

# THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.

EDITOR: SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Published by the Workers' Socialist Federation

Telephone: EAST 1787.

Annual Subscription - Post Free, 10s. 10d.

Back Numbers, 4½d, post free.

MSS. should be addressed to the Editor at  
400, Old Ford Road, London, E.3

All business communications to the  
MANAGER, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

Vol. V., No. 44.

Sat., January 25th 1919.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL WAR.

From the outbreak of war no man stood out so conspicuously as its opponent as brave Karl Liebknecht. When the German autocracy was at the height of its military power his attacks upon it were unflinching. He was cast into prison but remained undeterred. He was eulogised by the Allied press, which has since villified him, because his later attacks upon the capitalist system, instead of tending merely to weaken Germany's effort in the war with Allied Capitalism, have threatened to overthrow German Capitalism altogether. The actual details of his death are still unknown here. His brother is right in demanding that a non-military inquiry should be held. But the details are of lesser importance, the outstanding truth is that he has died in what he describes as the International Civil War for Socialism.

We cherish a faint hope that Rosa Luxemburg still lives, since it is reported that her body has disappeared.

The deaths of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, if they are really dead, will not mean the end of Spartacus. Already, on Saturday, January 18th, when the news reached Leipzig, Reuter reports that the workers in several factories went on strike:—

"Processions marched through the streets. All the bourgeois papers were prevented from appearing, and leaflets of the Democratic and German National People's party were burned publicly on the Augustusplatz. Bonfires were blazing from midday until late in the evening. An excited crowd invaded the offices of the Democratic party, and destroyed propaganda material. Several soldiers were stripped of their cockades and officers of their epaulettes."

The reported death of these two widely-known Socialists should arouse to the existence of the International Civil War any Socialists and workers whose thoughts still turn with hope to the Peace Conference, that much advertised temple of pretence.

The Conference Rules now published in full, prove clearly that it is merely a conference of the ruling politicians of the five Great Powers: Britain, France, Italy, America, and Japan. Representatives of other nations, even of "Little Belgium," will merely be allowed to say their views before these autocrats. The Conference will be to all intents and purposes a secret one, for says Rule 8:—

"The publicity of the proceedings shall be ensured by Official Communiqués prepared by the secretariat to be made public. In case of disagreement as to the drafting of these communiqués shall be referred to the principal plenipotentiaries or their representatives."

Therefore what the ruling politicians desire to say about the proceedings of the Conference, is to be said and nothing more.

President Wilson's first point, be it remembered, was:—

"Open Covenants of peace openly arrived at after which there shall be no private international

understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view."

The Allied attack on Socialist Russia and America's participation in that attack long since exposed the *Fourteen Points* as but an empty shell without a kernel. The act of shutting the smaller countries out from the decisive Conference has again shown that the fourteen points though accepted by the Allies "in principle" are flouted in practice. We expect to see the Conference coldly and deliberately violate by its decisions every point in turn. No Capitalist programme can bring peace to the world; the news of every day proves it. The Allies quarrel amongst themselves for concessions, and the unrest of the workers and their determination to secure Socialism is ever growing. *The Times* reports the growth of Bolshevism in the new Czecho-Slovak Republic, which the Allies have formed as a special bulwark to their power. Workers and Soldiers' Councils have been set up in the Argentine Republic. In India has occurred the largest strike ever known there; 100,000 Bombay mill hands are out demanding an increased bonus, and have been fired on by the military. From America comes news that there is to be a general strike to secure the release of Mooney and Billings, the victims of the anti-trade union "frame up case." In this country the engineers and miners are in a ferment, the police are threatening to strike, the soldiers and sailors remain dissatisfied. The opposition of the soldiers and sailors has checked the Government's aggressive plans in Russia; though do not forget that fighting still continues there and in regions where the temperature is 40 degrees below zero, and that anti-Bolshevik successes are being claimed in the Baltic provinces. The position is serious, do not overlook that.

*The Times'* forecast of the Government's proposals concerning its pledge (the so-called "Treasury Agreement") to restore pre-war trade union conditions, amounts, in our opinion, to a breach of faith. Says *The Times*:—

"The main principle underlying the scheme of the Bill is that pre-war practices should be restored, not automatically and universally by a sweeping legislative mandate, but whenever and wherever there is a demand from the workpeople for their restoration. Undoubtedly, there will be some practices which cannot possibly be resumed. There are others, notably those which relate to the manning of machines, the employment of women, and the reservation of certain operations for certain grades of workmen, which cannot be restored consistently with the development of production, or with the interests of many thousands of workers. The proposals of the Government are therefore based on the rule that a definite demand by a majority of the workers, who in pre-war days maintained a given practice, must precede its restoration."

This means, in our opinion, that the workers will have to fight the battle for every safeguard anew in every case, and will be put to almost, if not quite, as much trouble and expense as though the Treasury Agreement in question had never existed before. Indeed, if they are to argue their case before the Courts or negotiate with Government officials, they will probably do better to ignore the promises made to them under the Treasury Agreement and to conduct the fight with the employer in their own way. Undoubtedly the Government is steering straight for Labour troubles.

The Sinn Fein Parliament is now assembled. Ireland is self-determined, a miracle of faith and solidarity has been accomplished. Our question to the British Government and to the British Army is: "Why not let Ireland alone?"

The attempt of the extreme Royalist reaction in Portugal to restore the monarchy and place the ex-King Manoel on the throne, will probably fail. But it may stir up a genuine peoples' revolution, which will establish not a capitalist, but an industrial republic.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.