

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A JOURNAL OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST RECONSTRUCTION

Vol. I, No. 8

OCTOBER 1, 1917

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The S. P. L. A. and Industrial Action

THE essential of the principles and tactics as advocated by the Socialist Propaganda League can be formulated in short as: "The overthrow of the capitalist system by mass action of the workers." **Mass action** to be: organized, democratic action of large groups of class conscious workers.

Class conscious because the action has to be towards victory of the workers.

Democratic because we only believe in action under control of the many and not of a few leaders. We believe in action of the masses directly and not in strong men policy, even when advocated under the name of direct action.

Organized because only a concerted action in a definite direction constitutes power and because only organized action can produce the elements for a new society.

The most effective and basic mass

action, no doubt, is the industrial action, and this form of action therefore has our unrestricted and fullest support. We also recognize, however, the importance of other forms of mass action: demonstrations based on a local grouping of workers including unorganized and non-industrial proletarians and even middle class sympathizers, general protests through series of meetings and demonstrations, etc.

We furthermore look upon the present State as the organized instrument of the capitalist class to keep the workers in submission and therefore consider it important to fight particularly those manifestations of the State that are most in the way of the emancipation of the working class.

Although the capitalist State is based on the economic power of the capitalists and has to fall when the economic power is lost, it is not less true that the capitalist State backs up that economic

power and that the economic power would break down very quickly if not protected by the organization and instruments of power of the State. The fight to change or to overcome or to disorganize the instruments of the State: militarism, police, courts, laws, churches, schools, corruption, intimidation, charity, is considered an important issue in the class struggle. Political action is a part of this fight, but can be only effective when backed up by mass action.

We do not want to wait until the capitalist State dies by lack of economic power, we want to take a hand in its downfall and to hasten the process. We expect that it will be possible to overcome the capitalist State before the industrial unions are so strong that they can take possession of the industries in defiance of the tremendous instruments of power of the modern Imperialistic State.

You cannot fight an enemy without

fighting his instruments of power, you cannot fight an army without fighting and annihilating its guns, its aeroplanes and submarines. Although it is true that these are "only" dead instruments worthless if not "backed up" by man power, it would be a rather dangerous tactic to fight the men only and leave the instruments of destruction unmolested, on the ground that they will become harmless as soon as we have captured the men that handle them.

We believe in a general class fight against our masters in the factories and against their powerful instruments organized in the modern State. This unity of action constitutes our general or political class fight, of which parliamentarism is only a part, the importance of which decreases with the growing impotence of Parliament, but which on the other hand can have a special interest in the fight for free speech during periods of utmost reaction and war.

Lenin on the War

IN justifying the position of the extremists as opposed to the provisional government, Lenin writes in the Pravda:

"The provisional government is in favor of continuing the same war that was started by the bloody Czar. It is in favor of maintaining the secret treaties without consulting the will of the people and without publishing their contents.

"We are opposed to all this.

"We advise all peoples without exception to put an end to the war without annexations, that is, to conclude a real democratic peace, giving freedom to all nations without exception. We want to make it clear to the people, that in order to get such a peace, it is necessary to lodge power exclusively in the hands of the Councils of Workers, Peasants, Soldiers and other delegates.

"For, as long as the power is in the hands of Capitalists and big land owners, the carrying on of the war depends upon the ruling class and all promises of a peace without annexations remain promises, the distrust of the working masses is inevitable, which means continuation of the war.

"It has been asked: if in Russia the power would be in the hands of the Councils of Soldiers and Workers, but such a revolution is not accomplished in Germany, a revolution namely which not only overthrows Wilhelm, but also the German Big Capitalists and Junkers—what will be our position under such circumstances?

"Our answer is: The power in the hands of the Councils of Workers and Soldiers means the power in the hands of the masses of the working class, the workers and peasants. And these groups indeed have no interest in annexations; not only in words but in fact do they denounce aggression, they actually refuse to build a power for the defense of capitalist profits.

"Under such conditions we accept the slogan of a revolutionary war against the capitalists of whatever country, for

such a war would mean in reality a war against the interests of Capital in general, and not a war in favor of the Capitalists of a particular country.

"It has been asked: How can we hasten the cause of peace in practice since it is impossible to end the war by simply putting the bayonets into the earth?

