

LENIN

On the Development of Heavy Industry and Electrification



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Workers of All Countries, Unite!

V. I. Lenin

**On the Development
of Heavy Industry
and Electrification**



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В. И. ЛЕНИН

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Preface</i>	7
From THE IMPENDING CATASTROPHE AND HOW TO COMBAT IT	9
Can We Go Forward If We Fear to Advance Towards Socialism?	9
The Struggle Against Economic Chaos—and the War	12
The Revolutionary Democrats and the Revolutionary Proletariat	15
From ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE ARTICLE "THE IM- MEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT"	19
Chapter X	19
From THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERN- MENT	23
Raising the Productivity of Labour	23
The Organisation of Competition	25
"Harmonious Organisation" and Dictatorship	29
DRAFT PLAN OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORK	39
From "LEFT-WING" CHILDISHNESS AND THE PETTY- BOURGEOIS MENTALITY	41
IV	41
EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.). <i>March 18-23, 1919</i>	45
From Report on Work in the Countryside. <i>March 23</i>	45
TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY. <i>December 26, 1919</i>	48
TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY. <i>January 23, 1920</i>	49
From REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS DELIVERED AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, SEVENTH CONVOCATION. <i>February 2, 1920</i>	51
IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS PUT BY A CORRESPONDENT OF THE <i>DAILY EXPRESS</i>	54
SPEECH AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF ADULT EDUCATION DIVISIONS OF	

GUBERNIA EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS. <i>February 25, 1920</i>	56
TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY. <i>March 14, 1920</i>	61
SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST (INAUGURAL) ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF MINEWORKERS	63
From PRELIMINARY DRAFT THESES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION. <i>For the Second Congress of the Communist International</i>	70
From THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES. <i>Speech Delivered at the Third All-Russia Congress of the Russian Young Communist League. October 2, 1920</i>	72
From OUR FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POSITION AND THE TASKS OF THE PARTY. <i>Speech Delivered to the Moscow Gubernia Conference of the R.C.P.(B.). November 21, 1920</i>	74
TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY. <i>Late in December 1920</i>	80
TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY. <i>December 1920</i>	82
THE EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS. <i>December 22-29, 1920</i>	84
1. From Report of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars on the Home and Foreign Policy. <i>December 22</i>	84
2. Draft Resolution on the Report on Electrification	90
3. Draft Resolution of the R.C.P.(B.) Group of the Eighth Congress of Soviets	92
INTEGRATED ECONOMIC PLAN	93
TENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.). <i>March 8-16, 1921</i>	102
From Report on Party Unity and the Anarcho-Syndicalist Deviation. <i>March 16</i>	102
TO COMRADE KRZHIZHANOVSKY, THE PRESIDIUM OF THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION	103
INSTRUCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF LABOUR AND DEFENCE TO LOCAL SOVIET BODIES. <i>Draft</i>	107
<i>First Group of Questions</i>	113
1. Commodity Exchange with the Peasantry	113
2. The State's Attitude to the Capitalists	114
3. Encouragement of Enterprise in Commodity Exchange, and in Economic Development in General	115
4. Co-ordination of the Economic Work of Various Departments in the Local Administrative Areas: Volosts, Uyezds and Gubernias	116
5. Improvement of the Condition of the Workers and	117
6. Ditto of the Peasants	117
7. Increasing the Number of Government Officials in Economic Development	117
8. Methods and Results of Combating Bureaucratic Practices and Red Tape	119

<i>Second Group of Questions</i>	120
9. Revival of Agriculture: a) Peasant Farming; b) State Farms; c) Communes; d) Artels; e) Co-operatives; f) Other Forms of Collective Farming	120
10. Revival of Industry: a) Large-Scale Industry Entirely Controlled by the Centre; b) Large-Scale Industry Controlled Wholly or Partly by Local Bodies; c) Small, Handicraft, Domestic, etc., Industries	120
11. Fuel: a) Firewood; b) Coal; c) Oil; d) Shale; e) Other Types of Fuel (Waste Fuel, etc.)	121
12. Food Supplies	121
13. Building Industry	121
14. Model and Hopeless Enterprises and Establishments	122
15. Improvement in Economic Work	122
16. Bonuses in Kind	122
17. The Trade Unions. Their Part in Production	123
18. Stealing	123
19. Profiteering	124
20. Use of Army Units for Labour	124
21. Labour Service and Labour Mobilisation	125
<i>Third Group of Questions</i>	125
22. Regional and Local Economic Councils	125
23. Gosplan (the State General Planning Commission of the C.L.D.) and Its Relationships with Local Economic Bodies	125
24. Electrification	126
25. Commodity Exchange with Foreign Countries	126
26. Railway, Water and Local Transport	127
27. Press Publicity for Economic Work	127
<i>Fourth Group of Questions</i>	127
TENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.). <i>May 26-28, 1921</i>	129
Report on the Tax in Kind. <i>May 26</i>	129
THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL. <i>June 22-July 12, 1921</i>	144
1. From Theses for a Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P. 9. The Material Basis of Socialism and the Plan for the Electrification of Russia	144
2. From Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P. <i>July 5</i>	146
TO THE PRESIDIUM OF THE EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS	149
SEVENTH MOSCOW GUBERNIA CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY. <i>October 29-31, 1921</i>	151
1. From Report on the New Economic Policy. <i>October 29</i>	151
2. Closing Speech. <i>October 29</i>	159
From THE THESES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION ADOPTED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE	166

INSTRUCTIONS BY THE NINTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS ON QUESTIONS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. <i>December 28, 1921</i>	168
PREFACE TO I. I. STEPANOV'S <i>THE ELECTRIFICATION OF THE R.S.F.S.R. AND THE TRANSITIONAL PHASE OF WORLD ECONOMY</i>	171
LETTER TO THE FIFTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS	173
FIVE YEARS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE PROSPECTS OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION. <i>Report to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. November 13, 1922</i>	175
From BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER	189
<i>Notes</i>	194

PREFACE

This book consists of V. I. Lenin's articles, speeches and letters containing his most important propositions on the role and significance of large-scale industry and electrification in building socialism and communism.

In September 1917, a month before the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, Lenin wrote in his article "The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It", which opens this book, that the victorious proletariat of Russia would be faced with the task of effecting a transition to a superior mode of production, to socialism, with the task of overtaking and outstripping the advanced capitalist countries economically.

Upon the establishment of Soviet power in the country, Lenin drew up a scientific plan of transforming backward Russia into a mighty socialist state. He attached the greatest importance to large-scale machine industry in the matter of reorganising the entire national economy along socialist lines. Industry producing means of production, heavy industry, Lenin wrote, was the basis of socialism. Since raising the productivity of labour was, in the last analysis, the principal thing necessary for the victory of a new social system, communism, Lenin emphasised that a steady technological progress and the raising of labour productivity, based on it, first of all required that the material basis of large-scale industry be assured, namely, the development of the production of fuel, iron, the engineering and other industries.

Lenin wrote that the development of heavy industry was the key to the socialist reconstruction of agriculture and

an essential condition for a vigorous development of its productive forces.

He attached great importance to heavy industry in securing the country's technological and economic independence and in strengthening its defensive potential. Unless we restored heavy industry and further developed it, Lenin wrote, "we shall not be able to build up an industry at all; and without an industry we shall go under as an independent country". (P. 183 of this book.)

Lenin explained the need for setting a rapid pace in the development of large-scale industry and pointed out the ways of accumulating funds for the socialist industrialisation of the country, stressing the importance of the strictest economy..

In a number of articles included in this book Lenin also showed the importance of electrification in building up a material and technical basis of socialism and communism. He wrote: "A large-scale machine industry capable of reorganising agriculture is the only material basis that is possible for socialism. But we cannot confine ourselves to this general thesis. It must be made more concrete. Large-scale industry based on the latest achievements of technology and capable of reorganising agriculture implies the electrification of the whole country." (P. 144.)

Lenin also emphasised the great international significance of the Soviet Union's experience in socialist industrialisation and electrification. "...If Russia is covered with a dense network of electric power stations and powerful technical installations, our communist economic development will become a model for a future socialist Europe and Asia." (P. 89.)

From THE IMPENDING CATASTROPHE AND HOW TO COMBAT IT¹

CAN WE GO FORWARD IF WE FEAR TO ADVANCE TOWARDS SOCIALISM?

What has been said so far may easily arouse the following objection on the part of a reader who has been brought up on the current opportunist ideas of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.² Most measures described here, he may say, are *already* in effect socialist and not democratic measures!

This current objection, one that is usually raised (in one form or another) in the bourgeois, Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press, is a reactionary defence of backward capitalism, a defence decked out in a Struvean³ garb. It seems to say that we are not ripe for socialism, that it is too early to "introduce" socialism, that our revolution is a bourgeois revolution and therefore we must be the menials of the bourgeoisie (although the great bourgeois revolutionaries in France 125 years ago made their revolution a great revolution by exercising *terror* against all oppressors, landowners and capitalists alike!).

The pseudo-Marxist lackeys of the bourgeoisie, who have been joined by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and who argue in this way, do not understand (as an examination of the theoretical basis of their opinion shows) what imperialism is, what capitalist monopoly is, what the state is and what revolutionary democracy is. For anyone who understands this is bound to admit that there can be no advance except towards socialism.

Everybody talks about imperialism. But imperialism is merely monopoly capitalism.

That capitalism in Russia has also become monopoly capitalism is sufficiently attested by the examples of the Produgol, the Prodamet, the Sugar Syndicate, etc. This

Sugar Syndicate is an object-lesson in the way monopoly capitalism develops into state-monopoly capitalism.

And what is the state? It is an organisation of the ruling class—in Germany, for instance, of the Junkers and capitalists. And therefore what the German Plekhanovs (Scheidemann, Lensch, and others) call “war-time socialism” is in fact war-time state-monopoly capitalism, or, to put it more simply and clearly, war-time penal servitude for the workers and war-time protection for capitalist profits.

Now try to *substitute* for the Junker-capitalist state, for the landowner-capitalist state, a *revolutionary-democratic* state, i.e., a state which in a revolutionary way abolishes *all* privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, and more than one step, towards socialism!

For if a huge capitalist undertaking becomes a monopoly, it means that it serves the whole nation. If it has become a state monopoly, it means that the state (i. e., the armed organisation of the population, the workers and peasants above all, provided there is *revolutionary* democracy) directs the whole undertaking. In whose interest?

Either in the interest of the landowners and capitalists, in which case we have not a revolutionary-democratic, but a reactionary-bureaucratic state, an imperialist republic.

Or in the interest of revolutionary democracy—and then *it is a step towards socialism.*

For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. Or, in other words, socialism is merely state-capitalist monopoly *which is made to serve the interests of the whole people* and has to that extent *ceased* to be capitalist monopoly.

There is no middle course here. The objective process of development is such that it is *impossible* to advance from *monopolies* (and the war has magnified their number, role and importance tenfold) without advancing towards socialism.

Either we have to be revolutionary democrats in fact, in which case we must not fear to take steps towards socialism. Or we fear to take steps towards socialism, condemn them in the Plekhanov, Dan or Chernov⁴ way, by arguing that our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, that socialism

cannot be "introduced", etc., in which case we inevitably sink to the level of Kerensky, Milyukov and Kornilov,⁵ i. e., we in a *reactionary-bureaucratic* way suppress the "revolutionary-democratic" aspirations of the workers and peasants.

There is no middle course.

And therein lies the fundamental contradiction of our revolution.

It is impossible to stand still in history in general, and in war-time in particular. We must either advance or retreat. It is *impossible* in twentieth-century Russia, which has won a republic and democracy in a revolutionary way, to go forward without *advancing* towards socialism, without taking *steps* towards it (steps conditioned and determined by the level of technology and culture: large-scale machine production cannot be "introduced" in peasant agriculture nor abolished in the sugar industry).

But to fear to advance *means* retreating—which the Kerenskys, to the delight of the Milyukovs and Plekhanovs, and with the foolish assistance of the Tseretelis and Chernovs, are actually doing.

The dialectics of history is such that the war, by extraordinarily expediting the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly capitalism, has *thereby* extraordinarily advanced mankind towards socialism.

Imperialist war is the eve of socialist revolution. And this not only because the horrors of the war give rise to proletarian revolt—no revolt can bring about socialism unless the economic conditions for socialism are ripe—but because state-monopoly capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for socialism, the *threshold* of socialism, a rung on the ladder of history between which and the rung called socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*.

* * *

Our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks approach the question of socialism in a doctrinaire way, from the standpoint of a doctrine learnt by heart but poorly understood. They picture socialism as some remote, unknown and dim future.

But socialism is now gazing at us from all the windows of modern capitalism: socialism is outlined directly, *practically*,

by every important measure that constitutes a forward step on the basis of this modern capitalism.

What is universal labour conscription?

It is a step forward on the basis of modern monopoly capitalism, a step towards the regulation of economic life as a whole, in accordance with a certain general plan, a step towards the economy of national labour and towards the prevention of its senseless wastage by capitalism.

In Germany it is the Junkers (landowners) and capitalists who are introducing universal labour conscription, and therefore it inevitably becomes war-time penal servitude for the workers.

But take the same institution and think over its significance in a revolutionary-democratic state. Universal labour conscription, introduced, regulated and directed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, will *still not* be socialism, but it will *no longer* be capitalism. It will be a tremendous *step towards* socialism, a step from which, if complete democracy is preserved, there can no longer be any retreat back to capitalism, without unparalleled violence being committed against the masses.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ECONOMIC CHAOS—AND THE WAR

A consideration of the measures to avert the impending catastrophe brings us to another supremely important question, namely, the connection between home and foreign policy, or, in other words, the relation between a war of conquest, an imperialist war, and a revolutionary, proletarian war, between a criminal predatory war and a just democratic war.

All the measures to avert catastrophe we have described would, as we have already stated, greatly enhance the defence potential, or, in other words, the military might of the country. That, on the one hand. On the other hand, these measures cannot be put into effect without turning the war of conquest into a just war, turning the war waged by the capitalists in the interests of the capitalists into a war waged by the proletariat in the interests of all the working and exploited people.

And, indeed, nationalisation of the banks and syndicates, taken in conjunction with the abolition of commercial

secrecy and the establishment of workers' control over the capitalists, would not only imply a tremendous saving of national labour, the possibility of economising forces and means, but would also imply an improvement in the conditions of the working masses, of the majority of the population. As everybody knows, economic organisation is of decisive importance in modern warfare. Russia has enough grain, coal, oil and iron; in this respect, we are in a better position than any of the belligerent European countries. And given a struggle against economic chaos by the measures indicated above, enlisting popular initiative in this struggle, improving the people's conditions, and nationalising the banks and syndicates, Russia could use her revolution and her democracy to raise the whole country to an incomparably higher level of economic organisation.

If instead of the "coalition" with the bourgeoisie, which is hampering every measure of control and sabotaging production, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had in April effected the transfer of power to the Soviets and had directed their efforts not to playing at "ministerial leapfrog", not to bureaucratically occupying, side by side with the Cadets, ministerial, deputy-ministerial and similar posts, but to guiding the workers and peasants in *their* control *over* the capitalists, in their *war against* the capitalists, Russia would now be a country completely transformed economically, with the land in the hands of the peasants, and with the banks nationalised, i.e., would *to that extent* (and these are extremely important economic bases of modern life) be *superior* to all other capitalist countries.

The defence potential, the military might, of a country whose banks have been nationalised is *superior* to that of a country whose banks remain in private hands. The military might of a peasant country whose land is in the hands of peasant committees is *superior* to that of a country whose land is in the hands of landowners.

Reference is constantly being made to the heroic patriotism and the miracles of military valour performed by the French in 1792-93. But the material, historical economic conditions which alone made such miracles possible are forgotten. The suppression of obsolete feudalism in a really revolutionary way, and the introduction throughout the country of a superior mode of production and free

peasant land tenure, effected, moreover, with truly revolutionary-democratic speed, determination, energy and devotion—such were the material, economic conditions which with “miraculous” speed saved France by *regenerating* and *renovating* her economic foundation.

The example of France shows one thing, and one thing only, namely, that to render Russia capable of self-defence, to obtain in Russia, too, “miracles” of mass heroism, all that is obsolete must be swept away with “Jacobin” ruthlessness and Russia renovated and regenerated *economically*. And in the twentieth century this cannot be done merely by sweeping tsarism away (France did not confine herself to this 125 years ago). It cannot be done even by the mere revolutionary abolition of the landed estates (we have not even done that, for the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have betrayed the peasants), by the mere transfer of the land to the peasants. For we are living in the twentieth century, and mastery over the land *without mastery over the banks* cannot regenerate and renovate the life of the people.

The material, industrial renovation of France at the end of the eighteenth century was associated with a political and spiritual renovation, with the dictatorship of revolutionary democrats and the revolutionary proletariat (from which the democrats had not dissociated themselves and with which they were still almost fused), and with a ruthless war declared on everything reactionary. The whole people, and especially the masses, i.e., the *oppressed* classes, were swept up by boundless revolutionary enthusiasm; *everybody* considered the war a just war of defence, as it *actually was*. Revolutionary France was defending herself against reactionary monarchist Europe. It was not in 1792-93, but many years later, *after* the victory of reaction within the country, that the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of Napoleon turned France's wars from defensive wars into wars of conquest.

And what about Russia? We continue to wage an imperialist war in the interests of the capitalists, in alliance with the imperialists and in accordance with the secret treaties the *tsar* concluded with the capitalists of Britain and other countries, promising the Russian capitalists in these treaties the spoliation of foreign lands, of Constantinople, Lvov, Armenia, etc.

The war will remain an unjust, reactionary and predatory war on Russia's part as long as she does not propose a just peace and does not break with imperialism. The social character of the war, its true meaning, is not determined by the position of the enemy troops (as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks think, stooping to the vulgarity of an ignorant yokel). What determines this character is the *policy* of which the war is a continuation ("war is the continuation of politics"), the *class* that is waging the war, and the aims for which it is waging this war.

You cannot lead the people into a predatory war in accordance with secret treaties and expect them to be enthusiastic. The foremost class in revolutionary Russia, the proletariat, is becoming increasingly aware of the criminal character of the war, and not only have the bourgeoisie been unable to shatter this popular conviction, but, on the contrary, awareness of the criminal character of the war is growing. The proletariat of *both metropolitan cities* of Russia has definitely become internationalist!

How, then, can you expect mass enthusiasm for the war!

One is inseparable from the other—home policy is inseparable from foreign policy. The country cannot be made capable of self-defence without the supreme heroism of the people in boldly and resolutely carrying out great economic transformations. And it is impossible to arouse popular heroism without breaking with imperialism, without proposing a democratic peace to all nations, and without thus turning the war from a criminal war of conquest and plunder into a just, revolutionary war of defence.

Only a thorough and consistent break with the capitalists in both home and foreign policy can save our revolution and our country, which is gripped in the iron vice of imperialism.

THE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATS AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT

To be really revolutionary, the democrats of Russia today must march in very close alliance with the proletariat, supporting it in its struggle as the only thoroughly revolutionary class.

Such is the conclusion prompted by an analysis of the means of combating an impending catastrophe of unparalleled dimensions.

The war has created such an immense crisis, has so strained the material and moral forces of the people, has dealt such blows at the entire modern social organisation that humanity must now choose between perishing or entrusting its fate to the most revolutionary class for the swiftest and most radical transition to a superior mode of production.

Owing to a number of historical causes—the greater backwardness of Russia, the unusual hardships brought upon her by the war, the utter rottenness of tsarism and the extreme tenacity of the traditions of 1905⁶—the revolution broke out in Russia earlier than in other countries. The revolution has resulted in Russia catching up with the advanced countries in a few months, as far as her *political* system is concerned.

But that is not enough. The war is inexorable; it puts the alternative with ruthless severity: either perish or overtake and outstrip the advanced countries *economically as well*.

That is possible, for we have before us the experience of a large number of advanced countries, the fruits of their technology and culture. We are receiving moral support from the war protest that is growing in Europe, from the atmosphere of the mounting world-wide workers' revolution. We are being inspired and encouraged by a revolutionary-democratic freedom which is extremely rare in time of imperialist war.

Perish or forge full steam ahead. That is the alternative put by history.

And the attitude of the proletariat to the peasants in such a situation confirms the old Bolshevik concept, correspondingly modifying it, that the peasants must be wrested from the influence of the bourgeoisie. That is the sole guarantee of salvation for the revolution.

And the peasants are the most numerous section of the entire petty-bourgeois mass.

Our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have assumed the reactionary function of keeping the peasants under the influence of the bourgeoisie and leading them to a coalition with the bourgeoisie, and not with the proletariat.

The masses are learning rapidly from the experience of the revolution. And the reactionary policy of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks is meeting with failure: they have been beaten in the Soviets of both Petrograd and Moscow.⁷ A "Left" opposition is growing in both petty-bourgeois-democratic parties. On September 10, 1917, a city conference of the Socialist-Revolutionaries held in Petrograd gave a two-thirds majority to the *Left* Socialist-Revolutionaries, who incline towards an alliance with the proletariat and reject an alliance (coalition) with the bourgeoisie.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks repeat a favourite bourgeois comparison—bourgeoisie and democracy. But, in essence, such a comparison is as meaningless as comparing pounds with yards.

There is such a thing as a democratic bourgeoisie, and there is such a thing as bourgeois democracy; one would have to be completely ignorant of both history and political economy to deny this.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks needed a false comparison to *conceal* the indisputable fact that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat stand the *petty bourgeoisie*. By virtue of their economic class status, the latter inevitably vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are trying to draw the petty bourgeoisie into an alliance with the bourgeoisie. That is the whole meaning of their "coalition", of the coalition cabinet, and of the whole policy of Kerensky, a typical semi-Cadet. In the six months of the revolution this policy has suffered a complete fiasco.

The Cadets are full of malicious glee. The revolution, they say, has suffered a fiasco; the revolution has been *unable* to cope either with the war or with economic dislocation.

That is not true. It is the *Cadets*, and the *Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks* who have suffered a fiasco, for this alliance has ruled Russia for six months, only to increase economic dislocation and confuse and aggravate the military situation.

The more complete the fiasco of the *alliance* of the bourgeoisie and the *Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks*, the sooner the people will *learn their lesson*

and the more easily they will find the *correct* way out, namely, the alliance of the peasant poor, i.e., the majority of the peasants, and the proletariat.

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From ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE ARTICLE
"THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE
SOVIET GOVERNMENT"

CHAPTER X

The force of example, which could not be displayed in capitalist society, will be of enormous importance in a society that has abolished private ownership of land and factories, not only because, perhaps, good examples will be followed here, but also because a better example of the organisation of production will be accompanied inevitably by a lightening of labour and an increase in the amount of consumption for those who have carried out this better organisation. And here, in connection with the importance of the press as an organ for the economic reorganisation and re-education of the masses, we must also touch on the importance of the press in organising competition.

The organisation of competition must take a prominent place among the tasks of the Soviet government in the economic sphere. In their criticism of socialism, bourgeois economists have often declared that socialists deny the importance of competition or give it no place in their system or, as the economists express it, in their plan of social organisation. There is no need to say how stupid is this accusation, which has often been refuted in the socialist press. The bourgeois economists, as always, have confused the question of the specific features of capitalist society with the question of a different form of organisation of competition. The socialists' attacks have never been directed against competition as such, but only against market competition. Market competition, however, is a special form of competition characteristic of capitalist society and consisting in a struggle of individual producers for a livelihood and for influence, for a place in the market. The abolition of competition as a struggle of producers that

is connected only with the market does not at all mean the abolition of competition—on the contrary, the abolition of commodity production and capitalism makes it possible to organise competition in its human instead of its bestial forms. It is just at the present time in Russia, in view of the foundations of political power that have been created by the Soviet Republic, and of the economic characteristics of Russia with her vast expanses and tremendous diversity of conditions—it is just now that organisation of competition on a socialist basis in our country should be one of the most important and rewarding tasks in the reorganisation of society.

We are for democratic centralism. And it must be clearly understood how vastly different democratic centralism is from bureaucratic centralism on the one hand, and from anarchism on the other. The opponents of centralism continually put forward autonomy and federation as a means of struggle against the uncertainties of centralism. As a matter of fact, democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy, on the contrary, it presupposes the necessity of it. As a matter of fact, even federation, if carried out within limits that are rational from an economic point of view, if it is based on important national distinctions that give rise to a real need for a certain degree of state separateness—even federation is in no way in contradiction to democratic centralism. Under a really democratic system, and the more so with the Soviet organisation of the state, federation is very often merely a transitional step towards really democratic centralism. The example of the Russian Soviet Republic shows us particularly clearly that federation, which we are introducing and will introduce, is now the surest step towards the most lasting union of the various nationalities of Russia into a single democratic centralised Soviet state.

And just as democratic centralism in no way excludes autonomy and federation, so, too, it in no way excludes, but on the contrary presupposes, the fullest freedom of various localities and even of various communes of the state in developing multifarious forms of state, social and economic life. There is nothing more mistaken than confusing democratic centralism with bureaucracy and routinism. Our task now is to carry out democratic centralism in the economic sphere, to ensure absolute harmony and unity in

the functioning of such economic undertakings as the railways, the postal and telegraph services, other means of transport, and so forth. At the same time, centralism, understood in a truly democratic sense, presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal. The task of organising competition, therefore, has two aspects: on the one hand, it requires the carrying out of democratic centralism as described above, on the other hand, it makes it possible to find the most correct and most economical way of reorganising the economic structure of Russia. In general terms, this way is known. It consists in the transition to large-scale economy based on machine industry, in the transition to socialism. But the concrete conditions and forms of this transition are and must be diverse, depending on the conditions under which the advance aiming at the creation of socialism begins. Local distinctions, specific economic formations, forms of everyday life, the degree of preparedness of the population, attempts to carry out a particular plan—all these are bound to be reflected in the specific features of the path to socialism of a particular labour commune of the state. The greater such diversity—provided, of course, that it does not turn into eccentricity—the more surely and rapidly shall we ensure the achievement of both democratic centralism and a socialist economy. It only remains for us now to organise competition, i.e., to ensure publicity which would enable all communes in the state to learn how economic development has proceeded in various localities; to ensure, secondly, that the results of the advance towards socialism in one commune of the state are comparable with those in another; to ensure, thirdly, that the experience acquired in one commune can be repeated in practice by other communes; to ensure the possibility of an exchange of those material—and human—forces which have done well in any particular sphere of the national economy or of the state administration. Crushed by the capitalist system, we cannot at present even imagine at all accurately what rich forces lie hidden in the mass of the working people, in the diversity of labour communes of a large state, in the forces

of the intelligentsia, who have hitherto worked as lifeless, dumb executors of the capitalists' pre-determined plans, what forces are lying hidden and can reveal themselves given a socialist structure of society. What we have to do is only to clear the way for these forces. If we devote ourselves to the organisation of competition as a matter of state importance, then—provided that Soviet principles of the state system are implemented, provided that private ownership of land, factories, etc., is abolished—the results are inevitably bound to show themselves and will dictate our further forms of construction.

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From THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT⁸

RAISING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOUR

In every socialist revolution, after the proletariat has solved the problem of capturing power, and to the extent that the task of expropriating the expropriators and suppressing their resistance has been carried out in the main, there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system superior to capitalism, namely, raising the productivity of labour, and in this connection (and for this purpose) securing better organisation of labour. Our Soviet state is precisely in the position where, thanks to the victories over the exploiters—from Kerensky to Kornilov—it is able to approach this task directly, to tackle it in earnest. And here it becomes immediately clear that while it is possible to take over the central government in a few days, while it is possible to suppress the military resistance (and sabotage) of the exploiters even in different parts of a great country in a few weeks, the capital solution of the problem of raising the productivity of labour requires, at all events (particularly after a most terrible and devastating war), several years. The protracted nature of the work is certainly dictated by objective circumstances.

The raising of the productivity of labour first of all requires that the material basis of large-scale industry shall be assured, namely, the development of the production of fuel, iron, the engineering and chemical industries. The Russian Soviet Republic enjoys the favourable position of having at its command, even after the Brest peace,⁹ enormous reserves of ore (in the Urals), fuel in Western Siberia (coal), in the Caucasus and the South-East (oil), in Central Russia (peat), enormous timber reserves, water power, raw materials for the chemical industry (Karabugaz), etc. The development of these natural resources by methods

of modern technology will provide the basis for the unprecedented progress of the productive forces.

Another condition for raising the productivity of labour is, firstly, the raising of the educational and cultural level of the mass of the population. This is now taking place extremely rapidly, a fact which those who are blinded by bourgeois routine are unable to see; they are unable to understand what an urge towards enlightenment and initiative is now developing among the "lower ranks" of the people thanks to the Soviet form of organisation. Secondly, a condition for economic revival is the raising of the working people's discipline, their skill, the effectiveness, the intensity of labour and its better organisation.

In this respect the situation is particularly bad and even hopeless if we are to believe those who have allowed themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie or by those who are serving the bourgeoisie for their own ends. These people do not understand that there has not been, nor could there be, a revolution in which the supporters of the old system did not raise a howl about chaos, anarchy, etc. Naturally, among the people who have only just thrown off an unprecedentedly savage yoke there is deep and widespread seething and ferment; the working out of new principles of labour discipline by the people is a very protracted process, and this process could not even start until complete victory had been achieved over the landowners and the bourgeoisie.

We, however, without in the least yielding to the despair (it is often false despair) which is spread by the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals (who have despaired of retaining their old privileges), must under no circumstances conceal an obvious evil. On the contrary, we shall expose it and intensify the Soviet methods of combating it, because the victory of socialism is inconceivable without the victory of proletarian conscious discipline over spontaneous petty-bourgeois anarchy, this real guarantee of a possible restoration of Kerenskyism and Kornilovism.

The more class-conscious vanguard of the Russian proletariat has already set itself the task of raising labour discipline. For example, both the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union and the Central Council of Trade Unions have begun to draft the necessary measures and

decrees. This work must be supported and pushed ahead with all speed. We must raise the question of piece-work¹⁰ and apply and test it in practice; we must raise the question of applying much of what is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system; we must make wages correspond to the total amount of goods turned out, or to the amount of work done by the railways, the water transport system, etc., etc.

The Russian is a bad worker compared with people in advanced countries. It could not be otherwise under the tsarist regime and in view of the persistence of the hangover from serfdom. The task that the Soviet government must set the people in all its scope is—learn to work. The Taylor system, the last word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work, the elimination of superfluous and awkward motions, the elaboration of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organisation of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism. We must organise in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our own ends. At the same time, in working to raise the productivity of labour, we must take into account the specific features of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, which, on the one hand, require that the foundations be laid of the socialist organisation of competition, and, on the other hand, require the use of compulsion, so that the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat shall not be desecrated by the practice of a lily-livered proletarian government.

THE ORGANISATION OF COMPETITION

Among the absurdities which the bourgeoisie are fond of spreading about socialism is the allegation that socialists deny the importance of competition. In fact, it is only

socialism which, by abolishing classes, and, consequently, by abolishing the enslavement of the people, for the first time opens the way for competition on a really mass scale. And it is precisely the Soviet form of organisation, by ensuring transition from the formal democracy of the bourgeois republic to real participation of the mass of working people in *administration*, that for the first time puts competition on a broad basis. It is much easier to organise this in the political field than in the economic field; but for the success of socialism, it is the economic field that matters.

Take, for example, a means of organising competition such as publicity. The bourgeois republic ensures publicity only formally; in practice, it subordinates the press to capital, entertains the "mob" with sensationalist political trash and conceals what takes place in the workshops, in commercial transactions, contracts, etc., behind a veil of "trade secrets", which protect "the sacred right of property". The Soviet government has abolished trade secrets¹¹; it has taken a new path; but we have done hardly anything to utilise publicity for the purpose of encouraging economic competition. While ruthlessly suppressing the thoroughly mendacious and insolently slanderous bourgeois press, we must set to work systematically to create a press that will not entertain and fool the people with political sensation and trivialities, but which will submit the questions of everyday economic life to the people's judgement and assist in the serious study of these questions. Every factory, every village is a producers' and consumers' commune, whose right and duty it is to apply the general Soviet laws in their own way ("in their own way", not in the sense of violating them, but in the sense that they can apply them in various forms) and in their own way to solve the problem of accounting in the production and distribution of goods. Under capitalism, this was the "private affair" of the individual capitalist, landowner or kulak. Under the Soviet system, it is not a private affair, but a most important affair of state.

We have scarcely yet started on the enormous, difficult but rewarding task of organising competition between communes, of introducing accounting and publicity in the process of the production of grain, clothes and other things, of transforming dry, dead, bureaucratic accounts into living examples, some repulsive, others attractive. Under the

capitalist mode of production, the significance of individual example, say the example of a co-operative workshop, was inevitably very much restricted, and only those imbued with petty-bourgeois illusions could dream of "correcting" capitalism through the example of virtuous institutions. After political power has passed to the proletariat, after the expropriators have been expropriated, the situation radically changes and—as prominent socialists have repeatedly pointed out—force of example for the first time is able to influence the people. Model communes must and will serve as educators, teachers, helping to raise the backward communes. The press must serve as an instrument of socialist construction, give publicity to the successes achieved by the model communes in all their details, must study the causes of these successes, the methods of management these communes employ, and, on the other hand, must put on the "black list" those communes which persist in the "traditions of capitalism", i.e., anarchy, laziness, disorder and profiteering. In capitalist society, statistics were entirely a matter for "government servants", or for narrow specialists; we must carry statistics to the people and make them popular so that the working people themselves may gradually learn to understand and see how long and in what way it is necessary to work, how much time and in what way one may rest, so that *the comparison of the business results* of the various communes may become a matter of general interest and study, and that the most outstanding communes may be rewarded immediately (by reducing the working day, raising remuneration, placing a larger amount of cultural or aesthetic facilities or values at their disposal, etc.).

