

The scientists' revolt

parades

Panic ~~is~~ ^{permeates} goes through the ^{intellectual} instructed layers of American society. Whereas the peoples of Europe were ~~went~~ ^{used} to war and damage, to destruction and insecurity ⁱⁿ of life, Americans felt safe by being separated ^{by} oceans from dangerous foes. ⁱⁿ Till the atom bomb fell upon Hiroshima; the first scientists, realizing what it meant, called themselves "frightened men".

There is no secret; and there is no defense. Within some few years Russia and many smaller countries can have their installations ready to make atom bombs by the hundreds, just as America. Atom bombs are the cheapest means of town-destruction; General H H Arnold computed that destruction per square mile by means of B29 Bombs costs 3 million dollars, by means of ^{the Hiroshima} ~~atom~~ bombs half a million only (destroying thereby a value of 160 millions).

Carried by airplanes or rockets, they can pass the oceans in numbers, and by agents of foreign powers ^(Russia has number of devoted agents in every country -) they can be easily smuggled in and hidden, to destroy at the fixed moment everything ⁱⁿ miles around. An immense army of security ^{officers} ~~agents~~ ^(will be necessary) and spies, continually to inspect every box or case in any house.

~~And Russia has devoted agents~~ In penetrating words Urey, one of the foremost physicists of America, points out how ^{the deadly fear of annihilation will destroy} all the ~~liberties~~ liberties of American citizens. Nor will an attempt to ^{foresee all the danger through} ~~establishing~~ world-conquest by America be a way out "Not only may our own culture be destroyed by these weapons of mass destruction, but all civilizations as they exist in the world may be retarded and weakened for centuries to come. It all adds up to the most dangerous situation that humanity has ever faced in all history"

In this all the ^{his colleagues} scientists agree, and they ^{rebel. They} refuse, now that the German war is over and won, to take part in further research ~~and perfection of these weapons~~ ^{They give out the slogan: international control of the use of all atomic materials for peaceful ends} for military use, to construct and perfect ~~these weapons~~ ^{for} an extensive propaganda is put up to impress the American people that a new age, "the atomic age" has begun, and that it is ^{for} the sake of ~~them~~ ^{the} all to fight the danger ^(impending) incumbent upon them. should be fought

Atomic scientists

(The Government, to break this strike, has ^{already} imported hundreds of German Nazi-physicists)

"One world or none" p. 51

[They proposed international control of all atomic technics and research, and give out the slogan: no more war.] Professor Langmuir ~~now~~ explains that America must come to an understanding with Russia ~~and~~ and overcome the mutual distrust "We don't like their form of government and they don't like ours"; but ^{he adds, quoting the Atlantic Charter, that} "we have to respect the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live". Here we have the common ignorance of middle-class peace propagandists; ^{manifestly, he thinks} to imagine that the Russian people have ~~deliberately~~ ^{by preference,} ~~chosen~~ chosen their dictatorship. ^{now} ~~There is~~ ^{always} ~~an~~ ^{again} ~~understanding~~ ^{spirit} ~~between~~ ~~Russia and America~~ ~~as~~ ~~between~~ ~~the~~ ~~peoples,~~ ~~the~~ ~~working~~ ~~masses,~~ ~~there~~ ~~would~~ ~~be~~ ~~no~~ ~~difficulty,~~ ~~if~~ ~~they~~ ~~only~~ ~~could~~ ~~reach~~ ~~one~~ ~~another.~~ But "Russia"; that is the group of dictatorially ruling ~~dictatorial~~ officials, for whom the chief thing is to keep their power over the exploited gagged masses. But "America"; that is the group of millionaires, ruling by means of their agents, senators, presidents, congressmen, editors, for whom the chief thing is, to keep their power over the exploited fooled masses. And to extend their power over the world; American capitalism as the more powerful, aspiring at complete world-domination, Russian ^{state-} ^{more advanced, higher economic form of} capitalism as the ~~less~~ ^{more} organized, economically expecting ~~the~~ ^{its} superiority by delaying the conflict. Theoretically it does not seem entirely impossible that those two groups of exploiters ^{should} (come to an agreement of uniting into one, ^{although not homogeneous,} world-dominating class; just as now within one ~~capitalist~~ ^{competitively and} political unit the capitalist groups ^{shoot and} fight one another without ^{or destroying} killing. In America many voices are raised already, demanding one ~~own~~ ^{supreme} world-government ("One world or none"!)- they feel quite well that it ^{would} ~~mean~~ ^{mean} an American world government; ^{of course} ~~to~~ the Russian rulers refuse. But as long as ^{there are} ~~pre-capitalist conditions~~ large populations and countries ~~can~~ ^{to} still (be conquered by capitalism - as in China - under destruction of old-settled conditions and heavier suffering of the masses, violence and bloodshed will not retreat from the earth, and passionate greed will engender ^a warlike spirit. [So it does not seem probable that ^{world-peace} ~~agreement~~ and unity (will be reached.
 of the ruling classes)

