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LENIN
ON
**THE REVOLUTIONARY
PROLETARIAN PARTY
OF A NEW TYPE**

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Harrison
1970

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

LENIN
ON
THE REVOLUTIONARY
PROLETARIAN PARTY
OF A NEW TYPE

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I. THE COMMUNIST PARTY IS A POLITICAL PARTY GUIDED BY THE THEORY OF MARXISM; IT MUST HAVE A MARXIST PROGRAMME OF REVOLUTION

ONLY A PARTY GUIDED BY MARXIST THEORY CAN FULFIL THE ROLE OF THE VANGUARD

We stand wholly on the basis of the theory of Marx: this theory was the first to transform Socialism from a utopia into a science, to lay down a firm foundation for this science and to indicate the path that must be followed in further developing this science and elaborating it in all its parts.

.....

There cannot be a strong Socialist Party without a revolutionary theory which unites all Socialists, from which they draw all their convictions, and which they apply in their methods of struggle and means of action. To defend such a

theory, which to the best of your knowledge you consider to be true, against unfounded attacks and attempts to vitiate it, does not imply that you are an enemy of *all* criticism. We do not regard Marx's theory as something final and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the cornerstones of the science which Socialists *must* advance in all directions if they do not want to lag behind the march of life.

From "Our Programme"
(latter half of 1899).

The only banner the class movement of the workers can have is the theory of revolutionary Marxism. Russian Social-Democracy must see that it is further developed and put into practice, and at the same time protect it against those distortions and vulgarizations to which "fashionable theories" are often subjected (and the successes of revolutionary Social-Democracy in Russia have already made Marxism a "fashionable" theory).

From "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats" (end of August and beginning of September 1899).

Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of practical activity. The importance of theory for Russian Social-Democrats is still greater for three reasons, which are often forgotten:

The first is that our Party is only in the process of formation, its features are but just becoming outlined, and it has not yet completely settled its accounts with other tendencies in revolutionary thought which threaten to divert the movement from the proper path. Indeed, in very recent times we have observed (as Axelrod long ago warned the Economists would happen) a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary tendencies. Under such circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an "unimportant" mistake may give rise to most deplorable consequences, and only the shortsighted would consider factional disputes and strict distinction of shades to be inopportune and superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for many, many years to come may be determined by the strengthening of one or the other "shade."

The second reason is that the Social-Democratic movement is essentially an international movement. This does not merely mean that we must combat national chauvinism. It also means that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only on the condition that it assimilates the experience of other countries. In order to assimilate this experience, it is not sufficient merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to transcribe the latest resolutions. A critical attitude is required towards this experience, and ability to subject it to independent tests. Only those who realize how much the modern labour movement has grown in strength will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to fulfil this task.

The third reason is that the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other socialist party in the world. Further on we shall deal with the political and organizational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At the moment, we merely wish to state that *the role of vanguard can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by an advanced theory.*

From "What Is To Be Done?" (from autumn 1901 to February 1902).

Our programme is entirely based on the scientific, that is, the materialist world outlook.

From "Socialism and Religion" (published in *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 28, December 3, 1905).

IT IS ONLY WHEN THE PARTY HAS A REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL PROGRAMME THAT IT CAN HOLD TO ITS LINE THROUGH EACH AND EVERY TURN OF EVENTS, CONSOLIDATE THE LINKS BETWEEN THE REVOLUTIONARIES AND ATTRACT THE MASSES TO THE REVOLUTION

In order to build the party, it is not enough to be able to shout: "Unity," it is necessary, in addition, to have some sort of *political* programme, a programme of political action. The bloc of liquidators, of Trotsky, the Vperyodists, the Poles, Bolshevik(?) - party members, Paris Mensheviks, etc., etc., was foredoomed to a scandalous downfall because it was built on a lack of principles, on hypocrisy and empty phrases. It wouldn't be a bad thing if these sighers finally got down to solving for themselves the most complex and difficult question: whom do they want unity with? If it is with the liquidators, then why not say so without grimac-

ing; if they are against uniting with the liquidators, then what sort of unity are they sighing for?

From "Liquidators Against the Party"
(published in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 26,
May 8, 1912).

Without a programme, it is impossible for the party to be a more or less integral political organism, able always to hold to a line through each and every turn of events. Without a tactical line, based on an evaluation of the current political moment and giving exact answers to the "accursed problems" of the present, it is possible to have a small group of theoreticians, but not an operative political unit. Without an evaluation of the "active," topical or "fashionable" ideological-political trends, a programme and tactics can degenerate into dead "points," which it is unthinkable to realize in life, and to apply to thousands of detailed, concrete and most concrete questions of practice, with an understanding of the essence of things, an understanding of "what it is all about."

From "On the Election Campaign and the Election Platform" (published in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 24, October 18, 1911).

. . . The programme must formulate our basic views, exactly establish our immediate political tasks, point out those immediate demands which must mark out the range of agitational activity and give it unity, broaden and deepen it, raising agitation from the particular, from fragmentary agitation for small, separate demands to agitation for the whole body of Social-Democratic demands. Now, when Social-Democratic activity has already roused a considerably wide circle of socialist-intellectuals and conscious workers, it is urgently necessary to consolidate the links between them with a programme and thus give them all a firm basis for further, wider activity.

From "Draft Programme for
Our Party" (end of 1899).

But revolution consolidates and educates rapidly. Every step in the development of the revolution rouses the masses and attracts them with uncontrollable force precisely to the side of the revolutionary programme as the only programme that consistently and logically expresses their real, vital interests.

From "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" (June-July 1905).

THE ESSENCE OF THE PARTY'S PROGRAMME CONSISTS IN ORGANIZING AND LEADING THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT, IN THE CONQUEST OF POLITICAL POWER BY THE PROLETARIAT AND THE REALIZATION OF SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

We have already said that the essence of this programme consists in the organization of the class struggle of the proletariat and in leading this struggle, the ultimate aim of which is the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the organization of a socialist society.

From "Our Programme"
(latter half of 1899).

As we see it, the task of Social-Democracy is to organize and help to carry on the class struggle, to point out its essential ultimate aims, and to analyse the conditions which determine the methods by which this struggle should be conducted. "The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves." But while we do not separate Social-Democracy from the labour movement, we must not forget that the task of the former is to represent the interests of this movement in all countries as a whole, that it

must not blindly worship the particular phase in which it may find itself at any particular time or place. We think that it is the duty of Social-Democracy to support every revolutionary movement against the existing state and social system, and we regard its aim to be the capture of political power by the working class, the expropriation of the expropriators, and the establishment of a socialist society.

From "Draft Declaration by the Editorial Board of the *Iskra* and the *Zarya*" (spring of 1900).

THE PARTY'S PROGRAMME SHOULD LAY DOWN ITS ULTIMATE AIM; DO NOT FORGET GENERAL INTERESTS ON ACCOUNT OF PARTICULAR INTERESTS, OR FUNDAMENTAL TASKS ON ACCOUNT OF THE PARTICULARITIES OF THE SEPARATE STEPS OF THE STRUGGLE. THE INTERESTS OF THE PROLETARIAN STRUGGLE IN ONE COUNTRY SHOULD BE SUBORDINATED TO THOSE OF THE STRUGGLE ON A WORLD SCALE

That is why it is quite natural that Social-Democracy as the party of the revolutionary proletariat is so solicitous of its *programme*, so metic-

ulously defines its final aim long beforehand — the aim of complete liberation of the working people — and looks so jealously at any attempt to trim down this final aim; for this same reason Social-Democracy is so dogmatically strict and doctrinarily unbending in separating small, immediate, economic and political aims from the final aim. Whoever is fighting for *all*, for complete victory, cannot but be on the lookout lest small gains should bind one's hands, divert one from the path, force one to forget that which is relatively far off and without which all small gains are but the vanity of vanities. On the contrary, this care for programmes, this eternally critical attitude to small, gradual improvements cannot be understood by and is foreign to the bourgeois parties, even those that are the most freedom-loving and people-loving.

