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ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE (S.A.)

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# Stench and Disinfectant.

The whole world stinks with decaying capitalism. Every day, every news item brings more nakedly to view not merely the sordid, grasping, peddling motives dominating the contestants in the "Peace" Conference, but the desperate war of all of them, united for this, against rising Labour. That is behind - the tenderness to Austria, Hungary's neighbour, as well as the severity towards Germany, cut off from Russia; behind the bolstering up of Poland and Roumania as buffer states of old-fashioned type against "Bolshevisin," and the coercion of isolated Ireland, where Socialism threatens to swallow Sinn Fein, or Egypt or India, where nationism rests largely upon the sub-conscious protest of subject peoples producing wealth cheap for absentee Europeans. Lies, bluff and can't are the only possible explanation of "statesmen's" pronouncements. Force of. arms or mockade is the instant reply to every aspiration for the vaunted "self determination," which has not yet been bestowed in a single gennine instance, but on the contrary has dwindled everywhere as the result of the war, the peace and the Capitalist Combine, and is now being unblushingly repudiated all round, refused to those who crave it, taken away from those who had enjoyed it before. The armaments of the world are concentrated more and more in the hands of the Big Three for whatever the correct number is just now) and used for repressive purposes. Apart from Russia and some places sympathetic with Russia, the class conscious proletariat is no longer armed, leaving only the slum proletariat armed at discretion to do street fighting for its masters, while the air force, designed mainly for bombing the masses, is entirely in the hands of the bourgeois class. Moh law, representing even the "public" less than ever it did while war was on, is granted more complete licence than ever under the secret direction of ruling class agents, and appears simultaneously in various parts of the British Empire under the guise of a "returned soldiers' move-

ment." It is significant, however, that in Britain this latter device (which, as we see, is apt to recoil on its manipulators) is already almost played out. Britain to-day holds a key to the world situation : and if, as against the concentrated world armaments in capital's control, even a highly arganised industrial movement seems too vulnerable, the saving exception nowadays is when it embraces the key countries—roughly the "Big Three" countries. In these the organised working classes, in relation to the whole world's labour, perform speaking broadly, the more skilled processes of the world's industry, while Imperialism has tended to get its preliminary rougher work done by outlandish, often uncivilised, overses races out of touch with the "home" workers. Hence the latter have tended hitherto, however unconsciously, to stand towards Liese races in a position somewhat analogous to that of the white workers here towards the black (except that here they are in close contact and conscious of it) and have thus, especially in the countries of capitalism's highest development, moved slowly and been constantly retarded by middle class prepossesson and snobbery.

Between events staring them in the face the to light a realisation by that British Labour, the "triple allithat on them above all at this juncthe emancipation of their class the the world, just as it is their masters was are the most potent to oppose it.

The best news of the week is that alliance's oproposal for a national strike against the war with Ponssia, conscription, and the continued persedution of conscientious objectors. That the always reactionary Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress turned the proposal down is a matter of only temporary importance. The thing to welcome is that this is the first time, if we are not mistaken, that British Labour on a big scale has risen above the immediate demands of its unious for their own particular advancement and realised its position as part, and to-day a very vital part, of the Working-class Movement of the world. Where in other countries industrial action may seem to have become powerless, in Britain, France and America to-day organised labour. holds concentrated in its hands the power to silence all the guns of the ruling class and reduce them in turn to impotence. The strike against the Russian war, the first serfous proposal of the kind in a "Great Power" country by an organisation Table to carry it into effect, proclaims a new consciousness both of this ability, of universal labour solidarity, and of the world-wide scope which the Labour Movement must henceforth keep in view in every step it takes. And so, when our fighting advantage seems at times to wane, let us rejoice that at the psychological moment faith in the ultimate power of industrial organisation is to this extent vindicated by those who can make it most effective. Once his power is realised, it will not be long before it passes from the realm of pious resolutions to the stern arena action.

# Prophetic.

The following forecast by Jaures almost rivals in prophetic foresight the famous pronouncement by Engels, on the coming great

Writing in the "Petite Republique"

July 24th, 1897, Jaures declared:

It is unquestionable that a European counter-revolution will be organised against any successful socialist movement. Such is the terrible prospect which the workers will have to face and for which they, must be prepared. Should they succeed in overthrowing the capitalist Joligarchy which possesses power and property, should they make the republic a reality, should they establish a socialist republic in the mines and in the workshops and in the fields, should they free themselves by making ownership common to all, it will not be only against violence from without that they will have to defend their new rights. In the present condition of Europe and in view of the obvious course of events, none but a blind man can expect and none but a traitor can proclaim the peaceful inauguration of socialism among the nations that lead the world. The first nation to-realise socialism will instantly find that all the terrified powers of reaction are ranged against it. It will be lost unless it is ready to draw the sword, to answer shells with shells, so that time may be secured in which the working classes of other lands can organise and rise in their turn.

