

J. V. STALIN

LENIN

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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J. V. STALIN

LENIN

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LENIN AS THE ORGANIZER AND LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

There are two groups of Marxists. Both work under the flag of Marxism and consider themselves "genuinely" Marxist. Nevertheless, they are by no means identical. More, a veritable gulf divides them, for their methods of work are diametrically opposed to each other.

The first group usually confines itself to an outward acceptance, to a ceremonial avowal of Marxism. Being unable or unwilling to grasp the essence of Marxism, being unable or unwilling to put it into practice, it converts the living, revolutionary principles of Marxism into lifeless, meaningless formulas. It does not base its activities on experience, on what practical work teaches, but on quotations from Marx. It does not derive its instructions and directions from an analysis of living reality, but from analogies and historical parallels. Discrepancy between word and deed is the chief malady of this group. Hence the disillusionment and perpetual grudge against fate, which time and again lets it down and makes a "dupe" of it. The name for this group is Menshevism (in Russia), opportunism (in Europe). Comrade

Tyszka (Jogiches) described this group very aptly at the London Congress¹ when he said that it does not stand by, but *lies down* on the point of view of Marxism.

The second group, on the contrary, shifts the centre of gravity of the question from the outward acceptance of Marxism to its realization, its application in practice. What this group chiefly concentrates its attention on is determining the ways and means of realizing Marxism that best answer the situation, and changing these ways and means as the situation changes. It does not derive its directions and instructions from historical analogies and parallels, but from a study of surrounding conditions. It does not base its activities on quotations and maxims, but on practical experience, testing every step by experience, learning from its mistakes and teaching others how to build a new life. That, in fact, explains why there is no discrepancy between word and deed in the activities of this group, and why the teachings of Marx completely retain their living, revolutionary force. To this group may be fully applied Marx's saying that Marxists cannot rest content with interpreting the world, but must go further and change it.² The name for this group is Bolshevism, communism.

The organizer and leader of this group is V. I. Lenin.

I

LENIN AS THE ORGANIZER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

The formation of the proletarian party in Russia took place under special conditions, differing from those prevail-

ing in the West at the time the workers' party was formed there. Whereas in the West, in France and in Germany, the workers' party emerged from the trade unions at a time when trade unions and parties were legal, when the bourgeois revolution had already taken place, when bourgeois parliaments existed, when the bourgeoisie, having climbed into power, found itself confronted by the proletariat — in Russia, on the contrary, the formation of the proletarian party took place under a most ferocious absolutism, in expectation of a bourgeois-democratic revolution; at a time when, on the one hand, the Party organizations were filled to overflowing with bourgeois "legal Marxists"³ who were thirsting to utilize the working class for the bourgeois revolution, and when, on the other hand, the tsarist gendarmerie was robbing the Party's ranks of its best workers, while the growth of a spontaneous revolutionary movement called for the existence of a staunch, compact and sufficiently secret fighting core of revolutionaries, capable of directing the movement to the overthrow of absolutism.

The task was to separate the sheep from the goats, to dissociate oneself from alien elements, to organize cadres of experienced revolutionaries in the localities, to provide them with a clear programme and firm tactics, and, lastly, to gather these cadres into a single, militant organization of professional revolutionaries, sufficiently secret to withstand the onslaughts of the gendarmes, but at the same time sufficiently connected with the masses to lead them into battle at the required moment.

The Mensheviks, the people who "lie down" on the point of view of Marxism, settled the question very simply: inasmuch as the workers' party in the West had emerged from non-party trade unions fighting for the improvement of the

economic conditions of the working class, the same, as far as possible, should happen in Russia; that is, the "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government" in the localities was enough for the time being, no all-Russian militant organization should be created, and later . . . well, later, if trade unions did not arise by that time, a non-party labour congress should be called and proclaimed as the party.

That this "Marxist" "plan" of the Mensheviks, Utopian though it was under Russian conditions, nevertheless entailed extensive agitational work designed to disparage the notion of the Party principle, to destroy the Party cadres, to leave the proletariat without its own party and to surrender the working class to the tender mercies of the liberals — the Mensheviks, and perhaps a good many Bolsheviks too, hardly suspected at the time.

The immense service Lenin rendered the Russian proletariat and its Party was that he exposed the whole danger of the Mensheviks' "plan" of organization at a time when this "plan" was still in embryo, when even its authors perceived its outlines with difficulty, and, having exposed it, opened a furious attack on the laxity of the Mensheviks in matters of organization and concentrated the whole attention of the Party's practical workers on this question. For the very existence of the Party was at stake; it was a matter of life or death for the Party.

To establish an all-Russian political newspaper as a rallying centre of Party forces, to organize staunch Party cadres in the localities as "regular units" of the Party, to organize these cadres into one entity through the medium of the newspaper, and to weld them into an all-Russian militant party with sharply-defined boundaries, with a clear programme,

firm tactics and a single will — such was the plan that Lenin developed in his famous books, *What Is To Be Done?*⁴ and *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back.*⁵ The merit of this plan lay in the fact that it fully conformed to Russian realities, and that it generalized in masterly fashion the organizational experience of the best of the practical workers. In the struggle for this plan, the majority of the Russian practical workers resolutely followed Lenin and were not deterred by a possible split. The victory of this plan laid the foundation for that close-knit and steeled Communist Party which has no equal in the world.

Our comrades (not only the Mensheviks!) often accused Lenin of an excessive inclination towards controversy and splits, of being relentless in his struggle against conciliators, and so on. At one time this was undoubtedly the case. But it will be easily understood that our Party could not have rid itself of internal weakness and diffuseness, that it could not have attained its characteristic vigour and strength if it had not expelled the non-proletarian, opportunist elements from its midst. In the epoch of bourgeois rule, a proletarian party can grow and gain strength only to the extent that it combats the opportunist, anti-revolutionary and anti-party elements in its own midst and within the working class. Lassalle was right when he said: "A party becomes strong by purging itself."⁶

The accusers usually cited the German party, in which "unity" at that time flourished. But, in the first place, not every kind of unity is a sign of strength, and secondly, one has only to glance at the former German party, rent into three parties,⁷ to realize the utter falsity and fictitiousness of "unity" between Scheidemann and Noske, on the one hand,

and Liebknecht and Luxemburg, on the other. And who knows whether it would not have been better for the German proletariat if the revolutionary elements of the German party had split away from its anti-revolutionary elements in time? . . . No, Lenin was a thousand times right in leading the Party along the path of uncompromising struggle against the anti-Party and anti-revolutionary elements. For it was only because of such a policy of organization that our Party was able to create that internal unity and astonishing cohesion which enabled it to emerge unscathed from the July crisis during the Kerensky regime, to bear the brunt of the October uprising, to pass through the crisis of the Brest period unshaken, to organize the victory over the Entente, and, lastly, to acquire that unparalleled flexibility which permits it at any moment to re-form its ranks and to concentrate hundreds of thousands of its members on any big task without causing confusion in its midst.

II

LENIN AS THE LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

But the merits of the Russian Communist Party in the field of organization are only one aspect of the matter. The Party could not have grown and become strong so quickly if the political content of its work, its programme and tactics had not conformed to Russian realities, if its slogans had not fired the masses of the workers and had not impelled the revolutionary movement forward. Let us pass to this aspect of the matter.

The Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905) took place under conditions differing from those that prevailed during the revolutionary upheavals in the West, in France and Germany, for example. Whereas the revolution in the West took place under the conditions of the manufacturing period of capitalism and of an undeveloped class struggle, when the proletariat was weak and numerically small and did not have its own party to formulate its demands, while the bourgeoisie was sufficiently revolutionary to win the confidence of the workers and peasants and to lead them into the struggle against the aristocracy — in Russia, on the other hand, the revolution began (1905) under the conditions of the machine industry period of capitalism and of a developed class struggle, when the Russian proletariat, relatively numerous and welded together by capitalism, had already fought a number of battles with the bourgeoisie, had its own Party which was more united than the bourgeois party and its own class demands, while the Russian bourgeoisie, which moreover subsisted on government contracts, was sufficiently scared by the revolutionary temper of the proletariat to seek an alliance with the government and the landlords against the workers and peasants. The fact that the Russian revolution broke out as a result of the military reverses suffered on the fields of Manchuria only accelerated events without essentially changing the state of affairs.

The situation demanded that the proletariat should take the lead in the revolution, rally the revolutionary peasants around itself and wage a determined fight against tsardom and the bourgeoisie simultaneously, with a view to establishing complete democracy in the country and ensuring its own class interests.

But the Mensheviks, the people who "lie down" on the point of view of Marxism, settled the question in their own fashion: since the Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and since it is the representatives of the bourgeoisie that lead bourgeois revolutions (see the "history" of the French and German revolutions), the proletariat cannot exercise hegemony in the Russian revolution, the leadership should be left to the Russian bourgeoisie (the very bourgeoisie that was betraying the revolution); the peasantry should also be handed over to the tutelage of the bourgeoisie, while the proletariat should remain an extreme Left opposition.

And that vulgar medley of the tunes of the wretched liberals the Mensheviks passed off as the last word in "genuine" Marxism! . . .

The immense service Lenin rendered the Russian revolution was that he utterly exposed the futility of the Mensheviks' historical parallels and the whole danger of the Menshevik "scheme of revolution" which surrendered the cause of the workers to the tender mercies of the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, instead of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; boycott of the Bulygin Duma⁸ and the launching of an armed uprising, instead of participating in the Duma and carrying on organic work within it; the idea of a "Left bloc," when the Duma was after all convened, and the utilization of the Duma platform for the struggle outside the Duma, instead of a Cadet Ministry and the reactionary "cherishing" of the Duma; the fight against the Cadet Party as a counter-revolutionary force, instead of forming a "bloc" with it — such was the tactical plan which Lenin developed in his famous pamphlets, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic*

*Revolution*⁹ and *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party*.¹⁰

The merit of this plan lay in the fact that it bluntly and resolutely formulated the class demands of the proletariat in the epoch of the *bourgeois-democratic revolution* in Russia, facilitated the transition to the socialist revolution, and contained in embryo the idea of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. The majority of the Russian practical workers resolutely and unswervingly followed Lenin in the struggle for this tactical plan. The victory of this plan laid the foundation for those revolutionary tactics thanks to which our Party is now shaking the foundations of world imperialism.

The subsequent development of events; the four years of imperialist war and the shattering of the whole economic life of the country; the February Revolution and the celebrated dual power; the Provisional Government, which was a hotbed of bourgeois counter-revolution, and the Petrograd Soviet of Deputies, which was the form of the incipient proletarian dictatorship; the October Revolution and the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly; the abolition of bourgeois parliamentarism and the proclamation of the Republic of Soviets; the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war and the offensive of world imperialism, together with the professed "Marxists," against the proletarian revolution; and, lastly, the pitiable position of the Mensheviks, who clung to the Constituent Assembly and who were thrown overboard by the proletariat and driven by the waves of revolution to the shores of capitalism — all this only confirmed the correctness of the principles of the revolutionary tactics formulated by Lenin in his *Two Tactics*. A party with such a heritage could sail boldly forward, without fear of submerged rocks.

In our time of proletarian revolution, when every Party slogan and every utterance of a leader is tested in action, the proletariat makes special demands of its leaders. History knows of proletarian leaders who were leaders in times of storm, practical leaders, self-sacrificing and courageous, but who were weak in theory. The names of such leaders are not soon forgotten by the masses. Such, for example, were Lassalle in Germany and Blanqui in France. But the movement as a whole cannot live on reminiscences alone; it must have a clear goal (a programme), and a firm line (tactics).

There is another type of leader — peacetime leaders, who are strong in theory, but weak in matters of organization and practical work. Such leaders are popular only among an upper layer of the proletariat, and then only up to a certain time. When the epoch of revolution sets in, when practical revolutionary slogans are demanded of the leaders, the theoreticians quit the stage and give way to new men. Such, for example, were Plekhanov in Russia and Kautsky in Germany.

To retain the post of leader of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian party, one must combine strength in theory with experience in the practical organization of the proletarian movement. P. Axelrod, when he was a Marxist, wrote of Lenin that he “happily combines the experience of a good practical worker with a theoretical education and a broad political outlook” (see P. Axelrod’s preface to Lenin’s pamphlet: *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*¹¹). What Mr. Axelrod, the ideologist of “civilized” capitalism, would say now about Lenin is not difficult to guess. But we who know Lenin well and can judge matters objectively have no doubt that Lenin has fully retained this old quality.

It is here, incidentally, that one must seek the reason why it is Lenin, and no one else, who is today the leader of the strongest and most steeled proletarian party in the world.

Pravda, No. 86,

April 23, 1920

Signed: *J. Stalin*

Works,

Russian edition,

Vol. IV

COMRADE LENIN ON VACATION

Notes

It seems to me that it would not be fitting now to write of "Comrade Lenin on Vacation," when the vacation is coming to an end and Comrade Lenin will soon return to work. Besides, my impressions are so many and so precious that it is not quite expedient to write about them in a brief note, as the editorial board of *Pravda* requests. However, I must write, for the editorial board insists on it.

I had occasion to meet at the front veteran fighters who, after fighting continuously for several days on end, without sleep or rest, would come back from the firing line looking like shadows and drop like logs, but after having "slept the clock round" they would rise refreshed and eager for new battles, without which they "cannot live." When I first visited Comrade Lenin in July, not having seen him for six weeks, that was just the impression he made on me — that of a veteran fighter who had managed to get some rest after incessant and exhausting battles, and who had been

refreshed by his rest. He looked fresh and recuperated, but still bore traces of overwork and fatigue.

"I am not allowed to read the newspapers," Comrade Lenin remarked ironically, "and I must not talk politics. I carefully avoid every scrap of paper lying on the table, lest it turn out to be a newspaper and lead to a breach of discipline."

I laughed heartily and praised him to the skies for his obedience to discipline. We proceeded to make merry over the doctors, who cannot understand that when professional men of politics get together they cannot help talking politics.

What struck one in Comrade Lenin was his thirst for information and his craving, his insuperable craving for work. It is clear that he had been famished. The trial of the Socialist-Revolutionaries,¹² Genoa and The Hague,¹³ the harvest prospects, industry and finance — all these questions came up in swift succession. He was in no hurry to express his opinion, complaining that he had fallen behind with events; for the most part he asked questions and took silent note. He became very cheerful on learning that the harvest prospects were good.

