The Great Strategist of the Class War

VLADIMIR ILYITCH LENIN

We have allowed our thoughts to wander to the Land of the Social Revolution. We have listened in our thought to one of the millions. We have partici­pated in the great celebration.

Is it in imagination? No. This is what the Russian comrades announce to all of us here on the seventh anniversary of their Revolution. As to the celebration, it is up to us to make it as powerful and as glow­ing as befits the Great Day.

Long live the Russian Revolution!
Long live the Russian Communist Party!
Long live the Struggle for World Revolution!

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THE WORKERS PARTY TO THE FORE

By Wm. Z. Foster

STANDING out above all other facts in American social life today is the great revolt from their old political moorings of great masses of workers and farmers. Notwithstanding the political immaturity of these masses, their courage, which combine to make them easy prey to the middle-class politicians of the LaFollette type, the disillusionment of large masses with the pseudo traditional parties of American capitalism remains the biggest political fact today. By the time these lines appear in print the elections will be but a few days off, and we shall soon have more facts upon which to estimate the depth and extent of the movement of the masses. But even now the broad outlines of the situation are clear. Especially is it possible to judge the historical role of the LaFollette movement, and the tasks which are thereby placed upon the shoulders of the vanguard of the American working class—we Communists and our immediate sympathizers.

What is the LaFollette Movement?

The LaFollette movement has furnished the channel into which has been turned the elemental mass movement of disillusioned workers and farmers. Only the class conscious portion of the working class and poor farmers will follow the lead of the Communists in this election. But to say that the LaFollette movement has the support of great masses of workers and farmers tells us very little about its nature and his­torical function. It does not mean that LaFollette or his movement has influenced the interests of these workers; to admit such an influence is to equate the interests of these workers with the interests of the story-tellers; it does not mean that the LaFollette movement is the means of achieving the aims of these workers.

What we see in America in the LaFollette movement is the same historical fact that is finding expres­sion on an international scale in the revival of the democratic illusion. The LaFollette movement is the expression of the breakdown of the international capitalist stem. The imminence of this wave was pointed out the Fourth Congress of the Commu­nist International. For us, working class militants in the United States, the LaFollette movement is the most dangerous enemy of the toiling masses of America today.

The "Democratic Illusion.

"Democratic" under the capitalist system is a set of forms to mask the dictatorship of the capitalist class. In times of "normalcy" it puts in office such open servants of Wall Street as Warren Harding. If the workers are still "normal" this year it will put the capitalistic puppet, Coolidge, into power. Under such conditions capitalism operates brutally and openly through the government, with Daugherty in­junctions, "red raids," and armed force against the workers. Why not? The workers continue to approve with their votes! But when the masses begin to revolt against the flagrant "Wall Street control," and when the middle classes take the leadership, in­stitutional forms of democracy are called into play. LaFollette measures, such as pri­vate, direct election of senators, and so on, are laws, are allowed to be written into the law, to quiet the masses with the belief that they have achieved some measure of control.

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Perhaps our LaFollette enthusiasts may reply that the Wisconsin senator is an outspoken critic of American military adventures in South America, and that it is unfair to charge the movement with action on his part, that he would serve American imperialism. But when we know that the pacificist Mac- Donald (who, by the way, opposed the world war with slightly more enthusiasm than the LaFollette), once he was in office, proceeded to continue bombing defenseless natives in Iraq, to handle India by forcible repression, that he continued imperialist intrigue in the Near East, and in every way continued the policies of British imperialism as established by the liberals and conservatives, it is not straining a point to expect that the Doh- nald's prototype in America, LaFollett, will follow the same course with regard to American imperialism. And when we further see Herriot, of France, continue the policy of the Omnile des Forges, and of French imperial- 
ism in Africa, and French Indo-China, we have an- other reason for our belief. Further, when we con- sider that even the propaganda of the LaFollett for the masses contains nothing but the most pestilent sentimentalities, that Gompers, a big cog in the La- Follet machine, is an open defender of imperialism, that there is a complete absence of any program of action that would mobilize the resistance of the colonial peoples or crystallize the power of the working class against imperialism—then we know of the tawdry that are nothing but concealed imperialists, agents of capitalism in foreign affairs as they are at home.

Debouching the Working Class.

At this moment the masses in America are just entering upon a drunken debauch of democratization, fed to them by the LaFollette movement. Blindly they were making their exit from the two old parties of capitalism, and just as blindly they allowed them- selves to be led into the danger of the party bour- geoisie. And in the accompanying flood of middle- 

Imperialism and LaFollettism.

Imperialist policy is the very keynote of modern capitalism. How little the LaFollettistes, MacDonells, Herriots, and Eberts endear the capitalist dictator- 

Direct Organs of Struggle.

One of the most important of these forms, and one which will soon be playing an important role in the American labor movement, is the shop committee movement. The shop committees will furnish the basis for uniting the actions of organized and unorganized workers. They act as protective organs of the workers in the shops and factories, against wage cuts, against lengthening of hours, against arbitrary changes in working rules, etc. Now they think they have the weapon in the LaFollett movement. They will insist upon trying to assimilate to the extent that they are under the spell of the LaFollettism. The LaFollett movement will fail them miserably. But the masses will not believe that only because the Com- 

The situation here outlined brings sharply to the fore the role of the Workers Party as the vanguard of the workers class. We have two principal tasks: first, to assist the working class to cast off the influence of the LaFollett movement, and second, to arganize the 

Empowering the Shop Committees.

At the same time, they furnish the necessary base fcr the struggle for unity and amalgamation of the trade unions. Out of the struggle the shop committees give the mass basis for the political struggle against LaFollettism. Out of the shop committees, and out of the mass basis thus created, all any vages, abstract slogans and middle-of-the-road politi- 

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Against the class-collaboration program of La- 

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