The "rule of the workers" under Socialism obviously eannot mean the rule of one class or section over another, but the rule of a community, consisting apprely of workers. over itself: the most complete self-determination and democracy.

# Protecting" a Protectorate.

An Egyptian writer in the "Populaire" of 24th March, 1919, says that the day after the armistice the Egyptian people delegated certain members of the Egyptian Government to enlighten the Peace Conference as to the true condition of Egypt and to claim independence for the the country under the aegis of the League of Nations. Their mandates, signed by millions of people, including all the elected members of the Egyptian Chamber and the county and town councillors, were confiscated by the British; their passports were refused; they were arrested and deported to Malta. The Egyptian Ministry resigned; and protest meetings were fired on and bayonetted (the people are practically unarmed). Even the women have torn off their veils, broken the gratings of the harems, and gone out in the streets to demonstrate. This is the movement for selfdetermination which has cost so far 1,000 lives among its supporters.

# For Country or for Class?

Many of the local branches of the British Discharged and Demobilised Sailors' and Sol-Association (which Government has tried in vain to induce to act spy on "Bolshevists" and revolutionaries) during April passed the following resolution which has been refused publication in the capitalist

1. This meting of Discharged and Demobilised Soldiers and Sailors calls upon the Government immediately to introduce legislation to prevent the exploitation of the labour of disabled soldiers and sailors. We consider that such men are entitled to the protection asked for, as part payment of the debt which the country owes to those who were prepared to sacrifice their lives in defence of their king and country.

2. This meeting . . . expresses its readiness to return to the colours in the event of Germany resuming hostilities. We however view with alarm the possibility of the Government recalling class Z Army Reserve men to the colours to protect the interest and property of capitalists, and in the event of a strike in the coalfield we hereby pledge our support to the Trade Unions concerned if called upon.

# Capitalist Wriggles.

"The enemy is no longer the Boche, it is the Bolshevist. We should supply Germany amply with food and raw material. We should insist that any German Government continuously provided with food and raw materials sufficient to rebuild the vigour of the people and restart the industry of the country should firmly co-operate against Bolshevism."—("The Observer," 30th March, 1919.) Agree with thine adversary quickly, lest haply he deliver thee to the Bolshevika! "The vote is the British weapon of revo-

lution, and the polls are its battle ground."-("The Observer," 30th March, 1919.) Hoor, hoor. Why this generous enthusiasm for "constitutional means?" Because, as the "Daily News" of 15 days earlier says, "For practical purposes Parliament has ceased to exist as an effective instrument of Government."

# How the Red Army Fights.

A Russian American conscript, writing in a New York paper, says that on arriving at Archangel he was told by Russian workmen that under the Bolskeviks they had lived much better: they had bread and their earnings had been higher. As soon as the English came, said one, everything came to grief: no bread and poor earnings. Later, says the conscript, I convinced myself of the truth of their words. The English had indeed seized everything there; in a dictatorial manner they ruled the sterritory eccupied by the Allied troops. The population hated them as one can hate foreign invaders.... : We were ordered to "the front," and found ourselves at Obosevska. We found out that the Bolsheviks were retreating to the south, not because they feared our forces, but merely because they visited to avoid slaughter. At one place, instead of meeting the bayonets of the Soviet troops, we came across a train loaded with proclamations in English, French, Italian and other languages. In these the Bolsheviks explained the nature of the intervention and advised us to get home. The officers seized them. The Bolsheviks did not harm us, although on several occasions they could have shot us down like so many partridges. Once a man came forward from their side with a white flag, and speaking in English he told us that we were being misled that we ought to have the Russian territory and the Russian people at peace. "You have come here we light us, not we to fight vou. We have done no harm to you, so go back to your homes." There were also other such instances. We are surrounded en all sides by the Bolsheviks. We are doomed we think, but it is not so. They would keep us a day or two and then let sus go free unharmed., Compare the similar "atrocities of the Boors).

