

V. I. LENIN

ONE

STEP

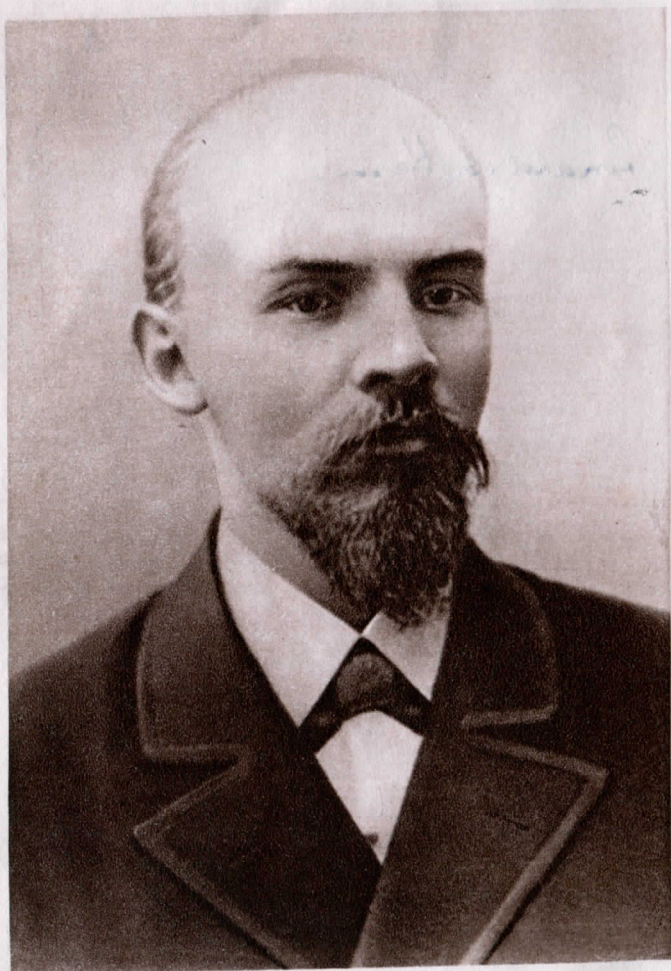
FORWARD

Two Steps Back

Price three shillings and sixpence

To Ron. from.
Doris & Eric.
Xmas. 1968.

Ronald. E. Hamlin



ONE
STEP FORWARD
TWO
STEPS BACK

V. I. LENIN

LONDON
LAWRENCE & WISHART

1948

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The present English translation of V. I. Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, written in 1904, has been made from the text published in 1908 in the edition abridged by the author himself.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION	7
A. THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONGRESS	13
B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VARIOUS GROUPINGS AT THE CONGRESS	14
C. BEGINNING OF THE CONGRESS. THE EPISODE OF THE ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE	15
D. DISSOLUTION OF THE <i>Yuzhny Rabochy</i> GROUP	20
E. THE EQUALITY OF LANGUAGES EPISODE	23
F. THE AGRARIAN PROGRAM	28
G. THE PARTY RULES	36
H. DISCUSSION ON CENTRALISM PRIOR TO THE SPLIT AMONG THE <i>Iskra</i> -ITES	37
I. PARAGRAPH ONE OF THE RULES	40
N. GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS. THE REVOLUTIONARY AND OPPORTUNIST WINGS OF THE PARTY	65
Q. THE NEW <i>Iskra</i> . OPPORTUNISM IN QUESTIONS OF ORGANIZATION	77
R. A FEW WORDS ON DIALECTICS. TWO REVOLUTIONS	110

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

When a prolonged, stubborn and fierce struggle is in progress, there usually comes a moment when central and fundamental points at issue assume prominence, points upon the decision of which the ultimate outcome of the campaign depends, and in comparison with which all the minor and petty episodes of the struggle recede more and more into the background.

That is how matters stand with regard to the struggle within our Party, which for six months already has been riveting the attention of all Party members. And precisely because in the study of the whole struggle herein presented to the reader I have had to allude to many points of detail* which are of infinitesimal interest, and to many squabbles* which at bottom are of no interest whatever, I should like from the very outset to draw the reader's attention to two really central and fundamental points, points which are of tremendous interest, which are unquestionably of historical significance, and which are the most urgent political questions at issue in our Party today.

The first question concerns the political significance of the division of our Party into a "majority" and a "minority" which took

* Omitted in the present edition.—*Ed.*

shape at the Second Party Congress and relegated all previous divisions among Russian Social-Democrats to the distant background.

The second question concerns the significance in point of principle of the position taken up by the new *Iskra** on questions of organization, in so far as this position is really one of principle.

The first question relates to the starting point of the struggle in our Party, its source, its causes, and its fundamental political character. The second question relates to the ultimate outcome of the struggle, its finale, the sum-total of principles resulting from the addition of all that relates to the realm of principle and the subtraction of all that relates to the realm of squabbling. The answer to the first question is obtained by analysing the struggle at the Party Congress; the answer to the second, by analysing what is new in the principles of the new *Iskra*. This twofold analysis, which constitutes nine-tenths of my pamphlet, leads to the conclusion that the "majority" is the revolutionary, and the "minority" the opportunist wing of our Party; the dissensions that divide the two wings at the present moment for the most part concern only questions of organization, and not questions of program or tactics; the new system of views of the new *Iskra*—which emerges the more clearly, the more it tries to lend profundity to its position and the more that position becomes cleared of all these squabbles about co-option—is opportunism in matters of organization.

The principal shortcoming of the existing literature on the crisis

* *Iskra* (*The Spark*)—the first All-Russian newspaper of the revolutionary Marxists founded by Lenin at the end of 1900. It was published abroad and secretly distributed in Russia. Under Lenin's direction (1900-1903) *Iskra* played an extremely important historical role in paving the way for the organization of the independent political party of the Russian proletariat. In November 1903, soon after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., the Mensheviks seized control of *Iskra* and converted it into an organ of their factional struggle against the Bolsheviks and against the decisions of the Second Congress of the Party. The Menshevik *Iskra* began to be called the "new" *Iskra* to distinguish it from the "old" *Iskra* that had been directed by Lenin.—Ed.

in our Party is, as far as the study and interpretation of facts are concerned, that hardly any analysis has been made of the minutes of the Party Congress, and as far as the elucidation of fundamental principles of organization is concerned, that no analysis has been made of the connection which unquestionably exists between the basic error Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod made in their formulation of the first paragraph of the Rules and their defence of that formulation, on the one hand, and the whole "system" (in so far as one can speak of a system here at all) of the present principles of the *Iskra* on the question of organization, on the other. Apparently, the present editors of the *Iskra* do not even notice this connection, although in the writings of the "majority" the importance of the dispute over paragraph one has been referred to again and again. As a matter of fact, Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov are now only deepening, developing and extending their initial error with regard to paragraph one. As a matter of fact, the entire position of the opportunists on questions of organization already began to be revealed in the controversy over paragraph one: their advocacy of a diffuse, not strongly welded, Party organization; their hostility to the idea (the "bureaucratic" idea) of building the Party from the top downwards, starting from the Party Congress and the bodies set up by it; their tendency to proceed from the bottom upwards, which would allow every professor, every high school student and "every striker" to declare himself a member of the Party; their hostility to the "formalism" which demands that a Party member belong to an organization recognized by the Party; their inclination towards the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who is only prepared "platonically to recognize organizational relations"; their penchant for opportunist profundity and for anarchist phrases; their partiality for autonomy as against centralism—in a word, all that is now blossoming so luxuriantly in the new *Iskra*, and is helping more and more towards a complete and graphic elucidation of the initial error.

As for the minutes of the Party Congress, the truly undeserved neglect of them can only be accounted for by the way our controversies have been cluttered by squabbles, and possibly by the fact that these minutes contain too large an amount of very unpalatable truth. The minutes of the Party Congress present a picture of the actual state of affairs in our Party that is unique and invaluable for its accuracy, completeness, comprehensiveness, richness and authenticity; a picture of views, sentiments and plans drawn by the participants in the movement themselves; a picture of the political shades existing in the Party, showing their relative strength, their mutual relations and their struggles. It is the minutes of the Party Congress, and only these minutes, that show to what extent we have really succeeded in making a clean sweep of all the survivals of the old, narrow, circle ties and in substituting for them a single great party tie. It is the duty of every Party member who wishes to take an intelligent share in the affairs of his Party to make a careful study of our Party Congress. I say study advisedly, for the mere perusal of the mass of raw material contained in the minutes is not enough to give a picture of the Congress. Only by careful and independent study can one reach (as one should) a stage where the brief digests of the speeches, the dry excerpts from the debates, the petty skirmishes over minor (seemingly minor) issues will combine to form one whole, and enable the Party member to conjure up before his eyes the living figure of each important speaker and to obtain a full idea of the political complexion of each group of delegates to the Party Congress. If the writer of these lines only succeeds in giving the reader an impetus to a broad and independent study of the minutes of the Party Congress, he will not regard his work in vain.

One more word to the opponents of Social-Democracy. They gloat and grimace over our controversies; and, of course, they will try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the defects and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them

for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows. As for our opponents, let them try to give us a picture of the *true* state of affairs in their own "parties" even remotely approximating that given by the minutes of our Second Congress!

N. LENIN

May 1904

A. THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONGRESS

The *Iskra* at the very outset, in its advance announcement in 1900, declared that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn. The *Iskra* tried to convert the Conference of 1902 into a private meeting and not a Party Congress.* The *Iskra* acted with extreme caution in the summer and autumn of 1902 when it revived the Organization Committee** elected at that conference. At last the work of demarcation was completed—as was generally admitted by us. The Organization Committee was set up at the very end of 1902. The *Iskra* welcomed its consolidation and, in an *editorial* article in its 32nd issue declared that the calling of a Party Congress was a matter of the *utmost urgency* and immediacy. Hence the last thing we can be accused of is having been precipitate in convening the Second Congress. We were, in fact, guided by the maxim: “measure your cloth seven times before you cut it.”

* See *Minutes of the Second Congress*, p. 20.

** The Organization Committee for the purpose of convening the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was set up in March 1902 at a conference held in Byelostok. It ceased to function as a consequence of the arrest of most of its members, but it resumed its activities in the autumn of the same year after a conference convened by *Iskra* in Pskov.—*Ed.*

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VARIOUS GROUPINGS AT THE CONGRESS

What was the principal task of the Congress? It was to create a *real* party on that basis of principles and organization which had been advanced and elaborated by the *Iskra*. That this was the direction in which the Congress had to work was predetermined by the activities of the *Iskra* over a period of three years and by the fact of its recognition by the majority of the committees. The *Iskra's* program and policy were to become the program and policy of the Party; the *Iskra's* organizational plans were to be embodied in the rules of organization of the Party. But needless to say, this result could not be secured without a fight; the highly representative character of the Congress ensured the presence both of organizations which had vigorously fought the *Iskra* (the Bund* and the *Rabocheye Dyelo***) and of organizations which, while verbally recognizing the *Iskra* as the leading organ, actually pursued plans of their own and were unstable in matters of principle (the *Yuzhny Rabochy**** group and delegates from several of the committees who were closely allied to it). This being the case, the Congress could not avoid becoming a *field of battle for the victory of the "Iskra" trend*. That the Congress did become such a field of battle will at once be apparent to all who peruse its minutes with any amount of attention. It is now our task to trace in detail the principal groupings that were revealed on the various issues at the Congress and to reconstruct, using the precise data of the minutes, the political complexion of each of the main groups. What precisely

* *The Bund*—the General Jewish Labour League in Lithuania, Poland and Russia, formed in 1897.—*Ed.*

** *Rabocheye Dyelo* (*Workers' Cause*)—a magazine published by the Foreign Union of Russian Social-Democrats (the Economists). Was published in Geneva from 1899 to 1902.—*Ed.*

*** *Yuzhny Rabochy* (*Southern Worker*)—a Social-Democratic group which from 1900 to 1903 published in Yekaterinoslav an illegal newspaper bearing the same name.—*Ed.*

did they represent, these groups, trends and shades which were to unite in one party at the Congress under the guidance of the *Iskra*?—that is the question we have to answer by analysing the debates and the voting. The elucidation of this point is of cardinal importance both for a study of what our Social-Democrats really stand for and for a comprehension of the causes of the differences among them.

C. BEGINNING OF THE CONGRESS. THE EPISODE OF THE ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

It will be most convenient of all to analyse the debates and the voting in the order of the sittings of the Congress, so as successively to note the political shades as they became more and more apparent. Departures from the chronological order for the purpose of considering closely allied questions of similar groupings in conjunction will be made only when absolutely essential. For the sake of impartiality, we shall endeavour to mention *all* the more important votes, omitting, of course, the innumerable votes on minor issues which took up an inordinate amount of time at our Congress (partly owing to our inexperience and to our inefficiency in dividing the material between the commissions and the plenary sittings, and partly owing to protraction which bordered on obstruction).

The first question to evoke a debate which began to reveal differences of shades was whether first place should be given (on the "agenda" of the Congress) to the item: "Position of the Bund in the Party" (*Minutes*, pp. 29-33). From the standpoint of the *Iskra*-ites, which was advocated by Plekhanov, Martov, Trotsky and myself, there could be no doubt on this point. The Bund's withdrawal from the Party offers graphic confirmation of our views: if the Bund refused to go our way and to accept the principles of organization which the majority of the Party shared with the *Iskra*, it would be useless and senseless to "pretend" that we were going the same way and only drag out the Congress (as the Bundists did

drag it out). The question had already been made abundantly clear in the literature on the subject, and it was apparent to any thoughtful Party member that the only thing that remained was to put the question frankly, and bluntly and honestly make the choice: autonomy (in which case we go the same way) or federation (in which case our ways part).

Always evasive in policy, the Bundists wished to be evasive here too and to protract the matter. They were joined by Comrade Akimov, who, evidently on behalf of all the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, at once gave prominence to the differences with the *Iskra* over questions of organization (*Minutes*, p. 31). The Bund and the *Rabocheye Dyelo* were supported by Comrade Makhov (representing two votes of the Nikolayev Committee—which had not long prior to this expressed its solidarity with the *Iskra*!). The question was altogether unclear in Comrade Makhov's opinion, and another "ticklish point," he considered, was, "whether we needed a democratic system or, on the contrary (mark this!), centralism."

Thus the *Iskra*-ites were opposed by the Bund, the *Rabocheye Dyelo* and Comrade Makhov, who together controlled the ten votes which were cast against us (p. 33). *Thirty votes* were cast in favour—this is the figure, as we shall see later, around which the vote of the *Iskra*-ites often fluctuated. Eleven abstained, apparently not taking the side of either of the contending "parties." It is interesting to note that when we took the vote on § 2 of the Rules of the Bund (it was the rejection of this § 2 which induced the Bund to withdraw from the Party), the votes in favour and the abstentions again amounted to ten (*Minutes*, p. 289), those who abstained being the three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (Brouckère, Martynov and Akimov) and Comrade Makhov. Clearly, the grouping shown in the vote on the place of the Bund item on the agenda was not fortuitous. Clearly, all these comrades differed with the *Iskra* not only on the technical question of the order of discussion, but in essence as well.

After the vote on the place of the Bund item on the agenda, the

question of the *Borba* group arose at the Congress; it too led to an extremely interesting grouping and was closely bound up with the most "ticklish" point at the Congress, namely, the personal composition of the central bodies. The commission appointed to determine the composition of the Congress had pronounced against inviting the *Borba* group, in accordance with a *twice-adopted* decision of the Organization Committee (see *Minutes*, p. 383 and p. 375), and the report of its representatives on the commission (p. 35).

Comrade Egorov, a member of the Organization Committee, declared that "the question of the *Borba* (mark, of the *Borba*, and not of any particular member of this group) was something new to him"; and he demanded the adjournment. How a question on which a decision had twice been taken by the Organization Committee could be new to a member of the Organization Committee is a mystery. During the adjournment a meeting of the Organization Committee was held (*Minutes*, p. 40), attended by such of its members as happened to be at the Congress (several members of the Organization Committee, old members of the *Iskra* organization, were not present at the Congress). A discussion over the *Borba* began. The *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (Martynov, Akimov and Brouckère—pp. 36-38) proclaimed in favour, the *Iskra*-ites (Pavlovich, Sorokin, Lange, Trotsky, Martov and others) against. Again the Congress split into the already familiar groupings. The struggle over the *Borba* was a stubborn one, and Comrade Martov made a very circumstantial (p. 38) and "militant" speech, in which he justly pointed to the "inequality of representation" of the Russian and foreign groups, and said that it would hardly be "well" to allow a foreign group any "privilege" (words of gold, which are particularly edifying today in the light of the events that have occurred since the Congress!), and that we should not encourage "the organizational chaos in the Party that was marked by a disunity which was not necessitated by any considerations of principle."

Apart from the followers of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, nobody came out openly and with reasoned motives on behalf of *Borba* until the list of speakers was closed (p. 40).

After the list of speakers had been closed, when it was already out of order to speak *on the point at issue*, Comrade Egorov "insistently demanded that the decision just adopted by the Organization Committee should be heard." It is not surprising that the delegates were outraged by this manoeuvre, and Comrade Plekhanov, the chairman, expressed his "astonishment that Comrade Egorov should insist upon his demand." Two courses were open, one would think: either to express oneself frankly and definitely to the Congress on the question at issue, or to say nothing at all. But to allow the list of speakers to be closed and then, under the guise of a "reply to the debate," to treat the Congress to a *new* decision of the Organization Committee—and on the very subject under discussion—was like a stab in the back!

The sitting was resumed after dinner, and the Bureau, still in perplexity, decided to waive "formalities" and to resort to the method of "comradely explanation," a method adopted at congresses only in extreme cases, as a last resort. Popov, the representative of the Organization Committee, announced the decision of the Organization Committee, which had been supported by all its members except one, Pavlovich (p. 43), and which recommended the Congress to invite Ryazanov.

Pavlovich declared that he had continued to deny the legitimacy of the meeting of the Organization Committee, and that its new decision "*contradicts its earlier decision*." This statement caused a *furor*. Comrade Egorov, also a member of the Organization Committee and a member of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, evaded a plain answer on the actual subject in dispute and tried to shift the issue to one of discipline. He claimed that Comrade Pavlovich had violated Party discipline [!], for, having heard his protest, the Organization Committee had decided "not to lay Pavlovich's dissenting

opinion before the Congress." The debate now centred around a question of Party discipline, and Plekhanov, amid the loud applause of the delegates, explained for the edification of Comrade Egorov that "*we have no such thing as imperative mandates*" (p. 42; cf. p. 379, Standing Orders of the Congress § 7: "The powers of delegates must not be restricted by imperative mandates. Delegates are absolutely free and independent in the exercise of their powers"). "The Congress is the supreme Party body," and, consequently, he violates Party discipline and the standing orders of the Congress who in any way restricts a delegate in addressing the Congress *directly* on any question, without exception, affecting the life of the Party. The issue was thus reduced to the dilemma: the circle spirit or the Party spirit? Were the rights of the delegates to be restricted at the Congress for the sake of the imaginary rights or constitutions of the various bodies and circles, or were *all* lower bodies and old groups to be *completely*, and not nominally, disbanded before the Congress, pending the creation of really Party authoritative institutions. The reader already perceives how profoundly important from the standpoint of principle was this dispute at the very outset of the Congress (third sitting), a congress whose actual purpose it was to restore the Party. Around this dispute, as it were, concentrated the conflict between the old circles and groups (like *Yuzhny Rabochy*) and the nascent Party. And the anti-*Iskra* groups at once revealed themselves: Abramson, a Bundist, Comrade Martynov, an ardent ally of the present *Iskra* editorial board, and our friend Comrade Makhov all sided with Egorov and the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group against Pavlovich. Comrade Martynov, who is now vying with Martov and Axelrod in making great play of "democracy" in organization, even cited the example of... the army, where an appeal to a superior authority can be made only through the lower authority!! The true meaning of this "compact" anti-*Iskra* opposition was quite clear to anybody who was present at the Congress or who had carefully followed the

internal history of our Party prior to the Congress. It was the purpose of the opposition (perhaps not always realized by all of its representatives, and sometimes pursued from force of inertia) to guard the independence, individualism and parochial interests of the small groups from being swallowed up in the broad Party that was being built on the *Iskra* principles.

It was just from this angle that the question was approached by Comrade Martov, who had not yet joined forces with Martynov. Comrade Martov vigorously took up the cudgels, and rightly so, against those whose "idea of Party discipline does not go beyond the duties of a revolutionary to the particular group of a *lower* order to which he belongs." "No *compulsory* [Martov's italics] grouping can be tolerated within a united Party," Martov explained to those who championed the methods of the circles, not foreseeing what a flail these words would be for his own political conduct at the end of the Congress and after....

D. DISSOLUTION OF THE YUZHNY RABOCHY GROUP

The division of the delegates over the Organization Committee question may perhaps seem casual. But this opinion would be wrong, and in order to dispel it we shall depart from the chronological order and will now examine an episode which occurred at the end of the Congress, but which is very closely connected with the previous episode. This episode was the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochoy* group. The organizational trend of the *Iskra*—complete union of the Party forces and removal of the chaos which divided them—here came into conflict with the interests of *one* of the groups, a group which had done useful work when there was no real party, but which had become superfluous when the work was being centralized. From the standpoint of its circle interests, the *Yuzhny Rabochoy* group was no less entitled than the old *Iskra* editorial board to lay claim to "continuity" and inviolability. But

in the interests of the Party, this group should have submitted to the transfer of its forces to "the proper Party organizations" (p. 313, end of resolution adopted by the Congress). From the point of view of circle interests and "philistinism," the dissolution of a useful group, which no more desired it than the old *Iskra* editorial board, could not but seem a "ticklish matter" (the expression used by Comrade Russov and Comrade Deutsch). But from the point of view of the interests of the Party, its dissolution, "solution" into the Party (Gushev's expression) was essential. The *Yuzhny Rabochoy* group bluntly declared that it "did not consider it necessary" to proclaim itself dissolved and demanded that "the Congress definitely pronounce its opinion" and, what is more, "immediately: yes or no." The *Yuzhny Rabochoy* group openly claimed the "continuity" to which the old *Iskra* editorial board began to lay claim after it had been dissolved! "Although we are all individually members of a united party," Comrade Egorov said, "it nevertheless consists of a number of organizations with which we have to reckon as *historical magnitudes*.... If such an organization is *not detrimental to the Party, there is no need to dissolve it*."

