



**LENIN'S PREDICTION
ON THE
REVOLUTIONARY
STORMS
IN THE EAST**

Michael

Hamm

1973

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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Vladimir Lenin

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EDITOR'S NOTE

"Hongqi" ("Red Flag"), the theoretical journal of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, published in its No. 2 issue of 1965 five articles and extracts from Lenin's works in which he discussed the prospect of revolutionary storms in the East. "Hongqi" prefaced the collection with an editor's comment, which reads as follows:

We reprint in this issue some articles and extracts from Lenin's works in which he analysed the prospect of revolutionary storms in the East.

Most of these articles were first published in the early part of the present century, when the European bourgeoisie had long since become decadent and reactionary, while the down-trodden and benighted peoples in the East had awakened from medieval stagnation. Lenin enthusiastically acclaimed the "new source of great world storms" that had opened up in Asia. He predicted that the revolutionary movements of the East would have repercussions in the European capitalist countries and give an impetus to their proletarian revolution.

We see from Lenin's articles how he sympathized with and supported the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and people and how he despised and condemned the wrong attitude taken by the revisionists of the Second International who regarded the movement in the colonies as "an insignificant national and completely peaceful movement".

The revolutionary storms in Asia before World War I and the October Revolution, which Lenin warmly applauded, were still democratic revolutions led by the bourgeoisie. However, a great change has taken place in the Asian people's revolutionary movements since World War I and the October Revolution, and particularly since World War II. The proletariat has entered the stage of history and assumed leadership in the revolution in many countries. The people of China and a few other countries have broken through the imperialist front in the East and embarked on the broad road of building socialism. In many other countries, the revolutionary people have overthrown the direct colonial rule of imperialism and established national independent states.

Lenin further pointed out after the October Revolution that the mass of people in the colonial countries "will play a very important revolutionary role in the coming phases of the world revolution". History has fully borne out Lenin's scientific prediction. The peoples in the East who had been looked down upon for centuries are now standing in the forefront of the world revolution, taking positive action and "participating in deciding the destiny of the whole world". The East which used to be carved up by the imperialist powers as they pleased has now become the anti-imperialist, revolutionary and fighting East.

The great victories won by the south Vietnamese people in their patriotic struggle against U.S. aggression fully show

the might of the people's revolutionary forces in the East. Under the telling blows of the south Vietnamese people the reputedly strong U.S. imperialism has sustained a crushing defeat and found itself in a desperate situation, from which it cannot extricate itself.

Violent revolutionary storms have arisen not only in Asia but also in Africa and Latin America. In 1963, in the light of this new world situation the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party further elaborated Lenin's propositions in its "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement". It said:

The various types of contradictions in the contemporary world are concentrated in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America; these are the most vulnerable areas under imperialist rule and the storm-centres of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism.

The national democratic revolutionary movement in these areas and the international socialist revolutionary movement are the two great historical currents of our time.

The national democratic revolution in these areas is an important component of the contemporary proletarian world revolution.

The anti-imperialist revolutionary struggles of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are pounding and undermining the foundations of the rule of imperialism and colonialism, old and new, and are now a mighty force in defence of world peace.

In a sense, therefore, the whole cause of the international proletarian revolution hinges on the outcome of the revolutionary struggles of the people of these areas,

who constitute the overwhelming majority of the world's population.

Therefore, the anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America is definitely not merely a matter of regional significance but one of overall importance for the whole cause of proletarian world revolution.*

Like Lenin all Marxists rejoice over the vigorous development of the national liberation movement. The wider the flames of the struggle of national liberation spread, the more delighted and encouraged they feel. Just as Lenin did, they carefully study the experience of the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and resolutely support this great revolutionary struggle with practical action.

Although these articles of Lenin's were written about 40 or 50 years ago, they still have great theoretical and practical significance for the revolutionary peoples of the world. Lenin said, "After the experience both of Europe and Asia, whoever now speaks of *non*-class politics and of *non*-class Socialism simply deserves to be put in a cage and exhibited alongside of the Australian kangaroo." Has not reality confirmed this statement?

