

JAPAN'S INTERVENTION IN THE FAR EAST (I WORLD WAR SITUATION)

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The First World War of 1914-1918 was used by imperialist Japan in order to try to implement extensive conquest plans. Imperialist Japan took full advantage of the fact that the attention of its main competitors-the USA and England, as well as tsarist Russia, Germany, and France-was distracted from Far Eastern affairs by military events in Europe. Japan not only captured the former German "leased territories" in China and the Germanic island possessions in the Pacific Ocean (the Marshall, Karolinsky, Mariansky Islands), but during the years of the First World War it actually monopolized the Far Eastern markets.

The war of 1914-1918 contributed to the very significant growth of Japanese industry and trade and the enrichment of the ruling classes. The economy of Japanese imperialism has undergone major changes that have brought to the fore the interests of monopoly capital due to some weakening of the share of landlord ownership. The cost of industrial products in Japan during the years of World War I increased more than fivefold: from 1371 million yen in 1914 to 6,737 million yen in 1919¹.

A vivid manifestation of the aggressive aspirations of Japanese imperialism was the intervention directed against Soviet Russia² and launched by the Japanese militarists in the spring of 1918 in accordance with the British and American ruling circles. Under fictitious pretexts, a thieves' image, the Japanese military captured the Soviet Primorye and invaded

Transbaikalia. The purpose of the intervention was the rejection of Soviet land east of Lake Baikal, strengthening the position of Japanese imperialism on the Asian mainland.

Japanese intervention began with a provocation. On April 4, 1918, an attack on three Japanese citizens organized by Japanese agents took place in Vladivostok. The next day, the commander of the Japanese squadron landed. At the same time, the Japanese imperialists strengthened the supply of white-bandit formations of Semenov and Kalmykov. On August 2, 1918, the Japanese government officially announced the start of the intervention in Russia together with the United States and Entente powers. By the fall of 1918, the Japanese command had over 70 thousand soldiers in the Russian Far East and Transbaikalia.

Japanese invaders tarnished themselves with atrocities and robbery on Soviet territory: in Nikolaevsk-on-Amur, Blagoveshchensk and other cities. Khabarovsk, Chita and the cities of Primorye were captured by Japanese mercenaries Kalmykov and Semenov. Japanese imperialists 'used the occupation of Russian territory for predatory siphoning off of its natural wealth, without stopping at the same time to ruin and even exterminate part of the local population.

The resistance of the Soviet people to the imperialist interventionists, who launched a

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mass partisan struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party, the military defeat by the Soviet troops of the White Guard armies of Kolchak and other proteges of imperialism forced the United States, as well as Britain and France to withdraw their troops from Russian territory in the Far East in early 1918. However, Japanese imperialism stubbornly continued the bloody adventure.

There was no unity among the Japanese ruling circles on the question of whether to continue the costly and unpopular intervention in Russia. Japan's economic situation was difficult. The international situation also developed unfavorably: the anti-imperialist movement in China grew and Japanese-American contradictions intensified³.

The Khara government in this situation took a peculiar maneuver: it seemed to transfer responsibility for the continuation of the intervention to the military command, officially recognizing that there were no "political motives" to continue the intervention, but only "strategic considerations".

Japanese militarists invented more and more pretexts to continue the intervention. On April 4-5, 1920, the Japanese military treacherously attacked Soviet troops in Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, and a number of other points. April 22, Japanese troops occupied North Sakhalin. To "justify" this capture, the Japanese military referred to the so-called Nikolaev incident as an imaginary argument in favor of the intervention. "Incident" consisted in the fact that a red group of Japanese in response to Japanese atrocities in Nikolaevsk was shot by a group of Japanese.

The Soviet government, trying to avoid a war with Japan, decided to create a "buffer" between the RSFSR and the Japanese interventionists - the Far Eastern Republic (FER). At the same time, measures were taken

towards the speedy complete rout of the White Guard generals, who constituted the shock force of the interventionists. As this task progressed, the area of Japanese occupation shrank.

The democratic circles of Japan and even part of the ruling classes insisted on ending the shameful intervention.

In 1920, for the first time in Japanese history, an open mass celebration of the international day of proletarian solidarity took place - May 1. The sowing of the workers and peasants has reached such an extent that the reformist leaders of the workers' unions could no longer restrain the masses from expressing their international feelings and sympathies. At the May Day demonstration in 1920 in Tokyo, the reformist trade union association Sodomei (successor to the yaikai) led a convoy of demonstrators. The demonstrators demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Japanese occupation forces from Russia, the abolition of article 17 of the police law for the protection of public order, protection against unemployment during the crisis, the establishment of a law guaranteeing a minimum wage that could ensure a normal standard of living.

The total number of demonstrators on May 1, 1920 in Tokyo did not exceed 1,500 people. They represented 15 progressive organizations. There were no performances in other cities of the country. However, in subsequent years, May Day performances by Japanese workers have become a tradition.

In 1921, the celebration of May 1 took place not only in Tokyo, but also in Osaka, Kobe, Yokohama, Asio⁴

During the May Day demonstration of 1921, the slogan of an 8-hour working day was first legally put forward. The total number of demonstrators in Tokyo alone reached 5 thousand people.

In June 1921, a major strike took place in Japan, which attracted general attention. Over 35,000 workers at the Kawasaki and Mitsubishi shipyards in Kobe went on strike simultaneously [26]. It is characteristic that workers, in addition to purely economic requirements, put forward the requirement of establishing workers' control over production. Out of solidarity with the strikers, workers of other enterprises also went on strike. The government sent troops and gendarmerie against striking workers and made numerous layoffs and arrests. In 1922, the May Day demonstration was held under the slogan

"Recognition of Worker-Peasant Russia."

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