When a new class comes on to the historical scene as the leader and guide of society, a period of violent "rocking", shocks, struggle and storm, on the one hand, and a period of uncertain steps, experiments, wavering, hesitation in regard to the selection of new methods corresponding to new objective circumstances, on the other, are inevitable. The moribund feudal nobility avenged themselves on the bourgeoisie which vanquished them and took their place, not only by conspiracies and attempts at rebellion and restoration, but also by pouring ridicule over the lack of skill, the clumsiness and the mistakes of the "upstarts" and the

"insolent" who dared to take over the "sacred helm" of state without the centuries of training which the princes, barons, nobles and dignitaries had had; in exactly the same way the Kornilovs and Kerenskys, the Gotzes and Martovs,¹² the whole of that fraternity of heroes of bourgeois swindling or bourgeois scepticism, avenge themselves on the working class of Russia for having had the "audacity" to take power.

Of course, not weeks, but long months and years are required for a new social class, especially a class which up to now has been oppressed and crushed by poverty and ignorance, to get used to its new position, look around, organise its work and promote its *own* organisers. It is understandable that the Party which leads the revolutionary proletariat has not been able to acquire the experience and habits of large organisational undertakings embracing millions and tens of millions of citizens; the remoulding of the old, almost exclusively agitators' habits is a very lengthy process. But there is nothing impossible in this, and as soon as the necessity for a change is clearly appreciated, as soon as there is firm determination to effect the change and perseverance in pursuing a great and difficult aim, we shall achieve it. There is an enormous amount of organising talent among the "people", i.e., among the workers and the peasants who do not exploit the labour of others. Capital crushed these talented people in thousands; it killed their talent and threw them on to the scrap-heap. We are not yet able to find them, encourage them, put them on their feet, promote them. But we shall learn to do so if we set about it with all-out revolutionary enthusiasm, without which there can be no victorious revolutions.

No profound and mighty popular movement has ever occurred in history without dirty scum rising to the top, without adventurers and rogues, boasters and ranters attaching themselves to the inexperienced innovators, without absurd muddle and fuss, without individual "leaders" trying to deal with twenty matters at once and not finishing any of them. Let the lap-dogs of bourgeois society, from Belorussov¹³ to Martov, squeal and yelp about every extra chip that is sent flying in cutting down the big, old wood. What else are lap-dogs for if not to yelp at the proletarian elephant? Let them yelp. We shall go our way

and try as carefully and as patiently as possible to test and discover real organisers, people with sober and practical minds, people who combine loyalty to socialism with ability without fuss (and in spite of muddle and fuss) to get a large number of people working together steadily and concertedly within the framework of Soviet organisation. *Only* such people, after they have been tested a dozen times, by being transferred from the simplest to the more difficult tasks, should be promoted to the responsible posts of leaders of the people's labour, leaders of administration. We have not yet learned to do this, but we shall learn.

"HARMONIOUS ORGANISATION" AND DICTATORSHIP

The resolution adopted by the recent Moscow Congress of Soviets advanced as the primary task of the moment the establishment of a "harmonious organisation", and the tightening of discipline. Everyone now readily "votes for" and "subscribes to" resolutions of this kind; but usually people do not think over the fact that the application of such resolutions calls for coercion—coercion precisely in the form of dictatorship. And yet it would be extremely stupid and absurdly utopian to assume that the transition from capitalism to socialism is possible without coercion and without dictatorship. Marx's theory very definitely opposed this petty-bourgeois-democratic and anarchist absurdity long ago. And Russia of 1917-18 confirms the correctness of Marx's theory in this respect so strikingly, palpably and imposingly that only those who are hopelessly dull or who have obstinately decided to turn their backs on the truth can be under any misapprehension concerning this. Either the dictatorship of Kornilov (if we take him as the Russian type of bourgeois Cavaignac¹⁴), or the dictatorship of the proletariat—any other choice is *out of the question* for a country which is developing at an extremely rapid rate with extremely sharp turns and amidst desperate ruin created by one of the most horrible wars in history. Every solution that offers a middle path is either a deception of the people by the bourgeoisie—for the bourgeoisie dare not tell the truth, dare not say that they need Kornilov—or an expression of the dull-wittedness of the petty-bourgeois democrats, of the

Chernovs, Tseretelis and Martovs, who chatter about the unity of democracy, the dictatorship of democracy, the general democratic front, and similar nonsense. Those whom even the progress of the Russian Revolution of 1917-18 has not taught that a middle course is impossible, must be given up for lost.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that during every transition from capitalism to socialism, dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons, or along two main channels. Firstly, capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated without the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their advantages of organisation and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor; secondly, every great revolution, and a socialist revolution in particular, even if there is no external war, is inconceivable without internal war, i.e., civil war, which is even more devastating than external war, and involves thousands and millions of cases of wavering and desertion from one side to another, implies a state of extreme indefiniteness, lack of equilibrium and chaos. And of course, all the elements of disintegration of the old society, which are inevitably very numerous and connected mainly with the petty bourgeoisie (because it is the petty bourgeoisie that every war and every crisis ruins and destroys first), are bound to "reveal themselves" during such a profound revolution. And these elements of disintegration *cannot* "reveal themselves" otherwise than in an increase of crime, hooliganism, corruption, profiteering and outrages of every kind. To put these down requires time and *requires an iron hand*.

There has not been a single great revolution in history in which the people did not instinctively realise this and did not show salutary firmness by shooting thieves on the spot. The misfortune of previous revolutions was that the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people, which sustained them in their state of tension and gave them the strength to suppress ruthlessly the elements of disintegration, did not last long. The social, i.e., the class, reason for this instability of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people was the weakness of the proletariat, which *alone* is able (if it is sufficiently numerous, class-conscious and disciplined) to win

over to its side *the majority* of the working and exploited people (the majority of the poor, to speak more simply and popularly) and retain power sufficiently long to suppress completely all the exploiters as well as all the elements of disintegration.

It was this historical experience of all revolutions, it was this world-historic—economic and political—lesson that Marx summed up when he gave his short, sharp, concise and expressive formula: dictatorship of the proletariat. And the fact that the Russian revolution has been correct in its approach to this world-historic task *has been proved* by the victorious progress of the Soviet form of organisation among all the peoples and tongues of Russia. For Soviet power is nothing but an organisational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the advanced class, which raises to a new democracy and to independent participation in the administration of the state tens upon tens of millions of working and exploited people, who by their own experience learn to regard the disciplined and class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat as their most reliable leader.

Dictatorship, however, is a big word, and big words should not be thrown about carelessly. Dictatorship is iron rule, government that is revolutionarily bold, swift and ruthless in suppressing both exploiters and hooligans. But our government is excessively mild, very often it resembles jelly more than iron. We must not forget for a moment that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois element is fighting against the Soviet system in two ways; on the one hand, it is operating from without, by the methods of the Savinkovs, Gotzes, Gegechkoris and Kornilovs, by conspiracies and rebellions, and by their filthy "ideological" reflection, the flood of lies and slander in the Constitutional-Democratic, Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press; on the other hand, this element operates from within and takes advantage of every manifestation of disintegration, of every weakness, in order to bribe, to increase indiscipline, laxity and chaos. The nearer we approach the complete military suppression of the bourgeoisie, the more dangerous does the element of petty-bourgeois anarchy become. And the fight against this element cannot be waged solely with the aid of propaganda and agitation, solely by organising

competition and by selecting organisers. The struggle must also be waged by means of coercion.

As the fundamental task of the government becomes, not military suppression, but administration, the typical manifestation of suppression and compulsion will be, not shooting on the spot, but trial by court. In this respect also the revolutionary people after October 25, 1917 took the right path and demonstrated the viability of the revolution by setting up their own workers' and peasants' courts, even before the decrees dissolving the bourgeois bureaucratic judiciary were passed. But our revolutionary and people's courts are extremely, incredibly weak. One feels that we have not yet done away with the people's attitude towards the courts as towards something official and alien, an attitude inherited from the yoke of the landowners and of the bourgeoisie. It is not yet sufficiently realised that the courts are an organ which enlists precisely the poor, every one of them, in the work of state administration (for the work of the courts is one of the functions of state administration), that the courts are an *organ of the power* of the proletariat and of the poor peasants, that the courts are an instrument for *inculcating discipline*. There is not yet sufficient appreciation of the simple and obvious fact that if the principal misfortunes of Russia at the present time are hunger and unemployment, these misfortunes cannot be overcome by spurts, but only by comprehensive, all-embracing, country-wide organisation and discipline in order to increase the output of bread for the people and bread for industry (fuel), to transport these in good time to the places where they are required, and to distribute them properly; and it is not fully appreciated that, consequently, it is *those* who violate labour discipline at any factory, in any undertaking, in any matter, who are *responsible* for the sufferings caused by the famine and unemployment, that we must know how to find the guilty ones, to bring them to trial and ruthlessly punish them. Where the petty-bourgeois anarchy, against which we must now wage a most persistent struggle, makes itself felt is in the failure to appreciate the economic and political connection between famine and unemployment, on the one hand, and general laxity in matters of organisation and discipline, on the other—in the tenacity of the *small-proprietor*

outlook, namely, I'll grab all I can for myself; the rest can go hang.

In the rail transport service, which perhaps most strikingly embodies the economic ties of an organism created by large-scale capitalism, the struggle between the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and proletarian organisation is particularly evident. The "administrative" elements provide a host of saboteurs and bribe-takers; the best part of the proletarian elements fight for discipline; but among both elements there are, of course, many waverers and "weak" characters who are unable to withstand the "temptation" of profiteering, bribery, personal gain obtained by spoiling the whole apparatus, upon the proper working of which the victory over famine and unemployment depends.

The struggle that has been developing around the recent decree on the management of the railways, the decree which grants individual executives dictatorial powers (or "unlimited" powers), is characteristic. The conscious (and to a large extent, probably, unconscious) representatives of petty-bourgeois laxity would like to see in this granting of "unlimited" (i.e., dictatorial) powers to individuals a departure from the collegiate principle, from democracy and from the principles of Soviet government. Here and there, among Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, a positively hooligan agitation, i.e., agitation appealing to the base instincts and to the small proprietor's urge to "grab all he can", has been developed against the dictatorship decree. The question has become one of really enormous significance. Firstly, the question of principle, namely, is the appointment of individuals, dictators with unlimited powers, in general compatible with the fundamental principles of Soviet government? Secondly, what relation has this case—to this precedent, if you will—to the special tasks of government in the present concrete situation? We must deal very thoroughly with both these questions.

That in the history of revolutionary movements the dictatorship of individuals was very often the expression, the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes has been shown by the irrefutable experience of history. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship of individuals was compatible with bourgeois democracy. On this point,

however, the bourgeois denigrators of the Soviet system, as well as their petty-bourgeois henchmen, always display sleight of hand: on the one hand, they declare the Soviet system to be something absurd, anarchistic and savage, and carefully pass over in silence all our historical examples and theoretical arguments which prove that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy, and what is more, the beginning of a *socialist* form of democracy; on the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than bourgeois democracy and say: personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with your, Bolshevik (i.e., not bourgeois, *but socialist*), Soviet democracy.

These are exceedingly poor arguments. If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state, *that is, coercion*, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances, such as, for example, the legacy of a long and reactionary war and the forms of resistance put up by the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. There is, therefore, absolutely *no* contradiction in principle between Soviet (*that is, socialist*) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individuals. The difference between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship is that the former strikes at the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority, and that it is exercised—*also through individuals*—not only by the working and exploited people, but also by organisations which are built in such a way as to rouse these people to history-making activity. (The Soviet organisations are organisations of this kind.)

In regard to the second question, concerning the significance of individual dictatorial powers from the point of view of the specific tasks of the present moment, it must be said that large-scale machine industry—which is precisely the material source, the productive source, the foundation of socialism—calls for absolute and strict *unity of will*, which directs the joint labours of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. The technical, economic and historical necessity of this is obvious, and all those who have thought about socialism have always regarded it as one of the conditions of socialism. But how can

strict unity of will be ensured? By thousands subordinating their will to the will of one.

Given ideal class-consciousness and discipline on the part of those participating in the common work, this subordination would be something like the mild leadership of a conductor of an orchestra. It may assume the sharp forms of a dictatorship if ideal discipline and class-consciousness are lacking. But be that as it may, *unquestioning subordination* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of processes organised on the pattern of large-scale machine industry. On the railways it is twice and three times as necessary. In this transition from one political task to another, which *on the surface* is totally dissimilar to the first, lies the whole originality of the present situation. The revolution has only just smashed the oldest, strongest and heaviest of fetters, to which the people submitted under duress. That was yesterday. Today, however, the same revolution demands—precisely in the interests of its development and consolidation, precisely in the interests of socialism—that the people *unquestioningly obey the single will* of the leaders of labour. Of course, such a transition cannot be made at one step. Clearly, it can be achieved only as a result of tremendous jolts, shocks, reversions to old ways, the enormous exertion of effort on the part of the proletarian vanguard, which is leading the people to the new ways. Those who drop into the philistine hysterics of *Novaya Zhizn* or *Vperyod*, *Dyelo Naroda* or *Nash Vek*¹⁵ do not stop to think about this.

Take the psychology of the average, ordinary representative of the toiling and exploited masses, compare it with the objective, material conditions of his life in society. Before the October Revolution he did *not* see a single instance of the propertied, exploiting classes making any real sacrifice for him, giving up anything for his benefit. He did *not* see them giving him the land and liberty that had been repeatedly promised him, giving him peace, sacrificing "Great Power" interests and the interests of Great Power secret treaties, sacrificing capital and profits. He saw this only *after* October 25, 1917, when he took it himself by force, and had to defend by force what he had taken, against the Kerenskys, Gotzes, Gegechkoris, Dutovs and Kornilovs. Naturally, for a certain time, all his attention,

all his thoughts, all his spiritual strength, were concentrated on taking a breath, on unbending his back, on straightening his shoulders, on taking the blessings of life that were there for the taking, and that had always been denied him by the now overthrown exploiters. Of course, a certain amount of time is required to enable the ordinary working man not only to see for himself, not only to become convinced, but also to feel that he cannot simply "take", snatch, grab things, that this leads to increased disruption, to ruin, to the return of the Kornilovs. The corresponding change in the conditions of life (and consequently in the psychology) of the ordinary working men is only just beginning. And our whole task, the task of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which is the class-conscious spokesman for the strivings of the exploited for emancipation, is to appreciate this change, to understand that it is necessary, to stand at the head of the exhausted people who are wearily seeking a way out and lead them along the true path, along the path of labour discipline, along the path of co-ordinating the task of arguing at mass meetings *about* the conditions of work with the task of unquestioningly obeying the will of the Soviet leader, of the dictator, *during* the work.

The "mania for meetings" is an object of the ridicule, and still more often of the spiteful hissing of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* people, who see only the chaos, the confusion and the outbursts of small-proprietor egotism. But without the discussions at public meetings the mass of the oppressed could never have changed from the discipline forced upon them by the exploiters to conscious, voluntary discipline. The airing of questions at public meetings is the genuine democracy of the working people, their way of unbending their backs, their awakening to a new life, their first steps along the road which they themselves have cleared of vipers (the exploiters, the imperialists, the landowners and capitalists) and which they want to learn to build themselves, in their own way, for themselves, on the principles of their own *Soviet*, and not alien, not aristocratic, not bourgeois rule. It required precisely the October victory of the working people over the exploiters, it required a whole historical period in which the working people themselves could first of all discuss the new conditions of life and the new tasks, in order to make

possible the durable transition to superior forms of labour discipline, to the conscious appreciation of the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat, to unquestioning obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the Soviet government during the work.

This transition has now begun.

We have successfully fulfilled the first task of the revolution; we have seen how the mass of working people evolved in themselves the fundamental condition for its success: they united their efforts against the exploiters in order to overthrow them. Stages like that of October 1905, February and October 1917 are of world-historic significance.

We have successfully fulfilled the second task of the revolution: to awaken, to raise those very "lower ranks" of society whom the exploiters had pushed down, and who only after October 25, 1917 obtained complete freedom to overthrow the exploiters and to begin to take stock of things and arrange life in their own way. The airing of questions at public meetings by the most oppressed and downtrodden, by the least educated mass of working people, their coming over to the side of the Bolsheviks, their setting up everywhere of their own Soviet organisations—this was the second great stage of the revolution.

The third stage is now beginning. We must consolidate what we ourselves have won, what we ourselves have decreed, made law, discussed, planned—consolidate all this in stable forms of *everyday labour discipline*. This is the most difficult, but the most gratifying task, because only its fulfilment will give us a socialist system. We must learn to combine the "public meeting" democracy of the working people—turbulent, surging, overflowing its banks like a spring flood—with *iron discipline* while at work, with *unquestioning obedience* to the will of a single person, the Soviet leader, while at work.

We have not yet learned to do this.

We shall learn it.

Yesterday we were menaced by the restoration of bourgeois exploitation, personified by the Kornilovs, Gotzes, Dutovs, Gegechkoris and Bogayevskys. We conquered them. This restoration, this very same restoration menaces us today in another form, in the form of the element of petty-

bourgeois laxity and anarchism, or small-proprietor "it's not my business" psychology, in the form of the daily, petty, but numerous sorties and attacks of this element against proletarian discipline. We must, and we shall, vanquish this element of petty-bourgeois anarchy.

Written between
April 13 and 26, 1918

Published on April 28, 1918 in
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to *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 85
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Vol. 27, pp. 257-72

DRAFT PLAN OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORK¹⁶

The Supreme Economic Council should immediately give its instructions to the Academy of Sciences, which has launched a systematic study and investigation of the natural productive forces* of Russia, to set up a number of expert commissions for the speediest possible compilation of a plan for the reorganisation of industry and the economic progress of Russia.

The plan should include :

the rational *distribution* of industry in Russia from the standpoint of proximity to raw materials and the lowest consumption of labour-power in the transition from the processing of the raw materials to all subsequent stages in the processing of semi-manufactured goods, up to and including the output of the finished product;

the rational merging and concentration of industry in a few big enterprises from the standpoint of the most up-to-date large-scale industry, especially trusts;

enabling the present Russian Soviet Republic (excluding the Ukraine and the regions occupied by the Germans) as far as possible to provide itself *independently* with *all* the chief items of raw materials and organise main branches of industry;

special attention to the electrification of industry and transport and the application of electricity to farming, and the use of lower grades of fuel (peat, low-grade coal) for

* N. B. *Publication* of this material must be accelerated to the utmost; a note about this must be sent to the Commissariat for Education, the Printing Workers' Trade Union and the Commissariat for Labour.

the production of electricity, with the lowest possible expenditure on extraction and transport;
water power and wind motors in general and in their application to farming.

Written between
April 18 and 25, 1918

First published on March 4, 1924
in *Pravda* No. 52

Vol. 27, pp. 320-21

From "LEFT-WING" CHILDISHNESS AND THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS MENTALITY

IV

To make things even clearer, let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism. Everybody knows what this example is. It is Germany. Here we have "the last word" in modern large-scale capitalist engineering and planned organisation, *subordinated to Junker-bourgeois imperialism*. Cross out the words in italics, and in place of the militarist, Junker, bourgeois, imperialist *state* put *also a state*, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a *Soviet* state, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the *sum total* of the conditions necessary for socialism.

Socialism is inconceivable without large-scale capitalist engineering based on the latest discoveries of modern science. It is inconceivable without planned state organisation, which keeps tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a unified standard in production and distribution. We Marxists have always spoken of this, and it is not worth while wasting two seconds talking to people who do not understand *even* this (anarchists and a good half of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

At the same time socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is ABC. And history (which nobody, except Menshevik blockheads of the first order, ever expected to bring about "complete" socialism smoothly, gently, easily and simply) has taken such a peculiar course that it *has given birth* in 1918 to two unconnected halves of socialism existing side by side like two future chickens in the single shell of international imperialism. In 1918 Germany and Russia have become the most striking embodiment of the material realisation of the

economic, the productive and the socio-economic conditions for socialism, on the one hand, and the political conditions, on the other.

A successful proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and very easily smash any shell of imperialism (which unfortunately is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of *any...* chicken) and would bring about the victory of world socialism for certain, without any difficulty, or with slight difficulty—if, of course, by “difficulty” we mean difficult on a world-historical scale, and not in the parochial philistine sense.

While the revolution in Germany is still slow in “coming forth”, our task is to study the state capitalism of the Germans, to spare *no effort* in copying it and not shrink from adopting *dictatorial* methods to hasten the copying of it. Our task is to hasten this copying even more than Peter hastened the copying of Western culture by barbarian Russia, and we must not hesitate to use barbarous methods in fighting barbarism. If there are anarchists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (I recall off-hand the speeches of Karelin and Ghe at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee) who indulge in Narcissus-like reflections and say that it is unbecoming for us revolutionaries to “take lessons” from German imperialism, there is only one thing we can say in reply: the revolution that took these people seriously would perish irrevocably (and deservedly).

At present, petty-bourgeois capitalism prevails in Russia, and it is *one and the same road* that leads from it to *both* large-scale state capitalism and to socialism, through *one and the same* intermediary station called “national accounting and control of production and distribution”. Those who fail to understand this are committing an unpardonable mistake in economics. Either they do not know the facts of life, do not see what actually exists and are unable to look the truth in the face, or they confine themselves to abstractly comparing “capitalism” with “socialism” and fail to study the concrete forms and stages of the transition that is taking place in our country. Let it be said in parenthesis that this is the very theoretical mistake which misled the best people in the *Novaya Zhizn* and *Vperyod* camp. The worst and the mediocre of these, owing to their stupidity and spinelessness, tag along behind the bourgeoisie, of

whom they stand in awe. The best of them have failed to understand that it was not without reason that the teachers of socialism spoke of a whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism and emphasised the "prolonged birthpangs" of the new society. And this new society is again an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect concrete attempts to create this or that socialist state.

It is because Russia cannot advance from the economic situation now existing here without traversing the ground which *is common* to state capitalism and to socialism (national accounting and control) that the attempt to frighten others as well as themselves with "evolution towards state capitalism" (*Kommunist*¹⁷ No. 1, p. 8, col. 1) is utter theoretical nonsense. This is letting one's thoughts wander away from the true road of "evolution", and failing to understand what this road is. In practice, it is equivalent to pulling us back to small proprietary capitalism.

In order to convince the reader that this is not the first time I have given this "high" appreciation of state capitalism and that I gave it *before* the Bolsheviks seized power I take the liberty of quoting the following passage from my pamphlet *The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It*, written in September 1917.

"...Try to *substitute* for the Junker-capitalist state, for the landowner-capitalist state, a *revolutionary-democratic* state, i.e., a state which in a revolutionary way abolishes *all* privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way. You will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state-monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, and more than one step, towards socialism!

"...For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly.

"...State-monopoly capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for socialism, the *threshold* of socialism, a rung on the ladder of history between which and the rung called socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*" (pp. 27 and 28).*

Please note that this was written when Kerensky was in power, that we are discussing *not* the dictatorship of the

* See this book, pp. 10, 11.—*Ed.*

proletariat, *not* the socialist state, but the "revolutionary-democratic" state. Is it not clear that the *higher* we stand on this political ladder, *the more completely* we incorporate the socialist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviets, *the less* ought we to fear "state capitalism"? Is it not clear that from the *material*, economic and productive point of view, we are not yet on "the threshold" of socialism? Is it not clear that we cannot pass through the door of socialism without crossing "the threshold" we have not yet reached?

From whatever side we approach the question, only one conclusion can be drawn: the argument of the "Left Communists" about the "state capitalism" which is alleged to be threatening us is an utter mistake in economics and is evident proof that they are complete slaves of petty-bourgeois ideology.

Published on May 9, 10 and 11,
1918 in *Pravda* Nos. 88, 89 and 90
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Vol. 27, pp. 339-42

EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P. (B.)
March 18-23, 1919

From REPORT ON WORK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
MARCH 23

We have so far accomplished only the fundamental task of every socialist revolution—that of defeating the bourgeoisie. That in the main has been accomplished, although an extremely difficult half-year is beginning in which the imperialists of the world are making a last attempt to crush us. We can now say without in the least exaggerating that *they themselves understand that after this half-year their cause will be absolutely hopeless*. Either they take advantage now of our state of exhaustion and defeat us, an isolated country, or we emerge victorious not merely in regard to our country alone. In this half-year, in which the food crisis has been aggravated by a transport crisis, and in which the imperialist powers are endeavouring to attack us on several fronts, our situation is extremely difficult. But *this is the last difficult half-year*. We must continue to mobilise all our forces in the struggle against the external enemy who is attacking us.

But when we speak of the aims of our work in the rural districts, in spite of all the difficulties, and in spite of the fact that our experience has been wholly concerned with the immediate task of crushing the exploiters, we must remember, and never forget, that our aims in the rural districts, in relation to the middle peasant, are entirely different.

All the class-conscious workers—from Petrograd, Ivanovo-Voznesensk or Moscow—who have been to the rural districts related examples of how a number of misunderstandings which appeared to be irremovable, and a number of conflicts which appeared to be very serious, were removed or mitigated when intelligent working men came

forward and spoke, not in the bookish language, but in a language understood by the peasants, when they spoke not as commanders who take the liberty of giving orders without knowing anything of rural life, but as comrades, explaining the situation and appealing to their sentiments as working people against the exploiters. And by such comradesly explanation they accomplished what could not be accomplished by hundreds of others who conducted themselves like commanders and superiors.

That is the spirit that permeates the resolution we are now submitting to you.

I have endeavoured in my brief report to dwell on the underlying principles, on the general political significance of this resolution. I have endeavoured to show—and I should like to think that I have succeeded—that from the point of view of the interests of the revolution as a whole we are making no change of policy, we are not changing the line. The whiteguards and their henchmen are shouting, or will shout, that we are. Let them shout. We do not care. We are pursuing our aims in a most consistent manner. We must transfer our attention from the aim of suppressing the bourgeoisie to the aim of arranging the life of the middle peasant. We must live in peace with him. In a communist society the middle peasants will be on our side only when we alleviate and improve their economic conditions. If tomorrow we could supply one hundred thousand first-class tractors, provide them with fuel, provide them with drivers—you know very well that this at present is sheer fantasy—the middle peasant would say, "I am for the communia" (i.e., for communism). But in order to do that we must first defeat the international bourgeoisie, we must compel them to give us these tractors, or so develop our productive forces as to be able to provide them ourselves. That is the only correct way to pose this question.

The peasant needs the industry of the towns; he cannot live without it, and it is in our hands. If we set about the task properly, the peasant will be grateful to us for bringing him these products, these implements and this culture from the towns. They will be brought to him not by exploiters, not by landowners, but by his fellow-workers, whom he values very highly, but values in a practical manner, for the actual help they give, at the same time

rejecting—and quite rightly rejecting—all domineering and “orders” from above.

First help, and then endeavour to win confidence. If you set about this task correctly, if every step taken by every one of our groups in the uyezds, the volosts, the food procurement groups, and in every other organisation is made properly, if every step of ours is carefully checked from this point of view, we shall gain the confidence of the peasant, and only then shall we be able to proceed farther. What we must now do is to help him and advise him. This will not be the orders of a commander, but the advice of a comrade. The peasant will then be entirely on our side.

This, comrades, is what is contained in our resolution, and this, in my opinion, must become the decision of the Congress. If we adopt this, if it serves to determine the work of all our Party organisations, we shall cope with the second great task before us.

We have learned how to overthrow the bourgeoisie, how to suppress them, and we are proud of the fact. But we have not yet learned how to regulate our relations with the millions of middle peasants, how to win their confidence, and we must frankly admit it. But we have understood the task, we have set it, and we say in all confidence, with full knowledge and determination, that we shall cope with this task—and then socialism will be absolutely invincible. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Published in 1919 in the book
*Eighth Congress of the Russian
Communist Party (Bolsheviks),
Verbatim Report, March 18-23,
1919*

Vol. 29, pp. 212-15

TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY

Gleb Maximilianych,

I was very interested in your report on peat.

Wouldn't you write an article about it in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (and then republish as a pamphlet, or in some journal)?

The question must be discussed in the press.

Here, you should say, are reserves of peat—milliards.

Its heat efficiency.

Its location—near Moscow; *Moscow Region*.

Near Petrograd—as exactly as possible.

Easy to secure (in comparison with coal, combustible slate, etc.).

Use of the labour of the *local* workers and peasants (*even if only four hours a day for a start*).

Here, you say, is the basis for electrification, increasing output *so many times* by using *existing* power stations.

Here is the *most rapid* and *most certain* basis for the restoration of industry—

—organisation of labour in socialist fashion (agriculture + industry);

— a way out of the fuel crisis (we shall release *so many* millions of cubic metres of timber for transport).

Put in the *conclusions* of your report; add a peat map; brief and general calculations. The possibility of building peat machines quickly, etc., etc. Briefly, the essence of the economic programme.

The question must be brought up *immediately* in the press.

Yours,

Lenin

December 26

P. S. In case of necessity, get Winter on the job, but provide the article as soon as you can.

Written on December 26, 1919

First published in
Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn No. 18,
January 22, 1925

Vol. 35, pp 430-31

TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY

Gleb Maximilianovich,

I have received and read the article.¹⁸

Magnificent.

We need *several* such articles. Then we shall publish them as a pamphlet. What we lack is specialists with a wide horizon and "an eye for the future".

It is necessary (1) *for the time being* to cut out the footnotes or reduce them. There are too many of them for a newspaper (I will have a talk with the editor tomorrow).

(2) Would it not be possible to add a *plan*, not a technical one (this, of course, is a job for *many* people, and not to be done in a hurry), but a political or state plan, i.e., a task for the proletariat?

Approximately as follows: in 10 (5?) years let us build 20-30 (30-50?) power stations, in order to cover the whole country with a network of centres of 400 (or 200, if we can't manage more) versts radius; using peat, water, combustible slate, coal, oil (*for example*, make a survey of the whole of Russia, giving *rough* approximations). Let's begin at once buying the necessary machines and models, you say. In 10 (20?) years we'll make Russia "electrical".

I think you could produce such a "plan"—I repeat, not a technical one but a state one—a draft plan.

It must be provided right away, in a visual, popular form, for the masses, so as to carry them forward with a clear and vivid perspective (entirely *scientific* at its foundations): let's set to work, and in 10-20 years we shall make all Russia, both industrial and agricultural, *electrical*. We shall set ourselves the target of having *so many* (thousands or

millions of horse-power or kilowatts?? devil knows what) mechanical slaves and so on.

Could there also be a *tentative* map of Russia with centres and their areas? Or is that not yet possible?

I repeat, we must carry away the *mass* of workers and politically-conscious peasants with a *great* programme for the next 10-20 years.

Let's have a talk on the telephone.

Yours,
Lenin

January 23

P. S. Krasin¹⁹ says that electrification of the railways is impossible for us. Is that true? And if it is, perhaps it will be possible in 5-10 years? Maybe it is possible in the Urals?

Could not a special article be written about a "state plan" for a network of power stations, with a map, or with the approximate list (number) of them, with the prospects of centralising the power of the whole country?

Ring me up on the telephone, please, when you get this letter, and we shall have a talk.

Written on January 23, 1920

First published in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* No. 18, January 22, 1925

Vol. 35, pp. 435-36

From REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE ALL-RUSSIA
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE
COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS DELIVERED
AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
SEVENTH CONVOCATION
FEBRUARY 2, 1920

We must at all costs, without weakening our military readiness, switch the Soviet Republic on to the new course of economic development. This task must be accomplished in the next few weeks, possibly months. Every Soviet or Party organisation must do everything in its power to end the transport dislocation and increase the grain stocks.

Then, and only then, shall we have a basis, a sound basis for industrial development on a wide scale, for the electrification of Russia. In order to prove to the population, and in particular to the peasants, that our extensive plans in this field are not fantasies, but are borne out by and based on technology and science, I think we should adopt a resolution—I hope the Central Executive Committee will endorse it—recommending that the Supreme Economic Council and the Commissariat of Agriculture jointly draft a plan for the electrification of Russia.

Thanks to the aid of the State Publishing House and the energy of the workers at the former Kushnerev Printing Works, now the 17th State Printing Works, I succeeded in getting Krzhizhanovsky's pamphlet *The Main Tasks of the Electrification of Russia* published at very short notice, and tomorrow it will be distributed to all members of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. This pamphlet of Comrade Krzhizhanovsky's, who works in the Electro-Technical Sub-Department of the Supreme Economic Council, summarises what has already been achieved and raises questions, the popularisation of which, not the practical application, is now one of the most important tasks.

I hope that the Central Executive Committee will adopt this resolution which, in the name of the Central Executive

Committee, instructs the Supreme Economic Council and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture to work out in the course of the next few months—our practical tasks during this period will be different—with the aid of scientists and engineers a broad and complete plan for the electrification of Russia. The author of this pamphlet is absolutely correct in choosing as its motto the saying: "The age of steam is the age of the bourgeoisie, the age of electricity is the age of socialism." We must have a new technical foundation for the new economic development. This new technical foundation is electricity, and everything will have to be built on this foundation, but it will take many long years. We shall not be afraid of working ten or twenty years, but we must prove to the peasants that in place of the old separation of industry from agriculture, this very deep contradiction on which capitalism thrived and which sowed dissension between the industrial and agricultural workers, we set ourselves the task of returning to the peasant the loan we received from him in the form of grain, for we know that paper money, of course, is not the equivalent of bread. We must repay this loan by organising industry and supplying the peasants with its products. We must show the peasants that the organisation of industry on the basis of modern, advanced technology, on electrification which will provide a link between town and country, will put an end to the division between town and country, will make it possible to raise the level of culture in the countryside and to overcome, even in the most remote corners of the land, backwardness, ignorance, poverty, disease and barbarism. We shall tackle the problem as soon as we have dealt with our current, basic task, and we shall not allow ourselves to be deflected for a single moment from the fundamental practical task.