"Our answer is: it is impossible to end the war simply by the refusal of one of the warring countries to continue fighting. The direct practical method to end the war (unless of course by a victory of the revolutionary workers over the Capitalists) can be no

other than the fraternization of the soldiers at the front.

"What is required is our quick, energetic, general encouragement of all efforts at fraternizing of soldiers of both warring groups at the front."

This was written before the desperate Russian offensive put an end to the successful and, to the bourgeois of both groups, equally hateful fraternization at the eastern front. Rather than have the war end in democracy in the way outlined by Lenin, the rulers of the world ordered their Russian confederates to sacrifice anew the workers and peasants in a hopeless offensive.

Terrorizing the Workers

Ten thousand charges against 166 I. W. W.ers certainly means a record and to ask \$1,625,000—bail shows how valuable these workers are even to the capitalists. No doubt, the army of class-conscious workers appreciates the fighters in their cause higher than the enemy does and will go to the limit to back up the defence. Send money!

The Washington Administration is rushing a committee to Arizona, to investigate whether the I. W. W. is replacing the A. F. L. organization in the mining field, and what can stop this calamity. Certainly there could be no more definite condemnation of the tactics of the A. F. L.

The President has declared in a memorandum that he is very much interested in the labor situation in the mountain region and on the Pacific Coast, and that he is desirous of seeking some kind of a working arrangement arrived at for the future, particularly during the period of the war, on a basis that will be fair to all parties. He, therefore, sends a committee of personal representatives to lend sympathetic counsel and said to the State Government in the development of a better understanding between laborers and employers.

Even the New York Times has to admit the charge of German gold against the I. W. W. is purely an invention. "Contrary to general belief, no direct connection has been shown thus far between the leaders of the conspiracy and the German corruption fund." The noble soul adds, however, that this led to the belief that the full scope of the conspiracy's operations has not yet been revealed. There evidently will have to follow confiscation of a couple of tons more paper and documents to construct a proper frame-up.

The New York Times makes another important discovery: "So far as yet determined there was no single controlling head. A group of some size, the evidence indicates has directed the propaganda and the outrages.

That is exactly the trouble. If they could only take a few leaders in jail or pay them a bribe, but what about a conspiracy embracing all the members and sympathizers of the I. W. W., the membership of which grew tenfold under the oppression.

Senator Walsh of Montana, after a thorough investigation, has discovered—the Preamble of the I. W. W.! And he decrees "that there is no place in the American system for such an organization either in peace or in war."

The American Golden Heel

THE Pravda, the paper of Lenin and the Left Wing Socialists in Russia, published the following disclosure about the ill-fated Russian offensive in July:

"On June 27th a meeting was held in the Russian headquarters attended by Brussilov and other Russian generals, Minister Terestchenko, the American Senator Root, the British Ambassador Buchanan and the American General Scott.

"The decision for an offensive was only taken under strong pressure of President Wilson, who had fixed as the ultimate date July 1st, threatening to cut off financial negotiations in case of refusal.

"As the economic future of Russia greatly depends upon the financial support of the United States, the Russians were forced to agree to an offensive, after which decision Root, in accordance with instructions from Wilson, paid five million dollars to Minister of War Kerensky."

"American money kings are trying to put their golden heel on the neck of the Russian workers" we wrote in our issue of June 2nd, and we warned that there was not much time to lose if we wanted to prevent our plutocrats crushing the Russian revolution. Sooner than we could expect and through the direct action of "our" Government, young revolutionary Russia was secretly strangled and the rope was paid, for by the taxes of American workers, supposedly in control of this democratic republic.

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THE I. W. W. ON THE FIRING LINE.

THE I. W. W. is becoming the centre of the revolutionary stage in America. It has succeeded in making the reaction show its claws. It has struck terror into the hearts of the capitalist powers. "Suppress the I. W. W. with bayonet and rifle," urges the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. Everywhere the representatives of law and order are using the most brutal, contemptible and conspiratory methods against the I. W. W. The Federal government, engaged in waging an unselfish war for democracy, refuses to use its power to maintain the rights of the people, and, moreover, uses its power to assist the terrorizing of the I. W. W. The remarkable thing about the whole situation is that the strikes of the I. W. W. in the West are industrial uprisings, and not against the war; and yet, *ipso facto*, they are of a political nature. It is a confirmation, if any were needed, of the revolutionary theory that the effective way to prevent war is by using industrial power of the proletariat. The I. W. W. is on the firing line, in the front line trenches, and is acquiring revolutionary strength of great significance. Every class conscious worker must throw his support to a group that is intelligently and effectively waging the class struggle against Capitalism.