A French soldier dragged over there as a "volunteer" writes to the Paris "Vague" that "the Bolsheviks are ten times, more civilised than we are." Among other things, drunkenness is very vigorously dealt with in contrast with isoltchak's country; similarly the Hungarian's viets Government prohibited the sale of alcohor).

Meanwhile "a Bolshevik movement at Var-: na " (the Bulgarian Black Sea port) " having been attempted by Secialisis and extremists' from Sofia, the Allied an horities coursed the name to be eccupied by British troops, and martial law was precipined. All the ringleaders are to be tried by British cours marial and coverely pugnished." And of Odessa a French soldier writes before the evacuation: "Every day Russians are being shot here. In the first few days here. I saw one shot for distributing pamphlets. That was in these pamphlets! The truth. The Russian people had risen against their masters who were decouring them. They were counting on usserobeh soldiers to understand that their cause was also ours. And the pamphlet ended with an appeal to the Workers' International for the avoidance of war between brothers. . . . Everyone looks askanco at us, Rich and poor alike. The poor say "What have you come here for? To takethe bread out of our months? To put us in chains again? The rich say to us: 'Why do you stop there doing nothing? The Isotshevik are bandits:" no niercy for them!" -we are not active enough to suit the purmoses of those who have the money bagin In our skirmishes with the Bolsheviks blood has has been spilt en both sides. May it fall as a curse on the heads of the guilty--who are in France."

Apropos of the proposed Finnish march on Petrograd, it is stated that the Finns and Karelians under Gen. Maynard at Murmansk have shown a determined desire to join the Bolsheviks, as to-day the Roumanians too are probably doing.

As the "Workers' Dreadnought" says: "The most effectual way for the British to end the war against the Soviets is to set up Soviets in Britain."

# How "We" Fight the Red Army.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE'S HANDI-WORK.

The "Manchester Guardian" publishes & protest by the Congress of Zemstvos (village land councils) of Southern Russia against the following order by the O.C. of a district recently annexed to the Don: "I forbid my troops to take the workmen as prisoners: they are to be hanged or shot. All workmen actually in prison are to be hanged in the principal streets and left there three days. For each Cossack killed, ten inhabitants in the village of Stepanovka are to be hanged and a nne of 200,000 rouble's will be exacted. When an officer has been imprisoned the whole village will be burnt. The most energetic measures of repression are to be taken against the workmen, and one out of every ten is to be hanged."

Another Cossack Colonel under General Denikin issued an order that working women too should not be imprisoned but shot or hanged by the high road, 'their dead bedies to remain for three days as a warning.

No wonder the Monshevik party, in a manifesto recently published by "Humanite," appeals to all Socialist parties and Tralo Unions to work for an agreement between the Entence and Lenin's Government, and "hopes that active intervention by the international proletariat will protect the Russian Revolution from the blow that is being struck" at it." The manifesto concludes: "Down with armed intervention! No interferences with revolutionary Russia! Long live the unity of the proletariat in its international struggle!"

And yet Labour Parties are still slobbering over a "League of Nations."

The fall of wages on Allied occupation in not confined to Russia. Wages have been reduced in Alsace by the Entente; there are 40,000 unemployed, at Mulhausen out of 110,000 inhabitants; the workers work from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. for very low wages. The chairman of the Railway Co. at Saarbrucken was sentenced to a week's confinement for not exerting a sufficiently decisive influence on the railway workers in the matter of substituting a ten for an eight hours day."

In the neighbourhood of Antwerp all but eleven per cent, of the workers are said to be unemployed. Vandervelde says that two and a quarter-million out of a population of soved millions are living son State aid. Out of 20,000 deckers in Antwerp only 2,000 are werling. In Brussels there are 92,000 unemployed. Britain has forced Belgium to cease exporting coal to Switzerland, as this "up-" sei the British exchanges." Belgium has lost 213,000 tons of shipping out of a total 350,000. No compensation has bene paid for this or other damage, and Belgium has had no definite guarantee as to her share of the sum to be exacted from Germany. Latterly. the Allies have even questioned her right to pricativ of compensation.

And in Britain on February 28 there were 948.620 people drawing out of work donation.

# Russia: the Real Trush.

Ernest Moulin (late "Daily Herald" correspondent in Moscow) writes in that paper on April 3:

A Belgian, I have lived twenty years in Russia, and have lived among all classes of Russian society. I owe this latter great privilege to the fact that I have helped to organise agricultural co-operative societies and to instruct the peasants in the methods of agriculture as known in Western Europe.