From "Political Sophisms" (published in *Vperyod*, No. 18, May 18, 1905).

This unalterable truth, the Social-Democratic Party has always used all its strength to spread among the proletariat and the whole people. The real, i.e., the mass struggle for freedom has passed

through and will always pass through the most diverse and often unexpected stages: it cannot be otherwise, because of the immense difficulty of the struggle, the complexity of its problems and the changeable composition of those who are struggling. Leading the struggle of the proletariat at every step of the development of this struggle and under all circumstances, Social-Democracy, as the conscious spokesman of the aspirations of the working class, must always have in mind the general and basic interests of this struggle as a whole. Beyond the particular interests of the working class, Social-Democracy teaches us not to forget the general interests — beyond the particularities of the separate steps of the struggle, not to forget the fundamental tasks of the entire struggle as a whole.

From "Struggle for Power and 'Struggle' for a Pittance" (published in *Vperyod*, No. 17, June 14, 1906).

The recognition of internationalism in word, and the substitution of petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism for it in deed, in all propaganda, agitation and practical work, is a very common thing not only among the parties of the Second International,

but also among those which have withdrawn from that International, and often even among those which now call themselves Communist Parties. The struggle against this evil, against the most deeply rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices, comes the more to the forefront, the more the task of transforming the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national one (i.e., existing in one country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i.e., a dictatorship of the proletariat covering at least several advanced countries and capable of exercising decisive influence upon the whole of world politics) becomes a pressing question of the day. Petty-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the bare recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more, while (quite apart from the fact that this recognition is purely verbal) preserving national egoism intact; whereas proletarian internationalism demands, firstly, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country be subordinated to the interests of that struggle on a world scale, and, secondly, that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie be able and willing to make the greatest national

sacrifices for the sake of overthrowing international capital.

Thus, in states which are already fully capitalistic, and which have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against the opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and most important task.

From "Preliminary Draft of Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" (published in June 1920).

II. THE PARTY MUST SEIZE POLITICAL POWER BY REVOLUTIONARY MEANS

**TO ACHIEVE ITS ULTIMATE AIM, THE PARTY
MUST MAKE POLITICAL POWER PASS INTO
THE HANDS OF THE WORKING CLASS**

Russian Social-Democracy, both in the person of its founders, the members of the "Emancipation of Labour" group and in the person of those Russian Social-Democratic organizations which founded the "Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party," have always recognized the following two basic principles: 1) The essence of Social-Democracy: the organization of the class struggle of the proletariat with the aim of winning political power, the transfer of all the means of production to the hands of the whole of society and the replacing of the capitalist economy with socialist economy; 2) The task of Russian Social-Democracy: to organize the Russian

workers' revolutionary party which sets as its immediate aim — the overthrow of the autocracy, the winning of political freedom. Whoever departs from these basic principles (exactly formulated in the programme of the "Emancipation of Labour" group and expressed in the "Manifesto of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party") departs from Social-Democracy.

From "A Retrograde Direction in
Russian Social-Democracy" (end of 1899).

The increase of wealth that comes from combining the labour of large masses of workers, or from improvements in the methods of production, goes to the capitalists, and the workers, who toil from generation to generation, remain propertyless proletarians as before. Hence, there is only one way of putting an end to the exploitation of labour by capital, and that is to abolish private ownership in the means of production and to transfer all the factories, workshops, mines and all the large landed estates to society as a whole and to carry on industry on socialist lines under the management of the workers themselves. The goods produced by

common labour will then be used for the benefit of the workers, and all wealth produced over and above that which is required for their maintenance will be used to satisfy the requirements of the workers themselves for the fullest development of all their capabilities and the equal enjoyment of all the benefits of science and art. That is why the programme states that this is the inevitable outcome of the struggle between the working class and the capitalists. For this it is necessary that political power, that is to say, the power to govern the state, shall pass from the hands of the government which is under the influence of the capitalists and landlords, or from the hands of the government which consists of the elected representatives of the capitalists, into the hands of the working class.

This is the ultimate aim of the struggle of the working class, this constitutes the conditions for its complete emancipation. This is the aim towards which the class-conscious, united workers must strive. . . .

From "Draft and Explanation of the Programme of the Social-Democratic Party"
(1895-96).

THE WORKING CLASS WOULD PREFER, OF COURSE, TO TAKE POWER PEACEFULLY; BUT TO REJECT THE REVOLUTIONARY SEIZURE OF POWER WOULD MEAN ONLY A SHAMEFUL RETREAT BEFORE THE BOURGEOISIE AND ALL THE PROPRIETED CLASSES

The fact is that there are very many different sides to the "modern community" and among those who use this general expression, some have one side in view, and others, another. Consequently, instead of explaining to the workers the concept of the class struggle and Socialism, R. M. merely drags in phrases that are foggy and bewildering. Finally, instead of pointing out the means which modern Socialism has brought forth for the realization of Socialism — the winning of political power by the organized proletariat — instead of this R. M. only talks about the production coming under their (the workers') social management or under the management of a democratized social power, democratized "by means of their (the workers') active participation in the offices for settlement of all kinds of factory and works affairs, courts of arbitration, in all kinds of meetings, commissions and conferences to draw up work laws, by means of the participation of workers in social self-government

organizations and finally in the general representational institution of the country." Thus the editors of *Rabochaya Mysl* ascribe to workers' Socialism only that which is achieved in a *peaceful* way, excluding the revolutionary way. This narrowing down of Socialism and its reduction to ordinary, commonplace bourgeois liberalism is again a huge step backward in relation to the views of all the Russian and the immense, overwhelming majority of European Social-Democrats. The working class would prefer, of course, to take power *peacefully* (we have already said before that this seizure of power can be brought about only by the organized working class, that has gone through the school of class struggle), but to *reject* the revolutionary seizure of power would be *reckless* on the part of the proletariat, both from the theoretical and from the practical-political point of view, and would mean only a shameful retreat before the bourgeoisie and all the propertied classes. It is very probable — and even most probable — that the bourgeoisie will not make a peaceful concession to the proletariat, but will, at the decisive moment, resort to force in defence of its privileges. Then there will remain to the working class no other way but revolution to

realize its aims. That is why the programme of "workers' Socialism" speaks in general about the conquest of political power *without defining* the method of this conquest, because the choice of method depends on the future which we cannot determine exactly. But to restrict the activities of the proletariat in any case to peaceful "democratization" alone, means, we repeat, completely arbitrarily narrowing down and vulgarizing the concept of workers' Socialism.

From "A Retrograde Direction in Russian Social-Democracy" (end of 1899).

I continue to maintain that any political party generally, and the party of the advanced class in particular, would forfeit its right to exist, would be unworthy of being regarded as a party, would be a wretched cipher in all respects, were it to refuse to assume power when it had the opportunity to do so.

From "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" (from end of September to October 1, 1917).

III. THE PARTY MUST TAKE THE LEAD IN EVERYTHING

**ONLY UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY IS IT
POSSIBLE TO OVERTHROW ABSOLUTISM, ADVANCE
TOWARDS COMMUNIST REVOLUTION AND ESTABLISH
THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT**

. . . That only the political party of the working class, i.e., the Communist Party, is capable of uniting, training and organizing a vanguard of the proletariat and of the whole mass of the working people that alone will be capable of withstanding the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillations of this mass and the inevitable traditions and relapses of narrow craft unionism or craft prejudices among the proletariat, and of guiding all the united activities of the whole of the proletariat, i.e., of leading it polit-

ically, and through it, the whole mass of the working people.