Thus an important question of *principle* was quite definitely raised, and all the *Iskra*-ites—inasmuch as their own circle interests had not yet taken the upper hand—took a decisive stand against the unstable elements (the Bundists and two of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites had already withdrawn from the Congress; they would undoubtedly have been heart and soul in favour of "reckoning with historical magnitudes"). The result of the vote was *thirty-one for*, five against and five abstentions (the four votes of the members of the *Yuzhny Rabochoy* group and one other, that of Belov, most likely, judging by his earlier pronouncements, p. 303). A group of *ten votes* distinctly opposed to the *Iskra*'s consistent organizational plan and defending the circle principle as against the Party principle, are here quite definitely to be discerned in the debate; the *Iskra*-ites treated the question precisely from the standpoint of principle

(see Lange's speech, p. 315), opposing amateurishness and disunity, refusing to pay heed to the "sympathies" of individual organizations, and plainly declaring that "if the comrades of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*" had adhered more strictly to principle earlier, a year or two ago, the unity of the Party and the triumph of the program principles we have sanctioned here would have been achieved sooner. This was the spirit expressed by Orlov, by Gussev, by Lyadov, by Muravyov, by Russov, by Pavlovich, by Glebov and by Gorin. Far from protesting against these definite references, repeatedly made at the Congress, to the lack of principle in the policy and "line" of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*, of Makhov and others, far from making any reservation on this score, the *Iskra*-ites of the "minority," in the person of Deutsch, vigorously associated themselves with these views, condemned "chaos" and welcomed the "blunt statement of the question" (p. 315) by Comrade Russov.

Among the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, the proposal to dissolve it evoked the most passionate indignation, traces of which are to be found in the minutes (it should not be forgotten that the minutes offer only a pale reflection of the debates, for they do not give the full speeches but only very condensed summaries and extracts). Comrade Egorov even called the bare reference to the *Rabochaya Mysl** group in conjunction with the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group a "lie"—a characteristic illustration of the attitude towards consistent Economism** that prevailed at the Congress. Even much later, at the 37th sitting, Egorov spoke of the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group with the utmost irritation (p. 356), requesting to

* *Rabochaya Mysl* (*Workers' Thought*)—a newspaper published by the Economists from 1897 to 1902.—Ed.

** *Economism*—an opportunist trend in Russian Social-Democratic movement at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. The Economists held that the principal task of the Social-Democrats was to organize the economic struggle of the workers in defence of their day-to-day interests, and they regarded the political struggle against tsarism as a task of the liberal bourgeoisie.—Ed.

have it recorded in the minutes that during the discussion on the *Yuzhny Rabochy* the members of this group were not asked either about publication funds or about control by the Central Organ and the Central Committee. During the discussion on the *Yuzhny Rabochy*, Comrade Popov hinted at a compact majority which was supposed to have predetermined the fate of this group. "Now," he said (p. 316), "after the speeches of Comrades Gussev and Orlov, everything is clear." The meaning of these words is unmistakable: now, after the *Iskra*-ites had stated their opinion and had moved a resolution, everything was clear, that is, it was clear that the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group would be dissolved against its wishes.

E. THE EQUALITY OF LANGUAGES EPISODE

Let us return and examine the Congress sittings in their proper order.

We have now convincingly seen that even before the Congress proceeded to discuss its actual business, there were already clearly revealed not only a perfectly definite group of anti-*Iskra*-ites (eight votes), but also a group of intermediate and unstable elements who were prepared to support the eight anti-*Iskra*-ites and increase their votes to roughly sixteen or eighteen.

The question of the place of the Bund in the Party, which was discussed at the Congress in extreme detail—excessive detail—reduced itself to laying down a thesis in principle, while its practical decision was postponed until the discussion on organization. In view of the fact that quite a lot of space had been devoted in pre-Congress publications to the subjects pertaining to this question, very little that was new was said at the Congress. It must however be mentioned that the supporters of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Martynov, Akinov and Brouckère) agreed with Martov's resolution, only with the reservation that they realized its inadequacy and differed with its conclusions (pp. 69, 73, 83, and 86).

Having discussed the place of the Bund, the Congress proceeded to consider the program. The discussion under this head mostly centred around particular amendments of slight interest. The opposition of the anti-*Iskra*-ites on matters of principle found expression only in Comrade Martynov's onslaught on the famous question of spontaneity and consciousness. Martynov, of course, was backed by the Bundists and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites to a man. The unsoundness of his objections was pointed out, incidentally, by Martov and Plekhanov. It should be noted as a curiosity that the *Iskra* editorial board have now taken their stand with Martynov and are saying the very opposite of what they said at the Congress!

Passing over the dispute about the adoption of *Iskra* as the central organ and the beginning of the debate on the Rules (which it will be more convenient to examine in connection with the whole discussion of the Rules), let us proceed to consider the shades of principle that were revealed during the discussion of the program. Let us first note one detail of a highly characteristic nature, namely, the debate on proportional representation. Comrade Egorov of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* advocated the inclusion of this point in the program, and did so in a way that called forth the justified remark from Posadovsky (an *Iskra*-ite of the minority) about "a serious difference of opinion." "It is unquestionable," said Comrade Posadovsky, "that we do not agree on the following basic question: *must we subordinate our future policy to certain fundamental democratic principles and attribute absolute value to them, or must all democratic principles be exclusively subordinated to the interests of our Party?* I am decidedly in favour of the latter." Plekhanov "fully associated himself" with Posadovsky, objecting in even more definite and decisive terms to "the absolute value of democratic principles" and to regarding them "abstractly." "Hypothetically," he said, "a case is conceivable where we Social-Democrats may oppose universal suffrage. There was a time when the bourgeoisie of the Italian republics deprived members of the nobility

of political rights. The revolutionary proletariat might restrict the political rights of the upper classes just as the upper classes at one time restricted its political rights." Plekhanov's speech was greeted with applause and *hisses*, and when Plekhanov protested against somebody's *Zwischenruf*,* "You should not hiss," and requested the comrades not to restrain their demonstrations, Comrade Egorov rose and said: "Since such speeches call forth applause, I am obliged to hiss." Together with Comrade Goldblatt (a Bund delegate), Comrade Egorov spoke in opposition to the views of Posadovsky and Plekhanov. Unfortunately, the debate was closed, and the question it gave rise to immediately receded into the background.

The difference was revealed even more distinctly in the discussion on "equality of languages" (*Minutes*, pp. 171 *et seq.*). On this point it was not so much the debate that was so eloquent as the votings: adding them together, we get the incredible number of *sixteen*! Over what? Over whether it was enough to stipulate in the program the equality of all citizens, irrespective of sex, etc., *and language*, or whether it was necessary to stipulate "freedom of language" or "equality of languages." Comrade Martov characterized this episode pretty accurately at the League Congress when he said that "a trifling dispute over the formulation of one clause of the program acquired fundamental significance because half the Congress was prepared to overthrow the Program Commission." Just so. The immediate cause of the conflict was indeed trifling, yet it assumed a truly *fundamental* character, and, consequently, frightfully bitter forms, going to the length even of attempts to "overthrow" the Program Commission, to the voicing of the suspicion that there was a desire "*to mislead the Congress*" (of which Egorov suspected Martov!), and to personal remarks . . . remarks of the most abusive kind (p. 178). Even Comrade Popov "expressed regret that mere trifles had given rise to *such an atmosphere*"

* *Zwischenruf*--an interjection from the body of the hall.—Ed.

(my italics, p. 182) as reigned during the course of three sittings (16th, 17th and 18th).

All these expressions are perfectly explicit and positively indicative of the eloquent fact that the atmosphere of "suspicion" and of the most bitter forms of conflict ("overthrowing")—which was later, at the League Congress, laid at the door of the *Iskra*-ite majority!—actually arose *long before we split into a majority and a minority*. It was not cutting remarks and witticisms that gave rise to the conflict—they were only a *symptom* of the fact that the very political grouping at the Congress harboured a "contradiction," that it harboured all the makings of a conflict, that it harboured an internal heterogeneity which burst forth with imminent force at the least pretext, even the *most trifling*.

From the standpoint from which I regard the Congress the desperately acute conflict of a *fundamental* character which arose from a "trifling" cause is quite explicable and inevitable. Inasmuch as a struggle between the *Iskra*-ites and the anti-*Iskra*-ites went on *all the time* at the Congress, inasmuch as between them stood the unstable elements, and inasmuch as the latter, together with the anti-*Iskra*-ites, controlled one-third of the votes (3+10=18, out of 51, according to my calculation, an approximate one, of course), it is perfectly clear and natural that *any falling away from the "Iskra"-ites of even a small minority* should create the possibility of a victory for the anti-*Iskra* trend and should therefore call forth a "frantic" struggle. This was not the result of inappropriate cutting remarks and attacks but of a political combination. It was not that cutting remarks gave rise to a political conflict, but that the existence of a political conflict in the very grouping at the Congress gave rise to cutting remarks and attacks—in this juxtaposition lies the root of the fundamental difference between our estimate and Martov's of the political significance of the Congress and its results.

During the Congress there were in all three major cases of a

small number of *Iskra*-ites falling away from the majority—over the question of equality of languages, over § 1 of the Rules, and over the elections—and in all three cases a bitter struggle resulted, leading in the end to the severe crisis we have in the Party today. If we want to get a political understanding of this crisis and of this struggle, we must examine the political grouping of the shades that clashed at the Congress.

The war opened with a dispute between Comrade Martov and Comrade Lieber, the leader of the Bundists (pp. 171-72). Martov argued that the demand for "equality of citizens" was enough. "Freedom of language" was rejected, but "equality of languages" was at once proposed, and Comrade Egorov joined Lieber in the fray. Martov declared that it was *fetishism* "when speakers insist on saying that nationalities are equal and transfer inequality to the sphere of language, whereas it is from just the opposite angle that the question should be examined: inequality of nationalities exists, and one of its expressions is that people belonging to certain nations are deprived of the right to use their mother tongue" (p. 172).

The grouping of the delegates in this fight is made particularly clear by the abundant roll-call votes. There were as many as three. The *Iskra* nucleus was solidly opposed all the time by the anti-*Iskra*-ites (eight votes) and, with very slight fluctuations, by the whole Centre (Makhov, Lvov, Egorov, Popov, Medvedyev, Ivanov, Tsaryov and Belov—only the last two vacillated at first, sometimes abstaining, sometimes voting with us, and it was only during the third vote that their position became fully defined). Of the *Iskra*-ites, several fell away—chiefly the Caucasians (three with six votes)—and thanks to this, the "fetishist" trend in the long run gained the upper hand. During the third vote, when the followers of both trends had clarified their position most fully, the three Caucasians, with six votes, broke away from the *Iskra*-ite majority and went over to the other side: two delegates—Posadovsky and

Kostich—with two votes, fell away from the *Iskra*-ite minority; the following went over to the other side or abstained during the first two votes: Lensky, Stepanov and Gorsky of the *Iskra*-ite majority, and Deutsch of the minority. *The falling away of eight "Iskra" votes (out of a total of thirty-three) gave the superiority to the coalition of the anti-"Iskra"-ites and the unstable elements.* It was just this *basic fact* of the Congress grouping which was repeated (only *other Iskra-ites* falling away) during the vote on § 1 of the Rules and during the elections.

F. THE AGRARIAN PROGRAM

The inconsistency of principle of the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the "Centre" was also clearly brought out by the debate on the agrarian program which took up so much time at the Congress (see *Minutes*, pp. 190-226) and raised quite a number of extremely interesting questions. As was to be expected, the campaign against the program was launched by Comrade Martynov (after a few remarks by Comrades Lieber and Egorov). He brought out the old argument about correcting "this particular historical injustice,"* whereby, he claimed, we were indirectly "sanctifying other historical injustices," and so on. He was joined by Comrade Egorov, to whom even "the significance of this program is unclear. Is it a program for ourselves, that is, does it define our demands, or do we want to make it popular?" (!?!?) Comrade Lieber "would like to make the same points as Comrade Egorov." Comrade Makhov spoke with his characteristic decisiveness and declared that "the majority [?] of the speakers positively cannot understand

* This refers to the demand made in the agrarian program of the R.S.D.L.P. that the so-called *otrezki*—i.e., the better portions of land essential to peasant farming which were cut off, or inclosed, for the benefit of the landlords at the time of the abolition of serfdom in 1861—be returned to the peasants.—Ed.

what the proposed program means and what its aims are." The program submitted, you see "can hardly be regarded as a Social-Democratic agrarian program"; it ... "smacks somewhat of a game at correcting historical injustices"; it bears "the stamp of demagoguery and adventurism." As a theoretical justification of this profound remark we get the caricature and over-simplification so customary in vulgar Marxism: the *Iskra*-ites, we are told, "want to treat the peasants as though their composition were homogeneous; but as the peasantry has split up into classes long ago [?], putting forward a single program must inevitably render the whole program demagogic and turn it into a dubious venture when put into practice" (p. 202). Comrade Makhov here "blurted out" the real reason why our agrarian program meets with the disapproval of many Social-Democrats who are prepared to recognize the *Iskra* (as Makhov himself did), but who have absolutely failed to grasp its trend, its theoretical and practical position. It was the vulgarization of Marxism as applied to present-day Russian peasant economy, with all its complexity and variety, and not differences over particular issues, that gave rise, and still gives rise, to the failure to understand this program. And it was on this vulgar Marxist standpoint that the leaders of the anti-*Iskra* elements (Lieber and Martynov) and of the "Centre" (Egorov and Makhov) so quickly found common ground. Comrade Egorov gave frank expression also to one of the characteristic traits of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* and of the groups and circles, gravitating towards it, namely, their failure to grasp the importance of the peasant movement, their failure to grasp that it was an underestimation rather than an overestimation of the importance of the movement (and a lack of forces to utilize it) that was the weak side of our Social-Democrats at the time of the first famous peasant revolts. "I am far from sharing the infatuation of the editorial board for the peasant movement," said Comrade Egorov, "an infatuation with which many Social-Democrats have been affected since the peasant disor-

ders." But, unfortunately, Comrade Egorov did not take the trouble to give the Congress any precise idea of what this infatuation of the *editorial board* consisted in; he did not take the trouble to give any specific reference to the material published by the *Iskra*. Moreover, he forgot that *all* the basic points of our agrarian program had already been developed by the *Iskra* in its third issue,* that is *long* before the peasant disorders.** He whose "recognition" of the *Iskra* is not merely a verbal one would do well to pay a little more heed to its theoretical and tactical principles.

"No, we cannot do much among the peasants!"—Comrade Egorov exclaimed, and went on to explain that this exclamation was not meant as a protest against any particular "infatuation," but as a denial of our entire position: "that means that our slogan cannot compete with an adventurist slogan." A most characteristic formulation revealing the lack of principle in this attitude, which reduces everything to "competition" between the slogans of different parties! And this was said after the speaker had announced his "satisfaction" with the theoretical explanations, in which it was stated that we were striving for lasting success in our agitation, undeterred by temporary failures, and that lasting success (despite the clamour of momentary "competitors") was impossible without a firm theoretical basis to the program (p. 196). What confusion is disclosed by this assurance of "satisfaction," immediately followed as it was by a repetition of the vulgar precepts inherited from the old Economism, for which the "competition of slogans" decided everything—not only the agrarian question, but the entire program and tactics of the economic and political struggle! "You will not induce the agricultural labourer," Comrade Egorov said,

* See "The Workers' Party and the Peasantry," Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II.—*Ed.*

** The reference is to the peasant revolts of 1902 in the Poltava, Kharkov, Voronezh and other gubernias in Russia which were accompanied by the wrecking of landlords' estates.—*Ed.*

"to fight side by side with the rich peasant for the *otrezki*," which to no small extent are already in the hands of the rich peasant."

There again you have the over-simplification that is undoubtedly akin to our opportunist Economism, which insisted that it was impossible to "induce" the proletariat to fight for what was to no small extent in the hands of the bourgeoisie and would fall into its hands to an even larger extent in the future. There again you have the vulgarization that forgets the Russian peculiarities of the general capitalist relations between the agricultural labourer and the rich peasant. The *otrezki* are now a sore point, and they are a sore point in fact with the agricultural labourer *as well*, who does not have to be "induced" to fight for emancipation from his state of servitude. It is certain intellectuals who have to be "induced"—induced to take a wider view of their tasks, induced to renounce stereotyped formulas when discussing specific questions, induced to take account of the historical situation, which complicates and modifies our aims. It is in fact only the prejudice that the muzhik is stupid—a prejudice which, as Comrade Martov justly remarked (p. 202) was to be detected in the speeches of Comrade Makhov and the other opponents of the agrarian program—only this prejudice explains why they forget the actual conditions of life of our agricultural labourers.

Having simplified the question down to a naked contrast of worker and capitalist, the spokesmen of the "Centre" tried, as usual, to ascribe their own narrow-mindedness to the muzhik. "It is just because I consider the muzhik, within the limits of his narrow class outlook, a clever fellow," Comrade Makhov remarked, "that I believe he will stand for the petty-bourgeois ideal of seizure and division." Two things are obviously confused here: the description of the class outlook of the muzhik as that of a petty bour-

* See note to page 28—*Ed.*

geois, and the narrowing down, the reduction, of this outlook to "narrow limits." It is in this reduction that the mistake of the Egorovs and Makhovs lies (just as the mistake of the Martynovs and Akimovs lay in reducing the outlook of the proletariat to "narrow limits"). Yet both logic and history teach us that the petty-bourgeois class outlook may be more or less narrow and more or less progressive, just because of the dual status of the petty bourgeois. And far from dropping our hands in despair because of this narrowness ("stupidity") of the muzhik or because he is governed by "prejudice," we must work steadily to widen his outlook and to help his reason triumph over his prejudice.

The vulgar "Marxist" view of the Russian agrarian question found its culmination in the concluding words of Comrade Makhov's speech, in which that faithful champion of the old *Iskra* editorial board set forth his principles. It was not for nothing that these words were greeted with applause ... ironical applause, to be sure. "I do not know, of course, what to call a misfortune," said Comrade Makhov, outraged by Plekhanov's statement that we were not at all alarmed by the movement for a black redistribution,* and that it is not we who would attempt to check this progressive (bourgeois progressive) movement. "But this revolution, if it can be called such, would not be a revolutionary one. It would be truer to call it, not revolution, but reaction [*laughter*], a revolution that was more like a riot. . . . Such a revolution would throw us back, and it would require a certain amount of time before we got back to the position we are in today. Today we have far more than during the French Revolution [*ironical applause*], we have a Social-Democratic Party" [*laughter*]. . . .

We thus find that even on the questions of pure principle raised by the agrarian program, the already familiar grouping at once appeared. The anti-*Iskra*-ites (eight votes) launched into the fray

* A peasant movement for the revolutionary redistribution of the landlords' land among the peasants.—Ed.

on behalf of vulgar Marxism, and the leaders of the "Centre," the Egorovs and the Makhovs, trailed after them, gradually erring and straying into the same narrow outlook. It is therefore quite natural that the voting on certain points of the agrarian program should result in 30 and 35 votes in favour (pp. 225 and 226), that is, approximately the same figure as we observed in the dispute over the order of discussion of the Bund question, in the Organization Committee episode, and in the question of dissolving the *Yuzhny Rabochy*. An issue had only to arise which in any way departed from the usual and established stereotype and demanded any independent application of Marxist theory to social and economic relations that were new (to the Germans) and peculiar, and we immediately find that the *Iskra*-ites who were able to cope with the problems had only three-fifths of the vote, and that the whole "Centre" turned and followed the Liebers and the Martynovs.

The debate on the agrarian program gives a clear picture of the struggle of the *Iskra*-ites against a good two-fifths of the Congress. On this question the Caucasian delegates took up an absolutely correct stand—due largely to the fact, apparently, that a close acquaintance with their numerous local feudal survivals warned them against the schoolboyish abstract and naked contrasts which satisfied the Makhovs. Martynov, Lieber, Makhov and Egorov were combated by Plekhanov, by Gussev (who declared that he had had "frequent occasion to meet such a pessimistic view of our work in the countryside" . . . as Comrade Egorov's . . . "among the comrades active in Russia"), by Kostrov, by Karsky and by Trotsky. The latter rightly remarked that the "well-meant advice" of the critics of the agrarian program "smacked too much of *philistinism*."

Referring to the arguments which smacked of "philistinism," Trotsky declared that "in the approaching period of revolution we must form ties with the peasantry. . . ." "In face of this task, the scepticism and political 'far-sightedness' of Makhov and Egorov are more harmful than any short-sightedness." Comrade Kostich,

another minority *Iskra*-ite, very aptly pointed to the "lack of confidence in himself, in the stability of his principles" displayed by Comrade Makhov, a description which fits our "Centre" admirably. "In his pessimism," Comrade Kostich continued, "Comrade Makhov is at one with Comrade Egorov, although they differ as to shades. He forgets that the Social-Democrats are already working among the peasantry, are already directing their movement as far as possible. And their pessimism is narrowing the scope of our work." (P. 210.)

To conclude our examination of the discussion of the program at the Congress, mention should be made of the brief debate on the subject of supporting oppositional trends. Our program clearly states that the Social-Democratic Party supports "every *oppositional* and revolutionary movement *directed against the existing social and political order in Russia*". It would seem that this last reservation makes it perfectly clear *exactly which* oppositional trends we support. Nevertheless, the various shades which had evolved long ago in our Party at once revealed themselves *here too*, difficult as it was to assume that any "perplexity or misunderstandings" were still possible on a question which had been digested so thoroughly! Evidently, the trouble lay not in misunderstandings, but in *shades*. Makhov, Lieber and Martynov at once sounded the alarm....