Of recent years a landowner—though now a dispossessed one—I moved, before the war, in land-owning circles, and was a member of a well-known Moscow club.

If I have any political prejudices, they are certainly against the Bolshevist system. I do not believe in it.

My little fortune in property, accumulated as the result of hard labour, has been confiscated by the Bolsheviks, and I am indeed one of their victims. So I am not likely to be prejudiced in their favour.

I have been living continuously in Central Russia—in the territory of the Bolsheviks—ever since they came to power. I was in Moscow less than a month ago.

I have not yet, perhaps, completely recovered from the amazement created in me by the ideas of Russia and the existing regime which I find prevalent in England.

We knew, of course, in Russia, that rather wild stories were current in England concerning the nature of the Bolshevik Rule—of a perennial Red Terror, of daily massacres, of troops running amok in the streets of Petrograd and Moscow; killing children, violating women, stories of the nationalisation of women; but I assumed that these stories were confined to the very ignorant, the repetition of which would not be sanctioned by reputable journals.

But that is not the situation I find. I find that these wild stories are printed and have been printed for months, day by day, in your most reputable papers; that the feeling created by them is dominating the public opinion which must decide your policy in Russia; and that this amazing distortion of perfectly verifiable facts will probably be the main cause of a line of political action which may lead to the very thing which it is the desire of all to prevent.

#### LIES NOW CURRENT.

I find practically everywhere in public opinion certain unshakable convictions, namely:---

1. The present Bolshevik rule is sheer anarchy, maintained over a quaking multitude by political adventurers, who neither desire nor are able to organise the country economically, a recognition of whom would in consequence condemn Russia to chaos and ruin.

2. The Governments of Koltchak and the various small Republics surrounding Bolshevik territory are of a more orderly character, whom it is safe and honourable for the Allies to support as against the Bolsheviks.

3. That the triumph of these counter-revelutionary or anti-Bolshevik groups would previde a road towards a peaceful, unified, and free Russia.

As against these convictions I want to state what I declare to be, and what thousands of witnesses, perfectly accessible to the Allied. Governments, will confirm, as the truth.

#### THE TRUTH.

1. These stories of wild orgies and terrorism are monstrous falsifications. Never, since the Revolution, has such good order been maintained as at present in the territory embraced in Soviet Russia.

2. To suppose that the counter-Revolutionary or anti-Bolshevist groups, or the small Republies now fighting Soviet Russia, can maintain order better than the Bolsheviks, or agree together, or bring peace to the country, is to fly in the face of all the available evidence.

3. To enter into alliance with them and to support them with arms must fail utterly in establishing peace.

d. The forces best able quickly to re-establish the economic life of Russia are the existing Bolshevist authorities.

5. These authorities are extremely desirous of receiving help for peaceable; re-establishment of industry in their country, and the reawakening of its economic life.

6. The Bolshevist Government is prepared to make the largest possible concessions and compromises in order to secure the co-operation of the Allies; it is prepared to give guarantees for the repayment of the Russian debt; to indemnify foreigners who have suffered by the economic measures taken by the Soviet Government; and these facts are perfectly well known to the Allies.

The Committee of the Italian Socialist party has resolved to dissociate itself from the "International Socialist Bureau" and to adhere to and work for the constitution of the revolutionary Socialist International on the basis and principles proposed by the Russian Communist Comrades, and for the convocation of a Socialist International Conference, as decided on at Moseow last January.

## Cape Notes.

The example of the hooligan mob in Johaneesburg in breaking up Socialist meetings is ring followed down here. Several of our e-cent meetings have been very rowdy, and east Saturday night the platform was rushed and an old comrade was badly knocked about by a few. "Imperialists." At the annual genmal meeting of the Industrial Socialist League the secretary submitted a very satisfactory eport in which he stated that exactly 100 meetings-indoor and outdoor had been held juring the past year exclusive of lectures, of which 28 were given. Only seven of the outisor meetings were closed by disturbances ther by drunks or civilians. In view of the ice that within two weeks/ two meetings more already been closed owing to disturbarces, it is hardly likely that such a report vill be submitted next year.

