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RAYMOND ROBBINS ON RUSSIA

Despite the barrage of untruth, misrepresentations and lies concerning the Soviet government of Russia and the Bolsheviki, erected by the capitalist press, the truth about the workers' government of that country is beginning to appear.

One of the men who is contributing a great deal to the work of getting the facts about Russia to the American people is Colonel Raymond Robbins of the American Red Cross, who was in Russia from June of 1917 to May of 1918.

Colonel Robbins spoke before an audience at the City Club of Cleveland last week. It was a typical middle class audience that he addressed. Doctors, lawyers, preachers, salaried business executives, newspaper editors and a sprinkling of local politicians, composed the audience that crowded the ball room of the Hollenden Hotel. For two and a half hours Colonel Robbins talked to this audience about Russia and his interpretation of Russian events and although most of the audience had come for the usual luncheon hour address, hardly a person stirred during the two and a half hours and many remained for another two hours of questions that followed.

Colonel Robbins is not a partisan of the Bolsheviki; he is bitterly opposed to bolshevism. But he evidently believes that the American people are entitled to know the truth and he presented the truth as he saw it develop in Petrograd and Moscow and elsewhere in Russia.

One thing that stands out in Colonel Robbins' statement is the utter repudiation of the charges made and constantly reiterated by the kept press, that Lenin and Trotsky were agents of German imperialism, bent upon wrecking Russia for the benefit of their imperial masters. He did not do this through a direct denial of the charge, but through a presentation of the story of his negotiations with Lenin and Trotsky, which furnished a more conclusive answer than any denial could be.

Opening his discussion of the subject with the statement: "I don't believe it is necessary to libel or slander courageous men with whose ideas I do not agree," he told the story of his relations with the Soviet government after Lenin and Trotsky came into power.

The first incident had to do with the movement of thirty-two cars of Red Cross supplies from Petrograd to Jassy in Roumania. The German armies were getting dangerously near to Petrograd when Robbins made his request to move these supplies. At Jassy the supplies

would be delivered to one of the allies and used in the struggle against Germany. Yet upon the request of Robbins, Trotsky not only permitted these supplies to be sent out of Petrograd, where they were badly needed, but furnished an armed guard to accompany the train, and they were delivered at Jassy without the loss of a single pound of the goods.

Robbins did not ask the question, why a German agent should help save supplies from the German army, but it arose in the minds of his audience without any suggestion from him.

His second point was to the effect that Trotsky had agreed, in December of 1917, after the armistice had been signed between Germany and Russia, to permit the allies to station officers of the American, French or British armies at the Russian frontier to prevent any raw materials from leaving Russia for Germany. He pointed out that a number of cars of copper, and other materials badly needed by Germany were discovered in Petrograd, which under cover of false billing were to reach Germany by the way of Finland and Sweden, and that Trotsky promptly ordered the cars confiscated when the matter was brought to his attention.

But the strongest argument made by Colonel Robbins was his presentation of the facts in regard to the attitude of Lenin and Trotsky toward the signing of the Brest treaty of peace.

Senator Johnson, of California, some months ago, asked upon the floor of the senate:

Is it true that the administration knew, at the time of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, that the Soviet government, represented by Lenin and Trotsky, was opposed to the projected treaty, and looked forward to signing it only because of the physical impossibility of resisting German demands unless the allies, or some of them, came to its aid?

Is it true that Lenin and Trotsky, a week or more previous to the signing of the treaty, handed to Raymond Robbins, at that time a representative in Russia of the American Red Cross, a communication to President Wilson declaring their opposition to the treaty, and stating that they would refuse to sign it if the United States would assure them of its moral

support in breaking off the negotiations and would send to Russia food and arms?

Robbins did not only affirm that it was true, but, dramatically, he took from his portfolio and held before the audience a photographic reproduction of the written offer made by Trotsky and approved by Lenin, which was cabled to the American State Department. He showed photographic copies of the cable sent by Bruce Lockhart, the British High Commissioner, urging his government to accept the offer. He offered in evidence photographic reproduction of cables sent by others in authority vouching of the genuineness of the offer of the Soviet government and urging its acceptance. He told how, when the day for the meeting of the All-Russian Soviet, which was to act upon the treaty arrived, at Lenin's personal request the meeting was delayed for two days in order to give more time for the allied government to reply. He told how, after the All-Russian Soviet had begun its session and before the treaty had been ratified, Lenin called him to the platform and asked:

"Have you heard anything from America?"