THE SITUATION IN RUSSIA.

THE provisional government of Russia has definitely proven its bankruptcy as a revolutionary force. In its compromises it has steadily drifted toward reaction. Premier Kerensky's declaration of a republic is an empty thing in itself, a move to strengthen his hands and secure an apparent mandate for his acts.

The Korniloff rebellion is a dark mystery. Kerensky apparently had yielded to most of the demands of the militarist Korniloff, and the rebellion, whether the responsibility lies upon Kerensky or Lvoff, or both, was a sinister move against the revolution, the purpose of which was to crush the revolutionary power in Petrograd and thereby strike at the revolution throughout Russia. The failure of the plot and the expose of its real animating purpose as a conspiracy has strengthened the real revolutionary forces.

The most significant recent development is the control of the Petrograd Council of Soldiers and Workmen secured by the Bolsheviks. This, more than anything else, shows that Russia

is revolutionary. And this new development is all the more significant in that it comes only a few months after an uprising of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd was suppressed. That uprising, which the American press at the time described as riots, now appears from later information to have been a formidable revolt that went far toward preserving the revolution from being directed into reactionary channels, that in its temporary defeat assured ultimate victory.

Moreover, the development is significant in that it shows that the revolution is finding itself. The Petrograd Council has made a number of almost fatal mistakes through its tendency to compromise. It allowed its members to become ministers in the provisional government and thereby assumed responsibility for its acts. It talked, while the government acted. While it issued manifestoes instinct with the revolutionary aspirations of the Russian democracy, the provisional government acted in a contrary manner and struck at the revolution. The council compromised, hesitated, apparently saw clearly but was afraid of what it saw and did not act. The resignations of Tscheydse, Skobelev and Tseretelli from the council and the election of Leon Trotzky as president of the Council in place of Tscheydse marks the definite defeat of compromise.

The reactionary character of the provisional government's actions is shown in the composition of the Moscow conference which it sponsored. It was a hand-picked affair and was in no way really representative of revolutionary Russia today. The delegates to this conference were divided as follows. 15 from Petrograd and Moscow Town Councils; 7 from other town councils; 100 from the Council of Soldiers and Workmen; 100 representing the peasantry, 400 the Zemstros; 300 the cooperative societies; 120 from industry; 200 from science and 400 representing the three Dumas. This alignment represents the conservative-revolutionary and bourgeois forces, and in no way was it typical of Russia today. It was out of this reactionary mass that Kerensky tried to snatch the power of imposing a dictatorship upon the revolution.

The situation in Russia is shaping itself definitely, and the immediate future will tell us the decision. It is clear that only the Bolsheviks can save the revolution from disaster, only a complete tearing up of things. Revolutions are dead if they pursue the legalistic and compromising methods of Kerensky and Tscheydse. There can, moreover, be no compromise with representatives of the bourgeois in a coalition government. The program of the Bolsheviks, the dictatorship of the revolutionary proletariat, is the need of Russia. And this dictatorship would not be for the purpose of establishing Socialism, but of using Russia as a revolutionary factor in the war, creating revolution in the rest of Europe, and assuring Russia the most liberal reconstruction possible at her stage of economic development. That is the program of Lenin and the real revolutionary forces.

The Stockholm Betrayal

By S. J. Rutgers.

THE proceedings in Stockholm are showing all the signs of weakness and decay of the Old International. Originated by Huysmans and Troelstra, representatives of the past, it was bound to be a failure.

From the very beginning, it used diplomatic methods and means of intrigue. Troelstra even travelled to Berlin and had a conference with the secretary of war, who gave him some secret information which led Troelstra to publish the statement that the world would be surprised about the liberal terms of a German peace. Troelstra and Huysmans from the very start intended to cooperate also with the German majority Socialists, the traitors of the Scheidemann type, the servants of the German Kaiser. Stockholm was not only bound to become a Congress of Social Patriots, it was essentially to become a tool of German diplomacy, not only to further its imperialistic world interests, but still more to deceive its own working class into the belief that the German Government wanted a peace acceptable to the workers.

