

# Freedom

VOL. XXXIII.—No. 356.

JANUARY, 1919.

MONTHLY: TWO PENCE.

## WHY HAVE YOU COME TO MOURMANSK?

**THIS APPEAL WAS PRINTED AND CIRCULATED AMONGST THE BRITISH TROOPS IN RUSSIA,  
BY THE RUSSIAN WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' REPUBLIC.**

COMRADES!—

Why have you come to Mourmansk? You have been told in England that the demand for men on the Western front is greater than ever. You know that in England men of 45 and over are being called to the colours because of the urgent need of men in France. Yet you are brought here, right in the Arctic Sea, a thousand miles from the battle front.

For what purpose? Your Government tells us that it has no hostile intentions towards us. That it does not desire to occupy our territory. That it will not interfere with our internal affairs. That you have been sent here only for the purpose of defending our Mourman railway against the Finns and the Germans. Comrades, it is not true!

When anybody offers to put himself to considerable trouble and expense on your behalf, unasked, you get a little suspicious of his motives. We have not asked your Government to help us to defend our country. We know that their intentions are quite other than those they express to us.

The Mourman railway is in no danger either from the Germans or Finns. If you look at a map you will see that the railways and roads from the West of Finland end hundreds of miles short of the Mourman railway. If the Finns want to approach our border they must traverse hundreds of miles of marshy forest land, and you know how difficult it is for an army to do that.

Neither can the Germans threaten the railway.

If the Germans want to attack the Mourman railway they must first take Petrograd, and march through our country hundreds of miles, from Petrograd to Petrozavodsk. We are no longer at war with Germany. The Germans cannot advance on Petrograd without first declaring war on us again. There is no likelihood of this happening. Except this, that if you come south, the Germans may use this as a pretext to advance further into our country.

Therefore you are not required to defend us. On the contrary, your presence here increases our danger. Why then have you been brought here? We will tell you.

**You have been brought here to occupy our country in the interest of Allied capitalists.**

**You have been brought here to overthrow our revolution, and bring back the reign of Tzarism!!!**

You cannot believe this. You say that the British Government would never do such a thing. Let the facts speak for themselves.

The English capitalist newspapers, *Times*, *Morning Post*, *Daily Telegraph*, are writing every day about erecting a "strong resolute government" in Russia. Do these papers represent the views of democracy, or do they represent the views of the financiers, capitalists, and profiteers of England? These papers also constantly refer to the wealth of timber contained in our northern territory, which they say would be sufficient to pay for the loans which the financiers, capitalists, and profiteers lent to a corrupt and tyrannical Tzarism. Capitalists and financiers are not the friends of English workers, nor Russian workers, nor the workers of any country. Who controls the Government of England to-day? The workers or the financial oligarchy? The financial oligarchy. They are ordering and directing your landing in Mourmansk. You are being used in the interest of the

profiteers, who are profiting out of the lives and labour of the working people.

Your Government is interfering in our internal affairs. It has established its own control in the district you occupy. It has cut off our telegraphic communication with outside. It is attempting to seduce our citizens into fighting against us. At **Kem** your Government shot four members of our local Soviet.

Your Government denies that it did so, but we have **positive** proof that it did.

You know that on the Volga, right in the heart of our country, the Czecho-Slovaks are openly striving to crush our Revolution. They said they wanted to fight the Germans, but they have remained here, and are fighting us. They say they are fighting for liberty, but they are fighting to bring back the Tzarist régime. They are extending into Siberia. Wherever they go they suppress our Soviets (Councils of Workers' Delegates), hang its members, and put Tzarist officers in its place. These Czecho-Slovaks are gathering around themselves the corrupt and reactionary officials of the Tzarist régime. It is the same crowd that betrayed Kitchener, that sold the guns and munitions made in British factories to the Germans, that disorganised our army, and who were just about to sell Russia to the Germans when we made our Revolution.

The one object of the Czecho-Slovaks, and this crowd, is to crush our Revolution and bring back Tzarism. They have officially declared that to be their object. And this has the unconcealed, nay outspoken support of the Allied Governments.

The Allied Governments and the Allied Press are applauding the deeds of the Czecho-Slovaks. The French Consul made a speech in which he congratulated them on the task they had undertaken. They are financed by the Allied Military Mission. Their operations are directed by French officers.

