L. FOTIEVA

PAGES FROM LENIN'S LIFE

RECOLLECTIONS OF LENIN'S SECRETARY

Lydia Fotieva worked as Lenin's secretary and secretary of the Council of People's Commissars for five years.

She first met Lenin in emigration in 1904, when she came to Geneva to work in the Russian Bolshevik group. She assisted N. K. Krupskaya (Lenin's wife) in maintaining a secret correspondence with underground Bolshevik organizations in Russia.

L. Fotieva worked immediately under the leader of the October Revolution during the turbulent years of setting up the young Soviet republic. She saw Lenin daily and followed his activities from the first meetings of the C.P.C. in 1918 in Moscow till 1923 when Lenin became bedridden with his grave illness.

In this book L. Fotieva has put down her observations and impressions, sincerely, vividly and stirringly.

The reader sees the living Lenin—the great thinker and revolutionary, founder and builder of the young proletarian state, who was at the same time a modest, approachable and considerate man, loved by the masses.

Fotieva's recollections cover meetings with Lenin in Geneva and Paris, and his work in the C.P.C. She describes his way of working, and his Kremlin study where he spent his days, packed with activity. There are stirring pages telling of the attempt made on Lenin's life in August 1918, and the months of Lenin's illness (1922-23) given in diary form.

Lydia Fotieva ends her recollections with these words:

"The world has not known another leader to equal Lenin in the confidence and devotion he enjoyed among the people."

L. FOTIEVA

PAGES FROM LENIN'S LIFE

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DESIGNED BY Y. KOPYLOV

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MEETINGS WITH V. I. LENIN IN GENEVA AND PARIS

Early in the spring of 1904 I was released from the Perm jail for "lack of evidence" after a seven-month term of imprisonment, shared with my brother and other comrades accused of belonging to the Perm Social-Democratic organization. Upon my release I immediately resumed my revolutionary work. Within a month, however, it became clear that I would be arrested again, and so my Perm comrades helped me to get out of the country. They gave me a conspiratorial address in Samara, whence I was directed to Suvalki, a small frontier town, where arrangements were to be made to get me across the border.

The actual crossing of the border was surprisingly simple and only cost 15 rubles. A good share of the money went to the commander of the frontier post, while all that the young soldier on duty at the border itself received was 20 kopeks for a bottle of vodka, as my guide told me. We crossed a small stream and in a matter of minutes found ourselves on German soil. My guide took me as far as Goldap, a small German town, where I was to find a certain German Social-Democrat, a tailor, whose address was given me by my comrades in Suvalki. I spent the night at his place, and the next morning, the tailor having provided me with a train ticket, I left for Berlin and thence for Geneva.

I did not meet Lenin directly upon coming to Geneva. When I arrived at the address in Rue de Carouge

given me I was received by V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich[1] whom I took for Lenin at first. He introduced himself and told me that Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna[2] were not in Geneva just then but were soon expected back.

Bonch-Bruyevich was very nice to me and offered me work at the Bolshevik Party literature dispatch office, which he managed on appointment by the Central Committee. The office was also in Rue de Carouge. There I met V. M. Velichkina (Bonch-Bruyevich), M. N. Lyadov and his wife L. P. Mandelstam, F. F. Ilyin, the Lepeshinskys, and many other Bolshevik Party workers. They were good comrades and fine people; apart from the pleasure of associating with them I benefited greatly by our acquaintanceship because it helped me to grasp the complexities of the situation in which the community of political emigrants was then living.

Until I came to Geneva I had no clear idea of what really constituted the difference of opinion between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks and the scale it had assumed. But even the little that did come through to us made us side with the Bolsheviks. And so I arrived at Geneva fully in sympathy with the Bolsheviks, though this was dictated perhaps by instinct rather than by proper understanding, and became one of them at once. And only there, in Geneva, reading Party literature which I pounced on greedily—especially

[1] V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich (1873-1955)—veteran Bolshevik. From 1903 was in charge of the dispatch office of the C.C. R.S.D.L.P. in Geneva. From the first days of the October Revolution until 1920—Administrative Manager of the Council of People's Commissars.—*Ed.*

[2] Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya (1869-1939). One of the oldest members of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin's wife and companion.—*Ed.*

Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*—and talking to the older comrades, did I come to a full understanding of the depth and irreconcilability of the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks.

The ideological unscrupulousness of the Mensheviks' stand determined their line of conduct both in Russia and in the communities of political emigrants abroad. In the press and at meetings they piled calumny on the Bolsheviks and accused Lenin of assuming a dictatorial stand, of striving to seize absolute power in the Party, of bonapartism and of all the mortal sins rolled into one; they practised deceit on Russian Party organizations, attempted to break meetings arranged by the Bolsheviks in Geneva, and juggled with the votes when resolutions were passed at these meetings. In short, they stirred up endless wrangles, and created petty factional squabbles which were at times unbearable. The Mensheviks went for every worker arriving from Russia in an effort to lure him to their side and even resorted to demagogy to achieve their ends.

So that was how complicated, strained and difficult the situation in the Geneva emigrant community was in the summer of 1904; and I was plunged into it the moment I arrived. Shortly afterwards, Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna returned to Geneva. They made a tremendous impression on me. Their unassuming manner and humaneness were amazing. I was struck by Vladimir Ilyich's peculiar sort of discernment. He seemed to see through everyone.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna was in charge of the confidential correspondence with Bolshevik committees and other Bolshevik organizations. In her memoirs she says that during the campaign for the convocation of the Third Congress[1] she had to write as many as

[1] The Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was held in London in April and May 1905. The Bolsheviks

300 letters a month. She suggested that I assist her in this work, and I gladly agreed.

I came to love Nadezhda Konstantinovna through working with her. She was a splendid person, always equable, composed and friendly, always solicitous for others and ever ready to help her comrades. Nadezhda Konstantinovna possessed great theoretical knowledge and considerable experience in Party work. While living abroad she devoted all her abilities to the big and important job of corresponding with illegal Party organizations in Russia, which she was engaged in day in day out under the immediate guidance and on direct instructions of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna opened and read the mail addressed to Lenin from Russia, and kept him fully informed of how matters stood in our illegal organizations. With her thorough knowledge of the cadres of professional revolutionaries, her ability to docket the comrades' names and Party nicknames in her mind, and gauge the true worth of every Party worker, she was Lenin's best assistant.

Corresponding with Russia was a very difficult and intricate job. The procedure was as follows: each incoming letter had to be studied and "developed," the coded part decoded and written out. In answer, a letter that would not rouse the suspicions of the secret police was written in ordinary ink with the more confidential part coded and traced between the lines by chemical means. Mistakes in the coding of the incoming letters were not infrequent, and much time and effort had to be spent deciphering them. There were also cases when

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were fighting for the summoning of the congress without delay in view of the fact that the Mensheviks' disorganizing activity made it difficult to unite the Party and to work out unified Marxist tactics in conditions of the revolutionary situation developing in Russia.—*Ed.*

the loss of a letter in the mail or the disclosure of an organization necessitated the use of a new, unfamiliar code, and then we had a hard time identifying it. Sometimes the chemically written lines could not be developed, and it was necessary to ask for a repetition of the letter through the Personal column.

Lenin gave his keen attention to the correspondence with Russia. The letters were either drafted by Nadezhda Konstantinovna in his name or written by Lenin himself. During my stay in Geneva, I helped Nadezhda Konstantinovna with the technicalities of the routine work.

One could hardly overestimate the importance of Lenin's letters for the Party committees in Russia. They rallied and united the committees under a common guidance, and were impatiently awaited and eagerly read by the Bolsheviks working underground in Russia.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna also helped Vladimir Ilyich to word the Personal column messages, which were of extreme importance in our work where secrecy had to be preserved. Laconic in form and worded so that the addressee alone could understand them, these messages gave directions and suggestions, requested information, acknowledged the receipt of letters or queried answers long overdue, stated failure to decode such and such a letter, etc. In the period (November 1903 to the end of 1904) when the Bolsheviks had no paper of their own there was nowhere to print the messages, but once the newspaper *Vperyod*[1] began to

[1] After the Party had split into the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks at the Second Congress, the newspaper *Iskra* (the first all-Russian illegal paper of the revolutionary Marxists founded and directed by Lenin) was seized by the Mensheviks and as from the 52nd number (October 19, 1903) became their organ. Later, the Bolsheviks started their own newspaper *Vperyod*, which came out in Geneva from January to May 1905 (18 numbers in all). For more details see pages 19-22 of this book.—*Ed.*

come out they appeared in almost every number. Sometimes the Personal column was very long; for instance, in the 9th number of *Vperyod* it took up 29 lines. The following, not very large column appearing in the 15th number of *Vperyod* on April 21, 1905, is cited as an example:

"*Nata* Letter not developed, solution too weak.... *Spitsa* Letter containing resolution cannot be developed. *Kolya* Letter by bearer and addresses received. *Vladimir* Letter received, thanks. *Odessa* "To a provincial." Your letter is very interesting. Continue writing. *T-ra* Letters Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 received. Nos. 2 and 3 in two copies. Repeat address for letters. *Lola* Have you received the money and the letter? *Anton* Letter received. *P.S.* Third address good enough. *Author of protest against "Iskra."* Thanks, but it's hardly worth printing; you can't respond to every small thing. *S.S.D.* Letter and resolution received. *Antonina* Receiving regularly."