* *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1965, p. 13.

[ASIA IS A NEW SOURCE OF WORLD REVOLUTIONARY STORMS]*

The opportunists had scarcely had their fill of praising "social peace" and the needlessness of storms under "democracy" when a new source of great world storms opened up in Asia. The Russian Revolution was followed by the Turkish, the Persian and the Chinese revolutions. It is in this era of storms and their "repercussion" in Europe that we are now living. Whatever may be the fate of the great Chinese Republic, against which the various "civilized" hyenas are now gnashing their teeth, no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia, or wipe out the heroic democracy of the masses of the people in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries.

Certain people who were inattentive to the conditions of preparation and development of the mass struggle were driven to despair and to anarchism by the prolonged postponements of the decisive struggle against capitalism in Europe. We

* Title supplied by *Hongqi*.

can now see how short-sighted and craven this anarchist despair is.

The fact that Asia, with its population of eight hundred million, has been drawn into the struggle for these same European ideals should inspire us with courage and not despair.

The Asiatic revolutions have revealed the same spinelessness and baseness of liberalism, the same exceptional importance of the independence of the democratic masses, and the same sharp demarcation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of all kinds. After the experience both of Europe and Asia, whoever now speaks of *non*-class politics and of *non*-class Socialism simply deserves to be put in a cage and exhibited alongside of the Australian kangaroo.

After Asia, Europe has also begun to stir, although not in the Asiatic way. The "peaceful" period of 1872-1904 has passed completely, never to return. The high cost of living and the oppression of the trusts is leading to an unprecedented intensification of the economic struggle, which has aroused even the British workers, who have been most corrupted by liberalism. Before our eyes a political crisis is brewing even in that extreme "diehard", bourgeois-Junker country, Germany. Feverish arming and the policy of imperialism are turning modern Europe into a "social peace" which is more like a barrel of gunpowder than anything else. And at the same time the decay of *all* the bourgeois parties and the maturing of the proletariat is steadily progressing.

Each of the three great periods of world history since the appearance of Marxism has brought for it new confirmation

and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat, in the period of history that we are now entering.

First published on March 1, 1913 Excerpts from V. I. Lenin, "The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XVIII, pp. 346-47.

THE AWAKENING OF ASIA

Was it so long ago that China was considered a typical land of age-old unmitigated stagnation? Today China is a land of seething political activity, the scene of a virile social movement and of a democratic upsurge. Following the 1905 movement in Russia, the democratic revolution spread to the whole of Asia — to Turkey, Persia, China. Ferment is growing in British India.

A significant development is the spread of the revolutionary democratic movement to the Dutch East Indies, to Java and the other Dutch colonies with their population of some 40 million.

It is being carried forward, first, by the popular masses of Java, among whom a nationalist movement has arisen under the banner of Islam. Second, by a native intelligentsia brought into being by the development of capitalism. It consists of acclimatized Europeans who demand independence for the Dutch East Indies. Third, by the fairly large Chinese population in Java and the other islands, which brought over the revolutionary movement from their native land.

Describing this awakening of the Dutch East Indies, van Ravesteijn, the Dutch Marxist, points out that the age-old despotism and tyranny of the Dutch Government now meet with resolute resistance and protest from the masses of the native population.

The usual events of a pre-revolutionary period have begun: Unions and parties are being founded at amazing speed. The government is banning them, thereby only fanning the resentment and accelerating the growth of the movement. Recently, for example, it dissolved the "Indian Party"¹ because its constitution and programme spoke of the striving for *independence*. The Dutch Derzhimordas² (with the approval, incidentally, of the clericals and liberals — European liberalism is rotten to the core!) regarded this clause as a criminal attempt at separation from the Netherlands! The dissolved party was, of course, revived under a different name.

