

This week in the Russian Revolution

June 12-18: Petrograd Congress of Factory Committees endorses Bolshevik resolutions

12 June 2017

Encouraged by the Bolsheviks, and to the dismay of the Provisional Government and its opportunist allies, factory committees are playing an ever more assertive role in the life of the former imperial capital: from controlling production to enforcing labor discipline, from organizing Red Guards to holding performances of operatic arias and Shakespeare's dramas, from ensuring the food supply to combating drunkenness. In a congress of factory committees held this week, elected worker-deputies arriving straight from their factory benches vote overwhelmingly for Bolshevik resolutions. Workers declare that they are ready to rule without the "help" of the capitalists and landlords.

Across the ocean, the US ruling class, led by President Wilson, mobilizes millions of soldiers and the immense productive capacity of the American economy to intervene in the Great War. However, the Wilson administration confronts a powerful working-class insurgency involving the largest strike wave in American history. In response, the "liberal" Wilson administration imposes the authoritarian Espionage Act, in effect criminalizing opposition to war.

Petrograd, June 12-18 (May 30-June 5 O.S.): Conference of Petrograd Factory Committees endorses Bolshevik resolutions

The first full conference of factory committees convenes in Tauride Palace, the same building where the Provisional Government had first assembled during the February upheavals. Encouraged by the Bolsheviks, factory committees elected from the shop floor are playing an increasingly dominant role in the life of the former tsarist capital.

Factory committees unilaterally assert control over the hiring and firing of workers, over wages, and over every aspect of production and distribution at a given workplace. When starvation threatens the capital, the factory committees establish commissions to procure food and cooperatives to serve meals to workers and their families. Commissions are established to address a whole panorama of issues: to resolve disputes with management, to resolve disputes among workers, and to discipline workers who steal from the factory, who come to work drunk, or who slack off on the job.

The factory committees do not limit themselves to the immediate issues arising at the workplace. Having no confidence in the Provisional Government and its police forces, the committees equip, arm, and train their own Red Guards. They establish commissions on "culture" and "enlightenment," establishing libraries, schools, kindergartens, day care, bands, orchestras, Shakespeare productions, lectures, and opera performances. Evening classes—in multiple languages—are held on literacy, science, mathematics, and law. The Putilov works committee, a center of

Bolshevik support, urges workers to attend evening classes: "Let the idea that knowledge is everything sink deep into our consciousness. It is the essence of life and it alone can make sense of life."

"Questions of culture and enlightenment are now the most vital burning questions," the committee writes. "Comrades, do not let slip the opportunity of gaining scientific knowledge. Do not waste a single hour fruitlessly. Every hour is dear to us. We need not only to catch up with the classes with which we are fighting, but to overtake them. That is life's command, that is where the finger is pointing. We are now the masters of our own lives and so we must become masters of all the weapons of knowledge" (quoted in S.A. Smith, *Red Petrograd*, p. 95).

The Provisional Government and its supporters view the growth of politicized and Bolshevik-influenced factory committees—and the workers' fierce loyalty to these committees—with alarm. In a law passed in April, the Provisional Government sought to grant the factory committees legal status while restricting them to the role of trade unions. This law is largely ignored by management, which still tries to crush any effort to organize workers, as well as by workers, who reject any government-imposed limits on the activities or aspirations of their organizations.

At the congress of factory committees, workers reject the idea that their organizations should accept a role as mere trade unions, limiting themselves to helping management and the state carry out their organizational work. In his speech to the congress on June 13, Lenin favors expanding the role of factory committees, which should boldly declare their authority over every aspect of production and organization at the workplace. "Comrades, workers, see that you get real control, not fictitious control," Lenin declares, "and reject in the most resolute manner all resolutions and proposals for establishing fictitious control existing only on paper."

The final resolution, supported by 336 of the 421 delegates, upholds the factory committees as democratically elected "fighting organizations" that aspire to "thorough control by labor over production and distribution." In contrast to the pompous and long-winded speeches that have characterized the proceedings of the Provisional Government and its petty-bourgeois supporters, the workers addressing the congress of factory committees are earnest and direct. "By taking into our own hands the control of production," one delegate says, "we will learn about its practical aspects and raise it to the level of future socialist production."