[Moreover ⁱⁿ world-war capital makes the biggest profits; 19 ship-builders companies with a total capital of 126 million dollars made profits amounting to 526 million dollars in the last war.

Capitalist society with its mighty technical and its entirely inadequate spiritual ^{and moral} powers often is compared ^{to} a powerful racing autocar with a baby at the wheel. Now the car is seen steering downright to ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{the} abyss. President Truman ^{a year ago} in ~~his~~ ^a message to Congress said: "the release of atomic energy constitutes a new force too revolutionary to consider in the framework of old ideas." What we see in politics ^{and international talk} (to the steadfast, nearly invariable ^{dominancy} ~~of~~ ^{of} the old ideas. The Army, here and yonder, prepares in secret more, and more ~~destructive~~ ^{destructive,} atomic weapons, ^{performing their narrow duty, in accordance with} ~~with the connivance of~~ ^{mutual} civil government; ^{the proposals of the} ~~and peace-phrases~~ ^{governments} have the old-fashioned sound of war-threats; Is that mere clumsiness of thought? No; the still reigning "old ideas" represent the still existing ^(the president spoke idle words. The atom bomb surely is a revolutionary factor. But it has not revolutionized) ~~the~~ ^{old} ~~foundations~~ ^{foundations} of society, the mastery of rapacious exploiters. ~~Will the~~ ^{Will the} revolting scientists change this basis? They do no ~~more~~ ^{more} than try to ^{impress} the danger ~~of~~ of atomic war upon the citizens. They cannot do any more, they are only learned physicists; ^{they are} ~~not~~ ^{are not acquainted with} social guides; ~~they do not know~~ ^{in different countries} the ^{real} nature of social relations. Learned societies ^{now demand} for the scientists control ^{of} and a say in politics, ^{part of the responsibility} in government; they ~~are not~~ ^{are} ~~not~~ ^{are aware} that ~~the~~ ^{the} right ^{of} governing is not given but must be conquered. In ~~one~~ ^{one} of the pamphlets issued to rouse the people, ^{one of} the question ~~asked~~ ^{asked} by the readers: ~~what shall we do~~ ^{what can I do?} - is thus answered: "Let your

International talk goes on in the old frame;

The basis of society.

~~Congress men know that you expect them to find a way to banish from the world (regardless of how many precedents and prejudices must be set aside) ^{Indeed, ten thousand of letters were received already by Congress,} both the causes and the weapons of war, ~~that will do it.~~ ^{That will do it.} Probably~~

(From among tens of millions of voters, hence 99.9 percent showing no interest).
 pretentious

the Congressmen receiving such ~~letters~~ ^{letters} ~~to~~ ^{sent} ~~their~~ ^{to} party-bosses' inside or outside the Administration ~~and what to do~~ ^{and instructions} to take counsel; and so everything remains ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the same hands, directed by the "old ideas" of politics. World-threatening dangers cannot be averted by ~~flimsy efforts~~ ^{flimsy efforts}.