Makhov again began with a vulgar over-simplification of Marxism. "Our only revolutionary class is the proletariat," he declared, and from this correct premise he at once drew an incorrect conclusion: "The rest are of no account, not worth anything [*general laughter*]. . . . Yes, they are not worth anything; all they are out for is their own advantage. I am against supporting them." (P. 226.) Comrade Makhov's inimitable formulation of his position embarrassed many (of his supporters), but as a matter of fact Lieber and Martynov agreed with him when they proposed to delete the word "oppositional" or to restrict it by an addition: "democratic-oppositional." Plekhanov quite rightly took up the cudgels against

this amendment of Martynov's. "We must criticize the liberals," he said, "expose their half-heartedness. That is true. . . . But, while exposing the narrowness and limitations of all movements other than the Social-Democratic, it is our duty to explain to the proletariat that even a constitution which does not confer universal suffrage would be a step forward compared with absolutism, and therefore it should not prefer the existing order to such a constitution." Comrades Martynov, Lieber and Makhov did not agree with this and stuck to their position, which was attacked by Axelrod, Starovyer and Trotsky and once more by Plekhanov. Meanwhile, Comrade Makhov managed to surpass himself. He had said at first that the other classes (other than the proletariat) were "of no account" and that he was "against supporting them." Then he condescended to admit that "while it is essentially reactionary, the bourgeoisie is sometimes revolutionary—for example, in the struggle against feudalism and its survivals." "But there are some groups," he continued, "which are always [?] reactionary—such as the handicraftsmen." Such are the gems of principle arrived at by those very leaders of our "Centre" who later foamed at the mouth in defence of the old editorial board! Even in Western Europe, where the guild system was so strong, the handicraftsmen, like the other petty bourgeois of the towns, were most revolutionary in the era of the fall of absolutism. And it is particularly absurd of a Russian Social-Democrat to repeat without reflection what our Western comrades say about the present-day handicraftsmen, the handicraftsmen of an era separated by a century or half a century from the fall of absolutism. To speak, in Russia, of the reactionary nature of the handicraftsmen on political questions compared with the bourgeoisie is merely to repeat a hackneyed phrase learnt by rote.*

* Another leader of this same group, the "Centre," Comrade Egorov, spoke on the question of supporting the oppositional trends on a different occasion, in connection with Axelrod's resolution on the Socialist-Revolutionary

G. THE PARTY RULES

Having discussed the program, the Congress proceeded to the Party Rules (we pass over the question of the Central Organ and the delegates' reports, which the majority of the delegates were unfortunately unable to present in a satisfactory form). It need hardly be said that the Party Rules were of the utmost importance to all of us. After all, the *Iskra* had acted from the very outset not only as a periodical but as an *organizational* nucleus. In an editorial in its fourth issue ("Where To Begin?") the *Iskra* had set forth a whole plan of organization, a plan which it pursued systematically and steadily over a period of *three years*. When the Second Party Congress adopted the *Iskra* as the central organ, two of the three points setting forth the motives of the resolution on the subject (p. 147) were devoted *just to this plan and these ideas of organization advocated by "Iskra,"* namely, its role in the leadership of the *practical* work of the Party and the leading part it played in the work of attaining unity. It is therefore quite natural that the work of the *Iskra* and the whole work of organizing the Party, the whole work of *actually* restoring the Party, *could not* be regarded as complete unless certain definite ideas of organization were recognized by the whole Party and formally enacted. It was this task that the rules of Party organization were to perform.

The principal ideas which the *Iskra* strove to make the basis of the Party's organization amounted essentially to the following two: first, the idea of centralism, which defined in principle the method of deciding all particular and detail questions of organ-

tionaries (p. 359). Comrade Egorov detected a "contradiction" between the demand in the program to *support* every oppositional and revolutionary movement and the *unfavourable* attitude towards both the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the liberals. In another form, and approaching the question from a somewhat different angle, Comrade Egorov here revealed the same narrow conception of Marxism, and the same unstable, semi-hostile attitude towards the position of the *Iskra* (which he had "recognized") as Comrades Makhov, Lieber and Martynov.

ization; second, the special function of an organ, a newspaper, for ideological leadership, an idea which took into account the temporary and special requirements of the Russian Social-Democratic labour movement amidst conditions of political slavery, on the understanding that the *primary* base of operations for the revolutionary assault would be set up abroad. The first idea, the only correct one in principle, was to permeate the whole Rules; the second, being a particular idea necessitated by temporary circumstances of place and mode of action, took the form of an *apparent* departure from centralism in the proposal to set up *two centres, a Central Organ and a Central Committee*. Both these principal *Iskra* ideas of Party organization had been developed by me in the *Iskra* editorial (No. 4) "Where To Begin?"* and in *What Is To Be Done?*** and, finally, were explained in detail in a form that practically resembled rules in "A Letter to a Comrade." Actually, all that remained was a certain amount of drafting in order to obtain the formulation of the paragraphs of the Rules which were to embody just those ideas, if the recognition of the *Iskra* was not to be merely nominal, a mere conventional phrase.

H. DISCUSSION ON CENTRALISM PRIOR TO THE SPLIT
AMONG THE *ISKRA*-ITES

Before passing to the really interesting question of the formulation of § 1 of the Rules, a question which undoubtedly disclosed the existence of different shades of opinion, let us dwell a little on that brief general discussion of the Rules which occupied the 14th sitting and part of the 15th sitting of the Congress. Comrade Martov *associated himself* (p. 157) with my views on organization, only making the reservation that he differed on two *particular points*.

* See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. IV.—Ed.

** See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Volume Edition, Vol. I, Moscow, 1946, pp. 149-271.—Ed.

Both the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the "Centre," on the contrary, at once launched into the fray against both the *basic* ideas of the *Iskra* plan of organization (and, consequently, against the Rules in their entirety), namely, centralism and the "two centres." Comrade Lieber referred to my Rules as "organized distrust" and discerned *decentralism* in the proposal for two centres (as did Comrades Popov and Egorov). Comrade Akimov expressed the desire that the jurisdiction of the local committees should be defined more widely, in particular, that "the right to alter their composition themselves" be conferred on them. "They should be allowed greater freedom of action. . . . The local committees should be elected by the active workers in their localities, just as the Central Committee is elected by the representatives of all the active organizations in Russia. But if even this cannot be allowed, let the number of members that the Central Committee may appoint to the local committees be limited. . . ." (P. 158.) Comrade Akimov, as you see, suggested an argument against "hypertrophy of centralism," but Comrade Martov remained deaf to these weighty arguments until defeat over the question of the composition of the central bodies induced him to follow in Akimov's wake. At that time the only opponents of "monstrous centralism" were those to whom *Iskra's* centralism was clearly *disadvantageous*: it was opposed by Akimov, Lieber and Goldblatt, *followed*, cautiously and circumspectly (so that they could always turn back), by Egorov (see pp. 156 and 272) and others. At that time it was still clear to the vast majority in the Party that it was precisely the parochial, circle interests of the Bund, *Yuzhny Rabochy*, etc., that evoked the protest against centralism.

Take Comrade Goldblatt's speech, for example (pp. 160-61). He complains about my "monstrous" centralism, and claims, that it would lead to the "destruction" of the lower organizations, that it is "permeated through and through with the desire to confer unrestricted powers on the centre and the unrestricted right to

interfere in everything," that it confers on the organizations "only one right—the right to submit without a murmur to orders from above," etc. "The centre proposed by the draft would find itself in a vacuum, it would have no peripheral organizations around it, but only an amorphous mass in which its executive agents would move." At the Congress the Bund was laughed at when it fought *our* centralism while *even more definitely* granting unrestricted rights to its *own* central body (for example, to admit and expel members, and even to refuse to admit delegates to congresses).

The grouping was also clearly to be discerned over the question of the two central bodies: *all* the *Iskra*-ites were opposed by Lieber, by Akimov, by Popov and by Egorov. The plan for two central bodies followed logically from the ideas of organization which the *old Iskra* had always advocated (and which had been approved, *verbally*, by Comrades Popov and Egorov!). The policy of the *old Iskra* militated against the plans of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*, the plans to create a parallel popular organ and to convert it virtually into the dominant organ. There lies the root of the contradiction, so strange at a first glance, that all the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the entire Marsh were in favour of one central body, that is, of *seemingly greater centralism*. Of course, there were delegates (especially among the Marsh) who scarcely had a clear idea where the organizational plans of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* would lead and were bound to lead in the course of things, but they were impelled to follow the anti-*Iskra*-ites by their own irresolute characters and lack of self-confidence.

Of the speeches by *Iskra*-ites during *this* debate on the Rules (the one preceding the split among the *Iskra*-ites), the most remarkable were those of Comrade Martov ("association" with my ideas of organization) and Trotsky. The latter answered Comrades Akimov and Lieber as follows: "The Rules," he [Comrade Akimov] said, "do not define the jurisdiction of the Central Committee with enough precision. I cannot agree with him. On the contrary, this definition

is precise and means that inasmuch as the Party is an entity, its control over the local committees must be ensured. Comrade Lieber, borrowing my expression, said that the Rules were 'organized distrust.' That is true. But I used this expression in reference to the rules proposed by the Bund spokesmen, which represented 'organized distrust' on the part of a section of the Party towards the whole Party. Our Rules, on the other hand, represent the organized distrust of the Party towards all its sections, that is, control over all local, district, national and other organizations." (P. 158.)

I. PARAGRAPH ONE OF THE RULES

In the footnote below* we quote the various formulations around which an interesting debate arose at the Congress. This debate took up nearly two sittings and ended with *two roll-call* votes (during the whole course of the Congress, if I am not mistaken, there were only eight roll-call votes, which were resorted to only in very important cases because of the great loss of time they involved). The question at issue was undoubtedly one of principle. The interest of the Congress in the debate was tremendous. *All* the delegates voted—a rare occurrence at our Congress (as at any big congress) and one that likewise testifies to the interest shown by the disputants.

What, then, was the sum and substance of the matter in dispute? I have already said at the Congress and have since repeated it time and again that "I by no means consider our difference [over § 1] so vital as to be a matter of life or death to the Party. We shall

* § 1 of my draft: "A Party member is one who accepts its program and who supports the Party both financially and by personal participation in one of the Party organizations."

§ 1 as formulated by Martov at the Congress and adopted by the Congress: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who accepts its program, supports the Party financially and renders its regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organizations."

certainly not perish because of an unfortunate clause in the Rules!" (P. 250.)* Taken by itself, this difference, although it disclosed shades of principle, could never have called forth that divergence (actually, to speak unreservedly, that split) which took place after the Congress. But every *slight* difference may become a *big* difference if it is insisted on, if it is put into the foreground, if people *set about* searching for all the roots and branches of the difference. Every *slight* difference may assume *tremendous* importance if it serves as the starting point for a *turn* towards definite mistaken views, and if these mistaken views, by virtue of new and additional divergences, are combined with *anarchist* actions which bring the Party to the point of a split.

And that is just how matters stood in the present case. *Now*, the question has been *put* as follows: was Martov's formulation, which was supported by Axelrod, affected by his (or their) instability, wavering and political vagueness, as I expressed it at the Party Congress (p. 333), by his (or their) deviation towards Jaurèsism and anarchism, as Plekhanov surmised at the League Congress (League Minutes, p. 102 and elsewhere); or was my formulation, which was supported by Plekhanov, affected by a wrong, bureaucratic, formalistic, pompadour, un-Social-Democratic conception of centralism? *Opportunism and anarchism, or bureaucracy and formalism?*—that is the way the question *is being put now* that the slight difference has become a big difference. And when discussing the pros and cons of my formulation *on their merits*, we must *bear in mind* just *this* statement of the question, which has been forced upon us all by the events.

Let us begin the examination of these pros and cons with an analysis of the debate at the Congress. The first speech, that of Comrade Egorov, is interesting only for the fact that his attitude (*non liquet*, it is still not clear to me, I still do not know where

* See "Report on Party Rules," Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II.—Ed.

the truth lies) is very characteristic of the attitude of many delegates who found it difficult to grasp the rights and wrongs of this really new and fairly complex and detailed question. The next speech, that of Comrade Axelrod, at once raised the question of principle. This was the first speech that Comrade Axelrod made at the Congress on questions of principle, or for that matter, the first speech he made at all, and it can scarcely be claimed that his debut with the celebrated "professor" was particularly fortunate. "I think," Comrade Axelrod said, "that we must draw a distinction between the concepts Party and organization. Yet these two concepts are here being confused. And the confusion is dangerous." This was the first argument against my formulation. Examine it more closely. When I say that the Party should be a *sum* (and not a mere arithmetical sum, but a complex) of *organizations*,* does that mean that I "confuse" the concepts Party and organization? Of course not. I thereby express clearly and precisely my wish, my demand, that the Party, as the vanguard of the class, should be as *organized* as possible, that the Party should admit to its ranks only such elements *as lend themselves to at least a minimum of organization*. My opponent, on the contrary, wants to *confuse*, to mix

* The word "organization" is usually employed in two senses, a broad and a narrow one. In the narrow sense it signifies an individual nucleus of the human collective body, even if constituted to only a minimum degree. In the broad sense it signifies the sum of such nuclei welded into a single whole. For example, the navy, the army, or the state represents at one and the same time a sum of organizations (in the narrow sense of the word) and a variety of social organizations (in the broad sense of the word). The Department of Education is an organization (in the broad sense of the word) and consists of a number of organizations (in the narrow sense of the word). Similarly, the Party is an organization, and *should be* an organization (in the broad sense of the word); at the same time, the Party should consist of a number of various kinds of organizations (in the narrow sense of the word). Therefore, when he spoke of drawing a distinction between the concepts Party and organization, Comrade Axelrod, firstly, did not take account of the difference between the broad and the narrow meaning of the word organization, and, secondly, did not observe that he himself was *confusing* organized and unorganized elements.

organized elements and unorganized elements in the Party, persons who submit to direction and those who do not, the advanced and the incorrigibly backward—for the corrigibly backward may join the organization. *This confusion is indeed dangerous*. Comrade Axelrod further cited the "strictly secret and centralized organizations of the past" (the "*Zemlya i Volya*" and the "*Narodnaya Volya*"): around them, he said, "were grouped a large number of people who did not belong to the organization but who helped it in one way or another and regarded themselves as Party members. . . . This principle should be even more strictly observed in the Social-Democratic organization." Here we come to one of the *nodal* points of the matter: is "this principle" really a Social-Democratic one—this principle which allows people who do not belong to any of the organizations of the Party and who only "help it in one way or another" to call themselves Party members? And Plekhanov gave the only possible reply to this question when he said: "Axelrod was wrong in citing the 'seventies. At that time there was a well-organized and splendidly disciplined central body; around it there were the organizations of various categories it had created; and outside these organizations there was nothing but chaos, anarchy. The component elements of this chaos called themselves party members, but this rather damaged than benefited the cause. We should not imitate the anarchy of the 'seventies, but avoid it." Thus "this principle," which Comrade Axelrod wanted to pass off as a Social-Democratic one, is in reality an *anarchist principle*. To refute this, one must show that control, direction and discipline *are possible* outside an organization; that conferring the title of Party members on "the elements of chaos" is *necessary*. The supporters of Comrade Martov's formulation did not show, and could not show, *either* of these things. Comrade Axelrod took as an example "a professor who regards himself as a Social-Democrat and pronounces himself such." To complete the thought contained in this example, Comrade Axelrod should have gone on to tell us

whether the organized Social-Democrats regard this professor as a Social-Democrat. By failing to raise this second question, Comrade Axelrod abandoned his argument half-way. And, indeed, one thing or the other. Either the organized Social-Democrats regard the professor in question as a Social-Democrat, in which case why should they not assign him to some Social-Democratic organization? For only if the professor were thus assigned would his "pronouncement" answer to his actions, and not be empty talk (as professorial pronouncements all too frequently are). Or the organized Social-Democrats do *not* regard the professor as a Social-Democrat, in which case it would be absurd, senseless and *harmful* to allow him the right to bear the honourable and responsible title of Party member. The matter therefore reduces itself to the alternative: either the consistent application of the principle of organization, or the sanctification of disunity and anarchy. Are we to build the Party on the basis of the already formed and already welded nucleus of *Social-Democrats* which brought about the Party Congress, for instance, and which is to enlarge and multiply Party organizations of all kinds; or are we to content ourselves with the soothing *phrase* that all who help are Party members? "If we adopt Lenin's formula," Comrade Axelrod continued, "we shall throw overboard a section of those who, although they may not be directly admitted to the organization, are nevertheless Party members." The confusion of concepts of which Comrade Axelrod wanted to accuse me, here stands out quite clearly in his own case: he already takes it for granted that all who help *are* Party members, whereas that is what the whole dispute is about, and our opponents have still to *prove* the necessity and value of such an interpretation. What is the meaning of the phrase "throwing overboard," which at first glance seems so terrible? Even if only members of organizations which are recognized as Party organizations are regarded as Party members, still people who cannot "directly" join any Party organization may work in an organization which

is not a Party organization but is associated with the Party. Consequently, there can be no talk of throwing anybody overboard, in the sense of preventing them from working, from taking part in the movement. On the contrary, the stronger our Party organizations consisting of *real* Social-Democrats are, and the less wavering and instability there is *within* the Party, the broader, the more varied, the richer and more fertile will be the influence of the Party on the elements of the working-class *masses* surrounding it and guided by it. After all, the Party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused with the entire class. And Comrade Axelrod is guilty of just this confusion (which is characteristic of our opportunist Economism in general) when he says: "We shall first of all, of course, create an organization of the most active elements of the Party, an organization of revolutionaries; but since we are the party of a class, we must take care not to leave outside its ranks people who consciously, although perhaps not very actively, associate themselves with that party." Firstly, the active elements of the Social-Democratic Labour Party will include not only organizations of revolutionaries, but a *whole number* of workers' organizations recognized as Party organizations. Secondly, how, by what logic, does the conclusion that it is unnecessary to make any distinction between those who *belong* to the Party and those who *associate* themselves with the Party follow from the fact that we are the party of a class? Just the contrary: precisely because there are differences in degree of consciousness and degree of activity, a distinction must be made in degree of proximity to the Party. We are the Party of a class, and therefore *almost the entire class* (and in times of war, in the period of civil war, the entire class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to our Party as closely as possible. But it would be Manilovism*

* *Manilovism*—derived from Manilov, one of the characters depicted in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, characteristic of smug complacency, inertness, vapid phrasemongering.—Ed.

and "khvostism" to think that at any time under capitalism the entire class, or almost the entire class, would be able to rise to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party. No sensible Social-Democrat has ever yet doubted that under capitalism even the trade union organizations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped strata) are unable to embrace the entire, or almost the entire working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses which gravitate towards it, to forget the constant duty of the vanguard to raise ever wider strata to this most advanced level, means merely to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks. And it is just such a shutting of one's eyes, it is just such forgetfulness, to obliterate the difference between those who associate and those who belong, between those who are conscious and active and those who only help.

To argue that we are the party of a class *in justification* of organizational vagueness, *in justification* of confusing organization with disorganization is to repeat the mistake of Nadezhdin, who confused "the philosophical and social-historical question of the 'depth' of the 'roots' of the movement with the technical and organizational question." It is this confusion, wrought by the deft hand of Comrade Axelrod, that was then repeated dozens of times by the speakers who defended Comrade Martov's formulation. "The more widespread the title of Party member, the better," said Martov, without explaining, however, what would be the advantage of a widespread *title* which did not correspond to fact. Can it be denied that control over Party members who do not belong to an organization is a mere fiction? A widespread fiction is not beneficial, but harmful. "It would only be a subject for rejoicing if every striker, every demonstrator, answering for his actions, could proclaim himself a Party member." (P. 229.) Is that so? *Every striker* should have the right to *proclaim himself a Party member*? In this

statement Comrade Martov at once reduces his mistake to an absurdity, by *lowering* Social-Democracy to the level of mere strike-making, thereby repeating the misadventures of the Akimovs. It would only be a subject for rejoicing if the Social-Democrats succeeded in directing every strike, for it is their direct and unquestionable duty to direct every manifestation of the class struggle of the proletariat, and strikes are one of the most profound and most powerful manifestations of that struggle. But we would be *khvostists* if we were to *identify* this primary form of struggle, which *ipso facto* is no more than a trade unionist form, with the all-round and conscious Social-Democratic struggle. We would be opportunistically *legitimatizing a patent falsehood* if we were to allow every striker the right "to proclaim himself a Party member," for *in the majority of cases* such a "proclamation" would be an outright *falsehood*. We would be consoling ourselves with complacent daydreaming if we were to attempt to assure ourselves and others that *every striker can be* a Social-Democrat and a member of the Social-Democratic Party, in face of that infinite disunity, oppression and stultification which under capitalism is bound to weigh down upon such very broad strata of the "untaught," unskilled workers. It is this very example of the "*striker*" that particularly brings out the difference between the *revolutionary striving* to direct every strike in Social-Democratic fashion and the *opportunist phrasemongering* which proclaims *every* striker a Party member. We are the Party of a class inasmuch as we *in fact* direct almost the entire, or even the entire, proletarian class in Social-Democratic fashion; but only people like Akimov can conclude from this that we must *in word* identify the Party and the class.

"I am not afraid of a conspiratorial organization," said Comrade Martov in this same speech; but, he added, "for me a conspiratorial organization has meaning only when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic Labour Party." (P. 239.) He should have said to be exact: when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic

labour *movement*. And in that form Comrade Martov's proposition would have been not only indisputable, but a direct truism. I dwell on this point only because subsequent speakers turned Comrade Martov's truism into the very *common and very vulgar* argument that Lenin wants "to confine the sum total of Party members to the sum total of conspirators." This conclusion, which can only provoke a smile, was drawn both by Comrade Posadovsky and by Comrade Popov, and when it was taken up by Martynov and Akimov its true character as an opportunist phrase became perfectly clear. Today this same argument is being developed in the new *Iskra* by Comrade Axelrod in order to acquaint the reading public with the new editorial board's new views on organization. Even at the Congress, at the very first sitting where the question of § 1 was discussed, I remarked that our opponents wanted to employ this cheap weapon, and therefore issued the warning in my speech (p. 240): "It should not be thought that Party organizations must consist solely of professional revolutionaries. We need the most diversified organizations of every type, rank and shade, from extremely narrow and secret organizations to very broad, free, *lose Organisationen*." This is such an apparent and self-evident truth that I considered it unnecessary to dwell upon it. . . .