In the next few months all our energies must be concentrated on food deliveries and the extension of our resources of food supplies. There must not be the slightest departure from this. At the same time let the scientists and technicians produce a long-term plan for the electrification of all Russia.²⁰ Let the links which we have established with the outside world, with capitalist Europe, that gateway which we made for ourselves by concluding peace with Estonia, serve to provide us immediately with essential technical aid. When, in the next few months, we have solved the basic

problems of transport and food supplies, when we have solved the problem of labour conscription, on which problems we shall wholly concentrate all our energies, not allowing ourselves to be deflected from this by anything else for a few months—when we have accomplished this we shall prove that we can go on with developmental tasks that will last many years and put the whole of Russia on to an advanced technological footing, abolishing the division between town and country, and making it possible to conquer completely and decisively the backwardness of the countryside, its scattered economy and its ignorance, from which stem all the stagnation, all the backwardness, all the oppression that have existed up to now. And in this matter, that of the peaceful struggle on the bloodless front of the reorganisation of industry, we shall, if we employ all our military skill and all our energy, and concentrate all our forces on the fulfilment of this task, achieve success that will be even more decisive, even more glorious, than those we have won in the military field. (Applause.)

Brief report published on February 3, 1920 in *Pravda* No. 23, and in *Izvestia* No. 23

First published in full in 1950 in the Fourth (Russian) Edition of the *Collected Works*, Vol. 30

Vol. 30, pp. 334-36

IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS PUT BY A CORRESPONDENT OF THE "DAILY EXPRESS"

1. What is our attitude towards the raising of the blockade?

We consider it a big step forward. The possibility is being opened for us to pass from a war that was forced on us by the capitalist governments of the Entente to peaceful reconstruction. This is of the greatest importance to us. Straining all our efforts towards the restoration of the economic life of the country, ruined first by the war between capitalists over the Dardanelles and the colonies, then by the war of the capitalists of the Entente and Russia against the workers of Russia, we are now among other measures, working out, with the aid of a number of scientists and experts, a plan of electrification of the whole country. This plan is to be realised over a period of many years. The electrification will rejuvenate Russia. Electrification based on the Soviet system will mean the complete success of the foundations of communism in our country—foundations of a cultured life, without exploiters, without capitalists, without landlords, without merchants.

The raising of the blockade will help to accomplish Russia's electrification.

2. What influence will the Allies' decision to cease offensive action have on the offensive actions of the Soviet power?

The Allies, together with their allies and their lackeys—Kolchak, Denikin, and the capitalists of the surrounding countries—have attacked us. We did not attack anyone. We concluded peace with Estonia even at the cost of material sacrifices.

We are impatiently waiting to see the Allies' "decision" supported by their *deeds*, but the story of the Versailles Peace and of its consequences, unfortunately, indicates that in most cases the Allies' words disagree with their deeds and the decisions remain scraps of paper.

3. Is the present *status quo* satisfactory from the standpoint of Soviet policy?

Yes, because every *status quo* in politics is a transition from old forms to new ones. The present *status quo* is, from many points of view, a transition from war to peace. Such a change is desirable to us for this reason, and insofar do we consider the *status quo* satisfactory.

4. What are our aims in connection with the cessation of hostilities on the part of the Allies?

Our aims, as already mentioned, are peaceful economic building. A detailed plan of it, on the basis of electrification, is being at present worked out by a committee of scientists and technicians—or rather, by a number of committees—in accordance with the resolution of the February (1920) session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

Written on February 18, 1920

Published on February 23, 1920
in the *Daily Express* No. 6198

Vol. 30, pp. 368-69

**SPEECH AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE
OF DIRECTORS OF ADULT EDUCATION DIVISIONS
OF GUBERNIA EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS
FEBRUARY 25, 1920**

Permit me to greet your conference on behalf of the Council of People's Commissars and to share a few ideas with you.

As far as the international situation is concerned, I can tell you of a wireless message received today from Britain which better than anything else typifies it. The message says that yesterday, the twenty-fourth, the Allied Council decided that in the event of the states bordering on Russia asking its advice on policy it would say that it could not advise a war that would probably injure their interests, still less could it advise an aggressive war against Russia; if, however, the Russian Soviet Republic attacked their legitimate frontiers, the Allied Council would give them its support. The Allied gentlemen also want to send to Russia a commission that belongs to the Washington labour committee. The organisers of the conference, social-traitors headed by Albert Thomas,²¹ have agreed on certain social reforms and want to send this crowd, which constitutes part of the League of Nations, to Russia to investigate how far conditions in Russia coincide with the normal requirements of "civilised" states.

The report of yesterday's decision by the Allies shows clearly enough that those gentlemen have got themselves into a mess, and also what benefit we can gain from that mess. They have wasted hundreds of millions (the British Government has) on support for the war and have now announced that they can no longer support it. Their offensive spirit is played out, although they are still delivering war matériel to Poland; they are still delivering armaments and we have authentic information that

Poland is regrouping her forces for an offensive so that we cannot place any great reliance on their announcement. A certain threat still remains, although the external danger from the Allies has diminished by ninety per cent; we shall have to retain our military preparedness after the end of the war against Denikin; we cannot count on full demobilisation.

Nine-tenths of the danger of an attack on Russia by international capitalism has, therefore, disappeared; they have suffered such a thorough collapse that are proposing for the umpteenth time to send a commission to Russia. If that commission is to consist of gentlemen like Albert Thomas, who visited Russia during the war, it will end in nothing but a scandal for them and will be an excellent basis for agitation for us. We'll give them such a welcome that they will leave Russia as quickly as possible and the only gain will be agitation for the workers of other countries. They want to scare us, but when we say we are welcoming them as honoured guests, they will hide this attempt of theirs. That shows the extent to which they are dismayed. We now have a window open on to Europe, thanks to the peace with Estonia, and are able to obtain the basic goods from there. There is, indeed, tremendous progress and improvement in our international situation; nine-tenths of all external danger to the Soviet Republic has been removed.

The more the danger is removed the more shall we be able to get on with our peaceful development, and we expect a lot from you and from your activities in the sphere of adult education. A number of material changes are necessary to put education in schools on a better footing—schools must be built, teachers selected and internal reforms carried out in organising and in selecting the staff. These are all things that require lengthy preparation. You are not hampered by this lengthy preparation in adult education. The demand of the people for an education outside the regular school system and the need for workers in this field are increasing very greatly. We are sure that with the common aid and by our common efforts more will be done than has hitherto been the case.

In conclusion I shall speak about the nature of adult education, which is connected with propaganda and agitation. One of the fundamental faults of education in

the capitalist world was its alienation from the basic task of organising labour, since the capitalist had to train and educate obedient and disciplined workers. There was no connection in capitalist society between the actual tasks of the organisation of social labour and teaching. There was dead, scholastic, routine teaching befouled by the influence of the clergy which everywhere, even in the most democratic republics, functioned in such a way that everything fresh and healthy was compelled to withdraw. Direct, vital work was made difficult because no extensive education was possible without a state apparatus and without material and financial aid. Since we can and must prepare to transfer our entire Soviet life from the path of military training and defence to that of peaceful development it is essential for you, workers in the field of adult education, to take this change into consideration, and your propaganda work, its aims and programme should be made to fit this change.

To show you how I understand the tasks and the entire character of education, of teaching, training and upbringing, in their connection with the changing tasks of the Soviet Republic, I would remind you of the resolution on electrification that was adopted at the last session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee; you are probably all familiar with it. A few days ago there was an announcement in the papers that within two months (in the official printed report it said two weeks, but that was a mistake)—that within two months a plan for the electrification of the country would be elaborated to cover a minimum period of two to three years and a maximum period of ten years. The character of all our propaganda, which includes purely Party propaganda, and school teaching, and adult education, must change, not in the sense that the fundamentals and general direction of teaching should be changed, but in the sense that the character of the work must be adapted to the transition to peaceful development with an extensive plan for the industrial and economic reconstruction of the country, because the general economic difficulty and the general task is the rehabilitation of the country's economic forces so that the proletarian revolution can create the new foundations of economic life side by side with petty peasant economy. Up to now the peasant has been compelled to loan grain to the workers' state; the pieces of coloured paper called money

received in return for grain do not satisfy the peasant. The peasant, being dissatisfied, is demanding his legitimate rights—in exchange for grain he wants the industrial goods that we cannot give him until we have rehabilitated the economy. Rehabilitation—that is the basic task, but we cannot rehabilitate on the old economic and technical basis. This is technically impossible and would be absurd; we have to find a new basis. This new basis is our electrification plan.

We are talking to the peasants, to the mass of less-developed people, showing them that the new transition to a higher stage of culture and technical education is necessary for the success of all Soviet development. And so, it is essential to restore the economy. The most ignorant peasant will understand that the economy has been wrecked by the war and that he cannot overcome poverty and obtain the necessary goods in exchange for grain unless we restore it. All our work in the sphere of propaganda, school and adult education must be linked up closely with this most immediate and urgent need of the peasant in order not to be isolated from the most urgent requirements of our daily life; it should present them and their development in a way the peasant understands; it must be stressed that the way out of the situation is only through the rehabilitation of industry. Industry, however, cannot be rehabilitated on the old basis; it must be rehabilitated on the basis of modern technology, which means the electrification of industry and a higher culture. Electrification takes up to ten years' work, but it is work at a higher cultural and political level.

We shall evolve an extensive plan of work which must, in the minds of the peasantry, have a clearly defined practical aim. This cannot be done in a few months. The minimum programme should cover no less than three years. Without lapsing into utopias we may say that in ten years we shall be able to cover all Russia with a network of power stations and go over to an industry based on electricity that will meet the requirements of modern technology and put an end to the old peasant farming. This, however, requires a higher level of education and culture.

Without hiding from ourselves the fact that the immediate practical task is the restoration of transport and the delivery of food, and that with productivity at its present level we cannot undertake any extensive activities, you must

nevertheless keep in mind and carry out, in the sphere of propaganda and education, the task of full rehabilitation on a basis commensurate with cultural and technical requirements. The old methods of propaganda are outmoded and until recently approached the peasants with general phrases about the class struggle; they served as grounds for the invention of all sorts of nonsense about proletarian culture,²² etc., but we shall very rapidly cure ourselves of all this nonsense which seems very much like an infantile disorder. In propaganda and agitation, and in school and adult education, we shall present the question in a more sober and business-like manner, a manner worthy of the people of Soviet power who have learned something in the course of two years and who will go to the peasants with a practical, business-like and clear-cut plan for the reconstruction of all industry and will demonstrate that with education at its present level the peasant and the worker will not be able to carry out this task and will not escape from filth, poverty, typhus and disease. This practical task is clearly connected with cultural and educational improvements and must serve as the central point around which we must group all our Party propaganda and activities, all our school and extra-mural teaching. This will help to get a sound grasp of the most urgent interests of the peasant masses and will link up the general improvement in culture and knowledge with burning economic requirements to such an extent that we shall increase a hundredfold the demand of the working-class masses for education. We are absolutely certain that if we have solved the difficult war problem in two years, we shall solve a still more difficult problem—the cultural and educational problem—in five to ten years.

These are the ideas I wished to express to you.
(Applause.)

Brief report published on March 2, 1920 in *Vecherniye Izvestia Moskovskogo Soveta Rabochikh i Krasnoarmeiskikh Deputatov* No. 481

First published in full on April 25, 1930 in *Pravda* No. 114

Vol. 30, pp. 374-79

TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY

March 14

Gleb Maximilianovich,

After looking through the statement by the *GOELRO* and thinking over yesterday's talk, I have come to the conclusion that it is *dry*.

It is not enough.

Can't you write, or commission an article from Krug (or someone else) of such a kind as to

prove

or, at any rate, illustrate

a) the tremendous advantage,

b) the *necessity* of electrification.

For example:

I. Transport. To restore in the old way—

we need α millions (at pre-war prices)

or α fuel + β working days.

But to restore it on the basis of electrification

α minus x million rubles

α minus y fuel + (β minus z) working days.

Or also $\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+\beta}$, but with an effect so many times greater than the previous one.

II. Steam power. If industry is restored in the old way, we must spend *more* than for restoring it on the basis of electrification.

III. Agriculture.

To restore, say, +5 million ploughs and teams of horses.

The cost of doing this in the old way, and with electrification?

This is a *rough idea*. I think an intelligent specialist will do this work in a couple of days (if he wants to do it conscientiously), taking either the figures of pre-war

statistics (a few, really a few, summary figures), or a *rough and approximate* calculation ("as a first approximation"²³ *towards a first approximation*).

Commission this. Perhaps you will commission somebody to collect the *material* for you and write the article yourself or *give an interview*. I will send an interviewer. Then we shall have the *warp* for propaganda. And that is important.

After reading this, ring me up on the telephone.

Yours,

Lenin

Written on March 14, 1920

First published in
Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn No. 18,
January 22, 1925

Vol. 35, pp. 440-41

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST (INAUGURAL) ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF MINeworkERS

Comrades, allow me first of all to convey the greetings of the Council of People's Commissars to the First Congress of Mineworkers.

Comrades, this Congress and this whole branch of industry are of the highest importance to the Soviet Republic. You all know, of course, that without the coal industry there would be no modern industry, no factories. Coal is the veritable bread of industry; without it industry comes to a standstill; without it the railways are in a sorry state and can never be restored; without it the large-scale industry of all countries would collapse, fall to pieces and revert to primitive barbarity; today the coal shortage and crisis are having the most dire effects even in the victor countries, even in countries far more advanced than Russia and which have suffered far less in the war. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to us that you, comrades, who have assembled to form a solid, strong, powerful and class-conscious union of mineworkers, should clearly realise the tremendous tasks with which the entire Soviet Republic, the workers' and peasants' government confront this Congress, confront the mineworkers. After two years of desperate struggle against the whiteguards and capitalists, who were supported by the capitalists of the whole world, today, after all the victories we have won, we are again faced with a stern struggle, as severe as the previous one but a more grateful one—the struggle on the bloodless front, on the front of labour.

When, on the bloody front of war, the landowners and capitalists tried to break the Soviet power in Russia, it seemed as if the cause of the Soviet Republic was hopeless, as if Soviet Russia, the weakest, most backward and most

devastated of all countries, would be unable to hold its own against the capitalists of the whole world. The richest powers in the world assisted the Russian whiteguards in this struggle, assigned hundreds of millions of rubles to help them, supplied them with munitions, established special camps abroad for the training of officers—and to this day these recruiting bureaus still exist abroad, where, with the help of the richest capitalists in the world, Russian prisoners of war and volunteers are being recruited for the war against Soviet Russia. It naturally looked as if this was a hopeless undertaking, as if Russia could not hold out against the military powers of the world, who are stronger than we are. Nevertheless, this miracle proved possible; Soviet Russia performed this miracle in two years.

Soviet Russia proved to be the victor in a war against all the richest powers in the world. Why? Not because we were stronger from the military standpoint, of course—that is not the case—but because in the civilised countries there were soldiers who could no longer be deceived, although reams of paper were devoted to proving to them that the Bolsheviks were German agents, usurpers, traitors and terrorists. As a result of this, we find that soldiers returned from Odessa either convinced Bolsheviks or declaring that they “would not fight the workers’ and peasants’ government”. The chief reason for our victory was that the workers of the advanced West-European countries understood and sympathised with the working class of the world so strongly that, despite the lies of the bourgeois press, which in publications issued in millions of copies showered disgusting calumnies on the Bolsheviks—despite all this, the workers were on our side; and this fact determined the issue of our war. Everybody realised that if hundreds of thousands of soldiers had fought against us, as they had fought against Germany, we would not have been able to hold on. This was obvious to anybody who knows what war means. Nevertheless, a miracle happened: we defeated them, they were split owing to their wrangling, and their famous League of Nations turned out to resemble a league of mad dogs who are snatching each other’s bones and cannot come to terms over a single question; however, the number of Bolshevik supporters, direct and indirect, conscious and not altogether so, is growing daily and hourly in every country.

Everybody who sympathises with socialism knows what happened to the Second International: for twenty-five years, from 1889 to 1914, it directed the socialist movement in all countries, but when the imperialist war broke out the socialists of the Second International went over to the side of their governments, each defending his own. All those who called themselves republicans, Socialist-Revolutionaries or Mensheviks, in every country, took the side of their own governments, defended their own fatherland and helped to conceal the secret treaties—did not publish them. The socialists who were considered the leaders of the working class went over to the capitalists, went against the Russian working class. The German Government is headed by the Scheidemann gang, who to this day call themselves Social-Democrats but who are the foulest of butchers; in alliance with the landowners and capitalists, they have murdered the leaders of the German working class, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, and slaughtered fifteen thousand German proletarians. In the period since its foundation a year ago, the Third (Communist) International has gained a complete victory. The Second International has fallen to pieces.

So you see what a strong influence the Soviet power in Russia has had on the workers of the whole world, despite all the lies and calumnies directed against it. The soldiers and workers hold that power should be vested in those who work—he who does not work, shall not eat, but he who does work is entitled to a voice in the state, he can influence matters of state. That is a simple truth, and millions of working-class people have understood it.

You are now faced with a difficult task, namely, to follow up our military victories by a much more difficult victory. This will be all the more difficult because here mere heroism is not enough; here results can be achieved only by persistent work, and years of intense effort will be required.

All over the world the capitalists are mustering labour-power and increasing output. But the workers say in reply, first feed the workers, first put a stop to the wrangling for which the workers pay with their lives, first put an end to the carnage, for millions of people perished in the recent bloodbath to decide whether the British or some other

predators were to rule. As long as power is in the hands of the capitalists we are not thinking of increasing production but of overthrowing them.

But now that the capitalists have been overthrown, prove that you are able to increase productivity without them; refute the lie which the capitalists spread about the class-conscious workers, when they say that this is not a revolution, not a new order, but sheer destruction, mere revenge on the capitalists; they say the workers alone can never organise the country and lead it out of economic chaos, that they will only create anarchy. That is the lie which the capitalists of all countries are spreading in millions of ways, and which non-party people, opponents of the Bolsheviks, are conveying in thousands of ways to Russian workers too, especially to those who are under-educated, have been most corrupted by capitalism or are most ignorant. But if, as we have seen, we have been able, in the two years of Soviet power, to stand up to the whole world, it has been largely due to the heroism of the workers.

We are reproached for having established the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the iron, relentless and firm rule of the workers, which stops at nothing and which says that whoever is not with us is against us, and that the slightest resistance to this rule will be crushed. But we are proud of it and say that were it not for this iron rule of the workers, of this workers' vanguard, we should not have been able to hold out for two months, let alone two years. What this dictatorship has given us is this—every time a difficult situation arose during the war, the Party mobilised Communists, and it was they who were the first to perish in the front ranks; they perished in thousands on the Yudenich and Kolchak fronts. The finest members of the working class perished; they sacrificed themselves, realising that although they perished they would save future generations, that they would save thousands upon thousands of workers and peasants. They ruthlessly pilloried and hounded the self-seekers—those who during the war were concerned only for their own skins—and shot them without mercy. We are proud of this dictatorship, of this iron rule of the workers, which said: "We have overthrown the capitalists and we will lay down our lives to prevent any attempt of theirs to restore their rule." Nobody during these

two years went as hungry as the workers of Petrograd, Moscow and Ivanovo-Voznesensk. It has now been computed that during these two years they received not more than seven poods of bread a year, whereas the peasants of the grain-producing gubernias consumed no less than seventeen poods. The workers have made great sacrifices, they have suffered epidemics, and mortality among them has increased. But they will prove that the workers did not rise up against the capitalists out of vengeance, but with the inflexible determination to create a social system in which there will be no landowners and capitalists. It was for the sake of this that these sacrifices were made. It was only because of these unparalleled sacrifices that were made consciously and voluntarily and were backed up by the discipline of the Red Army, without recourse to old methods of discipline—it was only because of these tremendous sacrifices that the advanced workers were able to maintain their dictatorship and earned the right to the respect of the workers of the whole world. Those who are so eager to slander the Bolsheviks should not forget that the dictatorship entailed the greatest sacrifice and starvation on the part of the workers who were exercising it. During these two years the workers of Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Petrograd and Moscow suffered more than anybody fighting on the Red fronts did.

This is what should be, first and foremost, borne in mind and well remembered by the comrades in the coal industry. You are a vanguard. We are continuing the war—not the bloody war, that, fortunately, is over, nobody will now dare to attack Soviet Russia, because they know that they will be defeated since the class-conscious workers cannot be led against us; they will blow up ports, as they did in Archangel under the British and also in Odessa. This has been proved; this much we have gained. But we are continuing the war, we are nevertheless continuing it as an economic war. It is the speculators we are now fighting, the handful of workers who have been corrupted by the old capitalist system and who say to themselves, "I must have higher pay, and to hell with the rest." "Give me double pay, give me two or three pounds of bread a day," they say, heedless of the fact that they are working for the defence of the workers and peasants, for the defeat of the capitalists. They must be combated by means of comradely education, by comradely

persuasion, and there is nobody to do this except the trade unions. It must be explained to such workers that if they side with the speculators and profiteers, with the rich peasants who say, "the more grain I have the more money I shall make" and "each for himself, and God for all", they will be following the precepts of the capitalist gentry and of all who preserve the old capitalist traditions; they must be told that we regard all who act on the old precepts as apostates and traitors whom the working class must brand and put to shame. There are mostly capitalist countries surrounding us and all over the world they are uniting against us, they are joining forces with our speculators; they want to overthrow us by force, and think they are stronger than we are. We continue to be a besieged fortress towards which the eyes of the world's workers are turned, for they know that their freedom will come from here, and in this besieged fortress we must act with military ruthlessness, with military discipline and self-sacrifice. In the ranks of the workers we cannot tolerate self-seekers who refuse to combine the interests of their group with the interests of the workers and peasants in general.

We must, with the help of the trade unions, create the comradely discipline which existed in the Red Army, which is being worked out by the best of our trade unions, and which I am convinced you who have now founded the mineworkers' union will also establish.

Your union will be one of the foremost unions, and it will have all the state assistance we can possibly give. And I am sure that you too will make similar sacrifices to create a firm labour discipline, raise the productivity of labour and foster the spirit of self-sacrifice among the workers in the coal industry, among those who are engaged in what is probably the hardest, dirtiest and most exhausting labour, and which technicians are striving to abolish altogether.

But in order to save Soviet power now, industry must be fed, that is, provided with coal. Unless this is done, it will be impossible to restore the economy and the railways, it will be impossible to set the factories going and provide goods to be exchanged for the peasants' grain; the peasants cannot, of course, be content with bits of coloured paper, they are granting us a loan, because it is their duty to grant a loan to the hungry workers. But it is our duty to repay

this loan, and production, therefore, must be increased tenfold and all the factories started.

That, comrades, is the tremendous task which faces all class-conscious workers, i.e., those workers who realise that the issue is one of preserving and consolidating Soviet power and socialism in order to save all future generations from the yoke of the landowners and capitalists for all time. Those who refuse to understand this must be driven from the ranks of the workers. The trade unions, with their training, influence and propaganda, and their deep concern for production and discipline, will see to those who do not understand it sufficiently. That is the way to strengthen the workers' and peasants' government. And by this slow but most important work you will achieve, you must achieve, victories even more important than those gained by our Red Army at the front.

Published in 1920 in the pamphlet
*Resolutions and Decisions of the
First (Inaugural) All-Russia
Congress of Mineworkers, Moscow*

Vol. 30, pp. 495-501

From PRELIMINARY DRAFT THESES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

For the Second Congress of the Communist International

7) The victory of socialism over capitalism and the consolidation of socialism may be regarded as ensured only when the proletarian state power, having completely suppressed all resistance by the exploiters and assured itself complete subordination and stability, has reorganised the whole of industry on the lines of large-scale collective production and on a modern technical basis (founded on the electrification of the entire economy). This alone will enable the cities to render such radical assistance, technical and social, to the backward and scattered rural population as will create the material basis necessary to boost the productivity of agricultural and of farm labour in general, thereby encouraging the small farmers by the force of example and in their own interests to adopt large-scale, collective and mechanised agriculture. Although nominally recognised by all socialists, this indisputable theoretical truth is in fact distorted by the opportunism prevalent in the yellow Second International and among the leaders of the German and the British "Independents",²⁴ the French Longuetists,²⁵ etc. This distortion consists in attention being directed towards the relatively remote, beautiful, and rosy future; attention is deflected from the immediate tasks of the difficult practical transition and approach to that future. In practice, it consists in preaching a compromise with the bourgeoisie and a "class truce", i.e., complete betrayal of the proletariat, which is now waging a struggle amidst the unprecedented ruin and impoverishment created everywhere by the war, and amidst the unprecedented enrichment and arrogance of a handful of millionaires resulting from that war.

It is in the countryside that a genuine possibility of a successful struggle for socialism demands, first, that all Communist Parties should inculcate in the industrial proletariat a realisation of the need to make sacrifices, and be prepared to make sacrifices so as to overthrow the bourgeoisie and consolidate proletarian power—since the dictatorship of the proletariat implies both the ability of the proletariat to organise and lead all the working and exploited people, and the vanguard's ability to make the utmost sacrifices and to display the utmost heroism to that end: second, success demands that, as a result of the workers' victory, the labouring and most exploited masses in the countryside achieve an immediate and considerable improvement in their conditions at the expense of the exploiters—for without that the industrial proletariat cannot get the support of the rural areas and, in particular, will be unable to ensure the supply of food for the cities.

Written in June-July 1920

Vol. 31, pp. 161-62

Published on July 20, 1920 in
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From THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES

**Speech Delivered at the Third All-Russia Congress
of the Russian Young Communist League
October 2, 1920**

You all know that, following the military problems, those of defending the republic, we are now confronted with economic tasks. Communist society, as we know, cannot be built unless we restore industry and agriculture, and that, not in the old way. They must be re-established on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that electricity is that basis, and that only after electrification of the entire country, of all branches of industry and agriculture, only when you have achieved that aim, will you be able to build for yourselves the communist society which the older generation will not be able to build. Confronting you is the task of economically reviving the whole country, of reorganising and restoring both agriculture and industry on modern technical lines, based on modern science and technology, on electricity. You realise perfectly well that illiterate people cannot tackle electrification, and that elementary literacy is not enough either. It is insufficient to understand what electricity is; what is needed is the knowledge of how to apply it technically in industry and agriculture, and in the individual branches of industry and agriculture. This has to be learnt for oneself, and it must be taught to the entire rising generation of working people. That is the task confronting every class-conscious Communist, every young person who regards himself a Communist and who clearly understands that, by joining the Young Communist League, he has pledged himself to help the Party build communism and to help the whole younger generation create a communist society. He must realise that he can create it only on the basis of modern education, and if he does not acquire this education communism will remain merely a pious wish.

It was the task of the older generation to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The main task then was to criticise the bourgeoisie, arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, and foster class-consciousness and the ability to unite their forces. The new generation is confronted with a far more complex task. Your duty does not lie only in assembling your forces so as to uphold the workers' and peasants' government against an invasion instigated by the capitalists. Of course, you must do that; that is something you clearly realise, and is distinctly seen by the Communist. However, that is not enough. You have to build up a communist society. In many respects half of the work has been done. The old order has been destroyed, just as it deserved, it has been turned into a heap of ruins, just as it deserved. The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the younger communist generation must build a communist society. You are faced with the task of construction, and you can accomplish that task only by assimilating all modern knowledge, only if you are able to transform communism from cut-and-dried and memorised formulas, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programmes into that living reality which gives unity to your immediate work, and only if you are able to make communism a guide in all your practical work.

That is the task you should pursue in educating, training and rousing the entire younger generation. You must be foremost among the millions of builders of a communist society in whose ranks every young man and young woman should be. You will not build a communist society unless you enlist the mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building communism.

From OUR FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POSITION AND THE TASKS OF THE PARTY

Speech Delivered to the Moscow Gubernia Conference
of the R.C.P.(B.)
November 21, 1920

I now turn to the state of affairs at home. The failure of a number of attempts at military intervention has led to a considerable improvement in our economic position. The main cause of our former desperate position was that we in Central Russia, industrial Russia, proletarian Russia—Petrograd, Moscow, and Ivanovo-Véznésensk—were cut off from all the main grain-producing areas such as Siberia, the South and the South-East; we were cut off from the Donets Basin, one of the main sources of fuel, and from the sources of oil, and it seemed absolutely impossible for the Republic to hold out. You know what appalling distress, what extreme privation, what grain shortages and famine we experienced because we were cut off from the richest grain-producing areas and the most important economic regions. The return of these territories is to a considerable extent responsible for the improvement now to be seen. Thanks to the possibility of drawing on Siberia and the Caucasus, and to the social changes developing in our favour in the Ukraine, there is promise that with the state food procurements in the forthcoming food campaign we shall not only emerge without an actual shortage as we did this year, but shall have sufficient food for all industrial workers. This is the first campaign when we can hope that, as a result of the doubtless improvement in the transport system, the government will dispose of such food stocks—between 250 and 300 million poods of grain—that we shall not merely be talking about socialist construction and doing precious little, as at present, but shall actually operate with real armies of labour; we shall be able to transfer hundreds of thousands of industrial workers, or workers now engaged

in provisioning for industry, to really urgent and essential work and to improve that work in the same way as the improved fuel situation made it possible to restore the textile industry. The Ivanovo-Voznesensk Gubernia mills have begun to work. At first, not more than a quarter of a million spindles were operating but at present there are already half a million, perhaps 600,000, and by the end of the year we count on a million spindles in operation. We think the number will go up to four million next year. Whereas quite recently we made both ends meet with the greatest difficulty by using up old stocks, conditions have now set in in which we are starting to rehabilitate Russia's ruined industry, and shall be able, while collecting grain from the countryside, to supply the peasants in return with salt and paraffin oil, and, though in small quantities, with textiles. Without this it is useless to talk of socialist construction.

While in the international sense we have gained a footing by concluding a series of military campaigns and by wresting peace treaties from a number of states, it has only now become economically possible for us to supply the industrial workers with bread and to provide the bread of industry, namely fuel, on a scale enabling us to set about the construction of socialism. That is our main task, the root of the problem, a transition we have several times tried to make. I remember that at a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee in April 1918, I said that our military tasks appeared to be ending and that we had not only convinced Russia, not only won her from the exploiters, for the working people, but had now to tackle other tasks in order to govern Russia in the interests of her economic construction. Our breathing-space at the time proved quite brief. The war that was forced on us, starting with the Czechoslovak revolt in the summer of 1918,²⁶ was most ferocious. However, we made several attempts, both in the spring of 1918 and, on a broader scale, in the spring of this year when the question of labour armies was posed in practice. We must now once again give top priority to this transitional stage and exert every effort to achieve it. Regarded from the international point of view, from the standpoint of victory over capitalism in general, this is a paramount task of the entire socialist revolution. To defeat

capitalism in general, it is necessary, in the first place, to defeat the exploiters and to uphold the power of the exploited, namely, to accomplish the task of overthrowing the exploiters by revolutionary forces; in the second place, to accomplish the constructive task, that of establishing new economic relations, of setting an example of how this should be done. These two aspects of the task of accomplishing a socialist revolution are indissolubly connected, and distinguish our revolution from all previous ones, which never went beyond the destructive aspect.

If we do not accomplish this second task, nothing will follow from our successes, from our victories in overthrowing the exploiters, and from our military rebuff to international imperialism, and a return to the old system will be inevitable. In the theoretical sense, that is beyond question. In this instance, the transitional stage is abrupt and most difficult, and calls for new methods, a different deployment and use of forces, a different emphasis, a new psychological approach, and so on. In the place of methods of the revolutionary overthrow of the exploiters and of repelling the tyrants, we must apply the methods of constructive organisation; we must prove to the whole world that we are a force capable, not only of resisting any attempt to crush us by force of arms but of setting an example to others. All the writings of the greatest socialists have always provided guidance on these two aspects of the task of the socialist revolution which, as two aspects of the same task, refer both to the outside world, to those states that have remained in capitalist hands, and to the non-proletarians of one's own country. We have convinced the peasants that the proletariat provides them with better conditions of existence than the bourgeoisie did; we have convinced them of this in practice. When the peasants, though they were dissatisfied with Bolshevik government, compared it in practice with the rule of the Constituent Assembly, Kolchak and the others²⁷ they drew the conclusion that the Bolsheviks guaranteed them a better existence and defended them militarily from violence by world imperialism. Yet, under conditions of bourgeois rule, half of the peasantry lived in a bourgeois fashion, and this could not have been otherwise. The proletariat must now solve the second problem: it must prove to the peasant that the proletariat can provide him with the example and

practice of economic relations of a higher level than those under which every peasant family farms on its own. The peasant still believes only in this old system; he still considers this the normal state of affairs. That is beyond doubt. It would be absurd to think that the peasant will change his attitude to vital economic problems, as a result of our propaganda. His is a wait-and-see attitude. From being neutrally hostile, he has become neutrally sympathetic. He prefers us to any other form of government because he sees that the workers', the proletarian state, the proletarian dictatorship, does not mean brute force or usurpation, as it has been described, but is a better defender of the peasants than Kolchak, Denikin, and the rest are.

But all that is not enough; we have not achieved the main object: to show that the proletariat will restore large-scale industry and the national economy so that the peasants can be transferred to a higher economic system. After proving that, by revolutionary organisation, we can repel any violence directed against the exploited, we must prove the same thing in another field by setting an example that will convince the vast mass of the peasants and petty-bourgeois elements, and other countries as well, not in word but in deed, that a communist system, and way of life, can be created by a proletariat which has won a war. This is a task of world-wide significance. To achieve the second half of the victory in the international sense, we must accomplish the second half of the task, that which bears upon economic construction. We discussed this at the last Party conference, so I think there is hardly any need or possibility to go into detail on the various points; this is a task that embraces every aspect of economic construction. I have briefly described the conditions ensuring bread for the industrial workers and fuel for industry. These conditions are fundamental in providing the possibility of further construction. I should add that, as you have seen from the agenda published in the newspapers, the question of economic construction will be the main item to be discussed at the forthcoming Congress of Soviets. The entire agenda has been drawn up so that the entire attention and concern of all delegates and of the whole mass of Government and Party workers throughout the Republic will be concentrated on the economic aspect, on the restoration of transport and industry, on what is cautiously

termed "aid to the peasant economy" but which implies far more—a system of carefully thought-out measures to raise to the appropriate level the peasant economy, which will continue to exist for some time to come.