I found an entirely different picture a month later. This time Comrade Lenin was surrounded by stacks of books and newspapers (he had been given permission to read and talk politics to his heart's content). There was no longer any trace of fatigue, of overwork. There was no sign of that nervous craving for work — he was no longer famished. Calmness and self-assurance had fully returned. This was our old Lenin, screwing up his eyes and gazing shrewdly at his interlocutor. . . .

And this time our talk, too, was of a more lively character. Home affairs... the harvest... the state of industry... the rate of exchange of the ruble... the budget. . . .

"The situation is difficult. But the worst is over. The harvest will make a fundamental difference. It is bound to be followed by an improvement in industry and finance. The thing now is to relieve the state of unnecessary expenditure by retrenchment in our institutions and enterprises and by improving them. We must be particularly firm in this matter, and we shall squeeze through, we shall most certainly squeeze through."

Foreign affairs... the Entente... France's behaviour... Britain and Germany... the role of America. . . .

"They are greedy, and they hate one another profoundly. They will be at loggerheads yet. We need be in no hurry. Ours is a sure road: we are for peace and for agreement, but we are against enslavement and enslaving terms of agreement. We must keep a firm hand on the wheel and steer our own course, without yielding to either flattery or intimidation."

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and their rabid agitation against Soviet Russia. . . .

"Yes, they have made it their aim to defame Soviet Russia. They are facilitating the imperialists' fight against Soviet Russia. They have been caught in the mire of capitalism, and are sliding into an abyss. Let them flounder. They have long been dead as far as the working class is concerned."

The whiteguard press... the émigrés... the incredible fairy-tales about Lenin's death, with full details. . . .

Comrade Lenin smiled and remarked: "Let them lie if it

is any consolation to them; one should not rob the dying of their last consolation."

September 15, 1922

Comrade Lenin on Vacation.
Illustrated supplement to *Pravda*,
No. 215, September 24, 1922

Signed: *J. Stalin*

Works,
Russian edition,
Vol. V

ON THE DEATH OF LENIN

*A Speech Delivered at
the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets¹⁴
January 26, 1924*

Comrades, we Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of a special stuff. We are those who form the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour of belonging to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party whose founder and leader was Comrade Lenin. It is not given to everyone to be a member of such a party. It is not given to everyone to withstand the stresses and storms that accompany membership in such a party. It is the sons of the working class, the sons of want and struggle, the sons of incredible privation and heroic effort who before all should be members of such a party. That is why the Party of the Leninists, the Party of the Communists, is also called the Party of the working class.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO HOLD HIGH AND GUARD THE PURITY OF THE GREAT TITLE OF MEMBER OF THE PARTY. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL FULFIL YOUR BEHEST WITH HONOUR!

For twenty-five years Comrade Lenin tended our Party and made it into the strongest and most highly steeled workers' Party in the world. The blows of tsarism and its henchmen, the fury of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the armed attacks of Kolchak and Denikin, the armed intervention of Britain and France, the lies and slanders of the hundred-mouthed bourgeois press — all these scorpions constantly chastised our Party for a quarter of a century. But our Party stood firm as a rock, repelling the countless blows of its enemies and leading the working class forward, to victory. In fierce battles our Party forged the unity and solidarity of its ranks. And by unity and solidarity it achieved victory over the enemies of the working class.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO GUARD THE UNITY OF OUR PARTY AS THE APPLE OF OUR EYE. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

Burdensome and intolerable has been the lot of the working class. Painful and grievous have been the sufferings of the labouring people. Slaves and slaveholders, serfs and serf-owners, peasants and landlords, workers and capitalists, oppressed and oppressors — so the world has been built from time immemorial, and so it remains to this day in the vast majority of countries. Scores and indeed hundreds of times in the course of the centuries the labouring people have striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become the masters of their own destiny. But each time,

defeated and subjected to disgrace, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliation, anger and despair, and lifting up their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the oppressed and down-trodden labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of the workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world now admits it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party. The greatness of Lenin lies above all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the whole world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is shortlived, that the kingdom of labour *can* be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven, but on *earth*. He thus fired the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. That explains why Lenin's name has become the name most beloved of the labouring and exploited masses.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO GUARD AND STRENGTHEN THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL SPARE NO EFFORT TO FULFIL THIS BEHEST, TOO, WITH HONOUR!

The dictatorship of the proletariat was established in our country on the basis of an alliance between the workers and peasants. This is the first and fundamental basis of the Republic of Soviets. The workers and peasants could not

have vanquished the capitalists and landlords without such an alliance. The workers could not have defeated the capitalists without the support of the peasants. The peasants could not have defeated the landlords without the leadership of the workers. This is borne out by the whole history of the civil war in our country. But the struggle to consolidate the Republic of Soviets is by no means at an end — it has only taken on a new form. Formerly, the alliance of the workers and peasants took the form of a military alliance, because it was directed against Kolchak and Denikin. Now, the alliance of the workers and peasants must assume the form of economic co-operation between town and country, between workers and peasants, because it is directed against the merchant and the kulak, and its aim is the mutual supply by peasants and workers of all they require. You know that nobody worked for this more persistently than Comrade Lenin.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO STRENGTHEN WITH ALL OUR MIGHT THE ALLIANCE OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

The second basis of the Republic of Soviets is the union of the working people of the different nationalities of our country. Russians and Ukrainians, Bashkirs and Byelorussians, Georgians and Azerbaijanians, Armenians and Daghestanians, Tatars and Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Turkmenians are all equally interested in strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not only does the dictatorship of the proletariat deliver these peoples from fetters and oppression, but these peoples on their part deliver our Republic of Soviets from the intrigues and assaults of the enemies of the working

class by their supreme devotion to the Republic of Soviets and their readiness to make sacrifices for it. That is why Comrade Lenin untiringly urged upon us the necessity of the voluntary union of the peoples of our country, the necessity of their fraternal co-operation within the framework of the Union of Republics.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNION OF REPUBLICS. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

The third basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat is our Red Army and our Red Navy. More than once did Lenin impress upon us that the respite we had won from the capitalist states might prove a short one. More than once did Lenin point out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. The events connected with Curzon's ultimatum and the crisis in Germany¹⁵ once more confirmed that, as always, Lenin was right. Let us vow then, comrades, that we shall spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy.

Like a huge rock, our country stands out amid an ocean of bourgeois states. Wave after wave dashes against it, threatening to submerge it and wash it away. But the rock stands unshakable. Wherein lies its strength? Not only in the fact that our country rests on an alliance of the workers and peasants, that it embodies a union of free nationalities, that it is protected by the mighty arm of the Red Army and the Red Navy. The strength, the firmness, the solidity of our country is due to the profound sympathy and unfailing support it finds in the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world. The workers and peasants of the whole

world want to preserve the Republic of Soviets as an arrow shot by the sure hand of Comrade Lenin into the camp of the enemy, as the pillar of their hopes of deliverance from oppression and exploitation, as a reliable beacon pointing the path to their emancipation. They want to preserve it, and they will not allow the landlords and capitalists to destroy it. Therein lies our strength. Therein lies the strength of the working people of all countries. And therein lies the weakness of the bourgeoisie all over the world.