The refusal of the Entente Governments to grant passports to their respective Socialists, for the first Stockholm Conference, tended to cloud the issue still more. The fact of this refusal was so outrageous, so brutal, that the fight for freedom to participate in whatever International Conference we might wish to hold overshadowed the issue whether this special conference served our purpose. If the Governments had not interfered in their usual despotic way, most likely the Left Wing Socialists all over the world would have refused to participate in this Stockholm Intrigue. Even as it was, the German minority Socialists through a letter written by Mehring protested most emphatically against any conference, in which the majority Socialists should be represented. Lenin, for the Russian Left Wing, and the minority party, the S. D. P. in Holland, also flatly refused to acknowledge the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee as representative of Proletarian interests. Under these circumstances, there never was held a Stockholm Congress, but the failure served the German interests as well, because it strengthened the arguments of the Imperial Government, that the failure to get peace is solely due to the attitude of the enemy. No doubt, the lull in the labor strikes and riots in Germany, which in April of this year looked quite promising, is partly due to the plotting of the Stockholm social diplomats.

It is to be regretted that the Russian Committee of Soldiers and Workers did not denounce more emphatically the Huysman-Toelstra-Branting diplomatic move. Instead they concentrated their energy in forcing the Entente Governments to grant passports to Socialist delegates.

In this they were partly successful, but at the same time fell into another trap. In their endeavor to convince the Governments that the peace term "no annexations and no indemnities" was acceptable, they degraded their formula to a new diplomatic scheme.

Although the Entente powers are utterly opposed to "no annexations and no indemnities" in the sense of the Russian Socialists they accepted the phrase, as being sufficiently vague and flexible to suit any purpose of conquest and humiliation. Once the Russians made an appeal to the Governments of the Allies, they lost the sound foundation of proletarian class-power, and the diplomatic intrigue turned against their own efforts. Stockholm turns out largely into a diplomatic move in the struggle for the support of the Russians, and chances now become more favorable to the Allies. For this reason we may expect in the near future cooperation from the Entente Governments in granting passports, and no doubt the United States will then have to give up its stubborn refusal.

But this new phase in the Stockholm business is doomed as well by its diplomatic character. It may not turn out an Imperial German Conference, but it cannot escape being essentially a tool of Imperialism in some form. At all events it will have nothing to do with the proletarian New International of the future.

We sincerely hope that the Russian Council of Soldiers and Workmen will give up its attitude in favor of a general International Congress, including Social Patriots and diplomats. As long as it leaves the organization of the International Congress into the hands of the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee, the diplomatic character of the Stockholm International guarantees failure in so far as proletarian interests are concerned. Left Wing Socialists should denounce and expose this new fraud and demand the exclusion of Social Patriots of all shades.

But we may still hope that the pressure of Left Wing Socialists in Europe and particularly of the group Lenin in Russia will induce the Committee of Soldiers and Workers to take this thing in their own hands and to issue a call to unite delegates in Petrograd, representing those workers who stand uncompromisingly against war and in favor of proletarian mass-action for the overthrow of Capitalism.

REVOLT IN AUSTRALIA.

Australia is experiencing a general strike of soldiers and workers. Neither boats nor trains are running. Australia is demanding peace at once and has forced the release of some of the political prisoners who have been convicted in the last year. Some of these are members of the I. W. W. In July the government declared the I. W. W. an illegal organization in Australia. Now soldiers and workers are singing their songs and selling their newspapers.

Although Frank Little was hanged, the strike in the copper mines of Butte are still unbroken, and victory expected. And if they hang them all, who will do the mining.

Neither silk gloves nor the hangman's noose will bring labor down if once aroused to the realization of its strength.

The Need of A Socialist Revolution

By Justus Ebert.