Tokyo, June 12: Tensions emerge between Japan and the US over China

The state-controlled press in Japan bitterly denounces the decision by the United States to send a note to the Chinese government at the beginning of the month, in which Washington advises Beijing that its prospective participation in the Allied war effort should take a back seat to ensuring domestic stability.

The American note has been sent as mass opposition to possible Chinese involvement in the conflict intensifies political instability. The country is wracked by violent conflicts between rival warlords, threatening the very existence of a central political authority. Japan's reaction reflects mounting tensions between Tokyo and Washington, both of which have designs on securing greater dominance over China after the war.

The semi-official *Japan Times* declares: "The Foreign Office officials must obtain from the United States an assurance that it will not repeat its actions in interfering with the domestic affairs in China, completely ignoring the existence and position of Japan." It states that the US note had been discussed in the Japanese Cabinet because it "gravely concerns the future of the Empire."

Petrograd, June 13 (May 31 O.S.): US former Secretary of State Root's mission arrives

After one month of travel, including a disembarkation in Vladivostok and a 10-day journey across Russia on a luxurious train that weeks earlier belonged to Tsar Nicholas II, the special American mission to Russia led by former Secretary of State Elihu Root arrives in Petrograd. The nine-man commission is housed in the tsar's sumptuous Winter Palace.

The mission includes, in addition to Root, two military officers, three industrialists, a representative from the Young Men's Christian Association, and two representatives of American "labor": the pro-war socialist Charles Russell, and James Duncan, vice president of the equally pro-war American Federation of Labor.

A note from Secretary of State Lansing, introducing the "high commission," makes clear that its purpose is to secure ongoing Russian involvement in the war: "This commission is prepared, if the Russian Government desires, to confer upon the best ways and means to bring about effective cooperation between the two Governments in the prosecution of the war against the German autocracy which is to-day the gravest menace to all democratic governments... Whatever the cost in life and treasure this supreme object should be, and can be, obtained."

Kerensky and the Provisional Government, in fact, need no convincing. "It is not that any difficulties will arise with the Government..." the *New York Times* writes. "[B]ut the government is not always its own master." Referring to the Petrograd Soviet and other working-class organs of power, the *Times* correspondent continues, "there are organizations, and powerful organizations [for whom] President Wilson's declarations and policy mean prolonged war, and it's a prolongation of the war that they detest. They will doubtless see in the Root Mission an attempt to bind Russia to a hard and fast policy which would inevitably mean war to the finish."

The Root Mission is hated among the Russian masses. One American observer, present in Petrograd at the time, remarked that "Root, in revolutionary Russia, was as welcome as the smallpox."

Ashton-under-Lyne, England, June 13: Munitions factory explosion kills over 40

A fire breaks out at the Hooley Hill Rubber and Chemical Works factory in Ashton-under-Lyme, northwest England. The blaze triggers an explosion of five tons of TNT, killing 46 people, including 23 workers at the facility, which is engaged in producing TNT for the war effort.

The factory is owned by the Hooley Hill Rubber and Chemical Company, which has sought to profit from the mass slaughter in Europe. On August 5, 1914, the day after war was declared on Germany, the company approached the British government to offer its services in the war effort. While it was initially turned down, London accepted its services after TNT stocks began running low.

The plant in Ashton-under-Lyme was constructed with the help of a government grant of £10,000. Initially approved to manufacture five tons of TNT per week, production has since been increased to 25 tons per week, even though the plant is in a built-up area with houses nearby. This has been part of a broader effort by the government to increase the production of TNT by private contractors, resulting in a sharp rise in TNT production from half a million tons in 1914 to 76 million tons in 1917.

Among the casualties are 11 children playing nearby. Over 120 people are hospitalized, and several hundred suffer minor injuries.

London, June 13: 162 killed, over 400 injured in German air raid

In Germany's first major air raid on the British capital with fixed-wing aircraft, 162 people lose their lives and 432 are injured. This will be the largest number of casualties caused by a single bombing raid on England during World War I.

Twenty-two Gotha bombers set out on the attack. The first bombs fall around 11:30 a.m. in East Ham and near the Royal Albert Docks. Three bombs are later dropped on Liverpool Street station, where there are at least 16 deaths. Reports say that in total the planes drop 126 bombs, mainly hitting private houses, stables, and schools.