Lenin never regarded the Republic of Soviets as an end in itself. He always looked on it as an essential link for strengthening the revolutionary movement in the countries of the West and the East, an essential link for facilitating the victory of the working people of the whole world over capitalism. Lenin knew that this was the only right conception, both from the international standpoint and from the standpoint of preserving the Republic of Soviets itself. Lenin knew that this alone could fire the hearts of the working people of the whole world with determination to fight the decisive battles for their emancipation. That is why, on the very morrow of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he, the greatest of the geniuses who have led the proletariat, laid the foundation of the workers' International. That is why he never tired of extending and strengthening the union of the working people of the whole world — the Communist International.

You have seen during the past few days the pilgrimage of scores and hundreds of thousands of working people to Comrade Lenin's bier. Before long you will see the pilgrimage of representatives of millions of working people to Comrade Lenin's tomb. You need not doubt that the representatives of millions will be followed by representatives of

scores and hundreds of millions from all parts of the earth, who will come to testify that Lenin was the leader not only of the Russian proletariat, not only of the European workers, not only of the colonial East, but of all the working people of the globe.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL NOT SPARE OUR LIVES TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNION OF THE WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD — THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL!

Pravda, No. 23
January 30, 1924

Works,
Russian edition,
Vol. VI

LENIN

*A Speech Delivered at a Memorial
Meeting of the Kremlin Military School
January 28, 1924*

Comrades, I am told that you have arranged a Lenin memorial meeting here this evening and that I have been invited as one of the speakers. I do not think there is any need for me to deliver a set speech on Lenin's activities. It would be better, I think, to confine myself to a few facts to bring out certain of Lenin's characteristics as a man and a leader. There may, perhaps, be no inherent connection between these facts, but that is not of vital importance as far as gaining a general idea of Lenin is concerned. At any rate, I am unable on this occasion to do more than what I have just promised.

THE MOUNTAIN EAGLE

I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance, but was by correspondence. But

it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*,¹⁶ had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. At that time I did not regard him merely as a leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues — Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle, and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Some time later, when I was already in exile in Siberia — this was at the end of 1903 — I received an enthusiastic reply from my friend and a simple, but profoundly expressive letter from Lenin, to whom, it turned out, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly, that every sentence did not so much speak as ring out like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter still further strengthened me in my opinion that Lenin was

the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time.

MODESTY

I first met Lenin in December 1905 at the Bolshevik conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I had pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then, was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals. . . .

It is accepted as the usual thing for a "great man" to come late to meetings so that the assembly may await his appearance with bated breath; and then, just before the "great man" enters the warning whisper goes up: "Hush! . . . Silence! . . . He's coming." This ritual did not seem to me superfluous, because it creates an impression, inspires respect. What, then, was my disappointment to learn that Lenin had arrived at the conference before the delegates, had settled himself somewhere in a corner, and was unassumingly carrying on a conversation, a most ordinary conversation with the most ordinary delegates at the conference. I will not conceal from you that at that time this seemed to me to be something of a violation of certain essential rules.

Only later did I realize that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make

himself conspicuous and not to emphasize his high position, this feature was one of Lenin's strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the simple and ordinary masses of the "rank and file" of humanity.

FORCE OF LOGIC

The two speeches Lenin delivered at this conference were remarkable: one was on the current situation and the other on the agrarian question. Unfortunately, they have not been preserved. They were inspired, and they roused the whole conference to a pitch of stormy enthusiasm. The extraordinary power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of argument, the brief and easily understood sentences, the absence of affectation, of dizzying gestures and theatrical phrases aiming at effect — all this made Lenin's speeches a favourable contrast to the speeches of the usual "parliamentary" orators.

But what captivated me at the time was not this aspect of Lenin's speeches. I was captivated by that irresistible force of logic in them which, although somewhat terse, gained a firm hold on his audience, gradually electrified it, and then, as one might say, completely overpowered it. I remember that many of the delegates said: "The logic of Lenin's speeches is like a mighty tentacle which twines all round you and holds you as in a vice and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away: you must either surrender or resign yourself to utter defeat."

I think that this characteristic of Lenin's speeches was the strongest feature of his art as an orator.

NO WHINING

The second time I met Lenin was in 1906 at the Stockholm Congress¹⁷ of our Party. You know that the Bolsheviks were in the minority at this congress and suffered defeat. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of the vanquished. But he was not in the least like those leaders who whine and lose heart after a defeat. On the contrary, defeat transformed Lenin into a spring of compressed energy which inspired his supporters for new battles and for future victory. I said that Lenin was defeated. But what sort of defeat was it? You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress — Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's merciless criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak. I remember that we, the Bolshevik delegates, huddled together in a group, gazing at Lenin and asking his advice. The speeches of some of the delegates betrayed a note of weariness and dejection. I recall that to these speeches Lenin bitingly replied through clenched teeth: "Don't whine, comrades, we are bound to win, for we are right." Hatred of the whining intellectual, faith in our own strength, confidence in victory — that is what Lenin impressed upon us. It was felt that the Bolsheviks' defeat was temporary, that they were bound to win in the very near future.

"No whining over defeat" — this was the feature of Lenin's activities that helped him to rally around himself an army faithful to the end and confident in its strength.

NO BOASTING

At the next congress, held in 1907 in London,¹⁸ the Bolsheviks proved victorious. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of victor. Victory turns the heads of some leaders and makes them haughty and boastful. They begin in most cases to be triumphant, to rest on their laurels. But Lenin did not in the least resemble such leaders. On the contrary, it was precisely after a victory that he became especially vigilant and cautious. I recall that Lenin insistently impressed on the delegates: "The first thing is not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third is to give the enemy the finishing stroke, for he has been beaten, but by no means crushed." He poured withering scorn on those delegates who frivolously asserted: "It is all over with the Mensheviks now." He had no difficulty in showing that the Mensheviks still had roots in the working-class movement, that they had to be fought with skill, and that all overestimation of one's own strength and, especially, all underestimation of the strength of the enemy had to be avoided.

"No boasting in victory" — this was the feature of Lenin's character that helped him soberly to weigh the strength of the enemy and to insure the Party against possible surprises.

FIDELITY TO PRINCIPLE

Party leaders cannot but prize the opinion of the majority of their party. A majority is a power with which a leader cannot but reckon. Lenin understood this no less than any other party leader. But Lenin never became a captive of the

majority, especially when that majority had no basis of principle. There have been times in the history of our Party when the opinion of the majority or the momentary interests of the Party conflicted with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. On such occasions Lenin would never hesitate and resolutely took his stand in support of principle as against the majority of the Party. Moreover, he did not fear on such occasions literally to stand alone against all, considering — as he would often say — that "a policy based on principle is the only correct policy."

Particularly characteristic in this respect are the two following facts.

