of the masses which are revolting against a 'civilisation' guilty of bringing endless sorrow to the world, and causing the wholesale slaughter of mankind.

"The majority of the Russian people at their Second Congress entrusted the Government of the country to the Workers' and Peasants' Government. Only a handful of capitalists, who desire to win back the banks and the factories, a few estate owners who would wrest their estates from the peasants, a group of Generals, filled with the desire to subjugate the peasants with the whip as hitherto; these alone disregard this decision of the Russian people. With the help of foreign gold they mobilised counter-revolutionary bands, with whose help they cut off the bread supply from Russia, so that the Russian Revolution should be starved out. Seeing the hopelessness of overthrowing the Workers' Government they set about causing counter-revolutionary risings, which force the workers from their employment and prevent the restoration of the country. It is these groups who have betrayed the South, North and East Russia into the hands of foreign imperialists by grasping any available foreign bayonets.

"We openly declare that neither hypocritical protests nor supplications will withhold punishment from those who bear arms for the capitalists against the workers and the poorest peasants, or who try to starve them and inveigle them into new capitalist wars. Equal rights and freedom will be assured to all those who do their duty loyally as citizens of the Socialist Workers' and Peasants' Republic."

Lenin had an article on September 20 in *Pravda* urging less attention by journalists to high politics, and more to the actual daily life of the people, to the progress of the nationalised factories, agricultural undertakings, the local Soviets, etc., so as to maintain a living contact with and intense interest in all that touches the real masses of the people.

A glorified Red Van was recently fitted up and decorated by the Guild of Artists in the shape of a propaganda train, which took a seven days' journey along one of the main railway lines, selling 20,000 books and pamphlets, and presenting local Soviets in the district with 60,000. An immense number of journals, manifestoes, and tracts were distributed, and numbers of meetings held. A cinematograph on board took films of the life of the country for use by their educational organisation.

A central organisation has recently been founded to promote research and study of Social Science, corresponding to similar bodies already existing for Arts and Science. £348,000 has been voted for it for the first twelve months, and it is taking steps to establish in the Provinces scientific institutions, laboratories, museums, libraries, etc.

Madam Gorki, perhaps better known as Marie Andreef (an actress), has been appointed the commissary for the Soviet Theatres of Petrograd.

The Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution was celebrated by the publication of a Year Book giving accounts of the work done during the first year of proletarian dictatorship. Twenty-five million roubles were said to have been voted in connection with the festivities, one million roubles to provide meals for the children.

Up to August, 1,000 metal works and coal mines had been socialised. All the big rubber, electric, chemical works and sugar factories had been taken over by the Soviets. A coal shortage had been averted by utilising coal dust and naphtha residues in the form of briquettes, some large works being established by Soviets for their manufacture.

It is reported from capitalist sources in Siberia that the only reliable labour to be had is that of prisoners, the average working class being thoroughly demoralised by Bolshevik rates of pay and hours of work. Troops are urgently wanted to alter this deplorable state of things. The counter revolutionary Siberian Government at Omsk, in whose support Col. John Ward, Labour M.P. for Stoke, showed such perverted zeal last month, has met with much antagonism from strikers, and in an endeavour to cope with this has shot five strike leaders.

The Co-operative Section of the Supreme Council for National Economy seems to be going strong. It has opened a credit of 100 million roubles at the State Bank for its operations. The Supreme Council has obtained between 500 and 600 million yards of textile materials, which are being distributed through the Soviet depôts in the agricultural districts in direct exchange for corn. Homes are being provided for the badly housed in the big towns by commandeering rooms in flats and buildings where more are occupied by the present inhabitants than they require. Furniture has also been provided for these rooms by similar means.

F.C.C.

A MOONEY CASE IN AUSTRALIA.

A case similar to that of Tom Mooney in America is that of the prosecution of twelve members of the I.W.W., who were sentenced to savage terms of imprisonment at Sydney, N.S.W., in November, 1916. They were charged with (1) conspiring to burn down buildings, (2) conspiring to set Tom Barker (one of their comrades) free by unlawful means, and (3) conspiring to create sedition. After their arrest and before their trial Mr. Hughes, the Conscriptionist and fire-eating Premier, denounced them as though they had already been found guilty. The verdict of the jury, therefore, was a foregone conclusion. But agitation has forced the Government to make an investigation into the methods adopted to gain a conviction, and according to the *Maoriland Worker* the following facts have come to light, and show the tools that Capitalism uses against the workers:

Of the four witnesses against the I.W.W. men, now doing ferocious sentences of imprisonment in the N.S.W. jails, two, the Goldsteins, were under arrest for forgery before the cases commenced, and were released by the police on their promise to help in the "frame-up." Another, McAllister, after beginning proceedings with a claim for £2,000 against the Government for "work done" was found dead in mysterious circumstances, and the other, Scully, after being paid £370 by the Government was provided with £150 more and given a passage to America. Acting-Premier Fuller's Department paid him the money and arranged his departure. Scully left on the ship which conveyed the twelve Australian editors to San Francisco on their way to be drilled by Northcliffe. Fuller said he did not inform his colleagues of the assistance he had given to Scully because it was a "Departmental matter." Before leaving, Scully left with prominent Labourites a written testimony that the I.W.W. men were convicted on organised perjury.

This is the sort of "law and order" the capitalists wish to fasten on to Russia and other Revolutionary countries.

Death of J. Harrison, Leeds.

We regret to record the death of Jackie Harrison, at the age of 72, of heart failure. Comrade Frost, who sends the news, says he was one of the best of comrades, and will be much missed in the movement. Comrades like Harrison are the growth of years of hard work, and not easily replaced. He was buried at Beeston Hill Cemetery on November 20. A secular address by a comrade was the only ceremony, but the only one he would have wished.

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DO NOT VOTE!

The capitalists can certainly congratulate themselves that the mass of the people still believe in that fine old capitalist institution, Parliament. After reading current newspapers and magazines—Conservative, Liberal, Labour, and Socialist—one could almost believe that the people of this country lived in a state of liberty, which was due to the protective influence of their representatives at Westminster. Certainly Labour and Socialist papers admit that the workers have a few grievances, but they look to Parliament to remedy them. Everything can be done in a perfectly legal and constitutional manner, they say, if the workers will vote for Labour and Socialist candidates. Do you want a million new houses? Parliament will give you them. Do you want to increase wages and reduce the cost of living? Parliament will do it. Do you want to abolish conscription? Parliament will do it. In fact, Parliament can cure all our ills if we go about the work in the right way.

But when you ask these candidates how it is that the grievances of the workers have not been remedied by previous Parliaments, they say it is because of the class character of the members. And if you inquire further you will find that all the Franchise Acts were drawn in favour of the wealthy classes, and all the Parliamentary rules of procedure are so many barbed-wire entanglements to protect the fortress of Privilege and Fraud. Lord Salisbury said the whole of the procedure of Parliament had been carefully designed to hinder legislation and to maintain the present system. Read the history of any of the so-called "great reforms" passed by Parliament and you will find that they only became law when the agitation for them outside the House had reached a dangerous point—for instance, the Reform Act and the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Instead of being the source of justice, Parliament is really a machine built and perfected by the landlord and capitalist classes to help them to rob the people. It was built for that purpose alone and can never be anything but an obstacle to freedom.

Government has always meant the domination of the many by the few, who, until the French Revolution, ruled quite frankly in their own interests, and regarded their workers as unworthy of a voice in public affairs. But after that great upheaval the ruling classes became more careful and decided it was best to let the people think they had a share in their own government. So the vote was given to sections of the people gradually, and when it was found that no harm resulted to the exploiters, the franchise was extended until in most States almost every adult male has a vote, and in some the women also. But in every case the people are only allowed to decide who shall carry on the capitalist's Government of the many by the few is still the rule in this country, as it was before the French Revolution. Nothing has been altered. The landlords and capitalists hold all the means of life in their hands—the land and all the machinery—and the workers still have to ask their permission to work for bread. You cannot change the system by voting. The exploiters have drawn up the rules of the Parliamentary game in such a way that it is impossible for them to lose.

Workers of all countries, cease supporting the Parliaments of your exploiters! Unite and sweep away all the rotten and out-of-date institutions of your masters, and in their place build up Anarchist groups and organisations in which none shall be masters, but all shall be equals, producing as Communists and distributing as Communists, free men and women in a land freed from landlords and capitalists.

Do not vote! Do not elect new rulers, but sweep aside all who would curtail your freedom and keep you enslaved!

PRELUDES TO REVOLUTION.

When the war is over, so we are assured, we shall enter into a period of "reconstruction." The problems which have made life hard and difficult for working folk will all be solved, and prosperity with happiness is to be the common lot of all of us. Poverty and ignorance and unemployment will all be swept away, and apparently we are to enter into that long-fabled Utopia which heretofore has been only stuff for dreams. Only a few of us—our voices unheard amid the din of battle—are asking what is the meaning of "Reconstruction": what it is we are going to reconstruct?