I used to come to Nadezhda Konstantinovna early every morning and work with her for the better part of the day. They had a small two-room flat with one window in each room in Rue de David; Nadezhda Konstantinovna's mother, Yelizaveta Vasilyevna, a very nice old lady, shared it with them. She had hardly ever lived apart from her daughter, and remained with her till the day of her death. Vladimir Ilyich was very good to her, and Yelizaveta Vasilyevna for her part adored him.

The family lived very modestly. Yelizaveta Vasilyevna kept house for them, did all the marketing, cooking and cleaning. She had a placid nature, never fussed, and took motherly care of both Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Vladimir Ilyich. Nadezhda Konstantinovna helped her with the housekeeping whenever she could snatch a moment from her work. She often told me that it was not the work of keeping house that

irked her—that in itself was not so bad—but the need to waste thought on it.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna and her mother had one of the too rooms, and Vladimir Ilyich the other. The flat was very frugally furnished, like that of an ordinary worker. Vladimir Ilyich's room had an iron bedstead with a bast mattress, a small table and two or three chairs. In this room he received comrades arriving from Russia and held conversations with them. For his own work, however, he preferred to use the public library at the Société de lecture where the facilities were very good. He would leave for the library early in the morning, come home for dinner and go back to work again until supper or evening tea. As far as I can remember, they had dinner at four in the afternoon. I sometimes stayed and had dinner with them and even supper when we were particularly busy. I treasure those days among my dearest memories. As a rule Vladimir Ilyich was in high spirits and fond of a joke; he would tease Yelizaveta Vasilyevna by saying that the worst penalty for bigamy was giving a man two mothers-in-law. Vladimir Ilyich did not talk about our work either at dinner or tea; he was a hearty eater, but never finicky and, in fact, it did not seem to make much difference to him what he ate.

I enjoyed the family's peculiar sort of comradely harmony, which was based on devotion to high ideals, community of interests, mutual trust and respect.

I usually had my meals at the dining-room run by the Lepeshinskys,[1] as did most of the Russian political emigrants. They kept coming and going from morning till night. It was actually a Bolshevik club. People went there to meet their comrades, share the latest news,

[1] Panteleimon and Olga Lepeshinsky—veteran Bolsheviks. In the years 1903-1905 they worked in the Geneva group of Bolshevik emigrants.—*Ed.*

debate a point, play a game of chess or listen to a report. Comrades arriving from Russia made the Lepeshinskys' their first port of call. There was a hired piano there, and in the evenings we often listened to S. I. Gusev sing or P. A. Krasikov play the violin. I supplied the piano accompaniment for both of them, and sometimes played a solo piece. Vladimir Ilyich came too, sometimes. Gusev, who was one of the most active Bolsheviks and a delegate to the Second Party Congress, had a beautiful baritone and a fine sense of music. Vladimir Ilyich liked to hear him sing romances by Dargomyzhsky, Rubinstein and Chaikovsky.

Of the piano pieces which I played, Vladimir Ilyich's favourite was Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata. Once, after hearing me play it, Vladimir Ilyich came up to me and said: "You must study." The words astonished me, and I thought: "So it's allowed!" As a young girl I read a lot of Pisarev,[1] and there was one sentence that impressed itself upon my mind. It went, I recall, as follows: "A society that pursues the study of art so long as it has even one illiterate member is like a savage who goes about naked but wears gold bracelets on his arms." The thought struck me forcibly, and although I had passed with honours on to the last course of the conservatoire where I was then studying, I left it and entered Bestuzhev Courses[2] instead. And now —Lenin of all people—told me that I should study. However, it was not until about ten years later that I could take up music again.

[1] D. I. Pisarev (1840-1868)—outstanding Russian revolutionary democrat, materialist philosopher, publicist and literary critic. —*Ed.*

[2] *Bestuzhev Courses*—higher educational establishment for women, founded in Petersburg in 1878 by a circle of progressive intellectuals. There were two faculties: literature and history, and physics and mathematics. The institute was called after its principal K. Bestuzhev-Ryumin, a professor of history.—*Ed.*

Krasikov gave a good violin performance of simple pieces like Braga's "Serenade" and Raff's "Cavatina." He arrived in Geneva in late June after large arrests in Moscow which he managed to escape. I saw him first when he was walking from the station with P. N. Lepeshinsky. He was carrying a small suitcase and a violin case. The notion of a professional revolutionary, who had slipped out of the clutches of sleuths and gendarmes, and illegally crossed the border with a violin in his hand struck me as very queer. He had many interesting things to tell us about the Second Party Congress to which he had been a delegate, about work in Russia, and about Siberia where he was born and bred. He came out well in polemics with the Mensheviks, cleverly locating their weakest spots and dealing well-aimed blows; he had a quick, resourceful and reasonably stinging wit. Little wonder, therefore, that the Mensheviks disliked him so, and that one of his Party nicknames was "Shpilka" ("Hairpin").

We sometimes spent our evenings at the Landolt café, where a small room with a private exit into a side street was kept for the exclusive use of Russian political emigrants. We would sit and chat there of an evening over a glass of beer, debating or playing chess. The Landolt was frequented only by the Bolsheviks, at least I personally never met a single Menshevik there. I mostly played chess with Gusev, while Krasikov looked on, distracting us terribly. Occasionally Vladimir Ilyich would come in too for a game of chess. Sometimes Maria Ilyinichna and I spent an hour or two there together.

Maria Ilyinichna Ulyanova,[1] came to Geneva in late September or early October 1904, soon after her re-

[1] Maria Ilyinichna Ulyanova (1878-1937)—one of the oldest members of the Bolshevik Party, a journalist by profession, was the sister of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.—*Ed.*

lease from jail. A close friendship, that proved lifelong, sprang up between us from the moment we met. In 1905 I often saw her in Petersburg in connection with revolutionary work. After the October Revolution, when the Soviet Government moved to Moscow, Maria Ilyinichna made her home with Vladimir Ilyich; a close friendship existed between them, and her love for him was boundless. During those years we saw one another every day. Maria Ilyinichna told me what good care Vladimir Ilyich took of her. On wet days, he saw to it that she wore her galoshes, and if she happened to look tired he would ask her if she was not "super-weary," in his own joking manner. One day in winter I came across Vladimir Ilyich and Maria Ilyinichna taking a stroll in the Kremlin grounds. Maria Ilyinichna and I started a game of snowballs; we laughed and played on until my shots had snowed her coat collar under. Vladimir Ilyich then came up to her and with fond care brushed the snow off so that it should not trickle down her neck.

She and Nadezhda Konstantinovna nursed Vladimir Ilyich during his illness, and never left his side till he drew his last breath. A professional revolutionary, selflessly devoted to the Party, Maria Ilyinichna dedicated her whole life and strength to revolutionary work, and actually burnt herself out on it. In the first days of June, 1937, she suddenly fell ill and died without regaining consciousness on the 13th of the same month.

Maria Ilyinichna (whose Party nickname was "Bear Cub") and I often went for bicycle rides in the country around Geneva, and sometimes Vladimir Ilyich accompanied us. One evening, the three of us were riding across country, on the outskirts of the town, along a narrow path with shallow ditches running on both sides of it. Vladimir Ilyich took the lead, with myself

following and Maria Ilyinichna bringing up the rear. The path ran slightly downhill. I had only just learned to ride a bicycle, and had no idea that such things as the rear wheel brake even existed. The front wheel brake refused to work, and I was quite helpless while my bicycle gathered speed, rapidly catching up with Vladimir Ilyich. I shouted to him that I was almost on him, he turned round and, seeing the danger, swerved into the ditch. He managed to jump off in time, but his bicycle hit the ditch and the handle-bars were so badly bent that it could not be ridden any more. The fact that Vladimir Ilyich did not so much as breathe a word of reproach or annoyance, made me feel even angrier with myself for losing my presence of mind and not thinking of swerving into the ditch before he did. Joking and laughing at my prowess, he led us to a bench outside a nearby church, from which came the sounds of a harmonium. We sat there for a while, listening to the music; then we picked up our bicycles and started back to town on foot.

