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# Letter to “Dr. Ball,” from John Reed in New York City, January 6, 1919

Typewritten letter from digital image in Tim Davenport collection. Ellipses in the original.

[1] Patchin Place, New York, Jan. 6, [1919].

My dear Dr. Ball:—

If you have been reading my articles on Russia in *The Liberator*, especially that on “The Structure of the Soviet State” [Nov. 1918] and those which preceded it, you would not have to ask me about the passing of property into the hands of the workers and peasants, and how they work it. Nor would you have to ask if the Bolsheviki represented the working class. Who else could they represent? The Bolsheviki, as I have written, now call themselves the Communist Party, and are still in power. The latest news from Russia is that they now have an army of a million, and are whipping hell out of the Allies. They are Marxians — as a matter of fact, they call themselves the only real Marxists. They believe in proletarian revolt followed by a dictatorship of the proletariat and the forcible expropriation and socialization of private property.... The opposition to [Katherine] Breshkovskaya is that she is not a Marxian, and what’s more, she is old, and a compromiser. Gorky is not an Anarchist. As a Socialist, I should have thought you would have known that he has been a Marxian Socialist (Internationalist) for many years.

I am very sorry that I cannot help you more, but if I answered your questions I should have to write a book, and I haven’t the time — as well as having already answered most of them in *The Liberator*.

Yours sincerely,

*John Reed.*

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

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