Your landing in Mourmansk is part of the scheme to co-operate with the Czecho-Slovaks.

You will be fighting, not against enemies, but against working people like yourselves.

For the first time in history the working people have got control of their country. The workers of all countries are striving to achieve this object. We in Russia have succeeded. We have thrown off the rule of the Tzar, of landlords and of capitalists. But we have still tremendous difficulties to overcome. We cannot build a new society in a day. We desire to be left alone.

We ask you, are you going to help to crush us? To help to give Russia back to the landlords, the capitalists, and Tzar?

You in your Trade Unions have been fighting capitalists, you know what it is.

**Comrades! Englishmen! You who pride yourselves on your love of liberty!**

**Comrades! Descendants of the great Chartist! You who have always expressed sympathy with the Russian revolution, are you going to assist in crushing the first effort of working people to free themselves from their sweaters and exploiters?**

**Remember this! If the Russian revolution is crushed, then the power of the capitalists will be enormously strengthened in every country, and the fight for economic freedom will be put back for a hundred years.**

N. LENIN,

Pres. Council Peoples' Commissaries.

G. TCHITCHERINE,

People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs.



## PROGRESS OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN EUROPE.

A keen observer of events, whose opinions on men and movements during the war very generally turned out to be correct, said the other day it would not be surprising if Workers' Committees and Soviets were in power and in full working order in Britain before the end of 1919. It would not be nearly so surprising as a like view would have seemed about Russia one week before the revolution broke out, or about Germany the day before it broke out there. When the March revolution in Russia broke out, Milyukoff watched from his study window the fighting by the workers and soldiers in the streets, and he says he had no doubt the Government would succeed in putting it down in a few hours, and that by the next day order would be restored and things would go on again as usual. And yet by the next day the revolution had almost bloodlessly overthrown this apparently strong Government; and some splendid achievements stand now to the credit of the multitude of unknown men and women who nearly two years ago started the revolutionary wave that is sweeping around the world and is everywhere undermining Capitalism and Government.

At a Congress of the Bavarian Social Democratic Party, held at Munich in the middle of October, their prominent speakers thought the time had certainly not yet come for a Socialist Revolution of any sort. But within three weeks from that day the revolution was over, Bavaria was declared a Socialist Republic, and the Social Democrats were in power headed by a man who just before was safely locked up in prison.

And the whole gigantic military, bureaucratic, and police machinery of the German Empire, that seemed so all-embracing, so invincible, so deeply rooted in the very habits of the people, vanished like some nightmare, and people are already beginning to wonder however the illusion about its inevitableness and strength could have lasted so long. Dutch correspondents have reported that the predominant feeling in Berlin when news of the revolt of the sailors at Kiel first came through was one of complete stupefaction that such things could happen in Germany, and when on the following day the same news came through from Hamburg and other cities the astonishment only deepened interest in this wonderful new phenomenon, and quite overshadowed the news of the Kaiser's abdication and the armistice which came the same day. The military commander of the district stopped all communication by railway, telephone, or telegraph between Berlin and the rest of the world and hurried troops into Berlin to prevent any "disorders." As battalion after battalion marched in with machine guns, field kitchens, and all the usual campaigning equipment, and occupied various positions about the city, it still looked like running one's head against a stone wall to attempt to overthrow the Imperial Government; and that anything done in this direction would only involve a frightful and useless loss of valuable lives. In the morning this huge apparatus of coercion stood solid and overwhelming in defence of exploitation and mastership. In the afternoon it had disappeared. All power was in the hands of the Soviet, and Workers' and Soldiers' Councils sprang up and took control throughout the Empire, and were working as naturally as could be wished, and as though these institutions had always been familiar to the population of the different States, in which one after another, in an astonishingly rapid succession, crowns were rolling in the roadway side by side with other outworn and useless things. And all this was accomplished almost bloodlessly.