The *Nation* shall supply us with part of our answer at least. In its issue of August 24 it said: "On equal pay for equal work we believe that the whole Labour World must take its stand if it is to avoid a pitiful struggle after the war between underpaid women and unemployed men. None the less, the difficulty in the way of this policy *cannot much longer be evaded*. The man feels that his pay is a family wage, while the woman has only herself to provide for. That has usually secured to him in the past a ground for demanding a higher scale of pay for equal work. The argument has its element of truth, though, in fact, nearly half the women in the labour market before the war had dependents, and, on the other hand, the employer does not differentiate between the bachelor and the married worker, or pay more to the fathers of large families. He pays the market price for labour, whatever the individual needs of the worker may be. The way of escape from this difficulty lies, we believe, in the proposal of 'family endowment'" (this hitherto an aristocratic privilege), "which we discussed in our issue of April 20. Let the State recognise by something like the present separation allowances that the mother performs a social service which is entitled to recognition, and, at the same time, by direct payments to her and grants for each child, ensure that the subsistence of families be left no longer to the hazard of commercial wages."

Though the writer does mix up women's wages with motherhood, the paragraph is significant. It indicates the flow of the current. Paragraphs and articles of similar import have appeared in all sorts of newspapers, magazines and pamphlets. The stream flows on: into what river it may be possible for us to discover.

The war, I am firmly convinced, marks the end of Wage Slavery, and we are beginning to learn that other and more subtle systems of slavery are possible for working people. Slavery is to be centralised and applied to the intellect of man; this is what "Reconstruction" is intended to mean; allowances are to take the place of wages.

When the war has come to an end there will arise an enormous demand for all kinds of foodstuffs. (In this connection it must be remembered that the Central Powers will enter the markets of the world as *customers*.) This demand will mean—supplies being strictly limited—high prices, and advantage will be taken by the Government—under the plea of regulating demand—to retain the present taxes on food, and even, it may be, to increase them. But demand being thus in flood will be extended to other commodities also. Furniture, clothing, jewellery, pianos, amusements of various kinds—under which head I include visits to the battlefields of France and of Belgium—books, toys, household labour-saving appliances; all these things and more will be in great demand. Prices will be high for two good reasons: first, the shortage in supplies; second, the depreciation of the currency by the over-issue of paper money.

Even though all this be regarded as a mere flight of the imagination, there remain yet two infallible happenings to take into account. And they shall be described by Mr. Gladstone. After the war in the Crimea he said: "When war comes and large sums are borrowed, two consequences follow:

1. An immense fictitious stimulus is given to labour at the time—and thus much more labour is brought into the market.
2. When that stimulus is withdrawn an augmented quantity of labour is left to compete in the market with a greatly diminished quantity of capital."

As soon as the makers of war material begin to reduce their establishments, as soon will this demand for foodstuffs and commodities be abated. It will be comparatively easy to knock off war bonuses, and even to reduce wages where there are men and women seeking employment and failing to find it. Though for a time working people will take such a condition of things very quietly, living meanwhile on the sale of their War Loan Stock. Account must also be taken of the fact that large numbers of them will be in receipt of pensions and Government allowances.

It is distinctly to the advantage of Financial Interest that War Loan Stock should be in its hands. Prices will tend to fall as larger and still larger quantities of it come into the market.

Instead of a pound for fifteen and sixpence, the investing worker is more likely to get six or seven shillings. This falling tendency in prices will be helped by the paper money in circulation, and if a gold currency should be restored the purchasing power of paper will diminish more and more.

As Financial Interest was saved from collapse when the war began by the issue of paper money, so is it likely to be saved once again at the coming of peace by the restoration of the gold standard of currency.

It has to be remembered also that many men will return from the war zone expecting to find their jobs waiting for them. Reinstatement will mean for those who now occupy these positions, unemployment. If there is no reinstatement then these discharged soldiers will swell the ranks of the unemployed. To extend demobilisation over twelve months will make the business more lingering, that is all.

This difficulty will be partially met by the employers, who, taking advantage of all this confusion and disorganisation, will set to work to promote and provoke strikes among their work-people. The strike weapon will be of enormous advantage to the employers in those days: they by such means being enabled to close down their works for a time, and by drawing on the unemployed reserve—no longer unskilled, be it remembered—can batten down wages.

