

AGAINST
The Plague of Nations

An
Address to Thinking People
On
THE POLISH QUESTION

By **NICOLAI LENIN**

Price: 10 Cents

PUBLISHED BY
THE TOILER PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
3207 Clark Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio

Spec. Coll.
Lobs. Paup. blot

L-763

.43

1929/

Against the Plague of Nations

The so-called League of Nations has become in reality a plague of nations. Born of the hatred engendered by four years of world war, ruled by the unscrupulous, moribund servants of greedy imperialism and capitalism, this organization is doing its utmost to prolong the sufferings of humanity. This so-called League of Nations is sending to slaughter British workers in Mesopotamia and India, French workers in Syria, Polish workers in Russia, and Turkish nationalists and Greeks thruout Asia Minor. It is starving to death the innocent children of Vienna, even the Lord Mayor of the City of Cork in the Tower of London.

Above all, this Plague of Nations is blockading, starving and fighting openly and secretly the peasants and workers of Soviet Russia. The anti-Bolshevist Polish nationalists, Pilsudski and Paderevski, have openly stated that it was this Plague of Nations ("League of Nations") which prevented them from concluding early peace with Soviet Russia. It is this same Plague of Nations again which is threatening Soviet Russia with new ultimata and injecting itself between the Poles and Russians at the present peace parleys at Minsk. It is this same Plague of Nations which is sending munitions, officers and aviators to the Polish front, thus clearly demonstrating the "neutrality" of that decrepit imperialism. Great Britain, the most elusive and most powerful member of the League, is being kept at bay by its revolutionary working class organizations demanding immediate lifting of the blockade and recognition of Soviet Russia. This explains the wavering and double-cross attitude toward Soviet Russia on the part of Lloyd George, who is supporting General Wrangel with ships and munitions while asserting His Majesty's neutrality towards that German baron bandit.

Italy has been forced by its working class revolutionary organizations to abandon all attacks against Soviet Russia and virtually to recognize the Soviet Government of the peasants and workers of Russia.

France remains the sworn enemy of every progress, especially in Russia. Her generals, her officers, guns, munitions and airplanes have been fighting the Soviet armies on the Polish front ever since the beginning of the present offensive of Poland against Soviet Russia. France has recognized General Wrangel as the government of All Russia. France is bent upon destroying the Soviets by starvation, hatred and violence.

There are still other governments supporting Poland morally and immorally, with empty words and promises.

These wanton onslaughts against the peaceful Republic of Soviet Russia have aroused the workers of the world to the highest pitch of indignation. They have become conscious of the fact that poverty,

disease and starvation cannot be eradicated from the face of the earth unless Russia, this giant nation, is permitted to rehabilitate itself. The imperialistic policy of capitalist governments is calculated to prolong the sufferings of Russia and of the workers the world over.

Here is the toll of epidemics exacted from the workers of Petrograd during the single week from May 30 to June 5, 1920:

| | |
|-----|-------------------------|
| 246 | cases of Spotted Typhus |
| 88 | “ “ Repeated Typhus |
| 10 | “ “ Smallpox |
| 18 | “ “ Dysentery |
| 10 | “ “ Acute Diarrhoea |
| 45 | “ “ Other Diseases |

Total 417 cases of needless suffering caused by filth and starvation imposed upon the Russian people by the horrible blockade of the Plague of Nations.

The Poles are spreading false stories about alleged atrocities of the Soviet Armies. We need not say much to refute their falsehoods. The massacres perpetrated upon the Jewish population by the Poles have been established beyond a scintilla of doubt by the most anti-Bolshevist investigators, by the High Commissioner of Great Britain, Sir Samuel himself. The inhuman treatment accorded by the Poles to the conquered nations was not confined to the Jews alone. They have maimed and killed peaceful peasants, even cattle, which they could not take with them. Upon the capture of Kiev they destroyed a freight depot, a sugar refinery and were about to burn the railroad station offices, which they were prevented from doing by the employees. They blew up the palace of the former governor-general, his church, the Girls' Gymnasium with the church, four bridges, waterworks, railroad cars, houses, and the big Georgiev Works, taking the machinery with them to Warsaw. The Ukrainian Executive Committee of the local communes have addressed a solemn protest to the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia, G. Chicherin, against the Polish atrocities perpetrated before the evacuation by them of the captured cities. They mention the destruction of the famous Cathedral of St. Vladimir in Kiev, a relic of antiquity as old as the famous Rheims Cathedral in France. They protested against the complete destruction of the town of Borisov by Polish artillery.