~~Could, then, anything otherwise be done? Certainly it could. Suppose ~~an~~ ^{an} immediate danger of war threatens, and there is a group, a party, of scientists, of pacifists or what else, who see it and know it, then it is their ~~damned~~ ^{damned} duty, "regardless of how many precedents and prejudices must be set aside";~~

to rouse the people throughout the continent to protest, to demonstrate their peace-will in mass-meetings, in street processions, ^{or what else may impress the rulers} (And should that not suffice, to call upon ~~all~~ ^{all} the workers, the employees in traffic and industry to strike, as the most serious admonition to government of the importance of the matter, of the resoluteness of their will for peace. ^{Certainly} Surely this would be revolutionary means; but, as Truman said, the atom bomb is a revolutionary factor.

Has not, however, American Government shown its good will for peace by its proposals of international control, and has not Russia rejected them? Surely the Russian rulers do not wish to ^{see their monopoly of prescribing opinions re} ~~bring~~ their subjects ^(by foreign controlling intruders) into contact with Western committees, broken. When they impress ^{their people} ~~them~~ to distrust America, ^{polices as} ~~decide~~ determined by greedy capitalists who ^{seek} ~~wish~~ to subject the entire world to their profit, they are right. ~~The wish for peace, for more freedom, for resistance against the pressure from above, that probably is present in secret in that country.~~ ^{(means} If there may be any ~~action~~ ^{action} to encourage ^{from the outside} resistance of oppositional elements ^(among the exploited masses) in Russia, ~~against~~ the deadly weight of dictatorship, it consists in mass actions of the American workers against capitalist power. ~~The possibility of~~ ^{Effective} Practical action ^{of the working people} against threatening ~~and~~ world war ^(- if they are determined to it -) is far more easily ~~possible~~ ^{and more effective} in America than elsewhere; so here the fight has to start. If the working masses in America ^{should come up} proceed ~~to~~ to wrench the decision on politics out of the hands of big ~~capital~~ ^{most} capital, the ^{would be} essential step ~~has been~~ made to deter ^(the Hirotonis) ~~annihilation~~. And it ~~would~~ ^{would} be a first step towards the social revolution ~~the~~ Destroying capitalism itself.

Then the atom bomb indeed would be a revolutionary factor, revolutionizing the ^{basis} ~~structure~~ of society. Then the "atomic age" would inaugurate the age of freedom.

Of course nobody expects from the atomic scientists this line of action. But it must be pointed out that, ⁱⁿ ~~as~~ so far ^{as} (can be seen now, it is the only way to safety

Have not the events their spirit of compromise as effects of previous causes? 243/5

Could it have been different? This is not an entirely idle question. Small differences in ^{direction and} relative strength, ^{apparently, change} decisions at definite moments, just as at watersheds on mountain ridges, can have great effects in the direction of the further course of events.

Had the opposition been stronger, more self-confident, more daring, had the workers at the time ^{acquired a view} been more independent even against their organization leaders then things could have been different.

Had they ^{possibly} been able to coerce the Basle congress to discuss and proclaim man actions against the war - then perhaps the war was not forestalled, but it would have been crossed, from the onset, by class fight, by internal ~~dis~~ actions, within every country - and then ~~the result~~ ^{new} society and class relations ~~at the end~~ on the ensuing dozens of years, history of the last quarter of a century, would have been much different -

What did the socialist press? It demonstrated that peace was the real interest of the people. It demonstrated War politics as a folly for the capitalists themselves, and threatened them that this folly would be punished by ~~the~~ ^{with} revolution after the war. Surely, the Germans being got their punishment, in total loss of capital and world power, but ~~shall~~ ^{were} worse punishment ~~was the~~ ^{was the} lot of the workers - victims of a

War against War. A reminiscence and a warning

It was 1912 that in Basle gathered a socialist congress against war. The international tensions that had reached war was felt threatening -

B. had laid open the firm will of the Party and Union leaders not to act against the war. First, most open and avowedly, they abhorred man-actions because in the sharp clash with the strong state power ~~they~~ the organisations, the basis of all their work and existence, could be destroyed

(It would ~~bring~~ them into sharp conflict with state power) Secondly, ^{because} in the deeper subconsciousness they were nationalist, they felt solidary with the capitalist class in entering upon an energetic fight for world-power.