The Congress of Soviets will, therefore, discuss a report on the electrification of Russia, so that an all-over economic plan for the rehabilitation of the national economy, of which we have spoken, can be drawn up in the technological aspect. There can be no question of rehabilitating the national economy or of communism unless Russia is put on a different and a higher technical basis than that which has existed up to now. Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country, since industry cannot be developed without electrification. This is a long-term task which will take at least ten years to accomplish, provided a great number of technical experts are drawn into the work. A number of printed documents in which this project has been worked out in detail by technical experts will be presented to the Congress. We cannot achieve the main objects of this plan—create 30 large regions of electric power stations which would enable us to modernise our industry—in less than ten years. Without this reconstruction of all industry on lines of large-scale machine production, socialist construction will obviously remain only a set of decrees, a political link between the working class and the peasantry, and a means of saving the peasants from the rule by Kolchak and Denikin; it will remain an example to all powers of the world, but it will not have its own basis. Communism implies Soviet power as a political organ, enabling the mass of the oppressed to run all state affairs—without that, communism is unthinkable. We see proof of this throughout the world, because the idea of Soviet power and its programme are undoubtedly becoming victorious throughout the world. We see this in every phase of the struggle against the Second International, which is living on support from the police, the church and the old bourgeois functionaries in the working-class movement.

This guarantees political success. Economic success, however, can be assured only when the Russian proletarian state effectively controls a huge industrial machine built on up-to-date technology; that means electrification. For this, we must know the basic conditions of the application of

electricity, and accordingly understand both industry and agriculture. This is an enormous task, to accomplish which will require a far longer period than was needed to defend our right to existence against invasion. However, we are not afraid of such a period and we think we have won a victory by attracting to this work tens and hundreds of engineers and scientists imbued with bourgeois ideas, whom we have given the mission of reorganising the entire economy, industry and agriculture, in whom we have aroused interest and from whom we have received a great deal of information being summarised in a number of pamphlets. Each region earmarked for electrification is dealt with in a separate pamphlet. The plan for the electrification of the Northern region is ready, and those interested may receive it. Pamphlets dealing with each region, with the over-all plan for reorganisation, will be published by the time the Congress of Soviets meets. It is now our task to carry on systematic work throughout the country, in all Party cells, in every Soviet institution, according to this all-over plan covering many years, so that we may in the near future have a clear idea of how and in what measure we are progressing, without deceiving ourselves or concealing the difficulties confronting us. The entire Republic is faced with the task of accomplishing this single economic plan at any cost. All the Communist Party's activities, propaganda and agitation must be focussed on this task. From the angle of theory, it has been dealt with on more than one occasion; nobody argues against it, but scarcely a hundredth part of what has to be done has been accomplished.

Published in December 1920 in the pamphlet

Current Questions of the Party's Present Work. Published by the Moscow Committee, R.C.P.(B.)

Vol. 31, pp. 415-21

TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY

Comrade Krzhizhanovsky

Would it not be possible to develop (not at once, but *straightaway* after the Congress,²⁸ for the Council of Labour and Defence) a practical plan for an electrification campaign:

Etwas *:

(1) in *each* uyezd *urgently* to set up at least one power station;

(2) make it obligatory for this centre to become a *training*, lecture, demonstration, etc., centre, and *take the entire* population through these courses (beginning with the young people, or by volosts, etc.);

(3) immediately assign tasks among the population as to what they can now make a start on (we need 2½ million poods of copper—so let us at once assign tasks for bringing in 25 million poods, let people *voluntarily* begin to collect church bells, door handles, etc.; then *poles*, etc.);

(4) begin preparatory *navvying* work *at once*, assigning tasks among the uyezds;

(5) mobilise *all* engineers, electricians, all who have done courses at physico-mathematical faculties, etc., without exception. Their obligation will be to deliver not less than two (four?) lectures a week, to teach *not less than* (10-50?) people about electricity. If they fulfil this—a bonus. If they don't—gaol.

(6) Write *urgently* a few popular pamphlets (some to be translated from *German*) and adapt the "book" (yours) into

* Something like this.—Ed.

a number of more popular articles, for teaching in the schools and reading to the peasants.

And then a number of detailed measures on the following two groups:

aa) propaganda and training

bb) first steps towards putting this into practice at once, and from all angles.

Lenin

Written late in December 1920

First published in 1942 in *Lenin
Miscellany XXXIV*

Vol. 35, pp. 469-70

TO G. M. KRZHIZHANOVSKY

G. M.,

The following idea has come into my head.

There must be propoganda for electricity. How? Not only in words but by example.

What does this mean? The most important thing is to make it popular. For this we have, here and now, to work out a *plan* for lighting up *every house* in the R.S.F.S.R. by electricity.

This is a long-term affair, because neither 20,000,000 (-40,000,000?) bulbs, nor wire, etc., shall we have *for a long time*.

But all the same a plan is needed *now*, if only to cover a number of years.

That comes first.

And secondly, we must work out right away a *shorter* plan, and then thirdly—and this is most important—we must be able to arouse both *competition* and *initiative among the masses*, so that they set about the job *straightaway*.

Would it not be possible for this purpose immediately to work out such a plan (for example):

(1) All volosts (10-15 thousand) to be supplied with electric lighting in *one* year.

(2) All settlements ($1/2$ -1 million, probably not more than $3/4$ million) in *two* years.

(3) Priority for the reading-room and the Soviet (two light bulbs).

(4) Get the poles ready *at once* in such-and-such a way.

(5) Prepare the insulators *at once yourselves* (ceramics works, I believe, are local and small affairs?). Make them *in such-and-such a way*.

(6) *Copper* for the wires? *Collect it yourselves* in your uyezd and volosts (a gentle hint at church bells, etc.).

(7) Organise training in electricity in such-and-such a way.

Could not something *of this kind* be considered, worked out and *decreed*?

Yours,
Lenin

Written in December 1920

First published in
Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn No. 18,
January 22, 1925

Vol. 35, pp. 467-68

THE EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

December 22-29, 1920

1

From REPORT OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS ON THE HOME AND FOREIGN POLICY DECEMBER 22

I now come to the last item—the question of electrification, which stands on the agenda of the Congress. You are to hear a report on this subject. I think that we are witnessing a momentous change, one which in any case marks the beginning of important successes for the Soviets. Henceforth the rostrum at All-Russia Congresses will be mounted, not only by politicians and administrators but also by engineers and agronomists. This marks the beginning of that very happy time when politics will recede into the background, when politics will be discussed less often and at shorter length, and engineers and agronomists will do most of the talking. To really proceed with the work of economic development, this custom must be initiated at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and in all Soviets and organisations, newspapers, organs of propaganda and agitation, and all institutions, from top to bottom.

We have, no doubt, learnt politics; here we stand as firm as a rock. But things are bad as far as economic matters are concerned. Henceforth, less politics will be the best politics. Bring more engineers and agronomists to the fore, learn from them, keep an eye on their work, and turn our congresses and conferences, not into propaganda meetings but into bodies that will verify our economic achievements, bodies in which we can really learn the business of economic development.

You will hear the report of the State Electrification Commission, which was set up in conformity with the decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of February 7, 1920. On February 21, the Presidium of the

Supreme Council of the National Economy signed the final ordinance determining the composition of the commission, and a number of leading experts and workers, mainly from the Supreme Council of the National Economy, over a hundred of them, and also from the People's Commissariat of Railways and the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, are devoting their entire energy to this work. We have before us the results of the work of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia in the shape of this small volume which will be distributed to you today or tomorrow. I trust you will not be scared by this little volume. I think I shall have no difficulty in convincing you of the particular importance of this book. In my opinion it is the second programme of our Party. We have a Party programme which has been excellently explained by Comrades Preobrazhensky and Bukharin in the form of a book which is less voluminous, but extremely useful. That is the political programme; it is an enumeration of our objectives, an explanation of the relations between classes and masses. It must, however, also be realised that the time has come to take this road in actual fact and to measure the practical results achieved. Our Party programme must not remain solely a programme of the Party. It must become a programme of our economic development, or otherwise it will be valueless even as a programme of the Party. It must be supplemented with a second Party programme, a plan of work aimed at restoring our entire economy and raising it to the level of up-to-date technical development. Without a plan of electrification, we cannot undertake any real constructive work. When we discuss the restoration of agriculture, industry and transport, and their harmonious co-ordination, we are obliged to discuss a broad economic plan. We must adopt a definite plan. Of course, it will be a plan adopted as a first approximation. This Party programme will not be as invariable as our real Party programme is, which can be modified by Party congresses alone. No, day by day this programme will be improved, elaborated, perfected and modified, in every workshop and in every volost. We need it as a first draft, which will be submitted to the whole of Russia as a great economic plan designed for a period of not less than ten years and indicating how Russia is to be placed on the real economic basis required for communism. What

was one of the most powerful incentives that multiplied our strength and our energies to a tremendous degree when we fought and won on the war front? It was the realisation of danger. Everybody asked whether it was possible that the landowners and capitalists might return to Russia. And the reply was that it was. We therefore multiplied our efforts a hundredfold, and we were victorious.

Take the economic front, and ask whether capitalism can be restored economically in Russia. We have combated the Sukharevka black market.²⁹ The other day, just prior to the opening of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, this not very pleasant institution was closed down by the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Red Army Deputies. (*Applause.*) The Sukharevka black market has been closed but it is not that market that is so sinister. The old Sukharevka market on Sukharevskaya Square has been closed down, an act that presented no difficulty. The sinister thing is the "Sukharevka" that resides in the heart and behaviour of every petty proprietor. This is the "Sukharevka" that must be closed down. That "Sukharevka" is the basis of capitalism. While it exists, the capitalists may return to Russia and may grow stronger than we are. That must be clearly realised. It must serve as the mainspring of our work and as a condition and yardstick of our real success. While we live in a small-peasant country, there is a firmer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism. That must be borne in mind. Anyone who has carefully observed life in the countryside, as compared with life in the cities, knows that we have not torn up the roots of capitalism and have not undermined the foundation, the basis, of the internal enemy. The latter depends on small-scale production, and there is only one way of undermining it, namely, to place the economy of the country, including agriculture, on a new technical basis, that of modern large-scale production. Only electricity provides that basis.

Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country. Otherwise the country will remain a small-peasant country, and we must clearly realise that. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on the world scale, but also within the country. That is common knowledge. We have realised it, and we shall see to it that the economic basis is transformed from a small-peasant basis into a large-scale

industrial basis. Only when the country has been electrified, and industry, agriculture and transport have been placed on the technical basis of modern large-scale industry, only then shall we be fully victorious.

We have already drawn up a preliminary plan for the electrification of the country; two hundred of our best scientific and technical men have worked on it. We have a plan which gives us estimates of materials and finances covering a long period of years, not less than a decade. This plan indicates how many million barrels of cement and how many million bricks we shall require for the purpose of electrification. To accomplish the task of electrification from the financial point of view, the estimates are between 1,000 and 1,200 million gold rubles. You know that we are far from being able to meet this sum from our gold reserves. Our stock of foodstuffs is not very large either. We must therefore meet the expenditure indicated in these estimates by means of concessions, in accordance with the plan I have mentioned. You will see the calculation showing how the restoration of our industry and our transport is being planned on this basis.

I recently had occasion to attend a peasant festival held in Volokolamsk Uyezd, a remote part of Moscow Gubernia, where the peasants have electric lighting.³⁰ A meeting was arranged in the street, and one of the peasants came forward and began to make a speech welcoming this new event in the lives of the peasants. "We peasants were unenlightened," he said, "and now light has appeared among us, an 'unnatural light, which will light up our peasant darkness'." For my part, these words did not surprise me. Of course, to the non-Party peasant masses electric light is an "unnatural" light; but what we consider unnatural is that the peasants and workers should have lived for hundreds and thousands of years in such backwardness, poverty and oppression under the yoke of the landowners and the capitalists. You cannot emerge from this darkness very rapidly. What we must now try is to convert every electric power station we build into a stronghold of enlightenment to be used to make the masses electricity-conscious, so to speak. All should be made aware of the reason why these small electric power stations, whose numbers run into the dozens, are linked up with the restoration of industry. We have an established plan of

electrification, but the fulfilment of this plan is designed to cover a number of years. We must fulfil this plan at all costs, and the period of its fulfilment must be reduced. Here we must have the same thing as was the case with one of our first economic plans, the plan for the restoration of transport—Order No. 1042—which was designed to cover a period of five years, but has now been reduced to three and a half years because we are ahead of the schedule. To carry out the electrification plan we may need a period of ten or twenty years to effect the changes that will preclude any return to capitalism. This will be an example of rapid social development without precedent anywhere in the world. The plan must be carried out at all costs, and its deadline brought nearer.

This is the first time that we have set about economic work in such a fashion that, besides separate plans which have arisen in separate sections of industry as, for instance, in the transport system and have been brought into other branches of industry, we now have an all-over plan calculated for a number of years. This is hard work, designed to bring about the victory of communism.

It should, however, be realised and remembered that we cannot carry out electrification with the illiterates we have. Our commission will endeavour to stamp out illiteracy—but that is not enough. It has done a good deal compared with the past, but it has done little compared with what has to be done. Besides literacy, we need cultured, enlightened and educated working people; the majority of the peasants must be made fully aware of the tasks awaiting us. This programme of the Party must be a basic book to be used in every school. You will find in it, in addition to the general plan of electrification, separate plans for every district of Russia. Thus every comrade who goes to the provinces will have a definite scheme of electrification for his district, a scheme for transition from darkness and ignorance to a normal life. And, comrades, you can and must compare the theses you have been presented with, elaborate and check them on the spot; you must see to it that when the question "What is communism?" is asked in any school and in any study circle, the answer should contain not only what is written in the Party programme but should also say how we can emerge from the state of ignorance.

Our best men, our economic experts, have accomplished the task we set them of drawing up a plan for the electrification of Russia and the restoration of her economy. We must now see to it that the workers and peasants should realise how great and difficult this task is, how it must be approached and tackled.

We must see to it that every factory and every electric power station becomes a centre of enlightenment; if Russia is covered with a dense network of electric power stations and powerful technical installations, our communist economic development will become a model for a future socialist Europe and Asia. (*Stormy and prolonged applause.*)

Published in 1921 in the book *The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Red Army Men's and Cossacks' Deputies. Verbatim Report*

Vol. 31, pp. 513-18

**DRAFT RESOLUTION
ON THE REPORT ON ELECTRIFICATION**

The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, after hearing the report of the Chairman of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia, expresses its thanks, in the first place, to the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the National Economy and also to the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and the People's Commissariat of Railways, and particularly to the Commission for the Electrification of Russia, for their work in drawing up the plan for the electrification of Russia.

The Congress instructs the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars, the Council of Labour and Defence, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the National Economy and also the other People's Commissariats to complete the elaboration of this plan and to endorse it without fail at the earliest date.

The Congress further instructs the government and requests the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and the All-Russia Congress of Trade Unions to take all measures to conduct the widest possible propaganda for this plan and to make the broadest sections of the population in town and countryside familiar with it. The study of this plan must be introduced into all educational establishments in the Republic without exception; every electric power station and every tolerably well organised factory and state farm must become a centre for teaching the principles of electricity and modern industry, a centre of propaganda for the plan of electrification, and of its systematic study. All persons possessing sufficient scientific or practical knowledge must be mobilised for the purpose of conducting propaganda for

the electrification plan and for imparting to others the knowledge necessary to understand it.

The Congress expresses its firm conviction that all Soviet institutions, all Soviets, and all industrial workers and working peasants will exert every effort and shrink from no sacrifice to carry out the plan for the electrification of Russia at all costs, and despite all obstacles.

Written between December 21 and
29, 1920

First published in 1930 in the
Second and Third Editions of
V. I. Lenin's *Works*, Vol. XXVI

Vol. 31, pp. 532-33

**DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE R.C.P.(B.)
GROUP OF THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS**

It is obligatory upon all members of the R.C.P., by the time the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P. is held (February 6, 1921):

1) to make the fullest possible study of the plan of electrification;

2) to take measures to ensure the widest and most detailed study of the local plan in every district;

3) to draw up, for the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P., practical proposals:

for methods of making all working people more widely familiar with the plan of electrification,

as well as for ways and means of immediately proceeding with the practical fulfilment of this plan in all its aspects.

Written between December 21 and
29, 1920

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Vol. 31, p. 534

INTEGRATED ECONOMIC PLAN

What is being said and written on this subject leaves a very painful impression. Take L. Kritsman's articles in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (I—December 14, 1920; II—December 23; III—February 9; IV—February 16; and V—February 20). There is nothing there but empty talk and word-spinning, a refusal to consider and look into what has been done in this field. Five long articles of reflection on how to approach the study of facts and data, instead of any actual examination of them.

Take Milyutin's theses (*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, February 19), or Larin's (*ibid.*, February 20); listen to the speeches of "responsible" comrades: they all have the same basic defects as Kritsman's articles. They all reveal the dullest sort of scholasticism, including a lot of twaddle about the law of concatenation, etc. It is a scholasticism that ranges from the literary to the bureaucratic, to the exclusion of all practical effort.

But what is even worse is the highbrow bureaucratic disdain for the vital work that has been done and that needs to be continued. Again and again there is the emptiest "drawing up of theses" and a concoction of plans and slogans, in place of painstaking and thoughtful study of our own practical experience.

The only serious work on the subject is the *Plan for the Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R.*, the report of GOELRO (the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia) to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, published in December 1920 and distributed at the Congress. It outlines an integrated economic plan which has been worked out—only as a rough approximation, of course—by the best brains in the Republic

on the instructions of its highest bodies. We have to make a very modest start in fighting the complacency born of the ignorance of the grandees, and the intellectualist conceit of the Communist literati, by telling the story of this book, and describing its content and significance.

More than a year ago—February 2-7, 1920—the All-Russia Central Executive Committee met in session and adopted a resolution on electrification which says:

“Along with the most immediate, vital and urgent tasks in organising transport, coping with the fuel and food crises, fighting epidemics, and forming disciplined labour armies, Soviet Russia now has, for the first time, an opportunity of starting on more balanced economic development, and working out a nation-wide state economic plan on scientific lines and consistently implementing it. In view of the prime importance of electrification... mindful of the importance of electrification for industry, agriculture and transport, . . . and so on and so forth . . . , the Committee resolves: to authorise the Supreme Economic Council to work out, in conjunction with the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, a project for the construction of a system of electric power stations. . . .”

This seems to be clear enough, doesn't it? “A nation-wide state economic plan on scientific lines”: is it possible to misread these words in the decision adopted by our highest authority? If the literati and the grandees, who boast of their communism before the “experts”, are ignorant of this decision it remains for us to remind them that ignorance of our laws is no argument.

In pursuance of the All-Russia C.E.C. resolution, the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, on February 21, 1920, confirmed the Electrification Commission set up under the Electricity Department, after which the Council of Defence endorsed the statute on GOELRO, whose composition the Supreme Economic Council was instructed to determine and confirm by agreement with the People's Commissariat for Agriculture. On April 24, 1920, GOELRO issued its *Bulletin* No. 1, containing a detailed programme of works and a list of the responsible persons, scientists, engineers, agronomists and statisticians on the several subcommissions to direct operations in the various areas, together with the specific assignments each had undertaken. The list of persons and their assignments runs to ten printed pages of *Bulletin* No. 1. The best talent available to the Supreme Economic Council, the People's Commissariat for

Agriculture and the People's Commissariat for Communications has been recruited.

The GOELRO effort has produced this voluminous—and first-class—scientific publication. Over 180 specialists worked on it. There are more than 200 items on the list of works they have submitted to GOELRO. We find, first, a summary of these works (the first part of the volume, running to over 200 pages): a) electrification and a state economic plan; followed by b) fuel supply (with a detailed “fuel budget” for the R.S.F.S.R. *over the next ten years*, with an estimate of the manpower required); c) water power; d) agriculture; e) transport; and f) industry.

The plan ranges over about ten years and gives an indication of the number of workers and capacities (in 1,000 hp). Of course, it is only a rough draft, with possible errors, and a “rough approximation”, but it is a real scientific plan. We have precise calculations by experts for every major item, and every industry. To give a small example, we have their calculations for the output of leather, footwear at two pairs a head (300 million pairs), etc. As a result, we have a material and a financial (gold rubles) balance-sheet for electrification (about 370 million working days, so many barrels of cement, so many bricks, poods of iron, copper, and other things; turbine generator capacities, etc.). It envisages (“at a very rough estimate”) an 80 per cent increase in manufacturing, and 80-100 per cent in extracting industry over the next ten years. The gold balance deficit (+11,000 million—17,000 million leaves a total deficit of about 6,000 million) “can be covered by means of concessions and credit operations”.

It gives the site of the first 20 steam and 10 water power district electric stations, and a detailed description of the economic importance of each.

The general summary is followed, in the same volume, by a list of works for each area (with a separate paging): Northern, Central Industrial (both of which are especially well set out in precise detail based on a wealth of scientific data), Southern, Volga, Urals, Caucasian (the Caucasus is taken as a whole in anticipation of an economic agreement between its various republics), Western Siberia and Turkestan. For each of the areas, electric power capacities are projected beyond the first units; this is followed by the

"GOELRO Programme A", that is, the plan for the use of *existing* electric power stations on the most rational and economic lines. Here is another small example: it is estimated that a grid of the Petrograd stations (Northern Area) could yield the following economy (p. 69): up to one-half of the capacities could be diverted to the logging areas of the North, such as Murmansk and Archangel, etc. The resulting increase in the output and export of timber could yield "*up to 500 million rubles' worth of foreign exchange a year in the immediate period ahead*".

"Annual receipts from the sale of our northern timber could very well equal our gold reserves over the next few years" (ibid., p. 70), provided, of course, we stop talking about plans and start studying and *applying* the plan already worked out by our scientists.

Let me add that we have an embryonic calendar programme for a number of other items (though not for all, of course). This is more than a general plan: it is an estimate for each year, from 1921 to 1930, of the number of stations that can be run in, and the proportions to which the existing ones can be enlarged, provided again we start doing what I have just said, which is not easy in view of the ways of our intellectualist literati and bureaucratic grandees.

A look at Germany will bring out the dimensions and value of GOELRO's effort. Over there, the scientist Ballod produced a similar work: he compiled a scientific plan for the socialist reconstruction of the whole national economy of Germany.³¹ But his being a capitalist country, the plan never got off the ground. It remains a lone-wolf effort, and an exercise in literary composition. With us over here it was a state assignment, mobilising hundreds of specialists and producing an integrated economic plan on scientific lines within 10 months (and not two, of course, as we had originally planned). We have every right to be proud of this work, and it remains for us to *understand how* it should be used. What we now have to contend with is failure to understand *this fact*.

The resolution of the Eighth Congress of Soviets says: "The Congress... *approves the work of the Supreme Economic Council, etc., especially that of GOELRO in drawing up the plan for the electrification of Russia... regards this plan as the first step in a great economic*

endeavour, authorises the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, etc., to put the finishing touches to the plan and to endorse it, at the very earliest date... It authorises the adoption of all measures for the most extensive popularisation of this plan... A study of this plan must be an item in the curricula of all educational establishments of the Republic, without exception", etc.

The bureaucratic and intellectualist defects of our apparatus, especially of its top drawer, are most glaringly revealed by the attitude to this resolution taken by some people in Moscow and their efforts to twist it, to the extent of ignoring it altogether. Instead of advertising the plan, the literati produce theses and empty disquisitions on how to start working out a plan. The grandees, in purely bureaucratic fashion, lay stress on the need to "approve" the plan, by which they do not mean concrete assignments (the dates for the construction of the various installations, the purchase of various items abroad, etc.) but some muddled idea, such as working out a new plan. The misunderstanding this produces is monstrous, and there is talk of partially restoring the old before getting on with the new. Electrification, it is said, is something of an "electrofiction". Why not gasification, we are asked; GOELRO, they also say, is full of bourgeois specialists, with only a handful of Communists; GOELRO should provide the cadre of experts, instead of staffing the general planning commission, and so forth.

The danger lies in this discord, for it betrays an inability to work, and the prevalence of intellectualist and bureaucratic complacency, to the exclusion of all real effort. The conceited ignoramus is betrayed by his jibes at the "fantastic" plan, his questions about gasification, etc. The nerve of their trying, offhand, to pick holes in something it took an army of first-class specialists to produce! Isn't it a shame to try to shrug it off with trite little jokes, and to put on airs about one's right "to withhold approval"?

It is time we learned to put a value on science and got rid of the "communist" conceit of the dabbler and the bureaucrat; it is time we learned to work systematically, making use of our own experience and practice.

Of course, "plans" naturally give rise to endless argument and discussion, but when the task is to get down to the

study of the only scientific plan before us, we should not allow ourselves to engage in general statements and debates about underlying "principles". We should get down to correcting it on the strength of *practical* experience and a more detailed study. Of course, the grandees always retain the right to "give or withhold approval". A sober view of this right, and a reasonable reading of the resolution of the Eighth Congress concerning the approval of the plan, which it endorsed and handed down to us for the broadest popularisation, show that approval must be taken to mean the placing of a series of orders and the issue of a set of instructions, such as the items to be purchased, the building to be started, the materials to be collected and forwarded, etc. Upon the other hand, "approval" from the bureaucratic standpoint means arbitrary acts on the part of the grandees, the red-tape runaround, the commissions-of-inquiry game, and the strictly bureaucratic foul-up of anything that is going.

Let us look at the matter from yet another angle. There is a special need to tie in the scientific plan for electrification with existing short-term plans and their actual implementation. That this must be done is naturally beyond doubt. But how is it to be done? To find out, the economists, the literati, and the statisticians should stop their twaddle about the plan in general, and get on with a detailed study of the implementation of our plans, our mistakes in this practical business, and ways of correcting them. Otherwise we shall have to grope our way long. Over and above such a study of our practical experience, there remains the very small matter of administrative technique. Of planning commissions we have more than enough. Take two men from the department under Ivan Ivanovich and integrate them with one from the department under Pavel Pavlovich, or vice versa. Link them up with a subcommission of the general planning commission. All of which boils down to administrative technique. Various combinations should be tried out, and the best selected. That is elementary.

The whole point is that we have yet to learn the art of approach, and stop substituting intellectualist and bureaucratic projecteering for vibrant effort. We have, and have had, short-term food and fuel plans, and there are glaring mistakes in both. That is unquestionable. But the

efficient economist, instead of penning empty theses, will get down to a study of the facts and figures, and analyse our own practical experience. He will pin-point the mistakes and suggest a remedy. This kind of study will suggest to the efficient administrator the transfers, alterations of records, recasting of the machinery, etc., to be proposed or put through. You don't find us doing anything of the sort.

The main flaw is in the wrong approach to the relationships between the Communists and the specialists, the administrators and the scientists and writers. There is no doubt at all that some aspects of the integrated economic plan, as of any other undertaking, call for the administrative approach or for decisions by Communists alone. Let me add that new aspects of that kind can always come to the fore. That, however, is the purely abstract way of looking at it. Right now, our communist writers and administrators are taking quite the wrong approach, because they have failed to realise that in this case we should be learning all we can from the bourgeois specialists and scientists, and cutting out the administrative game. GOELRO's is the only integrated economic plan we can hope to have just now. It should be amplified, elaborated, corrected and applied in the light of well scrutinised practical experience. The opposite view boils down to the purely "pseudo-radical conceit, which in actual fact is nothing but ignorance", as our Party Programme puts it.³² Ignorance and conceit are equally betrayed by the view that we can have another general planning commission in the R.S.F.S.R. in addition to GOELRO, which, of course, is not to deny that some advantage may be gained from partial and business-like changes in its membership. It is only on this basis—by continuing what has been started—that we can hope to make any serious improvements in the general economic plan; any other course will involve us in an administrative game, or high-handed action, to put it bluntly. The task of the Communists inside GOELRO is to issue fewer orders, rather, to refrain from issuing any at all; and to be very tactful in their dealings with the scientists and technicians (the R.C.P. Programme says: "Most of them inevitably have strong bourgeois habits and take the bourgeois view of things"). The task is to learn from them and to help them to broaden their world-view on the basis of achievements in their

particular field, always bearing in mind that the engineer's way to communism is *different* from that of the underground propagandist and the writer; he is guided along *by the evidence of his own science*, so that the agronomist, the forestry expert, etc., each have *their own path* to tread towards communism. The Communist who has failed to prove his ability to bring together and guide the work of specialists in a spirit of modesty, going to the heart of the matter and studying it in detail, is a potential menace. We have many such Communists among us, and I would gladly swap dozens of them for one conscientious qualified bourgeois specialist.

There are two ways in which Communists outside GOELRO can help to establish and implement the integrated economic plan. Those of them who are economists, statisticians or writers should start by making a study of our own practical experience, and suggest corrections and improvements only after such a detailed study of the facts. Research is the business of the scientist, and once again, because we are no longer dealing with general principles, but with practical experience, we find that we can obtain much more benefit from a "specialist in science and technology", even if a bourgeois one, than from the conceited Communist who is prepared, at a moment's notice, to write "theses", issue "slogans" and produce meaningless abstractions. What we need is more factual knowledge and fewer debates on ostensible communist principles.

Upon the other hand, the Communist administrator's prime duty is to see that he is not carried away by the issuing of orders. He must learn to start by looking at the achievements of science, insisting on a verification of the facts, and locating and studying the mistakes (through reports, articles in the press, meetings, etc.), before proceeding with any corrections. We need more practical studies of our mistakes, in place of the Tit Titych³³ type of tactics ("I might give my approval, if I feel like it").

Men's vices, it has long been known, are for the most part bound up with their virtues. This, in fact, applies to many leading Communists. For decades, we had been working for the great cause, preaching the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, teaching men to mistrust the bourgeois specialists, to expose them, deprive them of power and crush their resistance.

That is a historic cause of world-wide significance. But it needs only a slight exaggeration to prove the old adage that there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Now that we have convinced Russia, now that we have wrested Russia from the exploiters and given her to the working people, now that we have crushed the exploiters, we must learn to run the country. This calls for modesty and respect for the efficient "specialists in science and technology", and a business-like and careful analysis of our numerous *practical* mistakes, and their gradual but steady correction. Let us have less of this intellectualist and bureaucratic complacency, and a deeper scrutiny of the practical experience being gained in the centre and in the localities, and of the available achievements of science.

February 21, 1921

Pravda No. 39, February 22, 1921
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Vol. 32, pp. 137-45

TENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

March 8-16, 1921

From REPORT ON PARTY UNITY AND THE ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST DEVIATION

MARCH 16

Our Programme definitely says that we are taking the first steps and shall have a number of transitional stages. But in the practical work of Soviet administration and in the whole history of the revolution we have constantly had graphic illustrations of the fact that it is wrong to give theoretical definitions of the kind the opposition has given in this case. We know perfectly well that classes have remained in our country and will remain for a long time to come; and that in a country with a predominantly peasant population they are bound to remain for many, many years. It will take us at least ten years to organise large-scale industry to produce a reserve and secure control of agriculture. This is the shortest period even if the technical conditions are exceptionally favourable. But we know that our conditions are terribly unfavourable. We have a plan for building up Russia on the basis of modern large-scale industry: it is the electrification plan drawn up by our scientists. The shortest period provided for in that plan is ten years, and this is based on the assumption that conditions will be something like normal. But we know perfectly well that we do not have such conditions and it goes without saying that ten years is an extremely short period for us.

Pravda No. 68,
March 30, 1921

Vol. 32, pp. 250-51

TO COMRADE KRZHIZHANOVSKY THE PRESIDUM OF THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

There is still hardly any evidence of the operation of an integrated state economic plan. The predominating tendency is to "revive" everything, all branches of the national economy indiscriminately, even all the enterprises that we have inherited from capitalism.

The State Planning Commission should organise its work in such a way as to have drawn up, at least by harvest time, the main principles of a state economic plan for the next year or two.

It should start with food, for this is the tap-root of all our difficulties. An attempt must be made to draw up a national economic plan for three contingencies: a state reserve of (1) 200; (2) 250 and (3) 300 million poods of grain for the year (September 1, 1921 to September 1, 1922). Perhaps, if the difficulties of working out detailed calculations for the three contingencies prove too great, it would be more rational to confine ourselves to one detailed calculation based on the assumption that we obtain 250 million poods, with a surplus (300 minus 250) provided against a rainy day, and only approximate the details for the contingency of a complete shortage of grain (200 million poods) (so much to be bought from abroad, so much to be "tightened up" in industry, transport, the army, etc.).

Assume that the state grain reserve amounts to so much; deduct a reserve for the contingency of war, interruptions in railway communication, etc.

Then comes fuel. The prospects ranging from so much to so much. Minimum and maximum amount of food required for this purpose. The possibility of increasing fuel supplies to such-and-such dimensions if the grain reserve is increased by so much.

Possibility of economising so much fuel by concentrating production in a few of the best factories. These calculations are essential. In this connection, estimate the possibilities of economising food by closing down unnecessary factories, or those not absolutely essential, and by transferring the workers (Where? Is such transfer feasible? If not—consider the minimum task of putting such workers on shorter rations).

Economising fuel by paying a bonus for saving it and by tighter supervision of consumption. Approximate estimate of such economy—if there are any data to base it on.

The army (as distinct from the navy, for which special calculations must be made for maximum reduction, verging on abolition, and reduction of expenditure). Basis of calculation—1.6 million by Sept. 1, 1921, and a provisional estimate for half the amount.

Soviet office staffs. Present size. Possibility of reducing by 25 or 50 per cent. Bonus for one-fourth (of present number of employees, those absolutely essential) for reducing the total number. This question of giving a bonus to the remaining fourth (or third, or half) for reducing the total number of mouths (and for reducing fuel consumption by, say, introducing a three-shift system and closing two out of three offices) must be examined with particular care in view of its exceptional importance.