On Saturday morning the people of Cape fown gazed in surprise-at the sight of newspaper boys rushing through the streets sella paper entitled the "Bolshevist." There was a rush for copies and a great many were sold, but there was another rush this time in members of the C.I.D., who took the boys o gael together with their papers. This paper (there will be only onesissue) was pubshed by the League to counteract the anti-Bishevik campaigh. It is entirely a humorons, satirical paper, but it was felt that it was the only way to deal with those cables regarding Russia which adorn the pages of the "kept" press. The boys were released after a nutle while, but a prosecution is pendag. In the meantime the paper is suppressal. Whether it will be distributed depends up in the issue of the case. Should the anti-Swiglist agitation manifest itself in still further exhibitions of "mob violence" we shall is as the Johannesburg comrade: propose to le, and that is fall back upon leastet propaganda. In any case we can afford to wait entil this wave of Jingo feeling has worn off and those who now break up our meetings will realise that there is another fight to win In South Africa, the fight-for the Co-opera-We Commonwealth. M. LOPES.

P.S. Comrades Pick, Berman, and myself, gether with the two printers, have been Estived with summenses to present ourselves as court on the 22nd May on two charges of Addishing a Phewspaper" which was not Astered, and did not centain the printer's is anne and address. This is a technical charge, vet we shall fight it as much as besible, bégan e we realise quite well what a will mean to the movement down here if 7.6 3050,

"THE BOLSHEVIST."

A copy of the paper has reached us. It is id of fun. Here is a sample of its pretty

1. the Editor of "The Bolshevist."

Dar Sir.-The report of my nurder by B. J. hevister which appeared in your columns a few months ago, is grossly exaggerated. very much alive and kicking.--I am. vours truly,

PRINCE KROPOTKIN. The wish to reprimand our correspondent sor rushing into print before ascertainng the true facts.

2. Does our correspondent wish to imply rist all the neutral ambassadors are liars? 3. Who is our correspondent? Why should we take his word in preference to Reuter? 4. This correspondence is now closed.--

Ed., "The Bolshevist."]

The Secretary of the Cape Town Social Democratic Federation, in forwarding £5 to the Defence Fund and expressing that body's profound sympathy with the fight and its champions at Maritzburg, Benoni, etc., writes: "ne took £4 11s. of the above it our meeting on Sunday evening for this purpose, so you can judge that our Cape Town audiences are a little more sympathetic than the Johannesburg ones. Our Cape Town Comrades of the Great War dissociate themselves entirely from the Johannesburg section, and even the detectives cannot organise any disorder." (We have no complaint our bona-fide audiences, but only of cer-"alien elements."—Ed.)

# League Notes.

BUILDING AND PRINTING PLANT. 10,000 Shilling Fund. — The Committee charged with the management of this fund have books of 1s. stamps which can be obtained at the Office. It is considered necessary that the League should own its own printing plant and money is surgently needed for the purpose. The stamps constitute a convenient, method of raising the funds but at the same time any sympathiser who is willing to donate larger amounis or supply money on loan is invited, to communicate with the secretary at the Office of the League when he will be supplied with all nevessary information.

"Participation in Elections for Public Bodies is one of the methods of the I.S.I. as laid down in Clause 2 section (b) of the Constitution. The M.C. has decided with a view to utilising this weapon at the most convenient time to urge all comrades and sympathisers to get their names on the Municipal rolls of Johanne'sburg and other towns, which are now being compiled, and on Parliamentary and other rolls as the opportunity occurs. Branches and individuals are requested to see that no one is off the roll who is entitled to be registered.

May Day Committee final meeting on Sunday, the 25th inst., at Palmerston Hall, at 10.30 a.m. Business: Fiñancial statement

and closing accounts.

Defence Fund Acknowledgments. -- Already acknowledged, £20 133. 9d.; D.B., 5s.; G.B., 11s.; W., 20s.; M.G.J., 10s.; J.R., 5s.; Miss K., 15s.; F.S.E., 10s.; N.F., 5s.; B.S., 21s.; M.P., 5s.; T.N., 10s.; list F.W.F., 55s.; M.S., 10s.; B.McE., 21s.

#### BENONI BRANCH.

The dance at the Hotel Cecil on Wednesday was not held. So far the "Star" report (written in "Mail" vein however) is correct. But it was not even the three "returned soldiers" who appeared at the door (no more except some on our side who had come for the dance) that prevented it. The lessor of the ball, without a word of warning until an hour before the dance, and after all preparations had been completed, announced that he would close the hall, and did. The large growd outside which was disappointed was a Socialist crowd, and sang the "Red Plag" against the National Anthem by the dissenting three. The story about "returned soldiers barred" is of course the usual barefaced he spread to incite the mob to violence. And of course this sudden outbreak in all centres simultaneously makes it quite clour that it is not a case of "public feeling" being aroused. Buth police and Govérament support, anyoné can engineer a row with impunity. Proceedings are however contemplated by our comrades.