After the Comrade Kautsky wrote in the Neue Zeit -

It was just the reverse. The capitalist class ~~was~~ not deceived by this show-up. The governments now know that ~~from~~ the socialist parties did not intend to seriously oppose the war. They would protest and proclaim their peace-will, but they would not call upon the ^{workers} masses to fight and prevent the war by man-strikes. So they ~~governments~~ could ^{under} go on with their war preparations till the right moment had come.

So Basle was not only a symbol, but also a cross-road,

~~which opened the way to the present day situation~~
~~in the hands of the masses of workers~~
But the predictions!
Have any of those critics known what predictions?

II to prevent war

in order

Could, then, anything otherwise be done? Certainly, it could. But (to see this the question must be put in a wider context. Can the people, in extreme cases, force its will upon the rulers — directly, hence otherwise than on the long notoriously illusionary way of electing an entirely new and new-minded Congress? Suppose an immediate danger of war threatens, have then the working masses, ~~the~~ ^{provided that} when ^{within} ^{them} ^{lives} the decided will to prevent the war, any possibility to enforce their will upon an unwilling war-preparing government? They have, if (they really) are prepared to stand with resolute conviction for their ~~own~~ ^{aim}.

|| ~~The outspoken widely heard protest of the masses of the people is a political factor of the first rank. It can assume different forms of increased stringency. It can take the form of mass meetings resulting in voting sharp resolutions.~~

|| It must ^{be} borne in mind here that a government, a ruling class cannot ~~wage~~ ^{go into} a war with the people unwilling and resisting. Therefore a moral and intellectual preparation is no less necessary than a technical and organisational preparation. They know intuitively what ^{Clausewitz} the well-known German ~~author~~ ^{author} "On war" expressed in this way, that in every war spiritual forces play the main rôle. Systematic propaganda in the ~~press~~ ^{press}, in broadcasting and movies, must awaken the patriotic bellicose spirit and suppress the instinctive but unorganised resistance. So it is certain that a decided conscious ^{on the part of} refusal of the people's masses, demonstrated in an outspoken widely heard protest, is a first-rank political factor and can have a determining influence upon the governmental policy. Such a protest can assume different forms of increasing stringency. It may appear first in mass-meetings voting sharp resolutions. More efficient will be the protest, if by ten- and hundred thousands the masses go into the streets in endless processions; against such numbers all riot-acts and court-injunctions are meaningless. And if these are not sufficient, or

are suppressed by military violence, the workers and employees in traffic and industry can strike. Not for wages, but to save society. ^(political) A mass strike is ^{the} most serious ^{warning} admonition to government of the ~~importance~~ ^{importance} of the matter, of the resolute will for peace in the people. Surely it would be a revolutionary action; but, as Truman said, the atom bomb is a revolutionary factor.

Such an action is not lightly to be entered upon. Government ^(and the ruling class) will try to break this resistance with all means of moral and physical suppression. So it will be a hard fight, demanding sacrifices, steadfastness and endurance. ~~Just~~ The psychological factors ^{(are not at once present in full vigour; they need time to develop under heavy spiritual strains).} ^(for such fight) As long as citizens can be lulled by an appeal to nationalism — even in the illustrated leaflets against atomic war the star-spangled banner made its appearance — ~~and~~ ^{and} listening ^{you} to the promise that the big profits of American world-domination will ~~run~~ ^{run} out over the entire business world; as long as the ~~working class~~ ^{workers} ~~go~~ ^{go} to strike and go to work at the command of some union chieftain, instead of taking ~~the~~ action and decision over their lot entirely in their own hands — so long the psychological conditions for such actions of protest ~~are~~ ^{are} lacking. But it must be emphasized that ~~it~~ ^{in them} lies the only warrant of world peace.