There is system in the madness of the henchmen of the Allied managers of the Plague of Nations. Their aim is to so weaken and dishearten the workers of Russia as to compel them to submit to the dictates of greedy imperialism and capitalism. But the Soviet Government and its leaders have risen to the occasion. Their wits are more than a match for the war lords' dying Plague. The gradual disorganization and decomposition of the League is taking place before our eyes. The Soviet Government, on the other hand, is gathering its forces and straining every nerve to unite and to strengthen the power of resistance and the morale of the People of Soviet Russia. It is hoped that the workers in other countries will realize the world-wide significance of the battles going on at the Polish front, that they

will give their moral and material support to the Soviet Republic of Russia in its darkest hour of trial.

The remarks of Comrade Lenin, chairman of the Council of the People's Commissars of the Soviet Republic, before a recent conference of Rural Commissars of Soviet Russia may well serve as an inspiration for the gigantic task facing the Soviet Republic and the proletariat of all countries.

COMRADE LENIN ON THE POLISH OFFENSIVE

(Speech of Lenin at the 2nd All Russian Conference on Party Work in the Villages.)

"Comrades, you of course are familiar enough with the salient facts of the Polish Offensive.

"Immense quantities of falsehoods are circulated on this subject owing to the so-called freedom of the press which consists in the fact that all main organs of publicity abroad are bought up by capitalists and 90% of them are filled with articles written by prostitutes of the pen.

"The Principle of the Polish Offensive."

"It is alleged that the Polish offensive was started because the Bolsheviks submitted to Poland impossible demands. As a matter of fact, you know very well that we were willing to grant the Poles even the enormous territory which they had occupied prior to their offensive. We value higher the preservation of the lives of our Red Soldiers than war for the sake of White Russia and Lithuania captured by Poland.

"We most solemnly declared both in the name of the Council of People's Commissars and in a special manifesto of the All Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets addressed to the Polish Government, aside from our appeal to the Polish workers and peasants, that we were ready to begin peace parleys on the basis of the front existing at that time. That is to say, on the basis of the front according to which Lithuania and White Russia, altogether non-Polish territories, remained with the Poles.

"We were convinced and still continue to be convinced that the Polish capitalists will not be able to retain foreign lands and that even thru a most disadvantageous peace treaty we will gain more by safeguarding the lives of our Red Soldiers, because every month of peace makes us ten times stronger, whereas every bourgeois government, including that of Poland, is getting more and more disorganized.

"We do not wish to wage war, because to us the blood of Russian workers and peasants is dearer than any victories. To prove this we were willing to give such concessions as no other government can. We gave to Poland a better boundary than that published by the Supreme Council of the Allied British and French imperialists. These gentlemen capitalists of Great Britain and France are imagining that they are setting the boundaries, but thank God, there is

somebody who is deciding the boundaries besides them. The workers and peasants have learned to define the boundaries themselves. The eastern boundary of Poland set by the Allies is further west than the one proposed by us.

"Capitalist Support of the White Guards."

"The agreement reached in Paris between them and General Wrangel clearly indicates the undercover dealings between the capitalist governments and the White Guards. These governments are assuring us that they are desirous to conclude peace with Soviet Russia, that they are not supporting Poland nor General Wrangel. But we said that this is an outrageous lie, behind which they are hiding.

"They say that they are not giving the Poles any munitions, but these munitions are being given no less than several months ago. Today's communications received by us show that we have captured a great booty: we have taken carloads with brand-new British machine guns. Comrade Trotzky tells me that only recently our army captured brand-new French cartridges. What other proofs do we need to see that Poland is waging war by the aid of British and French munitions, British and French cartridges, British and French money?

"The allied governments are spreading lies on their non-support of Poland much the same as the British, French and American diplomats were assuring the world that they never sent Bullitt to us until finally he arrived in America and published his documents. The British Government a year ago offered thru Bullitt a peace treaty very profitable to the Allies and very unprofitable to us, according to which enormous territories were left with Denikin and Kolchak. We were convinced that if peace had been signed those governments would not have been able to maintain themselves. From their narrow traders' point of view they could not interpret it in any other way than as a confession of weakness on our part: All diplomats rubbed their hands and millions of pounds sterling were presented to Kolchak and Denikin. It ended with a crushing defeat of Kolchak and Denikin, and hundreds of millions of pounds sterling melted away.

"At the present time we are receiving one after another, trainloads with excellent British munitions. Very often we meet entire divisions of Russian Red Guards, clad in excellent British uniforms. Just recently a comrade from the Caucasus told me that a full division of Red Army Soldiers in the Caucasus was clad in the uniform of the Italian Bersaglieri. Russian Red Guards are grateful to the British merchants who have provided them with clothing (applause)! We observe the same facts in connection with the Polish offensive. Undoubtedly the Allies are headed by extremely wise and excellent politicians, and those politicians are committing one error after another. They are raising one country after another, affording us the opportunity to defeat them one at a time. A year ago they declared that they had raised fourteen states against the Soviet power; only today I received from Finland a pamphlet—the reminiscences of a white

guard officer on the attack against Petrograd, in which he tells how the entire affair developed.