From "Preliminary Draft of the Resolution of the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party on the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in Our Party" (March 1921).

It is on the working class that the Social-Democrats concentrate all their attention and all their activities. When its advanced representatives have mastered the ideas of scientific Socialism, the idea of the historical role of the Russian worker, when these ideas become widespread and when durable organizations arise among the workers which will transform the present sporadic economic war of the workers into a conscious class struggle — then the Russian **WORKERS** will rise at the head of all the democratic elements, overthrow absolutism and lead the **RUSSIAN PROLETARIAT** (side by side with the proletariat of **ALL COUNTRIES**) *along the straight road of open political struggle towards the VICTORIOUS*

COMMUNIST REVOLUTION.

From "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight Against the Social-Democrats" (spring-summer 1894).

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully.

From "‘Left-Wing’ Communism, an Infantile Disorder" (April-May 1920).

When they reproach us for having a dictatorship of one party and propose, as you have heard, a united socialist front, we say: "Yes, the dictatorship of one party! We stand for this and we cannot give up this position because this is that party which over the course of decades has won the position of the vanguard of the whole factory-works and industrial proletariat. This is that party which won this position even before the revolution of 1905. This is that party which in 1905 proved to be at the head of the working masses; which

since then and during the time of reaction after 1905, when during the existence of the Stolypin Duma the workers' movement was resumed with such difficulty, has fused with the working class, and only it alone could lead it in a deep and radical transformation of the old society."

From "Speech at the First All-Russian Congress of Workers in Education and Socialist Culture" (July 31, 1919).

THE PARTY MUST GUIDE ALL THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE. POLITICS CANNOT BUT HAVE PRECEDENCE OVER ECONOMICS, AND THE PARTY MUST, FIRST OF ALL, LEAD THE MASSES POLITICALLY TO BUILD THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIALISM, AND CONCENTRATE IN THEIR HANDS THE MANAGEMENT OF THE WHOLE OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

The trade unions were a tremendous progressive step for the working class in the early days of capitalist development, inasmuch as they represented a transition from the disunity and helplessness of the workers to the *rudiments* of class organization. When the *highest* form of proletarian class organization began to arise, *viz.*, the *revolutionary party*

of the proletariat (which will not deserve the name until it learns to bind the leaders with the class and the masses into one single indissoluble whole), the trade unions inevitably began to reveal *certain* reactionary features, a certain craft narrowness, a certain tendency to be non-political, a certain inertness, etc.

From "‘Left-Wing’ Communism, an Infantile Disorder" (April-May 1920).

The trade unions must be the closest and unfailing collaborators of the state power, all the political and economic activities of which are guided by the class-conscious vanguard of the working class — the Communist Party.

From "The Role and Functions of the Trade Unions Under the New Economic Policy" (from December 30, 1921 to January 4, 1922).

Not a single important political or organizational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guiding instructions of the Central Committee of the Party.

From "‘Left-Wing’ Communism, an Infantile Disorder" (April-May 1920).

The theoretical incorrectness of this is most striking. Politics are the concentrated expression of economics, I repeated in my speech, because I had already heard this totally unjustified — and from the lips of a Marxist totally impermissible — reproach about my "political" approach before. Politics cannot but have precedence over economics. To argue differently means forgetting the A B C of Marxism.

Perhaps my political appraisal is wrong? Then say so and prove it. But to say (or even indirectly to assume) that a political approach is the same as an "economic" approach, that it is possible to take "the one and the other," means forgetting the A B C of Marxism.

From "Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Present Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin" (January 25, 1921).

For the first time in history a socialist party has managed, in main outline, to fulfil the task of winning power and of suppressing the exploiters, and has managed to *approach very close* to the task of *administration*. We must prove worthy executors of this most difficult (and most grateful) task

of the socialist revolution. We must *ponder over the fact* that *in addition* to being able to convince people, in addition to being able to conquer in civil war, it is necessary to be able to *do practical organizational work* in order that the administration may be successful. It is a very difficult task, because it is a matter of organizing in a new way the most deep-rooted, the economic foundations of life of tens and tens of millions of people. And it is a very grateful task because, only *after* it has been fulfilled (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that Russia *has become* not only a Soviet, but also a Socialist Republic.

From "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (March-April 1918).

. . . It is a new task because for the first time the economic problem is being raised on such a vast scale, and we must realize and remember that the war on the economic front will be more difficult and prolonged. In order to achieve success on this front a larger number of workers and peasants must be got to display initiative, activity and loyalty. And this can be done, as is borne out by the experience we have gained in economic develop-

ment, because the realization of the misfortunes, cold, hunger and privation caused by the inadequacy of productive forces is deeply ingrained in the masses. We must now direct our attention to transferring our whole agitation and propaganda from political and military interests to economic development.

From "The Work of the Council of People's Commissars, Report Delivered at the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets" (December 22, 1920).

Communism says: The vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, leads the non-Party masses of the workers, educates, prepares, teaches and trains the masses (the "school" of Communism), first the workers and then the peasants, in order that they may eventually concentrate in their hands the entire management of the whole of national economy.

Syndicalism transfers to the masses of non-Party workers, who are divided according to industry, the management of branches of industry (the "Chief Committees and Central Boards"), thus destroying the need for the Party, and without carrying on pro-

longed work either in training the masses or in *actually* concentrating in *their* hands the management of *the whole of national economy*.

From "The Party Crisis"
(January 19, 1921).

THE PARTY MUST LEAD CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL WORK, REGARD SUCH WORK AS PART OF THE DUTIES OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND MAKE IT SERVE THE MILLIONS AND TENS OF MILLIONS OF WORKING PEOPLE

It is necessary with all possible speed to draft a resolution (for the Proletcult congress), and have it approved by the Central Committee in time to get it passed *at this very* session of the Proletcult. . . .

1) In the Soviet workers' and peasants' republic, the whole system of education, in the political-educational sphere in general as well as in the special sphere of art, must be imbued with the spirit of the class struggle of the proletariat for the successful achievement of the aims of its dictatorship — the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of classes and the abolition of all exploitation of man by man.

2) Therefore the proletariat, personified by its vanguard, the Communist Party, as well as by all the various kinds of proletarian organizations in general, must take a most active and leading part in the whole work of popular education.

.
5) . . . The Congress imposes upon all organizations of the Proletcult the absolute duty of regarding themselves as being entirely auxiliary bodies in the system of institutions of the People's Commissariat for Education, and performing their duties under the general guidance of the Soviet government (in particular, the People's Commissariat for Education) and of the Russian Communist Party, as part of the duties of the proletarian dictatorship.

From "Proletarian Culture"
(October 8, 1920).

We want to establish, and we shall establish, a free press, free not simply from the police, but also from capital, from careerism, and what is more, free from bourgeois-anarchist individualism.

These last words may sound paradoxical or an affront to the reader. What! some intellectual, a passionate champion of freedom will shout, you want

to impose collective control on such a delicate, individual matter as literary creation! You want questions relating to science, philosophy and aesthetics to be decided by a majority of worker votes! You deny the absolute freedom of absolutely individual ideological creation!

Calm yourselves, gentlemen! First of all we are discussing Party literature and its subordination to Party control.

From "Party Organization and Party Literature" (published in *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 12, November 13, 1905).

And we, Socialists, expose this hypocrisy and rip off the false labels — not for the sake of a non-class literature and art (that will be possible only in a socialist non-class society), but to oppose this hypocritically free, but in reality bourgeois-shackled, literature, with a literature that is really free and *openly* linked with the proletariat.