Let us review the situation I have endeavoured to depict: As soon as the end of the war is in sight large numbers of munition workers will be discharged from their employment. For a time these discharged workers will make holiday on (a) their savings, (b) their investments in War Loan Stocks. For a brief period large demands will be made on the world's food supplies and on other commodities. But prices being high, savings will soon be exhausted, and the offering for sale in large quantities of War Loan Stock will bring down prices which may be offered for it. By the purchase of this stock and the restoration of a gold currency financial interests will be able to secure themselves against disaster. This is, in short, Part I. of the story.

Part II. begins with the transformation of these holiday-makers into unemployed men and women. The numbers of them will be increased as the men return from the front and take up their former positions. To reduce wages employers will resort to the promotion of strikes and lock-outs, thereby dealing a hard blow at Trade Unionism, out of whose funds strike allowances will have to be paid. Account should also be taken of the suggestion that owing to an increasing scarcity of orders many employers will desire to close down their works for a while.

It is at this point that Revolution begins: *what form it will take depends entirely on the thoughts and doings of working folk now.*

Two demands are being put forward. The one—which must inevitably be supported by all militarists—is the “State endowment of motherhood”; the other, the State subsidy of wages. Their adoption will mean complete mental and physical slavery; in a word, State Slavery. The reader should turn back to the quotation from the *Nation* which begins this writing, and by considering it carefully along with what has been said will see how incontestably capitalist interests will be buttressed and enlarged by the carrying into effect of this simple programme of two planks.

Motherhood is to be endowed, the argument being that children—working folk's children—are the property, and should be the care, of the State. Obviously, on such an assumption, it becomes the duty of the grown child to defend the State. It will therefore become subject to military training and discipline. Already, I hear, definite plans have been devised for the training of boys and girls on military lines after the war ends. That conscription shall be abolished in this country when peace is declared is not a serious proposition. The argument to be used in its favour is the menace of the peoples of the East, who are being rapidly “civilised.” Japan's intervention in Russia is a particularly bright beacon.

The second proposal, State subsidy of wages—I will quote the actual words which appear in a pamphlet now being circulated: “That every individual all the time should receive from a central fund some small allowance in money which would be just sufficient to maintain life and liberty (*sic*) if all else failed”—has a great deal to do with the National Debt. The interest on that debt has to be paid every year in the form of commodities and services. For the making of these commodities and for these services the workers will receive no wages whatever. For example, if the value of the commodities produced in a year is twelve hundred million pounds, and the interest payable on the National Debt is six hundred million pounds, two things result. First, that for profits, rents, salaries and wages only six hundred million pounds worth of commodities are available. Second, that the other six hundred million pounds worth of commodities becomes the property of those who are holders of Government Stock, Consols and War Loan. It follows therefore that if a device can be found for the cheapening

of the cost of production, that device will be acceptable to capitalist interests. The State subsidy of wages is such a device. Destitution and its cost will be abolished at the same moment.

Lest it should seem that I understudy “Old Moore” too closely I must remind myself—and my readers—that at large in the world there are other forces besides that of the cash-nexus. But I think—my premises accepted—I am justified in saying that here is a form of revolution, entirely acceptable to the exploiting classes, which they will help forward if they may. I must leave, however, to a further article the consideration of questions which have intruded themselves into this one and have not been answered.

JOHN WAKEMAN.

“LAW AND ORDER.”

In London.

It seems as though it is impossible for the Government to behave with dignity or decency in their treatment of Russians—unless they happen to be supporters of the old Tsarist régime. Their actions in the case of Litvinoff and other Bolshevik representatives lacked the dignity which one would expect from “His Britannic Majesty's Government,” and their actions recently in the case of less influential Russians lack decency and ordinary humanity.

On October 23 Mr. T. Goldervitch, of Cannon Place, E., was arrested at 7-30 a.m. by members of the C.I.D. and kept in custody at Leman Street police station. At 2 p.m. he was informed he must leave for Russia forthwith. His wife was permitted to see him in the presence of police officials, so no private conversation was possible. She was told she must decide by 5 p.m. whether or not she would accompany her husband to Russia. Owing to the shortness of time for preparation and the fact that she was under medical care with a view to an operation she was unable to accompany him. At 4 p.m. Goldervitch was taken home in charge of two police officials to take leave of his family; later he was removed to King's Cross, and on the following day, at 8-30 p.m., was entrained for the ship.

Mr. Habergritz, of Tottenham Street, W., was arrested at the same time, detained also about 36 hours in custody, and finally embarked with his wife and children for Russia.