Industry, divided into several groups with the smallest possible number of the main groups. Water and light. Minimum necessary to cover minimum requirements: (α) productive consumption, (β) individual consumption. Estimates for a definite number of main groups (the task of working out detailed calculations for the respective branches of industry, districts and towns may, perhaps, be assigned to special subcommissions, or special local agents, or to the gubernia statistical bureaus, etc.)—calculate how many large factories all production can be concentrated in, and how many should be closed. Obviously, this extremely important question requires particularly careful study: firstly, purely statistical (data for 1920, and, if possible, also for 1918 and 1919; sometimes, in exceptional cases, pre-war statistics may be of auxiliary use); secondly, economic, which must solve the following special problem:

Is it possible to find for the redundant urban and industrial workers whom the state ought not to feed, and for whom other employment cannot be provided in the towns, temporary employment—for a year or two—in the grain districts on the understanding that they satisfy the needs of the surrounding farming population?

After industry, from which the building industry must be singled out, comes transport (perhaps this should be put before industry?), and electrification as a distinct item.

And so forth.

The estimates must be first drawn up at least in rough outline, as a first approximation; but they must be ready at an early date—within a month, or two, at the outside. They must give an overall picture of the total food and fuel expenditure for the year. This rough plan can afterwards be filled in, corrected, amended; but at this early date we must have the main plan for the year even if only in rough outline (or perhaps separate plans for each of the quarters, or thirds, of the year: Sept. 1, 1921 to Jan. 1, 1922; Jan. 1 to May 1, and May 1 to Sept. 1, 1922).

Nineteen-twenty must be taken as a basis for comparison throughout. Perhaps a number of estimates can and must be made on the basis of a comparative statistical and economic study of the data for 1920 and the “prospects” for 1921-22.

I request that the Presidium of the State Planning Commission inform me of the opinions on this letter of the majority and of its individual members, before submitting my proposal to the Plenum of the State Planning Commission.

Chairman of the Council of Labour and Defence,

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

May 14, 1921

P.S. 1) Special attention must be paid to the industries producing articles that can be exchanged for grain, in order to obtain grain within the country. At all events these industries must be grouped separately so as to provide a definite answer to the question: In the event of a general shortage of grain, will it be possible, by setting aside a given quantity of food and fuel for certain branches of industry,

or certain factories, to obtain a given quantity of goods which can be exchanged for a given quantity of grain? This provisional estimate must be drawn up beforehand, for application, in certain cases, after the harvest.

2) An attempt must be made to single out and count up: (a) the factories (and number of workers) that are absolutely essential for the state and (b) the factories—and number of workers—which are being kept running by tradition, routine, and the unwillingness of the workers to change their occupation and domicile, etc., and which should be closed down to rationalise production and concentrate industry in a few of the best factories operating in several shifts. Total number of factories and workers in each category. Estimate reduction of ration for second category as an incentive for closing these factories.

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INSTRUCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF LABOUR AND DEFENCE TO LOCAL SOVIET BODIES

Draft

The primary task of the Soviet Republic is to restore the productive forces and revive agriculture, industry and transport. The ruin and impoverishment caused everywhere by the imperialist war are so vast that an economic crisis is raging throughout the world, and even in the advanced countries, which before the war were way ahead of Russia in their development and which suffered much less from the war than she did, economic rehabilitation is proceeding with enormous difficulty and will take many long years. This situation prevails even in many of the "victor" countries, despite the fact that they are allied with the richest capitalist powers and are exacting a fat tribute from the defeated, dependent and colonial countries.

Backward Russia, which in addition to the imperialist war endured more than three years of civil war, imposed upon the workers and peasants by the landowners and capitalists with the help of the world bourgeoisie, naturally finds the difficulties of economic rehabilitation so much more formidable. The heavy crop failure in 1920, the lack of fodder and the loss of cattle have had a disastrous effect on peasant farming.

In conformity with the law passed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, a tax in kind has been substituted for the surplus appropriation system. The farmer is free to exchange his surplus produce for various goods. The tax rates have been announced by order of the Council of People's Commissars. The tax amounts to approximately one-half of the produce obtained under the surplus appropriation system. The Council of People's Commissars has issued a new law on the co-operative societies giving

them wider powers in view of the free exchange of surplus farm produce.

These laws have done a great deal for the immediate improvement of the condition of peasant farming and stimulation of peasant interest in enlarging the area under crop and improving methods of farming and livestock breeding. They have also done much to help revive and develop small local industry which can do without the procurement and transportation of large state stocks of food, raw materials and fuel.

Particularly great importance now attaches to independent local initiative in improving peasant farming, developing industry and establishing exchange between agriculture and industry. Great opportunities are being created for the application of new forces and fresh energy to the work of restoring the country's economy.

The Council of Labour and Defence, upon whom, in pursuance of the decision of the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, devolves the duty of co-ordinating and directing the activity of the People's Commissariats for the various sectors of the economy, insistently urges all local bodies to do their utmost to develop extensive activities for the all-round improvement of peasant farming and the revival of industry, in strict conformity with the new laws and in the light of the fundamental propositions and instructions given below.

We now have two main criteria of success in our work of economic development on a nation-wide scale. First, success in the speedy, full and, from the state point of view, proper collection of the tax in kind; and second—and this is particularly important—success in the exchange of manufactured goods for agricultural produce between industry and agriculture.

This is most vital, urgent and imperative. It will put all our efforts to the test and lay the foundations for implementing our great electrification plan, which will result in the restoration of our large-scale industry and transport to such proportions and on such a technical basis that we shall overcome starvation and poverty once and for all.

We must collect 100 per cent of the tax in kind, and, in addition, an equal quantity of food products through the free exchange of surplus farm produce for manufactured goods.

Of course, this will not be achieved everywhere all at once, but it should be our short-term goal. We can achieve it in a very short time if we take the right view of the state of our economy and put our hearts into reviving it the right way. All local authorities and bodies in every gubernia, uyezd, regional centre and autonomous republic must join forces and co-ordinate their efforts to stimulate the exchange of surplus produce. Experience will show how far we can do this by increasing the output and delivery of goods made by the state in the big socialist factories. It will show how far we succeed in encouraging and developing small local industry, and what part will be played in this by the co-operative societies and the private traders, manufacturers and capitalists who are under state control. We must try out every method, giving the utmost scope to local initiative. The new task before us has never been tackled anywhere else before. We are trying to solve it in the conditions of post-war ruin, which prevent any precise estimation of our resources or of the effort we can expect of the workers and peasants, who have made such incredible sacrifices to defeat the landowners and capitalists. We must be bolder in widely applying a variety of methods and taking different approaches, giving rein to capital and private trade in varying degree, without being afraid to implant some capitalism, as long as we succeed in stimulating exchange at once and thereby revive agriculture and industry. We must ascertain the country's resources by practical experience, and determine the best way to improve the condition of the workers and peasants to enable us to proceed with the wider and more fundamental work of building up the economy and implementing the electrification plan.

The two main questions to which every Soviet official engaged in economic work must pay attention are: how much of their surplus farm produce, over and above the tax, have the peasants exchanged for the manufactures of small industry and private trade, and how much for manufactured goods provided by the state? These are the main lines to follow over the short haul in order to achieve the greatest results. They will provide the success indicators and enable us to decide on the subsequent tasks. Every aspect of economic construction in general must be geared to these two immediate tasks.

To attain this co-ordination, encourage local initiative, enterprise and large-scale operations to the utmost, and make sure that central bodies are guided by local experience and local supervision, and vice versa, thereby eliminating red tape and bureaucratic practices, the Council of Labour and Defence has ordered (see text of the order) that:

first, regular economic conferences should be convened in all districts for the purpose of co-ordinating the work of the local departments of all the People's Commissariats for the various sectors of the economy;

second, proper records of the local economic conferences should be kept to facilitate the pooling of experience and the organising of emulation, and mainly, to utilise the work of the local organisations and its results as a means of checking up on the methods and organisation of the central bodies.

The local economic conferences should be organised on the lines of the C.L.D. (Council of Labour and Defence) and their relationship with the local executive committees should be similar to those between the C.L.D. and the Council of People's Commissars. The C.L.D. functions as a commission of the Council of People's Commissars. The appointment of members of the Council of People's Commissars to the C.L.D. ensures the fullest co-ordination of the work of both bodies, eliminates the possibility of any friction between them, expedites matters and simplifies procedures. Having no staff of its own, the C.L.D. utilises that of various government departments, striving to simplify their procedures and co-ordinate their operations.

Gubernia economic councils should stand in the same relationship to the gubernia executive committees, and that is the actual trend in practice. The C.L.D., in confirming the appointment of members and chairmen of regional and territorial economic councils, strives to take account of the experience of local workers and consults with them on all its confirmations. The regional economic councils must certainly strive, and will continue to strive, to co-ordinate their work with that of the gubernia economic councils, securing their fullest co-operation, keeping them informed and stimulating their interest. This is hardly the time to try to reduce these relationships to a set of regulations, for experience is still very short and any such attempt might result in a purely bureaucratic exercise. It is far more

appropriate to allow practice to determine initially the most suitable form of relationship (the C.L.D. worked side by side with the Council of People's Commissars for about a year, virtually without a constitution). Let these forms be at first not absolutely stable: variety is desirable, useful and even necessary to enable us to make a more precise study and a fuller comparison of the various systems of relationships.

Uyezd and volost economic councils should be organised on the same lines, naturally with a lot of leeway in modifying the main type, that is, the executive committees may assume all the functions and duties of the economic conferences, convert their own "executive" or "economic" meetings into economic conferences, appoint (say, in the volosts and sometimes in the uyezds) special committees or even individuals to exercise all or some of the functions of the economic conferences, and so on and so forth. The *village committees*³⁴ should be the bottom rung and should operate as the lower units of the C.L.D. in the rural districts. The Council of People's Commissars has already passed a law, issued in May 1921, which gives the village committees wider powers and defines their relationship with the village Soviets. The gubernia executive committees must draw up provisional regulations suitable for the given locality which, however, must not restrict, but give *the greatest possible scope* to "local" initiative in general, and that of the lowest units *in particular*.

In industrial uyezds and settlements, the district committees and factory committees, or the management boards of factories, should serve as the lower units of the C.L.D., depending on whether one or more branches of industry are being dealt with. In any case, *co-operation* with the uyezd executive committees, volost executive committees and village committees in directing *all* local economic life is absolutely essential in one form or another.

Furthermore, it is exceptionally important that local organisations should submit to the C.L.D. regular and precise information on their activity, for one of our main evils is the inadequate study of practical experience, inadequate exchange of experience and mutual control—putting orders from the centre to the test of local experience, and subjecting local work to control by the centre. One of the most important means of combating bureaucratic practices and red

tape should be to check the way the laws and orders from the centre are carried out locally, and this requires the printing of *public* reports, with *non-Party people* and people not working in the departments necessarily *taking a greater hand*. *Nashe Khozyaistvo*, "the fortnightly journal of the Tver Gubernia Economic Council" (No. 1, April 15, 1921; No. 2, April 30, 1921), is evidence that the local need to study, elucidate and publicise the results of our economic experience is being realised and satisfied the correct way. It will not be possible, of course, to publish a journal in every gubernia, not within the next few months, at any rate; nor will it be possible everywhere to have a fortnightly printing of 3,000 copies, as is the case in Tver. But every gubernia, and every uyezd even, can—and should—compile a report on local economic activities once every two months (or initially at longer intervals, by way of exception) and issue it in a printing of, say, 100 to 300 copies. The paper and the printing facilities for such a small operation will surely be found everywhere, provided we realise its urgency and importance, and see the necessity to satisfy this need by taking the paper from many of the departments which print a mass of useless and hardly urgent material. The copy could be set up in small type and printed in two columns (as the comrades in Tver are doing); the feasibility and urgency of this will be quite clear if we realise the simple truth that even a hundred copies, distributed one to every gubernia library and all the major state libraries, will provide a source of information for *the whole of Russia*, which may perhaps be scanty but *sure*, and will serve as a record of experience.

These reports must be published regularly, even if in small printings, in order to maintain a proper record of experience, and actually pool it, and enlist all the prominent and capable organisers among the non-Party people. This is something we can and must do immediately.

When drawing up the reports, the questions put must be answered as briefly and precisely as possible. The questions fall into four groups, the first being those especially prominent at the present time. They must be answered in every report with the maximum precision and in the greatest detail. That is particularly necessary because this group of questions is extremely vital and urgent for most uyezds at

this very moment. Other questions will come to the fore for the smaller part of the uyezds and districts, that is, the purely industrial ones. The second group consists of questions which must also be answered in every report, but the answers can and should frequently be given in the form of brief summaries of reports already submitted to the government departments concerned. In all such cases, the reports to the C.L.D. must give: the dates on which the reports were sent off; the departments to which they were sent; and a brief summary of the reports in figures. The C.L.D. requires such reports for supervision over the various departments, as well as for the totals indicating the results in food supplies, fuel, industry, and so forth. The third group contains questions that need *not* be answered in every report. The answers to these questions must be given initially, that is, in the first report, but subsequent reports should add only the supplementary and new information as it accumulates. In many cases, there will be nothing to report at all on these questions every two months. The fourth group consists of miscellaneous, supplementary questions, which are not indicated in advance; they are not formulated by the centre but arise locally. This group must be compiled by the local bodies, and is not limited in any way. It goes without saying that questions pertaining to state secrets (army, or such as are connected with military operations, security, etc.) must be answered in special reports not for publication, but intended exclusively for the C.L.D. as confidential reports.

Here is a list of these questions:

FIRST GROUP OF QUESTIONS

1. Commodity Exchange with the Peasantry

At present, this question ranks first in importance and urgency. First, the state cannot carry on any economic development unless the army and the urban workers have regular and adequate supplies of food; the exchange of commodities must become the principal means of collecting foodstuffs. Secondly, commodity exchange is a test of the relationship between industry and agriculture and the foundation of all our work to create a fairly well regulated monetary system. All economic councils and all economic

bodies must now concentrate on commodity exchange (which also includes the exchange of manufactured goods, for the manufactured goods made by socialist factories and exchanged for the foodstuffs produced by the peasants are not commodities in the politico-economic sense of the word; at any rate, they are not only commodities, they are no longer commodities, they are ceasing to be commodities).

What preparations have been made for commodity exchange? What has been done specifically to prepare for it? By the Commissariat for Food? By the co-operative societies? The number of co-operative shops available for this purpose? Are there such shops in every volost? In how many villages? Stock of goods for commodity exchange? Prices on the "free" market? Surplus stocks of grain and other farm produce? Is there any, and how much, experience in commodity exchange? Totals and results? What is being done to prevent the pilferage of goods stocks earmarked for exchange, and of food stocks (a particularly important point demanding investigation of *every case* of pilferage)?

Salt and paraffin oil as articles for commodity exchange? Textiles? Other goods? What items are needed most? What are the chief peasant shortages? What can be supplied by local, small, handicraft industry? Or by developing local industry?

Facts and figures showing how commodity exchange is organised and the results achieved are most important for the conduct of the experiment on a country-wide scale.

Has the proper relationship been established between the Commissariat for Food, the body controlling and supervising commodity exchange, and the co-operative societies, the bodies carrying on commodity exchange? How does this relationship operate in practice? In each locality?

What part does private trade play in commodity exchange? To what extent is private trade developing, or developed? Number of private traders; their turnover in the major items, particularly foodstuffs?

2. The State's Attitude to the Capitalists

Commodity exchange and freedom of trade inevitably imply the appearance of capitalists and capitalist relationships. There is no reason to fear this. The workers'

state has enough resources to keep *within the proper bounds* and control these relationships, which are useful and necessary in conditions of small-scale production. The thing to do at present is to make a close study of their dimensions and devise suitable methods (not restrictive, or rather, not prohibitive) of state control and accountancy.

To what extent is private trade developing as a result of the substitution of the tax for the surplus appropriation system? Can it be estimated or not? Is it only profiteering or regular trade as well? Is it registered, and if so, what are the results?

Private enterprise: have there been any offers from capitalists and entrepreneurs to lease enterprises or establishments, or commercial premises? Exact number of such offers and an analysis of them? How are the results of trading operations assessed (if only approximately)? Ditto as regards the accounts of leaseholders and commission agents, if any?

Have there been any offers from commission agents? To buy produce for the state on a commission basis? Or to market and distribute it? Or to organise industrial enterprises?

Handicraft industry: changes since the introduction of the tax in kind? Extent of development? Source of information?

3. Encouragement of Enterprise in Commodity Exchange, and in Economic Development in General

This question is closely bound up with the preceding one. The encouragement of initiative may often prove to have no connection with capitalist relationships. All economic councils and economic bodies in general should ask themselves: how is this to be encouraged? In view of the novelty of the task, it is scarcely possible to issue any definite instructions at present. The thing is to pay great attention to the question, encourage all initiative in economic matters, make a careful study of practical experience and let the country know what is being done.

When the small farmer pays his tax to the state and enters into commodity exchange with it (with the socialist factory) the economic situation created imperatively demands that the state, through its local bodies, should give

all possible encouragement to enterprise and initiative. The exchange of the observations and experience of local bodies will enable us to collect material, and later on, perhaps, to supplement this general and inadequate formulation of the question with a number of examples and detailed instructions.

4. Co-ordination of the Economic Work of Various Departments in the Local Administrative Areas: Volosts, Uyezds and Gubernias

One of the great evils hindering our economic development is the absence of co-ordination in the work of the various local departments. Great attention must be devoted to this question. It is the function of the economic councils to eliminate this flaw and to stimulate the enterprise of local bodies. There must be a collection of practical examples to secure improvements and hold out the successful cases as a model for all. During the extreme food shortage, for instance, it was natural and inevitable that local bodies should be highly restricted in making decisions on the use of grain collected. As grain stocks increase, and under appropriate control, they must have a freer hand to do so. This can and should help to reduce red tape, cut down haulage of goods, encourage production and improve the condition of the workers and peasants. The food supply, small local industry, fuel, large-scale state industry, etc., are all bound up together, and their necessary division into "departments" for the purposes of state administration will cause harm unless constant efforts are made to co-ordinate them, remove friction, red tape, departmental narrow-mindedness and bureaucratic methods. The local bodies, which are closer to the mass of workers and peasants, have a better view of these defects, and it is therefore their business to devise methods of eliminating them by pooling their experience.

It is absolutely essential that definite, careful and detailed replies should be submitted to the following question: What has been done and how to co-ordinate the activity of the local state farms, timber committees, uyezd land departments, economic councils, and so forth?

How are officials penalised for satisfying local requirements to the detriment of the centre and in violation of orders from the centre? The names of those penalised? Is the number of such offences diminishing? Have the penalties been increased? If so, in what way?

5. Improvement of the Condition of the Workers and 6. Ditto of the Peasants

Every success achieved in economic development improves the condition of the workers and peasants. But, first, here again departmental narrow-mindedness and the lack of co-ordination are doing a great deal of harm. And, second, these questions must be brought up well to the fore to allow a careful observation of the results achieved in this sphere. What exactly has been achieved? In what way? Answers to these questions are essential.

Weariness and in some cases downright exhaustion as a result of the long years of war, first the imperialist war and then the Civil War, are so great that it is absolutely essential to make special efforts to improve the condition of the workers and peasants. Very far from everything is being done that could and should be done, even with our meagre resources. By no means all the departments and agencies are concentrating on it. It is therefore a matter of urgent necessity to collect and study local experience in this field. The reports should be compiled as precisely, fully and carefully as possible. If that is done, it will at once become evident which departments lag most and where. We shall then secure an improvement more quickly through a common effort.

7. Increasing the Number of Government Officials in Economic Development

It is extremely important for us to enlarge this group of workers, but very little systematic effort is being made to do so. Under capitalism, the individual proprietors strove to obtain—secretly from one another, and tripping each other up—the services of good salesmen, managers and directors. It took them decades to do this, and only a few of the best

firms achieved good results. Today, the workers' and peasants' state is the "proprietor", and it must select the best men for economic development; it must select the best administrators and organisers on the special and general, local and national scale, doing this *publicly*, in a methodical and systematic manner and on a broad scale. Now and again we still see traces of the initial period of the Soviet power—the period of fierce civil war and intense sabotage, traces of Communists isolating themselves in a narrow circle of rulers, being fearful or incapable of enlisting the services of sufficient numbers of non-Party people.

We must set to work quickly and energetically to correct this. A number of capable and honest non-Party people are coming to the fore from the ranks of the workers, peasants and intellectuals, and they should be promoted to more important positions in economic work, with the Communists continuing to exercise the necessary control and guidance. Conversely, we must have non-Party people controlling the Communists. For this purpose, groups of non-Party workers and peasants, whose honesty has been tested, should be invited to take part, on the one hand, in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and on the other, in the informal verification and appraisal of work, quite apart from any official appointment.

In their reports to the C.L.D., the local bodies, particularly in the volosts, uyezds and districts, which have the best knowledge of the worker and peasant masses, should give *lists* of non-Party people who have proved their honesty at work, or who have simply become prominent at non-Party conferences, or who command universal respect in their factory, village, volost, etc., and should indicate their assignments in economic construction. By work is meant official position as well as *unofficial participation in control and verification*, regular attendance at informal conferences, etc.

There must be regular replies to these questions, for otherwise the socialist state will be unable to organise correctly the enlistment of the masses in the work of economic development. There are any number of honest and loyal workers. There are many of them among the non-Party people, but we do not know them. Only local reports can help us to find them and try them out in wider and gradually

expanding fields of work, and cure the evil of isolation of Communist Party cells from the masses, an evil that is in evidence in many places.

8. Methods and Results of Combating Bureaucratic Practices and Red Tape

At first, most answers to this question will probably be very simple: methods—nil; results—nil. The decisions of the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets have been read and forgotten.

But although the situation in this field is deplorable, we shall certainly not imitate those who give way to despair. We know that in Russia bureaucratic routine and red tape are mostly due to the low standard of culture and the consequences of the extreme ruin and impoverishment resulting from the war. This evil can be overcome only by strenuous and persistent effort over a long period of years. Therefore, we must not give way to despair, but make a new start every time, pick it up where it was abandoned, and try diverse ways of achieving our goal.

The reorganisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; enlistment of the services of non-Party people with and without this inspection; legal proceedings; reduction and careful selection of staffs; verification and co-ordination of the work of the various departments, and so on and so forth—all these measures, everything indicated in the decisions of the Eighth Congress of Soviets, all the measures and methods mentioned in the press must be systematically, steadily and repeatedly tried out, compared and studied.

The gubernia economic councils, and all the other bodies co-ordinating and directing economic development in the localities, must insist on the implementation of measures prescribed by the law and indicated by practical experience. Local experience must be pooled. Answers to this question must be sent in to the C.L.D., regardless of how hard it may be at first to teach people to give exact, full and timely answers. The C.L.D. will see to it that this is done. It will undoubtedly produce good results, even if not as quickly as is expected by those who tend to reduce the "combating of

red tape" to a mere phrase (or to a repetition of whiteguard, Socialist-Revolutionary and also Menshevik, gossip) instead of working hard to take definite steps.

SECOND GROUP OF QUESTIONS

9. Revival of Agriculture: a) Peasant Farming; b) State Farms; c) Communes; d) Artels; e) Co-operatives; f) Other Forms of Collective Farming

The briefest summaries, giving the figures of the reports sent to the respective departments, with the date on which each report was sent.

More detailed information—not in every report, but periodically, every four or six months, and so forth—on the more important aspects of local farming, results of surveys, the major measures adopted, and their verified results.

Exact information must be given at least twice a year on the number of collective farms (all types, *b-f*), classified according to the degree of organisation—good, fair and unsatisfactory. A typical farm in each of the three groups must be described in detail at least twice a year, with exact data on size, location, production performance, its assistance to peasant farming, etc.

10. Revival of Industry: a) Large-Scale Industry Entirely Controlled by the Centre; b) Large-Scale Industry Controlled Wholly or Partly by Local Bodies; c) Small, Handicraft, Domestic, etc., Industries

The answers should be on the same lines as those for the preceding section. As regards category *a*, the local bodies, which have opportunities for making a close observation of the work of large national establishments, their influence on the neighbouring population, and the attitude of the population to them, must, in every report, give information on these establishments, the assistance given to them by local bodies, the results of this assistance, the assistance rendered to the local population by these establishments, their most urgent requirements, defects in their organisation, etc.

**11. Fuel: a) Firewood; b) Coal; c) Oil; d) Shale;
e) Other Types of Fuel (Waste Fuel, etc.)**

The same as for the two preceding questions: the briefest summaries, giving the figures of the reports sent to the respective departments and dates on which they were sent.

Detailed information on major points, on what is outside the scope of the department, on local co-ordination of work, etc.

Special attention must be paid to economising fuel. What measures are being taken? What are the results?

12. Food Supplies

Summary of reports to the Commissariat for Food, following the same rules as above.

Market gardening and suburban farming (connected with industrial establishments). Results.

Local experience in organising school meals, the feeding of children, dining-rooms, public catering in general, etc.

Bi-monthly summaries in two figures are obligatory, that is, total number of persons receiving food, and total quantity of foodstuffs distributed.

In every large consuming centre (large or medium towns, military institutions in special settlements, etc.) we are feeding many extra people, former government officials who have crept into Soviet agencies, bourgeois lying low, profiteers, etc. There must be a determined drive to sift out these superfluous mouths who are breaking the fundamental law: He who does not work shall not eat. For this purpose, a responsible statistician must be appointed in all such places to study the returns of the census of August 28, 1920, and current statistical returns, and submit a signed report on the number of extra consumers every two months.

13. Building Industry

Answers must be on the same lines as the preceding. Local initiative and self-reliance are particularly important in this sphere and must be given particularly wide scope. Detailed information on the major measures and results is obligatory.

14. Model and Hopeless Enterprises and Establishments

A description of every enterprise, establishment and office connected with economic development and meriting the designation of model, or at least outstanding, or successful (in the event of there being none in the first two categories) is obligatory. Names of the members of the management boards of these establishments. Their methods. Results. Attitude of the workers and the population.

The same as regards hopeless and useless enterprises.

Of special importance is the question of closing down enterprises that are not absolutely essential (hopeless ones, such as might be closed down and their operations transferred to a smaller number of larger enterprises, etc.). Statistical summary of such superfluous establishments, their number and the order in which the Republic should gradually dispense with them.

15. Improvement in Economic Work

Enumerate major and model cases of improvements introduced by inventors and workers of exceptional ability. Give names; enumerate experiments which the local bodies regard as important, and so forth.

16. Bonuses in Kind

This is one of the most important factors in socialist development. The enlistment of labour is one of the most important and difficult problems of socialism.

Practical experience in this field must be systematically collected, recorded and studied.

Obligatory bi-monthly reports showing how many bonuses issued, what the bonuses consist of, what branch of industry (separately forestry and all other branches of work). A comparison of the results, output, with the number of bonuses in kind issued?

Have there been any cases of bonuses being converted into a wage reserve? Report each case separately.

Have bonuses been issued to conspicuously successful enterprises and individual workers? Give exact details of each case.

Investigate: can a local product be obtained (for export, or one particularly valuable for use in Russia) by increasing the bonuses in kind by a given quantity? This is highly important, because if this survey is properly conducted across the country we shall discover many valuable products which we could profitably export, even if we have to import a certain quantity of goods for the bonuses in kind.

17. The Trade Unions. Their Part in Production

The gubernia trade union councils and the uyezd trade union bodies must immediately appoint reporters and their deputies who must, on their own, and with the help of local statisticians, draw up bi-monthly reports on the subject.

As regards production propaganda, give exact facts and figures on lectures, meetings and demonstrations, with the names of organisers, etc.

But of even greater importance than production propaganda are the facts about the part the factory committees and the trade unions in general actually play in production. Forms of participation? Describe every typical case. Practical results. Compare establishments where the participation of the trade union in production is well, or fairly well, organised, with those where it is not.

The question of labour discipline is particularly important. Reports on the number of absentees are obligatory. Compare factories where labour discipline is bad with those where it is good.

Methods of improving labour discipline.

Comrades' disciplinary courts. How many, and when established? How many cases examined per month? Results?

18. Stealing

While some organisations are aware of this widespread evil and are fighting it, there are others which report that "in the department, office or factory in our charge, there is no stealing", "everything is in order".

Precise bi-monthly reports are obligatory. How many offices, establishments, and so forth, send in information? How many do not?

Brief summary of this information.

The measures taken to combat stealing.

Are managers, management boards, or factory committees called to account (for laxity in combating stealing)?

Are people searched? Are other methods of control employed; if so, what are they?

Is the new law on commodity exchange, and on the permission given the workers to retain part of their output for this purpose, having the effect of reducing stealing? Give precise details.

Local warehouses, that is, warehouses located in the given district, and belonging to the state or to the local authorities. Brief summary of the reports on these warehouses, giving the date on which each was sent.

Reports by the local authorities on state warehouses. Methods of protection. Stealing. Number of persons employed, etc.

19. Profiteering

Extent of this according to local information. Predominating type of profiteer. Workers? Peasants? Railway employees? Other Soviet employees? And so forth.

State of the railways and waterways.

Measures to combat profiteering and results obtained.

What records are being kept of profiteers and profiteering?

20. Use of Army Units for Labour

Labour armies. Composition, numerical strength, and performance. Methods of accounting? Attitude of the local population?

Other forms of using army units—ditto universal military training units—for labour purposes.

Numerical strength of local army units—ditto local universal military training administration, and number of youths undergoing training in the units.

Concrete cases of employment of youths undergoing universal military training and Red Army men for definite forms of control work, sanitary inspection, help to the local population, various economic operations. Give a detailed

description of each case, or if there are a number of cases give two typical ones: the most and the least successful.

21. Labour Service and Labour Mobilisation

How are the local departments of the People's Commissariat for Labour organised? What are they doing?

Brief summaries of their reports sent to the People's Commissariat for Labour; give date on which each report was sent.

Describe, not less than once in four months, two typical cases of labour mobilisation; the most and the least successful.

Enumerate purposes for which labour service was enforced. Total figures of the number engaged and results of work done.

What part do the local departments of the Central Statistical Board play in organising labour service and labour mobilisation?

THIRD GROUP OF QUESTIONS

22. Regional and Local Economic Councils

When and how were the economic councils established in the localities at region, gubernia, uyezd and volost level? How is their work co-ordinated between themselves and with the village committees, the factory committees?

Economic councils of district Soviets in big towns. Their composition, work, how is the work organised, relations with the city Soviets?

Are there any district committees and district economic councils? Are they necessary? Is it necessary to set up the larger factory or industrial settlements, with their environs, as separate areas, and so forth?

23. Gosplan (the State General Planning Commission of the C.L.D.) and Its Relationships with Local Economic Bodies

Are there any regional bodies of Gosplan? Or special representatives of the latter? Or groups of experts acting in such a capacity?

Is the work of the local bodies co-ordinated with Gosplan's? If so, how? Is such co-ordination necessary?

24. Electrification

Have the gubernia and uyezd libraries copies of the Plan for the Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R., which was submitted as a report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets? If so, how many copies? If not, it shows that the local delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets are dishonest and ought to be expelled from the Party and dismissed from their responsible posts, or else they are idlers who should be taught to do their duty by a term of imprisonment (at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, 1,500-2,000 copies were handed out for local libraries).

What measures have been taken to carry out the decision of the Eighth Congress of Soviets to conduct extensive propaganda of the electrification plan? How many articles on the subject have appeared in the local newspapers? How many lectures have been delivered? Number of persons attending these?

Have all local workers with theoretical or practical knowledge of electricity been mobilised for the purpose of delivering lectures on, or teaching, the subject? Number of such persons? How is their work being conducted? Are the local or nearest electric power stations utilised for lectures and purposes of instruction? Number of such stations?

How many educational establishments have included the electrification plan in their syllabus, in conformity with the decision of the Eighth Congress of Soviets?

Has anything practical been done towards carrying out this plan? Or any electrification work outside the plan? If so, what has been done?

Is there a local plan and schedule of work on electrification?

25. Commodity Exchange with Foreign Countries

It is absolutely obligatory for all border areas to answer this question, but not only for them. Uyezds and gubernias adjacent to border areas also have opportunities for engaging in such commodity exchange and observing how it is organised. Furthermore, as indicated above (Point 16:

Bonuses in Kind), localities even very remote from the border have opportunities to engage in commodity exchange with foreign countries.

State of the ports? Protection of the border? Volume and forms of trade? Brief summaries of the reports on this sent to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade, giving the date on which each report was sent.

Supervision of the work of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade by the local economic councils? Their opinions on practical organisation and results?

26. Railway, Water and Local Transport

Brief summaries of the reports sent to the appropriate department, giving date on which each report was sent.

State of affairs appraised from the local standpoint.

Defects in the transport system. Measures taken to improve it and their results?

The state of local transport facilities, and measures taken to improve them.

27. Press Publicity for Economic Work

Local publications and *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*. How is economic work treated in the press? Participation of non-Party people? Verification and appraisal of practical experience?

Circulation of local publications and of *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*? Are they available at the libraries and accessible to the public?

Publication of pamphlets and books on economic development. Give list of the publications issued.

Demand for foreign literature: to what extent is it satisfied? Are the publications of the Bureau of Foreign Science and Technology delivered? If so, what opinion is expressed about them? Other foreign publications in Russian and other languages?

FOURTH GROUP OF QUESTIONS

This group should include questions chosen at the discretion of and suggested by the local bodies themselves, and by individuals; moreover, these questions may have a

direct or indirect, close or remote, connection with economic development.

These reports must be drawn up in co-operation with the members of the local staffs of the Central Statistical Board. Whether this is done by them, or any other persons, is up to the local economic council to decide, but the co-operation of the gubernia statistical bureau and uyezd statisticians is obligatory. Every report and every answer to a question, if written by different persons, must be signed by the author, giving his official position, if he holds one. Responsibility for the reports rests on the authors, and the local economic councils as a whole, and it shall be their duty to send in regular, punctual and truthful reports.

Wherever there is a shortage of local workers, courses of instruction in the compilation of reports must be organised under the supervision of statisticians and comrades, specially appointed for the purpose (from the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and other bodies). The names of the persons responsible for these courses and the schedule of instruction must be published.