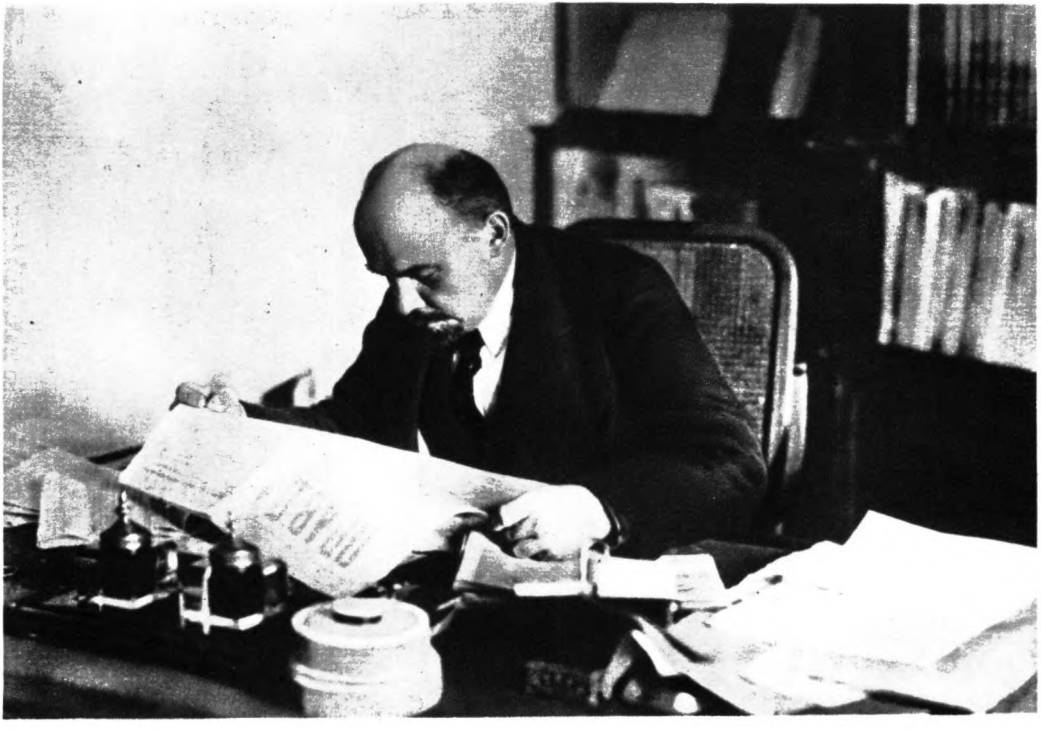
Vladimir Ilyich enjoyed those out-of-town bicycle rides which he usually took with his wife. They at least gave him some sort of respite from the nerve-racking atmosphere created by increasingly strained relations with the Mensheviks.

P. N. Lepeshinsky's well-known caricatures helped to relieve the nervous tension for a time. In June the Menshevik paper *Iskra* carried an article by Martov entitled "Forward or Back?" aimed against Lenin's book *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. Martov proclaimed that Lenin was a political corpse, and gave his article the sub-title "In Lieu of a Funeral Oration." Lepeshinsky came back at once with a caricature "How the Mice Buried the Cat," one of the best he ever drew. He gave the mice a near-portrait likeness of the prominent Mensheviks—Martov, Dan, Potressov

and others. The verses to go with it were aptly borrowed from the ending to Zhukovsky's tale "The War of Mice and Frogs." The caricature was passed around the whole of Geneva. People memorized the lines, repeating them again and again, and this made the Bolsheviks laugh and the Mensheviks rant and rave. The caricature lashed out at the Mensheviks with laughter, a deadly weapon against which they were helpless.

In that tense situation the absence of our own Bolshevik newspaper was becoming more and more intolerable. In July, when the composition of the Central Committee underwent a change owing to the arrest of some of the members, the ones remaining at liberty assumed a conciliatory attitude, co-opted three more conciliators to the committee and published a statement (the so-called July Declaration, printed in the 72nd number of *Iskra* of August 25, 1904), in which they insisted upon a reconciliation with the Mensheviks and spoke emphatically against summoning the Third Party Congress or agitating for it. At the same time Lenin, who was the representative of the Central Committee abroad, was suspended from the management of the Central Committee's affairs abroad, and forbidden to publish anything without first getting it approved by the entire board of the Central Committee.

An attack was also launched against the dispatch office of the R.S.D.L.P. of which V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich was in charge. The Central Committee forbade Bolshevik literature to be circulated and mailed to Russia, and demanded that Menshevik literature be circulated instead. One conflict sprang up after another. This state of affairs was extremely trying for the whole Bolshevik group in Geneva. It was particularly hard on Vladimir Ilyich, because he realized more clearly than anyone



Lenin in his study in the Kremlin. October 1918

Lenin. September 1918

else that all this was causing a pointless dissipation of strength and the disorganization of all the Party work in Russia, at a time, moreover, when the growth of the revolutionary movement in the country called for a mustering of all our Party's forces.

It was clear to Vladimir Ilyich and his closest comrades that the dissentient "July Declaration" of the Central Committee could not be left unanswered. And that was what prompted the calling of a meeting of the group of the Bolsheviks then residing in Geneva, which came to be known as the "Meeting of the 22." The meeting discussed and approved the appeal "To the Party" written by V. I. Lenin. From the first word to the last the address was imbued with an ardent faith in the strength of the Party, so much in character with Lenin, in the Party's ability to overcome the crisis and, in spite of all adversity, find the right path.

The meeting was held out of town, somewhere on the outskirts of Geneva, I cannot recall exactly what building it was in, but I do remember that it was held in a biggish hall on the first floor. I do not remember the names of all those present at the meeting. I came to know many Bolshevik underground workers in the summer of 1904 in Geneva, among them: Lunacharsky, Bogdanov, Malinin, Vorovsky, Karpinsky, the Ilyins, the Pervukhins, and others. I cannot tell for certain who arrived in Geneva prior to the meeting and therefore took part in it, and who came later. Among those present I distinctly remember Vladimir Ilyich, Nadezhda Konstantinovna, V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich, V. M. Velichkina, the Lepeshinskys, Lyadovs, Pervukhins, P. A. Krasikov, S. I. Gusev and Liza Knuniants.

The appeal "To the Party" explained the necessity for the immediate summoning of the Third Party Con-

gress as the only possible way out of the crisis, and called upon the Party organizations to launch a campaign for the congress. The document played a tremendous role in the work of Bolshevik Party committees in Russia, and provided them with a battle weapon, a programme in their campaign to summon the Third Party Congress. In October, on Lenin's initiative, a Bureau of Committees of the Majority[1] was formed in Russia for the preparation and summoning of the Third Congress. The thought of starting a Bolshevik newspaper took ever stronger hold of Vladimir Ilyich and his closest comrades. The Bolshevik Publishers ("V. Bonch-Bruyevich and N. Lenin") put out a number of pamphlets written by Lenin, Olminsky, Vorovsky, Lyadov, Bogdanov and others, for mailing to Russia. But that was obviously not enough. What was needed was a regular leading newspaper that would maintain close ties with Party organizations and give a quick response to events in the revolutionary life in Russia.

Extreme nervous overstrain forced Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna to leave Geneva and take a rest. From about the middle of July to the middle of September they stayed in a village near Lac de Bré, and went on walking tours in the mountains. Throughout the summer months, particularly in August, Vladimir Ilyich kept in close touch with those foreign agents of the Central Committee who had remained in Geneva: V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich, M. N. Lya-

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[1] *Bureau of Committees of the Majority*—the Bolsheviks'[2] organizational centre, formed for the preparation and summoning of the Third Party Congress. The necessity to form such a centre arose from the Mensheviks seizing the leading Party organs and the consequent aggravation of the struggle within the Party.—*Ed.*

[2] The word Bolshevik is a derivative of Bolshinstvo, meaning "majority" in Russian.—*Tr.*

dov and P. N. Lepeshinsky. He directed them in their work, and through them received mail from Russia.

Evidently, the plan for starting a Bolshevik newspaper had by then taken definite shape in Vladimir Ilyich's mind. In her memoirs, Nadezhda Konstantinovna says that she and Vladimir Ilyich spent August in a remote little village near Lac de Bré with Bogdanov, Olminsky and Pervukhin. It was there they came to an agreement with Bodganov about the plan of literary work, and tentatively arranged to publish their own paper abroad and promote agitation for a congress in Russia.

The same thing was said indirectly in a letter I received late in August from Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna. Vladimir Ilyich asked me to send the letter to "all *our friends* in Russia as soon as possible (preferably today)." The text of the letter which had to be sent to Russia, written in Vladimir Ilyich's hand, followed. "Please start collecting and posting all kinds of correspondence to our addresses marked 'For Lenin' immediately. Money is also needed badly (marked the same). Events are coming to a head. The minority are clearly preparing an action by collusion with part of the Central Committee. We are expecting the worst. More details coming in the next few days." Vladimir Ilyich went on to repeat that the letter had to be posted immediately. Further down, in Nadezhda Konstantinovna's hand, I was given ten addresses to which the letter had to be sent, with a postscript by Vladimir Ilyich adding "and to the addresses of all our friends who can be relied upon entirely."[1] Vladimir Ilyich was evidently collecting the correspondence as material for the new Bolshevik newspaper. The reason why it could not be started was lack of

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XV*, pp. 120-121.

funds. However, in November, V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich succeeded in coming to terms with a certain French firm to supply the paper and do the printing on credit, and M. N. Lyadov managed to secure some money to cover immediate expenses. Besides, there were expectations of money coming in eventually from the sale of the newspapers abroad and in Russia.