First fact. It was in the period 1909-11, when the Party, smashed by the counter-revolution, was in process of complete disintegration. It was a period of disbelief in the Party, of wholesale desertion from the Party, not only by the intellectuals, but partly even by the workers; a period when the necessity for illegal organization was being denied, a period of Liquidationism and collapse. Not only the Mensheviks, but even the Bolsheviks then consisted of a number of factions and trends, for the most part severed from the working-class movement. You know that it was just at that period that the idea arose of completely liquidating the illegal organization and organizing the workers into a legal, liberal Stolypin party. Lenin at that time was the only one not to succumb to the widespread epidemic and to hold high the banner of Party principle, assembling the scattered and shattered forces of the Party with astonishing patience and extraordinary persistence, combating each and every anti-Party trend within the working-class movement and defending the Party principle with unusual courage and unparalleled perseverance.

We know that in this fight for the Party principle, Lenin later proved the victor.

Second fact. It was in the period 1914-17, when the imperialist war was in full swing, and when all, or nearly all, the Social-Democratic and Socialist parties had succumbed to the general patriotic frenzy and had placed themselves at the service of the imperialism of their respective countries. It was a period when the Second International had hauled down its colours to capitalism, when even people like Plekhanov, Kautsky, Guesde and the rest were unable to withstand the tide of chauvinism. Lenin at that time was the only one, or almost the only one, to wage a determined struggle against social-chauvinism and social-pacifism, to denounce the treachery of the Guesdes and Kautskys, and to stigmatize the half-heartedness of the betwixt and between "revolutionaries." Lenin knew that he was backed by only an insignificant minority, but to him this was not of decisive moment, for he knew that the only correct policy with a future before it was the policy of consistent internationalism, that a policy based on principle is the only correct policy.

We know that in this fight for a new International, too, Lenin proved the victor.

"A policy based on principle is the only correct policy" — this was the formula by means of which Lenin took new "impregnable" positions by assault and won over the best elements of the proletariat to revolutionary Marxism.

FAITH IN THE MASSES

Theoreticians and leaders of parties, men who are acquainted with the history of nations and who have studied

the history of revolutions from beginning to end, are sometimes afflicted by a shameful disease. This disease is called fear of the masses, disbelief in the creative power of the masses. This sometimes gives rise in the leaders to a kind of aristocratic attitude towards the masses, who, although not versed in the history of revolutions, are destined to destroy the old order and build the new. This kind of aristocratic attitude is due to a fear that elemental forces may break loose, that the masses may "destroy too much"; it is due to a desire to play the part of a mentor who tries to teach the masses from books, but who is averse to learning from the masses.

Lenin was the very antithesis of such leaders. I do not know of any other revolutionary who had so profound a faith in the creative power of the proletariat and in the revolutionary efficacy of its class instinct as Lenin. I do not know of any other revolutionary who could scourge the smug critics of the "chaos of revolution" and the "riot of unauthorized actions of the masses" so ruthlessly as Lenin. I recall that when in the course of a conversation one comrade said that "the revolution should be followed by the normal order of things," Lenin sarcastically remarked: "It is a pity that people who want to be revolutionaries forget that the most normal order of things in history is the revolutionary order of things."

Hence, Lenin's contempt for all who superciliously looked down on the masses and tried to teach them from books. And hence, Lenin's constant precept: learn from the masses, try to comprehend their actions, carefully study the practical experience of the struggle of the masses.

Faith in the creative power of the masses — this was the feature of Lenin's activities which enabled him to comprehend the spontaneous process and to direct its movement into the channel of the proletarian revolution.

THE GENIUS OF REVOLUTION

Lenin was born for revolution. He was, in truth, the genius of revolutionary outbreaks and the greatest master of the art of revolutionary leadership. Never did he feel so free and happy as in a time of revolutionary upheavals. I do not mean by this that Lenin approved equally of all revolutionary upheavals, or that he was in favour of revolutionary outbreaks at all times and under all circumstances. Not at all. What I do mean is that never was the genius of Lenin's insight displayed so fully and distinctly as in a time of revolutionary outbreaks. In times of revolution he literally blossomed forth, became a seer, saw in advance the movement of classes and the probable zigzags of the revolution, seeing them as if they lay in the palm of his hand. It was with good reason that it used to be said in our Party circles: "Lenin swims in the tide of revolution like a fish in water."

Hence the "amazing" *clarity* of Lenin's tactical slogans and the "breathtaking" *boldness* of his revolutionary plans.

I recall two facts which are particularly characteristic of this feature of Lenin.

First fact. It was in the period just prior to the October Revolution, when millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, impelled by the crisis in the rear and at the front, were de-

manding peace and liberty; when the generals and the bourgeoisie were working for a military dictatorship for the sake of "war to a finish"; when the whole of so-called "public opinion" and all the so-called "Socialist parties" were hostile to the Bolsheviks and were branding them as "German spies"; when Kerensky was trying — already with some success — to drive the Bolshevik Party underground; and when the still powerful and disciplined armies of the Austro-German coalition confronted our weary, disintegrating armies, while the West-European "Socialists" lived in blissful alliance with their governments for the sake of "war to complete victory."

...

What did starting an uprising at such a moment mean? Starting an uprising in such a situation meant staking everything. But Lenin did not fear the risk, for he knew, he saw with his prophetic eye, that an uprising was inevitable, that it would win; that an uprising in Russia would pave the way for ending the imperialist war, that it would rouse the war-weary masses of the West, that it would transform the imperialist war into a civil war; that the uprising would usher in a Republic of Soviets, and that the Republic of Soviets would serve as a bulwark for the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

We know that Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with unparalleled exactness.

Second fact. It was in the first days of the October Revolution, when the Council of People's Commissars was trying to compel General Dukhonin, the mutinous Commander-in-Chief, to terminate hostilities and open negotiations for an armistice with the Germans. I recall that Lenin, Krylenko (the future Commander-in-Chief) and I went to

General Staff Headquarters in Petrograd to negotiate with Dukhonin over the direct wire. It was a ghastly moment. Dukhonin and Field Headquarters categorically refused to obey the order of the Council of People's Commissars. The army officers were completely under the sway of Field Headquarters. As for the soldiers, no one could tell what this army of fourteen million would say, subordinated as it was to the so-called army organizations, which were hostile to the Soviet power. In Petrograd itself, as we know, a mutiny of the military cadets was brewing. Furthermore, Kerensky was marching on Petrograd. I recall that after a pause at the direct wire, Lenin's face suddenly shone with an extraordinary light. Clearly he had arrived at a decision. "Let's go to the wireless station," he said, "it will stand us in good stead. We shall issue a special order dismissing General Dukhonin, appoint Comrade Krylenko Commander-in-Chief in his place and appeal to the soldiers over the heads of the officers, calling upon them to surround the generals, to cease hostilities, to establish contact with the Austro-German soldiers and take the cause of peace into their own hands."

This was "a leap into the unknown." But Lenin did not shrink from this "leap"; on the contrary, he made it eagerly, for he knew that the army wanted peace and would win peace, sweeping every obstacle from its path; he knew that this method of establishing peace was bound to have its effect on the Austro-German soldiers and would give full rein to the yearning for peace on every front without exception.

We know that here, too, Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with the utmost exactness.

The insight of genius, the ability rapidly to grasp and see beforehand the inner meaning of impending events, this was

the quality of Lenin which enabled him to lay down the correct strategy and a clear line of conduct at turning points of the revolutionary movement.