THE war is forcing millions of young men to look about for some way to avoid its terrors. They are turning to the Socialist movement for relief. It will not be able to give them any, unless it first undergoes a radical transformation, in keeping with the general tendencies of the times. For the Socialist movement builds on a foundation in which Socialism is turned topsy-turvy and thereby rendered impossible of any achievement, except that of helping along the capitalist cataclysm. Socialism is primarily an economic philosophy, based on the irreconcilable class struggle caused by the evolution of capitalist property and exploitation. The Socialist movement is primarily a political movement, seeking office—so-called political power—and engaging in political jobbery and capitalist imperialism to secure and retain it. Having no economic basis—no definitely organized class interests to back it and through which to exert its power—the Socialist movement, as defined above, has become a movement of national reform and compromise, if not worse. It is now in a position of less actual power, though possessing greater prestige, because of its possibilities, than ever before. How then can it help the young men who come to it in this, their hour of extremity? Only by a change of base, a revolution in accordance with the times!

These words, be it said, are not written to discredit Socialism and to aid Capitalism. On the contrary, they are written to strengthen Socialism, in order that it may ultimately triumph over Capitalism. The most essential way to do this is to look the facts in the face. And the facts are that Socialism to-day is powerless because it has built a political structure on a foundation of capitalist exigencies rather than working class economic power. Is the Socialist movement going to continue to make this time-honored and tragic mistake? It looks like it!

There is an old proverb according to which one cannot make a fist without fingers. But the Socialists of the world are trying to make a political fist without economic fingers. According to their own Socialist philosophy this is an absolute impossibility. Yet they are, apparently, intent on persisting in the impossible. That France should have had Millerandism, Germany Scheidemannism and pro-Kaiserism, Australia, Hughes and Imperialism—that every country on the face of the globe where Socialism and Laborism have attained commanding political power should be a capitalist-istically governed, though socialist-ically legislated, country has been a puzzle to these Socialists because they are surface-thinkers ignoring the fundamentals of their own teachings. They are so naive and innocent (?) to believe that a Socialist commonwealth is possible on a basis of capitalist ownership and exploitation, if only Socialists of their own kind are given powers of administration! So far as they and their working-class victims are concerned, Marx lived and died in vain. They never got the kernel of his economic

philosophy, according to which the mode of production and distribution is the main factor in determining the superstructure of society. And what is more, despite their high-sounding academic titles and extremely learned theoretical hairsplittings and excuses, they never knew how to apply the Marxian philosophy. The result was that they became the handmaids and gunmen of imperialistic capitalism—traitors to the working class, all!

Now, if Socialism is to become something else than a ghastly historic mistake—if it is to become a factor in modern life—it must stop standing on its head and get back on its feet—back to first principles and proletarian sources. Take notice that in the world-war, capitalist newspapers watch with much anxious attention, strikes abroad that may prove a means of crippling military plans and ending the war in favor of the Allies. Strikes have also been watched with intense eagerness by Socialists, who see in them hopes of working-class peace achievements and progress. Take notice also that in Russia the working class, armed by means of the economic resources of the bourgeoisie, turns its arms against the forces that provided them, only to be compelled, in turn, to reverse their arms once more, through the financial pressure exerted principally by the United States of America. Take notice, further, that the Petrograd elections were favorable to Socialism only as a result of the perversion of capitalist military economics by the workers themselves. Take notice, still further, that, in this country, imperialism triumphs politically because, back of it, there is an imperialism that triumphs economically. The government is powerful in proportion as the ultra-financiers provide its war loans and dominate in the contract awards, price control and export decisions of the defense council, which is composed of the representatives of the dominant interests. Turn where we will, in the world-war it is the power of economics, both as a motive and controlling force, that impresses the observer—and gives proof of the soundness of Socialist philosophy once more. Against this power, what does political Socialism offer by way of a combative contrast? Only this—and little else—a repetition of office-getting on the old basis (now intensified in favor of the world's rulers) of capitalist ownership and exploitation!