The only answer Robbins could make was that he had received no answer. And Lenin added:

"The allies would rather see Germany triumph than help the social revolution."

What shall we say about the Wilson administration that knew these facts and still permitted the lies about the attitude of Lenin and Trotsky to circulate in this country undenied? What shall we say about an administration, which, in spite of knowledge of these facts, permitted an official government bureau to poison the minds of the American people with those damnable forgeries the Sisson documents? What other conclusion is possible than Lenin's "The allies would rather see Germany triumph than help the social revolution?"

Robbins indirectly answered another charge against the Soviet government when he told how a letter from Lenin to the local Soviets was sufficient guarantee to give him free passage across six thousand miles of Russian territory and that in those six thousand miles of travel he did not hear a single shot fired.

The inspiring part of Robbins' address to the Socialists was his picture of how, what he called, "the new

revolutionary culture" swept over all of Russia. It was not through force that the Bolsheviki conquered, but through ideas. The revolutionary ideals took hold of the people and as they swept across the country the power of the autocracy, the power of bourgeois government that succeeded, the power of Kerensky, vanished into thin air. These governments became corpses because the masses had accepted a new idea and moved from under them. It was inspiring because he proved so conclusively that after all real power lies in the masses of the people and when the hypnotic spell which holds the people in subjection is broken, the most powerful government of exploiters becomes merely a shadow.

Robbins is opposed to bolshevism, but he says neither England, France and Italy can stop it. "The government of Lloyd George rests upon a narrow ledge of social sanction; though Clemenceau lives in spite of the assassin's bullet, his government is already dead; the Italian government rests upon a volcano, which may burst at any moment."

"Bolshevism is the most fundamental menace of the time," Colonel Robbins said in closing. "But it will have no power in America unless by restricting freedom of speech and the freedom of the press and other acts of oppression, we create bitterness that will not be satisfied with less than the overthrow of our democratic institutions."

And if Colonel Robbins were to consider the fact about conditions in this country he would find that the very conditions which he said would lead to the triumph of bolshevism here have already been created. Debs is under ten years' sentence, Haywood has begun his twenty years in prison, thousands of others are in prison or awaiting sentence; at Seattle the federal troops are called when the workers use their industrial power to secure better things for themselves; hundreds of thousands are out of work and the government and the industrial masters coolly wait until industry adjusts itself, while the workers starve. Colonel Robbins may hope and wish but the facts are against the ruling class here as they were against the ruling class in Russia. The day is coming when the "revolutionary, Marxian culture" will sweep away the power of the industrial autocracy and its political expression here and prepare the way for a Soviet republic.

Soviet Representative Publishes Record of Achievement

Memorandum Submitted to State Department Tells of Wonderful Work New Government Has Accomplished

Through the Bureau of Information on Soviet Russia we are in receipt of a copy of the memorandum submitted to the state department together with the credentials of L. A. Martens, the representative of the Soviet Republic of Russia. This memorandum describes what has been achieved in Russia since the Soviet government has been in power and the present situation in that country.

The facts presented tell a story of wonderful achievements made in the face of counter-revolution within and the attack by allied bayonets from the outside. The memorandum is a complete answer to the kept press and its misrepresentations and lies about Russia.

Following we print the complete text of the memorandum as presented to the state department:

The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic was established on the 6th of November, 1917, by a spontaneous uprising of the toiling masses of Russia. Its government, the Council of the People's Commissars, is a government controlled by and responsible to all such members of the population of Russia as are willing to perform useful work, physical or mental. Those who, while not being unable to work, deliberately refuse to exercise their productive abilities, choosing to live on the fruits of the labor of other people, are eliminated from participation in the control of my government.

Under present conditions those who are willing to work for the common good, number at least 90 per cent. of the adult population in the area controlled by the Soviets. All such people have full political and civic rights. More people participate in government than anywhere in the world.

The basis for citizenship in Russia being industrial and economic rather than political, and the social system being of such a nature that every person engaged in useful social labor is bound to participate in public affairs, the percentage of people directly participating in the management of society in Soviet Russia is higher than has been the case anywhere in the world hitherto. The Russian Soviet Republic affords thereby the widest possible field for a real expression of a conscious popular will.