I had already pointed this out in *What Is To Be Done?*—and in "A Letter to a Comrade" I developed this idea in greater detail. The factory circles, I wrote there, "are particularly important to us: after all, the main strength of the movement lies in the state of organization of the workers in the *large* mills, for the large mills (and factories) contain the predominant part of the working class, not only as to numbers but even more as to influence, development and fighting capacity. Every factory must be our fortress. . . . The factory sub-committee should endeavour to embrace the whole factory, the largest possible number of the workers, by a network of all kinds of circles (or agents). . . . All groups, circles, sub-committees, etc., should enjoy the status of committee institutions, or

branches of a committee. Some of them will openly proclaim their wish to join the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and, *if endorsed* by the committee, will join the Party, will take upon themselves definite functions (on the instructions of, or in agreement with, the committee), will undertake to obey the orders of the Party organs, *will receive the same rights as all Party members*, will be regarded as immediate candidates for election to the committee, etc. Others *will not join* the R.S.D.L.P. and will have the status of circles formed by Party members or associated with one or other Party group, etc." (Pp. 17-18.) The words I have under-scored make it particularly clear that the *idea* of my formulation of § 1 was already fully expressed in "A Letter to a Comrade." There the conditions for joining the Party are plainly indicated, namely: 1) a certain degree of organization, and 2) the endorsement of a Party committee. A page later I roughly indicate also what groups and organizations should (or should not) be admitted to the Party, and for what reasons: "Groups of literature distributors should belong to the R.S.D.L.P. and know a certain number of its members and functionaries. A group for the study of labour conditions and for the drawing up of trade union demands need not necessarily belong to the R.S.D.L.P. A group of students, officers or office employees engaged in self-education *in conjunction with* one or two Party members should in some cases not even be aware that these belong to the Party, etc." (Pp. 18-19.)

Depending on degree of organization in general and degree of secrecy of organization in particular, roughly the following categories may be distinguished: 1) organizations of revolutionaries; 2) organizations of workers of the broadest and most varied kind (I confine myself to the working class, taking it as self-evident that certain elements of other classes will also be included here under certain conditions). These two categories constitute the Party. Further, 3) organizations of workers which are associated with the Party; 4) organizations of workers which are not associated

with the Party but actually submit to its control and direction; 5) unorganized elements of the working class who also come partly under the direction of the Social-Democratic Party, at any rate during the big manifestations of the class struggle. That, approximately, is how the matter presents itself to me. From the point of view of Comrade Martov, on the contrary, the border line of the Party remains absolutely vague, for "every striker" may "proclaim himself a Party member." What is the use of this vagueness? A widerspead "title." Its harm is that it introduces a *disorganizing* idea, the confusing of class and Party.

In illustration of the general propositions we have adduced, let us take a cursory glance at the subsequent discussion of § 1 at the Congress. Comrade Brouckère (to the satisfaction of Comrade Martov) pronounced himself in favour of my formulation, but *his* alliance with me, it appears, in contradistinction to Comrade Akimov's alliance with Martov, was based on a misunderstanding. Comrade Brouckère did "not agree with the Rules as a whole, nor with their entire spirit" (p. 239) and defended my formulation *as the basis of the democracy* which the supporters of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* desire. Comrade Brouckère had not yet risen to the view that in a political struggle it is sometimes necessary to choose the *lesser evil*; Comrade Brouckère did not realize that it was useless to advocate democracy at a Congress like ours. Comrade Akimov was more perspicacious. He put the question quite rightly when he admitted that "Comrade Martov and Lenin are arguing as to which [formulation] would best achieve their common aim" (p. 252). "Brouckère and I," he continued, "want to choose the one *which will least achieve that aim*. From this angle I choose Martov's formulation." And Comrade Akimov frankly explained that he considered "their very aim" (that is, the aim of Plekhanov, Martov and myself, namely, the creation of a directing organization of revolutionaries) "impracticable and harmful"; like Comrade

Martynov,* he advocated the idea of the Economists that "an organization of revolutionaries" was unnecessary. He was "imbued with the belief that in the end the realities of life will force their way into our Party organization, irrespective of whether you bar their path with Martov's formulation or with Lenin's." It would not be worth while dwelling on this "*khvostist*" conception of the "realities of life" if we did not encounter it in the case of Comrade Martov too. In general, Comrade Martov's second speech (p. 245) is so interesting as to be worth examining in detail.

Comrade Martov's first argument: control by the Party organizations over Party members not belonging to them "is practicable, inasmuch as, having assigned a function to somebody, the committee will be able to watch it" (p. 245). This thesis is remarkably characteristic, for it "betrays," if one may say so, *who* needs Martov's formulation and who will find it of service *in fact*—whether freelance intellectuals or workers' groups and the worker masses. The fact is that two interpretations of Martov's formulation are possible: 1) that anyone who renders the Party regular personal assistance under the guidance of one of its organizations is entitled "*to proclaim himself*" (Comrade Martov's own words) a Party member; 2) that every Party organization is *entitled to regard* anyone as a Party member who renders it regular personal assistance under its direction. It is only the first interpretation that really gives "every striker" the opportunity to call himself a Party

* Comrade Martynov, however, was anxious to draw a distinction between himself and Comrade Akimov; he was anxious to show that conspiratorial does not mean secret, that behind the two different words were concealed two different concepts. What the difference is, was explained neither by Comrade Martynov nor by Comrade Axelrod, who is now following in his footsteps. Comrade Martynov tried to "make out" that I had not—for example in *What Is To Be Done?* (as well as in the *Tasks*)—resolutely declared my opposition to "confining the political struggle to conspiracies." Comrade Martynov was anxious to have his hearers *forget* that the people I was combating *did not see* any necessity for an *organization of revolutionaries*, just as Comrade Akimov does not see it now.

member, and therefore *it alone* immediately won the hearts of the Liebers, Akimovs and Martynovs. But it is obvious that this interpretation is but an empty phrase, because it would fit the entire working class, and the difference between Party and class would be obliterated; control over and direction of "every striker" can only be spoken of "symbolically." That is why, in his second speech, Comrade Martov at once slipped into the second interpretation (even though, be it said in parentheses, it was *directly rejected by the Congress* when it turned down Kostich's resolution—p. 255), namely, that a committee would assign functions and watch the way they were carried out. Of course, no such special assignments would ever be made to the *mass* of the workers, to the *thousands* of proletarians (of whom Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martynov spoke)—they would frequently be given to those *professors* whom Comrade Axelrod mentioned, to those *high school students* about whom Comrade Lieber and Comrade Popov were so concerned (p. 241), and to the *revolutionary youth* to whom Comrade Axelrod referred in his second speech (p. 242). In a word, Comrade Martov's formula would either remain a dead letter, an empty phrase, or it would be of benefit mainly and almost exclusively to the "*intellectuals who are thoroughly imbued with bourgeois individualism*" and who do not wish to join the organization. Martov's formulation *ostensibly* defends the interests of the broad strata of the proletariat, but *in fact*, it serves the interests of the *bourgeois intellectuals*, who fight shy of proletarian discipline and organization. No one will undertake to deny that it is *precisely its individualism* and incapacity for discipline and organization that in general distinguishes *the intelligentsia as a separate stratum* of modern capitalist society (see, for example¹, Kautsky's well-known articles on the intelligentsia). This, incidentally, is a feature which unfavourably distinguishes this social stratum from the proletariat; it is one of the reasons for the flabbiness and instability of the intellectual, from which the proletariat is so often made to

suffer; and this characteristic of the intellectual is intimately bound up with his customary mode of life, his mode of earning a livelihood, which in a great many respects approximates to the *petty-bourgeois mode of existence* (working in isolation or in very small groups, etc.). Lastly, it is not fortuitous that the defenders of Comrade Martov's formulation were obliged to cite the example of professors and high school students! It was not the champions of a broad proletarian struggle who, in the controversy over § 1, took the field against the champions of a radically conspiratorial organization as Comrades Martynov and Axelrod thought, but the supporters of *bourgeois-intellectual individualism*, who came into conflict with the supporters of *proletarian organization and discipline*.

Comrade Popov said: "Everywhere, in St. Petersburg as in Nikolayev or Odessa, as the representatives from these towns testify, there are dozens of workers who are distributing literature and carrying on word-of-mouth agitation but who cannot be members of an organization. They may be assigned to an organization, but they cannot be regarded as members." (P. 241.) Why they cannot be members of an organization Comrade Popov did not divulge. I have already quoted the passage from "A Letter to a Comrade" showing that the admission of all such workers (by the hundred, not the dozen) to an organization is possible and essential, and, moreover, that a great many of these organizations can and should belong to the Party.

Comrade Martov's second argument: "In Lenin's opinion there should be no organizations in the Party other than Party organizations...." Quite true!... "In my opinion, on the contrary, such organizations should exist. Life creates and breeds organizations quicker than we can include them in the hierarchy of our militant organization of professional revolutionaries...." That is untrue in two respects: 1) The number of effective organizations of revolutionaries that "life" breeds is far less than we need and the

working-class movement requires; 2) our Party should be a hierarchy not only of organizations of revolutionaries, but of a large number of workers' organizations as well. . . . "Lenin thinks that the Central Committee will confer the title of Party organization only on such as are fully reliable in the matter of principles. But Comrade Brouckère understands very well that life [*sic!*] will claim its own and that the Central Committee, in order not to leave a multiplicity of organizations outside the Party, will have to legitimize them despite their utterly unreliable character; that is why Comrade Brouckère associates himself with Lenin. . . ." Of course, if the Central Committee *had absolutely* to consist of people who were not guided by their own opinions but by what others might say, then "life" would "claim its own" in the sense that the most backward elements of the Party would gain the upper hand. But no *intelligent* reason can be cited which would induce a *sensible* Central Committee to admit "unreliable" elements to the Party. By this very reference to "life," which "breeds" unreliable elements, Comrade Martov patently revealed the opportunist character of his plan of organization! . . . "But I think," he continued, "that if such an organization (one that is not quite reliable) is prepared to accept the Party program and Party control, we may admit it to the Party without thereby making it a Party organization. I would consider it a great triumph for our Party, if, for example, some union of 'independents' were to declare that they accept the views of Social-Democracy and its program and wanted to join the Party; which does not mean, however, that we would include the union in a Party organization. . . ." Such is the muddle Martov's formulation leads to: a non-Party organization belonging to the Party! Only picture *his* scheme: the Party=1) an organization of revolutionaries, + 2) organizations of workers recognized as Party organizations, + 3) organizations of workers not recognized as Party organizations (consisting principally of "independents"), + 4) individuals performing various functions—professors, stu-

dents, etc., + 5) "every striker." Alongside of this remarkable plan one can only put the words of Comrade Lieber: "Our task is not only to organize an organization [!!]; we can and should organize a party." (P. 241.) Yes, of course, we can and should do this, but what it requires is not meaningless words about "organizing organizations," but the *plain demand* that Party members should work to create an *organization* in fact. He who talks about "organizing a party" and yet defends the use of the word party to screen disorganization and disunity of every kind is just indulging in empty jabber.

"Our formulation," Comrade Martov said, "expresses the desire to have a series of organizations standing between the organization of revolutionaries and the masses." It does not. Martov's formulation does *not express* this truly essential desire, for it *does not offer a stimulus to organization*, does not contain a demand for organization, and does not separate the organized from the unorganized. All it offers is a *title*, and in this connection we cannot but recall Comrade Axelrod's words: "no decree can forbid them" (circles of revolutionary youth and the like) "and individuals to call themselves Social-Democrats" (a sacred truth!) "and even to regard themselves as part of the Party. . . ." There he is *absolutely wrong!* You cannot, and there is *no need*, to forbid anyone to call himself a Social-Democrat, for in its *direct* sense this word only signifies a system of convictions, and not definite organizational relations. As to forbidding individual circles and persons "to regard themselves as part of the Party," that can and should be done when such circles and persons injure the Party, corrupt it and disorganize it. It would be absurd to speak of the *Party* as a whole, as a political magnitude, if it could not "forbid by decree" a circle to "regard itself as part" of the whole! What otherwise would be the point of defining the procedure and conditions of expulsion from the Party? Comrade Axelrod reduced Comrade Martov's fundamental mistake to an obvious absurdity; he even elevated this mistake to

an *opportunist theory* when he added: "In Lenin's formulation, § 1 is a direct contradiction in principle to the very nature [!] and aims of the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat" (p. 243). This means no more and no less than that to make higher demands of the Party than of the class is contradictory in principle to the very nature of the aims of the proletariat. It is not surprising that Akimov was heart and soul in favour of such a *theory*.

It should be said in fairness that Comrade Axelrod, who *now* desires to convert this mistaken formulation, one obviously tending towards opportunism, into the germ of *new* views, at the Congress, on the contrary expressed a readiness to "bargain," by saying: "But I observe that I am hammering at an open door, because Comrade Lenin, with his peripheral circles which are to be regarded as part of the Party organization, goes out to meet my demand..." (And not only with the peripheral circles, but with every kind of workers' union: cf. p. 242 of the Minutes, the speech of Comrade Strakhov, and the passages from "A Letter to a Comrade" quoted above.) "There still remain the individuals, but here, too, we could bargain." I replied to Comrade Axelrod that, generally speaking, I was not averse to bargaining, and I must now explain in what sense this was meant. As regards the individuals—all those professors, high school students, etc.—I should be inclined least of all to make concessions; but if doubts were raised about the workers' organizations, I would have agreed (despite the utter lack of foundation for such doubts, as I have shown above) to add to my § 1 a note to the following effect: "As large a number as possible of workers' organizations which accept the Program and Rules of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party should be included among the Party organizations." Strictly speaking, of course, the place for such a wish is not in the Rules, which should be confined to legal definitions, but in explanatory commentaries and pamphlets (and I have already stated that I gave such explanations in my pamphlets long before the Rules were

drawn up); but, at least, such a note would not contain even a shadow of a *wrong* idea capable of leading to disorganization, not a shadow of the *opportunist* arguments* and "*anarchist conceptions*" that are undoubtedly to be found in Comrade Martov's formulation.

The latter expression, given by me in quotation marks, belongs to Comrade Pavlovich, who quite justly characterized as *anarchism* the recognition of "*irresponsible and self-styled Party members*." "Translated into simple language," said Comrade Pavlovich, explaining my formulation to Comrade Lieber, it means that "if you want to be a Party member you must recognize organizational relations, too, not only platonically." With no less justice, Comrade Pavlovich pointed to the contradiction between Comrade Martov's formulation and the indisputable precept of scientific Socialism which Comrade Martov quoted so unhappily: "Our Party is the conscious spokesman of an unconscious process." Exactly so. And for this very reason it is wrong to want "every striker" to have the

* To this category of arguments, which inevitably arise when attempts are made to justify Martov's formulation, belongs, in particular, Trotsky's statement (pp. 248 and 346) that "opportunism is created by more complex (or: is determined by more profound) causes than a clause in the Rules; it is brought about by the relative level of development of the bourgeois democracy and the proletariat..." The point is not that clauses in the Rules may give rise to opportunism: the point is to forge with the help of the Rules a more or a less trenchant weapon against opportunism. The profounder its causes, the more trenchant should this weapon be. Therefore, to *justify* a formulation which opens the door to opportunism by the fact that opportunism has "profound causes" is *khvostism* of the purest water. When Trotsky was opposed to Comrade Lieber, he understood that the Rules constituted the "organized distrust" of the whole towards the part. of the vanguard towards the backward detachment; but when Trotsky found himself on Comrade Lieber's side, he forgot this and even began to justify the *weakness* and instability of our organization of this distrust (distrust of opportunism) by talking about "complex causes," the "level of development of the proletariat," etc. Here is another of Trotsky's arguments: "It is much easier for the intellectual youth, organized in one way or another, to *enter themselves* [my italics] on the rolls of the Party." Just so. That is why it is the formulation by which even unorganized elements may *proclaim themselves* Party members that suffers from the vagueness typical of the intellectual, and not my formulation which *removes* the right to

right to call himself a Party member, for if "every strike" were not only a spontaneous expression of a powerful class instinct and of the class struggle, which is inevitably leading to the social revolution, but a *conscious expression* of that process, then . . . the general strike would not be anarchist phrasemongering, then our Party would forthwith and at once *embrace* the whole working class, and, consequently, would at once put an end to the *entire bourgeois society*. If it is to be a conscious spokesman *in fact*, the Party must be able to work out such organizational relations as will *ensure a definite level* of consciousness, and systematically raise this level. "If we go the way of Martov," Comrade Pavlovich said, "we must first of all delete the clause on accepting the *program*, for before a program can be accepted it must be mastered and understood. . . . Acceptance of the program presupposes a fairly high level of political consciousness." We will never consent to have *support* of Social-Democracy, *participation* in the struggle it is directing, artificially *restricted* by any demand (mastery, understanding, and

"enter *oneself*" on the rolls. Trotsky says that if the Central Committee were "not to recognize" an organization of opportunists it would only be because of the character of certain persons, and that once these persons were known as political individuals they would not be dangerous and could be removed by a general Party boycott. This is only true of cases when people have to be *removed from the Party* (and only half true at that, because an organized party *removes* members by a vote and not by a boycott). It is absolutely untrue of the far more frequent cases when *removal* would be absurd, and when all that is required is *control*. For purposes of control, the Central Committee might, on certain conditions, *deliberately* admit to the Party an organization which was not quite reliable but which was capable of working; it might do so with the object of testing it, of trying to *direct it into the true path*, of correcting its partial aberrations by its own guidance, etc. This would not be dangerous *if* in general "*self-entering*" on the Party rolls were not allowed. It would often be useful for an open and *responsible*, controlled, expression (and discussion) of mistaken views and mistaken tactics. "But if legal definitions are to correspond to actual relations, Comrade Lenin's formulation must be rejected," said Trotsky, and again he spoke like an opportunist. Actual relations are not a dead thing, they live and develop. Legal definitions may correspond to the progressive development of these relations, but they may also (if these definitions are *bad ones*) "correspond" to retrogression or stagnation. The latter is the "case" with Comrade Martov.

the rest), for this *participation* itself, its very manifestation, *promotes* both consciousness and the instinct for organization; but inasmuch as we have *joined together in a party* in order to carry on systematic work, we must see to it that it is systematic.

That Comrade Pavlovich's warning regarding the program was not superfluous became apparent *at once*, in the course of *that very same* sitting. Comrades Akimov and Lieber, who got Comrade Martov's formulation carried,* *at once* betrayed their true nature by demanding (pp. 254-55) that as regards the program too all that was required (for "membership" in the Party) was platonic recognition, recognition only of its "basic principles." "Comrade Akimov's motion is quite logical from Comrade Martov's standpoint," Comrade Pavlovich remarked.

* * *

The grouping of votes over paragraph one of the Rules revealed a phenomenon of exactly the same type as the equality of languages episode: the falling away of one-quarter (approximately) of the *Iskra*-ite majority made possible the victory of the anti-*Iskra*-ites, who were backed by the "Centre". . . .

[Chapters *J*, *K*, *L*, and *M* have been omitted in the present edition since they deal almost exclusively with a description of the petty controversies over details of the rules or controversies over the personal composition of the central party institutions. Neither the one nor the other are of interest to the contemporary reader or important in elucidating the differences between the "minority" and the "majority." We give only the latter part of Chapter *M* which refers to a question of tactics touched on as far back as the Second Party Congress.]

. . . An interesting, but, unfortunately, all too brief controversy in which a question was discussed on its merits arose in connection

* The vote was 28 for and 22 against. Of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ites, seven were for Martov and one for me. Without the aid of the opportunists, Comrade Martov would not have carried through his opportunist formulation.

with Starovyer's resolution on the liberals. As one may judge from the signatures to it (pp. 357 and 358), it was adopted by the Congress because three of the supporters of the "majority" (Braun, Orlov and Ossipov) voted both *for it* and for Plekhanov's resolution, not perceiving the irreconcilable contradiction between the two. The irreconcilable contradiction is not apparent at a first glance, because Plekhanov's resolution lays down a general principle, outlines a definite attitude as regards both principles and tactics towards *bourgeois liberalism in Russia*, whereas Starovyer's attempts to define the *concrete conditions in which "temporary agreements" would be permissible* with "liberal or liberal-democratic trends." The subjects of the two resolutions are different. But Starovyer's suffers from *political vagueness*, and is consequently petty and shallow. It *does not define the class meaning of Russian liberalism*, it does not indicate the *definite* political trends in which it is expressed, it does not tell the proletariat what should be the *major* tasks of the latter's propaganda and agitation in relation to these definite trends, it confuses (owing to its vagueness) such different things as the student movement and *Osvobozhdeniye*.^{*} it is too shallow, casuistically prescribing *three* concrete conditions under which "temporary agreements" would be permissible. Here, as in many other cases, political vagueness leads to casuistry. The absence of any general principle and the attempt to enumerate "conditions" result in a shallow and, strictly speaking, *incorrect* formulation of these conditions. Just examine Starovyer's three conditions: 1) "the liberal or liberal-democratic trends" must "clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocratic government they will resolutely side with the Russian Social-Democrats." What is the difference between the liberal and

^{*} *Osvobozhdeniye*—a bourgeois liberal group organized in 1902 which served as the nucleus of the subsequent major bourgeois party in Russia—the Constitutional Democrats. It published a magazine abroad under the same title, founded and edited by Struve, which was illegally distributed in Russia.—Ed.

liberal-democratic trends? The resolution furnishes no material for a reply to this question. Is it not that the liberal trends voice the position of the politically least progressive sections of the bourgeoisie, while the liberal-democratic trends voice the position of the more progressive sections of the bourgeoisie and of the petty bourgeoisie? If that is so, can Comrade Starovyer possibly think that the sections of the bourgeoisie which are least progressive (but nevertheless progressive, for otherwise they could not be called liberal at all) can "resolutely side with the Social-Democrats"? That is absurd, and even if the spokesmen of such a trend were to "*declare so clearly and unambiguously*" (an absolutely impossible assumption), we, the party of the proletariat, *would be obliged not to believe* them. Being a liberal and resolutely siding with the Social-Democrats are two mutually exclusive things.