Oh, yes; political Socialists say we must organize "industrially as well as politically." But, as the industrial organization which they have thus far created is only subsidiary, to their political organization and is shamelessly patterned after the trade-agreement, "no general strike nonsense" capitalist industrial unionism approved by Congress, the Civic Federation and the Council of National Defense, of what real intrinsic value is it to the working class and Socialism? What the working class and Socialism need is an industrial unionism that, like capitalist imperialism, dominates politics instead of being dominated by it! Socialism needs working

class control of industry for the workers' economic welfare. Not control of working class organization by labor lawyers, doctors, dentists, preachers, journalists, intellectuals, and others who have middle class aspirations and interests to perpetuate and advance. Socialism, in all its phases, and principally in its basic phases, is a movement of the workers for the workers by the workers. Not of lawyers, journalists and others, by protocols, for capitalists. Socialism is a class struggle in which the working class must rule or be made the football of middle-class interests and capitalist reaction. First we had Socialist corruption a la Millerand in France, Lunn in America, Hughes in Australia. Then we had Socialist reaction a la Scheidemann in Germany, Hyndman in England, Spargo, Walling and Russell in the United States of America. Are we to believe that there will not be a repetition of these events because the men who, in their cowardice, inflicted the infamous Section Six on

American Socialism, have now become brave enough to fight American imperialism via the back door of bourgeois "peace and democracy?" Whoever believes that must ignore Socialist economic philosophy, Socialist political history, and must deprive his senses of Socialist discernment. What American Socialism needs is a Socialist revolution to keep pace with the capitalist revolution. We, for one, refuse to believe that the leopard (opportunism) shows any evidence of changing his spots (compromise with bourgeois elements for votes and office). We, for one, know the animal; and we shall expect him to spring upon the proletariat when the necessity therefore again compels it. Note our "friend" Kerensky, "Socialist minister of war" and field marshal for imperialism.

Conditions make men, not men conditions. Given Socialist economics, Socialist politics will follow, as a matter of course. All else is a myth!

International Notes

THE food situation in Holland caused serious rioting in Amsterdam in the early part of July. Demonstrations were held, in which women took a prominent part and food was taken from shops and warehouses. Military troops were rushed to the city and in a great number of instances salvos were fired. Eight were killed and several seriously wounded, and the number of victims would have been even greater but for the refusal of many soldiers to shoot. One detachment simply refused to obey and in a great many instances the soldiers took it upon themselves to fire over the heads of the rioters. A railway worker refused to handle the signals for a train transporting troops to the capital, and other encouraging facts are reported in connection with this first uprising of masses of Dutch workers against starvation and threatening war. A spontaneous protest strike of 24 hours broke out, in which about 20,000 workers participated, which is a fairly good result, taking into account that the official leaders of the labor unions were strongly opposed.

The executive government of Amsterdam, which is responsible for the demand to send troops, contains two members of the majority Socialist Party (S. D. A. P.). They accepted the responsibility for the murder and continued in office, with the approval of the Social-patriotic Party. The acceptance of "civil peace" logically results in betrayal and murder of the workers; in Germany as in the United States, in Russia as in Holland.

Hopeful signs of coming action against the social patriots are increasing in France.

Newspapers, such as Echo de Paris and others demand energetic measures from the Government to suppress peace propaganda by soldiers and a check to the "demoralization" in the French army.

Herve, as energetic a social patriot as he was formerly an anti-militarist, appeals to Minister Thomas to explain

to the French soldiers, that the Russian revolutionists are willing to fight to a finish. This is considered most essential, because the Russian Revolution has had a magic influence on the French soldiers. Herve reports that he receives letters from the trenches, urging a revolution in France the way the Russians did.

Five Socialist sections of the French Party strongly denounced the writing of Herve in his paper La Victoire and demand his expulsion from the party.

The French Government had to suppress several issues of the Left Wing paper La Libertaire and 1224 arrests were ordered at one day in connection with peace propaganda.

Viviani, once a well known Socialist, introduced a bill in Parliament to better suppress the pacifist propaganda and the distribution of leaflets.

The problem of labor and its relation to capital after the war is being considered by the ruling classes of most of the belligerent countries.

In England a report has been issued by a sub-committee of the reconstruction committee for the permanent improvement of relations between employers and workmen. It will be remembered, that the English government in taking all the rights and union rules from the workers declared solemnly and even embodied in a law, that the trade union rules and customs suspended during the war, were to be restored in peace time.

The above mentioned report considers already the possibility of setting aside these guarantees permanently by substituting a more definite cooperation between employers and employees. The committee advocates "National Industrial Councils" to secure this cooperation; granting to workingmen and women a greater share in the consideration of matters affecting their industry.

The new national imperialistic slavery throws its shadows in advance; will the workers be prepared to meet the situation before it is too late?