While the Soviet government is a government of the working class, the abolition of exploitation of labor and the elimination thereby of class division creates a productive community in which all able inhabitants are bound to become useful workers who have full political rights. The expression of fully one hundred per cent. of the people. It should also be noted that political rights are granted in Russia to every inhabitant engaged in useful work, though he be not a citizen of Russia, but only temporarily working there.

The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic was rapidly acclaimed by the vast majority of the laboring people throughout the former empire of Russia. It has maintained itself in the face of manifold plots and op-

position on the part of small groups of the former ruling classes who in many cases enlisted foreign help and who employed the most unscrupulous methods in their fight against the Soviet institutions. Yet, nowhere in Russia could such elements of their own accord organize any noticeable resistance to the popular will, as expressed by the Soviet government. Only in sparsely populated outlying districts and in such of those districts

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Debs Case Again Before Court

Washington.—Eugene V. Debs, March 17, filed in the Supreme Court a petition for a rehearing. The court recently affirmed Debs' conviction, under the Espionage law, under which he was sentenced to the federal penitentiary.

"The opinion of this country, as expressed upon the sentence of Debs clearly amounts to the trial of a person for an undisclosed state of mind," said Debs' petition. "The court erroneously bases its judgment upon the motive of the defendant. In the trial court we were denied the privilege of showing a good motive that would argue for acquittal. If it is good law to use motive for the purpose of sustaining a conviction, then it should have been equally good law, upon which the defendant was entitled to rely for the purpose of an acquittal."

Debs declared that "opposition to war stated as a conclusion does not constitute an admission of obstructing recruiting. If this court decides that opposition to war is an element of crime, then opposition to peace, opposition to a tariff, opposition to an import tax, opposition to an inheritance tax, and opposition to prohibition can equally be interpreted as elements of criminality. Opposition to war is a motive, it is not an intent. Motive and intent are clearly distinguishable."

(A later press dispatch from Washington announces that the court has refused the rehearing and that the mandate for imprisonment of Debs will be issued in about ten days.)

Toledo Crowd Compels Release of Socialist Speakers

Audience Aroused Because Denied Freedom of Speech Disarm Policeman and Marches on Police Station

Toledo, O.—City authorities here learned Sunday that the workers will no longer submit to arbitrary interference with the right of freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. In a crisis they were obliged to ask the assistance of the workers' representative to prevent a great mass of working people taking matters in their own hands and not only holding meetings as they pleased, but opening the prison doors for release of those who had been arrested.

The situation grew out of a meeting at which Toledo Socialists intended to pay their tribute to Eugene V. Debs. When they endeavored to secure Memorial hall for this meeting they found it had been rented to the Metal Workers' Council. They went to the Metal Workers' Council and stated the case to them and the latter agreed to give up the hall in favor of the Socialists. When this was explained to the city authorities who control the hall they refused to permit the transfer, stating that if the metal workers gave up the hall it would be turned over to some patriotic organization.

In order to meet this situation the Metal Workers' Council agreed to have Debs speak under their auspices.

Arrangements had been made to meet Debs at the station when he arrived. A crowd of some five hundred people assembled there, whom the police tried in vain to disperse. When the train arrived it was found that Debs had been taken ill in Cleveland and was unable to speak and that Charles Baker, state organizer of the Socialist Party, had come in his place.

Baker entered a waiting automobile and the crowd at the station formed in line behind, to march to the hall. In order to break up the demonstration police arrested the driver of the automobile, but another man quickly

took his place and the procession proceeded.

When the procession arrived at Memorial hall it was found that the city authorities had locked the doors and refused the metal workers, to whom the hall had been rented, the use of the hall for a Debs' meeting. A crowd of ten thousand people was assembled in the streets in the neighborhood of the building.

M. H. Toohy, secretary of the Toledo Socialist local, mounted the top of an automobile and began to speak and was immediately arrested. Seven other Socialists followed him, each being arrested as soon as he began to talk.

By this time the crowd was beginning to get beyond the control of the police, although the whole Toledo force was present. One policeman was stripped of his badge, club and revolver and chased out of the neighborhood. While this was going on an appeal to members of the Socialist Party was made to immediately adjourn to the party headquarters, while the audience was asked to remain where they were.