Further, let us assume a case where the "liberal and liberal-democratic trends" clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocracy they resolutely side with the *Socialist-Revolutionaries*. Such an assumption is far less unlikely than Comrade Starovyer's (owing to the bourgeois-democratic nature of the Socialist-Revolutionary trend). It follows from the meaning of his resolution, because of its vagueness and casuistry, that *in a case like this temporary agreements* with such liberals would be *impossible*. Yet this inevitable deduction from Comrade Starovyer's resolution would lead to a *downright false* conclusion. Temporary agreements are permissible with the Socialist-Revolutionaries (see the resolution of the Congress of the latter), and, *consequently*, with liberals who side with the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Second condition: if these trends "do not put forward in their programs demands running counter to the interests of the working class or the democracy in general, or demands which obscure their minds." Here we have the same mistake again: there never have been, nor can there be, liberal-democratic trends which did not put forward in their programs demands that run counter to the interests

of the working class and obscure their (the proletarians') minds. Even one of the most democratic sections of our liberal-democratic trend, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, put forward in their program—a muddled program, like all liberal programs—demands that run counter to the interests of the working class and obscure their minds. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that it is *essential* “to expose the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement,” but not that temporary agreements are impermissible.

Lastly, in the general form in which it is presented, Comrade Starovyer's third “condition” (that the liberal-democrats should make universal, equal, secret and direct suffrage the slogan of their struggle) is *wrong*: it *would be unwise* to declare impermissible in all cases temporary and partial agreements with liberal-democratic trends which put forward as their slogan the demand for a constitution with a qualified suffrage, for a “curtailed” constitution generally. As a matter of fact, this is just the category to which the *Osvobozhdeniye* “trend” belongs, but it would be political shortsightedness incompatible with the principles of Marxism to tie one's hands in advance by forbidding “temporary agreements” even with the most timorous liberals.

To sum up: Comrade Starovyer's resolution, to which Comrades Martov and Axelrod subscribed their signatures, is a *mistake*, and the Third Congress would be wise to rescind it. It suffers from the *political vagueness* of its theoretical and tactical position, from the casuistry of the practical “conditions” it stipulates. It *confuses two questions*: 1) the exposure of the “anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian” features of *all* liberal-democratic trends and the necessity to *combat* these features, and 2) the *conditions* for temporary and partial agreements with any of these trends. It does not give what it should (an analysis of the class meaning of liberalism), and gives what it should not (a prescription of “conditions”). It is absurd in general to draw up detailed “conditions” for temporary agreements

at a Party congress, when even the direct partner, the other party to such possible agreements, is unknown; and even if the other party were known, it would be a hundred times more rational to leave the definition of the “conditions” for a temporary agreement to the central institutions of the Party, as the Congress did in relation to the Socialist-Revolutionary “trend” (see Plekhanov's amendment to the end of Comrade Axelrod's resolution—Minutes, pp. 362 and 15).

As to the objections of the “minority” to Plekhanov's resolution, Comrade Martov's only argument was: Plekhanov's resolution “ends with the paltry conclusion that a certain writer should be exposed. Would this not be using a sledgehammer to kill a fly?” (P. 358.) This argument, whose emptiness is concealed by a smart phrase—“paltry conclusion”—is another specimen of pompous phrasemongering. Firstly, Plekhanov's resolution speaks of “exposing in the eyes of the proletariat the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement wherever such limitations and inadequacy manifest themselves.” Hence Comrade Martov's assertion (at the League Congress; Minutes, p. 88) that “all attention is to be directed only to Struve, only to one liberal” is the sheerest nonsense. Secondly, to compare Mr. Struve to a “fly” when the possibility of temporary agreements with the Russian liberals is in question, is to sacrifice an elementary political truth for a smart phrase. No, Mr. Struve is not a fly, but a political magnitude; and it is not because he personally is such a big figure that he is a political magnitude, but because of his position as the sole representative of Russian liberalism—of liberalism that is at all effectual and organized—in the illegal world. Therefore, whoever talks of the Russian liberals and of what should be the attitude of our Party towards them, and loses sight of Mr. Struve and of *Osvobozhdeniye*, is just talking for the sake of talking. Or perhaps Comrade Martov will be good enough to point to *even one single* “liberal or liberal-democratic trend” in Russia which could be even remotely compared

today with the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend? It would be interesting to see him try!

"Struve's name means nothing to the workers," said Comrade Kostrov, supporting Comrade Martov. I hope Comrade Kostrov and Comrade Martov will not be offended—but that argument is fully in the style of Akimov. It is like the argument about the proletariat in the genitive case.*

To which workers does "Struve's name mean nothing" (like the name of *Osvobozhdeniye*, mentioned in Comrade Plekhanov's resolution alongside of Mr. Struve)? To those who are very little acquainted, or not at all acquainted, with the "liberal and liberal-democratic trends" in Russia. One asks, what should have been the attitude of our Party Congress to such workers: should it have instructed Party members to acquaint these workers with the only definite liberal trend in Russia; or *should it have refrained from mentioning* names with which the workers are little acquainted only because they are little acquainted with politics? If Comrade Kostrov, having taken one step in the wake of Comrade Akimov, does not want to take another step, he will answer this question in the former sense. And having answered it in the former sense, he will see how groundless his argument was. *At any rate*, the words "Struve" and "*Osvobozhdeniye*" in Plekhanov's resolution *are likely to mean* much more to the workers than the words "liberal and liberal-democratic trend" in Starovsky's resolution.

Today the Russian worker cannot obtain a practical acquaintance with the political trends in our liberal movement that are at all frank, except through *Osvobozhdeniye*. The legal liberal litera-

* During the discussion of the Party program at the Congress, the "Economist" Akimov (V. Makhnovets) declared that one of the defects of the *Iskra's* draft program, a defect which showed that its authors had forgotten the interests of the proletariat, was that it nowhere mentioned the word "proletariat" in the nominative case, as a subject, but only in the genitive case, in combination with the word "party" ("party of the proletariat"). This statement was greeted by a general outburst of laughter.—Ed.

ture is unsuitable for this purpose because it is so nebulous. And we must as assiduously as possible (and among the broadest possible masses of workers) direct the weapon of our criticism against the followers of *Osvobozhdeniye*, so that when the future revolution breaks out, the Russian proletariat may, with the real criticism of weapons, paralyze the inevitable attempts of the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry to curtail the democratic character of the revolution.

N. GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS. THE REVOLUTIONARY AND OPPORTUNIST WINGS OF THE PARTY

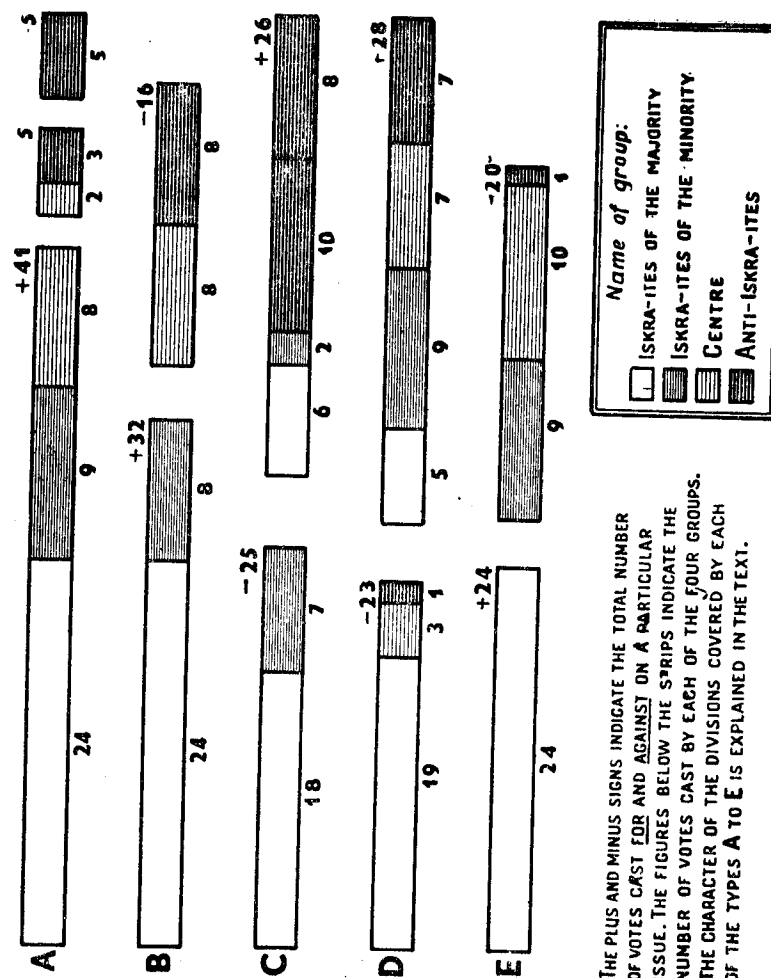
We must now sum up, so that we may, on the basis of the *entire* Congress material, answer the following question: what elements, groups and shades went to make up the final majority and minority which were destined for a time to become the main division in the Party? We must sum up all the material relating to the shades of opinion on matters of principle, theory and tactics which the minutes of the Congress provide in such abundance. Without a general "summary," without a general picture of the Congress as a whole, and of all the principal groupings during the voting, this material is too disjointed, too disconnected, so that at first sight some groupings seem to be casual, especially to one who does not take the trouble to make an independent and comprehensive *study* of the minutes of the Congress (and how many readers have taken that trouble?).

In English parliamentary reports we often meet the characteristic word "division." The House "divided" into such and such a majority and minority—it is said when an issue is voted. The "division" of our Social-Democratic House on the various issues discussed at the Congress presents a picture of the struggle inside the Party, of its shades of opinions and groups, that *for its completeness and accuracy is unique and invaluable*. To make the picture

more graphic, to obtain a real *picture* instead of a heap of disconnected, disjointed and isolated facts and incidents, to put a stop to the endless and senseless controversies over separate divisions (who voted for whom and who supported whom?), I have decided to try to depict *all the basic* types of "divisions" at our Congress in the form of a *diagram*. This will probably seem strange to a great many people, but I doubt whether any other method can be found that would really generalize and summarize the results in the most complete and accurate manner possible. Whether a particular delegate voted for or against a given motion can be determined with absolute accuracy in cases when a roll-call vote was taken; and in certain important cases, even when no roll-call vote was taken, it can be determined from the minutes with a very high degree of probability, with a sufficient degree of approximation to the truth. If we take into account *all* the roll-call votes and all the other votes on issues of any importance (as judged, for example, by the thoroughness and warmth of the debates), we shall obtain a picture of the struggle within our Party that will be as objective as the material at our disposal permits. In doing so, instead of trying to give a photograph, *i.e.*, an image of each vote separately, we shall try to give a picture, *i.e.*, to present all the main *types* of voting, ignoring relatively unimportant exceptions and variations which would only confuse matters. In any case, anybody will be able with the aid of the minutes to check every detail of our picture, to supplement it with any particular vote he likes, in a word, to criticize it not only by arguments, doubts and references to isolated cases, but by drawing a *different picture* on the basis of the same material.

In marking on the diagram every delegate who took part in the voting, we shall indicate by special shading the four main groups which we have traced in detail throughout the course of the debates at the Congress, *viz.*, 1) the *Iskra*-ites of the majority; 2) the *Iskra*-ites of the minority; 3) the "Centre," and 4) the anti-*Iskra*-

GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS



ites. We have seen the difference in shades of principle between these groups in a *host of instances*, and if anyone does not like the *names* of the groups, which remind lovers of zigzags too much of the *Iskra* organization and the *Iskra* trend, let us remark that it is not the name that matters. Now that we have traced the shades through *all* the debates at the Congress it is easy to substitute for the already established and familiar Party appellations (which jar on the ears of some) a description of the *essence of the differences between the groups*. Were this substitution made, we would obtain the following names for these same four groups: 1) consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats; 2) minor opportunists; 3) middling opportunists; and 4) major opportunists (major according to our Russian standards).

We shall now proceed to give a detailed explanation of the types of vote which have been "snapped" on this diagram (see diagram: General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress).

The first type of vote (A) covers cases when the "Centre" joined with the *Iskra*-ites against the anti-*Iskra*-ites or a part of them. It includes the vote on the program as a whole (Comrade Akimov alone abstained, all the others voted for); the vote on the resolution condemning federation in principle (all voted for, except the five Bundists); the vote on § 2 of the Bund rules (the five Bundists voted against us; five abstained, *viz.*: Martynov, Akimov, Brouckère and Makhov, the latter with two votes, the rest were with us); *it is this vote that is represented in diagram A*. Further, the *three* votes on the question of endorsing the *Iskra* as the central organ of the Party were also of this type: the editors (five votes) abstained; in all the three divisions two voted against (Akimov and Brouckère) and, in addition, when the vote on the *motives* for endorsing the *Iskra* was taken, the five Bundists and Comrade Martynov abstained.*

* Why was the vote on § 2 of the Bund rules taken as an illustration in the diagram? Because the votes on the question of endorsing the *Iskra*

This type of vote provides an answer to a very interesting and important question, namely, when did the Congress "Centre" vote with the *Iskra*-ites? Either when the anti-*Iskra*-ites, too, were with us, with a few exceptions (adoption of the program, or endorsement of the *Iskra* without the motives stated), or else when it involved the sort of *statement* which was not in itself a direct committal to a definite political position (recognition of the organizing work of the *Iskra* was not in itself a committal to carry out its organizational policy in relation to particular groups; rejection of the principle of federation did not preclude abstention from voting on a specific scheme of federation, as we have seen in the case of Comrade Makhov). We have already seen, when speaking of the significance of the groupings at the Congress in general, how falsely this matter is put in the official account of the official *Iskra*, which (through the mouth of Comrade Martov) *slurs and glosses over* the difference between the *Iskra*-ites and the "Centre," between the consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats and the opportunists, by citing *cases when the anti-Iskra-ites, too, sided with us!* Even the most "Right-wing" of the opportunists in the German and French Social-Democratic parties never vote against such points as the *adoption of the program as a whole*.

The second type of division (B) covers the cases when the *Iskra*-ites, consistent and inconsistent, voted together against all the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the entire "Centre." These were mostly cases that involved giving effect to definite and specific plans of the *Iskra* policy, of endorsing the *Iskra* in fact and not only in word. They include the *Organization Committee episode*;* the question

were less complete, while the votes on the program and on the question of federation refer to political decisions of a less clearly defined character. Speaking generally, the choice of any other one of a number of votes of the same type will not in the least affect the main features of the picture, as anyone may easily see by making the corresponding changes.

* It is this vote that is depicted in Diagram B: the *Iskra*-ites secured thirty-two votes; the Bundist resolution sixteen. It should be pointed out

whether the position of the Bund in the Party should be the first item on the agenda; the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group; the two votes on the agrarian program, and, sixthly and lastly, the vote *against* the Foreign Union of Russian Social-Democrats (*Rabocheye Dyelo*), that is, the recognition of the League as the only Party organization abroad. In cases like these the old, pre-Party, circle spirit, the interests of the opportunist organizations or groups, the narrow conception of Marxism, were at issue with the strictly consistent principles of the policy of revolutionary Social-Democracy, the *Iskra*-ites of the minority still sided with us in a number of cases, in a number of exceedingly important votes (important from the standpoint of the Organization Committee, *Yuzhny Rabochy* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*) ... until *their own* circle spirit and their own inconsistencies came on the carpet. The "divisions" of this type make it quite clear that on a number of issues involving the practical application of our principles, *the Centre joined forces with the anti-"Iskra"-ites*, displaying a much greater kinship with them than with us, a greater inclination in practice towards the *opportunist* than towards the *revolutionary* wing of Social-Democracy. Those who were *Iskra*-ites in name but were ashamed to be *Iskra*-ites revealed their true nature; and the struggle that inevitably ensued caused no little irritation which obscured from the least thoughtful and most impressionable the significance of the shades of principle revealed in the course of the struggle. But now that the ardour of battle has somewhat abated

that *not one* of the votes of this type was by *roll-call*. The way the individual delegates voted can only be established—although to a very high degree of probability—by two sets of evidence: 1) in the debate the speakers of both groups of *Iskra*-ites spoke in favour, those of the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the Centre against; 2) the number of votes cast in favour was always very close to thirty-three. Nor should it be forgotten that when analysing the debates at the Congress we pointed out, quite apart from the voting, a number of cases when the "Centre" sided with the anti-*Iskra*-ites (the opportunists) against us. Some of these issues were: the absolute value of democratic demands, whether we should support the opposition elements, restriction of centralism, etc.

and the minutes remain as an unbiased extract of a series of heated battles, only those who will not see can fail to perceive that the alliance of the Makhovs and Egorovs with the Akimovs and Liebers was not, and could not be, casual.

The distinguishing feature of the third type of vote at the Congress, represented by the three remaining parts of the diagram (C, D and E), is that *a small section of the "Iskra"-ites broke away and went over to the anti-"Iskra"-ites*, who accordingly gained the victory (as long as they remained at the Congress). In order to trace with the fullest accuracy the development of this *coalition* of the *Iskra*-ite minority with the anti-*Iskra*-ites, we have reproduced all the three main types of *roll-call* votes of this kind. C is the vote on the equality of languages (the last of the three roll-call votes on this question is given, it being the most complete). All the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the whole Centre stood solid against us, whereas a part of the majority and a part of the minority separated from the *Iskra*-ites. *It was not yet clear which of the "Iskra"-ites were capable of forming a definite and lasting coalition with the opportunist "Right-wing" of the Congress.* Next comes type D—the vote on paragraph one of the Rules (of the two votes, we have taken the one which was more clear cut, that is, in which there were no abstentions). *The coalition becomes more distinct and more lasting; all the Iskra-ites of the minority are now on the side of Akimov and Lieber, but only a very small number of Iskra-ites of the majority, these counterbalancing three of the "Centre" and one anti-Iskra-ite who had come over to our side.* A mere glance at the diagram will show which elements shifted from side to side casually and temporarily and which *were drawn with irresistible force towards a lasting coalition with the Akimovs.* The last vote (E—elections to the central organ, the Central Committee and the Party Council), *which in fact represents the final division into a majority and a minority*, clearly reveals the complete fusion of the *Iskra*-ite minority with the *entire "Centre"* and

the remnants of the anti-*Iskra*-ites. By this time, of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ites, only Comrade Brouckère remained at the Congress (Comrade Akimov had already explained his mistake to him and he had taken his proper place in the ranks of the *Martovites*). The withdrawal of the seven most "Right" of the *opportunists* decided the issue of the elections against Martov.*

And now, with the aid of the objective evidence of votes of every type, let us sum up the results of the Congress.

There has been much talk to the effect that the majority at our Congress was "casual." The diagram clearly shows that in one sense, but in that one only, the majority may be called casual, viz., in the sense that the withdrawal of the seven most opportunist delegates of the "Right" was casual. Only to the extent that this withdrawal was casual (and no more) was our majority casual. A mere glance at the diagram will show better than any long argument on whose side these seven would have been; *were bound to have been*.** But the question arises: how far was the withdrawal of the seven really casual? That is a question which those who talk freely about the "casual" character of the majority do not like to ask themselves. They find it an unpleasant question. Was it a casual thing that the most arrant representatives of the *Right* wing, and not of the *Left* wing, of our Party were the ones to withdraw? Was it a casual thing that it was *opportunists* who withdrew, and not consistent *revolutionary Social-Democrats*? Is there no connection between this "casual" withdrawal and the struggle against

* The seven opportunists who withdrew from the Second Congress were the five Bundists (the Bund withdrew from the Party after the principle of federation had been rejected by the Congress) and two *Rabocheye Dyelo* delegates, Comrade Martynov and Comrade Akimov. These latter left the Congress after the *Iskra*-ite League had been recognized as the only Party organization abroad, i.e., after the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ite Foreign "Union" of Russian Social-Democrats had been dissolved. (Lenin's footnote to the 1908 edition.—Ed.)

** We shall see later that after the Congress both Comrade Akimov and the Voronezh Committee, which has the closest kinship with Comrade Akimov, explicitly expressed their sympathy with the "minority."

the opportunist wing which was waged all through the Congress and which stands out so clearly in our diagram?

One has only to ask these questions, which are so unpleasant to the minority, to realize what fact all this talk about the casual character of the majority is intended to conceal. It is the unquestionable and incontrovertible fact that *the minority was composed of those members of our Party who were most inclined to gravitate towards opportunism*. The minority was composed of the elements in our Party who were the least stable in theory and the least consistent in matters of principle. It was from the *Right* wing of the Party that the minority was formed. The division into a majority and a minority is a direct and inevitable continuation of that division of the Social-Democrats into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing, into a Mountain and a Gironde, which did not appear only yesterday, nor in the Russian Workers' Party alone, and which no doubt will not disappear to-morrow.

This fact is of cardinal importance for an elucidation of the causes and the various stages of our disagreements. Whoever tries to evade the fact by denying or glossing over the struggle at the Congress and the shades of principle that emerged there, simply testifies to his own intellectual and political poverty. But in order to disprove the fact, it would have to be shown, in the first place, that the general picture of the votes and "divisions" at our Party Congress was different from the one I have drawn; and, in the second place, that it was the most consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats, those who in Russia have adopted the name of *Iskra*-ites, who were wrong in substance on all those issues over which the Congress "divided."

The fact that the minority consisted of the most opportunist, the most unstable and least consistent elements of the Party incidentally provides an answer to those numerous perplexities and objections that are addressed to the majority by people who are imperfectly acquainted with the matter, or have not given it

sufficient thought. Is it not shallow, we are told, to account for the *disagreement* by a minor mistake of Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod? Yes, gentlemen, Comrade Martov's mistake was a minor one (and I said so even at the Congress, in the heat of the struggle); but this minor mistake *might* cause (*and did cause*) a lot of harm owing to the fact that Comrade Martov was pulled over to the side of delegates who had made *numbers of mistakes* and had manifested a tendency to opportunism and inconsistency of principle on numbers of questions. That Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod should have displayed instability was an individual and unimportant fact; it was not an individual fact, however, but a *Party* fact, and a *not altogether unimportant* one, that a very considerable minority had been formed of *all* the least stable elements, of *all* who either rejected *Iskra's* trend altogether and openly opposed it, or paid lip-service to it but actually sided time and again with the anti-*Iskra*-ites.