Poplar Upper North Street School is hit, resulting in the death of 18 children, 16 of them aged between 4 and 6, and the maiming of 30 others.

The raid shows a lack of preparedness by the British authorities. A small number of aircraft are scrambled to attack the German bombers but are outnumbered and fail to shoot any down. Although some planes and guns have been in place around the capital to deal with Zeppelin attacks that have been launched at regular intervals since 1915, aircraft are not deployed in sufficient numbers to deal with large formations of German aircraft.

Petrograd, 14 June: Provisional Government forces Swiss Social Democrat Robert Grimm to leave the country

The Menshevik ministers of the Provisional Government, Tsereteli and Skobelev, inform the Swiss social democrat Robert Grimm that he must leave Russia immediately. They had previously confronted and exposed him for secretly making contact with the German high command. Using Swiss diplomatic channels, Grimm had attempted to arrange a separate peace between Germany and Russia.

Robert Grimm (1881-1958) is known for organizing the peace conferences at Zimmerwald (1915) and Kienthal (1916). Lenin and Trotsky participated in these conferences, notwithstanding their political differences with Grimm.

Early in the morning of June 15, Grimm, accompanied by a Russian agent, is placed on the next train and escorted to the Swedish border. The

Congress of Soviets, held in Petrograd, endorses the deportation of Grimm (in Trotsky's words), "the pathetic Swiss socialist who tried to save the Russian Revolution and German social democracy by secret negotiations with Hohenzollern diplomacy." Lenin writes in a letter to Radek in Stockholm: "I am not surprised that the scoundrel Grimm, a centrist and Kautskyist, is capable of a disgraceful rapprochement with 'his' ministers: Whoever does not break decisively with the social chauvinists always risks finding themselves in this shameful situation."

Grimm had been in contact with the Swiss government and the German military command for months. He also informed them of his visit to Russia, where he took part in meetings with workers and deputies of the soviets and visited the sailors in Kronstadt. In a coded telegram from Petrograd to the Swiss foreign minister in Bern, Arthur Hoffman (of the Free Democratic Party), he wrote: "The desire for peace is generally present ... If possible, tell me what you know of the war aims of the governments so that the negotiations can be made easier." Hoffman then recommended to the German supreme command that they "further spin the thread begun by Grimm with the relevant persons in Petersburg."

London, June 15: British government announces general amnesty for Irish political prisoners involved in Easter Rising

In the House of Commons, Chancellor of the Exchequer Bonar Law reads a statement from the government proposing a general amnesty for the more than 100 Irish political prisoners still in custody following their participation in the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin. The government justifies its move by the desire to show goodwill in advance of the convocation of an Irish convention due to open next month. The convention's task will be to determine Ireland's future relationship with Britain, which rules the island as a colony.

The detention of more than 3,000 people following the rebellion, which was brutally put down by British soldiers in less than a week, has increased anger among the Irish population towards British colonial rule. Working-class opposition to the war is deepening, and there is widespread hostility to Irishmen being drafted to fight on behalf of their British colonial overlords. In February, Sinn Fein, which is rapidly shifting from its former position of advocating an independent Ireland under the British crown to a call for outright independence, secured its first victory in a parliamentary by-election.

One of the most well-known figures among the prisoners the government will now release is Eamon de Valera, who served as a commandant of one of the rebel brigades during the Easter Rising. He will go on to become Sinn Fein President and play a major role in the Irish Civil War and negotiations with Britain that will result in the creation of the Irish Free State.

See also: One hundred years since Ireland's Easter Rising

Petrograd, June 15 (June 2, O.S.): First issue of *Vperiod*, the new paper of the Mezhraintsy

The first issue of Trotsky's new journal *Vperiod* ("Forward") appears in Petrograd. Trotsky at this point still works formally outside the ranks of the Bolshevik Party, trying to win the majority of the *Mezhraintsy* (Interdistrict Group) for a merger with Lenin's Bolsheviks.