This will be a free literature because the idea of Socialism and the sympathy of the working people, and not selfishness or careerism, will bring ever new forces to its ranks. It will be a free literature because it will serve not some satiated heroine, nor

the bored and obese "upper ten thousand," but the millions and tens of millions of working people — the flower of the country, its strength and its future. It will be a free literature, enriching the last word in the revolutionary thought of mankind with the experience and living work of the socialist proletariat, establishing permanent interaction between the experience of the past (scientific Socialism, the consummation of the development of Socialism from its primitive, utopian forms) and the present (the present struggle of worker comrades).

To work, then, comrades! Before us lies a new and difficult task. But it is a noble and gratifying one — the organization of a broad, multiform and varied literature inseparably linked with the Social-Democratic labour movement. Social-Democratic literature must become Party literature throughout. Every newspaper, journal, publishing house, etc., must lose no time in reorganizing its work, so that it will, in one or other form, be integrated in our Party organizations. Only then will "Social-Democratic" literature really merit that name, fulfil its duty and, within the bounds of bourgeois society, break with the slavery of the bourgeoisie and merge with the move-

ment of the really advanced and consistently revolutionary class.

Ibid.

THE PARTY MUST EDUCATE AND REMOULD BOURGEOIS INTELLECTUALS IN THE COMMUNIST SPIRIT; IT MUST KINDLE THEM WITH THE FIRE OF ITS INITIATIVE, SO THAT THEY WILL BE IMBUED WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE PARTY

Under Soviet rule, your proletarian party and ours will be invaded by a still larger number of bourgeois intellectuals. They will worm their way into the Soviets, the courts, and the administration, for Communism cannot be built otherwise than with the aid of the human material created by capitalism, and the bourgeois intellectuals cannot be expelled and destroyed, but must be vanquished, remoulded, assimilated and re-educated, just as we must—in a protracted struggle waged on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat—re-educate the proletarians themselves, who do not abandon their petty-bourgeois prejudices at one stroke, by a miracle, at the behest of the Virgin Mary, at the behest of a slogan, resolution or decree, but only in the course

of a long and difficult mass struggle against mass petty-bourgeois influences.

From Appendix to "‘Left-Wing’ Communism, an Infantile Disorder" (May 12, 1920).

But we must know and remember that the whole constitution of the Soviet Republic in law and in actuality is built on the fact that the Party corrects, appoints and builds everything according to the one principle that the communist elements linked with the proletariat should be able to imbue that proletariat with their spirit, bring it under their leadership, free it from that bourgeois deception which we have been trying so long to get rid of. The People's Commissariat of Education went through a long struggle: the teachers' organization fought for a long time against the socialist revolution. Bourgeois prejudices had particularly strongly entrenched themselves among these teachers. Here for a long time, the struggle went on in the form both of direct sabotage and stubbornly-held bourgeois prejudices, and slowly, step by step we have had to win for ourselves a communist position. For the Central Political Educational Administration working in extra-school

education, and solving the tasks of this education and enlightenment of the masses, there arises particularly strikingly the task of integrating the Party leadership and subordinating to itself, imbuing with its spirit, kindling with the fire of its initiative this huge apparatus—a half million strong army of teaching personnel which now stands in the service of the worker. The educational workers, the teaching personnel were brought up in the spirit of bourgeois prejudices and habits, in a spirit hostile to the proletariat and they had absolutely no links with it. Now we must train up a new army of pedagogical teaching personnel which must be closely linked with the Party and with its ideas, which must be imbued with its spirit, must draw to itself the working masses, imbue them with the spirit of Communism and interest them in what Communists are doing.

From "Speech at the All-Russian Conference of Political Educational Administrations of the Provincial and District People's Educational Departments" (November 3, 1920).

In order to succeed we must make a profound study of the history of the old bourgeois world.

In order to build Communism we must take technology and science and make them available to wider circles; and we can acquire technology and science only from the bourgeoisie. Prominence must be given to this fundamental question, it must be treated as one of the basic problems of economic construction. We have to govern with the help of people who belong to the class we have overthrown; they are imbued with the prejudices of their class and we must re-educate them. At the same time we must recruit our own administrators from our own class. We must use the whole machinery of the state in order to ensure that the educational institutions, extra-school training and practical schooling shall be placed at the disposal of the proletarians, the workers and the toiling peasants, under the guidance of the Communists.

From "Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks): Report of the Central Committee" (March 29, 1920).

At the same time it is necessary to work steadfastly so as to surround the bourgeois specialists with an atmosphere of comradely common labour shoulder to shoulder with the mass of rank-and-file workers

guided by conscious Communists, and patiently, without getting discouraged by inevitable individual setbacks, arouse in those who have scientific knowledge a consciousness of the utter vileness of using science for personal enrichment and for the exploitation of man by man, a consciousness of the higher task of using science to acquaint the whole mass of the working people with it.

From "Draft Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)" (1919).

IV. THE PARTY MUST GIVE ALL POSSIBLE SUPPORT TO THE REVOLUTIONARY MASS MOVEMENT AND SECURE ITS EXPANSION

THE REVOLUTIONARY ENERGY OF THE MASSES IS THE DEEPEST SOURCE OF THE VICTORIES OF THE REVOLUTION

The victory over capitalism requires a proper correlation between the leading, Communist, Party, the revolutionary class—the proletariat—and the masses, i.e., all the toilers and exploited. The Communist Party alone, if it is really the vanguard of the revolutionary class, if it really contains all its best representatives, if it consists of fully conscious and loyal Communists who have been educated and hardened by the experience of the persistent revolutionary struggle, if this Party has succeeded in linking itself inseparably with the whole life of its class, and through it, with the whole mass of exploit-

ed, and if it has succeeded in completely winning the confidence of this class and this mass — such a Party alone is capable of leading the proletariat in the most ruthless, decisive and final struggle against all the forces of capitalism. On the other hand, only under the leadership of such a Party can the proletariat display the full force of its revolutionary onslaught and neutralize the inevitable apathy and sometimes resistance of the small minority of the aristocracy of labour, the old trade union and co-operative leaders, etc., who have been corrupted by capitalism — only then will it be able to display its whole might, which is immeasurably greater than the proportion of the population it represents owing to the very economic structure of capitalist society.

From "Theses on the Fundamental Tasks
of the Second Congress of the Communist
International" (July 4, 1920).

There is no doubt that without this feature — without revolutionary violence — the proletariat could not be victorious, but there can also be no doubt that revolutionary violence is a necessary and proper method of the revolution only at definite

moments of its development, only under definite and special conditions, while the much deeper, permanent characteristic of this revolution and the condition of its victories was and remains the organization of the proletarian masses, the organization of the working people. The best conditions for the revolution, the deepest source of its victories, lie precisely in this organization of the millions of the working people.

From "Speech in Memory of
Y. M. Sverdlov" (March 18, 1919).

For the *single real* force that compels change is only the revolutionary energy of the masses, not the kind, moreover, that remains on paper as was the case with the Second International, but the kind that leads to all-round revolutionary propaganda, agitation and the organization of the masses by the parties themselves, which march at the head and not at the tail of the revolution.

From "Rough Draft of Theses for an Appeal
to the International Socialist Commission
and to All Socialist Parties" (before
December 25, 1916).

. . . The chief source of our strength is the conscientiousness and heroism of the workers, whom the labouring peasants could not and cannot but sympathize with and support. The reason for our victories was the direct appeal of our Party and of the Soviet government to the working masses, pointing to every new difficulty and problem as it arose; our ability to explain to the masses why it was necessary to devote all energies first to one, then to another aspect of Soviet work at any given moment; our ability to rouse the energy, heroism and enthusiasm of the masses and to concentrate every ounce of revolutionary effort on the most important task of the hour.