Is it not absurd to *account* for the disagreement by the prevalence of an inveterate circle spirit and revolutionary philistinism in the small circle comprised by the old *Iskra* editorial board? No, it is not absurd, because *all those in our Party* who all through the Congress had fought *for every kind of circle*, all those *who were generally incapable of rising* above revolutionary philistinism, all those who spoke of the "historical" character of the philistine and circle spirit to justify and preserve that evil, rose up in support of *this particular circle*. The fact that narrow circle interests prevailed over the Party spirit in the one little circle of the *Iskra* editorial board may, perhaps, be regarded as casual; but it was not casual that in staunch support of this circle rose up the Akimovs and Brouckères, who attached no less (if not more) value to the "historical continuity" of the celebrated Voronezh Committee and the notorious St. Petersburg "Workers'" Organization,* the

* The Voronezh Committee, which was controlled by "Economists," had taken up a hostile attitude towards the *Iskra*, the Organization Com-

Egorovs, who lamented the "murder" of *Rabocheye Dyelo* as bitterly as the "murder" of the old editorial board (if not more so), the Makhovs, etc., etc. You can tell a man by his friends—the proverb says. And you can tell a man's *political complexion* by his political allies, by the people who vote for him.

The minor mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod was, and might have remained, a *minor* one as long as it did not serve as the starting point for a *durable alliance* between them and the whole opportunist wing of our Party, as long as it did not lead, as a result of this alliance, to a *recrudescence* of opportunism, to the exaction of *revenge* by all whom *Iskra* had fought and who were now overjoyed at a chance of *venting their spleen* on the consistent adherents of revolutionary Social-Democracy. And, in fact, as a result of the post-congress events, we are now witnessing a recrudescence of opportunism in the new *Iskra*, the exaction of revenge by the Akimovs and Brouckères (see the leaflet issued by the Voronezh Committee),* and the glee of the Martynovs, who have at last (at last!) been allowed, in the detested *Iskra*, to have a kick at the detested "enemy" for all former grievances.

Taken by itself, there was nothing dreadful, nor crucial, nor even anything abnormal in the fact that the Congress (and the Party) had divided into a Left and a Right, a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing. On the contrary, the whole past decade in the history of the Russian (and not only of the Russian) Social-Democratic movement has been leading inevitably and inexorably to such a division. The fact that it was a number of very *minor*

mittee and the Second Congress they were arranging. It was therefore not invited to send delegates to the Congress.

The "Workers'" Organization of the St. Petersburg League was formed in the autumn of 1902 by "Economists" who had broken away from the St. Petersburg "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class." Brouckère (Lidia Makhnovets) was the delegate from this organization at the Second Congress.—*Ed.*

* See this volume pp. 108-109.—*Ed.*

mistakes of the Right wing, of (relatively) very unimportant dissensions, that caused the division (which seems shocking to the superficial observer and to the philistine mind), marked *a big step forward for our Party as a whole*. Formerly we used to differ over major issues, such as might even at times justify a split; now we have reached agreement on all major and important points, and are only divided by *shades*, about which we may *and should* argue, but over which it would be absurd and childish to part company (as Comrade Plekhanov has quite rightly said in his interesting article "What Should Not Be Done?" to which we shall revert). Now that the *anarchist behaviour* of the minority *after the Congress* has almost led to a split in the Party, one may often hear wiseacres saying: "Was it worth while fighting at the Congress over such trifles as the Organization Committee episode, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group or the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, or § 1, or the dissolution of the old editorial board, etc.? Those who argue in this way are in fact introducing the circle view into Party affairs: a struggle of *shades* in the Party is *inevitable and essential* as long as it does not lead to anarchy and splits, as long as it is confined *within bounds* approved by the common consent of all comrades and Party members. And *our struggle* against the Right wing of the Party *at the Congress*, against Akimov and Axelrod, Martynov and Martov, *never exceeded those bounds*. It is enough to recall, at least, that when Comrades Martynov and Akimov were about to leave the Congress *we were all prepared* to do everything to obliterate the idea of an "insult"; *we all adopted* (by thirty-two votes) Trotsky's motion to invite these comrades to regard the explanations as satisfactory and to withdraw their statement.

[Chapters O and P have been omitted in the present edition since they are devoted to a description of the post-congress struggle over the personal composition of the centres, i.e., something which appertains least of all to the realm of principle and most of all to that of squabbling.]

Q. THE NEW *ISKRA*. OPPORTUNISM IN QUESTIONS OF ORGANIZATION

As the basis for our analysis of the principles of the new *Iskra* we should unquestionably take the two articles of Comrade Axelrod.* We have already shown at length what is the concrete meaning** of some of his favourite catchwords. We must now try to abstract ourselves from their concrete meaning and study more closely the line of thought that forced the "minority" (on any small or minor occasion) to arrive at these particular slogans rather than at any other, must examine the principles behind these slogans, irrespective of their origin, of the question of "co-option." Concessions are all the fashion nowadays, so let us make a concession to Comrade Axelrod and take his theory "seriously."

Comrade Axelrod's main thesis (the *Iskra*, No. 57) is that "from the very outset our movement harboured two opposite tendencies, the mutual antagonism of which could not fail to develop and to affect the movement parallel with its own development." To be precise: "in principle, the proletarian aim of the movement (in Russia) is the same as that of the Social-Democratic movement in the West." But in our country the influence is exercised on the worker masses "by a social element alien to them," namely, the radical intelligentsia. Comrade Axelrod thus establishes an antagonism between the proletarian and the radical-intellectual trends in our Party.

In this Comrade Axelrod is undoubtedly right. The existence of such an antagonism (and not in the Russian Social-Democratic Party alone) is beyond question. What is more, everyone knows

* The articles in question were included in the symposium "*Iskra* for Two Years," Part II, p. 122, *et seq.* (St. Petersburg 1906).

** This "concrete meaning" refers to the Congress and post-Congress struggle over the personal composition of the centres the description of which has been omitted in the present edition. (Lenin's footnote to the 1908 edition.—Ed.)

that it is this antagonism that very largely accounts for the division of the present-day Social-Democratic movement into the revolutionary (also known as the orthodox) and the opportunist (revisionist, ministerialist, réformist) wing, which has become fully apparent in Russia, too, during the past ten years of our movement. Everyone also knows that the proletarian trend of the movement is expressed by orthodox Social-Democracy, while the trend of the democratic intelligentsia is expressed by opportunist Social-Democracy.

But, having squarely faced this piece of common knowledge, Comrade Axelrod then begins to shy and back away from it. He does not make *the slightest attempt* to analyse the way in which this division has manifested itself in the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement in general, and at our Party Congress in particular, although it is about the Congress that Comrade Axelrod is writing! Like all the other editors of the new *Iskra*, Comrade Axelrod displays a *mortal fear* of the minutes of this Congress. This should not surprise us after what has been said, but in a "theoretician" who claims to be investigating the different trends in our movement it is certainly a queer case of *truth-shyness*. Backing away, because of this malady, from the latest and most accurate material on the trends in our movement, Comrade Axelrod seeks salvation in the sphere of pleasant daydreaming. He writes: "Has not legal or semi-Marxism provided our liberals with a literary leader?*" Why should not prankish history provide revolutionary bourgeois democracy with a leader from the school of orthodox, revolutionary Marxism?" All we can say about this daydream which Comrade Axelrod finds so pleasant is that if history does sometimes play prankish tricks, that is no excuse for *prankish thoughts* in people who undertake to analyse history. When the liberal peeped out from under the cloak of the leader of

* The reference is to Struve.—Ed.

semi-Marxism, those who wished (*and were able*) to trace back his "trends" did not allude to possible prankish tricks of history, but to tens and hundreds of instances of the mentality and logic of that leader and to those peculiarities of his literary make-up which were stamped with the reflection of Marxism in bourgeois literature. And if, after having undertaken to analyse "the general revolutionary and the proletarian trends in our movement" Comrade Axelrod could produce *nothing, absolutely nothing*, in proof or evidence that certain representatives of that orthodox wing of the Party which he detests so much have such-and-such tendencies, he thereby issued a *formal certificate of his own bankruptcy*. Comrade Axelrod's case must be very weak indeed if all he can do is to allude to possible pranks of history.

Comrade Axelrod's other allusion—to the "Jacobins"—is still more revealing. Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the division of the present-day Social-Democratic movement into revolutionary and opportunist has long since given rise—and not only in Russia—to "historical parallels with the era of the Great French Revolution." Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the *Giron-dists of the present-day Social-Democratic movement* are always resorting to the terms "Jacobinism," "Blanquism" and so on to describe their opponents. Let us then not imitate Comrade Axelrod in his truth-shyness, let us consult the minutes of our Congress and see whether they offer any material for an analysis and examination of the trends we are discussing and the parallels we are dissecting.

First example: the debate on the program at the Party Congress. Comrade Akimov ("fully agreeing" with Comrade Martynov) says: "the clause on the capture of political power (the dictatorship of the proletariat) has been formulated in such a way—as compared with the programs of all other Social-Democratic parties—that it may be interpreted, and has actually been interpreted by Plekhanov, to mean that the role of the leaders of the

organization will relegate to the background the class it is leading and separate the former from the latter. Consequently, the formulation of our political tasks is exactly the same as that of the "Narodnaya Volya." (Minutes, p. 124.) Comrade Plekhanov and other *Iskra*-ites reply to Comrade Akimov and accuse him of opportunism. Does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute shows (in actual fact, and not in the imaginary pranks of history) the antagonism between the *modern Jacobins* and the modern *Girondists* in the Social-Democratic movement? And was it not because he found himself in the company of the *Girondists* of the Social-Democratic movement (owing to the mistakes he committed) that Comrade Axelrod began talking about Jacobins?

Second example: Comrade Posadovsky asserts that there is a "grave difference of opinion" over the "fundamental question" of the "absolute value of democratic principles" (p. 169). Like Plekhanov, he denies their absolute value. The leaders of the "Centre," or the Marsh (Egorov), and of the anti-*Iskra*-ites (Goldblatt) vigorously oppose this view and accuse Plekhanov of "imitating bourgeois tactics" (p. 170). *This is exactly Comrade Axelrod's idea of a connection between orthodoxy and the bourgeois trends*, the only difference being that in Axelrod's case it is vague and general, whereas Goldblatt linked it up with definite issues. Again we ask: does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute, too, *obviously* shows, at our Party Congress, the antagonism between the Jacobins and the Girondists in the present-day Social-Democratic movement? Is it not because he finds himself in the company of the Girondists that Comrade Axelrod raises this outcry against the Jacobins?

Third example: the debate on § 1 of the Rules. Who is it that defends "*the proletarian trend in our movement*"? Who is it that insists that the worker is not afraid of organization, that the proletariat has no sympathy for anarchy, and that he values the prompting to organize? Who is it that warns us against the bour-

geois intelligentsia and says that they are permeated through and through with opportunism? *The Jacobins of the Social-Democratic movement*. And who is it that tries to smuggle radical intellectuals into the Party? Who is it that is concerned about professors, high school students, freelancers, the radical youth? *The Girondist Axelrod and the Girondist Lieber*.

How clumsily Comrade Axelrod defends himself against the "false accusation of opportunism" that was openly levelled at the majority of the "Emancipation of Labour" Group at our Party Congress. He defends himself in a manner that confirms the charge, for he keeps reiterating the hackneyed Bernsteinian song about Jacobinism, Blanquism and so on! He shouts about the menace of the radical intellectuals in order to drown his own speeches at the Party Congress which were full of concern for these intellectuals.

These "dreadful words"—Jacobinism and the rest—are expressive of nothing but *opportunism*. A Jacobin who maintains an inseparable bond with the *organization* of the proletariat, a proletariat *conscious* of its class interests, is a *revolutionary Social-Democrat*. A Girondist who yearns for professors and high school students, who is afraid of the dictatorship of the proletariat and who sighs about the absolute value of democratic demands is an *opportunist*. It is only opportunists who can still detect a danger in secret organizations today, when the idea of narrowing down the political struggle to a secret conspiracy has been rejected thousands of times in written publications and has long been rejected and swept aside by the realities of life, and when the cardinal importance of mass political agitation has been elucidated and reiterated to the point of nausea. The real basis of this fear of conspiracy, of Blanquism, is not any feature to be found in the practical movement (as Bernstein and Co. have long, and vainly, been trying to show), but the Girondist timidity of the bourgeois intellectual whose mentality is so often revealed among the Social-

Democrats of today. Nothing could be more comical than these efforts of the new *Iskra* to utter a *new word* of warning (which has been uttered hundreds of times before) against the tactics of the French conspirator revolutionaries of the 'forties and 'sixties (No. 62, editorial). In the next issue of the *Iskra*, the Girondists of the present-day Social-Democratic movement will probably name a group of French conspirators of the 'forties for whom the importance of political agitation among the working masses, the importance of the labour press as the principal means by which the party influences the class, was a rudimentary truth they had learned and assimilated long ago.

However, the tendency of the new *Iskra* to repeat the ABC and go back to rudiments while pretending to be uttering something new is not without its cause; it is an inevitable consequence of the situation Axelrod and Martov find themselves in, now that they have landed in the opportunist wing of our Party. There is nothing for it. They have to go on repeating opportunist phrases, they have to *go back* and try to find in the *remote past* some sort of justification for their position, which is indefensible from the point of view of the struggle at the Congress and of the shades and divisions in the Party that emerged there. To the profound Akimovist remarks about Jacobinism and Blanquism, Comrade Axelrod adds Akimovist lamentations to the effect that the "politicians" as well, and not only the "Economists" were "one-sided," excessively "infatuated," and so on and so forth. Reading the high-flown disquisitions on this subject in the new *Iskra*, which conceitedly claims to be above oneness and infatuation, one asks in perplexity: whose portrait are they painting? where do they hear this talk? Who does not know that the division of the Russian Social-Democrats into Economists and politicians has long been obsolete? Go through the files of the *Iskra* for the last year or two before the Party Congress and you will find that the fight against "Economism" subsided and came to an end altogether as far back

as 1902; you will find, for example, that in July 1903 (No. 43), the "times of Economism" are spoken of as being "definitely over." Economism is considered to be "dead and buried," and the infatuation of the politicians is regarded as clear atavism. Why, then, do the new editors of the *Iskra* revert to this dead and buried division? Do you think that we fought the Akimovs at the Congress because of the mistakes they made in the *Rabocheye Dyelo* two years ago? If we had, we would have been sheer idiots. But everyone knows that we did not, that it was not for their old, dead and buried mistakes in the *Rabocheye Dyelo* that we fought the Akimovs at the Congress, but for the *new mistakes* they committed in their arguments and in the way they voted at the Congress. It was not by their stand on the *Rabocheye Dyelo* that we judged which mistakes had really been abandoned and which still lived and called for controversy, but by their stand at the Congress. By the time of the Congress the old division into Economists and politicians no longer existed; but various opportunist trends continued to exist. They found expression in the debates and voting on a number of issues, and finally led to a new division of the Party into a "majority" and a "minority." The whole point is that the new editors of the *Iskra* are for obvious reasons trying to gloss over the connection that exists between this new division and *contemporary* opportunism in our Party, and are, consequently, compelled to go back from the new division to the old one. Their inability to explain the political origin of the new division (or their desire, in order to prove how accommodating they are, to cast a veil* over its origin) compels them to keep harping on a division that has long been obsolete. Everyone knows that the new

* See Plekhanov's article on "Economism" in the *Iskra*, No. 53. The subtitle of the article appears to contain a slight misprint. Instead of "Reflections on the Second Party Congress," it should apparently read, "On the League Congress," or even "On Co-option." However appropriate concessions to personal claims may be under certain circumstances, it is quite inadmissible (from the Party, not the philistine standpoint) to confuse

division is based on a difference of opinion over questions of *organization*, which began with the controversy over principles of organization (§ 1 of the Rules) and ended up with a "practice" worthy of anarchists. The old division into Economists and politicians was based mainly on a difference of opinion over questions of *tactics*.

In its efforts to justify this retreat from the more complex, truly modern and burning issues of Party life to issues that have long been settled and have now been dug up artificially, the new *Iskra* resorts to an amusing display of profundity for which there can be no other name than *khvostism*. Started by Comrade Axelrod, there runs like a crimson thread through all the writing of the new *Iskra* the profound "thought" that content is more important than form, that program and tactics are more important than organization, that "the virility of an organization is in direct proportion to the volume and importance of the content it puts into the movement," that centralism is not an "end in itself," not an "all-saving talisman," etc., etc. Great and profound truths! A program is indeed more important than tactics, and tactics are more important than organization. The alphabet is more important than etymology, and etymology more important than syntax—but what would we say of people who, having failed in an examination in syntax, went about pluming and priding themselves on having been kept over in a lower class for another year? Comrade Axelrod argued about principles of organization (§ 1) like an opportunist, and behaved inside the organization like an anarchist—and now he is trying to lend profundity to Social-Democracy. Sour grapes! What is organization, properly speaking? Why, it is only a form. What

the issues that are agitating the Party and to substitute for the new mistake of Martov and Axelrod, who have begun to swing from orthodoxy to opportunism, the old mistake (never recalled today by anyone except the new *Iskra*) of the Martynovs and the Akimovs, who may now be prepared, for all one knows, to swing from opportunism to orthodoxy on many questions of program and tactics.

is centralism? After all, it is not a talisman. What is syntax? Why, it is less important than etymology; it is only a form of combining the elements of etymology.... "Will not Comrade Alexandrov agree with us," the new editors of the *Iskra* triumphantly ask, "when we say that the Congress did much more for the centralization of Party work by drawing up a Party program than by adopting rules, however perfect the latter may seem?" (No. 56, Supplement.) It is to be hoped that this classical utterance will acquire a historic fame no less wide and no less lasting than Comrade Krichevsky's celebrated remark to the effect that Social-Democracy, like mankind, always sets itself achievable tasks. The profundity of the new *Iskra* is of exactly the same alloy. Why was Comrade Krichevsky's phrase held up to derision? Because he tried to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of tactics—their inability to set correct political aims—by a commonplace which he wanted to palm off as philosophy. In exactly the same way the new *Iskra* tries to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of organization, to justify the instability of the intellectual displayed by certain comrades—which has led them to the point of anarchist phrasemongering—by the commonplace that a program is more important than rules, and that questions of program are more important than questions of organization! What is this but *khvostism*? What is this but pluming oneself on having been left over in a lower class for another year?

The adoption of a program contributes more to the centralization of the work than the adoption of rules. How this commonplace, palmed off as philosophy, smacks of the mentality of the radical intellectual, who has much more in common with bourgeois decadence than with Social-Democracy! Why, the word centralization is used in this famous phrase quite *symbolically*. If the authors of the phrase are unable or disinclined to think, they might at least have recalled the simple fact that though we and the Bund-

ists together adopted a program, this did not even save us from a split, let alone lead to the centralization of our common work. Unity on questions of program and tactics is an essential but by no means a sufficient condition for Party unity and for the centralization of Party work (good God, what rudimentary things one has to keep repeating nowadays, when all concepts have been confused!). That requires, in addition, unity of organization, which, in a party that has grown to be anything more than a mere family circle, is inconceivable without formal rules, without the subordination of the minority to the majority, of the part to the whole. As long as there was no unity on the fundamental questions of program and tactics, we bluntly admitted that we were living in a period of disunity and the circle spirit; we bluntly declared that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn; we did not even talk of the forms of a joint organization, but exclusively discussed the new (at that time they really were new) questions of how to fight opportunism on program and tactics. When, as we all agreed, this fight had already ensured a sufficient degree of unity, as formulated in the Party program and in the Party's resolution on tactics, we had to take the next step, and, by common consent, we did take it, working out the *forms* of a united organization that would merge all the circles together. We have been dragged back to anarchist conduct, to anarchist phrasemongering, to the revival of a circle in place of a Party editorial board. And this step back is being justified on the grounds that the alphabet is more helpful to literate speech than a knowledge of syntax!

The philosophy of *khvostism* which flourished three years ago in connection with tactics is being resurrected today in connection with organization. Take the following argument of the new editors: "The militant Social-Democratic trend in the Party," says Comrade Alexandrov, "should be maintained not only by an ideological struggle, but by definite forms of organization." Whereupon the

editors edifyingly remark: "Not bad, this juxtaposition of ideological struggle and forms of organization. The ideological struggle is a process, whereas the forms of organization are just ... forms [believe it or not, that is what they say in No. 56, Supplement, p. 4, col. 1, bottom of page!] designed to clothe a fluid and developing content—the developing practical work of the Party." That is quite in the style of the joke about a cannon ball being a cannon ball and a bomb a bomb! The ideological struggle is a process, and the forms of organization are only forms clothing the content! The point at issue is whether our ideological struggle is to have forms of a *higher type* to clothe it, forms of Party organization binding on all, or the forms of the old disunity and the old circles. We have been dragged back from higher to more primitive forms, and this is being justified on the grounds that the ideological struggle is a process, whereas forms—are just forms. That is just how Comrade Krichevsky in bygone days tried to drag us back from tactics-as-a-plan to tactics-as-a-process.

Take the pompous talk of the new *Iskra* about the "self-training of the proletariat" which is directed against those who are supposed to be in danger of missing the content because of the form. (No. 58, editorial.) Is this not Akimovism No. 2? Akimovism No. 1 used to justify the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in formulating tactical tasks by talking about the more "profound" content of the "proletarian struggle" and about the self-training of the proletariat. Akimovism No. 2 justifies the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in the theory and practice of organization by equally profound talk about organization being merely a form, and the self-training of the proletariat being the important thing. Let me tell you gentlemen who are so solicitous about the younger brother* that the proletariat is not afraid of organization and discipline!

* The "lower classes."—Ed.