That was good enough to put the planning of the newspaper on a business-like, practical footing. In view of this, a meeting of the Bolshevik group was held in Geneva early in December 1904. A final decision was reached on the publication of the new newspaper, the name *Vperyod* was unanimously agreed on, and the wording of the announcement proposed by V. I. Lenin approved. In addition, routine editorial matters were decided on, and an editorial board including Lenin, Vorovsky, Olminsky and Lunacharsky established. There was an atmosphere of elation at the meeting, for at long last things had started moving. I was present at the meeting, and I saw how happily excited Vladimir Ilyich was. Nor was he alone in this: everyone seemed to feel a weight lifted off their backs.

The endorsement of the appeal "To the Party" raised the spirits of the Bolsheviks but it did not relieve the tension. Not a single meeting at which the Bolsheviks made reports passed without the Mensheviks starting trouble. I remember a meeting, called by the Bolsheviks to hear the reading of a paper, which almost ended in a fight. The Mensheviks interfered with the proceedings and attempted to seize our cash-box. We left that meeting feeling rotten, and Krasikov, Gusev and myself together with some other comrades spent the rest of the night pacing the streets of Geneva, furious and indignant, our nerves strained to breaking point.

The last time I heard Vladimir Ilyich in Geneva was

at the Café Caserne where he read his paper entitled "The Zemstvo Campaign and *Iskra*'s Plan."

In his paper, Lenin criticized the letter addressed by the *Iskra* editors to Party organizations ("For Party Members") published in November 1904. In this letter, the Mensheviks advanced a regular plan for launching a political campaign to bring influence to bear on the liberal bourgeoisie, who were soliciting for a constitution. The Mensheviks proposed organizing mass manifestations of workers to lend courage to the liberal bourgeoisie. They offered support to the liberal constitutional movement instead of to workers' demonstrations with revolutionary demands.

Lenin exposed the Mensheviks as toadies of the bourgeoisie who were striving to subordinate the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, and in their zeal to serve the latter even going so far as to demand a "lessening of the proletariat's courage." Not compromise with the liberal bourgeoisie, but mass pressure on the government—that was how Lenin defined the immediate aims of the proletariat's struggle. Life itself very soon proved how right Lenin's line was. During the Revolution of 1905-1907 the liberal bourgeoisie exposed itself as a counter-revolutionary force. Vladimir Ilyich read his paper with great feeling. As we put it, he made mincemeat of the Mensheviks. They were really beside themselves with rage. Vladimir Ilyich's paper was printed in pamphlet form and sent to Russia.

On January 4, 1905, to the joy of all of us, the first number of *Vperyod* came out at long last. I was in Paris when my copy reached me.

In December 1904, Vladimir Ilyich sent P. A. Krasikov to Paris in order to consolidate the Russian Bolshevik group there of which Krasikov was appointed secretary. About two weeks later I moved to Paris too. My first impression was staggering. The huge city with

its seething street life, its numerous historical monuments, museums, the Louvre, the Luxembourg, exhibitions of paintings and sculpture at the Salon.... It was all new and fascinating. But soon my first impressions lost their glamour and the vast, crowded city began to give me a feeling of emptiness and nostalgia. The Russian emigrant community was very small. Of the older comrades who had spent long years in Paris there was Filatov, and of the younger ones I remember comrades Ber, Inber, Nadya Shevelina and Rachel Rivlin.

Unlike Geneva, the organizational fight was not as tense in Paris, and clashes with the Mensheviks were rarer. But then there was none of that pulse-beat of Russian revolutionary life so clearly felt in Geneva; there was no Lenin to whom the threads of Russia's Party organizations were irresistibly drawn.

In the main, our connection with Geneva was kept up through letters exchanged with Maria Ilyinichna. She wrote at length, passing on information received from Russia and telling us what was happening in Geneva; she supplied us with literature, including pamphlets issued by the Geneva Bolshevik Publishers, and copies of the newspaper *Vperyod* for the Paris group and for forwarding to Russia "in envelopes." From time to time one of the comrades would come from Geneva bringing literature and paintings (copies) on the backs of which Bolshevik printed matter was cleverly pasted in for dispatch to Russia. In those days that printed matter was put out on very thin paper, no thicker than cigarette paper, which made it considerably easier to get it into the country. Among those who came to Paris were Vorovsky, Bonch-Bruyevich, Lunacharsky, Essen ("Baron" and his brother "Boer") and others.

In one of her letters to me in January or February 1905, Maria Ilyinichna told me of the not very good

state of affairs in some of the Party organizations in Russia, and expressed the hope that *Vperyod* would change matters there. It was important to send more people to Russia. Maria Ilyinichna wrote that there was hope of securing some money, but so far none had materialized.

"In Petersburg, they say, some 17 Mensheviks were apprehended. Things are not going badly in Odessa. Uncle is there now (L. M. Knipovich—*L.F.*). About 14 Mensheviks have arrived there. Uncle has formed a propaganda group of eight—4 Mensheviks and 4 Bolsheviks, but it seems that everything is pointing to the formation of separate Menshevik and Bolshevik committees everywhere because of the split.

"And here is our local Geneva news: Martov read a paper on liberalism and socialism. It was terribly poor and pointless, as though intended for an audience of first-form children. Any sort of polemics or new plans for the new *Iskra* were meticulously avoided, so much so that Voinov (A. V. Lunacharsky—*L.F.*) who had intended to speak, could not take the floor no matter how much he wanted to, because there was nothing to oppose.... Our people have formed a number of circles—organizational, agitators', propaganda and technical. Things are going at a lively pace, minutes of meetings are kept. So far the work is interesting and fruitful, I don't know about later...."

Maria Ilyinichna said she was hoping we would manage the job of dispatching literature in envelopes efficiently. "It would mean a great deal, especially since it appears that in the other communities this is managed very badly. Leipzig, of which we were very hopeful, is busy sending *Iskra* in the main (!!). London is locked in silence, and so on and so forth." Next, Maria Ilyinichna asked for a list of all the addresses where Bolshevik literature was being sent from Paris and also,

if we kept records of it, what was being sent where. She promised to give us some new addresses as well. "The important thing," she said, "is to see that they are made use of."

Even from a city as large as Paris, literature in envelopes or other printed matter could only be mailed in small batches—no more than one or two parcels a day—to avoid trouble at the frontier. Today one can hardly appreciate the importance of that regular, daily dispatch of "envelopes" and, consequently, the receipt in Russia of new numbers of the leading Party newspaper with articles in it by Lenin. Making these "small shipments" was a very important part of our work in Paris. We carried it out to the best of our ability. We also arranged evenings with refreshments, with any profit made going into our Party cash-box, and held lectures and talks for which we collected an entrance fee, and so on.

The events of January 9[1] stirred the whole emigrant community. We were in a fever of impatience for more news from Russia. Night after night a crowd of us roamed the Grands Boulevards of Paris, flooded with light. From time to time we dropped into the newspaper offices to see if any new telegrams had come in from Russia. We felt we could not part company with one another, we could not stay indoors calmly or sleep. Our nostalgia for Russia was stronger than ever, but we could not go back then.

A few days later we attended a meeting at the Grand Hall of the Trocadéro Palace, where Jaurès made a speech about the events of January 9. The hall which admitted fully 10,000 people was packed. Jaurès walked

[1] *9 January 9 (Old Style) 1905*—the day on which the tsarist government shot down a peaceful demonstration of St. Petersburg workers who were bringing a petition to the tsar. The day marks the beginning of the first Russian revolution.—*Ed.*

quickly up and down the stage, he almost ran about; he made his speech in the French oratorical singsong manner, with great pathos, as if reciting a poem. It fell strangely on the Russian ear, but his ardent speech so excited the audience that when he finished everyone, to a man, joined in a rousing shout that went on for several minutes: "Assassin Nicholas! Assassin Nicholas!" The effect was very stirring, but on leaving the palace we saw the mounted police lined up in front of the entrance. The French Constitution allowed its citizens to get as noisy and excited as they pleased and to make revolutionary speeches so long as they were inside closed premises, but out of doors they had to behave themselves.... The crowd of ten thousand poured out into the street in a calm, unhurried stream, and everyone went his own way.

For several nights running after that we went around with a collection "In Aid of the Victims of January 9" at various recitals and concerts. French men and women made ready contributions.

The position of the Bolsheviks in Russia became increasingly stronger with the appearance and circulation of the Bolshevik paper *Vperyod*. Local committees were getting a clearer understanding of the ideological differences between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, which the former were striving to slur over with unscrupulous squabbles, disorganization and misinformation of the Russian committees. The Mensheviks, on the other hand, were losing their positions step by step. They clamoured that the congress was certain to lead to a split.

On March 12, 1905, the conciliatory Central Committee in Russia, taking into account the situation in Russian Party organizations which demanded with growing insistence the summoning of the congress, came to an agreement with the Bureau of Committees

of the Majority and, jointly with it, published an appeal "To the Party" stating that they had arrived at a decision concerning the joint organization of the congress. The last paragraph of this decision stated: "The resolution of the Council of the Party[1] against the summoning of the Third Party Congress published in *Iskra* No. 89, is not accepted by the Central Committee and the B.C.M. (Bureau of Committees of the Majority. —*Ed.*) as grounds for halting the work of organizing the congress." This meant a moral victory for the Bolsheviks, a victory of Party principle over clanishness.