Trotsky's editorial in this first issue of *Vperiod* makes clear that he is already fighting for the same line as Lenin: against the opportunist,

nationalist betrayal of socialism by the Mensheviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries and other tendencies, and for the building of the Third International to lead the world socialist revolution:

Our paper is to be the organ of revolutionary socialism. Such a declaration would have been sufficient a short time ago. At present these words have lost value. For, both socialism and revolution are now professed by such elements, such classes, as, in their social nature, belong to the camp of the enemy whom we cannot conciliate.... The Russian Revolution is the beginning of the great European tide. The bourgeoisie is attempting with all its might to tame the Russian Revolution and to nationalize it. That is why the bourgeoisie is camouflaging itself behind the defensive minority of socialism. The servants of the bourgeoisie and its political agents are exerting all their efforts, in the name of "national unity and defense," to castrate the proletariat, to tear it away from the International, and to subjugate it to the discipline of an imperialistic war. We consider this policy to be a mortal foe to the interests of socialism. "The revolutionary defense" is our domestic brand of social-patriotism. Under the mask of populism or of "Marxism," this "revolutionary defense" in reality involves an unalterable desertion of the independent policy of the proletariat, and brings with it the poison of chauvinism and a complete degradation of the proletarian ideology. The fight against the disintegrating influence of social-patriotism and in defense of the principles of revolutionary internationalism will be the most important task of this paper.

The paper was to be short lived. Only 16 issues appear before virtually all the *Mezhraintsy* join the Bolshevik Party in late July 1917 and start publishing in its main organ, *Pravda*.

Washington, June 15: Wilson signs into law the Espionage Act

After several months of wrangling with Congress for a more sweeping bill, Wilson signs into law the Espionage Act, which, in the name of "national defense," seeks to outlaw political opposition to US involvement in the Great War.

Section 2 of the law makes punishable by death or imprisonment of up to 30 years "willful" interference with the US military or collusion with its enemies. Section 1 is much broader, imposing a prison term of up to two years for a suspect's "intent or reason to believe" that conveyance of information regarding US national defense—including not only military installations but railroads, factories, and mines—might cause "injury of the United States."

Section 3 is tantamount to a gag order against opposition to American imperialism. It prescribes prison terms of up to 20 years for the "crime" of making "false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military" or of "attempt[ing] to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States or [obstruction] of the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States."

Section 6 allows the president to declare, by proclamation, any part of the US "a prohibited place" where the Espionage Act can be made operative.

Wilson proposed the Espionage Act as early as his 1915 State of the Union Address:

There are citizens of the United States, I blush to admit, born under other flags but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to the full freedom and opportunity of America, who have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life; who have sought to bring the authority and good name of our Government into contempt, to destroy our industries...Such creatures of passion, disloyalty, and anarchy must be crushed out...

Wilson's warnings against criticism of the American government and threats to its "industries" are not mere window-dressing. With the Espionage Act, Wilson and leaders of both major parties are attempting to counter the growing influence of socialism amidst the largest strike wave in US history. The target of the Espionage Act is the working class.

Wilson wishes to go much further than what is realized with the law, which slows its passage: He demands the right to impose censorship upon the media. A proposed amendment to the Espionage Act, granting the president this right, fails by one vote in the Senate. However, the law itself is so sweeping that it is interpreted as allowing the Postmaster General to outlaw the delivery in the mail of newspapers and magazines that oppose the war. Soon, foreign language newspapers are required to submit an English language translation prior to delivery.

On May 16, 1918, Congress will add a set of amendments to the Espionage Act known informally as the Sedition Act. This will outlaw forms of speech deemed "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive... about the form of government of the United States ... or the flag of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy."

Petrograd, June 16 (June 3, O.S.): First All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies convenes in Petrograd

The First All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is in session from June 16 to July 7 (June 3 to 24, O.S). The Congress is attended by 1,090 deputies who represent 305 Soviets of Workers,' Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, as well as dozens of regional soviets, army units, naval organizations, and other councils and committees. Of the deputies, there are 285 Socialist-Revolutionaries, 248 Mensheviks, 105 Bolsheviks, and a broad panorama of other political affiliations.