Pravda, No. 34,
February 12, 1924

Works,
Russian edition,
Vol. VI

**WORKING WOMEN AND PEASANT WOMEN,
REMEMBER AND CARRY OUT ILYICH'S
BEHESTS!**

A year ago, departing from us, the great leader and teacher of the working people, our Lenin, bequeathed to us his behests, indicated the road along which we must go to the final victory of communism. Carry out these behests of Ilyich, working women and peasant women! Bring up your children in the spirit of these behests!

Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the behest to strengthen with all our might the alliance of the workers and peasants. Then strengthen this alliance, working women and peasant women!

Comrade Lenin taught the toiling people to support the working class in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, home and foreign. Remember this behest, working women and peasant women! Support the rule of the working class which is building a new life!

Comrade Lenin taught us to hold high the banner of the Communist Party, the leader of all the oppressed. Then rally

round this Party, working women and peasant women — it is your Party!

On the anniversary of Ilyich's death, the Party issues the watchword — open wider the road for the working women and peasant women who, with the Party, are building a new life!

J. Stalin

Written January 5, 1925
Published in the magazine
Rabotnitsa, No. 1,
January 1925

Works,
Russian edition,
Vol. VII

TO RABOCHAYA GAZETA¹⁹

Remember, love and study Ilyich, our teacher, our leader.
Fight and defeat our enemies, home and foreign — in the way that Ilyich taught us.

Build a new life, new ways of living, the new culture — in the way that Ilyich taught us.

Never refuse to do the little things in work, for from little things are built the big things — that is one of Ilyich's important behests.

J. Stalin

Rabochaya Gazeta, No. 17
January 21, 1925

Works,
Russian edition,
Vol. VII

INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST AMERICAN LABOUR DELEGATION

(Excerpts)

September 9, 1927

I

QUESTIONS PUT BY THE DELEGATION AND COMRADE STALIN'S ANSWERS

FIRST QUESTION. What new principles have Lenin and the Communist Party added in practice to Marxism? Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in "creative revolution" whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of the development of economic forces?

ANSWER: I think that Lenin "added" no "new principles" to Marxism, nor did he abolish any of the "old" principles of Marxism. Lenin was, and remains, the most loyal and consistent pupil of Marx and Engels, and he wholly and completely based himself on the principles of Marxism.

But Lenin did not merely carry out the teaching of Marx and Engels. He was at the same time the continuer of that teaching.

What does that mean?

It means that he developed further the teaching of Marx and Engels in conformity with the new conditions of development, with the new phase of capitalism, with imperialism. It means that in developing further the teaching of Marx in the new conditions of the class struggle, Lenin contributed something new to the general treasury of Marxism as compared with what was created by Marx and Engels, with what could be created in the pre-imperialist period of capitalism; at the same time Lenin's new contribution to the treasury of Marxism is wholly and completely based on the principles laid down by Marx and Engels.

It is in this sense that we speak of Leninism as Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

Here are a few questions to which Lenin contributed something new, developing further the teaching of Marx.

Firstly, the question of monopoly capitalism of imperialism as the new phase of capitalism.

In *Capital*, Marx and Engels analysed the foundations of capitalism. But Marx and Engels lived in the period of the domination of pre-monopoly capitalism, in the period of the smooth evolution of capitalism and its "peaceful" expansion over the whole world.

That old phase of capitalism came to a close towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, when Marx and Engels were already dead. It is understandable that Marx and Engels could only guess at the new conditions for the development of capitalism that arose as a result of the new phase of capitalism which

succeeded the old phase, as a result of the imperialist, monopoly phase of development, when the smooth evolution of capitalism was succeeded by spasmodic, cataclysmic development of capitalism, when the unevenness of development and the contradictions of capitalism became particularly pronounced, and when the struggle for markets and fields of capital export, in the circumstances of the extreme unevenness of development, made periodical imperialist wars for periodic redivisions of the world and of spheres of influence inevitable.

The service Lenin rendered here, and consequently, his new contribution, was that, on the basis of the fundamental principles in *Capital*, he made a substantiated Marxist analysis of imperialism as the last phase of capitalism, and exposed its ulcers and the conditions of its inevitable doom. That analysis formed the basis for Lenin's thesis that under the conditions of imperialism the victory of socialism is possible in individual capitalist countries, taken separately.

Secondly, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The fundamental idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the political rule of the proletariat and as a method of overthrowing the power of capital by the use of force was advanced by Marx and Engels.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was that:

a) he discovered the Soviet system as the best state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, utilizing for this the experience of the Paris Commune and the Russian revolution;

b) he elucidated the formula of the dictatorship of the proletariat from the angle of the problem of the allies of the proletariat, defining the dictatorship of the proletariat as a special form of class alliance between the proletariat as the

leader, and the exploited masses of the non-proletarian classes (the peasantry, etc.) as the led;

c) he laid particular emphasis on the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the highest type of democracy in class society, the form of *proletarian* democracy, which expresses the interests of the majority (the exploited), in contrast to *capitalist* democracy, which expresses the interests of the minority (the exploiters).

Thirdly, the question of the forms and methods of successfully building socialism in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, in a country surrounded by capitalist states.

Marx and Engels regarded the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a more or less prolonged one, full of revolutionary clashes and civil wars, in the course of which the proletariat, being in power, would take the economic, political, cultural and organizational measures necessary for creating, in the place of the old, capitalist society, a new, socialist society, a society without classes and without a state. Lenin wholly and completely based himself on these fundamental principles of Marx and Engels.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was that:

a) he proved that a complete socialist society can be built in a country of the dictatorship of the proletariat surrounded by imperialist states, provided the country is not strangled by the military intervention of the surrounding capitalist states;

b) he traced the concrete lines of economic policy (the "New Economic Policy") by which the proletariat, having possession of the economic key positions (industry, land, transport, banks, etc.), links up socialized industry with agriculture ("the link between industry and peasant econ-

omy") and thus leads the whole national economy towards socialism;

c) he traced the concrete ways of gradually guiding and drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the channel of socialist construction through the co-operatives, which in the hands of the proletarian dictatorship are a most powerful instrument for the transformation of small peasant economy and for the re-education of the main mass of the peasantry in the spirit of socialism.

Fourthly, the question of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, in every popular revolution, both in the revolution against tsarism and in the revolution against capitalism.

Marx and Engels provided the main outlines of the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat. Lenin's new contribution in this field was that he further developed and expanded those outlines into a harmonious system of the hegemony of the proletariat, into a harmonious system of leadership of the working masses in town and country by the proletariat not only in the overthrow of tsarism and capitalism, but also in the building of socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We know that, thanks to Lenin and his Party, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat was applied in a masterly way in Russia. This, incidentally, explains why the revolution in Russia brought the proletariat into power.

In the past, things usually took the following course: during the revolution the workers fought at the barricades, it was they who shed their blood and overthrew the old order, but power fell into the hands of the bourgeois, who then oppressed and exploited the workers. That was the case in England and France. That was the case in Germany. Here,

in Russia, however, things took a different turn. In Russia the workers were not merely the shock force of the revolution. While being the shock force of the revolution, the Russian proletariat at the same time strove for hegemony, for political leadership of all the exploited masses of town and country, rallying them around itself, wresting them from the bourgeoisie and politically isolating the bourgeoisie. And while being the leader of the exploited masses, the Russian proletariat fought to take power into its own hands and to utilize it in its own interests, against the bourgeoisie, against capitalism. This, in fact, explains why each powerful outbreak of the revolution in Russia, in October 1905 as well as in February 1917, brought on to the scene Soviets of Workers' Deputies as the embryo of the new apparatus of power whose function is to suppress the bourgeoisie — as against the bourgeois parliament, the old apparatus of power, whose function is to suppress the proletariat.