The appeal of the Central Committee and the B.C.M. "To the Party" was printed in *Vperyod* No. 13 of April 5, 1905, and also reprinted in leaflet form. The reaction of Vladimir Ilyich and his closest comrades to this appeal is evident from Maria Ilyinichna's letter, which said:

"How do you like the reprint from No. 13? What an unexpected turn of events, isn't it? Who could have expected it?! The remaining two members of the Central Committee co-opted two conciliators and two Mensheviks (and 'lousy' ones at that according to one Russian comrade) and in spite of this 'the resolution of the Council of the Party published in the 89th number of *Iskra* is not accepted as grounds for halting the work of organizing the congress?!' Our people were quite flab-

[1] *Council of the Party*—one of the leading centres of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, established as the highest Party body by the "Party Rules" approved by the Second Congress. The functions of the Council included the co-ordination of the work of the Central Committee and the Party newspaper. In November 1903, the Council of the Party which had actually passed into the hands of the Mensheviks made a stand against the majority of the Party demanding the summoning of the Third Party Congress.—*Ed.*

bergasted by this news. One may expect the most unforeseen results from the congress now, it will probably be attended by all the Russian committees, the Council will in all probability attend it too, what else can it do?! The position the Council is in is incredibly foolish, but they will hardly want to surrender without a struggle, and I suppose they'll have to excommunicate themselves from the Party in the first place, as they had so wrathfully threatened those who dared attend the congress. The M-s[1] are very down in the mouth, some say, 'Yes, you have won,' and others frankly declare: 'Oh well, we'll think of something yet.' The elders are so far saying nothing.

"Our people are in a fever of excitement, no one does anything of course, all they do is talk about what will happen next. Ilyich was quite 'mad' (from the caption to Lepeshinsky's caricature 'How the Mice Buried the Cat.'—*L.F.*). At first he just laughed and laughed—he stirred everyone up—I haven't seen him so jolly for a long time. Boggy committees will anyway be in the majority, most probably, a great deal will depend on the affiliation of the delegates, and Allah alone knows what fate will bring us. . . ."

Vladimir Ilyich worked hard on the preparation of the congress, he was particularly busy with it in March and April of 1905. In Geneva he spoke on problems connected with the summoning of the Third Congress, wrote articles for *Vperyod*, drafted the text of the congress resolutions, sent letters to Party committees in Russia about the nomination of delegates to the congress, proposed that Menshevik committees be invited to the congress together with the Bolshevik ones, and attended meetings held by the Third Congress Organizational Committee in Geneva. Vladimir Ilyich also

[1] Mensheviks.

studied and thought over the technique of street fighting: a popular revolution was starting in Russia.

On April 5, Vladimir Ilyich wrote to Krasikov in Paris. Krasikov was to go to Liège to speak on the preparations for the congress prior to his departure for it as delegate of the committees of organizations abroad. Vladimir Ilyich advised him to take a round trip ticket for 45 days Paris-Liège, etc.-Paris and indicated the line he should take with the delegates: "Our line with the delegates should be decidedly peaceable, so to say, 'we have nothing to lose, we stand to win all (in case of victory),' and with our opponents it's the other way about."[1]

On April 25, Vladimir Ilyich left for the Third Party Congress in London, armed with credentials for a deciding vote from the Kursk and Odessa committees.[2] Nadezhda Konstantinovna also left for the congress as a delegate with a deliberative vote.

In the spring of 1905, Maria Ilyinichna came to Paris; it was while Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna were in London, I believe. I do not remember just what brought her there and how long she stayed in Paris, but I shall not forget the many walks we took to the Père-Lachaise cemetery. We spent long hours sitting on the hillock facing the Wall of the Communards where in 1871 the Versailles troops shot over fifteen hundred Paris workers, the last defenders of the Commune. We sat there sharing our most intimate thoughts and plans for future work. Maria Ilyinichna told me a lot about Vladimir Ilyich.

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[1] *Lenin Miscellany XVI*, p. 88.

[2] The Kursk Committee sent its credentials to Lenin in case the delegate nominated by the Kursk organization failed to attend the congress through circumstances beyond his control. However, the Kursk delegate did come to the congress, and Lenin only represented the Odessa Committee.

On his return to Geneva, Vladimir Ilyich gave a briefing on the Third Party Congress and the Menshevik conference[1] for the benefit of the Bolshevik community and the agents who were to be dispatched to other communities with reports.

Early in June Vladimir Ilyich came to Paris. I received the following letter from him notifying me of his coming:

"I have just sent you a telegram. To make sure, I shall explain what it is all about. I have been summoned to Paris on a certain business. I certainly do not want to waste the trip on that alone, and so I want to read a paper as well. The theme is: 'The Third Congress and the Resolutions Adopted.' Contents: a parallel analysis of our resolutions and those of the Mensheviks: they have just put out a statement about their conference and I shall analyse it. I can only do it on *Tuesday* (I'll arrive on Monday, but I have an engagement that evening) and I must be sure to finish it in one day. If possible, lease the largest hall (the one where I read a paper against Struve. Filatov and the others know), and notify a maximum number of people. If you have not telegraphed me your definite answer yet, send me a telegram tomorrow so that I may know *for certain* whether you have leased the hall or not. Perhaps there's even time for you to send me a letter by express (so that it should reach me not later than Sunday morning), but if there is anything of importance you have to say, be sure to telegraph.

"I am reading the same paper here today.

"Tournez s'il vous plait! Best regards,

"Yours, *Lenin.*

[1] A conference convened in Geneva by the Mensheviks who had refused to take part in the Third Congress.—*Ed.*

"Should it transpire that the paper cannot be read, I may not come at all. And so be sure to answer."[1]

The hall was duly leased, and Vladimir Ilyich read his paper. I do not know what business brought him to Paris besides the report on the Third Congress. On that occasion he made a stay of three days, no less. He went to the theatre on both his free evenings. The first night he acted on the advice of Comrade Filatov who knew Paris well, and went to the Grand Opera to hear some opera that was on. He did not like it, however, and thought it boring. The next night Vladimir Ilyich, Krasikov and I went to the Folies Bergères. They were showing short scenes of a light genre. I remember one called "The Legs of Paris." The curtain was raised knee-high, showing the legs of people of different walks of life and social standing moving across the stage. There was a workingman, a street-light man, a grisette, a priest, a policeman, a small shopkeeper, a Paris dandy, and many others. The legs were so emphatically typical that there was no mistaking their owners, and you could easily picture the person they belonged to. It was very amusing. Vladimir Ilyich laughed as infectiously as he alone knew how, and he really enjoyed himself that evening.

Soon after Vladimir Ilyich left, Krasikov went on a tour of some communities abroad to speak on the Third Congress and the Menshevik conference, and I returned to Geneva with the intention of starting back for Russia shortly afterwards. And before long I was provided with a passport made out in the name of Sarah Yudkovna Derbarindiker, a resident of the town of Nikolayev. The passport had run out about five years ago and to avoid paying a huge fine at the border my comrades advised me to give any fictitious address in

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 116.

Nikolayev where I was supposed to be living, and sign a statement that I would pay the fine the moment I arrived there and handed in my passport for registry with the police.

I left for Russia via Berlin in July 1905, entrusted with a certain amount of illegal literature to take across. I had to go through a few anxious moments at the border afraid that my passport would be my undoing, but I got through safely, and in July 1905 reached revolutionary Petersburg.

THE WAY LENIN WORKED

In a brief article one cannot, of course, fully describe Lenin's style of work. This would require special research. The aim of what I put down here is merely to acquaint the reader with some of Lenin's methods and his manner of daily work as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, with the chief demands he made on the workers of the Soviet state apparatus—requirements which have lost none of their power or significance to this day—and to show certain traits of Lenin's character.

* * *

In the years of hardship for the Soviet state, when foreign interventionists allied with the counter-revolutionaries in Russia were trying to overthrow the Soviet government by armed force, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government headed by Lenin roused the people for a war for the fatherland, and organized the defence of the Soviet state.

In those years of stress for the republic, I often saw Vladimir Ilyich in his workroom engrossed in deep thought over a map spread on his table. He marked the position of our troops, followed the movements of the enemy forces and, together with the other leading workers of the Party and Government, discussed and worked out strategic plans for defeating the enemy.

Vladimir Ilyich closely followed developments at the fronts. He was amazingly well informed about every-

thing that was happening on the fighting fronts and behind the lines, he was fully aware of the needs and sentiments of all strata of society throughout the vast country. He drew his information from the accounts and reports of leading workers in the provinces and the centre, from the numerous letters and telegrams that came in from the working people, from personal talks with delegations of workers and peasants, and from other sources.

Vladimir Ilyich went into every detail of the organization of defence, subjecting all the data at his disposal to a Marxist analysis and appraisal. Nothing escaped his line of vision. He demanded concise, accurate reports and authentic data, and constantly verified the execution of his orders. On August 29, 1918, he wrote to M. Kedrov in Vologda:

"You give too few facts. Send reports at *every opportunity*.

"What defences have been built?

"In what direction?

"At what points of the railway line are demolition men available, so that in the event of the Anglo-French starting to move in large forces we could blow up and *seriously* damage such and such a[1] (an account must be given of what exactly and where exactly) of bridges, versts of track, passes across marshes and so on and so forth.