The central question at the Congress is its attitude to the Provisional Government and the war. The SRs and Mensheviks support the government and call for the strengthening of the army to fight the war. The Bolsheviks, together with the *Mezhraiontsy* and some Menshevik-Internationalists, are in the minority. Speakers from this wing, including Trotsky, denounce the war as "imperialist" and call for the transfer of power to the Soviet of Workers,' Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Many of the major figures in the Russian Revolution are present, and the proceedings of the congress are rich with drama. The Menshevik Nikolai Chkheidze chairs. The Mensheviks Fyodor Dan, Irakli Tsereteli, and Georgi Plekhanov speak in support of the provisional government and the war, Lenin and Trotsky against. At one point, Tsereteli is speaking, claiming that there is no political party in Russia ready to take power entirely. Lenin interrupts, "There is!"

When Lenin's turn to speak arrives on June 17, he delivers a comprehensive presentation of the political situation, an analysis of political tendencies, and an exposition of the Bolshevik positions. Lenin concludes:

You can write on paper anything you like. But as long as the capitalist class has a majority in the government the war will remain an imperialist war no matter what you write, no matter how eloquent you are, no matter how many near-socialist Ministers you have. Everyone knows that, and everyone can see it...

The time has come for a radical turn in the whole history of the Russian revolution. When the Russian revolution began it was assisted by the imperialist bourgeoisie of Britain who imagined Russia to be something like China or India. Yet, side by side with a government in which the landowners and capitalists now have a majority, the Soviets arose, a representative institution unparalleled and unprecedented anywhere in the world in strength, an institution which you are killing by taking part in a coalition ministry of the bourgeoisie. In reality, the Russian revolution has made the revolutionary struggle from below against the capitalist governments welcome everywhere, in all countries, with three times as much sympathy as before. The question is one of advance or retreat. No one can stand still during a revolution...

Power transferred to the revolutionary proletariat, supported by the poor peasants, means a transition to revolutionary struggle for peace in the surest and most painless forms ever known to mankind, a transition to a state of affairs under which the power and victory of the revolutionary workers will be ensured in Russia and throughout the world.

Flanders, June 17: First combat action of Portuguese troops on the Western Front

Troops of the Portuguese Expeditionary Corps (CEP) engage in battle for the first time on the Western Front alongside British forces. The fighting comes more than a year after Lisbon formally entered the war on the side of the Allies in March 1916.

When the war initially broke out in 1914, the weak Portuguese government sought to retain a position of official neutrality. However, Portuguese and German troops engaged in a series of hostile skirmishes over competing colonial possessions in Africa. Portugal sent troops to Angola on Africa's southwest coast and Mozambique on the southeast coast to strengthen control of its colonies. From its colony of Southwest Africa, Germany fomented unrest among African tribes in Angola. Angola has been a longstanding target for Berlin, which formed an Angola League as early as 1912 and was pursuing secret talks with Britain to seize it from Portugal prior to the war's outbreak.

The conflict escalated in November 1915, when Portugal sent an additional 1,500 troops to Mozambique to capture the Kionga Triangle from Germany, which has been occupied since 1894. The final straw came in early 1916, when Britain requested Portugal confiscate German ships in its ports, a request which Lisbon followed. The declaration of war occurred on March 9, 1916.

The deployment of 55,000 troops to France to fight on the Western Front triggered mass opposition. Strikes broke out and the deployment has only been carried out following the imposition of martial law. The first contingent arrived in February, and there have been Portuguese troops at the front since early April.

June 17 (June 4, O.S.): Socialist Revolutionaries conclude Third Party Congress in Moscow

On June 17, the Socialist Revolutionary Party (SRs) concludes its Congress in Moscow. Of all parties in Russia at the time, the SRs are most closely associated with the tradition of populism and seen as the central political vehicle of Russia's vast peasantry. The influence of the SRs had dramatically increased after the February Revolution and is now reaching its apex in the early summer. In June, the SRs won a comfortable majority of 58 percent in the Moscow City Council elections, and most Russian cities are now run by an SR mayor.

Like the Mensheviks, the SRs support the Provisional Government and the war effort. The Congress gives its formal approval for the participation of both Chernov and Kerensky in the Provisional Government, as minister of agriculture and minister of war respectively.

Whatever the apparent success of the SRs in this period, the Third Party Congress in June reveals a party that is hopelessly divided and on the brink of political collapse. Having undergone a shift toward national chauvinism and conservatism during the war, the party's leading intellectuals and representatives oppose the widespread land seizures by peasants in the countryside. They have abandoned the centerpiece and most popular component of the SR program, the socialization of the land, in all but name.