Twice the bourgeoisie in Russia tried to restore the bourgeois parliament and put an end to the Soviets: in September 1917, at the time of the Pre-parliament, before the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, and in January 1918, at the time of the Constituent Assembly, after the seizure of power by the proletariat; and on both occasions it suffered defeat. Why? Because the bourgeoisie was already politically isolated, because the vast masses of the working people regarded the proletariat as the sole leader of the revolution, and because the Soviets had already been tried and tested by the masses as their own workers' government, to exchange which for a bourgeois parliament would have meant suicide for the proletariat. It is not surprising, therefore, that bourgeois parliamentarism did not take root in Russia. That is why the revolution in Russia led to the rule of the proletariat.

Such were the results of the application of Lenin's system of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution.

Fifthly, the national and colonial question.

Analysing in their time the events in Ireland, India, China, the Central European countries, Poland and Hungary, Marx and Engels provided the basic, seminal ideas on the national and colonial question. Lenin in his works based himself on those ideas.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was:

a) he unified those ideas in one harmonious system of views on national and colonial revolutions in the era of imperialism;

b) he linked the national and colonial question with the question of overthrowing imperialism;

c) he declared the national and colonial question to be a component part of the general question of international proletarian revolution.

Lastly, the question of the party of the proletariat.

Marx and Engels provided the main outlines on the party as the advanced detachment of the proletariat, without which (the Party) the proletariat cannot achieve its emancipation, either in the sense of capturing power, or in the sense of transforming capitalist society.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was that he developed those outlines further in conformity with the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism and showed that:

a) the Party is the highest form of class organization of the proletariat as compared with other forms of proletarian organization (trade unions, co-operatives, state organization) whose work it is the Party's function to generalize and direct;

b) the dictatorship of the proletariat can be implemented

only through the Party, as the guiding force of the dictatorship;

c) the dictatorship of the proletariat can be complete only if it is led by one party, the Communist Party, which does not and must not share the leadership with other parties;

d) unless there is iron discipline in the Party, the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat in regard to suppressing the exploiters and transforming class society into socialist society cannot be accomplished.

That, in the main, is the new contribution made by Lenin in his works, giving concrete form to Marx's teaching and developing it further in conformity with the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism.

That is why we say that Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

It is clear from this that Leninism cannot be separated from Marxism; still less can it be counterposed to Marxism.

The question submitted by the delegation goes on to say:

"Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in 'creative revolution' whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of the development of economic forces?"

I think it would be quite incorrect to say that. I think that every popular revolution, if it really is a popular revolution, is a creative revolution, for it breaks up the old order and creates a new one.

Of course, there is nothing creative in the "revolutions" — if they may be so called — that sometimes take place in certain backward countries, in the form of toy-like "risings" of one tribe against another. But Marxists never regarded such toy-like "risings" as revolutions. It is obviously not a question of such "risings," but of a mass, popular revolution which arouses the oppressed classes against the oppressing

classes. Such a revolution cannot but be creative. Marx and Lenin upheld precisely such a revolution, and only such a revolution. It goes without saying that such a revolution cannot arise under all conditions, that it can take place only under definite favourable conditions of an economic and political nature.

Pravda, No. 210,
September 15, 1927

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Vol. X

**TALK WITH THE GERMAN AUTHOR
EMIL LUDWIG**

(Excerpts)

December 13, 1931

Ludwig: I am extremely obliged to you for having found it possible to receive me. For over twenty years I have been studying the lives and deeds of outstanding historical personages. I believe I am a good judge of people, but on the other hand I know nothing about social-economic conditions.

Stalin: You are being modest.

Ludwig: No, that is really so, and for that very reason I shall put questions that may seem strange to you. Today here in the Kremlin I saw some relics of Peter the Great and the first question I should like to ask you is this: Do you think a parallel can be drawn between yourself and Peter the Great? Do you consider yourself a continuer of the work of Peter the Great?

Stalin: In no way whatever. Historical parallels are always risky. There is no sense in this one.

Ludwig: But after all, Peter the Great did a great deal to develop his country, to bring western culture to Russia.

Stalin: Yes, of course, Peter the Great did much to elevate the landlord class and develop the nascent merchant class. He did very much indeed to create and consolidate the national state of the landlords and merchants. It must be said also that the elevation of the landlord class, the assistance to the nascent merchant class and the consolidation of the national state of these classes took place at the cost of the peasant serfs, who were bled white.

As for myself, I am just a pupil of Lenin's, and the aim of my life is to be a worthy pupil of his.

The task to which I have devoted my life is the elevation of a different class — the working class. That task is not the consolidation of some "national" state, but of a socialist state, and that means an international state; and any strengthening of that state helps to strengthen the entire international working class. If every step I take in my endeavour to elevate the working class and strengthen the socialist state of this class were not directed towards strengthening and improving the position of the working class, I should consider my life purposeless.

So you see your parallel does not fit.

As regards Lenin and Peter the Great, the latter was but a drop in the sea, whereas Lenin was a whole ocean.

Ludwig: Marxism denies that the individual plays an outstanding role in history. Do you not see a contradiction between the materialist conception of history and the fact that, after all, you admit the outstanding role played by historical personages?

Stalin: No, there is no contradiction here. Marxism does not at all deny the role played by outstanding individuals or

that history is made by people. In Marx's *The Poverty of Philosophy*²⁰ and in other works of his you will find it stated that it is people who make history. But, of course, people do not make history according to the promptings of their imagination or as some fancy strikes them. Every new generation encounters definite conditions already existing, ready-made when that generation was born. And great persons are worth anything at all only to the extent that they are able correctly to understand these conditions, to understand how to change them. If they fail to understand these conditions and want to alter them according to the promptings of their imagination, they will land themselves in the situation of Don Quixote. Thus it is precisely Marx's view that people must not be counterposed to conditions. It is people who make history, but they do so only to the extent that they correctly understand the conditions that they have found ready-made, and only to the extent that they understand how to change those conditions. That, at least, is how we Russian Bolsheviks understand Marx. And we have been studying Marx for a good many years.

Ludwig: Some thirty years ago, when I was at the university, many German professors who considered themselves adherents of the materialist conception of history taught us that Marxism denies the role of heroes, the role of heroic personalities in history.

Stalin: They were vulgarizers of Marxism. Marxism has never denied the role of heroes. On the contrary, it admits that they play a considerable role, but with the reservations I have just made.

.....
Ludwig: Lenin passed many years in exile abroad. You had occasion to be abroad for only a very short time. Do

you consider that this has handicapped you? Who do you believe were of greater benefit to the revolution — those revolutionaries who lived in exile abroad and thus had the opportunity of making a thorough study of Europe, but on the other hand were cut off from direct contact with the people; or those revolutionaries who carried on their work here, knew the moods of the people, but on the other hand knew little of Europe?