Will not such actions, ^{by} flaming the war preparations ~~of the own country~~, play in the ~~hands~~ ^{hands} of the foe and prepare for the defeat of the own country? Everybody ~~knows~~ in America knows that Russia is a dictatorship able to go its course unimpaired by the powerless people. But in Russia ^(the workers know) every child knows that the U.S.A. is ruled by big capitalism aspiring at world-domination, and to that end ^{is} able to ~~it~~ ^{it} muster the entire American people, workers as well as middle-classes. At least up to now. ~~Will they~~ ^(then) blame their rulers that ^{it} ~~they~~ ^{they} prepare for defence? ~~AAAAAAAAAAAA~~ Thus the ring of fate ^(a war of) is closed. How can it be broken? ^{they are}

In Russia the workers are powerless, by hard constraint kept in spiritual as well as physical bonds. The American workers are free to take up the fight, free to act, ^(to them) ~~forcing~~ each working class to its masters,

would impose upon the war-mongers, and that, if the debates should expose ^{the} ~~their~~ differences and dissensions about ways and means, existing between us, this would encourage the militarists. As Kautsky wrote after the congress: (never the International showed itself so united and unanimous ... full unanimity not only in the negative rejection of war, but further on in the positive construction of a detailed program of European foreign politics ...) under such conditions important manifestations of the peace will of the proletariat can be a decisive factor for the maintenance of peace. (Neue Zeit 31 I. p 337 ff., Dec 6. 1912)

Of course it was just the reverse. The ~~militarist~~ capitalist ^{rulers} ~~were~~ not deceived by this show-up. The ^{warlike} ~~militarist~~ governments ^{directly} felt its inner weakness; they now knew that the Socialist Parties did not intend to seriously oppose the war. It would utter lip-protests, but would not call upon the working masses to fight and ^{effectively} prevent the war by mass actions. ~~So~~ So the disaster went its inevitable course. When on the last days of July 1914 the war danger stood before them gigantic ~~and~~ there were spontaneous antiwar demonstrations of the workers in Berlin; but they felt uneasy because the Socialist Party ~~did~~ did not give energetic directions; their "International" in the streets was drowned by the louder national anthems of the bourgeois youth. Without serious hindrance the ~~first~~ world war started, with the working class organisations now tied firmly to its chariot.

Basle ~~was~~ had been a symbol, a test, a cross road. The decision taken there ^{first, directly,} ~~was~~ determined all the further consequences, ^{the catastrophe of all (spiritual, moral and) expectations of progress} the whole sale murder over all Europe, the downbreak of the International, the annihilation of all hopes on the debasement and hopelessness, ^{and then, further on,} ~~the~~ Hitlerism, the second world war with its wholesale destruction of Europe, and the now impending annihilation of human culture. Could it have been otherwise? Of course the congress decision was not one chance event but was determined by the entire state of mind and power relations in society and workers' movement. ~~Is not~~ Is not, then, all what happened a strict and precise effect of preceding conditions, so that it is an idle question?

War against war

It was in November 1912 that in Basle ^(A reminiscence and a warning socialist) delegates from Germany, France, Austria and all surrounding countries gathered into a ~~congress~~ congress against war. Armaments had increased all the preceding years, the threat of war by the Morocco affair had just passed, now the international tension again had reached a breaking point by the Balkan wars. International socialism saw the necessity to demonstrate against this danger. It was a great and imposing solemnity, for which the old Gothic cathedral was put at its disposal: Under ^{the} solemn bin-lam of the church-bells the delegates, ~~with~~ impressed by the importance of time and task, entered the church, ^{there} ~~where~~ the greatest of socialist leaders, Bebel, Victor Adler, Jauries spoke and asserted the unshakable peace will and ^{feelings of} the international brotherhood of the socialist workers of all countries.