The proletariat will do nothing to have the worthy professors and high school students, who do not want to join an organization, recognized as Party members merely because they work under the control of an organization. The proletariat is trained by its whole life for organization far more radically than many an intellectual prig. Having gained some understanding of our program and our tactics, the proletariat will not start justifying backwardness in organization by arguing that the form is less important than the content. It is not the proletariat, but *certain intellectuals* in our Party who lack *self-training* in the spirit of organization and discipline, in the spirit of hostility and contempt for anarchist phrasemongering. When they say that it is not ripe for organization, the Akimovs No. 2 libel the proletariat just as the Akimovs No. 1 libelled it when they said that it was not ripe for the political struggle. The proletarian who has become a conscious Social-Democrat and feels that he is a member of the Party will reject *khvostism* in matters of organization with the same contempt as he rejected *khvostism* in matters of tactics.

Finally, consider the profound wisdom of "Practical Worker" in the new *Iskra*. "Properly understood," he says, "the idea of a 'militant' centralized organization uniting and centralizing the *activities*" (the italics are to make it look more profound) "of revolutionaries can naturally materialize only if such activities exist" (new and clever!); "the organization itself, being a form" (mark that!), "can only grow *simultaneously*" (the italics are the author's, as throughout this quotation) "with the growth of the revolutionary work which is its content." (No. 57.) Does this not remind you very much of the hero in the folk tale who, on seeing a funeral, cried: "Many happy returns of the day"? I am sure there is not a practical worker (in the genuine sense of the term) in our Party who does not understand that the form of our activities (*i.e.*, our organization) has been lagging behind its content for a long time, and lagging desperately, and that only the Simple

Simon in the Party could shout to those who are lagging: "Keep in line; don't run ahead!" Compare our Party, let us say, with the Bund. There can be no question but that the *content** of the work of our Party is immeasurably richer, more varied, broader and deeper than that of the Bund. The scope of our theoretical views is wider, our program more developed, our influence among the working-class masses (and not among the organized artisans alone) broader and deeper, our propaganda and agitation more varied, the pulse of the political work of the leaders and of the rank and file more lively, the *popular* movements during demonstrations and general strikes grander, and our work among the non-proletarian population more energetic. And the "form"? Compared with that of the Bund, the "form," of our work is lagging unparadoxically, lagging so that it is an eyesore and brings a blush of shame to the cheeks of anyone who does not merely "pick his nose" when contemplating the affairs of his Party. The fact that the organization of our work is lagging behind its content is our weak point, and it was our weak point long before the Congress, long before the Organization Committee was formed. The undeveloped and unstable character of the form makes any serious step in the further development of the content impossible; it causes a shameful stagnation, leads to a waste of energy, to a discrepancy between word and deed. We have all suffered enough from this discrepancy, yet along come the Axelrods and the "Practical Workers" of the new *Iskra* with their profound precept: the form must grow naturally, and only simultaneously with the content!

That is where a small mistake in connection with a question of organization (§ 1) will lead you, if you try to *lend profundity* to nonsense and to find philosophical justification for an opportunist

* I will not mention the fact that the *content* of our Party work was outlined at the Congress (in the program, etc.) in the spirit of revolutionary Social-Democracy only *at the cost of a struggle*, a struggle against the very anti-*Iskra*-ites and the very Marsh whose representatives numerically predominate in our "minority."

ist phrase. Pacing slowly in timid zigzags!—we have heard this refrain in connection with questions of tactics; we are hearing it again in connection with questions of organization. *Khvostism in matters of organization* is a natural and inevitable product of the mentality of the *anarchist individualist* when he starts to elevate his anarchist deviations (which at the outset may have been accidental) to a *system of views*, to *special differences of principle*. At the Congress of the League we witnessed the beginnings of this anarchism, in the new *Iskra* we are witnessing attempts to elevate it to a system of views. These attempts strikingly confirm what was already said at the Party Congress about the difference between the point of view of the bourgeois intellectual who attaches himself to the Social-Democratic movement and the proletarian who has become conscious of his class interests. For instance, this same “Practical Worker” of the new *Iskra* with whose profundity we are already familiar denounces me for visualizing the Party as “an immense factory” headed by a director in the shape of the Central Committee (No. 57, Supplement). “Practical Worker” does not even guess that the dreadful word he uses immediately betrays the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who is familiar neither with the practice nor with the theory of proletarian organization. For the factory, which seems only a bogey to some, is that highest form of capitalist co-operation which has united and disciplined the proletariat, taught it to organize, and placed it at the head of all the other sections of the toiling and exploited population. And Marxism, the ideology of the proletariat trained by capitalism, has taught and is teaching unstable intellectuals to distinguish between the factory as a means of exploitation (discipline based on fear of starvation) and the factory as a means of organization (discipline based on collective work united by the conditions of a technically highly developed form of production). The discipline and organization which come so hard to the bourgeois intellectual are very easily acquired by the proletariat just because of

this factory “schooling.” Mortal fear of this school and utter failure to understand its importance as an organizing factor are characteristic of the ways of thinking which reflect the petty-bourgeois mode of life and which give rise to that species of anarchism which the German Social-Democrats call *Edelanarchismus*, i.e., the anarchism of the “noble” gentleman, or aristocratic anarchism, as I would call it. This aristocratic anarchism is particularly characteristic of the Russian nihilist. He thinks of the Party organization as a monstrous “factory”; he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as “serfdom” (see Axelrod’s articles); division of labour under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragi-comical outcry against people being transformed into “wheels and cogs” (to turn editors into contributors being considered a particularly atrocious species of such transformation); mention of the organizational rules of the Party calls forth a contemptuous grimace and the disdainful remark (intended for the “formalists”) that one could very well dispense with rules altogether.

Incredible as it may seem, it was a didactic remark of just this sort that Comrade Martov addressed to me in the *Iskra*, No. 58, quoting, for greater weight, my own words in “A Letter to a Comrade.” Well, what is it if not “aristocratic anarchism,” and *khvostism* to cite examples from the era of disunity, the era of the circles, to *justify* the preservation and glorification of the circle spirit and anarchy in the era of the Party?

Why did we not need rules before? Because the Party consisted of separate circles, unconnected by any organizational tie. Any individual could pass from one circle to another at his own “sweet will,” for he was not faced with any formulated expression of the will of the whole. Disputes within the circles were not settled by rules, “but by a struggle and by threats to resign,” as I put it in “A Letter to a Comrade,” citing the experience of a number of circles and of our own editorial circle of six in particular. In the

era of the circles, this was natural and inevitable, but it never occurred to anybody to extol it, to regard it as ideal; everyone complained of the disunity, everyone was tired of it and longed for the time when the isolated circles would be fused into a formally constituted party organization. And now that this fusion has taken place, we are being dragged back and, under the guise of higher organizational views, treated to anarchist phrasemongering! To those who are accustomed to the loose dressing gown and slippers of the Oblomov* circle domesticity, formal rules seem narrow, restrictive, irksome, petty and bureaucratic, a bond of serfdom and a fetter on the free "process" of the ideological struggle. Aristocratic anarchism cannot understand that formal rules are needed precisely in order to replace the narrow circle ties by the broad Party tie. It was unnecessary and impossible to formulate the internal tie of a circle or the ties between circles, for these ties rested on friendship or on a "confidence" for which no reason or motive had to be given. The Party tie cannot and must not rest on either of these; it must be founded on *formal*, "bureaucratically" worded rules (bureaucratic from the standpoint of the undisciplined intellectual), strict adherence to which can alone safeguard us from the wilfulness and caprices characteristic of the circles, from the circle methods of scrapping that goes by the name of the free "process of the ideological struggle."

The editors of the new *Iskra* try to trump Alexandrov with the didactic remark that "confidence is a delicate matter and cannot be knocked into people's hearts and minds" (No. 56, Supplement). The editors do not realize that by this talk about confidence, *naked* confidence, they are once more betraying their aristocratic anarchism and organizational *khvostism*. When I was a member of a circle only—whether it was the circle of the six editors or the *Iskra* organization—I was entitled to justify my refusal, say, to work

* *Oblomov*—the hero of Goncharov's novel of the same name, an embodiment of inertia, supineness and a passive, vegetating existence.—Ed.

with X merely on the grounds of lack of confidence, without stating reason or motive. But now that I have become a member of a party, I am *no longer entitled* to plead lack of confidence in general, for that would throw open the doors to all the freaks and whims of the old circles; I *have to* give formal reasons for my "confidence" or "lack of confidence," that is, I must cite a formally established principle of our program, tactics or rules; I must not just declare my "confidence" or "lack of confidence" without giving reasons for them, but must realize that *reasons must be given* for my decisions—and generally for all decisions of any section of the Party—to the whole Party; I have to adhere to a *formally prescribed* procedure when giving expression to my "lack of confidence," or when trying to secure the acceptance of the views and wishes that follow from this lack of confidence. We have risen above the *circle* view that "confidence" does not have to be accounted for to the *Party* view which demands adherence to a formally prescribed procedure of expressing, accounting for and *testing* our confidence. But the editors are trying to drag us back, and are calling their *khvostism* "new views on organization"!

Listen to the way our so-called Party editors talk about the literary groups that might demand representation on the editorial board. "We shall not get indignant and begin to shout about discipline," we are admonished by these aristocratic anarchists who have always looked down on such a thing as discipline. We shall either "arrange the matter" (*sic!*) with the group, if it is reasonable, or just ridicule its demands.

Dear, dear, what a lofty and noble rebuff to vulgar "factory" formalism! But in reality it is the old circle phraseology furbished up a little and served up to the Party by an editorial board which does not feel that it is a Party body, but the survival of an old circle. The intrinsic falsity of this position inevitably leads to the *anarchist* profundity of elevating the disunity which they pharisaically proclaim to be obsolete to a *principle* of Social-Democratic

organization. There is no need for a hierarchy of higher and lower Party bodies and authorities—aristocratic anarchism regards such a hierarchy as the bureaucratic invention of ministries, departments, etc. (see Axelrod's article); there is no need for the part to submit to the whole; there is no need for any "formal bureaucratic" definition of *Party* methods of "arranging matters" or of parting ways. Let the old circle scrapping be sanctified by pompous talk about "genuinely Social-Democratic" methods of organization.

This is where the proletarian who has been through the school of the "factory" can and should teach a lesson to anarchist individualism. The class-conscious worker has long ago emerged from the state of infancy when he used to fight shy of the intellectual as such. The class-conscious worker prizes the richer store of knowledge and the wider political horizon which he finds in Social-Democratic intellectuals. But as we proceed with the building of a *real* party, the class-conscious worker must learn to distinguish the mentality of the soldier of the proletarian army from the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who flaunts his anarchist talk, he must learn to *insist* that the duties of a Party member be fulfilled not only by the rank and file, but by the "people on top" as well; he must learn to treat *khvostism* in matters of organization with the contempt with which in the old days he used to treat *khvostism* in matters of tactics!

Inseparably connected with Girondism and aristocratic anarchism is the last characteristic feature of the new *Iskra's* attitude towards matters of organization, namely, its defence of *autonomism* as against centralism. This is the meaning in principle (if it has any such meaning) of its outcry against bureaucracy and autocracy, of its regrets over the "undeserved neglect of the non-*Iskra*-ites" (who defended autonomism at the Congress), of its comical howls about the demand for "unqualified obedience," of its bitter complaints of "pompadour methods," etc., etc. The opportunist wing of any party always defends and justifies all retrograde tendencies,

whether in program, tactics or organization. The new *Iskra's* defence of retrograde tendencies in matters of organization (*khvostism*) is closely connected with the defence of *autonomism*. True, autonomism has, generally speaking, been so discredited by the three years' propaganda work of the old *Iskra* that the new *Iskra* is ashamed, *as yet*, to advocate it openly; it still assures us of its sympathy for centralism, but shows it only by printing the word centralism in italics. Actually, it is enough to apply the slightest touch of criticism to the "principles" of the "true Social-Democratic" (not anarchistic?) quasi-centralism of the new *Iskra* for the autonomist standpoint to be detected at every step. Is it not now clear to everyone that on the subject of organization Axelrod and Martov have swung over to Akimov? Have they not solemnly admitted it themselves in the significant words, "undeserved neglect of the non-*Iskra*-ites"? And what was it but autonomism that Akimov and his friends defended at our Party Congress?

It was autonomism (if not anarchism) that Martov and Axelrod defended at the Congress of the League when, with amusing zeal, they tried to prove that the part need not submit to the whole, that the part is autonomous in defining its relation to the whole, that the rules of the Foreign League, in which the relation is thus formulated, are valid, in defiance of the will of the Party majority, in defiance of the will of the Party centre. It is autonomism, too, that Comrade Martov is now openly defending in the columns of the new *Iskra* (No. 60) in connection with the right of the Central Committee to appoint members to the local committees. I shall not speak of the puerile sophistries which Comrade Martov used to defend autonomism at the Congress of the League, and is still using in the new *Iskra*—the important thing here is to note the undoubted tendency to *defend autonomism as against centralism*, which is a fundamental characteristic of opportunism in matters of organization.

Perhaps the only attempt to *analyse* the concept bureaucracy is

the distinction drawn in the new *Iskra* (No. 53) between the "formal democratic principle" (author's italics) and the "formal bureaucratic principle." This distinction (which, unfortunately, was no more developed or explained than the allusion to the non-*Iskra*-ites) contains a grain of truth. Bureaucracy *versus* democracy is the same thing as centralism *versus* autonomism; it is the organizational principle of the revolutionary Social-Democrats as opposed to the organizational principle of the opportunist Social-Democrats. The latter strive to proceed from the bottom upward, and, therefore, wherever possible and as far as possible, advocate autonomism and a "democracy" which is carried (by the over-zealous) to the point of anarchism. The former strive to proceed from the top downward, and advocate an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in respect to the parts. In the period of disunity and the circles, this top from which the revolutionary Social-Democrats strove to proceed organizationally was inevitably one of the circles, the one which was most influential because of its activity and its revolutionary consistency (in our case, the *Iskra* organization). Now that real Party unity has been restored and the obsolete circles dissolved in this unity, this top is inevitably the *Party Congress*, as the supreme organ of the Party; the Congress as far as possible includes representatives of all the active organizations, and, by appointing the central bodies (often with a membership which satisfies the advanced elements of the Party more than the backward elements, and which is more to the taste of its revolutionary wing than its opportunist wing) makes them the top until the next Congress. Such, at any rate, is the case among the Social-Democratic Europeans, although this custom, which is so detested in principle by the anarchists, is gradually beginning, not without difficulty and not without conflicts and squabbles, to spread to the Social-Democratic Asiatics.

It is most interesting to note that these fundamental characteristics of opportunism in matters of organization (autonomism, aristo-

cratic or intellectual anarchism, *khvostism* and Girondism) are *mutatis mutandis* (with corresponding modifications) to be observed in all the Social-Democratic parties of the world, wherever there is a division into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing (and where is there not?). Only quite recently this was very strikingly revealed in the German Social-Democratic Party, when its defeat at the elections in the 20th electoral division of Saxony (known as the Göhre incident)* brought the question of the *principles* of party organization to the fore. That this incident should have become an issue of principle was largely due to the zeal of the German opportunists. Göhre (an ex-parson, author of that not uncelebrated book, *Drei Monate Fabrikarbeiter*** and one of the "heroes" of the Dresden Congress) was himself an extreme opportunist, and the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (*Socialist Monthly*), the organ of the consistent German opportunists, at once "took up the cudgels" on his behalf.

Opportunism in program is naturally connected with opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organization. The exposition of the "new" point of view was undertaken by Comrade Wolfgang Heine. To give the reader some idea of the political complexion of this typical intellectual, who on joining the Social-Democratic movement brought with him his opportunist habits of thought, it is enough to say that Comrade Wolfgang Heine is something less than a German Comrade Akimov and something more than a German Comrade Egorov.

Comrade Wolfgang Heine took the warpath in the *Sozialistische*

* Göhre was returned to the Reichstag on June 16, 1903, from the 15th division of Saxony, but resigned after the Dresden Congress. The electorate of the 20th division, which had fallen vacant on the death of Rosenow, wanted to offer the seat to Göhre. The Central Council of the Party and the Central Agitation Committee for Saxony opposed this, and although they had no formal right to forbid Göhre's nomination, they succeeded in getting him to decline. The Social-Democrats were defeated at the polls.

** *Three months as a Factory Worker.—Ed.*

Monatshefte with no less pomp than Comrade Axelrod in the new *Iskra*. The very title of his article is priceless: "Democratic Observations on the Göhre Incident" (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*, No. 4, April). The contents are no less thunderous. Comrade W. Heine rises up in arms against "encroachments on the autonomy of a constituency," champions the "democratic principle," and protests against the interference of an "appointed authority" (i.e., the Central Council of the Party) in the free election of deputies by the people. The point at issue, Comrade W. Heine admonishes us, is not a casual incident, but a general "tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party," a tendency, he says, which was to be observed before, but which is now becoming particularly dangerous. It must be "recognized as a principle that the local institutions of the Party are the arteries of Party life" (a plagiarism on Comrade Martov's pamphlet, *Once More in the Minority*). We must not "get accustomed to the idea that all important political decisions must emanate from one centre," and we must warn the Party against "a doctrinaire policy which loses contact with life" (borrowed from Comrade Martov's speech at the Party Congress to the effect that "life will claim its own"). Carrying his argument further, Comrade W. Heine says: "... If we go down to the roots of the matter, if we abstract ourselves from personal conflicts, which here, as everywhere, have played no small part, we shall find that this bitterness against the revisionists" (the italics are the author's and evidently hint at a distinction between fighting revisionism and fighting revisionists) "is mainly expressive of the distrust of the Party officials for 'outsiders'" (W. Heine had evidently not yet read the pamphlet about combating the state of siege, and therefore resorted to an Anglicism—*Outsidertum*), "the distrust of tradition for the unusual, of the impersonal institution for everything individual," "in a word, that tendency which we have defined above as a tendency toward bureaucracy and centralism in the party."

The idea of "discipline" inspires Comrade W. Heine with a no less noble disgust than Comrade Axelrod. . . . "The revisionists," he writes, "have been accused of lack of discipline for having written for the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*—whose Social-Democratic character has even been brought into question because it is not *controlled by the Party*. This attempt to narrow down the concept 'Social-Democratic,' this insistence on *discipline* in the sphere of ideological production, where absolute freedom should prevail" (remember that the ideological struggle is a process whereas the forms of organization are only forms) "in themselves point to the tendency towards bureaucracy and the suppression of individuality." And W. Heine goes on and on, fulminating against this detestable tendency to create "one big all-embracing organization, as centralized as possible, one set of tactics and one theory," against the demand for "unqualified obedience," "blind submission," against "oversimplified centralism," etc., etc., literally "in the Axelrod manner."

The controversy started by W. Heine spread, and as there were no squabbles about co-option in the German Party to obscure the issue, and as the German Akimovs display their complexion not only at congresses but also in a permanent periodical of their own, the controversy soon boiled down to an analysis of the principles of the orthodox and revisionist trends in matters of organization. Karl Kautsky came forward (in *Die Neue Zeit*, 1904, No. 28, in an article "*Wahlkreis und Partei*"—"Constituency and Party") as one of the spokesmen of the revolutionary trend (which, exactly as in our Party, was of course accused of "dictatorship," "inquisitorial" tendencies and other dreadful things). "W. Heine's article," he says, "reveals the line of thought of the whole revisionist trend." Not only in Germany, but in France and Italy as well, the opportunists are all in favour of autonomism, of a slackening of Party discipline, of reducing it to nought; everywhere their tendencies lead to *disorganization* and to corrupting the "democratic principle" and converting it into *anarchism*. "Democracy does not

mean absence of authority," says Karl Kautsky, instructing the opportunists on the subject of organization, "democracy does not mean anarchy; it means the rule of the masses over their representatives, as distinct from other forms of rule where the supposed servants of the people are in reality their masters." K. Kautsky traces at length the disruptive role played by opportunist autonomism in various countries; he shows that it is precisely the fact that "*a great number of bourgeois elements*"* have joined the Social-Democratic movement that lends strength to opportunism, autonomism and the tendency to violate discipline, and once more he reminds us that "organization is the weapon that will emancipate the proletariat," that "organization is the characteristic weapon of the proletariat in the class struggle."

In Germany, where opportunism is weaker than in France or Italy, "autonomist tendencies have so far led to nothing but more or less highflown declamations against dictators and grand inquisitors, against excommunication** and heresy hunting, and to endless cavilling, which would only result in endless squabbling if replied to by the other side."

It is not surprising that in Russia, where opportunism in the Party is even weaker than in Germany, autonomist tendencies should have produced fewer ideas and more "high-flown declamations" and squabbling.

It is not surprising that Kautsky arrives at the following conclusion: "There is probably no other issue on which the revisionists of all countries, despite their multiplicity of form and hue, are so alike as on the question of organization." Karl Kautsky too defines the basic trends of orthodoxy and revisionism in this sphere by

* Karl Kautsky mentioned *Jaurès* as an example. The more these people deviated towards opportunism, the more "they were bound to consider Party discipline an improper constraint on their free personality."

** *Bannstrahl*: excommunication. This is the German equivalent of the Russian "state of siege" and "emergency laws." It is the "dreadful word" of the German opportunists.

the "dreadful words": bureaucracy *versus* democracy. "We are told," he says, "that to give the Party leadership the right to influence the selection of a candidate (for parliament) by the constituencies would be a 'shameful violation of the democratic principle, which demands that all political activity proceed from the bottom upward, by the independent activity of the masses, and not from the top downward, by bureaucratic means....' But if there is any democratic principle, it is that the majority must have its way against the minority, and not the other way round...." The election of a member of parliament by any constituency is an important question for the Party as a whole, which should influence the nomination of candidates, if only through the Party's representatives (*Vertrauensmänner*). "Whoever considers this too bureaucratic or too centralistic let him suggest that candidates be nominated by the direct vote of the whole Party membership (*sämmtlicher Parteigenossen*). If he thinks this is not practicable, he must not complain of a lack of democracy when this function, like many others that affect the whole Party, is exercised by one or by several Party bodies." It has long been a "common law" in the German Party for constituencies to "come to a friendly understanding" with the Party leadership about the choice of a candidate. "But the Party has grown too big for this tacit common law to suffice any longer. Common law ceases to be a law when it ceases to be regarded as natural and self-evident, when its stipulations, and even its very existence, are *called in question*. Then it becomes absolutely essential to formulate the law specifically, to codify it," to adopt a more "precise statutory definition (*statutarische Festlegung*) and, accordingly, greater strictness (*grössere Straffheit*) of organization."