Stalin: Lenin must be excluded from this comparison. Very few of those who remained in Russia were as intimately connected with the actual state of affairs there and with the labour movement within the country as Lenin was, although he was a long time abroad. Whenever I went to see him abroad — in 1906, 1907, 1912 and 1913²¹ — I saw piles of letters he had received from practical Party workers in Russia, and he was always better informed than those who stayed in Russia. He always considered his stay abroad to be a burden to him.

There are many more comrades in our Party and its leadership who remained in Russia, who did not go abroad, than there are former exiles, and they, of course, were able to be of greater benefit to the revolution than those who were in exile abroad. Actually few former exiles are left in our Party. They may add up to about one or two hundred out of the two million members of the Party. Of the seventy members of the Central Committee scarcely more than three or four lived in exile abroad.

As far as knowledge of Europe, a study of Europe, is concerned, those who wished to make such a study had, of course, more opportunities of doing so while living there. In that respect those of us who did not live long abroad lost something. But living abroad is not at all a decisive factor in

making a study of European economics, technique, the cadres of the labour movement and literature of every description, whether belles lettres or scientific. Other things being equal, it is of course easier to study Europe on the spot. But the disadvantage of those who have not lived in Europe is not of much importance. On the contrary, I know many comrades who were abroad twenty years, lived somewhere in Charlottenburg or in the Latin Quarter, spent years in cafés drinking beer, and who yet did not manage to acquire a knowledge of Europe and failed to understand it.

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NOTES

¹ The London Congress — the Fifth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which met from April 30 to May 19, 1907, in London. p. 2

² See Karl Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach" in Frederick Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1976, p. 65. p. 2

³ "Legal Marxism" — a bourgeois perversion of Marxism, which originated in the nineties of the past century among the bourgeois intellectuals in Russia. Disguised as Marxists, these people wrote for the legal, tsarist government-sanctioned newspapers and periodicals, and were, therefore, called the "legal Marxists." They tried to use the banner of Marxism to subordinate and adapt the labour movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie. p. 3

⁴ *What Is To Be Done?*, FLP, Peking, 1975. p. 5

⁵ *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, FLP, Peking, 1976. p. 5

⁶ These words from a letter by Lassalle to Karl Marx, dated June 24, 1852, were taken by Lenin as part of an epigraph to his *What Is To Be Done?* p. 5

⁷ The three parties resulting from the split of the old German Social-Democratic Party were: the Social-Democratic Party, the Independent Social-Democratic Party and the Communist Party of Germany. p. 5

⁸ The Bulygin Duma — a consultative representative assembly which the tsarist government intended to convene in 1905. The law instituting the Duma and the regulations governing the elections to it were drafted by a commission of which Minister of the Interior Bulygin was the

chairman, and were published simultaneously with the tsar's Manifesto of August 6, 1905. The Bolsheviks proclaimed an active boycott of the Bulygin Duma. "... The Bulygin Duma was never convened. It was swept away by the revolutionary storm before it was convened." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, Vol. 23, pp. 246-47.) p. 8

⁹ *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, FLP, Peking, 1975. p. 9

¹⁰ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1962, Vol. 10, pp. 199-276. p. 9

¹¹ V. I. Lenin wrote the pamphlet, *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, at the end of 1897 while he was in exile. The first edition, with a preface by P. Axelrod, was published in Geneva in 1898 by the League of Russian Social-Democrats (see V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, FLPH, Moscow, 1960, Vol. 2, pp. 323-51). p. 10

¹² The trial of the Socialist-Revolutionaries by the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal took place in Moscow, in 1922, from June 8 to August 7. Of the 34 accused, 11 were members of the Central Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. The trial established that from the very first days of the October Socialist Revolution, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party had fought against the Soviet power, had organized armed revolts and conspiracies, had supported the foreign interventionists and had committed terrorist acts against leaders of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government. p. 13

¹³ This refers to the international economic conferences held in Genoa (April 10-May 19, 1922) and at The Hague (June 15-July 20, 1922). The Genoa Conference was called for the purpose of determining the relations between the capitalist world and Soviet Russia. The conference was attended, on the one side, by representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and other capitalist states, and on the other side by representatives of Soviet Russia. The representatives of the capitalist countries presented the Soviet delegation with demands which, if conceded, would have meant transforming the land of Soviets into a colony of West-European capital (the demand for payment of all war and pre-war debts, for restitution to foreigners of nationalized property formerly owned by them, etc.). The Soviet delegation rejected the claims of the foreign capitalists. The matter was referred to a conference of experts convened at The Hague. The Hague Conference, too, failed to reach agreement owing to the irreconcilability of the points of view of the two sides. p. 13

¹⁴ The Second All-Union Congress of Soviets was held in Moscow from January 26 to February 2, 1924. At the first sitting, which was devoted to the memory of Lenin, J. V. Stalin delivered a speech in which, in the name of the Bolshevik Party, he took a solemn vow to hold sacred and fulfil the behests of Lenin. In connection with the death of Lenin, the congress adopted an appeal "To Toiling Mankind." To perpetuate the memory of Lenin, the congress adopted a decision to publish Lenin's *Works*, to change the name of Petrograd to Leningrad, to establish a Day of Mourning, and to erect a mausoleum for Lenin in the Red Square in Moscow, and monuments to him in the capitals of the Union Republics and also in the cities of Leningrad and Tashkent. The congress discussed a report on the activities of the Soviet Government, the budget of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the establishment of a Central Agricultural Bank. On January 31, the congress endorsed the first Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the U.S.S.R. which had been drafted under the guidance of J. V. Stalin. The congress elected a Central Executive Committee — the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. J. V. Stalin was elected to the Soviet of the Union. p. 16

¹⁵ This refers to the economic and political crisis in Germany in 1923. A mass revolutionary movement spread over the country, as a result of which workers' governments were set up in Saxony and Thuringia, and an armed uprising broke out in Hamburg. After the suppression of the revolutionary movement in Germany, bourgeois reaction was intensified all over Europe, as was the danger of a new intervention against the Soviet Republic. p. 20

¹⁶ *Iskra* (*Spark*) — the first all-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper, founded by Lenin in December 1900. It was published abroad and brought secretly into Russia (on the significance and role of *Iskra* see *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*, *Short Course*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 55-68). p. 24

¹⁷ The Stockholm Party Congress — the Fourth ("Unity") Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. — took place on April 10-25, 1906 (see *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*, *Short Course*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 136-39). p. 27

¹⁸ The Fifth (London) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. took place from April 30 to May 19, 1907 (see J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 47-80, and *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*, *Short Course*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 143-46). p. 28

¹⁹ *Rabochaya Gazeta* (*Workers' Newspaper*), a daily newspaper of a mass character, organ of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), published in Moscow from March 1922 to January 1932. It first appeared under the title of *Rabochy* (*Worker*), but in July 1922 it was renamed *Rabochaya Gazeta*. p. 38

²⁰ Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, undated. p. 50

²¹ This refers to meetings between J. V. Stalin and V. I. Lenin: in Stockholm, at the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1906); in London, at the time of the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1907); and during J. V. Stalin's trips abroad to Cracow and Vienna (1912 and 1913). p. 51