An increasingly militant left minority is opposing these policies. In Kronstadt and some other regions, the left SRs often support Bolshevik resolutions and expand their cooperation with Lenin's party. However, they refuse to break with the SRs. On the other hand, a no less militant right-wing is boiling with almost unrestrained Russian nationalist chauvinism and support for militarism.

In a desperate attempt to prevent the party from breaking up, the Congress effectively avoids any binding resolution and programmatic decision. The concrete implementation of the land reform, as well as a number of crucial points, are left to a Constituent Assembly, yet to be convened in the indefinite future. The party also avoids clarifying its stand on the ever-more burning nationality question, with leading representatives insisting that only Poland, but not Ukraine, Finland, or any other major nationality, have the right to nominal independence from Russia. Despite a massive influx of new members, the Congress does not even manage to set up a standard procedure for admission.

Zürich, June 14: Ferdinand Hodler exhibition opens

In Zürich, the most comprehensive exhibition ever held of the work of Swiss painter Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918) opens on June 14. Hodler belongs to the most innovative and versatile artists of the early modernists. His work encompasses everything from realistic landscapes and portrait paintings, to symbolism and art nouveau, to ever more abstract presentations of people and landscapes. His later works include not only portraits and landscapes of great luminosity, but also several monumental paintings and murals in which he approached historical themes with a new visual vocabulary. His figures and groups of people move in rhythmic repetitions and are reminiscent of modern dance.

Hodler grew up in poverty and was confronted with death at an early age, something which became a central theme in his life's work. When he was five years old, his father, a carpenter, died of tuberculosis. When he was 13, his mother succumbed to the same disease, collapsing in a field. The 14-year-old loaded her into a wheelbarrow and carried her into the city with tears streaming down his face. After that, his five siblings also died. Hodler: "In the family, death was universal. In the end, it seemed there would always be a dead person in the house, and that it had to be so."

Among his most impressive works are the 100 or so drawings and

paintings concerning the illness and death of his lover, the dancer Valentine Godé-Darel (1915).

In 1914, he signs a letter of protest against the bombing of the Reims Cathedral by German troops. Following this, he is subjected to a furious smear campaign in Germany. One of Hodler's pictures, "The German Students in the War of Liberation of 1813," hangs at the University of Jena. Nobel laureate Rudolf Eucken and zoologist Ernst Haeckel call for the painting to be removed and ultimately sold. Haeckel writes that with his "spiteful and libelous statement," Hodler had "deeply wounded" the German honor. All of his paintings are banished to the cellars of German museums.

United States, June 17: Charlie Chaplin's *The Immigrant* opens

Charlie Chaplin's two-reel film (22 minutes), *The Immigrant*, opens in the US. The remarkable movie, made for the Mutual Film Corporation, contains elements of comedy, romance, and social criticism.

The Immigrant is the 11th comic short Chaplin has made for Mutual in 1916-17, in all of which he produces, writes, directs, and stars. The series also includes other immortal works such as *The Vagabond*, *One A.M.*, *The Pawnshop*, and *The Rink*.

Chaplin relies in part on his own experiences as an outsider in the US. The film begins on board a ship carrying poor immigrants, many of whom are seasick. A wonderful gag involves Chaplin aligning his movements with the rocking of the ship. He makes friends with a young woman (played by Edna Purviance) and her ailing mother, whose money has been stolen.

The newcomers spy the Statue of Liberty in New York's harbor, but soon find themselves behind a rope barrier and pushed around by immigration officials. Chaplin's kick administered to one of the officials is cited in the "Red Scare" period of the early 1950s, when the filmmaker is forced out of the US, as evidence of his "anti-Americanism."

Chaplin and the 21-year-old Purviance—with whom the filmmaker is romantically involved—later meet up in a restaurant, where he contrives to come up with payment for their meals in the face of a huge, intimidating waiter (Eric Campbell).

Chaplin shoots as much footage for *The Immigrant* as other directors do for feature-length films. He exposes 90,000 feet of negative (the final film runs some 2,000 feet) and works four days and nights without sleep while editing the film to its final length.

In his autobiography, Chaplin describes the period at Mutual as "the happiest period of my career."



To contact the WSW and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)