Thus you have, in a different environment, the same struggle between the opportunist wing and the revolutionary wing of the Party on the question of organization, the same conflict between autonomism and centralism, between democracy and "bureaucracy," between the tendency to relax and the tendency to tighten organiza-

tion and discipline, between the mentality of the unstable intellectual and that of the staunch proletarian, between intellectualist individualism and proletarian solidarity. What, one asks, was the attitude to this conflict of *bourgeois democracy*—not the bourgeois democracy which prankish history has only promised in private to show to Comrade Axelrod some day, but the real and actual bourgeois democracy which in Germany has spokesmen no less learned and observant than our own gentlemen of *Osvobozhdeniye*? German bourgeois democracy at once reacted to the new controversy and—like Russian bourgeois democracy, like bourgeois democracy always and everywhere—rose up solidly in behalf of the opportunist wing of the Social-Democratic Party. The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, leading organ of the German stock exchange, published a thunderous editorial (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, April 7, 1904, No. 97, evening edition) which shows that the unscrupulous habit of plagiarizing Axelrod is becoming a veritable disease with the German press. The stern democrats of the Frankfurt stock exchange lash furiously at “autocracy” in the Social-Democratic Party, “party dictatorship,” at the “autocratic domination of the Party authorities,” at these “excommunications” which are intended “as it were, to chastise all the revisionists” (recall the “false accusation of opportunism”), at the insistence on “blind submission,” “deadening discipline,” “servile subordination” and the transforming of Party members into “political corpses” (that is much stronger than wheels and cogs!). “All distinctiveness of personality,” the knights of the stock exchange indignantly exclaim at the sight of the undemocratic regime in the Social-Democratic Party, “all individuality must be persecuted, don’t you see, for they threaten to lead to the French state of affairs, to Jaurèsism and Millerandism, as was stated in so many words by Zindermann, who made the report on the subject” at the Party Congress of the Saxon Social-Democrats.

* * *

And so, in so far as the new catchwords of the new *Iskra* on organization contain any principles at all, there can be no doubt that they are opportunist principles. This conclusion is moreover confirmed by the whole analysis of our Party Congress which divided up into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing, and by the example of *all* European Social-Democratic parties, where opportunism in organization finds expression in the same tendencies, in the same accusations, and very often in the same catchwords. Of course, the national peculiarities of the various parties and the different political conditions in different countries leave their impress and make German opportunism quite dissimilar from French opportunism, French opportunism from Italian opportunism and Italian opportunism from Russian opportunism. But the similarity of the fundamental division of all these parties into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing, the similarity of the line of thought and the tendencies of opportunism in organization stand out clearly in spite of all the difference of conditions mentioned.* The presence of large numbers of radical intellectuals in the ranks of our Marxists and our Social-Democrats has made, and is making, the existence of opportunism, produced by their mentality, inevitable in the most varied spheres and in the most varied forms. We fought opportunism on the fundamental problems of our world conception, on questions of our program, and a complete divergence of aims

* No one will doubt today that the old division into Economists and politicians among the Russian Social-Democrats on questions of tactics was similar to the division of the whole Social-Democratic movement of the world into opportunists and revolutionaries, although the difference between Comrades Martynov and Akimov, on the one hand, and Comrades von Vollmar and von Elm or Jaurès and Millerand, on the other, may be very great. Nor will anyone doubt the similarity of the main divisions on questions of organization, in spite of the enormous difference between the conditions of politically unfranchised and politically free countries. It is extremely characteristic that the highly principled editors of the new *Iskra*, while briefly touching on the controversy between Kautsky and Heine (No. 64), fearfully evaded the trends of *principle* of opportunism and orthodoxy in general on questions of organization.

inevitably led to an irrevocable division between the Social-Democrats and the liberals who had corrupted our legal Marxism. We fought opportunism on tactical questions, and our divergence with Comrades Krichevsky and Akimov on these less important issues was naturally only temporary, and was not accompanied by the formation of different parties. We must now vanquish the opportunism of Martov and Axelrod in matters of organization, which are, of course, even less fundamental than questions of program and tactics, but which have now come to the forefront in our Party life.

When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget a feature that is characteristic of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, diffuseness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, will always evade formulating an issue clearly and decisively, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and to reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, good and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth. Comrade Eduard Bernstein, an opportunist in questions of program, "agrees" with the revolutionary program of his party, and although he is most likely anxious to have it "radically revised," he considers it inopportune and inexpedient, and not so important as the elucidation of "general principles" of "criticism" (which mainly consist in uncritically borrowing principles and catchwords from bourgeois democracy). Comrade von Vollmar, an opportunist in questions of tactics, also agrees with the old tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy and also confines himself mostly to declamations, petty amendments and sneers rather than openly advocating any definite "ministerial" tactics. Comrades Martov and Axelrod, opportunists in questions of organization, have also so far failed to produce, though directly challenged to do so, any definite statement of principles that could be "fixed by statute"; they too, would like, they most certainly

would like, a "radical revision" of our rules of organization (the *Iskra*, No. 58, p. 2, col. 3), but they would prefer to devote themselves first to "general problems of organization" (for a really radical revision of our Rules, which, in spite of § 1, are centralist rules, would inevitably lead, if carried out in the spirit of the new *Iskra*, to autonomism; and Comrade Martov, of course, does not like to admit even to himself that, *in principle*, his trend is towards autonomism). Their "principles" of organization therefore display all the colours of the rainbow: the predominant note is innocent and high-sounding declamations against autocracy and bureaucracy, against blind obedience and wheels and cogs—declamations that are so innocent that it is very, very difficult to discern in them what is really concerned with principle and what is really concerned with co-option. But the further you go, the worse it gets: attempts to analyse and precisely define this detestable "bureaucracy" inevitably lead to autonomism; attempts to "deepen" and justify inevitably lead to vindicating backwardness, to *khvostism*, to Girondist phrasemongering. At last there emerges the principle of *anarchism*, as the sole really definite principle, which for that reason stands out in practice in particular relief (practice is always in advance of theory). Sneering at discipline—autonomism—*anarchism*—there you have the ladder by which our opportunism in the sphere of organization now climbs and now descends, skipping from rung to rung and skilfully evading any definite statement of its principles.* Exactly the same stages are displayed by opportunism in questions of program and tactics—sneering at "orthodoxy," narrowness and immobility—revisionist "criticism" and ministerialism—bourgeois democracy.

* Those who recall the debate on § 1 will now clearly see that the mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod in connection with § 1 had *inevitably* to lead, when developed and deepened, to opportunism in matters of organization. Comrade Martov's initial idea—self-enrolment in the Party—was nothing but false "democracy," the idea of building the Party from the bottom upward. My idea, on the other hand was

There is a close psychological connection between this hatred of discipline and that incessant nagging note of *injury* which is to be detected in all the writings of all opportunists today in general, and of our minority in particular. They are being persecuted, hounded, ejected, besieged and bullied. There is far more psychological and political truth in these catchwords than was probably suspected even by the author of the pleasant and witty joke about bullies and bullied. For you have only to take the minutes of our Party Congress to see that the minority are all those who suffer from a sense of injury, all those who at one time or another and for one reason or another were offended by the revolutionary Social-Democrats. There are the Bundists and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites, whom we "offended" so badly that they withdrew from the Congress; there are the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ites, who were mortally offended by the slaughter of all organizations in general and of their own in particular; there is Comrade Makhov, who had to put up with offence every time he took the floor (for every time he did, he invariably made a fool of himself); and lastly, there are Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod, who were offended by the "false accusation of opportunism" in connection with § 1 of the Rules and by their defeat in the elections. All these mortal offences were not the accidental outcome of impermissible witticisms, rude behaviour, frenzied controversy, slamming of doors and shaking of fists, as so many philistines imagine to this day, but the inevitable political outcome of the whole three years' ideological work of the *Iskra*. If in the course of these three years we were not just wag-

"bureaucratic" in the sense that the Party was to be built from the top downward, from the Party Congress to the individual Party organizations. The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, anarchist phrasemongering, and opportunist, *khvostist* profundity were all to be discerned already in the debate on § 1. Comrade Martov says that "new ideas are beginning to be worked out" by the new *Iskra*. That is true in the sense that he and Axelrod are really pushing ideas in a new direction, beginning with § 1. The only trouble is that this direction is an opportunist one. The more they "work" in this direction the deeper will they sink in the mire.

ging our tongues, but giving expression to convictions which were to be transformed into deeds, we had to fight the anti-*Iskra*-ites and the "Marsh" at the Congress. And when, together with Comrade Martov, who had fought in the front line with vizor up, we had offended such heaps of people, very little remained, we had only to offend Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov ever so little, for the cup to overflow. Quantity was transformed into quality. The negation was negated. All the offended forgot their mutual squabbles, fell weeping into each other's arms, and raised the banner of "revolt against Leninism."*

A revolt is a splendid thing when it is the advanced elements who revolt against the reactionary elements. When the revolutionary wing revolts against the opportunist wing, it is a good thing. When the opportunist wing revolts against the revolutionary wing, it is a bad business.

Comrade Plekhanov is compelled to take part in this bad business in the capacity of a prisoner of war, so to speak. He tries to "vent his spleen" by fishing out isolated clumsy phrases by the author of some resolution in favour of the "majority," and exclaiming: "Poor Comrade Lenin! What fine orthodox supporters he has!" (The *Iskra*, No. 63, Supplement.)

Well, Comrade Plekhanov, all I can say is that if I am poor, the editors of the new *Iskra* are downright paupers. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached such utter destitution as to have to shut my eyes to the Party Congress and hunt for material for the exercise of my wit in the resolutions of committee men. However poor I may be, I am a thousand times better off than those whose supporters do not utter a clumsy phrase inadvertently, but on every issue—whether in relation to organization, tactics or program—stubbornly and steadfastly adhere to principles which are the very opposite of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy.

* This amazing expression is Comrade Martov's.

However poor I may be, I have not yet reached the stage where I have to *conceal from the public* the praises lavished on me by such supporters. And that is what the editors of the new *Iskra* have to do.

Reader, do you know what the Voronezh Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party stands for? If not, read the minutes of the Party Congress. You will learn from them that the line of that committee is fully expressed by Comrade Akimov and Comrade Brouckère, who at the Congress fought the revolutionary wing of the Party all along the line, and who scores of times were ranked as opportunists by everybody, from Comrade Plekhanov to Comrade Popov. Well, this Voronezh Committee, in its January leaflet (No. 12, January 1904), makes the following statement:

"A great and important event in the life of our steadily growing Party took place last year, when the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., a congress of the representatives of its organizations, was held. Convening a party congress is a very complicated business, and, under the monarchy, a dangerous and difficult one. It is therefore not surprising that it was carried out *in a far from perfect way*, and that the Congress itself, although it passed off without mishap, did not fulfil all the Party's expectations. The comrades whom the Conference of 1902 commissioned to convene the Congress were arrested, and *the Congress was arranged by persons who represented only one of the trends in Russian Social-Democracy, viz., the "Iskra"-ites*. Many organizations of Social-Democrats who did not happen to be *Iskra*-ites were not invited to take part in the work of the Congress; *this is one of the reasons why the task of drawing up a program and rules for the Party was carried out by the Congress in an extremely imperfect way*; the delegates themselves admit that there are important flaws in the rules 'which may lead to dangerous misunderstandings.' The *Iskra*-ites themselves split at the Congress, and many prominent workers in our R.S.D.L.P. who hitherto had appeared to be in full agreement with the *Iskra* program of action have admitted that many of its views, advocated *mainly by Lenin and Plekhanov*, are impracticable. Although the latter gained the upper hand at the Congress, the mistakes of the theoreticians are being quickly corrected by the forces of real life and the demands of real work, in which all the non-*Iskra*-ites are taking part and which, since the Congress, have introduced important amend-

ments. *The "Iskra" has undergone a profound change and promises to pay careful heed to the demands of all workers in the Social-Democratic movement generally. Thus, although the work of the Congress will have to be revised at the next Congress, and, as is obvious to the delegates themselves, was unsatisfactory, and therefore cannot be accepted by the Party as unimpeachable decisions*, the Congress has cleared up the situation inside the Party; has provided much material for the further theoretical and organizational work of the Party, and has been an experience of immense instructive value for the common work of the Party. The decisions of the Congress and the rules it has drawn up will be *taken into account* by all the organizations, but many will *refrain from being guided by them exclusively, in view of their obvious imperfections*.

"Fully realizing the importance of the common work of the Party, the Voronezh Committee actively *responded* in all matters concerning the organization of the Congress. It fully recognizes the importance of what has taken place at the Congress and *welcomes the change undergone by 'Iskra,'* which has become the Central Organ (chief organ).

"Although the state of affairs in the Party and in the Central Committee does not satisfy us *as yet*, we trust that by common effort the difficult work of organizing the Party will be perfected. In view of false rumours, the Voronezh Committee informs the comrades that there is no question of the Voronezh Committee leaving the Party. The Voronezh Committee realizes perfectly what a dangerous precedent might be created by the withdrawal of a workers' organization like the Voronezh Committee from the R.S.D.L.P., *what a reproach this would be to the Party*, and how disadvantageous it would be to workers' organizations which might follow this example. We must not cause new splits, but persistently strive to unite all class-conscious workers and Socialists in one party. Besides, the Second Congress was not a constituent congress, but an ordinary one. Expulsion from the Party can only be by decision of a Party court, and no organization, not even the Central Committee, has the right to expel any Social-Democratic organization from the Party. Furthermore, the Second Congress adopted paragraph 8 of the Rules, according to which every

organization is autonomous in its local affairs, and this *fully entitles the Voronezh Committee to put its views on organization into practice and advocate them in the Party.*"

The editors of the new *Iskra*, in quoting this leaflet in No. 61, reprinted the second half of this tirade, which we give here in large type; as for the first half, here printed in small type, the editors preferred to omit it.

They were ashamed.

R. A FEW WORDS ON DIALECTICS. TWO REVOLUTIONS

A general glance at the development of our Party crisis will readily show that in the main, with minor exceptions, the composition of the two contending sides remained unchanged throughout. It was a struggle between the revolutionary wing and the opportunist wing in our Party. But this struggle passed through the most varied stages, and anyone who wants to understand the vast amount of literature that has already been accumulated, the mass of fragmentary evidence, passages torn from their context, isolated accusations, and so on and so forth, must thoroughly familiarize himself with the peculiarities of each of these stages.

In each of these stages the circumstances of the struggle and the immediate object of attack are essentially different; each stage is, as it were, a separate battle in one general military campaign. Our struggle cannot be understood at all unless the concrete circumstances of each battle are studied. But once that is done we shall clearly find that the development does actually proceed dialectically, by way of contradictions: the minority becomes the majority, and the majority becomes the minority; each side passes from the defensive to the offensive, and from the offensive to the defensive; the starting of the ideological struggle (§ 1) is "negated"

and gives place to an all-pervading squabble;* but then begins the "negation of the negation," and, having found a way of living more or less in "peace and harmony" on the various central bodies, we return to the starting point, the purely ideological struggle; but by now this "thesis" has been enriched by all the results of the "antithesis" and has become a higher synthesis, in which the isolated, casual error in connection with § 1 has grown into a quasi-system of opportunist views on matters of organization, and in which the connection between this fact and the basic division of our Party into a revolutionary wing and an opportunist wing becomes increasingly apparent to all. In a word, not only do oats grow according to Hegel, but the Russian Social-Democrats war among themselves according to Hegel.

But the great Hegelian dialectics which Marxism made its own, having first turned it right side up again, must never be confused with the vulgar trick of justifying the zigzags of politicians who swing over from the revolutionary wing to the opportunist wing of the Party, or with the vulgar habit of lumping together distinct statements, the distinct incidents in the development of different stages of a single process. Genuine dialectics does not justify individual errors, but studies the inevitable turns, proving that they were inevitable by a detailed study of the process in all its concreteness. The basic principle of dialectics is that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete. . . . And, one thing more, the great Hegelian dialectics should never be confused with that vulgar worldly wisdom so well expressed by the Italian saying: *mettere la coda dove non va il capo* (sticking in the tail where the head will not go through).

The outcome of the dialectical development of our Party strug-

* The difficult problem of drawing a line between squabbling and a difference of principle now solves itself: all that relates to co-option is squabbling; all that relates to an analysis of the struggle at the Congress, to the dispute over § 1 and to the swing towards opportunism and anarchism is a difference of principle.

gle has been two revolutions. The Party Congress was a real revolution, as Comrade Martov justly remarked in his "Once More in the Minority." The wits of the minority are also right when they say: "The world moves in revolutions; well, we have made a revolution!" They did indeed make a revolution after the Congress; and it is true, too, that generally speaking the world does move in revolutions. But the concrete significance of each concrete revolution is not defined by this general aphorism; there are revolutions which are more like reaction, to paraphrase the unforgettable expression of the unforgettable Comrade Makhov. We must know whether it was the revolutionary wing or the opportunist wing of the Party which was the actual force that made the revolution, we must know whether it was revolutionary or opportunist principles that inspired the fighters, before we can determine whether the "world" (our Party) was moved forward or backward by any concrete revolution.

Our Party Congress was unique and unprecedented in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. For the first time a secret revolutionary party succeeded in emerging from the darkness of underground life into broad daylight, displaying to the world the whole course and outcome of the struggle within our Party, the whole nature of our Party and of each of its more or less noticeable sections in relation to program, tactics and organization. For the first time we succeeded in throwing off the traditions of circle looseness and revolutionary philistinism, in bringing together dozens of the most varied groups, many of which had been fiercely warring among themselves and had been linked together solely by the force of an idea and were prepared (in principle, that is) to sacrifice all their group aloofness and group independence for the sake of the great whole which we were for the first time actually creating—the Party. But in politics sacrifices are not obtained gratis, they have to be won in battle. The battle over the slaughter of the organizations was bound to be terribly fierce. The fresh breeze of free and open struggle blew into a gale. The gale swept away—and a good

thing that it did!—every conceivable remnant of the circle interests, sentiments and traditions without exception, and for the first time created authoritative bodies that were really Party bodies.

But it is one thing to call oneself something, and another to be it. It is one thing to sacrifice the circle system in principle for the benefit of the Party, and another to renounce one's own circle. The fresh breeze proved to be too fresh for those who were used to musty philistinism. "The Party was unable to stand the strain of its first congress," as Comrade Martov rightly put it (inadvertently) in his "Once More in the Minority." The sense of injury over the slaughter of the organizations was too strong. The furious gale raised all the mud from the bottom of our Party stream; and the mud took its revenge. The old hidebound circle spirit overpowered the newly born Party spirit. The opportunist wing of the Party, utterly routed though it had been, defeated—temporarily, of course—the revolutionary wing, having been accidentally reinforced by the Akimov windfall.

The result of all this is the new *Iskra*, which is compelled to develop and deepen the error its editors committed at the Party Congress. The old *Iskra* taught the truths of revolutionary struggle. The new *Iskra* teaches the worldly wisdom of yielding and living in harmony with everyone. The old *Iskra* was the organ of militant orthodoxy. The new *Iskra* treats us to a recrudescence of opportunism—chiefly on questions of organization. The old *Iskra* earned the honour of being detested by the opportunists, both Russian and West-European. The new *Iskra* has "grown wise" and will soon cease to be ashamed of the praises lavished on it by the extreme opportunists. The old *Iskra* marched unswervingly towards its goal, and there was no discrepancy between its word and its deed. The inherent falsity of the position of the new *Iskra* inevitably leads—independently even of anyone's will or intention—to political hypocrisy. It cries out against the circle spirit in order to conceal the victory of the circle spirit over the Party spirit. It pharisaically

condemns splits, as if one can imagine any way of avoiding splits in any at all organized party except by the subordination of the minority to the majority. It says that heed must be paid to revolutionary public opinion, yet, while keeping dark the praises of the Akimovs, it indulges in petty scandal-mongering about the committees of the revolutionary wing of the Party! How shameful! How they have disgraced our old *Iskra*!

One step forward, two steps back.... It happens in the lives of individuals, and it happens in the history of nations and in the development of parties. It would be criminal cowardice to doubt even for a moment the inevitable and complete triumph of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy, of proletarian organization and Party discipline. We have already won a great deal, and we must go on fighting, undeterred by reverses, fighting steadfastly, scorning the philistine methods of circle scrapping, doing our very utmost to preserve the single party tie among all the Russian Social-Democrats which has been established at the cost of so much effort, and striving by dint of stubborn and systematic work to make all Party members, and the workers in particular, fully and intelligently acquainted with the duties of Party members, with the struggle at the Second Party Congress, with all the causes and all the stages of our disagreements, and with the utter disastrousness of opportunism, which, in the sphere of organization, as in the sphere of our program and our tactics, helplessly surrenders to the bourgeois psychology, uncritically adopts the point of view of bourgeois democracy, and blunts the weapon of the class struggle of the proletariat.

In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organization. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the "lower depths" of utter destitution, savagery and degeneration, the proletariat can become, and inevitably will become, an invincible force only when its ideological

unification by the principles of Marxism is consolidated by the material unity of an organization which will weld millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the decrepit rule of Russian tsardom, nor the senile rule of international capital will be able to withstand this army. Its ranks will become more and more serried, in spite of all zigzags and backward steps, in spite of the opportunist phrasemongering of the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy, in spite of the smug praise of the antiquated circle spirit, and in spite of the tinsel and fuss of *intellectual* anarchism.

First published
as a separate pamphlet
in May 1904, Geneva

THE ESSENTIALS OF LENIN

New 2 volume edition

This new selection from the works of V. I. Lenin, in two volumes, presents all the most important aspects of his thought in a compact and easily assimilable form.

The works included have been chosen and arranged in such a way as to provide not only a historical commentary on the events of the Russian Revolution, but also to give a basis for the understanding of Marxism and Leninism in its living development in theory and practice.

Large Demy 8vo.

1,500 pp.

12s. 6d. each volume.

LAWRENCE & WISHART