“And why? Because their League of Nations is a League merely on paper, while in fact it is only a group of wild beasts fighting each other, not aiding each other. In reality they are even now boasting that Latvia, Roumania, and Finland will join Poland in her offensive. But we are convinced that the threats of Finland, Roumania and Latvia, these dependencies of the allies, will come to naught.

“Poland concluded an agreement only with Petlura, this general without an army, and this agreement provoked a great bitterness among the population of Ukraine. Instead of a common offensive they started a sporadic action.

“Our cavalry took Zhitomiy and the last road connecting Kief with the Polish front in the south and in the north has been already cut, hence Kiev is hopelessly lost for the Poles. We have been advised that the government of Skulski is already tottering, and is ready to offer us new peace terms.

“Danger is not over yet.”

“In spite of our successes we have to strain all our efforts. The most dangerous course is to underestimate the enemy and to believe that we are stronger. Not only is it important to begin, it is also important to persevere and withstand, and this our brothers, the Russians, do not know. Only through long training and through disciplined proletarian struggle against all confusion and wavering can the toiling masses be brought to cast off this bad Russian habit.

“We defeated Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch. But we did not know how to destroy them completely and we left Wrangel in the Crimea who is receiving aid from Great Britain and recently landed troops and took Melitopol. To be sure, the latest dispatches say that we retook it.

“We have to wage a most ruthless warfare against desertion, which causes destruction of tens of thousands of our best red guards and peasants and the prolongation of all the tortures of starvation. Our watchword should be to do away with every kind of laxity. Once war has become inevitable everything has to be sacrificed for it! Without this we shall not subdue the Polish nobility and bourgeoisie in order to end war once for all, and to teach this last of our neighboring powers which is still daring to play with us. We have to make them unlearn it so that they should beseech their children, their grandchildren and their grandchildren’s children never to attempt it again (applause).

“Work in the Villages.”

“Therefore, comrades, the first duty of all workers in the villages, of propagandists and agitators is to remember first of all and to propagate first of all the watchword “All for the war”. Before the war is concluded with a complete victory we have to safeguard ourselves against any errors and vagaries. The first order of business of every meeting should be the question: Have we done everything, have we made all sacrifices to end the war? This is the question of saving the

lives of tens of thousands of the best comrades at the front, it is the question of saving from starvation. To accomplish this it is necessary to enforce discipline and obedience with the utmost rigidity.

I saw a comrade who recently came from Siberia and comrades Lunatcharski and Rykov, who recently returned from Ukraine and Northern Caucasus. They were stunned by the riches of these regions. In the Ukraine wheat is fed to the hogs, in the north of Caucasus dishes are washed with milk. From Siberia are arriving trains with wool, hides and other goods; there are tens of millions of poods of salt while our peasants are suffering from want and are declining to give bread for paper while here in Moscow the workers are starving in the shops.

"Because we lost Crimea several thousands of people will have to starve half a year more, and all this is due to lack of organization and discipline.

"If all our measures are fully enforced we shall be protected against disorganization and demoralization caused by the imperialistic war. The stocks of grain accumulated for the year beginning August 1, 1917, amounted to 30 million poods, for the year beginning August 1, 1918—110 million poods, and from August 1, 1919 up to date, over 150 million poods. But we have not completed the conquest of Ukraine, of Northern Caucasus and of Siberia. When we shall have completed this task, we shall be able to provide to the workers two pounds of bread daily.

"Work on a National Scale."

"One of the chief obstacles to our work in the rural districts is the fact that we do not know how to work on a national scale. Even our leading comrades in this work here in the centre are accustomed to the old underground ways when we sat in small circles here or in foreign countries and did not even dare to think of placing our work on a national scale. At present we have to know and remember that we have to manage millions. Everyone of you going to a village either as a delegate or as an envoy from the Central Committee should remember that we have a large state apparatus which is functioning very inefficiently because we do not know enough to manage it well. Every agitator has to co-ordinate his work with the work of the Council of People's Commissars, the Council of General Education and the Commissariat of War. The work should be arranged in such a way that each teacher and every war commissary would work in the spirit of the Soviet. Under such conditions, with the proper direction of our endeavors, you will increase your forces tenfold, and each hundred of agitators will leave after them a trail in the form of an organized apparatus functioning as yet unsatisfactorily, awkwardly, but still existing. In this field as well as in others I wish you success." (Long applause.)