From "The Fight to Overcome the Fuel Crisis" (published in *Pravda*, No. 254, November 13, 1919).

**THE PARTY MUST EDUCATE THE MASSES ON THE
MARXIAN PROGRAMME, AND RAISE THEM UP
TO A WIDER REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE**

We educated the Party of the proletariat on the Marxian programme, and the tens of millions of

toilers we have in our country must be educated in the same way.

From "Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks): Reply to the Discussion on the Party Programme" (March 19, 1919).

We, on the other hand, consider that *only* events in which the actors are the masses themselves, which are born out of their sentiments and are not staged "with a special aim" by one or the other organization, are able to have a really, seriously "agitational" (arousing), and not only arousing, but (and this is much more important) an educational effect. We think that a whole hundred assassinations of tsars will never have such an arousing and educational effect as will the mere participation by tens of thousands of the working people in meetings discussing their vital interests and the connection between politics and those interests — as participation in a struggle that really *raises* ever more new "untouched" strata of the proletariat to a more conscious life, to a wider revolutionary struggle.

From "New Events and Old Questions" (published in *Iskra*, No. 29, December 1, 1902).

A party is the vanguard of a class, and its duty is to lead the masses, not to reflect the average state of mind of the masses.

From "Speech on the Agrarian Question,
Delivered at the Extraordinary All-Russian
Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies"
(November 14, 1917).

The victory of Socialism (as the first stage of Communism) over capitalism requires that the proletariat, as the only really revolutionary class, shall fulfil the three following tasks. . . . Second — win over and bring under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat, of its Communist Party, not only the whole of the proletariat, or the overwhelming, the enormous majority of the latter, but also the whole mass of toilers and those exploited by capital; educate, organize, train and discipline them in the very process of the supremely bold and ruthlessly firm struggle against the exploiters; tear this overwhelming majority of the population in all capitalist countries from its dependence on the bourgeoisie; imbue it by means of its practical experience with confidence in the lead-

ing role of the proletariat and of its revolutionary vanguard.

From "Theses on the Fundamental Tasks
of the Second Congress of the Communist
International" (July 4, 1920).

The task of Social-Democracy consists precisely in *transforming* the spontaneous struggle of the workers against the oppressors, by means of the organization of the workers, propaganda and agitation among them, into a struggle of the whole class, into the struggle of a definite political *party* for definite political and socialist ideals.

From "Our Immediate
Tasks" (latter half of 1899).

1) Prolonged work of socialist training, organization and consolidation of the advanced masses of the proletariat is, as heretofore, first and foremost on the order of the day;

.

3) It is necessary to organize and expand systematic political agitation, to give all possible support

to the incipient mass movement and to secure its expansion under the banner of the full, uncurtailed slogans of the Party.

From "Sixth ('Prague') All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party: Draft Resolution on the Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party" (first half of January 1912).

**THE PARTY MUST BOLDLY BRING INTO PLAY THE
INITIATIVE OF THE MASSES, AND TURN THE
CAUSE OF SOCIALISM INTO A REAL MASS
MOVEMENT**

But it is important to realize how infinitely mendacious is the ordinary bourgeois conception of Socialism as something lifeless, petrified, fixed once for all, whereas in reality *only* under Socialism will a rapid, genuine, really mass forward movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, commence in all spheres of public and personal life.

From "The State and Revolution" (August-September 1917).

One of the biggest and most dangerous mistakes of Communists (as generally of revolutionaries who have successfully accomplished the beginning of a great revolution) is the idea that a revolution can be made by revolutionaries alone. On the contrary, to be successful every serious revolutionary work requires the understanding and translation into action of the idea that revolutionaries are capable of playing the part only of the vanguard of the truly virile and advanced class. A vanguard performs its task as vanguard only when it is able to avoid becoming divorced from the masses it leads and is able really to lead the whole mass forward. Without an alliance with non-Communists in the most varied spheres of activity there can be no question of any successful communist constructive work.

From "On the Significance of Militant Materialism" (March 12, 1922).

The idea of building communist society exclusively with the hands of the Communists is childish, absolutely childish. The Communists are drops in the ocean, drops in the ocean of the people.

From "Political Report of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to the 11th Congress of the R.C.P. (B.)" (March 27, 1922).

And what is important to us is to enlist all the toilers to a man in the government of the state. That is a tremendously difficult task. But Socialism cannot be introduced by a minority, a party. It can be introduced by tens of millions of people when they have learned how to do everything themselves.

From "Report on Revising the Programme and Name of the Party, Delivered at the Seventh Congress of the R.C.P. (B.)" (evening of March 8, 1918).

In such a gigantic task, we could never claim, and not a single sensible Socialist who has ever written on the prospects of the future ever thought, that we could devise the forms of organization of the new society according to a predetermined pattern, and at one stroke.

All we knew, all that the best experts on capitalist society, the best minds who foresaw the development of capitalist society, could tell us at all precisely was that this transformation was historically inevitable and would proceed along a certain main line, that private ownership of the means of

production had been doomed by history, that it would burst, that the exploiters would inevitably be expropriated. This was established with scientific precision, and we knew this when we grasped the banner of Socialism, when we declared ourselves to be Socialists, when we formed socialist parties, when we transformed society. We knew this when we took power for the purpose of proceeding with socialist reorganization; but we could not know the form this transformation would take, or the rate of development of the concrete reorganization. Collective experience, the experience of millions alone can give us decisive guidance in this respect; because, for the purposes of our task, for the purpose of building Socialism, the experience of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands who constitute the upper strata which have made history up to now in landlord society and in capitalist society is insufficient. We cannot proceed in this way precisely because we rely on joint experience, on the experience of millions of toilers.

From "Speech Delivered at the First Congress of the Councils of National Economy" (May 26, 1918).

Far from extinguishing competition, Socialism, on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for actually drawing the majority of toilers into an arena of such labour in which they can display their abilities, develop their capacities, reveal their talents, of which there is an untapped spring among the people, and which capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.

.....
"They" think that the "common people," the "common" workers and poor peasants, will be unable to cope with the great, truly heroic, in the world-historical sense of the word, organizational tasks which the socialist revolution has imposed upon the toilers. The intellectuals who are accustomed to serving the capitalists and the capitalist state say in order to console themselves: "You cannot do without us." But their insolent calculations will fall to the ground: educated men are already appearing, who are coming over to the side of the people, to the side of the toilers, and are helping to break the resistance of the servants of capital. There are a great many talented organizers among the peasants and the

working class, and they are only just beginning to become conscious of themselves, to awaken, to stretch out towards the great living creative work, to attack with their own forces the task of building socialist society.

One of the most important tasks today, if not the most important task, is to develop this independent initiative of the workers, and of all the toilers and exploited generally, as widely as possible in creative *organizational* work. At all costs we must break the old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called "upper classes," only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, are capable of administering the state and directing the organizational construction of socialist society.

This is a prejudice. It is fostered by rotten routine, by petrified views, slavish habits, and still more by the sordid selfishness of the capitalists, in whose interest it is to administer while plundering and to plunder while administering. No. The workers will not forget for a moment that they need the power of knowledge. The extraordinary striving after knowledge which the workers reveal, particularly now, shows that mistaken ideas about this do not

and cannot exist among the proletariat. But every *rank-and-file* worker and peasant who is able to read and write, who can judge people and has practical experience, is capable of *organizational* work. Among the "common people," of whom the bourgeois intellectuals speak with such naughtiness and contempt, there are *masses* of men and women of this kind. This sort of talent among the working class and the peasantry is a rich and still untapped spring.

From "How to Organize Competition" (December 25-28, 1917).