A National Union of the native people has been formed in Java. It already has a membership of 80,000 and is holding mass meetings. There is no stopping the growth of the democratic movement.

World capitalism and the 1905 movement in Russia have finally aroused Asia. Hundreds of millions of the downtrodden and benighted have awakened from medieval stagnation to a new life and are rising to fight for elementary human rights and democracy.

The workers of the advanced countries follow with interest and inspiration this powerful growth of the liberation movement, in all its various forms, in every part of the world. The bourgeoisie of Europe, scared by the might of the labour movement, is throwing itself into the arms of the forces of reaction, militarism, clericalism and obscurantism. But the proletariat of the European countries and the young

democracy of Asia, fully confident of its strength and with abiding faith in the masses, are advancing to take the place of this decadent and moribund bourgeoisie.

The awakening of Asia and the beginning of the struggle for power by the advanced proletariat of Europe are symbols of the new phase in world history that began early this century.

First published on May 7, 1913

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XIX, pp. 65-66.

BACKWARD EUROPE AND ADVANCED ASIA

The conjunction of these words seems paradoxical. Who does not know that Europe is advanced and Asia backward? But the words taken for the title for this article contain a bitter truth.

In civilized and advanced Europe, with its brilliantly developed machine industry, its rich all-round culture and its constitutions, a historical moment has been reached when the commanding bourgeoisie, out of fear for the growth and increasing strength of the proletariat, is supporting everything backward, moribund and medieval. The moribund bourgeoisie is combining with all obsolete and obsolescent forces in an endeavour to preserve tottering wage slavery.

Advanced Europe is commanded by a bourgeoisie which supports everything backward. In our day Europe is advanced not *thanks to*, but *in spite of* the bourgeoisie, for the proletariat alone is adding to the million-strong army of fighters for a better future, it alone is preserving and propagating implacable enmity towards backwardness, savagery, privilege, slavery and the humiliation of man by man.

In "advanced" Europe, the *sole advanced* class is the proletariat. The living bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is

prepared to go to any length of savagery, brutality and crime in order to preserve perishing capitalist slavery.

And a more striking example of this decay of the *entire* European bourgeoisie can scarcely be cited than the support it is lending to *reaction* in Asia for the sake of the selfish aims of the financial manipulators and capitalist swindlers.

Everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength. There the bourgeoisie is *still* siding with the people against reaction. *Hundreds* of millions of people are awakening to life, light and liberty. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy! What sympathy for young Asia imbues all honest democrats!

And "advanced" Europe? It is plundering China and helping the foes of democracy, the foes of liberty in China!

Here is a simple but instructive little calculation. The new Chinese loan has been concluded *against* Chinese democracy: "Europe" is *for* Yuan Shih-kai, who is preparing a military dictatorship. Why is it for him? Because it is profitable business. The loan has been concluded for a sum of about 250,000,000 rubles, at the rate of 84 per 100. That means that the bourgeois of "Europe" will *pay* the Chinese 210,000,000 rubles, but will take from the public 225,000,000 rubles. There you have at one stroke a pure profit of *fifteen million rubles* in a few weeks! "*Pure*" profit, indeed, is it not?

But what if the Chinese people do not recognize the loan? China, after all, is a republic, and the majority in parliament are *against* the loan.

Oh, then "advanced" Europe will cry "civilization", "order", "culture" and "fatherland"! Then it will set the *guns* in motion and crush the republic of "backward" Asia, in alliance with the adventurer, traitor and friend of reaction, Yuan Shih-kai!

All commanding forces of Europe, all the European bourgeoisie is *in alliance* with all the forces of reaction and medievalism in China.

But all young Asia, that is, the hundreds of millions of toilers in Asia, have a reliable ally in the proletariat of all the civilized countries. No force on earth can prevent its victory, which will liberate both the peoples of Europe and the peoples of Asia.

First published on May 18, 1913

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th
Russian edition, Vol. XIX, pp. 77-
78.