Mr. Rembach, of Beaumont Square, E., was similarly treated, and allowed similarly inadequate time for preparation. And another individual in Manchester received the same brutal treatment.

When one remembers that these people will be put off the ship in the Arctic Zone, for which special warm clothing is necessary, the brutality of the whole proceeding seems malicious. As none of these Russians have ever committed a criminal offence here we can only put down their treatment to spite on the part of the Government.

In Switzerland.

Henri Guilbeaux, manager of *Demain*, and previously a member of the *Temps Nouveaux* Group, was arrested on November 15 at Vertoix Station, Switzerland, by order of the Procurer-General of the Confederation. His luggage was seized and found to contain a large number of books and manuscript pamphlets. Guilbeaux had recently been awarded the title of Russian citizen by the Soviet Government. Fifteen Russian Bolsheviks were arrested at Lausanne about the same time and brought before M. Calama, a judge who has been specially charged to make an inquiry into the activities of Russian Bolsheviks in Switzerland.

Our comrade Bertoni, editor of *Reveil*, has not yet been brought into court, although he has been in prison for some months. The Swiss authorities allege that he was engaged in a German plot, but no evidence has been published so far. In this respect the case resembles that of the Sinn Feiners who have been interned as pro-German plotters without trial or publication of the evidence.

TO OUR READERS.

The response to our appeal for funds was slightly better during the past month, and we hope that those who make a practice of giving presents at Christmas and New Year will send cash presents to FREEDOM. We really require at least £10 per month to enable us to pay our way. So now, comrades, let us start the New Year with plenty of money. There is also plenty of room for new agents for FREEDOM. With plenty of meetings being held all over the country, comrades could double or treble the circulation with a little energy; we must push Anarchist ideas among the people. Send us the cash and we will send you a bundle at 1s. 6d. per dozen (13), post paid.

The following sums have been received (December 5): C.B.W., 1s.; J.W., 1s.; H. W. Journet, 17s. 6d.; W. T. Shore, 10s.; P. Mitchell, 1s.; T. Burt, 1s.; G. Carr, 1s.; J. S. (Walthamstow), 1s.; E. C. Batstone, 2s. 6d.; M.B.H., 2s. 6d.; A. Peters, 2s. 6d.; E. Michaels, 3s.; R. Peddie, 2s. 6d.; P. Esteban, 2s. 6d.; Cooper (Hampshire), 1s. 6d.; Roe (Winchester), 1s.; Paul, 4s.; J. E. Collins, 1s.; B. Black, 10s.; J. Osborne, 1s.; R. Ranken, 2s. 6d.; J.S.R., 2s.; J. Colton, 2s. 3d.; A. D. Moore, 1s.

IS IT PEACE.

Europe is aflame with revolution and politicians are still talking. These are the vital facts that have emerged out of the welter of war. The European financiers, when they started the conflagration of war, forgot that fire can be a very good servant and a very bad master. Thus the news of the German revolution must have done much to damp the ardour of victory felt by the Allied financiers and statesmen. They certainly wanted to defeat Germany economically, but, being upholders of "law and order," they naturally wanted that defeat to be like so many of the military defeats of the war—"according to plan." But ever since the Allies first failed to isolate the Russian revolutionary bacillus and overthrow the Bolshevik Government, there has been grave danger of the spread of the infection Westwards.

The German revolution is a further proof that you cannot fool all the people all the time, and the panic-stricken financiers are beginning to look around for safety ladders.

In these circumstances it is not surprising to find the chants of hate against the Hun disappearing from our octopus press. Even the action of the Socialist Ebert and the ubiquitous Scheidemann, in harnessing the fiery steed of revolution with the worn-out bourgeois political creeds that the Majority Socialists have consistently supported throughout the war, has received the blessings of our corrupt press. On the other hand, the one-time hero, Liebknecht, is reported as having emerged from prison with impaired intellect, obviously because he still possesses the courage to attack *all* imperialists and capitalists of whatever nationality. Because of his opposition to the war he served to provide useful copy for our gutter press, and now because of his so-called Bolshevik tendencies the martyr's halo is torn from him and he becomes, according to our pressmen, a mere ranting lunatic.

But underneath all the victory orations of statesmen, and the reiterations in our daily press that because of our stable institutions and the greatness of our Constitution, our social and economic structure is really founded upon a rock, so there is the growing fear of revolution. Hence the haste to assist the present German Government to feed its people. Our masters know that once the German workers see through the fraud of Ebert-Scheidemann-Solf Government, another revolution must sweep away all vestiges of the capitalist régime that has brought the past four years' tragedy upon the world.