#### JEWISH-SPEAKING BRANCH.

Enuly Class every Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. in the Palmersion Hall.

The Branch will meet at the Palmersten Hall on Sundays, June 1st, at 10.30 sharp to elect officers. "

#### JOHANNESBURG BRANCH.

An aggregate meeting of all members of the League in Town and Reef will be held on Sinday, June 1st, at 11 a.m. at the Palmersion hall, to deal with the various elemenis of the present critical situation. No comrade must be absent on this occasion, and Branch Secretaries will please ensure the presence of every member of their branches.

Study Class every Friday evening in Palm-

erston Hall, at 8 p.m.

We are glad to learn that Com. Mrs. Marynen is out of hospital and hope she will soon fully recover from the injuries received at the hands of heroes at the recent broken-up, meeting.

PRETORIA BRANCH.

The Branch now meets on the first and third Monday in each month in the Federation Hall, at 8 p.m. The first Monday is a business meeting, and the third educational.

On Sunday, June 1st, Com. S. P. Bunting will lecture in the Federation Hall, Church Street, on The Mission of Labour."

# "Liberty" in Australia

Sentences (on returned soldiers among others) for flying the Red Flag now form a regular weekly feature in Australian Socialist papers. The Melbourne Trades Hall, hold. an "eight hours" procession recently, were ordered by the "authorities" to carry the Union Jack and Australian ensign and forbidden to display red flags or other emblems; of a revolutionary character, or any tableaux reflecting on the Government. "God Save the King" had to be played when the procession arrived opposite Parliament House. The Trades Hall people submitted.

The militant workers of Brisbane flew the Red Flag, and for that a number of them have been sentenced to six months' imprisonment, while others are to be deported from Australia. One of them, Geo. Taylor, a returned soldier, said he had demonstrated with a Red Flag as a protest against the War Precautions Act which he claimed was a violation of the British Constitution and the

frights of free citizenship.

The Brisbane "Worker" has been fined for publishing a cartoon showing the Allies squeezing the last drop of blood out of Germany.

Last month the fortnightly business meeting of the Social Democratic League at Sydney was invaded by the police and detectives, and all letters; minute books, pamphlets, and photographs of leaders, as well as a map of Australia, were "arrested."

The capitalist press is full (as here) of more or less veiled incitement to mob violence (really conducted by the ('.I.1).) against what they call "Bolshevists." Even religi-

ous liberty is threatened.

And the returned soldier stunt has been used to cloak secret terroristic movements instigated by the ruling class, who are a "loranorder" party until it suits them to throw "loranorder" to the winds; exactly as in South Africa. In particular in Brisbane at the end of March capitalist thugdom had a field day against Labour, boasting that it had a backing of £15,000 as against Labour's backing of-thousands of Trade Unionists. It is significant that Australian exchanges containing accounts of this Brisbane affair have not reached us, though previous and subsequent issues have.

On 26th February, in the French Chamber, Marcel Cachin, on behalf of the Socialist Party, appealed to the soldiers of France "not to join Pichon's "volunteer" army for Russia. One of his colleagues declared that the Russian war was a violation of the consttiution and quoted the Declaration of the Rights of Man: "When the Government violates the rights of the people, insurrection becomes the most sacred of rights and the most binding of duties." Renaudel said French soldiers in Russia were refusing to march against the Bolsheviks. The Under-Secretary for War replied that the Government would not send an expedition to Russia, and that the men there were being withdrawn: but M. Pichon, asked whether soon not a French soldier would be left in Russia, replied "Not at all."

According to Comrade Frumkin, member of the People's Commissariat of Supply, the Soviet of the People's Commissariat has issued definite instructions for the taking over of the retail trade of goods, already a State monopoly. In cases of products not yet under State monopoly, great care is advised, so that chaos should be avoided in any sudden transition from the old system. The question of supply is closely connected with the co-operative societies, hence the decision to use mese societies as the means of dis-The State distributes all tribution. goods equally among all co-operative communes, and the plan is to make cooperative organisations State organs of distribution for the whole community. Every citizen is to join a co-operative society, so that co-operation thus becomes compulsory. -The People's Russian Information Bureau.