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Lenin

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TENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

May 26-28, 1921

REPORT ON THE TAX IN KIND MAY 26

Comrades, I had occasion to discuss, for the benefit of the Party, the question of the tax in kind in a pamphlet with which, I suppose, the majority of you are familiar.³⁵ That this question has been brought up for discussion at a Party conference came as a surprise to me, for I had not seen anything to indicate that this was called for. But very many of the comrades who have visited the localities, notably Comrade Osinsky upon his return from a tour of a number of gubernias, informed the Central Committee—and this was corroborated by several other comrades—that locally the policy which had taken shape in connection with the tax in kind remained largely unexplained and partly even misunderstood. In view of its exceptional importance, additional discussion at a Party conference seemed so necessary that it was decided to convene the conference earlier than scheduled.

You are aware that we in the Central Committee have decided to divide the report on this point into four parts, to be given by four rapporteurs: Kamenëv, on the work of the co-operatives; Milyutin, on small-scale industry; Comrade Svidersky, on the precise calculations and proposals of the People's Commissariat for Food, and the related organisational measures; the instructions and regulations on the tax system, partly approved, and partly to be approved shortly, by the Council of People's Commissars, are of especial importance in this connection. Finally, Comrade Khinchuk is to be the fourth rapporteur; he has been relieved of all his duties in the People's Commissariat for

Food to allow him to concentrate entirely on the co-operatives, as Chairman of Tsentrosoyuz.*

It has been decided, as the chief principle, that the commodity exchange in this case is to be handled by the People's Commissariat for Food, mostly and even chiefly, through Tsentrosoyuz and the co-operatives. These relations between the People's Commissariat for Food and Tsentrosoyuz should be formalised in an agreement, stating that all the goods available for exchange shall be handed over by the People's Commissariat for Food to Tsentrosoyuz. This makes the latter's role quite clear, and there is no need to go into it in detail. Thus, it has fallen to me to introduce the question of the general significance of this policy, and I should merely like to supplement what I have already said in the pamphlet. I have no direct information as to how this question is being presented in the localities or to the flaws, defects and unclarity that there prevail. I may have to elaborate certain points later on, when it becomes clearer from the questions that are raised at the conference, or from the subsequent debate, how the local officials and the Party are to be oriented.

As far as I can see, the misunderstandings and lack of clarity on the political tasks connected with the tax in kind and the New Economic Policy are perhaps due to the exaggeration of this or that aspect of the matter. But until we have organised this work on practical lines, these exaggerations are absolutely inevitable; and until we have carried out at least one food campaign on the new lines, it will hardly be possible at all to give any precise definition to the real limits for the application of this or that specific feature of this policy. I shall deal only in general outline with some of the contradictions which, as far as I could judge from several notes sent up at the meeting, have given rise to most misunderstanding. The tax in kind and the attendant changes in our policy are often interpreted as a sign of a drastic reversal of policy. It is not surprising that this interpretation is taken up and made most of by the whiteguard, particularly the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik, press abroad. I do not know whether it is due to the operation of similar influences which have made

* Central Council of Co-operative Societies.—*Ed.*

themselves felt on the territory of the R.S.F.S.R., or to the acute discontent which was, and perhaps still is, evident in certain circles, owing to the extreme aggravation of the food situation, but this sort of perplexity may have spread to some extent even in this country and created what is largely a wrong conception of the significance of the change that has been brought about and of the character of the new policy.

Naturally, in view of the fact that the peasantry preponderates enormously among the population, the principal task—of our policy in general, and of our economic policy in particular—is to establish definite relations between the working class and the peasantry. For the first time in modern history we have a social system from which the exploiting class has been eliminated but in which there are two different classes—the working class and the peasantry. The enormous preponderance of the peasantry could not but have an effect on our economic policy, and our policy in general. The principal problem that still confronts us—and will inevitably confront us for many years to come—is that of establishing proper relations between these two classes, proper from the standpoint of abolishing classes. The enemies of the Soviet power discuss the formula of agreement between the working class and the peasantry with such frequency, and so very often use it against us, because it is so vague. Agreement between the working class and the peasantry may be taken to mean anything. Unless we assume that, from the working-class standpoint, an agreement is possible in principle, permissible, and correct only if it supports the dictatorship of the working class and is one of the measures aimed at the abolition of classes, then, of course, it remains a formula on which all the enemies of the Soviet power, all the enemies of the dictatorship, operate. How is this agreement to be realised in the first period of our revolution, i. e., the period which we can now approximately consider as coming to a close? How was the dictatorship of the proletariat maintained and consolidated amidst the enormous preponderance of the peasant population? It is the Civil War that was the principal reason, the principal motive force, and the principal determinant of our agreement. Although, in many cases, the Civil War was started with the whiteguards, the Socialist-Revolutionaries,

and the Mensheviks jointly participating in the alliance against us, it invariably led to all the Socialist-Revolutionary Constituent Assembly and Menshevik elements finding themselves—either through a *coup d'état* or otherwise—driven into the background, which left the capitalist and landowner elements to head the whiteguard movement. That was the case under Kolchak and Denikin, and all the numerous smaller regimes and during campaigns against us. It was the principal factor that determined the form of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. This circumstance multiplied our incredible difficulties, but upon the other hand, it spared us the necessity of racking our brains over how to apply the alliance formula, for it and the conditions of its realisation were both dictated by the circumstances of war, leaving us no choice whatsoever.

Only the working class could exercise the dictatorship in the form demanded by the Civil War and its conditions. The participation of the landowners in this war united the working class and the peasantry absolutely, unreservedly and irrevocably. In that respect there was no internal political wavering whatsoever. Amidst the gigantic difficulties that confronted us because Russia was cut off from her principal grain areas and food hardships had been aggravated to the extreme, we could not have carried out our food policy in practice without the appropriation of surplus grain. This meant taking not only the surplus stocks of grain, which would hardly have sufficed even if they had been properly distributed. I cannot here deal in detail with the irregularities which the system brought in its train. At all events, it served its main purpose—keeping industry going even when we were almost completely cut off from the grain districts. But this could have been at all satisfactory only in conditions of war. As soon as we had finally done away with the external enemy—and this became a fact only in 1921—another task confronted us, the task of establishing an *economic* alliance between the working class and the peasantry. It was only in the spring of 1921 that we actually got down to this task, and that was when the 1920 crop failure had worsened the condition of the peasantry to an incredible degree, and when we first witnessed some internal political wavering, which did not

result from external enemy pressure, but from the relations between the working class and the peasantry. If we had had a very good, or at least a good, harvest in 1920, if the surplus appropriations had yielded 400 million out of the planned 420 million poods of grain, we would have been able to fulfil the greater part of our industrial programme and would have had a stock of manufactured urban goods to exchange for agricultural produce. But the opposite happened. A fuel crisis, even more acute than the food crisis, developed in some places and it was utterly impossible to satisfy the needs of the peasant farms in urban manufactures. Peasant farming was gripped by an incredibly acute crisis. Those were the circumstances that suggested that we could not possibly continue with the old food policy. We had to bring up the question of what economic basis we required immediately for the alliance between the working class and the peasantry as a stepping stone to further measures.

The stepping stone is to prepare the exchange of industrial goods for agricultural produce; to create a system under which the peasant would not have to surrender his produce otherwise than in exchange for urban and factory-made goods, but which would not subordinate him to any of the forms existing under the capitalist system. In view of the prevailing economic conditions, however, we could not even think about that. That is why we have adopted the transitional form I have spoken about, namely, to take produce in the form of a tax without giving any equivalent, and to obtain additional produce through the medium of exchange. But this requires an appropriate fund; ours is extremely small, and the possibility of augmenting it through foreign trade has arisen only this year, as a result of a number of agreements with capitalist countries. It is true that these are as yet a mere introduction, a foreword; no real trade has yet begun. There is continued sabotage and all sorts of attempts to disrupt these agreements by most or the greater part of the capitalist circles, and the most characteristic thing is that the Russian whiteguard press, including the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press, is hammering away at these agreements with more venom than at anything else. It is absolutely clear that the bourgeoisie is better prepared for the fight, that it is more developed than the proletariat, that its class-consciousness has

been given a keener edge by all the "trouble" it has had to put up with, and that it is betraying an abnormal sensitiveness. A close look at the whiteguard press will show that it is hitting out at the very point that is the centre, the pivot, of our policy.

After the failure of the military invasion, which has quite obviously collapsed, although the struggle is still on, the whole of the whiteguard Russian press has set itself an unattainable aim: to tear up the trade agreements. The campaign which was started this spring on an extremely extensive scale, with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the forefront of the counter-revolutionary forces, had a definite aim—to tear up the economic agreements between Russia and the capitalist world by this spring; and to a considerable extent they succeeded in achieving their aim. It is true that we have concluded the principal agreements—their number is increasing—and we are overcoming the growing resistance to them. But there has been a very dangerous delay; for, without some assistance from abroad, rehabilitation of large-scale industry and restoration of regular exchange of commodities will either be impossible or will mean very dangerous delay. These are the conditions in which we are obliged to act, and these are the conditions which for the peasants have brought the question of restoring trade to the forefront. I shall not deal with the question of concessions, because it has been debated most at Party meetings, and has not lately given rise to any perplexity. The position is that we are continuing our assiduous offers of concessions, but the foreign capitalists have not yet received a single sizable concession, and we have not yet concluded any really serious concessions agreement. The whole difficulty lies in finding a way of enlisting West-European capital that has been tested in practice.

Theoretically, it is absolutely indisputable—and it seems to me that everyone's doubts on this score have been dispelled—theoretically, I say, it is absolutely clear that it would be to our advantage to pay off European capital with a few score or hundreds of millions, which we could give it in order to augment, in the shortest possible time, our stocks of equipment, materials, raw materials and machinery for the purpose of restoring our large-scale industry.

Large-scale industry is the one and only real basis upon which we can multiply our resources and build a socialist society. Without large factories, such as capitalism has created, without highly developed large-scale industry, socialism is impossible anywhere; still less is it possible in a peasant country, and we in Russia have a far more concrete knowledge of this than before; so that instead of speaking about restoring large-scale industry in some indefinite and abstract way, we now speak of the definite, precisely calculated and concrete plan of electrification. We have a precise plan projected by the best Russian specialists and scientists, a plan which gives us a definite picture of the resources, considering Russia's natural features, with which we can, must and will lay the basis of large-scale industry for our economy. Without it, no real socialist foundation for our economic life is possible. This remains absolutely indisputable, and if, in connection with the tax in kind, we have lately spoken about it in abstract terms, we must now say definitely that we must first of all restore large-scale industry. I myself have heard statements of this kind from several comrades, and all I could do in reply was, of course, to shrug my shoulders. It is absolutely ridiculous and absurd to assume that we could ever lose sight of this fundamental aim. The only question that arises here is: how could such doubts and perplexity arise in the minds of comrades, and how could they think that this key task, without which the material production basis of socialism is impossible, has been pushed into the background? These comrades must have misunderstood the relation between our state and small industry. Our main task is to restore large-scale industry, but in order to approach this task at all seriously and systematically we must restore small industry. Both this year, 1921, and last year, we had great gaps in our efforts to restore large-scale industry.

In the autumn and winter of 1920 we started several important branches of our large-scale industry, but we had to suspend them again. Why? Many factories were able to obtain enough manpower and sufficient supplies of raw materials; why then was work at these factories suspended? Because we were short of food and fuel. Without a state reserve of 400 million poods of grain (I take an approximate figure) backed up by regular monthly

allotments, it is difficult to talk about any sort of regular economic development or of restoring large-scale industry. Without it we find that after having started work on restoring large-scale industry and continuing it for several months we have had to suspend it again. Most of the few factories that were started are now idle. Without fully assured and adequate food stocks the state cannot concentrate on systematically organising the rehabilitation of large-scale industry, organising it on a modest scale, perhaps, but in such a way as to keep it going continuously.

As regards fuel, until the Donbas is restored, and until we obtain a regular supply of oil, we shall have to continue to rely on timber, on firewood, which again means dependence on small-scale production.

That explains the mistake of those comrades who failed to understand why it is the peasant who must now be placed in the centre of things. Some workers say: the peasants are being favoured, but we get nothing. I have heard such talk, but I must say I think it is not very widespread, for such talk is dangerous, because it echoes the Socialist-Revolutionaries. It is an obvious political provocation; and is, besides, a survival of craft—not class—but craft-union prejudices of workers, when the working class regards itself a part of equitable capitalist society and fails to realise that it still stands on the old capitalist basis. These workers say, in fact: the peasant is being favoured, he has been relieved of surplus-grain appropriation, he is allowed to retain his grain surplus for the purpose of exchange; we workers at the bench want to have the same thing.

What is at the bottom of this point of view? It is, in essence, the old petty-bourgeois ideology: since the peasants are a component part of capitalist society, the working class also remains a component part of this society; hence, if the peasant trades, we too must trade. Here we undoubtedly see a revival of the old prejudices which grapple the worker to the old world. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are the most ardent and, in fact, the only sincere, champions of the old capitalist world. You will find none among the hundreds, the thousands, and even the hundreds of thousands in all the other camps. But these rare specimens remain among the so-called pure democrats, whom the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks represent. And the more

persistently they advocate their views, the more dangerous is their influence over the working class. They are doubly dangerous when the working class has to go through periods of suspended production. The principal material basis for the development of proletarian class-consciousness is large-scale industry, where the worker sees the factories running, and daily feels the power that can really abolish classes.

When the workers lose their footing in this material production basis, some of them are beset by a sense of instability, uncertainty, despair and skepticism, and this has a definite effect when combined with outright provocations by our bourgeois democrats, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. This produces a mentality which makes people, even in the ranks of the Communist Party, reason in this way: the peasants were given a handout; for the same reasons, and by the same methods, a handout should be given to the workers. We have had to yield to this mentality to some extent. The decree on bonuses to workers in the form of a part of the goods they produce is, of course, a concession to these sentiments, which have their roots in the past and are engendered by skepticism and despair. Within certain small limits, this concession was necessary. It has been made. But we must not for a moment forget that we have been making a concession that is necessary from no other standpoint but the economic one: the interests of the proletariat. Its basic and most vital interests are bound up with the rehabilitation of large-scale industry as a solid economic foundation. When that is done, it will consolidate its dictatorship, it will be sure to carry its dictatorship to success, in the teeth of all the political and military difficulties. Why, then, were we obliged to make a concession, and why would it be extremely dangerous to give it a wider interpretation than it deserves? It is only because temporary food and fuel difficulties compelled us to take this path.

What is the principal economic determinant of the policy when we say, "We must not base our relations with the peasants on surplus-grain appropriation but on a tax"? It is that under the surplus-grain appropriation system the small peasant farms have no proper economic basis and are doomed to remain dead for many years. Small farming cannot exist and develop, because the petty farmer loses interest in

consolidating and developing his activity and in increasing his output, all of which leaves us without an economic basis. We have no other basis or source, and unless the state is able to accumulate large stocks of food it is no use thinking about the rehabilitation of large-scale industry. That is why we are first of all applying this policy which is changing our food relations.

We are conducting this policy so as to have a fund for the rehabilitation of large-scale industry; to relieve the working class from all interruption of work, which should not be experienced even by our large-scale industry, miserable though it is when compared with that of the advanced countries; to relieve the proletariat of the need to find the means of subsistence by resorting to the petty-bourgeois method of profiteering, which is not a proletarian method and threatens us with the gravest economic dangers. Owing to our present deplorable conditions, proletarians are obliged to earn a living by methods which are not proletarian and are not connected with large-scale industry. They are obliged to procure goods by petty-bourgeois profiteering methods, either by stealing, or by making them for themselves in a publicly-owned factory, in order to barter them for agricultural produce—and that is the main economic danger, jeopardising the existence of the Soviet system. The proletariat must now exercise its dictatorship in such a way as to have a sense of security as a class, with a firm footing. But the ground is slipping from under its feet. Instead of large, continuously running factories, the proletarian sees something quite different, and is compelled to enter the economic sphere as a profiteer, or as a small producer.

We must spare no sacrifice in this transitional period to save the proletariat from this. To ensure the continuous, if slow, rehabilitation of large-scale industry we must not hesitate to throw sops to the greedy foreign capitalists, because, from the standpoint of building socialism, it is at present to our advantage to overpay the foreign capitalists some hundreds of millions in order to obtain the machines and materials for the rehabilitation of large-scale industry, which will restore the economic basis of the proletariat, and will transform it into a steadfast proletariat, instead of one engaged in profiteering. The Mensheviks and Socialist-

Revolutionaries have deafened us with their shouts that since the proletariat has been declassed, we ought to abandon the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They have been shouting that since 1917, and the surprising thing is that they have not grown tired of shouting it up to 1921. But when we hear these attacks we do not say that there has been no declassing, and that there are no flaws. What we say is that Russian and international realities are such that even though the proletariat has to go through a period when it is declassed, and has to suffer from these handicaps, it can nevertheless fulfil its task of winning and holding political power.

It would be absurd and ridiculous to deny that the fact that the proletariat is declassed is a handicap. By 1921, we realised that after the struggle against the external enemy, the main danger and the greatest evil confronting us was our inability to ensure the continuous operation of the few remaining large enterprises. This is the main thing. Without such an economic basis, the working class cannot firmly hold political power. In order to ensure the continued rehabilitation of large-scale industry we must organise the food supply in such a way as to collect and properly distribute a fund of, say, 400 million poods. It would be utterly impossible for us to collect it through the old surplus-grain appropriation system: 1920 and 1921 are proof of this. Now we see that we can nonetheless fulfil this extremely difficult task by means of the tax in kind. We cannot fulfil it with the old methods, and so we must try some new ones. It can be done by means of the tax in kind and by establishing proper relations with the peasant as a small producer. We have devoted considerable effort to prove this theoretically.

I think, judging by the Party press and by what is being said at meetings, that it has been fully proved theoretically that this task can be fulfilled if the proletariat retains possession of the transport system, the big factories, the economic basis as well as political power. We must give the peasant a fair amount of leeway as a small producer. Unless we revive peasant farming we shall not solve the food problem.

It is within this framework that we must deal with the question of developing small industry on the basis of

unrestricted trade and free turnover. This free turnover is a means to establish economically stable relations between the working class and the peasantry. We now have more and more precise data on agricultural output. A pamphlet on grain output was distributed at the Party Congress; it was still in proofs when it was distributed to the delegates. Since then the material contained in it has been supplemented and circulated. The pamphlet in its final form has now been sent to the press, but it is not yet ready for the conference, and I am unable to say whether it will be ready before the conference comes to a close and the delegates disperse. We shall do all we can to get it out in time, but we cannot promise to do so.

This is a small part of our effort to determine, as precisely as possible, the position in regard to agricultural output, and the resources at our disposal.

Still, we can say that there is evidence that we are quite able to solve this economic problem, particularly this year, when the harvest prospects are not too bad, or not as bad as we anticipated in spring. This assures us of the possibility of accumulating an agricultural reserve that will enable us to devote ourselves entirely to the task of steadily, even if slowly, restoring our large-scale industry.

In order to solve the problem of accumulating food stocks for industry we must devise a form of relations with the peasant, the small proprietor, and there is no other form except that of the tax in kind; no one has come up with another form, and none can be imagined. But we must have a practical solution of this problem: we must arrange to have the tax collected in a proper manner, and not in the old way, when grain was taken two or three times, leaving the peasant in a worse plight than ever, inflicting the most suffering on the more industrious and destroying every possibility of establishing economically stable relations. The tax in kind, while also a levy on every peasant, must be collected in a different way. On the basis of the collected and published data we can say that the tax in kind will now bring about a crucial change, but whether it will cover everything is still, to some extent, an open question. Of one thing we can be quite certain, however, and it is that we must bring about an immediate improvement in the condition of the peasant.

The task that confronts the local workers is to collect the tax in kind in full, and do so in the shortest possible time. The difficulties are increased by the fact that the harvest promises to be an unusually early one this year, and if our preparations are based on the customary dates, we run the risk of being too late. That is why the early convocation of the Party conference was important and opportune. We must work more quickly than before to prepare the apparatus for collecting the tax in kind. The accumulation of a minimum state fund of 240 million poods of grain and the possibility of making the position of the peasant secure depend on the speed with which the tax in kind is collected. Delay in collecting it will cause a certain amount of inconvenience to the peasant. The tax will not be paid voluntarily, we shall not be able to dispense with coercion, for the levy imposes some restrictions on the peasant farm. If we drag out the process of collecting the tax, the peasant will be discontent and will say that he is not free to dispose of his surplus. If the freedom is to be such in practice, the tax must be collected quickly; the tax-collector must not hover over the peasant for long, and so the period between the harvesting and the collection of the tax in full must be reduced to a minimum.

That is one task. The other is to maximise the peasant's freedom of trade and the revival of small-scale industry, so as to allow some leeway to the capitalism that grows up on the basis of small private property and petty trade. We should not be afraid of it, for it is not dangerous to us in the least.

We need not fear it at all in view of the general economic and political situation that has now arisen, with the proletariat controlling all the sources of large-scale production, and denationalisation in any shape or form entirely out of the question. At a time when we are suffering most of all from a severe shortage of goods and utter impoverishment, it is ridiculous to fear the threat of capitalism based on small commercial agriculture. To fear it is to fail altogether to take account of the relation of forces in our economy. It means to fail to understand that the peasant economy, as a small-scale peasant economy, cannot be stable at all without some free exchange and the attendant capitalist relations.

This is what you must firmly impress on your minds, comrades. And our main task is to give a push to the comrades in all the localities, to give them the utmost scope for initiative, to stimulate them to display the utmost self-reliance and boldness. In this respect we are still suffering from the fear of doing things on a really wide scale. We have no more or less definitely tabulated local data showing from practical experience what the situation is in regard to local goods exchange and trade, what success has been achieved in restoring and developing small industry—which can alleviate the condition of the peasant right away, without the great effort of transporting large stocks of food and fuel to the industrial centres that large-scale industry entails. From the general economic standpoint, not enough is being done locally in this respect. We have no information on this from the localities, we do not know what the position is all over the Republic, we have no examples of really well-organised work; and my impression is that the Trade Union Congress and the Congress of the Supreme Economic Council³⁶ have none either.

Here again, the principal defect of these congresses is that we devote ourselves mainly to such threadbare things as theses, general programmes and arguments, instead of giving the participants a chance to swap local experience and say, on returning home: "Out of a thousand examples we heard one good one, and we shall follow it." Actually, we have not only one good example in a thousand, we have many more; but least of all do we see congress work arranged in this way.

I have no wish to forestall events, but I must say a word or two about collective supplies for the workers, i.e., about the proposal to substitute for the ration system a system under which certain factories that are actually in operation will be assured of a certain quantity of food in proportion to their output. The idea is an excellent one, but we have turned it into something semi-fantastic, without however doing any real preparatory work for it. We have no example as yet of any particular factory, even one employing a small number of workers, in a particular uyezd, having tried out this system and having secured such-and-such results. That is something we do not as yet have, and it is one of the greatest drawbacks in our work. We must keep repeating that instead of discussing general problems, which was all

very well in 1918, i.e., in the long distant past, we must, in this 1921, discuss practical problems. By telling congresses first of all about the examples of well-organised work.—there are quite enough of them—we would make it an obligation for the rest to strive to imitate the best that has been achieved in a few rare and exceptional localities. I have in mind the work of the Trade Union Congress, but it also applies to all work connected with the food problem.

Quite a lot has been done in some cases, in a few localities, to prepare for the collection of the tax in kind, the organisation of trade, etc., but we have not managed to study this experience; and the great task that confronts us now is to induce the vast majority of the localities to follow the example of the best. Our task now is to study practical experience and raise the backward and medium uyezds and volosts, the standard of which is absolutely unsatisfactory, to the level of the insignificant number of highly satisfactory ones. At our congresses we must shift our main attention from the study of general theses and programmes of meetings to the study of practical experience, to the study of the examples set by the satisfactory and highly satisfactory districts, and to raising the backward and medium ones, which predominate, to the level of these good ones, which may be few but are still there.

Those are the remarks to which I must confine myself.
(*Applause.*)

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konferentsii R.K.P.(B.)* (Bulletin
of the All-Russia Conference of
the R.C.P.(B)) Nos. 1 and 2

Vol. 32, pp. 402-16

THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

June 22-July 12, 1921

1

From THESES FOR A REPORT ON THE TACTICS OF THE R.C.P.

9. The Material Basis of Socialism and the Plan for the Electrification of Russia

A large-scale machine industry capable of reorganising agriculture is the only material basis that is possible for socialism. But we cannot confine ourselves to this general thesis. It must be made more concrete. Large-scale industry based on the latest achievements of technology and capable of reorganising agriculture implies the electrification of the whole country. We had to undertake the scientific work of drawing up such a plan for the electrification of the R.S.F.S.R. and we have accomplished it. With the co-operation of over two hundred of the best scientists, engineers and agronomists in Russia, this work has now been completed; it was published in a large volume and, as a whole, endorsed by the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets in December 1920. Arrangements have now been made to convene an all-Russia congress of electrical engineers in August 1921 to examine this plan in detail, before it is given final government endorsement. The execution of the first part of the electrification scheme is estimated to take ten years, and will require about 370 million man-days.

In 1918, we had eight newly erected power stations (with a total capacity of 4,757 kw); in 1919, the figure rose to 36 (total capacity of 1,648 kw), and in 1920, it rose to 100 (total capacity of 8,699 kw).

Modest as this beginning is for our vast country, a start has been made, work has begun and is making steady progress. After the imperialist war, after a million prisoners of war in Germany had become familiar with modern up-to-date technique, after the stern but hardening experience of

three years of civil war, the Russian peasant is a different man. With every passing month he sees more clearly and more vividly that only the guidance given by the proletariat is capable of leading the mass of small farmers out of capitalist slavery to socialism.

Published as a pamphlet in 1921
in Moscow by the
Comintern's Press Department

Vol. 32, p. 459

From REPORT ON THE TACTICS OF THE R.C.P.
JULY 5

...I must once again emphasise that the only possible economic foundation of socialism is large-scale machine industry. Whoever forgets this is no Communist. We must analyse this problem concretely. We cannot present problems in the way the theoreticians of the old school of socialism do. We must present them in a practical manner. What is modern large-scale industry? It is *the electrification of the whole of Russia*. Sweden, Germany and America have almost achieved this, although they are still bourgeois. A Swedish comrade told me that in Sweden a large part of industry and thirty per cent of agriculture are electrified. In Germany and America, which are even more developed capitalistically, we see the same thing on a larger scale. Large-scale machine industry is nothing more nor less than the electrification of the whole country. We have already appointed a special commission consisting of the country's best economists and engineers. It is true that nearly all of them are hostile to the Soviet power. All these specialists will come over to communism, but not our way, not by way of twenty years of underground work, during which we unceasingly studied and repeated over and over again the ABC of communism.

Nearly all the Soviet government bodies were in favour of inviting the specialists. The expert engineers will come to us when we give them practical proof that this will increase the country's productive forces. It is not enough to prove it to them in theory; we must prove it to them in

practice, and we shall win these people over to our side if we present the problem differently, not from the standpoint of the theoretical propaganda of communism. We say: large-scale industry is the only means of saving the peasantry from want and starvation. Everyone agrees with this. But how can it be done? The restoration of industry on the old basis will entail too much labour and time. We must give industry a more modern form, i.e., we must adopt electrification. This will take much less time. We have already drawn up the plans for electrification. More than two hundred specialists—almost to a man opposed to the Soviet power—worked on it with keen interest, although they are not Communists. From the standpoint of technical science, however, they had to admit that this was the only correct way. Of course, we have a long way to go before the plan is achieved. The cautious specialists say that the first series of works will take at least ten years. Professor Ballod has estimated that it would take three to four years to electrify Germany. But for us even ten years is not enough. In my theses I quote actual figures to show you how little we have been able to do in this sphere up to now. The figures I quote are so modest that it immediately becomes clear that they are more of propaganda than scientific value. But we must begin with propaganda. The Russian peasants who fought in the world war and lived in Germany for several years learned how modern farming should be carried on in order to conquer famine. We must carry on extensive propaganda in this direction. Taken by themselves, these plans are not yet of great practical value, but their propaganda value is very great.

The peasants realise that something new must be created. They realise that this cannot be done by everybody working separately, but by the state working as a whole. The peasants who were prisoners of war in Germany found out what real cultural life is based on. Twelve thousand kilowatts is a very modest beginning. This may sound funny to the foreigner who is familiar with electrification in America, Germany or Sweden. But he laughs best who laughs last. It is, indeed, a modest beginning. But the peasants are beginning to understand that new work must be carried out on a grand scale, and that this work has already begun. Enormous difficulties will have to be overcome. We shall try to

establish relations with the capitalist countries. We must not regret having to give the capitalists several hundred million kilogrammes of oil on condition that they help us to electrify our country.

Newspaper report published on
July 9, 1921 in *Pravda* No. 144

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in *Bulleten III Kongressa
Kommunisticheskogo
Internatsionala* (Bulletin of the
Third Congress of the Communist
International) No. 17

Vol. 32, pp. 492-94

**TO THE PRESIDUM
OF THE EIGHTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS³⁷**

I regret very much that I am unable to greet your Congress in person.

I have on more than one occasion expressed my opinion on the importance of the book *A Plan for Electrification* and still more so of electrification itself. Large-scale machine industry and its extension to agriculture is the only possible economic basis for socialism, the only possible basis for a successful struggle to deliver mankind from the yoke of capital, to save mankind from the slaughter and mutilation of tens of millions of people in order to decide whether the British or German, the Japanese or American, etc., vultures are to have the advantage in dividing up the world.

The Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic has initiated the planned and systematic electrification of the country. However meagre and modest the beginning may be, however enormous the difficulties may be for the country which the landowners and capitalists have reduced to ruin in the course of four years of imperialist war and three years of civil war, and which the bourgeoisie of the whole world is watching, ready to pounce upon and convert into their colony, however slow, painfully slow, the progress in the electrification of our country may be, progress is nevertheless being made. With the assistance of your Congress, with the assistance of all the electrical engineers in Russia, and of a number of the best and progressive scientists in all parts of the world, by the heroic efforts of the vanguard of the workers and working

peasants, we shall cope with this task, and our country will be electrified.

I greet the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Electrical Engineers and wish you every success.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin),
Chairman of the Council of People's
Commissars

Written on October 8, 1921

Published on October 11, 1921 in
the *Bulleten VIII Vserossiiskogo
elektrotekhnicheskogo syezda*
(Bulletin of the 8th All-Russia
Congress of Electrical Engineers)
No. 3

Vol. 33, pp. 49-50

SEVENTH MOSCOW GUBERNIA CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

October 29-31, 1921

1

From REPORT ON THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY OCTOBER 29

The New Economic Policy was adopted because, in the spring of 1921, after our experience of direct socialist construction carried on under unprecedentedly difficult conditions, under the conditions of civil war, in which the bourgeoisie compelled us to resort to extremely hard forms of struggle, it became perfectly clear that we could not proceed with our direct socialist construction and that in a number of economic spheres we must retreat to state capitalism. We could not continue with the tactics of direct assault, but had to undertake the very difficult, arduous and unpleasant task of a long siege accompanied by a number of retreats. This is necessary to pave the way for the solution of the economic problem, i.e., that of the economic transition to socialist principles.

I cannot today quote figures, data, or facts to show the results of this policy of reverting to state capitalism. I shall give only one small example. You know that one of our principal industrial centres is the Donets Basin. You know that there we have some of the largest of the former capitalist enterprises, which are in no way inferior to the capitalist enterprises in Western Europe. You know also that our first task there was to restore the big industrial enterprises; it was easier for us to start the restoration of the Donets industry because we had a relatively small number of workers there. But what do we see there now, after the change of policy last spring? We see the very opposite, viz., that the development of production is particularly successful in the small mines which we have leased to peasants. We see the development of state capitalist relations. The peasant mines are working well and

are delivering to the state, by way of rent, about thirty per cent of their coal output. The development of production in the Donets Basin shows a considerable general improvement over last summer's catastrophic position; and this is largely due to the improvement of production in small mines, to their being exploited along the lines of state capitalism. I cannot here go into all the data on the question, but this example should clearly illustrate to you some of the practical results that have been achieved by the change of policy. A revival of economic life—and that is what we must have at all costs—and increased productivity—which we must also have at all costs—are what we are beginning to obtain as a result of the partial reversion to the system of state capitalism. Our ability, the extent to which we shall be able to apply this policy correctly in the future, will determine to what extent we shall continue to get good results.

I shall now go back and develop my main idea. Is our transition to the New Economic Policy in the spring, our retreat to the ways, means and methods of state capitalism, sufficient to enable us to stop the retreat and prepare for the offensive? No, it is not yet sufficient. And for this reason. To go back to the analogy I gave at the beginning (of direct assault and siege in war), we have not yet completed the redeployment of our forces, the redistribution of our stores and munitions, etc.; in short, we are not yet fully prepared for the new operations, which must be conducted on different lines in conformity with the new strategy and tactics. Since we are now passing to state capitalism, the question arises of whether we should try to prevent the methods which were suitable for the previous economic policy from hindering us now. It goes without saying, and our experience has proved it, that that is what we must secure. In the spring we said that we would not be afraid to revert to state capitalism, and that our task was to organise commodity exchange. A number of decrees and decisions, a vast number of newspaper articles, all our propaganda and all the laws passed since the spring of 1921 have been directed to the purpose of stimulating commodity exchange. What was implied by that term? What plan of development, if one may so express it, did it imply? It implied a more or less socialist exchange throughout the country of the products of industry for the products of agriculture, and by means of that commodity exchange the

restoration of large-scale industry as the sole basis of socialist organisation. But what happened? You are all now well aware of it from your own practical experience, and it is also evident from our press, that this system of commodity exchange has broken down; it has broken down in the sense that it has assumed the form of buying and selling. And we must now admit this if we do not want to bury our heads in the sand, if we do not want to be like those who do not know when they are beaten, if we are not afraid of looking danger straight in the face. We must admit that we have not retreated far enough, that we must make a further retreat, a further retreat from state capitalism to the creation of state-regulated buying and selling, to the money system. Nothing came of commodity exchange; the private market proved too strong for us; and instead of the exchange of commodities we got ordinary buying and selling, trade.