"Has Vologda been made sufficiently secure from the whiteguard danger? It will be unpardonable if you show weakness or carelessness in this matter."[2]

Lenin studied war maps scrupulously. He had a great number of them; one of the bottom drawers in the bookcase in his office was filled to capacity with maps.

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[1] Evidently the word "number" was omitted.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 35, p. 295.

Lenin's war correspondence was indeed voluminous. Using the telegraph in his office in the Kremlin, the mail and the telephone, Lenin sent his instructions, orders and friendly suggestions to all parts of the country, drew attention to urgent problems, warned against errors, excessive optimism and underestimation of the enemy's forces, congratulated on victory, spoke of the Red Army's heroism, demanded and persuaded. His instructions and orders were always clear, concrete and precise.

According to incomplete data and only those documents which were published, Lenin dispatched during the years of the Civil War and foreign intervention (1918-1920), approximately 500 letters and telegrams on problems of defence to the various sections of the fighting front, addressed to 97 populated places in different parts of the country. Furthermore, many of Lenin's directives were addressed to "All Soviets of Deputies" or "All Gubernia Committees of the Party."

These documents give a highly vivid description of Lenin's role in organizing and directing the defence of the Soviet state in battle against foreign intervention and domestic counter-revolution. Lenin's wise instructions to the command of the fighting fronts helped in the scrupulous elaboration of the more important operations. In October 1920, when the Red Army was fighting against Wrangel on the approaches to the Crimea, Lenin telegraphed Frunze[1] as follows:

"Your own and Gusev's elated telegrams make me fear excessive optimism. Remember that you must enter the Crimea riding on the enemy's back no matter what

[1] M. V. Frunze (1885-1925)—one of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party and Soviet Government, a gifted commander and outstanding organizer of the Red Army. At the end of 1920 Frunze was in command of the Southern Front forces who routed Wrangel's whiteguard army and liberated the Crimea.—*Ed.*

the cost. Prepare with greater thoroughness, make sure of all the fords for taking the Crimea."[1]

These instructions served as a guide to the command of the Southern Front in elaborating the plan for defeating Wrangel with a double-edged blow: by fording the Sivash lagoon, and launching a direct attack on the Perekop fortifications. This plan was brilliantly carried out by the Red Army.

Directions on all the main, essential points in forming a regular Red Army and Red Navy, and in strengthening national defence and the position at home, were issued by Lenin. As leader of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Council of People's Commissars and Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence,[2] Lenin was responsible for the solution of many a problem connected with the defence of the Soviet state. None of the more important decisions on matters of defence were adopted by the Party or the Soviet Government without Lenin's active participation.

Lenin demanded implicit obedience to battle orders from every fighter. He held that stiff discipline and precise execution of orders formed the basis of the Red Army's fighting efficiency.

In the autumn of 1918, following the slowing down of our progress on the Eastern Front and a series of reverses on the Southern Front, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) addressed a circular letter to all members of the Party—commissars, army commanders and Red Army men. The letter, which Lenin helped to compose, read as follows:

"It is imperative with an iron hand to make the com-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 35, p. 392.

[2] The Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was established in 1918 to direct national defence. Lenin headed it. In April 1920 the Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was reorganized into the Council of Labour and Defence.

manders, from the highest to the lowest, carry out battle orders no matter what the cost. One must not stop at any sacrifices to achieve the lofty aims now set before the Red Army.... No single crime against discipline or the revolutionary battle spirit must remain unpunished."[1]

Lenin taught men courage, staunchness, contempt of death, and demanded that whiners, panic-mongers, deserters and cowards be dealt with without clemency. He pointed out again and again that weakness, indecision, and cowardice in critical moments were liable to lead to betrayal whether the person in question wished it or not. It was imperative to impress upon the mind of each worker, each soldier and commander separately that in the final count the ending of the war depended on his courage, resoluteness and loyalty.

At the same time Lenin called for the utmost support for the Red Army and aid for its wounded. "All our difficulties and sufferings are nothing in comparison with what has been the lot of the wounded Red Army men, who shed their blood in defence of the workers' and peasants' power..."[2] wrote Lenin in the magazine *Raneny Krasnoarmeyets (The Wounded Red Army man).*

One may say with assurance that a careful study of all the voluminous material left by Lenin on defence problems in the years of the Civil War and foreign military intervention will prove him to be the founder of Soviet military science.

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The efficient working of the Soviet state apparatus was tremendously important for victory at the fighting fronts and for success in socialist construction.

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*, p. 45.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 31, p. 159.

Lenin waged a tireless struggle to improve the work of the state apparatus, to simplify and reduce it, to instil efficiency, order and discipline into the daily routine of Soviet bodies, and with perseverance impressed on the Soviet people the need for a new, socialist attitude to work.

In order to organize and improve the work of the Soviet Government bodies strict, prompt and efficient implementation of all laws and orders issued by the Soviet Government was essential. Lenin led an unrelenting and systematic struggle for the strict observance of revolutionary law and order. By means of persuasion and compulsion he inculcated profound respect for the laws and orders issued by the Soviet Government and for the Constitution of the Soviet Republic.

The following statement made by Lenin to the representatives of the Danilovo Mills, who came to request him for a cotton cloth ration, is a typical example in this respect. Vladimir Ilyich wrote: "In view of the fact that this question has been decided by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, which according to the Constitution is a *higher* body than the Council of People's Commissars, neither I, as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, nor the Council of People's Commissars have the right to alter the decision."[1]

In 1919, at the instance of Vladimir Ilyich, the draft law department of the People's Commissariat of Justice put out a pamphlet entitled *Observe the Laws of the Soviet Republic!* Vladimir Ilyich edited it personally. The pamphlet is an appeal to the working people to rigidly observe the laws established by the Soviet Government. On Lenin's orders copies were sent to all the members of the C.P.C. Lenin always had the pam-

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 58.

phlet before him at C.P.C. meetings, he made references to it and kept calling the commissars' attention to it.

In upholding revolutionary law, Lenin relentlessly combated bribery, which he called a cursed heritage of tsardom. In May 1918, Vladimir Ilyich in a note to Kursky, People's Commissar of Justice, proposed the following: "... *immediately,* with exemplary speed, submit a draft law to the effect that penalties for bribery (corruption, bribe-giving, intermediacy in bribery, *etc.*) must be *not less* than 10 years imprisonment and, in addition, ten years compulsory labour."[1]

In his practical everyday activity Lenin often went back to the problem of combating bribery. He allotted a major role to Party members in this, as he did in all work connected with socialist construction and the improvement of the state apparatus. In his report to the Second All-Russian Congress of Political Education Bodies[2] in October 1921, Lenin said, elucidating their role in the struggle against bribery: "... if members of the Political Education Bodies say: 'it doesn't concern our department,' or 'we have put out pamphlets and proclamations on the subject,' the people will say to you: 'You are poor Party members: true, it doesn't concern your department, there is the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection[3] for it, but then you are members of the Party, too.' "[4]

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 35, p. 271.

[2] *Political Education Bodies*—part of the system of public education, whose province was educational work among adults (liquidation of illiteracy, running various types of schools, courses, clubs and libraries).—*Ed.*

[3] *The People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection*—a state control body established in 1920, whose duty was to help draw the greatest possible number of people into state administration.—*Ed.*

[4] V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 53.

Whenever Vladimir Ilyich discovered that someone had failed to observe any one of the decisions or orders passed by the Soviet Government, he invariably insisted on the culprit being punished. He would add that the punishment did not necessarily have to be severe, sometimes a reprimand would serve the purpose, but that it was imperative to shatter the common belief that culprits went unpunished. The culprit, Vladimir Ilyich held, was not just the man who had failed to carry out something entrusted to him directly, but also the indifferent director of the institution whose work was suffering from the non-observance of the government's decision. What Lenin blamed a director like that for was not sounding the alarm in time, or putting in a complaint, and not letting the pertinent bodies know. For instance, if the C.P.C. obliged the People's Commissariat of Food to supply the workers of some enterprise or other with shock-workers' rations and the director of that enterprise failed to give timely warning that the decision of the C.P.C. was not being carried out, Lenin considered him as much to blame as the People's Commissariat of Food.

Neither did Lenin tolerate a careless, thoughtless attitude to routine office orders. When he returned to work after recovering from his wound, the doctors strongly advised him not to work in a smoke-filled room. Smoking in the conference room was strictly forbidden; in Lenin's own office a "No Smoking" sign made out in large letters on his suggestion, was tacked to the brick stove wall. Nevertheless, the comrades who came in did not always observe the rule. One day, after a conference, when the room was particularly smoky, Vladimir Ilyich called me in and said: "The notice must be taken down." And added: "If we cannot get a rule obeyed, we should take it down so as not to compromise the rule."

When in the course of C.P.C. or C.L.D. meetings Lenin would discover that some government decision had not been carried into effect, he would order the culprit to be put under arrest for 2 or 3 days saying: "Keep him under arrest on holidays and let him out on weekdays so that the work should not suffer."