[No need to worry about Asiatics there.--Rd.]

### The Last Days.

Tom Paine's historic dictum, written at the time of the American Revolution, "that these are the times to try men's souls," well describes the present time. To-day, this would apply very well to the intellectual chaos of the middle and capitalist classes. To those not acquainted with the economic and social laws of capitalism, that is with Marxian Socialism, the outlook is one of profound despair. One has only to open the morning paper to read a letter written by an "intellectual" deploring the great spread of anar-"chy, etc., in "civilised" nations. In their clubs and assemblies when they discuss these problems of labour unrest one notices how their mind works in a vicious circle wherein they can find no solution to these questions. which are troubling them. Outside the cir--cle they dare not go, for facing them would be the spectre of Socialism, the only solution to the harbarism and anarchy of capitalism.

Before the spectacle of a collapsing econcomic system with its systems of laws, morals, etc., they are at a loss; pessimism is spreading amongst them, and the more superstitious are adopting the theory of the "last days" as shown by the statement of a clergyman recently in Johannesburg that this period is the period of probation. As the class-conscious ill over the world link up for the last onslaught this "ideology" of unrest is certain to spread amongst the ignorant and superstitious.

Amidst all the intellectual chaos there stands untouched and impregnable the theoretical system of Karl Marx, which alone easts light on the present period and which is responsible for the great feeling of exultation held by all Marxian Socialists. Those profound generalisations of Marx which have made his name immortal, the materialistic conception of history, surplus value and class struggle are finding in the present period of decadence and chaos their supreme vindica-

tion. 'Throughour history the once subject classes have attained economic and political power hy virtue of their control of forces of production, the unfertered development of which was necessary for the progress of society. Whenever the free development of these forces of production has been fettered by the political and economic power of the ruling class there has casued a period of revolution which has always presulted in the triumph of the class which stood for progress. We saw this in the revolutions of the capitalist class which at that period undoubtedly stood for progress. Buy progress is constant. The dlass which once stood for progress gradually in the course of industrial development. becomes a fetter on the productive forces and. then comes in conflict with that class whose historic role ii is to usher in the new economic system. Production for profit, like a 'husty chain entangling the wheels of some machine producing articles of use and beauty, stands to-day a fetter upon the full development of industry, and a bar to the wellbeing of the people's. Should it be allowed to continue, i will produce a series of great, convulsions, panies or wars due to the great development of machinery, the great increase in the unemployed and the shrinking of the world markets. But that section of society that is oppressed and exploited is aroused and the death agenies will be considerably shortened. 'we see in Europe to-day the workers, "their feet on the ashes and the rags, their hands tight to the throats of kings."

The dilemma laid before those workers who are not yet sufficiently aroused to overthrow capitalism is not "Socialism or Capitalism," but "Socialism or Chaos." Herman Cahn, the well-known Marxist, in his book "The Collapse of Capitalism," which should be in the hands of all revolutionary Socialists, has shown the inevitability of the speedy collapse of capitalism, irrespective of any revolutionary action by the masses. He says: "Fortunately and wonderfully capitalism was born with the germ of a mortal disease (the necessity of commodity money) which has been revealed only in the last lifty years, and the coming of its fatal crisis

can be almost measured. The progress of the disease has been abnormally furthered by the war. Capitalism is moribund, and its end is due within a very few years." This fact does not call for any slackening on the part of Socialists of their propaganda. Rather should it act as an incentive to more extensive activity, especially to those sympathisers who have higherto stood apart from active participation in our propaganda. "There is a great storm coming," and it will be the function of the Socialist organisations to show the people the way out of the chaos which is impending, and the remedy will be as always the establishment of a new order on a basis of co-operative industry. Whether the collapse of capitalism will be forestalled by the establishment of Socialism all over the world depends on the workers of all countries and is for the future to determine.

But these facts are not known to the capitalist class or their intellectual hirelings whose duty it is to disparage the economics of Marx. The capitalist class will fight, not with the ballot or in the workshop, but with aeroplane, gun and hayonet. The situation in Germany shows this quite plainly. This fact calls for an extensive anti-militarist propaganda, with special reference to the returned soldiers, and the organisation of the workers into workers' committees in all large towns, for the purpose of carrying on the work of the ecommunity when the hour of our release shall strike. And upon these things depends the duration of the chaos and the extent of any fighting that may take place. These are inspiring times. Day by day with anxious but joyous hearts we see the progress of our comrades in Europe. The events a Hungary, the almost his colless tovolution in that esuntry as in Basaria, etc., justifies the weeds of the great revolutionary noet Whitman:

"Then in their power not for all these did the blows strike revenge,

Or the heads of the nobles fall;

The people searned the ferecity of kings."