In their hearts our rulers know that many voices have been crying "Peace, peace," when there is no peace, and secretly they are making their preparations. For if Germany—that stronghold of discipline and law and order—is swept by Bolshevism, nothing can arrest its onward march Westwards. Hence their haste to crush the Bolshevik Government in Moscow. It was a well-known fact in September that the end of the war was near, yet a large body of "freedom-loving" British Tommies were then sent from England to Siberia with the expressed intention of putting down the Bolshevik movement in that country. Simultaneously a tissue of lies against the Russian Government appeared in the New York press, and was religiously telegraphed to all quarters of the earth. But not content with these careful acts of strategy our masters took the precaution of raiding all those offices suspected of having Bolshevik sympathies, and seized all literature that courageously reflected the truth. Since the signing of the armistice this has been followed by the Government's declaration not to abolish the censorship, and the reason for not doing so was frankly stated. Their mortal fear is lest brother-worker, without waiting for the politician's blessing, should stretch forth a hand of fellowship to brother-worker in other lands. For once the political shams and manufactured racial hatreds are removed, the reign of force and greed will automatically cease, and the fruits of victory will go to the exploited masses in all countries.

So we see in this war the colossal power of capitalism and its colossal weakness. So will we see in the peace that is to be a gigantic defeat or a great triumph. We are on the eve of momentous happenings. The usual political jugglery will go on, statesmen and their trusty henchmen will go like hucksters to the market place crying their wares. The cry of revolution among the masses will be met with the usual formula about putting a cross on a paper at the ballot-box. But the history of the past five years has taught many of us the true value of a "scrap of paper." The politicians, dazzled by the thought of power, fail to see that Europe has been riven asunder as by a mighty earthquake, and that all the scraps of paper the world might supply, well pasted though they may be, will fail to restore Europe on its old pre-war social and political basis.

Worn-out dynasties and governments have not been alone in falling. Something infinitely more vital to a nation's needs is

appearing on the ruins of tradition and authority. The force of new ideas is gaining ground, and the movement against centralisation is becoming apparent.

But even though Tweedledee and Tweedledum is triumphant at the coming polls, the economic condition of England will give the casting vote and determine our destinies. The social reform programme, whether put forward by the Coalition or by the Labour Party cannot even touch the fringe of the social unrest that has developed in intensity since the war broke out. No political party can ever hope to save the economic situation without an exceedingly bold scheme of reform. And as such a scheme cannot possibly be put into operation without wholesale expropriation of some kind, it is certain that any such scheme will be promptly shelved once the election is won for the Coalitionists. But the schemes put forward are all likely to be upon the familiar lines of the creation of fresh bureaucratic departments. Already the Government has sanctioned the extension of the Labour Exchanges for the purpose of registering the unemployed. But we have not yet heard that any far-reaching scheme of production for workers pauperised by the coming of peace has yet been made operative. There is no statesman living who possesses the magic power of placing the new wine demanded by the masses into the old worn-out political bottles. Collapse is inevitable sooner or later, and then we must face the problem of reconstruction which to-morrow will present to us.

Are we ready for this change? Have we the courage to break entirely with our old faiths and put our trust in Co-operation and Communism? There will then be no need to concern ourselves with this or that political victory. While our masters are counting votes, we can count our acres, our looms, our houses, and by direct action take charge of all those means of production which alone will bring us peace and victory.

Fellow worker, are you doing your bit in the great fight for liberty? Are you ready to leave Parliament, the statesmen and politicians to their eternal hair-splitting? Have you the courage to act for *yourselves* and control your own destiny? For not until then will victory be won and a lasting peace be ours.

"New Russia."

The Socialist Party of Ireland have published, under the above title, an "Anniversary Bulletin of the Bolshevik Revolution" of November, 1917. It contains the full text of the Russian Soviet Constitution, and articles by Sidney Arnold, R. McKenna, and Zelda Coates. It is a very handy booklet, and should be secured by all those who wish to know what a Soviet Constitution really is on paper; but we would remind enthusiasts of the words of Herbert Spencer: "Paper Constitutions raise smiles on the faces of those who have observed their results." Liberty depends on your power to protect it every day.

The booklet (price 3d.) can be obtained from the Socialist Party of Ireland, Room 3, Liberty Hall, Dublin.

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