**[THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST ARE
PARTICIPATING IN DECIDING THE DESTINY
OF THE WHOLE WORLD]***

We know that the popular masses of the East will rise as independent participants, as builders of a new life, because hundreds of millions of people in the East belong to dependent, under-privileged nations, which until now have been objects of international imperialist policy, and which have existed only as manure for capitalist culture and civilization. And when they talk of handing out mandates for colonies, we know very well that it means handing out mandates for spoliation and plunder—handing out to an insignificant section of the world's population the right to exploit the majority of the population of the globe. That majority, which before had been completely outside the orbit of historical progress, because it could not represent an independent revolutionary force, ceased, as we know, to play that passive role at the beginning of the twentieth century. We know that 1905 was followed by revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China, and that a revolutionary movement developed

* Title supplied by *Hongqi*.

in India. The imperialist war likewise contributed to the growth of the revolutionary movement, because whole regiments of colonial people had to be involved in the struggle of the European imperialists. The imperialist war aroused the East also and drew its peoples into international politics. Britain and France armed colonial peoples and helped them to familiarize themselves with military technique and up-to-date machines. That knowledge they will use against the imperialist gentry. The period of awakening of the East in the contemporary revolution is being succeeded by a period in which all the Eastern peoples will participate in deciding the destiny of the whole world, and will cease to be simply an object for the enrichment of others. The peoples of the East are becoming alive to the need for practical action, for every nation to take part in shaping the destiny of all mankind.

First published on December 20,
1919

Excerpts from V. I. Lenin, "Address to the Second All-Russian Congress of Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East", *Collected Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XXX, pp. 138-39.

**[THE TOILING MASSES WILL PLAY A VERY
IMPORTANT REVOLUTIONARY ROLE IN
THE COMING PHASES OF THE
WORLD REVOLUTION]***

The labouring masses in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, who make up the vast majority of the world's population, were awakened to political life early in the twentieth century, particularly as a result of the revolutions in Russia, Turkey, Persia and China. The imperialist war of 1914-18 and Soviet power in Russia are converting, once and for all, these masses into an active factor of world politics and in the revolutionary destruction of imperialism, although this is still stubbornly disregarded by the educated philistines of Europe and America, including the leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals. British India stands at the head of these countries, and there the revolution is developing all the more rapidly, on the one hand, as the more considerable becomes the industrial and railway pro-

* Title supplied by *Hongqi*.

letariat and, on the other, as the more savage becomes the terror of the British, who more and more frequently resort to wholesale massacre (Amritsar), public floggings, etc.

.....

I should also like to emphasize here the significance of the movement in the colonies. In this respect we witness in all the old parties, in all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois labour parties of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, the survivals of old sentimental conceptions — they are, forsooth, full of sympathy for the oppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies. The movement in the colonial countries is still regarded as an insignificant national and completely peaceful movement. However, that is not the case. Great changes have taken place in this respect since the beginning of the twentieth century, namely, millions and hundreds of millions — actually the overwhelming majority of the world's population — are now coming out as an independent and active revolutionary factor. And it is perfectly clear that in the impending decisive battles of the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the world's population, originally aimed at national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary role than we expect. It is important to stress that, for the first time in our International, we are moving toward the preparation of this struggle. Of course, in this vast sphere the difficulties are much greater, but at any rate the movement is advancing and the mass of toiling people, the peasants in the colonial countries,

despite the fact that they are still backward, will play a very important revolutionary role in the coming phases of the world revolution.

First published in 1921

Excerpts from V. I. Lenin, "Third Congress of the Communist International, June 22-July 12, 1921", *Collected Works*, 4th Russian edition, Vol. XXXII, pp. 430-31, 457-58.