The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms. Our Soviets are following the same road. But they are still "shy," they have not yet got into their stride, have not yet "bitten into" their new, great, creative task of building the socialist system. The Soviets must set to work more boldly and display greater initiative.

Ibid.

**THE PARTY MUST UNDEVIATINGLY INCULCATE THE
PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNISM IN THE MINDS
OF THE MASSES, AND INTRODUCE COMMUNIST
DISCIPLINE IN COMMUNIST LABOUR**

Socialism implies the performance of work without the aid of capitalists, it implies social labour accompanied by the strictest accounting, control and supervision on the part of the organized vanguard, the most advanced section of the toilers. Moreover, it implies that standards of labour and the amount of compensation for labour must be determined. They must be determined because capitalist society has left us such relics and habits as uncoordinated labour, lack of confidence in social economy, the old habits of the small producer, which prevail in all peasant countries. All these run counter to a real communist economy. Communism, on the other hand, is the name we apply to a system under which people become accustomed to the performance of public duties without any specific machinery of compulsion, when unpaid work for the common good becomes the general phenomenon.

From "Subbotniks"
(December 20, 1919).

This is the fundamental significance of the subbotniks, which have shown that something has been created and is beginning to spring up in the form of unpaid labour widely organized on behalf of the state as a whole, something absolutely new, which runs counter to all the old capitalist rules, something superior to the socialist society which is triumphing over capitalism.

Ibid.

However that may be, whether we shall receive complete and reliable data soon or not, there can be no doubt that, from the point of view of principle, we observe no phenomenon other than the subbotniks that would indicate that not only do we call ourselves Communists, not only do we desire to be Communists, but that we are already accomplishing something that in practice is not only socialist, but communist. And therefore every Communist, everyone who desires to remain true to the principles of Communism, must devote all his energies and attention to assisting the study of this phenomenon and its practical application. This is the fundamental significance of the subbotniks. And, therefore, this question must be constantly raised at every Party

conference and discussed from the point of view of both theory and practice.

Ibid.

And we solemnly and firmly promise each other that we shall be prepared for every sacrifice, that we shall remain steadfast and resolute in this most difficult fight, the fight against the force of habit, and that we shall work for years and decades without sparing ourselves. We shall work for the eradication of that accursed law "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost," for the eradication of the habit of regarding labour only as a thing of compulsion and justified only when paid in accordance with certain labour standards. We shall work to inculcate in people the habit, to implant in the everyday life of the masses the law "all for one and one for all," "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," to introduce, gradually but undeviatingly, communist discipline in communist labour.

From "From the First Subbotnik on the Moscow-Kazan Railway to the All-Russian May Day Subbotnik" (published in *Per-vomaiskii Subbotnik*, May 2, 1920).

**V. THE PARTY MUST HAVE THE MOST
AUTHORITATIVE AND EXPERIENCED
LEADERS**

**THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT WILL
REMAIN A PHRASE IF THE PARTY DOES NOT
HAVE INFLUENTIAL AND EXPERIENCED
LEADERS**

Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organize a movement and lead it.

From "The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement" (first half of November 1900).

The training of experienced and influential Party leaders is a long and difficult task. And without them the dictatorship of the proletariat, its "unity of will," will remain a phrase.

From "A Letter to the German Communists" (August 14, 1921).

**THE LEADERS OF THE PARTY ARE THE MOST
AUTHORITATIVE AND EXPERIENCED REVOLUTION-
ARIES WHO ARE ALWAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE
REVOLUTIONARY INITIATIVE OF THE MASSES AND
CAN FIND SPEEDY AND CORRECT SOLUTIONS TO
INTRICATE POLITICAL PROBLEMS**

The mere presentation of the question — "dictatorship of the Party or dictatorship of the class, dictatorship (Party) of the leaders, or dictatorship (Party) of the masses?" — testifies to the most incredible and hopeless confusion of mind. These people are straining to *invent* something quite out of the ordinary, and, in their effort to be clever, make themselves ridiculous. Everyone knows that the masses are divided into classes; that the masses can be contrasted to classes only by contrasting the vast majority in general, regardless of division according to status in the social system of production, to categories holding a definite status in the social system of production; that usually, and in the majority of cases, at least in modern civilized countries, classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who

are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders. All this is elementary.

.....
To go so far in this connection as to contrast, *in general*, dictatorship of the masses to dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd and stupid. What is particularly curious is that actually, in place of the old leaders, who hold the common human views on ordinary matters, *new leaders* are put forth (under cover of the slogan: "Down with the leaders!") who talk unnatural stuff and nonsense.

From "Left-Wing" Communism, an
Infantile Disorder" (April-May 1920).

Revolutions are the locomotives of history, said Marx. Revolutions are the festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order as at a time of revolution. At such times the people are capable of performing miracles, if judged by a narrow philistine scale of gradual progress. But the leaders of the revolutionary parties must also, at such a time, present their tasks in a wider and

bolder fashion, so that their slogan may always be in advance of the revolutionary initiative of the masses, serve them as a beacon and reveal to them our democratic and socialist ideal in all its magnitude and splendour, indicate the shortest, the most direct route to complete, absolute and final victory.

From "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy
in the Democratic Revolution" (June-July
1905).

... The proletariat was armed and united, in the army, with the poorer sections of the people. The German revolution inspired the workers to rise, and there was "practically universal unrest in the army." Obviously, the duty of revolutionary leaders was to lead the masses towards revolution, *not to miss* the opportune moment, when the arming of the workers and the influence of the German revolution could have decided the issue at one stroke.

From "How the Bourgeoisie Utilizes
Renegades" (September 20, 1919).

That, in fact, is one of the functions of a party organization and of party leaders worthy

of the title, namely, through the prolonged, persistent, variegated and comprehensive efforts of all thinking representatives of the given class, to evolve the knowledge, the experience and — in addition to knowledge and experience — the political instinct necessary for the speedy and correct solution of intricate political problems.

From "‘Left-Wing’ Communism, an Infantile Disorder" (April-May 1920).

ALL THE GREAT REVOLUTIONARY THINKERS HAVE NOT BEEN AFRAID TO LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE GREAT MOVEMENTS OF THE OPPRESSED CLASSES. FIRMLY CLING TO THE LEADERS OF THE PARTY, AND SMASH THE FILTHY SLANDER OF THE ENEMY

There is no trace of utopianism in Marx, in the sense that he made up or invented a "new" society. No, he studied the *birth* of the new society *out of* the old, the forms of transition from the latter to the former as a natural-historical process. He examined the actual experience of a mass proletarian movement and tried to draw practical lessons from it. He "learned" from the Commune,

just as all the great revolutionary thinkers were not afraid to learn from the experience of the great movements of the oppressed classes, and never addressed them with pedantic "homilies" (such as Plekhanov's: "they should not have taken to arms"; or Tsereteli's: "a class must limit itself").

From "The State and Revolution" (August-September 1917).

Should our Party consent to the suspension of public activities of its leaders because they were slandered by the bourgeoisie, the Party would suffer terribly; harm would be caused to the proletariat; and its enemies would rejoice.

.....

We must unswervingly follow our own way, safeguard the working power of our party, guard its leaders from even wasting their time on mudslingers and their filthy slander.

From "Political Blackmail" (published in *Proletarii*, No. 10, September 6, 1917).