Though enjoying boundless prestige with the working people and their sincere devotion, Vladimir Ilyich never abused his position or permitted any exception to the established rules, regulations or laws in his own case. His letter of May 23, 1918, to the Administrative Manager of the C.P.C. is well known. In this letter V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich was strongly reprimanded for increasing Lenin's salary, as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, from 500 to 800 rubles a month. The action, Lenin said, was unwarranted and unlawful. Vladimir Ilyich also disapproved of the practice of sending him gifts, especially if they came from institutions or officials. Thus, for example, on receiving some samples of fruit grown on state farms from the Food Department of the Moscow Soviet on August 22, 1919, Vladimir Ilyich wrote back the very next day, August 23, as follows: "... I earnestly beg you not to do this any more, no fruit, etc., is to be sent to me, instead I want some facts and figures showing how fruit, etc., grown on state farms is distributed generally, whether any is *given to hospitals, sanatoria, children, and if so where and exactly how much.*"[1]

Vladimir Ilyich regarded every attempt to make his life more comfortable as a striving to place him in comparatively better conditions than others, and resentfully declined such attempts.

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[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 74.

Bureaucratic methods and red tape were great evils in the work of the Soviet state apparatus.

Soviet power had destroyed the old, bureaucratic state apparatus and created a new Soviet one on the principle of drawing the masses of working people into state administration. This was a great achievement of the Soviet Government. Speaking at the Eleventh Party Congress, Lenin said: "Let our state apparatus be as poor as it can be, still it has been created, the greatest historic innovation has been made. . . ."[1]

In practice, the Soviet state apparatus had serious flaws. There was a shortage of cultured workers. The young Soviet workers had little experience as yet in statecraft. The old, tsarist officials, die-hard bureaucrats ensconsed in departments and institutions, often obstructed the work intentionally. Vladimir Ilyich taught that in order to win a complete victory over officialism and red tape it was necessary to draw the entire population into the management of the state and to raise the people's general cultural level.

Lenin dealt drastically with every case of red tape, officialism or indifference that came to his knowledge. He demanded efficiency, and prompt and exact fulfilment of the Soviet Government's orders, and persistently combated bureaucrats, red-tape officials and transgressors of the law who substituted bureaucratic officialism and skeins of red tape for real work.

In January 1919, Lenin wrote to the Simbirsk Gubernia Commissar of Food, moved to profound indignation by the irresponsible, indifferent attitude adopted to the most important of state affairs, that of supplying the workers with bread. "The committee of 42 organizations of starving workers in Petrograd and Moscow have complained about your inefficiency. I demand the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 270.

utmost energy from you, a non-formalistic approach to your work, and all-round help for the starving workers. Failure will compel me to arrest the entire personnel of your institutions and bring them to trial."[1]

On February 18, 1919, Lenin telegraphed to the Mamadysh Uyezd Executive Committee: "Is it true that the Sormovo Communist Rukavishnikov has been in prison for a month and his case not yet investigated? If it is true, the person responsible must be brought to trial for red tape. Telegraph your reply."[2]

Lenin regarded the struggle against red tape as a matter of political importance.

In a number of letters to the People's Commissariat of Justice, the Revolutionary Tribunal, etc., Lenin demands that cases involving red tape should be tried. In his letter of November 4, 1921, to D. I. Kursky Lenin says: "... it is imperative to bring 4-6 Moscow cases of red tape to trial in Moscow in the course of this autumn and winter, 1921-1922, selecting the more 'glaring cases' and making each trial an affair of political import."[3]

On October 20, 1921, Lenin wrote to the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal about the instance of red tape at the People's Commissariat of Food:

"P.S. It is of extreme importance—from both the Party and political points of view—particularly in the light of the resolutions adopted by the Eighth Congress of Soviets, that the trial of this instance of red tape should be as solemn and *educational* as possible and the verdict sufficiently impressive."[4]

In the struggle against red tape Vladimir Ilyich attached much importance to checking the execution of

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*, pp. 80-81.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 171.
[3] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, p. 239.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 238.

orders. He insisted that departments and institutions, Party and Soviet workers, carry out practical control over the execution of Soviet Government decisions, and check "what came of it in actual fact," as he put it.

Lenin regarded the verification of execution and a wise choice of personnel as conditions of major importance for bringing about an improvement in the work of the state apparatus. When A. D. Tsurupa was appointed Vice-Chairman of the C.P.C. late in 1921, the main task set before him by Vladimir Ilyich was to regulate the working of the state apparatus.

Vladimir Ilyich ordered his secretariat to keep a check on the timely implementation of government decisions. With this aim in view a special index card system was worked out with his participation in 1922. He made it a point that only such columns that were certain to be filled in should be included. Columns which would be difficult to fill in and which would consequently remain blank in practice, were not to be included. He appointed a special member of the staff to do this work, warning him that he would supervise it personally. If in the course of events it transpired that a decision could not be carried into effect in the time set, the institution concerned had to ask for postponement without waiting for the time limit to expire. Vladimir Ilyich required that a report on how the verification of the execution of orders was proceeding be presented to him twice a month, briefly worded in telegraph style.

Vladimir Ilyich invariably demanded self-reliance in their work from both institutions and members of the staff. He harshly condemned helplessness, fumbling, and evasion of responsibility, and resolutely combated the attempts of certain workers and institutions to bring problems that could well be solved by themselves before the C.P.C., the C.L.D., or to leave them for com-

missions to solve. Lenin demanded that the People's Commissars should take more responsibility for the work of the Commissariats entrusted to them, that they, and not their deputies, should personally participate in the work of the C.P.C.

Lenin held that a clear-cut demarcation of the workers' duties, so that "each should know what he was answerable for," was one of the main and indispensable conditions for getting the state apparatus to work smoothly.

In drafting the rules for the administration of Soviet institutions in December 1918, Lenin wrote: "Collective discussion of and decisions on all matters concerned with the management of Soviet institutions must be accompanied by the establishment of the most clear-cut *responsibility* to be borne by *every one* of the persons in the Soviet service for *the fulfilment of definite*, clearly and unambiguously outlined tasks and *practical* jobs."[1] Lenin frequently brought up this requirement throughout his activity as Chairman of the C.P.C.

Lenin did not ignore a single, be it the most insignificant, case of irresponsibility towards duty that came to his knowledge. On learning that the lift at the Administrative Office of the C.P.C. would be out of order for three days, he sent a note to the Kremlin commandant (copy to the Administrative Office) on September 19, 1921: "I have been told that the lift will not be working on September 20, 21 and 22.

"This is the height of disgrace. There are people suffering from heart disease for whom mounting stairs is both harmful and dangerous. I have pointed out a thousand times that the lift must be kept in order, and that one person should be made responsible for it.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 326.

"I strongly reprimand you, and charge you to establish the identity of those guilty of not giving due warning; let me have a list of the people responsible for the lift once again; and the penalties imposed on them.

"Chairman of the Council of
People's Commissars V. Ulyanov (Lenin)"[1]

Lenin strived tirelessly to instil into the practice of institutions and staff members the principle that each and every assignment should be carried through to the end. One must learn to obtain the desired result whatever the cost, he used to say, doing the thing ten times over if need be. You have started on something but come to a blind alley—begin from the beginning, again and again, until you have achieved your goal. Lenin not only taught this in theory but also showed by his own personal example the perseverance with which one should work towards a set goal. He harshly condemned and ridiculed slipshodness, carelessness, idling at work, the tendency to tackle everything under the sun and carry nothing through, to substitute talk for action and speechifying for work.

While making us strive for greater efficiency in the state apparatus, Vladimir Ilyich frequently pointed out that this very difficult task would only yield good results in 10 or 20 years' time, that it called for a real cultural revolution, but that there was all the more reason why we should work for it with persistence and perseverance.

Lenin fought hard against all and every hitch of a bureaucratic nature, however trifling. For instance, during the first years of Soviet power, one had to go through a great number of posts to get to see Lenin in

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, pp. 327-328.

the Kremlin. There was the post at the entrance to the Kremlin, the "lower" and the "upper" posts, and as a result the visitor was bound to get stuck somewhere. Vladimir Ilyich had the commandant work out a system whereby persons coming to see him or on business to the C.P.C. need not waste any time, that is, if the secretariat had instructed the commandant to admit them. The secretary's duty was to see that there was no hitch in letting people through. When someone he was expecting failed to show up in time, Vladimir Ilyich would send to find out if that person was roaming about the Kremlin looking for the way to the C.P.C. or if he had perhaps got stuck at one of the posts. A number of written instructions to the commandant have been preserved in which Lenin warned him that penalty measures would be adopted unless the admittance routine was straightened out.

On November 19, 1921, Vladimir Ilyich wrote to the Kremlin commandant as follows: "Last night at 8 p.m. I received Osip Petrovich *Goldenberg*. In spite of the half-hour or more notice given to the commandant's office and sentries, he was *detained* not downstairs at the C.P.C. but *upstairs*.