Take the trouble to adapt yourselves to this; otherwise, you will be overwhelmed by the wave of spontaneous buying and selling, by the money system!

That is why we find ourselves in the position of having to retreat still further, in order, eventually, to go over to the offensive. That is why we must all admit now that the methods of our previous economic policy were wrong. We must admit this in order to be able to understand the nature of the present position, the specific features of the transition that now lies ahead of us. We are not now confronted with urgent problems of foreign affairs; nor are we confronted with urgent war problems. We are now confronted mainly with economic problems, and we must bear in mind that the next stage cannot be a transition straight to socialist construction.

We have not been able to set our (economic) affairs in order in the course of three years. The devastation, impoverishment and cultural backwardness of our country were so great that it proved impossible to solve the problem in so short a time. But, taken as a whole, the assault left its mark and was useful.

Now we find ourselves in the position of having to retreat even a little further, not only to state capitalism, but to the state regulation of trade and the money system. Only in this way, a longer way than we expected, can we restore economic life. Unless we re-establish a regular system of economic

relations, restore small-peasant farming, and restore and further expand large-scale industry by our own efforts, we shall fail to extricate ourselves from the crisis. We have no other way out; and yet there are many in our ranks who still do not understand clearly enough that this economic policy is necessary. When we say, for example, that the task that confronts us is to make the state a wholesale merchant, or that it must learn to carry on wholesale trade, that our task is commercial, some people think it is very queer and even very terrible. They say: "If Communists have gone to the length of saying that the immediate task is to engage in trade, in ordinary, common, vulgar, paltry trade, what can remain of communism? Is this not enough to make anyone throw up his hands in despair and say, 'All is lost?'" If we look round, I think we shall find people who express sentiments of this kind, and such sentiments are very dangerous, because if they become widespread they would give many people a distorted view of things and prevent them from appraising our immediate tasks soberly. If we concealed from ourselves, from the working class, from the masses the fact that we retreated in the economic field in the spring of 1921, and that we are continuing the retreat now, in the autumn and winter of 1921-22, we would be certifying to our own lack of political consciousness; it would prove that we lacked the courage to face the present situation. It would be impossible to work and fight under such conditions.

If an army which found that it was unable to capture a fortress by direct assault declared that it refused to leave the old positions and occupy new ones, refused to adopt new methods of achieving its object, one would say that that army had learnt to attack, but had not learnt to retreat when certain severe conditions made it necessary, and would, therefore, never win the war. There has never been a war in history that was an uninterrupted victorious advance from beginning to end—at any rate, such wars are very rare exceptions. This applies to ordinary wars—but what about wars which decide the fate of a whole class, which decide the issue of socialism or capitalism? Are there reasonable grounds for assuming that a nation which is attempting to solve this problem for the first time can immediately find the only correct and infallible method? What grounds are

there for assuming that? None whatever! Experience teaches the very opposite. Of the problems we tackled, not one was solved at the first attempt; every one of them had to be taken up a second time. After suffering defeat we tried again, we did everything all over again; if we could not find an absolutely correct solution to a problem we tried to find one that was at least satisfactory. That is how we acted in the past, and that is how we must continue to act in the future. If, in view of the prospects before us, there were no unanimity in our ranks it would be a very sad sign that an extremely dangerous spirit of despondency had lodged itself in the Party. If, however, we are not afraid to speak the sad and bitter truth straight out, we shall learn, we shall unflinchingly and certainly learn to overcome all our difficulties.

We must take our stand on the basis of existing capitalist relations. Will this task scare us? Shall we say that it is not communist? If so, then we have failed to understand the revolutionary struggle, we have failed to understand that the struggle is very intense and is accompanied by extremely abrupt changes, which we cannot brush aside under any circumstances.

I shall now sum up.

I shall touch upon the question that occupies many people's minds. If today, in the autumn and winter of 1921, we are making another retreat, when will the retreat stop? We often hear this question put directly or not quite directly. This question recalls to my mind a similar question that was asked in the period of the Brest peace. When we concluded the Brest peace we were asked, "If you concede this, that and the other to German imperialism, when will the concessions stop? And what guarantee is there that they will stop? And in making these concessions, are you not making the position more dangerous?" Of course, we are making our position more dangerous; but you must not forget the fundamental laws of every war. War itself is always dangerous. There is not a moment in time of war when you are not surrounded by danger. And what is the dictatorship of the proletariat? It is war, much more cruel, much more prolonged and much more stubborn than any other war has ever been. Here danger threatens us at every step.

The position which our New Economic Policy has created—the development of small commercial enterprises, the leasing of state enterprises, etc.—entails the development of capitalist relations; and anybody who fails to see this shows that he has lost his head entirely. It goes without saying that the consolidation of capitalist relations in itself increases the danger. But can you point to a single path in revolution, to any stage and method that would not have its dangers? The disappearance of danger would mean that the war had come to an end, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat had ceased. Of course, not a single one among us thinks that anything like that is possible at the present moment. Every step in the New Economic Policy entails a series of dangers. When we said in the spring that we would substitute the tax in kind for requisitioning, that we would pass a decree granting freedom to trade in the surplus grain left over after the tax in kind had been paid, we thereby gave capitalism freedom to develop. Failure to understand this means losing sight of the fundamental economic relations; and it means that you are depriving yourself of the opportunity to look round and act as the situation demands. Of course, the methods of struggle have changed; the dangers spring from other sources. When the question of establishing the power of the Soviets, of dissolving the Constituent Assembly was being decided, political danger threatened us. That danger proved to be insignificant. When the period of civil war set in—civil war backed by the capitalists of the whole world—the military danger, a far more formidable danger, arose. And when we changed our economic policy, the danger became still greater, because, consisting as it does of a vast number of economic, workaday trifles, which one usually becomes accustomed to and fails to notice, economics calls for special attention and effort and more peremptorily demands that we learn the proper methods of overcoming this danger. The restoration of capitalism, the development of the bourgeoisie, the development of bourgeois relations in the sphere of trade, etc.—this constitutes the danger that is peculiar to our present period of economic development, to our present gradual approach to the solution of problems that are far more difficult than previous problems have been. There must not be the slightest misunderstanding about this.

We must understand that the present concrete conditions call for the state regulation of trade and the money system, and it is precisely in this field that we must show what we are capable of. There are more contradictions in our economic situation now than there were before the New Economic Policy was adopted; there is a partial, slight improvement in the economic position of some sections of the population, of the few; there is an extreme disproportion between economic resources and the essential needs of other sections, of the majority. Contradictions have increased. And it goes without saying that in making this very sharp change we cannot escape from these contradictions at one bound.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasise the three main points of my report. First, the general question—in what respect must we admit that our Party's economic line in the period preceding the New Economic Policy was wrong? By quoting the example of what had occurred during a certain war I tried to explain the necessity of passing from assault to siege tactics, the inevitability of assault tactics at first, and the need to realise the importance of new fighting methods after the assault tactics have failed.

Next, the first lesson, the first stage which we had reached by the spring of 1921—the development of state capitalism on new lines. Here certain successes can be recorded; but there are still unprecedented contradictions. We have not yet mastered this sphere of activity.

And third, after the retreat from socialist construction to state capitalism, which we were obliged to make in the spring of 1921, we see that the regulation of trade and the money system are on the order of the day. Remote from communism as the sphere of trade may seem to be, it is here that a specific problem confronts us. Only by solving that problem can we get down to the problem of meeting economic needs that are extremely urgent; and only in that way shall we be able to restore large-scale industry—by a longer and surer way, the only way now open to us.

These are the main factors in the New Economic Policy that we must always bear in mind. In solving the problems of this policy we must clearly see the fundamental lines of development so as to be able to keep our bearings in the seeming chaos in economic relations we now observe, when,

simultaneously with the break up of the old, we see the still feeble shoots of the new, and often employ methods that do not conform to the new conditions. Having set ourselves the task of increasing the productive forces and of restoring large-scale industry as the only basis for socialist society, we must operate in a way that will enable us to approach this task properly, and to solve it at all costs.

CLOSING SPEECH
OCTOBER 29

Comrades! Before replying to the observations submitted in writing I should like to say a few words in reply to the comrades who have spoken here. I should like to point to what I think is a misunderstanding in Comrade Larin's speech. Either I did not express myself clearly, or else he did not understand me properly; but he linked the question of regulation, which I dealt with in my speech, with the question of regulating industry. That is obviously wrong. I spoke about regulating trade and the money system and compared it with commodity exchange. To this I must add that if we want our policy, our decisions and our propaganda and agitation to be effective, and if we want to secure an improvement in our propaganda, agitation and decrees, we must not turn our backs on recent experience. Is it not true that we spoke about commodity exchange in the spring of 1921? Of course, it is; you all know it. Is it not true that commodity exchange, as a system, proved to be unsuited to the prevailing conditions, which have given rise to the money system, to buying and selling for money, instead of commodity exchange? There can be no doubt about this; the facts prove it. This answers both Comrade Stukov and Comrade Sorin, who spoke here about people imagining mistakes. Here is a striking example not of an imaginary, but of a real mistake.

The experience of our economic policy during the recent period, that commenced with the spring, has shown that in the spring of 1921 nobody challenged the New Economic Policy and that the whole Party, at congresses and conferences and in the press, had accepted it absolutely unanimously. The controversies that had raged previously did not

affect the new, unanimous decision in the least. This decision was based on the assumption that by means of commodity exchange we could achieve a more direct transition to socialist construction. But at present it is clear that we must go by a roundabout way—through trade.

Comrades Stukov and Sorin complained that there was a lot of talk about mistakes and begged us to refrain from inventing them. Of course, it is a very bad thing to invent mistakes; but it is utterly wrong to brush practical problems aside, as Comrade Gonikman does. He delivered quite an oration on the theme that "historical phenomena could not assume any other shape than they have done". That is absolutely incontrovertible, and, of course, we have all learnt this from the ABC of communism, the ABC of historical materialism, and the ABC of Marxism. Here is an argument based on these lines. Was Comrade Semkov's speech a historical phenomenon, or not? I maintain that it was. The very fact that this historical phenomenon could not assume any other shape than it did proves that nobody has invented mistakes and that nobody maliciously wanted members of the Party to give way—or maliciously wanted to permit them to give way—to despondency, dismay and dejection. Comrades Stukov and Sorin were very much afraid that the admission of mistakes would be harmful in one way or another, wholly or partly, directly or indirectly, because it would spread despondency and dejection. The purpose I had in mind in giving these examples was to show that the crux of the matter is this—has the admission of mistakes any practical significance at the moment? Should anything be changed after what has happened, and had to happen? First we launched an assault; and only after that did we commence a siege. Everybody knows that; and now the application of our economic policy is being hindered by the erroneous adoption of methods that would, perhaps, be excellent under other conditions, but which are harmful today. Nearly all the comrades who spoke here entirely avoided this subject although this, and this alone, is the point at issue. My best ally here proved to be Comrade Semkov, because his speech was a vivid example of this mistake. Had Comrade Semkov not been here, or had he not spoken here today, the impression might have remained that Lenin was inventing mistakes. But Comrade Semkov very

definitely said: "What's the use of talking to us about state trade! They didn't teach us to trade in prison." Comrade Semkov, it is quite true that we were not taught to trade in prison! But were we taught to fight in prison? Were we taught how to administer a state in prison? Were we ever taught the very unpleasant business of reconciling the different People's Commissariats and of co-ordinating their activities? We were not taught that anywhere. We were not taught anything in prison. At best, we studied ourselves. We studied Marxism, the history of the revolutionary movement, and so forth. In that respect, for many of us the time we spent in prison was not lost. When we are told: "They did not teach us to trade in prison", it clearly shows that those who say it have a mistaken idea of the practical objects of the Party's struggle and activities today. And this is the mistake of employing methods suitable for an "assault" when we are in the period of "siege". Comrade Semkov revealed the mistake that is being made in the ranks of the Party. This mistake must be admitted and rectified.

If we could rely on military and political enthusiasm—which undoubtedly has been a gigantic historical force and has played a great role that will affect the international working-class movement as well for many years to come; if this enthusiasm—with a certain degree of culture, and with our factories in a better condition—could help us to pass straight on to socialist construction, we would not now engage in anything so unpleasant as business calculation and the art of commerce. It would not be necessary. As things are, however, we must engage in these matters. Why? Because we are directing, and must direct, economic development. Economic development has brought us to the position where we must resort not only to such unpleasant things as leasing, but also to this unpleasant business of trading. It was to be expected that this unpleasant situation would give rise to despondency and dejection. But who is to blame for that? Is it not those who have given way to dejection and despondency? If the economic situation in which we find ourselves as a result of the sum total of conditions, economic and political, international and Russian, is such that the money system and not commodity exchange has become a fact, if it has become necessary to regulate the trade and defective money system that exist today, shall we

Communists say that it has nothing to do with us? That would indeed be the most pernicious despondency, would express a mood of utter despair, and would make all further work impossible.

The situation in which we are carrying on our work has not been created by ourselves alone; it is bound up with the economic struggle and our relations with other countries. Things so turned out that last spring we had to discuss the question of leasing, and today we have to discuss the question of trade and the money system. To shirk this question by arguing "that they did not teach us to trade in prison" means to give way to inexcusable despondency, means shirking our economic task. It would be much more pleasant to capture capitalist trade by assault, and under certain circumstances (if our factories were not ruined and if we had a developed economy and culture) it would not be a mistake to launch an "assault", i.e., to pass straight on to commodity exchange. In the present circumstances, however, the mistake we make is that we refuse to understand that another method of approach is necessary and inevitable. Nobody is inventing this mistake; it is not a mistake taken from history—it is a lesson that will help us to understand what can and must be done at the present time. Can the Party successfully accomplish the task that confronts it if it approaches it on the principle that "they did not teach us to trade in prison" and that we don't want any commercial calculations? There are lots of things that we did not learn in prison, but which we had to learn after the revolution; and we learnt them very well.

I think it is our duty to learn to understand commercial relations and trade; and we shall begin to learn this, and finally master it, when we begin to talk about it without beating about the bush. We have had to retreat so far that the question of trade has become a practical question for the Party, a question of economic development. What dictates our transition to a commercial basis? Our environment, our present conditions. This transition is essential to enable us speedily to restore large-scale industry, link it up speedily with agriculture and organise a correct exchange of products. In a country with a better developed industry all this would take place much quicker; in our country this follows a longer, circuitous road, but in

the end we shall attain our goal. And today we must be guided by the tasks that the present and immediate future pose before us, before our Party, which has to direct the whole state economy. We can no longer speak of commodity exchange today because we have lost it as a sphere of struggle. That is an incontrovertible fact, no matter how unpleasant it may be to us. Does that mean we must say there is nothing else for us to do? Nothing of the sort. We must learn. We must acquire the knowledge needed for the state to regulate commercial relations—it is a difficult task but not an impossible one. And we shall carry it out because we have carried out tasks that were just as new, necessary and difficult. The co-operative trade is something difficult but not impossible; we have to understand this thoroughly and get down to serious work. That is what our new policy boils down to. To date we have already put a small number of enterprises on a commercial footing; at these enterprises wages are paid according to the prices on the open market, and they have gone over to gold in their settlements. But the number of such economic units is insignificant; in most of the others there is chaos, a serious discrepancy between wages and living conditions; state supplies for some have ceased and for others have been reduced. What is the way out? The only way is to learn, adapt ourselves and resolve these problems properly, i.e., in conformity with the conditions obtaining.

That is my reply to the comrades who have spoken about today's talk, and now I shall reply briefly to some of the notes submitted.

One of them reads: "You refer to Port Arthur. But don't you see the possibility of our being Port Arthur besieged by the international bourgeoisie?"

Yes, comrades. I have already said that war itself is always dangerous; that we must never embark on war without bearing in mind the possibility of defeat. If we are defeated, then, of course, we shall find ourselves in the deplorable position of Port Arthur. But in my speech I had in mind the Port Arthur of international capitalism, which is being besieged, and other armies besides our own are taking part in this siege. In every capitalist country there is a steadily growing army that is besieging this Port Arthur of international capitalism.

A comrade asks: "What will be our tactics on the morrow of the social revolution if it breaks out next year, or the year after?" If it were possible to answer such questions it would be quite easy to make revolutions, and we would make any number of them all over the place. But such questions cannot be answered, because we cannot say what will happen in six months' time, let alone next year, or the year after. It is as useless to put such questions as to attempt to decide which of the belligerents will find itself in the deplorable position of the fortress of Port Arthur. The only thing we know is that in the long run the fortress of the international Port Arthur must inevitably be captured, because the forces that will capture it are growing in all countries. The main problem that confronts us today is how to retain the possibility of restoring large-scale industry under the extremely difficult conditions in which we now find ourselves. We must not shun commercial accounting, but must understand that only on this basis can we create tolerable conditions that will satisfy the workers as regards wages, employment, etc. Only on this commercial basis will it be possible for us to build up our economy. This is being hindered by prejudice and by reminiscences of yesterday. Unless we take this into account we shall fail to carry out the New Economic Policy properly.

Questions like the following are also asked, "Where is the last line of retreat?" I have other questions of the same type, "How far can we retreat?" I anticipated this question and said a few words about it in my report. This question reflects a mood of despondency and dejection, and is absolutely groundless. We heard the same sort of question at the time we concluded the Brest-Litovsk peace. It is wrong to put such a question, because only when we have pursued our new policy for some time shall we have material on which to base our reply to it. We shall go on retreating until we have completed our education; until we have made our preparations for a definite offensive. I cannot say more than that. It is very unpleasant to retreat. But when heavy blows are being struck, nobody stops to ask whether it is pleasant or unpleasant: the troops retreat, and nobody is surprised. Nothing useful will come of asking how long we shall go on retreating. Why anticipate hopeless situations? Instead of doing that, we must get down to definite work. We must

closely examine the concrete conditions, the concrete situation, decide what position we can hold—a river, a hill, a bog, a railway station. Because only when we are able to hold our ground shall we be able to pass to the offensive. We must not give way to despondency; we must not shirk the problem by shouting propaganda slogans, which are all very well in their proper place, but which in the present case can do nothing but harm.

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Vol. 33, pp. 94-101, 102-08

From THE THESES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION
ADOPTED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE

4. My last observation concerns the points of the theses which speak of the need to increase the output of agricultural produce and the importance of modern machines (*des machines modernes*), particularly threshing machines (*les batteuses*), tractor ploughs (*les charrues à tracteur*), etc.

All these statements in the theses are undoubtedly correct and necessary from the practical point of view. I think, however, that we should not confine ourselves to the ordinary capitalist technique, but should take a step beyond that. A few words should have been said about the need for planned and complete electrification of the whole of France, and to show that it is absolutely impossible to do this *for the benefit of the workers and peasants* unless bourgeois rule is overthrown and power is seized by the proletariat. French literature contains no little data on the importance of electrification for France. I know that a small part of this data is quoted in the plan for the electrification of Russia that was drawn up by order of our government, and that since the war considerable progress has been made in France towards the technical solution of the problem of electrification.

In my opinion it is extremely important both from the theoretical and from the practical propaganda point of view to say in the theses (and generally to enlarge on it in our communist literature) that modern advanced technology imperatively calls for *the electrification of the whole country—and of a number of neighbouring countries—under a single plan*; that this is quite feasible at the present time; that agriculture, and particularly the peasantry, stand to gain most from this; that as long as capitalism and private

ownership of the means of production exist, the electrification of a whole country, or a series of countries, firstly, cannot be carried out speedily and according to plan, and secondly, *cannot benefit* the workers and peasants. Under capitalism, electrification will inevitably lead to increased *oppression* of the workers *and peasants* by the *big banks*. Even before the war, not a "narrow-minded Marxist", but none other than Lysis—who is now patriotically licking the boots of the capitalists—had proved that France was actually governed by a *financial oligarchy*.

France possesses splendid opportunities for electrification. After the victory of the proletariat in France, the *small peasants* particularly will benefit *enormously* from electrification carried out according to plan and unhindered by the private property of big landowners and capitalists. If the capitalists remain in power, however, electrification cannot possibly be planned and rapid; and in so far as it is carried out at all, it will be a means of imposing new fetters on the peasants, a new means of enslaving the peasants to the "financial oligarchy" which is robbing them today.

These are the few observations I am able to make on the French agrarian theses, which on the whole are, in my opinion, quite correct.

December 11, 1921

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Signed: *A Russian Communist*

Vol. 33, pp.136-37

**INSTRUCTIONS BY THE NINTH ALL-RUSSIA
CONGRESS OF SOVIETS ON QUESTIONS
OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES
DECEMBER 28, 1921**

The Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, having examined the reports of the People's Commissariats on their economic activities during the year under review, supplements and summarises the decisions of the Congress of Soviets on individual economic questions with the following guiding points, which must be strictly adhered to by all Soviet bodies at the centre and in the localities.

1. The Congress of Soviets orders that the main and immediate task of all the economic bodies must be to effect, speedily and at all costs, stable practical improvements in supplying the peasantry with large quantities of the goods that are needed to raise the level of agriculture and improve the living conditions of the working peasantry.

2. This being the main object, it must be kept in mind by all industrial administrative bodies, allowing of course no relaxation in the supply of the Red Army with everything it needs, a task which must remain primary in order to maintain the Soviet Republic's defence potential.

3. The improvement of the conditions of the workers should also depend on the achievement of this object, which means that it is the duty of all workers' organisations (primarily the trade unions) to see to it that industry is so organised as to be able speedily and fully to satisfy the requirements of the peasantry; wage increases and improvement in the conditions of industrial workers should be directly determined by the degree to which success is achieved in this field.

4. This object must also be pursued by the People's Commissariat of Finance; and the Ninth Congress of Soviets instructs it to make every effort to secure the speediest reduction of the issue of paper money, eventually put a stop to it and establish a sound currency backed by gold. The

substitution of taxes for the issue of paper money must be pursued undeviatingly without any red tape.

5. The same object must be given priority by all bodies and organisations engaged in home and foreign trade, i.e., the Central Council of Co-operative Societies, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, etc. The Congress of Soviets will judge—and instructs the leading bodies of the Soviet government to judge—the success of these organisations only by the rapid and practical results they achieve in developing exchange between agriculture and industry. In particular, the Congress instructs the various organisations to use private enterprises more widely for supplying raw materials, transporting these materials and for promoting trade in every way, while the function of state bodies is to control and direct this exchange, and sternly punish all deadening red tape and bureaucracy.

6. The Ninth Congress of Soviets calls upon all organisations and departments engaged in economic activities to devote infinitely more attention and energy than hitherto to the task of enlisting the services of all capable non-Party workers and peasants in this field of state activity.

The Congress declares that in this respect we are a long way behind requirements, that not enough method and perseverance are being displayed in this matter, that it is absolutely and urgently necessary to recruit business and government officials from a wider circle than hitherto; and, in particular, that every success achieved in rebuilding industry and agriculture should be more regularly encouraged by awards of the Order of the Red Banner of Labour, as well as by cash bonuses.

The Congress of Soviets draws the attention of all economic bodies and all organisations of a non-governmental, class character to the fact that it is absolutely essential still more perseveringly to enlist the services of specialists in economic organisation, to employ scientists and technicians, and men who by their practical activities have acquired experience and knowledge of trade, of organising large enterprises, of supervising business transactions, etc. The improvement of the material position of specialists and the training under their direction of a large number of workers and peasants must receive unflagging attention from the central and local government bodies of the R.S.F.S.R.

7. The Ninth Congress of Soviets calls upon the People's Commissariat of Justice to display far more energy than hitherto in two matters:

first, that the People's Courts of the Republic should keep close watch over the activities of private traders and manufacturers and, while prohibiting the slightest restriction of their activities, should sternly punish the slightest attempt on their part to evade rigid compliance with the laws of the Republic. The People's Courts should encourage the masses of workers and peasants to take an independent, speedy and practical part in ensuring enforcement of the laws;

second, that the People's Courts should take more vigorous action against bureaucracy, red tape and mismanagement. Trials of such cases should be held not only for the purpose of increasing responsibility for the evil which it is so difficult to combat under present circumstances, but also for the purpose of focussing the attention of the masses of workers and peasants on this extremely important matter, and of securing a practical object, viz., greater success in the economic field.

The Ninth Congress is of the opinion that the task of the People's Commissariat of Education in this new period is to train, in the shortest possible period, specialists in all fields from among the peasants and workers; and it orders that school and extra-mural education should be more closely connected with the current economic tasks of the Republic as a whole, as well as of the given region and locality. In particular, the Ninth Congress of Soviets declares that far from enough has been done to fulfil the decision of the Eighth Congress of Soviets on the popularisation of the plan for the electrification of Russia, and requires that every electric power station mobilise all competent forces and arrange regular talks, lectures and practical studies to acquaint the workers and peasants with the importance of electricity and with the plan for electrification. In those uyezds where no power stations yet exist, at least small power stations should be built as speedily as possible and used as local centres for propaganda, education and the encouragement of every initiative in this field.

Written on December 25, 1921

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**PREFACE TO I. I. STEPANOV'S
"THE ELECTRIFICATION OF THE R.S.F.S.R.
AND THE TRANSITIONAL PHASE OF WORLD
ECONOMY" ³⁸**

I heartily recommend this book by Comrade Stepanov to all Communists.

The author has succeeded in giving a very able exposition of exceedingly difficult and important problems. He did very well in not writing a book for intellectuals (as is the practice among many of us who copy the worst manners of bourgeois writers), but for the working people, for the masses, for rank-and-file workers and peasants. To his book the author has appended a list of references for supplementary reading for the benefit of those who may find it difficult to understand some parts of it without further explanation, as well as for the benefit of those who would like to consult the principal works on this subject published in Russia and abroad. Special reference must be made to the beginning of Chapter VI, where the author splendidly outlines the significance of the New Economic Policy, and magnificently answers the "airy" scepticism that is displayed in some quarters about the possibility of electrification. This scepticism is usually a cloak to conceal the absence of serious thought on the subject (that is, if it is not a cloak to conceal whiteguard, Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik hostility to all Soviet construction, which, in fact, is sometimes the case).

What we lack most for genuine (and not idle-bureaucratic) popular education is precisely "school manuals" (for absolutely all schools) like this one. If all our Marxist writers sat down to write such manuals, or textbooks, on all social questions without exception, instead of wasting their efforts on newspaper and magazine political fireworks, which everybody is sick and tired of, we should not have the

present disgraceful situation where, nearly five years after the proletariat captured political power, the young people in the *proletariat's* state schools and universities are taught (or rather, corrupted) by the old bourgeois scientists using the old bourgeois junk.

The Eighth Congress of Soviets decreed that instruction on the Plan for Electrification should be compulsory in all educational establishments in the R.S.F.S.R. without exception. This decree, like many others, has remained a dead letter because of our (Bolsheviks') lack of culture. Now that Comrade Stepanov's "manual for schools" has been published we must see to it—and we shall see to it!—that every uyezd library (and later every volost library) obtains several copies of it and that every electric power station in Russia (there are over 800 of them) not only has copies of this book but also arranges popular lectures, on electricity, on the electrification of the R.S.F.S.R. and on engineering in general. We must see to it that every village schoolteacher reads and assimilates this manual (to help him in this, a circle or group of engineers and teachers of physics should be organised in every uyezd), and not only reads, understands and assimilates it himself but is able to relate what is in it in a plain and intelligible way to his pupils, and to young peasants in general.

It will require no little effort to do this. We are poor and uneducated. But that does not matter so long as our people realise that they must learn, and so long as they are willing to learn; so long as the workers and peasants clearly understand that they must now learn not to "benefit" and produce profits for the landowners and capitalists, but to improve *their own* conditions of life.

This knowledge and desire exist. And so we definitely shall start learning, and shall certainly learn something.

N. Lenin

March 18, 1922

Pravda No. 64, March 21, 1922

Vol. 33, pp. 245-46

LETTER TO THE FIFTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

September 17, 1922

Dear Comrades,

This is the first time since my long illness that I am able to address a Congress, even though in writing. Permit me, therefore, to confine myself to expressing to you my cordial greetings, and to a few brief remarks on the position and tasks of our industry and of our Republic. Our position is particularly difficult because we lack the means to restore our fixed assets, i.e., machinery, tools, buildings, etc.; and it is precisely that part of industry known as heavy industry which is the main basis of socialism. In capitalist countries these fixed assets are usually restored by means of loans. We are refused loans until we restore the property of the capitalists and landowners; but this we cannot and will not do. The only road open to us is the long and extremely arduous road of slowly accumulating our savings, of raising taxes in order to be able gradually to repair our destroyed railways, machinery, buildings, etc. So far, we are the only country in the world in which the working peasants, under the leadership of the workers, are building socialism, flatly rejecting the leadership of the bourgeoisie who, under cover of florid phrases about democracy, liberty, etc., are actually consolidating the private ownership of the capitalists and landowners and establishing the rule of a handful of rich men who have divided the entire globe among themselves and are fighting one another for its redivision, for the enslavement of hundreds of millions of people in the weaker and more backward nations.

As long as we remain in the field alone the task of restoring our economy will be an extremely heavy burden on our shoulders. All the peasants and all the workers will have to exert themselves to the very utmost; our machinery of state, which is still working very inefficiently, must be improved and made less costly so that we may improve the conditions of the working people, and, to some extent at least, restore our economy, which was destroyed by the imperialist and civil wars.

Let every politically conscious peasant and worker who may become despondent over our hard conditions of life, or over the extremely slow progress of our work of state construction, remember the recent past, when the capitalists and landowners were in power. This will give him new zest in his work. The only way to save the workers' and peasants' rule is to make every effort to intensify and improve our work in all fields.

With comradely greetings,

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)

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Vol. 33, pp. 370-71

FIVE YEARS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE PROSPECTS OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

Report to the Fourth Congress of the Communist
International
November 13, 1922

(Comrade Lenin is met with stormy, prolonged applause and a general ovation. All rise and join in singing "The Internationale".) Comrades, I am down in the list as the main speaker, but you will understand that after my lengthy illness I am not able to make a long report. I can only make a few introductory remarks on the key questions. My subject will be a very limited one. The subject, "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution", is in general too broad and too large for one speaker to exhaust in a single speech. That is why I shall take only a small part of this subject, namely, the question of the New Economic Policy. I have deliberately taken only this small part in order to make you familiar with what is now the most important question—at all events, it is the most important to me, because I am now working on it.

And so, I shall tell you how we launched the New Economic Policy, and what results we have achieved with the aid of this policy. If I confine myself to this question, I shall, perhaps, succeed in giving you a general survey and a general idea of it.

To begin with how we arrived at the New Economic Policy, I must quote from an article I wrote in 1918.³⁹ At the beginning of 1918, in a brief polemic, I touched on the question of the attitude we should adopt towards state capitalism. I then wrote:

"State capitalism would be a *step forward* as compared with the present state of affairs (i.e., the state of affairs at that time) in our Soviet Republic. If in approximately six months' time state capitalism became established in our Republic, this would be a great success and a sure guarantee

that within a year socialism will have gained a permanently firm hold and will have become invincible in our country."*

Of course, this was said at a time when we were more foolish than we are now, but not so foolish as to be unable to deal with such matters.

Thus, in 1918, I was of the opinion that with regard to the economic situation then obtaining in the Soviet Republic, state capitalism would be a step forward. This sounds very strange, and perhaps even absurd, for already at that time our Republic was a socialist republic and we were every day hastily—perhaps too hastily—adopting various new economic measures which could not be described as anything but socialist measures. Nevertheless, I then held the view that in relation to the economic situation then obtaining in the Soviet Republic state capitalism would be a step forward, and I explained my idea simply by enumerating the elements of the economic system of Russia. In my opinion these elements were the following: "(1) patriarchal, i.e., the most primitive form of agriculture; (2) small commodity production (this includes the majority of the peasants who trade in grain); (3) private capitalism; (4) state capitalism, and (5) socialism."** All these economic elements were present in Russia at that time. I set myself the task of explaining the relationship of these elements to each other, and whether one of the non-socialist elements, namely, state capitalism, should not be rated higher than socialism. I repeat: it seems very strange to everyone that a non-socialist element should be rated higher than, regarded as superior to, socialism in a republic which declares itself a socialist republic. But the fact will become intelligible if you recall that we definitely did not regard the economic system of Russia as something homogeneous and highly developed; we were fully aware that in Russia we had patriarchal agriculture, i.e., the most primitive form of agriculture, alongside the socialist form. What role could state capitalism play in these circumstances?

I then asked myself which of these elements predominated? Clearly, in a petty-bourgeois environment the petty-bourgeois element predominates. I recognised then that the

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 334-35.—Ed.

**Ibid., pp. 335-36.—Ed.

petty-bourgeois element predominated; it was impossible to take a different view. The question I then put to myself—this was in a specific controversy which had nothing to do with the present question—was: what is our attitude towards state capitalism? And I replied: although it is not a socialist form, state capitalism would be for us, and for Russia, a more favourable form than the existing one. What does that show? It shows that we did not overrate either the rudiments or the principles of socialist economy, although we had already accomplished the social revolution. On the contrary, at that time we already realised to a certain extent that it would be better if we first arrived at state capitalism and only after that at socialism.