Take the Germans. It will not be denied, I hope, that their organization embraces the crowd, that in Germany everything proceeds from the

crowd, that the working-class movement there has learned to walk. Yet observe how this vast crowd of millions values its "dozen" tried political leaders, how firmly it clings to them! Members of the hostile parties in parliament have often teased the Socialists by exclaiming: "Fine democrats you are indeed! Yours is a working-class movement only in name; in actual fact it is the same clique of leaders that is always in evidence, Bebel and Liebknecht, year in and year out, and that goes on for decades. Your supposedly elected workers' deputies are more permanent than the officials appointed by the Emperor!" But the Germans only smile with contempt at these demagogic attempts to set the "crowd" against the "leaders," to arouse bad and ambitious instincts in the former, and to rob the movement of its solidity and stability by undermining the confidence of the masses in their "dozen wise men." Political thinking is already sufficiently developed among the Germans, and they have accumulated sufficient political experience to understand that without the "dozen" tried and talented leaders (and talented men are not born

by the hundred), professionally trained, schooled by long experience and working in perfect harmony, no class in modern society can wage a determined struggle.

From "What Is To Be Done?" (from
autumn 1901 to February 1902).

VI. THE PARTY MUST WAGE AN UNCOMPROMISING STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPORTUNISM AND REVISIONISM. THE PARTY OF THE OLD TYPE WHICH STANDS FOR SOCIAL REFORMS SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY TRANSFORMED INTO A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

THE OPPORTUNISTS REJECT REVOLUTIONARY THEORY AND HOLD THAT IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO HAVE ANY KIND OF REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAMME, REVOLUTIONARY PARTY, REVOLUTIONARY TACTICS, BUT THIRST FOR A UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY PEACEFULLY FOLLOWING THE PATH OF REFORM, THE PATH OF CLASS COLLABORATION

Social-Democracy must change from a party of the social revolution into a democratic party of social reforms. Bernstein has surrounded this political demand with a whole battery of symmetrically arranged "new" arguments and reasonings. The possibility of putting Socialism on a scientific

basis and of proving from the point of view of the materialist conception of history that it is necessary and inevitable was denied, as was also the growing impoverishment, proletarianization and the intensification of capitalist contradictions. The very conception, "*ultimate aim*," was declared to be unsound, and the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat was absolutely rejected. It was denied that there is any counter-distinction in principle between liberalism and Socialism. *The theory of the class struggle* was rejected on the grounds that it could not be applied to a strictly democratic society, governed according to the will of the majority, etc.

From "What Is To Be Done?" (from autumn 1901 to February 1902).

We repeat: this is the basic, typical reasoning of all opportunists throughout the world. To what conclusion does this reasoning inevitably lead? To the conclusion that it is not necessary to have any kind of revolutionary programme, revolutionary party, revolutionary tactics. *Reforms* are necessary, and that is all. Revolutionary Social-Democracy is not necessary. A party of democratic and socialist reform is necessary. Indeed, is it not clear

that there will *always* be people in the world who feel the unsatisfactoriness of things as they are? Of course, always. Is it not equally clear that the *smallest* correction of this unsatisfactory situation will *always* be advocated by the *biggest* number of dissatisfied people? Of course, always. This means that it is our task, the task of the advanced and "conscious" people, *always* to support the *smallest* demands for the correction of evil. This is the most reliable, most practical task, and all sorts of talk of some kind of "fundamental" demands and so on—this is only the talk of "utopians," only "revolutionary phrases." *One must make a choice*—and one must make a choice always between the existing evil and the smallest of the current projects for its correction.

From "More on the Duma Ministry"
(published in *Echo*, No. 6, June 28, 1906).

What is at issue is the answer to questions of the programme in the first place. What have the last four years of Russian life produced in this connection? Each and everyone must admit that they have not produced any attempt to review or correct or elaborate further the old programme of the Marx-

ists in that part which concerns matters of principle. What is characteristic of the "current moment"—it would be more correct in many respects to call it the "stagnant" or "rotten" moment—is the contemptuous shrugging off of the programme and the striving to shorten and cut it in every way *without* the slightest attempt at a direct, determined review of it. "Revisionism," in its specific significance as a bourgeois emasculation of Marxist truths, is characteristic for the current epoch not as a militant revisionism, raising the "banner of revolt" (even as this was done by Bernstein in Germany nearly 10 years ago and in Russia by Struve some 15 years back, or Prokopovich a little later), but as a cowardly, surreptitious renunciation, frequently justified by "practical," chiefly supposedly practical considerations. Those who took over and follow the "cause" of Struve and Prokopovich, the Messrs. Potresovs, Maslovs, Levitskys & Co., "participated" in the prevailing disorder and supported it (as was done on the other side by Yushkevich, Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and so on) mostly by means of timid and unsystematic attempts to throw overboard the "old" Marxism and replace it with the "new" bourgeois teaching. It was not accidentally,

not by the whim of these "groups" that theoretical questions were pushed into one of the first places during this last four-year period. Only people timidly renouncing the past relegated these questions, or one or the other part of them, among the "trifles." And now if we talk about the defence of the programme and the world outlook of Marxism in connection with the election campaign, in the "process" of the election campaign and so on—if we talk about this not merely to fulfil our "official" obligations and also not for the purpose of saying nothing, then one should take into account not words, promises, assurances, but precisely the *experience* of the four years we have lived through. They have shown us, in fact, again and again a whole series of "unreliable fellow-travellers" of Marxism among our intelligentsia (frequently wishing to be Marxists), they have taught distrust of these fellow-travellers, they have *raised* in the minds of thinking workers the significance of Marxist theory and the Marxist programme in their uncut form.

From "Questions of Principle in the Election Campaign" (published in *Prosveshcheniye*, Nos. 1 and 2, December 1911 and January 1912).

This is just the way things are looked at by the newest variety of bourgeois democracy—the opportunists and revisionists who thirst for a great united democratic party peacefully following the path of reform, the path of class collaboration.

From "Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth" (published in *Student*, Nos. 2-3, September 1903).

One of the most important questions on the agenda of the Second International Conference of the "Zimmerwaldists" is the question of the Social-Democratic "peace programme." In order to bring home to the reader the *essentials* of this question we will quote a declaration made by Kautsky, the most authoritative representative of the Second International and most authoritative champion of the social-chauvinists in all countries.

"The International is not a fit instrument in time of war; it is, essentially, an instrument of peace. . . . The fight for peace, class struggle in peace time." (*Neue Zeit*, November 27, 1914.) "All peace programmes formulated by the International; the programmes of the Copenhagen, London and Vienna

Congresses, all demand, and quite rightly, the recognition of the independence of nations. This demand must also serve as our compass in the present war." (Ibid., May 21, 1915.)

These few words excellently express the "programme" of international social-chauvinist unity and conciliation.

From "The 'Peace Programme'" (published in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 52, March 25, 1916).

Look at that which is — said Bernstein and other opportunists — and have the courage to say what is a fact: we in Germany are all engaged in the struggle for reforms, we are all in effect reformists, we are the party of reform. And the elimination of wage slavery in a series of crises is just words, an empty utopia.

Up to the present this manoeuvre of the opportunists is repeated hundreds of times by them and the whole bourgeois press (our Kadet "*Rech*," in the first place) is always using this reasoning of the opportunists *against* Marxism. Whoever is interested seriously in the fate of the workers' movement must be well acquainted with this well-worn

manoeuvre of the direct enemies and false friends of the proletariat.

From "Notes of a Publicist" (published in *Pravda Truda*, No. 3, September 13, 1913).

Tear away the struggle for reforms from the struggle for the final aim — this is what Bernstein's gospel boils down to in actual fact. Tear away the struggle for improvements, for freedom of the unions and so on, from the struggle with reformism, from the defence of Marxism, from its spirit and direction — this is what the gospel of D. and other liquidators boils down to in actual fact.

They want to impose on the working class their own blindness (failing to see the connections with the past, failing to see its direction, failing to see the struggle with reformism). But the foremost workers, as was proved again and again at the meeting of metalworkers on August 25, have already seen into the liberal nature of D. and his little group.