What, then, should be done, if governments persisted in their war-politics? In France the idea of a universal strike at the outbreak of war had been propagated, as well as of a general refusal to take up arms. In Germany since 1903 in the socialist papers ^{and reviews} there had been extensive discussions on mass-strikes and mass-^{actions} ~~demonstrations~~ to be entered upon for the defence of political rights, to the great discontent of most party- and ^{trade} union-leaders who wished to restrict the workers' movement to parliamentary and trade-union action. Now part of the delegates at Basle wanted the congress to discuss ways and means how to act against the threat of war: One of them, Herman Gorter from Holland, had brought a resolution with him to lay before the congress, to ^{enter into a discussion of practical methods,} ~~discuss the possibilities~~ and to convoke ~~meetings~~ ^{where} meetings in all towns, ^{should} for the workers to discuss how far mass-actions, demonstrations and, in the extreme case, mass-strikes were feasible, ~~and~~ and thus ^{should} ~~to~~ know their own responsibility. But discussion on the congress was not allowed. The presidium told them that now the splendid unity of peace-will

Small differences in relative strength, hardly felt, apparently chance decisions at definite moments, just as small ~~structure~~ details of watersheds on mountain ridges, can have ~~great~~ ^{large} effects in the direction of the further course of events. If the opposition in the Socialist parties had been stronger, more self-confident, more daring, if the workers at the time had acquired a greater independence over against their organization leaders, if then, the Leftist delegates had been able to compel the Basle congress to discuss ^{of ways and means, expect} and proclaim mass-actions against war — then the war ^(probably, would) not have been forestalled, but from the onset ~~it~~ would have been crossed by class-fights, internal ^{(within each country,} breaking national unity, exalting the workers' spirits; ^{demonstrating} ^{since} internationality; and then history of the last dozens of years, the state of socialism, the relations of the classes, the conditions of society would have been greatly different.

Now again we stand before a war, in a case analogous to that of 1912, ~~and~~ realizing that its power of destruction will far exceed everything of former wars. And again the capitalist world, and ^{in the first place} ~~most of them~~ its working class, stands before the question: is there any means to prevent it? Of course there are differences. The chief difference ~~with 1912~~ is that ~~then~~ in 1912 in Germany (and in a lesser degree in the rival countries) ~~there was a large~~ the working class to a large extent was organized in the Socialist Party that ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{the} ~~was~~ ^{policy of the} hostile to imperialist and warlike government and ~~in program~~ ~~and~~ proclaimed itself the deadly enemy of all capitalism. In present America there is nothing of the sort; the ^{great} majority of the working class is following capitalist trends of thought, reads the capitalist papers and is spiritually lead by them.

debar
preclude
foreclose
inhibit
contravene

to read, to publish, to discuss, to instruct themselves, ^{to combine into unions,} ~~to assemble in meetings,~~ to strike. Hence it is here only that the fight for peace can start. If there exists any way to encourage, from the outside, resistance of oppositional elements among the Russian masses against the deadly weight of dictatorships, it consists in mass-actions of the American workers against capitalist power. If they should ^{come forward} proceed to wrench the decision on ~~foreign~~ policy out of the hands of big capital, the most essential step would be made to deter the threatening annihilation ^{through} atomic war.

At the same time such action would be the first step towards social revolution overthrowing capitalism itself. Then the atom bomb would be a revolutionary factor indeed, revolutionizing the basis of society. Then the "atomic age" would inaugurate the age of freedom.

Of course nobody expects the atomic scientists to go that far. They have given their expert warning, as physicists & above they cannot do. It is ^{up} to others to take ~~up~~ the warning.