I must lay special emphasis on this, because I assume that it is the only point of departure we can take, firstly, to explain what the present economic policy is; and, secondly, to draw very important practical conclusions for the Communist International. I do not want to suggest that we had then a ready-made plan of retreat. This was not the case. Those brief lines set forth in a polemic were not by any means a plan of retreat. For example, they made no mention whatever of that very important point, freedom to trade, which is of fundamental significance to state capitalism. Yet they did contain a general, even if indefinite, idea of retreat. I think that we should take note of that not only from the viewpoint of a country whose economic system was, and is to this day, very backward, but also from the viewpoint of the Communist International and the advanced West-European countries. For example, just now we are engaged in drawing up a programme. I personally think that it would be best to hold simply a general discussion on all the programmes, to make the first reading, so to speak, and to get them printed, but not to take a final decision now, this year. Why? First of all, of course, because I do not think we have considered all of them in sufficient detail, and also because we have given scarcely any thought to possible retreat, and to preparations for it. Yet that is a question which, in view of such fundamental changes in the world as the overthrow of capitalism and the building of socialism with all its enormous difficulties, absolutely requires our attention. We must not only know how to act when we pass directly to the offensive and are victorious. In revolutionary

times this is not so difficult, nor so very important; at least, it is not the most decisive thing. There are always times in a revolution when the opponent loses his head; and if we attack him at such a time we may win an easy victory. But that is nothing, because our enemy, if he has enough endurance, can rally his forces beforehand, and so forth. He can easily provoke us to attack him and then throw us back for many years. For this reason, I think, the idea that we must prepare for ourselves the possibility of retreat is very important, and not only from the theoretical point of view. From the practical point of view, too, all the parties which are preparing to take the direct offensive against capitalism in the near future must now give thought to the problem of preparing for a possible retreat. I think it will do us no harm to learn this lesson together with all the other lessons which the experience of our revolution offers. On the contrary, it may prove beneficial in many cases.

Now that I have emphasised the fact that as early as 1918 we regarded state capitalism as a possible line of retreat, I shall deal with the results of our New Economic Policy. I repeat: at that time it was still a very vague idea, but in 1921, after we had passed through the most important stage of the Civil War—and passed through it victoriously—we felt the impact of a grave—I think it was the gravest—internal political crisis in Soviet Russia. This internal crisis brought to light discontent not only among a considerable section of the peasantry but also among the workers. This was the first and, I hope, the last time in the history of Soviet Russia that feeling ran against us among large masses of peasants, not consciously but instinctively. What gave rise to this peculiar, and for us, of course, very unpleasant, situation? The reason for it was that in our economic offensive we had run too far ahead, that we had not provided ourselves with adequate resources, that the masses sensed what we ourselves were not then able to formulate consciously but what we admitted soon after, a few weeks later, namely, that the direct transition to purely socialist forms, to purely socialist distribution, was beyond our available strength, and that if we were unable to effect a retreat so as to confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would face disaster. The crisis began, I think, in February 1921. In the spring of that year we decided unanimously—I did not

observe any considerable disagreement among us on this question—to adopt the New Economic Policy. Now, after eighteen months have elapsed, at the close of 1922, we are able to make certain comparisons. What has happened? How have we fared during this period of over eighteen months? What is the result? Has this retreat been of any benefit to us? Has it really saved us, or is the result still indefinite? This is the main question that I put to myself, and I think that this main question is also of first-rate importance to all the Communist Parties; for if the reply is in the negative, we are all doomed. I think that all of us can, with a clear conscience, reply to this question in the affirmative, namely, that the past eighteen months provide positive and absolute proof that we have passed the test.

I shall now try to prove this. To do that I must briefly enumerate all the constituent parts of our economy.

First of all I shall deal with our financial system and our famous Russian ruble. I think we can say that Russian rubles are famous, if only for the reason that their number now in circulation exceeds a quadrillion. (*Laughter.*) That is something! It is an astronomical figure. I am sure that not everyone here knows what this figure signifies. (*General laughter.*) But we do not think that the figure is so very important even from the point of view of economic science, for the noughts can always be crossed out. (*Laughter.*) We have achieved a thing or two in this art, which is likewise of no importance from the economic point of view, and I am sure that in the further course of events we shall achieve much more. But what is really important is the problem of stabilising the ruble. We are now grappling with this problem, our best forces are working on it, and we attach decisive importance to it. If we succeed in stabilising the ruble for a long period, and then for all time, it will prove that we have won. In that case all these astronomical figures, these trillions and quadrillions, will not have mattered in the least. We shall then be able to place our economy on a firm basis, and develop it further on a firm basis. On this question I think I can cite some fairly important and decisive data. In 1921 the rate of exchange of the paper ruble remained stable for a period of less than three months. This year, 1922, which has not yet drawn to a close, the rate remained stable for a period of over five months. I think

that this proof is sufficient. Of course, if you demand scientific proof that we shall definitely solve this problem, then it is not sufficient; but in general, I do not think it is possible to prove this entirely and conclusively. The data I have cited show that between last year, when we started on the New Economic Policy, and the present day, we have already learned to make progress. Since we have learned to do this, I am sure we shall learn to achieve further successes along this road, provided we avoid doing anything very foolish. The most important thing, however, is trade, namely, the circulation of commodities, which is essential for us. And since we have successfully coped with this problem for two years, in spite of having been in a state of war (for, as you know, Vladivostok was recaptured only a few weeks ago), and in spite of the fact that only now we are able to proceed with our economic activities in a really systematic way—since we have succeeded in keeping the rate of the paper ruble stable for five months instead of only three months, I think I can say that we have grounds to be pleased. After all, we stand alone. We have not received any loans, and are not receiving any now. We have been given no assistance by any of the powerful capitalist countries, which organise their capitalist economy so “brilliantly” that they do not know to this day which way they are going. By the Treaty of Versailles⁴⁰ they have created a financial system that they themselves cannot make head or tail of. If these great capitalist countries are managing things in this way, I think that we, backward and uneducated as we are, may be pleased with the fact that we have grasped the most important thing—the conditions for the stabilisation of the ruble. This is proved not by theoretical analysis but by practical experience, which in my opinion is more important than all the theoretical discussions in the world. Practice shows that we have achieved decisive results in that field, namely, we are beginning to push our economy towards the stabilisation of the ruble, which is of supreme importance for trade, for the free circulation of commodities, for the peasants, and for the vast masses of small producers.

Now I come to our social objectives. The most important factor, of course, is the peasantry. In 1921 discontent undoubtedly prevailed among a vast section of the peasantry. Then there was the famine. This was the severest trial for

the peasants. Naturally, all our enemies abroad shouted: "There, that's the result of socialist economy!" Quite naturally, of course, they said nothing about the famine actually being the terrible result of the Civil War. All the landowners and capitalists who had begun their offensive against us in 1918 tried to make out that the famine was the result of socialist economy. The famine was indeed a great and grave disaster which threatened to nullify the results of all our organisational and revolutionary efforts.

And so, I ask now, after this unprecedented and unexpected disaster, what is the position today, after we have introduced the New Economic Policy, after we have granted the peasants freedom to trade? The answer is clear and obvious to everyone; in one year the peasants have not only got over the famine, but have paid so much tax in kind that we have already received hundreds of millions of peods of grain, and that almost without employing any measures of coercion. Peasant uprisings, which previously, before 1924, were, so to speak, a common occurrence in Russia, have almost completely ceased. The peasants are satisfied with their present position. We can confidently assert that. We think that this evidence is more important than any amount of statistical proof. Nobody questions the fact that the peasants are a decisive factor in our country. And the position of the peasantry is now such that we have no reason to fear any movement against us from that quarter. We say that quite consciously, without exaggeration. This we have already achieved. The peasantry may be dissatisfied with one aspect or another of the work of our authorities. They may complain about this. That is possible, of course, and inevitable, because our machinery of state and our state-operated economy are still too inefficient to avert it; but any serious dissatisfaction with us on the part of the peasantry as a whole is quite out of the question. This has been achieved in the course of one year. I think that is already quite a lot.

Now I come to our light industry. In industry we have to make a distinction between heavy and light industry because the situation in them is different. As regards light industry, I can safely say that there is a general revival. I shall not go into details. I did not set out to quote a lot of statistics. But this general impression is based on facts, and I can assure you that it is not based on anything untrue or

inaccurate. We can speak of a general revival in light industry, and, as a result, of a definite improvement in the conditions of the workers in Petrograd and Moscow. In other districts this is observed to a lesser degree, because heavy industry predominates in them. So this does not apply generally. Nevertheless, I repeat, light industry is undoubtedly on the upgrade, and the conditions of the workers in Petrograd and Moscow have unquestionably improved. In the spring of 1921 there was discontent among the workers in both these cities. That is definitely not the case now. We, who watch the conditions and mood of the workers from day to day, make no mistake on that score.

The third question is that of heavy industry. I must say that the situation here is still grave. Some turn for the better occurred in 1921-22, so that we may hope that the situation will improve in the near future. We have already gathered some of the resources necessary for this. In a capitalist country a loan of hundreds of millions would be required to improve the situation in heavy industry. No improvement would be possible without it. The economic history of the capitalist countries shows that heavy industry in backward countries can only be developed with the aid of long-term loans of hundreds of millions of dollars or gold rubles. We did not get such loans, and so far have received nothing. All that is now being written about concessions and so forth is not worth much more than the paper it is written on. We have written a great deal about this lately and in particular about the Urquhart concession. Yet I think our concessions policy is a very good one. However, we have not concluded a single profitable concession agreement so far. I ask you to bear that in mind. Thus, the situation in heavy industry is really a very grave problem for our backward country, because we cannot count on loans from the wealthy countries. In spite of that, we see a tangible improvement, and we also see that our trading has brought us some capital. True, it is only a very modest sum as yet—a little over twenty million gold rubles. At any rate, a beginning has been made; our trade is providing us with funds which we can employ for improving the situation in heavy industry. At the present moment, however, our heavy industry is still in great difficulties. But I think that the decisive circumstance is that we are already in a position to save a little. And we shall go

on saving. We must economise now though it is often at the expense of the population. We are trying to reduce the state budget, to reduce staffs in our government offices. Later on, I shall have a few words to say about our state apparatus. At all events, we must reduce it. We must economise as much as possible. We are economising in all things, even in schools. We must do this, because we know that unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up an industry at all; and without an industry we shall go under as an independent country. We realise this very well.

The salvation of Russia lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms—that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumer goods—this, too, is not enough; we also need *heavy* industry. And to put it in a good condition will require several years of work.

Heavy industry needs state subsidies. If we are not able to provide them, we shall be doomed as a civilised state, let alone as a socialist state. In this respect, we have taken a determined step. We have begun to accumulate the funds that we need to put heavy industry on its feet. True, the sum we have obtained so far barely exceeds twenty million gold rubles; but at any rate this sum is available, and it is earmarked exclusively for the purpose of reviving our heavy industry.

I think that, on the whole, I have, as I have promised, briefly outlined the principal elements of our economy, and feel that we may draw the conclusion from all this that the New Economic Policy has already yielded dividends. We already have proof that, as a state, we are able to trade, to maintain our strong positions in agriculture and industry, and to make progress. Practical activity has proved it. I think this is sufficient for us for the time being. We shall have to learn much, and we have realised that we still have much to learn. We have been in power for five years, and during these five years we have been in a state of war. Hence, we have been successful.

This is understandable, because the peasantry were on our side. Probably no one could have supported us more than they did. They were aware that the whiteguards had the landowners behind them, and they hate the landowners more

than anything in the world. That is why the peasantry supported us with all their enthusiasm and loyalty. It was not difficult to get the peasantry to defend us against the whiteguards. The peasants, who had always hated war, did all they possibly could in the war against the whiteguards, in the Civil War against the landowners. But this was not all, because in substance it was only a matter of whether power would remain in the hands of the landowners or of the peasants. This was not enough for us. The peasants know that we have seized power for the workers and that our aim is to use this power to establish the socialist system. Therefore, the most important thing for us was to lay the economic foundation for socialist economy. We could not do it directly. We had to do it in a roundabout way. The state capitalism that we have introduced in our country is of a special kind. It does not agree with the usual conception of state capitalism. We hold all the key positions. We hold the land; it belongs to the state. This is very important, although our opponents try to make out that it is of no importance at all. That is untrue. The fact that the land belongs to the state is extremely important, and economically it is also of great practical purport. This we have achieved, and I must say that all our future activities should develop only within that framework. We have already succeeded in making the peasantry content and in reviving both industry and trade. I have already said that our state capitalism differs from state capitalism in the literal sense of the term in that our proletarian state not only owns the land, but also all the vital branches of industry. To begin with, we have leased only a certain number of the small and medium plants, but all the rest remain in our hands. As regards trade, I want to re-emphasise that we are trying to found mixed companies, that we are already forming them, i.e., companies in which part of the capital belongs to private capitalists—and foreign capitalists at that—and the other part belongs to the state. Firstly, in this way we are learning how to trade, and that is what we need. Secondly, we are always in a position to dissolve these companies if we deem it necessary, and do not, therefore, run any risks, so to speak. We are learning from the private capitalist and looking round to see how we can progress, and what mistakes we make. It seems to me that I need say no more.

I should still like to deal with several minor points. Undoubtedly, we have done, and will still do, a host of foolish things. No one can judge and see this better than I. (*Laughter.*) Why do we do these foolish things? The reason is clear: firstly, because we are a backward country; secondly, because education in our country is at a low level; and thirdly, because we are getting no outside assistance. Not a single civilised country is helping us. On the contrary, they are all working against us. Fourthly, our machinery of state is to blame. We took over the old machinery of state, and that was our misfortune. Very often this machinery operates against us. In 1917, after we seized power, the government officials sabotaged us. This frightened us very much and we pleaded: "Please come back." They all came back, but that was our misfortune. We now have a vast army of government employees, but lack sufficiently educated forces to exercise real control over them. In practice it often happens that here at the top, where we exercise political power, the machine functions somehow; but down below government employees have arbitrary control and they often exercise it in such a way as to counteract our measures. At the top, we have, I don't know how many, but at all events, I think, no more than a few thousand, at the outside several tens of thousands of our own people. Down below, however, there are hundreds of thousands of old officials whom we got from the tsar and from bourgeois society and who, partly deliberately and partly unwittingly, work against us. It is clear that nothing can be done in that respect overnight. It will take many years of hard work to improve the machinery, to remodel it, and to enlist new forces. We are doing this fairly quickly, perhaps too quickly. Soviet schools and Workers' Faculties have been formed; a few hundred thousand young people are studying; they are studying too fast perhaps, but at all events, a start has been made, and I think this work will bear fruit. If we do not work too hurriedly we shall, in a few years' time, have a large body of young people capable of thoroughly overhauling our state apparatus.

I have said that we have done a host of foolish things, but I must also say a word or two in this respect about our enemies. If our enemies blame us and say that Lenin himself admits that the Bolsheviks have done a host of foolish things,

I want to reply to this: yes, but you know, the foolish things we have done are nonetheless very different from yours. We have only just begun to learn, but are learning so methodically that we are certain to achieve good results. But since our enemies, i.e., the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, lay stress on the foolish things we have done, I take the liberty, for the sake of comparison, to cite the words of a celebrated Russian author,⁴¹ which I shall amend to read as follows: if the Bolsheviks do foolish things the Bolshevik says, "Twice two are five", but when their enemies, i.e., the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, do foolish things, they get, "Twice two make a tallow candle". That is easily proved. Take, for example, the agreement concluded by the U.S.A., Great Britain, France and Japan with Kolchak. I ask you, are there any more enlightened and more powerful countries in the world? But what has happened? They promised to help Kolchak without calculation, without reflection, and without circumspection. It ended in a fiasco, which, it seems to me, is difficult for the human intellect to grasp.

Or take another example, a closer and more important one: the Treaty of Versailles. I ask you, what have the "great" powers which have "covered themselves with glory" done? How will they find a way out of this chaos and confusion? I don't think it will be an exaggeration to repeat that the foolish things we have done are nothing compared with those done in concert by the capitalist countries, the capitalist world and the Second International. That is why I think that the outlook for the world revolution—a subject which I must touch on briefly—is favourable. And given a certain definite condition, I think it will be even better. I should like to say a few words about this.

At the Third Congress, in 1921, we adopted a resolution on the organisational structure of the Communist Parties and on the methods and content of their activities. The resolution is an excellent one, but it is almost entirely Russian, that is to say, everything in it is based on Russian conditions. This is its good point, but it is also its failing. It is its failing because I am sure that no foreigner can read it. I have read it again before saying this. In the first place, it is too long, containing fifty or more points. Foreigners are not usually able to read such things. Secondly, even if they read it, they

will not understand it because it is too Russian. Not because it is written in Russian—it has been excellently translated into all languages—but because it is thoroughly imbued with the Russian spirit. And thirdly, if by way of exception some foreigner does understand it, he cannot carry it out. This is its third defect. I have talked with a few of the foreign delegates and hope to discuss matters in detail with a large number of delegates from different countries during the Congress, although I shall not take part in its proceedings, for unfortunately it is impossible for me to do that. I have the impression that we made a big mistake with this resolution, namely, that we blocked our own road to further success. As I have said already, the resolution is excellently drafted; I am prepared to subscribe to every one of its fifty or more points. But we have not learnt how to present our Russian experience to foreigners. All that was said in the resolution has remained a dead letter. If we do not realise this, we shall be unable to move ahead. I think that after five years of the Russian revolution the most important thing for all of us, Russian and foreign comrades alike, is to sit down and study. We have only now obtained the opportunity to do so. I do not know how long this opportunity will last. I do not know for how long the capitalist powers will give us the opportunity to study in peace. But we must take advantage of every moment of respite from fighting, from war, to study, and to study from scratch.

The whole Party and all strata of the population of Russia prove this by their thirst for knowledge. This striving to learn shows that our most important task today is to study and to study hard. Our foreign comrades, too, must study. I do not mean that they have to learn to read and write and to understand what they read, as we still have to do. There is a dispute as to whether this concerns proletarian or bourgeois culture. I shall leave that question open. But one thing is certain: we have to begin by learning to read and write and to understand what we read. Foreigners do not need that. They need something more advanced: first of all, among other things they must learn to understand what we have written about the organisational structure of the Communist Parties, and what the foreign comrades have signed without reading and understanding. This must be

their first task. That resolution must be carried out. It cannot be carried out overnight; that is absolutely impossible. The resolution is too Russian, it reflects Russian experience. That is why it is quite unintelligible to foreigners, and they cannot be content with hanging it in a corner like an icon and praying to it. Nothing will be achieved that way. They must assimilate part of the Russian experience. Just how that will be done, I do not know. The fascists in Italy may, for example, render us a great service by showing the Italians that they are not yet sufficiently enlightened and that their country is not yet ensured against the Black Hundreds.⁴² Perhaps this will be very useful. We Russians must also find ways and means of explaining the principles of this resolution to the foreigners. Unless we do that, it will be absolutely impossible for them to carry it out. I am sure that in this connection we must tell not only the Russians, but the foreign comrades as well, that the most important thing in the period we are now entering is to study. We are studying in the general sense. They, however, must study in the special sense, in order that they may really understand the organisation, structure, method and content of revolutionary work. If they do that, I am sure the prospects of the world revolution will be not only good, but excellent. (*Stormy, prolonged applause. Shouts of "Long live our Comrade Lenin!" evoke a fresh stormy ovation.*)

From BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER

The general feature of our present life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have done our best to raze to the ground the medieval institutions and landed proprietorship, and thus created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary work. It is not easy for us, however, to keep going until the socialist revolution is victorious in more developed countries merely with the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under NEP, keeps the productivity of labour of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, by and large, reduced the labour productivity of the people to a level considerably below pre-war. The West-European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilise the elements of the Civil War in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all events, hinder its progress towards socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists; that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with

enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

The system of international relationships which has now taken shape is one in which a European state, Germany, is enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, owing to their victory, a number of states, the oldest states in the West, are in a position to make some insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which, insignificant though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of “class truce”.

At the same time, as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries of the East, India, China, etc., have been completely jolted out of the rut. Their development has definitely shifted to general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

Thus, at the present time we are confronted with the question—shall we be able to hold on with our small and very small peasant production, and in our present state of ruin, until the West-European capitalist countries consummate their development towards socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual “maturing” of socialism, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation of the first of the countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following. We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers’ government and to retain our

small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority. We have the advantage that the whole world is now passing to a movement that must give rise to a world socialist revolution. But we are labouring under the disadvantage that the imperialists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist development, to rise to her feet. All the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and preventing her from rising. On the other hand, the entire East, with its hundreds of millions of exploited working people, reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into a position where its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European states.

Can we save ourselves from the impending conflict with these imperialist countries? May we hope that the internal antagonisms and conflicts between the thriving imperialist countries of the West and the thriving imperialist countries of the East will give us a second respite as they did the first time, when the campaign of the West-European counter-revolution in support of the Russian counter-revolution broke down owing to the antagonisms in the camp of the counter-revolutionaries of the West and the East, in the camp of the Eastern and Western exploiters, in the camp of Japan and the U.S.A.?

I think the reply to this question should be that the issue depends upon too many factors, and that the outcome of the struggle as a whole can be forecast only because in the long run capitalism itself is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe for the struggle.

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured.

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet Government, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, between the most civilised countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries which, however, comprise the majority, this majority must become civilised. We, too, lack enough civilisation to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we do have the political requisites for it. We should adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy, to save ourselves.

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain the leadership of the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and by exercising the greatest economy remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations.

We must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine.

Will not this be a reign of peasant limitations?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible thrift in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov Power Project, etc.

In this, and in this alone, lies our hope. Only when we have done this shall we, speaking figuratively, be able to change horses, to change from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty, from the horse of an economy designed for a ruined peasant country, to the horse which the proletariat is seeking and must seek—the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of the Volkhov Power Station, etc.

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the

exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high level, in giving it a leadership with Central Committee rights, etc., etc.

And this justification is that only by thoroughly purging our government machine, by reducing to the utmost everything that is not absolutely essential in it, shall we be certain of being able to keep going. Moreover, we shall be able to keep going not on the level of a small-peasant country, not on the level of universal limitation, but on a level steadily advancing to large-scale machine industry.

These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning for it the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an "ordinary" People's Commissariat.

March 2, 1923

Pravda No. 49, March 4, 1923
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Vol. 33, pp. 498-502

NOTES

¹ Lenin wrote *The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It* while underground in Helsingfors (now Helsinki) on September 23-27, 1917, i.e., a month before the Great October Socialist Revolution. p. 9

² *Socialist-Revolutionaries (S.R.s)*—a petty-bourgeois party founded in Russia at the end of 1901-the beginning of 1902. The S.R.s sought to abolish landed proprietorship, and in their struggle against the autocracy resorted to individual terrorism. After the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 three groups emerged within the S. R. Party: the Right wing, the Centre and the Left wing. Together with the Mensheviks and Constitutional-Democrats, they were the mainstay of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois-landowner Provisional Government; leaders of the Right wing and the Centre were members of this government. Under the influence of the peasants who were becoming revolutionary-minded, the Left S. R. wing formed, early in December 1917, an independent Party of Left-wing Socialist-Revolutionaries. Anxious to retain their influence over the peasants, the Left S. R.s came to an agreement with the Bolsheviks and were admitted into the Soviet Government. However, they disagreed with the Bolsheviks on the cardinal questions of building socialism and opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Left S. R.s were against the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty (see Note 9) with Germany. In July 1918, the Left S. R. Central Committee organised the assassination of the German ambassador in Moscow, with the aim of provoking a war between Soviet Russia and Germany, and raised an armed revolt against Soviet power.

Mensheviks—an opportunist wing in Russian Social-Democracy and one of the trends in international opportunism. It was shaped at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1903) from the opponents of the Leninist *Iskra*. At this Congress, during the elections to the Party's central organs, the Leninists received the majority (*bolshinstvo* in Russian) of votes and were thereafter called Bolsheviks, while the opportunists who remained in the minority (*menshinstvo* in Russian) were named Mensheviks.

The Mensheviks came out against the Party's revolutionary programme, against the hegemony of the proletariat in the

revolution and the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and favoured conciliation with the liberal bourgeoisie.

After the defeat of the 1905-07 revolution in Russia, the Mensheviks sought to liquidate the illegal revolutionary party of the proletariat. In January 1912, the Sixth All-Russia Party Conference expelled the Menshevik liquidators from the R.S.D.L.P.

In 1917, some of the Mensheviks were members of the bourgeois Provisional Government, and after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution they joined other counter-revolutionary parties in their struggle against Soviet power. p. 9

² *Struveism*—a liberal-bourgeois distortion of Marxism, so named after P. B. Struve, the chief exponent of "legal Marxism" in Russia. The "legal Marxists" attempted to adapt Marxism and the working-class movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie. p. 9

⁴ *Dan, F. I.*—a Menshevik leader.

Chernov, V. M.—a Socialist-Revolutionary leader. p. 10

⁵ *Kerensky, A. F.*—a Socialist-Revolutionary; Minister and then Prime Minister of the bourgeois Provisional Government.

Milyukov, P. N.—leader of the Constitutional-Democratic (Cadet) Party, the chief party of the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie. In 1917, Foreign Minister in the first bourgeois Provisional Government.

Kornilov, L. G.—general of the tsarist army, Supreme Commander-in-Chief under the Provisional Government. In August 1917, directed a counter-revolutionary revolt. p. 11

⁶ That is, revolutionary traditions, for 1905 is the year of the first Russian revolution. p. 16

⁷ On August 31 (September 13), 1917, the Petrograd Soviet adopted a resolution, moved by the Bolshevik group, categorically rejecting the policy of agreement with the bourgeoisie. It called for the transfer of all power to the Soviets and outlined a programme of revolutionary changes in the country.

A few days later, the Bolshevik Party scored another major victory: on September 5 (18), the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies adopted a similar resolution. p. 17

⁸ In the manuscript, Lenin's work "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" was headed "Theses on the Tasks of the Soviet Government in the Present Situation". The Party Central Committee discussed the "Theses" on April 26, 1918, unanimously approved them and passed a decision to have them published as an article in *Pravda* and *Izvestia VTsIK* and also as a pamphlet. p. 23

⁹ *The Brest peace*—the peace treaty between Soviet Russia and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) signed on March 3, 1918 in Brest-Litovsk. The terms were extremely harsh for Russia, and stipulated the severance of huge territories in the west and south of the country. Following the victory of the November 1918 revolution in Germany, which overthrew the monarchy, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee annulled the predatory Brest Treaty. p. 23

- ¹⁰ After the October Revolution the system of piece-work was abolished almost everywhere and replaced by a time system of payment, which led to a drop in the productivity of labour. Re-introduction of piece-work began at the first nationalised enterprises and the system was endorsed by the publication of the Soviet Labour Code in December 1918. p. 25
- ¹¹ This refers to the right protected by bourgeois law to keep secret all production, trade and financial operations and also all the relevant documents at private capitalist enterprises. After the October Socialist Revolution this right was abolished by the Statute on Workers' Control adopted on November 14 (27), 1917. p. 26
- ¹² *Gotz, A. R.*—a Socialist-Revolutionary leader. p. 28
Martov, L.—a Menshevik leader.
- ¹³ *Belorussov, A. S.*—a bourgeois publicist. p. 28
- ¹⁴ *Cavaignac, Louis Eugène*—French general; headed the military dictatorship in France from June 1848 and suppressed the June uprising of the Paris workers with unheard-of cruelty. As Karl Marx put it, Cavaignac personified the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the help of a sabre. p. 29
- ¹⁵ These are Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary and Cadet newspapers. p. 35
- ¹⁶ This was written by Lenin in connection with the question of enlisting scientists in tackling problems of national economy. The Academy of Sciences was approached on Lenin's initiative and at the end of March 1918 it accepted the Soviet Government's proposal to undertake the survey of the country's natural resources. On April 12, at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars, with Lenin in the chair, a resolution was passed to set the Academy of Sciences "the urgent task of systematically solving the problems of the correct distribution of the country's industry and the most rational utilisation of economic resources", and the need to finance the Academy's work was confirmed. p. 39
- ¹⁷ *Kommunist*—a newspaper, factional organ of the anti-Party group of the so-called Left Communists, published in Petrograd from March 5 to 19, 1918. p. 43
- ¹⁸ Lenin refers to G. M. Krzhizhanevsky's article "The Tasks of the Electrification of Industry", a condensed version of which was published in *Pravda* No. 20 on January 30, 1920. p. 40
- ¹⁹ *Krasin, L. B.*—prominent Soviet statesman who, in the first years of Soviet power, was the People's Commissar for Trade and Industry, and from 1919 onwards was engaged in diplomatic work. p. 50
- ²⁰ The first long-term scientific plan for the rehabilitation and development of the Soviet Republic's economy was drawn up, on Lenin's instructions, by the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia (GOELRO) in 1920. The plan was to

cover the period of 10 to 15 years and envisaged the construction of 20 electric power stations and 10 hydro-power stations, with an annual capacity of 8,800 million kwh. It also provided for a rational, planned distribution of industries throughout the country, for an increase in industrial output, etc. By the end of 1935 the plan was considerably overfulfilled on all points. For example, already in 1931—that is, in 10 years—production of electricity was increased more than 20 times and reached 10,700 million kwh.

p. 52

²¹ *Thomas, Albert*—French politician, a Right-wing socialist who was a member of the French Government. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia in February 1917 Albert Thomas came to Russia to campaign for it to continue the war on the side of the Entente.

p. 56

²² The reference is to the activities of *Proletkult*, an organisation founded in September 1917. Its members rejected the importance of the cultural heritage of the past, sought to fence themselves off from the tasks of the mass cultural and educational work, and tried to create a special "proletarian culture" divorced from life. Early in the 1920s Proletkult organisations ceased to exist.

p. 60

²³ Krzhizhanovsky subsequently wrote that when Lenin used the words "as a first approximation" he was teasing him for his habit of prefacing any calculations or plans with this cautious formula.

p. 62

²⁴ Lenin refers to the leaders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany and the Independent Labour Party of Britain. The former was a Centrist party that was founded in April 1917 and existed until 1922. The latter—a reformist organisation set up in 1893—concentrated its attention on parliamentary struggle and deals with the Liberal Party.

p. 70

²⁵ *Longuetists*—a Centrist trend within the French Socialist Party headed by Jean Longuet. In December 1920 they split away from the party and joined the so-called Two-and-a-Half International.

p. 70

²⁶ The counter-revolutionary revolt of a Czechoslovak corps was organised by the Entente imperialists, with the active participation of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. That corps had been formed in Russia prior to the victory of the October Socialist Revolution from Czech and Slovak prisoners of war. In the summer of 1918, the corps numbered over 60,000 men (altogether there were over 200,000 Czech and Slovak prisoners of war in Russia).

After the establishment of Soviet power in Russia the Entente countries undertook to finance the corps with a view to utilising it in the struggle against the Soviet Republic.

The revolt started late in May 1918. Acting in close contact with the whiteguards and the kulaks, the White Czechs captured a

considerable part of the Urals, Siberia and the Volga area, restoring bourgeois rule everywhere.

However, the majority of the Czech and Slovak prisoners of war sympathised with Soviet power and did not yield to the anti-Soviet propaganda of the corps's reactionary commanders. Many of them refused to fight against Soviet Russia and left the corps. The revolt of the Czechoslovak corps was put down at the end of 1919 simultaneously with the rout of Kolchak's army. p. 75

²⁷ Lenin refers to the local counter-revolutionary governments established in different parts of Russia in the course of the Civil War. p. 76

²⁸ The reference is to the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets (held December 22-29, 1920), at which Krzhizhanovsky delivered a report on the plan for the electrification of Russia. The resolution on this report was drafted by Lenin (see pp. 90-91 of this book). p. 80

²⁹ During the Civil War, the Sukharevka black market in Moscow was the centre of profiteering and the synonym of "free" private trade. p. 86

³⁰ Lenin attended the opening of the electric power station in the village of Kashino on November 14, 1920. He talked with the peasants and addressed the meeting, held to celebrate the event, with a speech on the international situation and the significance of electrification for the national economy. p. 87

³¹ This refers to the work of Karl Ballod, a German professor of political economy, entitled *Der Zukunftsstaat. Produktion and Konsum im Sozialstaat*. p. 96

³² Here and below Lenin quotes the Party's Programme adopted in March 1919 at the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). p. 99

³³ *Tit Titych*—a rich tyrannical merchant in the comedy *Shouldering Another's Trouble* by A. N. Ostrovsky, a famous Russian playwright. p. 100

³⁴ These peasant committees were formed by the village Soviets to improve agriculture. p. 111

³⁵ The pamphlet in question is *The Tax in Kind* written by Lenin late in April 1921. The Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) adopted a special decision suggesting that all local Party committees should use Lenin's pamphlet to explain to the working people the essence and significance of the New Economic Policy (see V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32). p. 129

³⁶ Lenin refers to the Fourth All-Russia Congress of Trade Unions held in Moscow from May 17 to 25, 1921, and the Fourth All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils that also took place in Moscow between May 18 and 24, 1921.

The most important problems of economic development were discussed at joint sittings of the two congresses with the participation of specialists and public figures. p. 142

- ³⁷ *The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Electrical Engineers* was held in Moscow on October 1-9, 1921. There were 893 delegates from 102 Russian towns and 475 guests. The delegates included the country's prominent scientists, executives, experts, and workers from various enterprises. The congress heard a large number of reports, adopted resolutions and made recommendations which were taken into account when the GOELRO plan was concretised and carried into effect. p. 149
- ³⁸ Skvortsov-Stepanov wrote this book on instructions from Lenin who attached great importance to it.
Lenin's preface was published in *Pravda* before the publication of the book. p. 171
- ³⁹ Lenin refers to his article " 'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" (see V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27). p. 175
- ⁴⁰ *The Peace Treaty of Versailles* which concluded the First World War (1914-18) was signed on June 28, 1919. Its purpose was to confirm the redivision of the capitalist world in favour of the victor countries and establish a system of relations between countries aimed at destroying Soviet Russia and defeating the world revolutionary movement. p. 180
- ⁴¹ Lenin refers to Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev. Further, Lenin paraphrases the words of Pigasov, a character from Turgenev's novel *Rudin*. p. 186
- ⁴² *Black Hundreds* were monarchist gangs organised by the tsarist police to combat the revolutionary movement. p. 188

REQUEST TO READERS

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В. И. Ленин

**О РАЗВИТИИ ТЯЖЕЛОЙ ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ
И ЭЛЕКТРИФИКАЦИИ СТРАНЫ**

На английском языке