At the headquarters two hundred party members were organized to follow each other as speakers and they then returned to the scene of the meeting. In a half hour's time another fifty, who attempted to speak were arrested, one after the other, among them Organizer Baker, and were taken to the police station.

Meanwhile the attitude of the crowd toward the police grew more threatening and it looked as if they were in for a rough time.

Evidently the city authorities realized that things were beyond their control, for no sooner had the last batch of prisoners arrived at the station, when the police chief appeared to beg M. H. Toohy, Thomas Devine, Charles Baker and others to go back

to the scene of the meeting and try to disperse the crowd.

After some negotiations, during which it was agreed that every man arrested should be freed at once and it was impressed upon the police chief that never again must he interfere with a Socialist meeting, it was agreed that the Socialists would endeavor to restore order.

Hardly had they left the station when they met the vast crowd coming toward the station. Filling the street from building to building the mass of people swept everything before them and advanced toward the station intent upon freeing the arrested men. An automobile was hastily placed in position from which Toohy and Baker addressed the crowd, explaining that all the arrested men and women had been freed and the agreement that had been reached.

After a half hour of speech making the crowd was calmed and after a number of other brief speeches the audience was dispersed.

Socialists believe that the city authorities have learned what a mass movement means from their experience Sunday and that they will hesitate a long time before they again expose themselves to the wrath of a mass of working men, as they did Sunday.

Debs Gets Great Ovation at Youngstown

While the cry leaped from a thousand throats of the disciples of Eugene V. Debs last night, March 26, in Diamond hall: "If you go to jail, we go with you!" two thousand more stormed the door trying to get into the hall.

The expression came following the reading of a resolution in which it was unanimously voted "that not a wheel shall be turned in this valley by us on or after July 4, unless the constitutional rights, as guaranteed Debs in our American constitution, are respected, without any penalty whatsoever for exercising his rights."

Manifesto of Hungarian Socialists Charge Entente With Strangling Liberties

Appeal To Workers Of World Made Before Soviet Government Was Established Explain Conditions That Led To Workers Revolt

The resignation of the cabinet of the Hungarian People's government and the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Socialist government gives added interest to the appeal to the workers of the world recently issued by the Socialists and workers of Hungary, urging them to exert pressure on the governments of the allies to bring to an end the open alliance between the entente troops of occupation in Hungary and the counter-revolutionary elements bent on overthrowing the people's government and restoring the old regime of the monarchists and capitalist and landowners.

The manifesto throws a great deal of light upon the conditions in Hungary since the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the Hungarian People's government, and is especially interesting in its portrayal of the activities of the entente troops of occupation in opposition to the fundamental liberties of the Hungarian peoples. The text follows:

AN APPEAL FROM THE WORKERS OF HUNGARY TO THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD.

The workers' congress has taken a grave decision. The Hungarian workers address themselves to the workers of the world and urge them not to permit the rights of liberty now acquired by the conquests of the Hungarian People's Republic to be destroyed under the pretext of occupation.

BIRTH OF HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC.

Our delegates are going to all parts of the world. We shall utilize every method and all mediums in order that the proletariat of Europe especially may understand the situation which menaces democratic Hungary, Hungarian socialism, and the Hungarian labor movement, and to secure their effective assistance in this crisis.

What is happening in Hungary now?

The revolution, almost without the shedding of blood, overthrew the rotten system of tyranny. The Hun-

garian People's Republic was born. The people's republic, which rapidly wiping out the last vestiges of feudalism, which is creating in Hungary the most complete democracy and laying the foundations for the development of socialism.

ENTENTE TROOPS AGAINST HUNGARIAN LIBERTIES.

The territory of the vanished monarchy is now inundated by the troops of occupation.

The liberty of the small nations and the safety of democracy were written upon the banners of the entente as long as actual fighting continued and before the war was terminated victoriously for them. Victorious, the entente floods Hungary with the troops of occupation. But the troops of occupation cannot carry liberty. The Hungarian People's Republic alone effectively created liberty here. But the entente, which promised to liberate the world from the yoke of German absolutism, has subjected Hungary to the greedy clutch of Roumania, Siberian and Czechoslovak imperialisms.

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What Capitalists Hate Worst Is What Workers Need Most