Ibid.

In Europe, reformism signifies renunciation of Marxism in favour of bourgeois "social policy." In

Russia, the reformism of the Liquidators, in addition, signifies destruction of the Marxist organization and abandonment of the democratic tasks of the working class in favour of a liberal labour policy.

From "Marxism and Reformism" (published in *Pravda Truda*, No. 2, September 12, 1913).

THE PARTY MUST IN ALL SPHERES OF THE STRUGGLE CARRY THROUGH THE POLITICAL LINE OF OPPOSITION TO OPPORTUNISM, AND TRANSFORM THE REFORMIST PARTY OF THE OLD TYPE INTO A GENUINELY REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

The transformation of the old type of European parliamentary party, which in fact is reformist and only slightly tinted with revolutionary colours, into a new *type* of party, into a genuinely revolutionary, genuinely Communist Party, is an extremely difficult matter. The example of France demonstrates this difficulty most clearly. To transform the *type* of Party work in everyday life, to transform humdrum everyday work, to transform the Party into the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat without allowing it to become separated from the masses, but, on the contrary, linking it more and more closely with them and imbuing them with revolutionary consciousness and

rousing them for the revolutionary struggle, is a very difficult but very important task. If the European Communists do not take advantage of the intervals (probably very short ones) between the periods of particularly acute revolutionary battles, such as took place in many capitalist countries of Europe and America in 1921 and in the beginning of 1922, for the purpose of bringing about this fundamental, internal, profound reconstruction of the whole structure and the whole of the work of their Parties, they will be committing a heinous crime.

From "Notes of a Publicist"
(end of February 1922).

A party which wishes to exist, can permit neither the slightest wavering on the question of its existence nor any compromise with those who might bury it. There is no end to the number of those who wish to play the role of go-betweens in such a compromise, but all these people, to use an old expression, are burning oil for nothing and wasting their time.

From "How V. Zasulich Kills Liquidationism" (published in *Prosveshcheniye*, No. 9, September 1913).

With reformists and Mensheviks in the ranks, victory in the proletarian revolution is *impossible*; it is *impossible* to defend it. This is obvious in principle. This was confirmed for all to see by experience in Russia and in Hungary.

From "On the Struggle Within the Italian Socialist Party" (November 4, 1920).

One of the essential conditions for preparing the proletariat for victory is a prolonged, persistent and ruthless struggle against opportunism, reformism, social-chauvinism, and similar bourgeois influences and tendencies, which are inevitable as long as the proletariat acts under capitalist conditions. Unless such a struggle is fought, and unless a complete victory over opportunism within the working-class movement is preliminarily gained, there can be no hope for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

From "The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (December 16, 1919).

Against the social-traitors, against reformism and opportunism, this political line can and must be followed in *all* spheres of the struggle without excep-

tion. And then we shall win the working masses. And with the working masses the Marxist centralized political party, the vanguard of the proletariat, will take the people along the right road to the triumph of proletarian dictatorship, to proletarian instead of bourgeois democracy, to the Soviet Republic, to the socialist system.

From "Greetings to Italian, French and German Communists" (October 10, 1919).

**VII. THE PROLETARIAN PARTY OF A NEW
TYPE IS A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY WHICH
IS A CLASS PARTY, CONSCIOUS, MILITANT,
IN CONTACT WITH THE MASSES AND
DISCIPLINED**

Russian Social-Democracy sets itself the task of laying bare before the workers the irreconcilable antagonism between their interests and the interests of the capitalists, of showing to the proletariat the historical significance, character and condition of the social revolution it is destined to carry out, and of organizing a revolutionary class party capable of directing all the manifestations of the struggle of the proletariat.

From "Draft of a Programme for the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" (from end of January to early February 1902).

Social-Democracy is a certain organized entity, and those people who do not abide by the discipline of

this organization, who scorn it and violate its decisions, do not belong to it. This is a fundamental rule.

From "Materials on the Question of the Struggle Within the Social-Democratic Fraction in the Duma" (published in *Za Pravdu*, No. 22, October 29, 1913).

Certainly, almost everyone now realizes that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, unless the strictest, truly iron discipline had prevailed in our Party, and unless the latter had been rendered the fullest and unreserved support of the whole mass of the working class, that is, of all its thinking, honest, self-sacrificing and influential elements who are capable of leading or of carrying with them the backward strata.

From "'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder" (April-May 1920).

The party of the Social-Democrats is the party of the conscious and struggling proletariat. It does not believe in any promises of the bourgeoisie, it seeks deliverance from poverty and want not in the

strengthening of small-scale economy but in the united struggle of all the toiling people for Socialism.

From "Draft of an Appeal to the Electors"
(published in *Proletarii*, No. 8, November
23, 1906).

Operating in a new situation, among more conscious and more united enemies, the working class must also reorganize its own party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. In place of the leader-intellectual it puts forward leaders from the ranks of the workers. A new type of social-democrat worker party man is growing up who independently carries on *all* the work of the party and is able to rally, unite and organize ten and a hundred times bigger proletarian masses, as compared with the former.

From "Announcement of the Publication
of the *Rabochaya Gazeta*" (October 1910).

Socialist parties are not debating clubs, but organizations of the fighting proletariat; and when a number of battalions have gone over to the enemy, they must be named and branded as traitors, and we must not allow ourselves to be "caught" by hyp-

ocritical assertions to the effect that "not everybody" understands imperialism "in the same way," or that the chauvinist Kautsky and the chauvinist Cunow can write volumes about it, or that the question has not been "sufficiently discussed," etc., etc.

From "The Collapse of the Second International" (latter half of May and first half of June 1915).

And indeed, in the epoch of capitalism, when the masses of the workers are constantly subjected to exploitation and cannot develop their human faculties, the most characteristic feature of working-class political parties is that they can embrace only a minority of their class. A political party can comprise only a minority of the class, just as the really class-conscious workers in any capitalist society constitute only a minority of all the workers. That is why we have to admit that only this class-conscious minority can guide and take the lead of the broad masses of the workers. And if Comrade Tanner says that he is opposed to parties but at the same time is in favour of a minority, composed of the best organized and the most revolutionary workers, showing the way to the whole of the proletariat, then

I say that there is really no difference between us. What is an organized minority? If this minority is truly class-conscious, if it is able to lead the masses, if it is capable of answering every question that comes up on the order of the day, then essentially it is a party. And if comrades like Tanner, whom we particularly reckon with as being representatives of a mass movement — a thing which cannot, without stretching a point, be said of the British Socialist Party representatives — if these comrades are in favour of a minority existing that will fight resolutely for the dictatorship of the proletariat and that will train the masses of the workers in this direction, then essentially, such a minority is nothing but a party. Comrade Tanner says that this minority should organize and lead the whole mass of the workers. If Comrade Tanner and the other comrades of the Shop Stewards' group and of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) admit this — and in the conversations we have with them every day we see that they do — if they approve the proposition that the class-conscious communist minority of the working class must lead the proletariat, then they also have to agree that this is the sense of all our resolutions. And then the only difference

that exists between us is their avoidance of the word "party" because of a sort of prejudice held by British comrades towards political parties. They cannot conceive of a political party being anything else than a replica of the parties of Gompers and Henderson, of parliamentary bosses and traitors to the working class. And if they imagine parliamentarism to be what it actually is in Britain and America today, then we too are opposed to such parliamentarism and such political parties. What we need is new parties, different parties. We need parties that will be in constant and real contact with the masses and that will be able to lead these masses.

From "The Role of the Communist Party,
a Speech at the Second Congress of the
Communist International" (July 23, 1920).

列宁論新型的革命的
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