In the very midst of the revolution itself

In the very midst of the revolution itself we should turn aside for a moment and give a thought to those who for endless ages have fought and died for freedom, to those of the Socialist movement who toiled when all was dark, waea no promise of speedy deliverance could lighten ideir labours or sustain their hopes. Not only to salue the great here. of intellect and soul, but the naknown heroes of the rank and file. Standing as we do on the threshold of the Socialist Commonwealth chat heir labours here wrought, we can say to the capitalist class, "We want neither your crambs nor your condescension; your guidance ver sour glamour, your tution nor your tradition. We have our level historic way to follow, our own salvation to achieve, and by this sign we shall conquer."

M. LOPES.

The Leace Conference "Labour Charter" which "bears a striking resemblance to that adopted by the Government Socialists at Berne, who no doubt, as usual, found our what sine Government meant to give and then asked for it "--contains nothing new worth having or setting out here. It is to be administered by a general conference of four representatives per country; two nominated by the Government, one by employers, one by workers! If any country is recalcitrant, a commission is to be appointed from a panel consisting of three government, three employers' and three workers' representatives; and any of these may be rejected by 'a two-thirds' vote of the whole! The offending State is liable to "an economic sentence"—i.e., blockade and starvation. (It will be remembered that the Whitley Council, or the Advisory Board asked for by the Bloemfontein Conference, includes a chairman appointed by the Government which thus controls them.)

The General Assembly of Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, by 1,470 votes to 20, sent a telegram of congratulation to Soviet Hungary, pledging itself not to rest "until the final victory of socialism is assured."

# Russia from Within.

Writing at the end of January, Maxim
Litvinoff says:--

"The food situation at Moscow has lost its acuteness, but there is little fuel. A: Petrograd even the food situation is very bad

"The Allied blockade is condemning the country to starvation and cold. The Scan dinavian countries have broken with us very unwillingly, yielding to the pressure of the Allies who presented them with an ultimatum. We are being strangled and deprived of the possibility of bettering the internaconditions, and yet it is we who are made responsible for the consequences. Neutracountries are being forced to boycott us, and then the fact is used as a proof of our wick edness."

Litviness confirms the coalition of formes opposing parties, including the "Bund" and even the lechanoff party, in defence of the Soviet republic. "The rich peasants are hos tile not so much to the Soviet Government a to the collection of taxés. Mobilisation is proe without any compulsion whatever (conscientious objectors have no difficulty getting exempted). The village Poverty Conmittees are waging successful war against the vultures and the rich who had contrived to entrench themselves in the village Soviets of the old type. In the corn-growing provinces the peasants supply the elevators with sufficient quantities of grain, but the furthtransport to the capitals still leaves much a be desired.

"Prices are fixed for everything and are comparatively speaking, not high. Bread for instance, is sold at Moscow at 60 kopeks the 3d at pre-war rates) a pound, while the bourgeoisie pays, by buring from illegrenders, ad rembles (El a: pro-war ratés), a pould. It is clear that the more publishes. illiest trading and illiest solf-precisioning are suppressed the more products will be avail alde for the public stores to distribute among the people at reasonable prices. Under the White guard regime in Finland products a high prices are more accessible to the bom genisio, but on the other hand the poorer classes obtain much smaller and less regula supplies for their coupens.

work is being carried on feverishly, but naturally the practical administration is considerably behind the legislation. Perfect public order reigns in both capitals, and all reports of disturbances, brigandage and murder the streets are absolute fabrications.

"If it had not been for the secret hopes of the overthrow of the Soviets by the Allied armies the bourgeoisie would have already to conciled sitself to the new regime.

Factories can only be restarted according as raw material and fuel become available. The economic reconstruction is ham pered to a large extent by the militarisation of the country."

The hy strike by the white workers in Bergian Congo against the great monopolist companies, which began last week, will not be the first attempt of its kind, but is destined we hope to achieve greater success than in the past, when attempts to form a union have failed. "Free labourers" will please keep away from the Congo. Nor is our stalwart comrade, E. J. Brown, who has, as he expected, been put over the border, the first to suffer that fate in the Congo.

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