When the turn of the English Social Revolution comes we should be able to carry it out even more completely and easily if we learn from the experience of our comrades in other countries what to do and what to avoid. Several points stand out very clearly; amongst them are two which we can see both in Russia and in Germany are of the greatest importance. In the first place to take steps to prevent as far as possible, from the very beginning, the movement getting into the hands or under the control of the ordinary professional politicians; and in the next place to see that the Soviets are not packed with the old stagers of the Trade Union world, the professional labour leaders and officials, but that through the Shop Stewards' Movement, Workers' Committees, and similar organisations they do faithfully represent the changing needs and aspirations of the rank and file, and see the widest possible scope is secured for free initiative, to welcome everywhere boldness of thought and action both in destroying old institutions and constructing others more suited to the new day, fearlessly grappling with the real problems of the time, and frankly facing facts, whatever they may be, and a steady adherence through all that may happen to the highest ideals we can conceive; they are quite likely to fall short of the true and the possible.

In Russia eight precious months were wasted through allowing politicians of various schools to carry on their coalitions and compromises and make-believes, and generally to expose their barrenness in ideas and timidity in action. If we compare this with the first eight months' work done by the Bolshevik Soviets we can realise what a loss it was and how many dangers and obstacles might have been avoided if only that first stage could have been omitted. In Central Europe the same thing is repeating itself, but there are grounds for hoping this period will prove shorter in the German case. A description by the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* of the Soviet Congress in Berlin should cause every revolutionary workman furiously to think. He says, "The overwhelming majority were staid Trade Union officials who had kept the working masses well in hand." The soldiers' delegates included 25 officers. "The Congress resembled more an assembly of worried city fathers than a revolutionary Parliament." Max Cohen, one of the Moderate Socialist "leaders," said: "A continuance of the present state of disorganisation and exaggerated labour demands will lead straight to a catastrophe. Only a strong Central Government can bring salvation. Only a National Assembly will be recognised . . . as expressing the national will; the Soviets never. The socialisation of certain industries might certainly be done, but care must be taken not to deprive employers of incentive, which was never more indispensable." Others, probably with an eye to middle class votes at the National Assembly elections, explained that Germany in her present position is "a quite unfit object for Socialistic experiments," they only want "to overcome the present crisis with the minimum of injury" (to profiteers and politicians?).

Compare this with the general strike of the coal miners to compel immediate socialisation of the mines, the determined strike movements at Berlin and elsewhere to secure thorough-going Socialist changes, and the extensive measures of socialisation that have already been carried out in districts where the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils are composed of the actual rank and file workers, or where the devoted propagandists of the Spartacus and other genuine Socialist groups have been able to secure a hearing for their ideas. The Spartacus Group includes in its immediate programme repudiation of all war loans without compensation, expropriation of all banks, mines, industries, large and medium sized estates. Spartacus ideas are so attractive that the General who was called with his troops to Berlin from Finland to support the Moderate Socialist Government against the Liebknecht Party complains that within a week his former "loyal" troops are melting away, some going home and others openly joining the Spartacus Group. And it is now announced that this Government can probably not depend upon any of the Berlin troops, and they do not know what others can be had, and every day Bolshevik ideas spread farther and take a deeper hold amongst working men and women.

Any day the German Revolution may enter upon its second stage, the Bolshevik one, and the creation of another Federation of Soviet Socialist Commonwealths in Central Europe will be seriously taken in hand. This, united with the Russian Federation, would almost certainly prove too strong for the remaining Capitalist Governments in the world to overthrow, and by its example to the remaining exploited section of the world's proletariat or its attraction to emigrants from other countries would definitely mark the speedy end of Capitalism and Parliamentary Government everywhere. It would immediately bring into view what seems to be the only real alternative to either endless wars or the League of Capitalist Governments, a League of Brigands to put down brigandage. We may almost see this latter at work in the way the Allied Capitalist Governments have treated the Socialist Revolution in Russia and Germany, and in their villainous cold-blooded starvation of women and children, the old and the sick, over a great part of Europe after the war was known to be over. The blackguard peace they seem to be preparing will be worth no more than the paper it is written on, and will probably not last so long as the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

A probably unique incident in proletarian revolutions took place at the end of December, when large bands of workmen from one of the great munition works in Berlin suddenly marched in good military order into the courtyard of the police headquarters and demanded rifles and ammunition, which were supplied. They wanted to assist the Spartacus sailors at the palace, against whom troops and artillery were being used by the Ebert Government. News had spread that the chief of police was on the sailors' side; but by that time the Government had given in.

French and Russian prisoners of war in Berlin joined the revolutionists, and at the very beginning worked hard to secure their success.