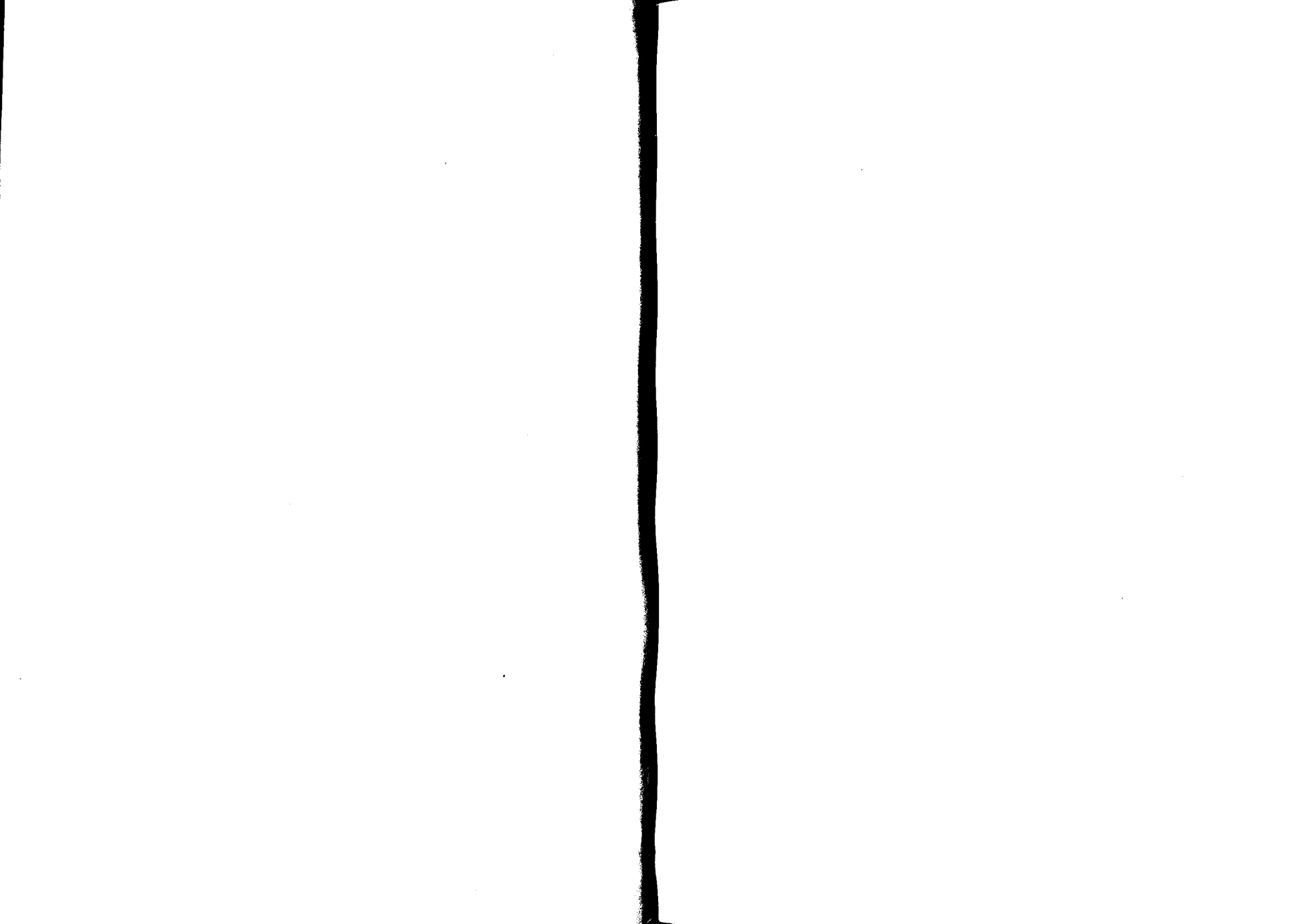
NOTES

¹ This refers to the East-Indies Party.

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² *Derzhimorda* — the name of a policeman and bully in Gogol's *Inspector General*.

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列宁对东方革命风暴的预见

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