"Once again—and this is not the first time by far—I must draw your attention to this violation of the rules. Do not force me to resort to harsh measures. . . ."[1]

On November 26, 1921, Lenin again wrote to the Kremlin commandant about the sentries detaining people on their way to see him: ". . . I have demanded time and again and I am demanding once more that the commandant of the Kremlin should work out a system whereby *people coming to see me, even if they have no passes at all,* should be given the opportunity, *without the slightest hitch, to contact*

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, p. 231.

my secretariat or the switchboard operators on the third floor *from the Kremlin gates or from the C.P.C. entrance.*

"You are treating my demands carelessly, consider this a reproof."[1]

Lenin went on to give detailed instructions on how the matter should be organized.

With patience and insistence Vladimir Ilyich taught his small staff to work without admitting any blunders in any matters, big or small.

It was characteristic of Vladimir Ilyich that he thought nothing too small to be followed up if he saw it yielding good practical results. To give an example, there was the mailing of letters, a small matter one would have thought. Vladimir Ilyich gave us the following instructions: do not send the bicycle messenger to the addressee without first finding out his whereabouts (whether he is at a meeting, in his office, at home, etc.); once you have made sure, seal up the envelope, punch and run a string through it, if necessary, and seal down the ends yourself. Furthermore, write on the envelope, without fail, that no one else is to open it, and tell the messenger that he must get the addressee to sign receipt on the envelope. After delivering the letter and obtaining the addressee's signed receipt, the messenger must hand the envelope into the secretariat; it was then to be shown to Vladimir Ilyich. In this way, with no loss of time involved, a guarantee would be secured that the letter had actually been delivered to the addressee in person and had not been left lying in the office somewhere. Vladimir Ilyich was very exacting where efficiency in the dispatch of his letters was concerned.

On September 13, 1921, having discovered that one of his letters had not been sent off on time, Lenin wrote

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, p. 232.

to the Administrative Office of the C.P.C.: "I discovered yesterday that an urgent document I gave to Fotieva... was sent in the 'usual' that is the idiotic way[1] and was many hours late in arriving; had I not interfered, next time it would be days late.

"Such inefficiency in office work is intolerable, and if this most typical of red-tape practices and spoilage of work comes to light once again, I shall resort to strict punishment and a change of personnel."

Next, Vladimir Ilyich gives comprehensive directions on the dispatch of his letters.

"On my orders:

"1) the secretary on duty (who must have a relief in case she goes out, and who must notify the telephone operators working round the clock of this) must *personally* check every document or cover which I hand in for dispatch;

"2) see that *all* the instructions are on the envelope (personal, urgent, sign receipt on the envelope, etc.);

"3) see that it is handed to the messenger at once;

"4) *check* with the addressee *by telephone* without fail;

"5) *show* me the envelope with the signature acknowledging receipt;

"6) the same rules are to be observed by the telephone operators, in case the secretary is away when letters have to be dispatched."[2]

Being well aware of the grave shortcomings in the work of the state apparatus in the centre as well as in the provinces, Vladimir Ilyich paid great attention to the letters and complaints the working people addressed

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[1] Lenin's urgent letters were dispatched by bicycle messenger. On this occasion, the letter was handed to the mail clerk and went through the dispatch office routine.

[2] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, pp. 226-227.

Lenin and Y. M. Sverdlov (left) in the Presidium of the First All-Russian Congress of Land Departments, Committees of Poor Peasants and Communes. December 1918

Lenin in the Presidium of the First Congress of the Communist International, Kremlin. March 1919

Lenin. March 1919

to him personally or to the C.P.C. He made it a rule for the workers of the secretariat to study all letters containing requests or complaints. Vladimir Ilyich issued special instructions to the Administrative Office of the C.P.C. on January 18, 1919, to the effect that all written complaints were to be reported to him within 24 hours, and verbal ones within 48 hours. He also demanded that a careful check be made to see that the resolutions he passed on these complaints were carried into effect.

Later, on Vladimir Ilyich's instructions, a reception office was opened at the C.P.C. It was not in the Kremlin, and on Lenin's orders all incoming letters addressed to the C.P.C. or Chairman of the C.P.C. were forwarded there. The secretary appointed to the reception office had to redirect these letters for action and report to Lenin once a fortnight on what had been done.

Talking to the Administrative Manager, N. P. Gorbunov, on January 20, 1921, Vladimir Ilyich instructed him as follows: to start work in the outer reception office on a modest scale, establish the closest possible contact with the People's Commissariats and make use of their staffs in the work; firstly, to study the methods of organization and learn to utilize the staffs of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; to utilize the newspaper *Izvestia VTSIK (News of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee)* as a mail box to answer letters, complaints and inquiries; to publish articles and notices in the papers relating to problems most frequently raised by workers and peasants in letters and appeals to the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars; to consult Vladimir Ilyich beforehand; to let the writers know that their cases had been referred to such and such a department; to avoid duplication of work and combat it in other institutions.

Vladimir Ilyich watched the work of the C.P.C. reception office closely. Anxious to increase its effectiveness, he advocated the use of "direct contacts." On December 3, 1921, Vladimir Ilyich wrote to this effect to several workers who, by dint of the posts they occupied, had most to do with letters and complaints coming in from the working people. These workers were Dzerzhinsky, Karpinsky and others.

"The experience of the C.P.C. reception office in dealing with applications and complaints has proved the advantage of using 'direct contacts' in especially serious and urgent cases—that is, a *personal* appeal to one or another of the Party workers holding a sufficiently influential position in their locality. This does away with the red tape inevitable in the usual departmental routine, and generally enhances the desired effect.

"As an example take the terrorist case of the kulak 'gang' in the (new) Yelan Uyezd, Saratov Gubernia, that had wormed its way into the confidence of the Soviet Government and the Party. It took *ten days* to get a reply by telegraph from the plenipotentiary of the VECHEKA[1] in Volga Country, to whom an inquiry had been sent in this 'comradely' manner, saying that 'all steps have been taken to establish who were the culprits.' Similar results have been obtained in other cases as well.

"Adoption of this method, however, can only be put on a broader scale if one is sufficiently well acquainted with the staff of responsible workers actually on the spot. Therefore, I request you to urgently compile lists of comrades who, in your opinion, are particularly eligible for exercising this sort of 'pressure,' reliable comrades

[1] *VECHEKA*—All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, a state security body, established in December 1917 on V. I. Lenin's initiative, to combat the counter-revolution and sabotage.—*Ed.*

with a good record, from among the members of Executive Committees, Gubernia Cheka, etc., one or two per gubernia, sending the lists to the *reception office, Council of People's Commissars,* Vozdvizhenka 4."

The letter ends:

"P.S. It is imperative to have a hole-proof guarantee of these comrades' good faith: the fullest possible record, both in Party and Soviet work, and a *personal* guarantee of their unquestionable honesty put up by *several* old Party members."[1]

It came to Lenin's knowledge in December 1921 that very often the working people's complaints and applications forwarded by the reception office to directors of central Soviet institutions to be dealt with by them remained unanswered and nothing was done about them. Exasperated by this irresponsible attitude towards their work, Lenin wrote to the directors of the central institutions concerned: "See that you pull yourselves up at once. The Soviet state administration must work efficiently, honestly and quickly. Besides being detrimental to the interests of individuals, this looseness is lending the whole work a mirage-like, sham quality." Lenin demanded that forthwith all letters and inquiries coming in from the reception office should be given prompt and comprehensive answers, and gave a warning that "the reception office of the C.P.C. had the right to bring the culprits to answer, irrespective of 'rank.' "[2]

In the above-mentioned draft of rules for Soviet institution administration, Lenin set out in detail how people should be received in a Soviet institution. He was anxious that each citizen who had a request, complaint or application to make, should be admitted freely and without any difficulty whatsoever to the

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, p. 235.
[2] *Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*, p. 429.

corresponding institution, and that each case should be guaranteed proper channelling and consideration.

"Every Soviet institution," Lenin wrote, "must put up a sign, giving its reception days and hours, not just inside the building but also outside so that people can avail themselves of the information without the need to apply for any sort of pass. The arrangement of the reception premises must be such that people should come in freely, and certainly without any passes.

"Every Soviet institution must start a visitor's book to record as briefly as possible the visitor's name, the gist of his case and the department it has been directed to.

"Reception hours must be set for Sundays and holidays as well."[1]

Lenin attached great importance to the strict observance of rules in the work of Soviet institutions aimed at combating red tape, disclosing cases of corruption, and unmasking dishonest workers.

* * *

V. I. Lenin fervently believed in the masses and knew, as no one else did, how to rally them to action. He was well aware of the hardships and privations the working people had to go through in the years of war and economic dislocation, and deeply felt the sufferings of the masses.

Lenin regarded closeness with the masses as an earnest of all the successes and victories of the Soviet state, and no matter how difficult or dangerous the situation was he never concealed it from the people. He often pointed out that the entire strength of the Soviet Government rested on the confidence and consciousness of the workers.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 327.

Foreseeing a new onslaught by the united intervention forces, Lenin said in his report made on October 22, 1918, at a joint meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet, factory committees and trade unions: "I think that the masses hardly realize the danger bearing down on us, and since we can only act if we have the support of the masses, the main task confronting the representatives of Soviet power is to acquaint these masses with the whole truth of the present situation, however difficult it may be at times."[1]

Speaking at the Eleventh Party Congress, Lenin expressed this thought even more emphatically in the following words: "After all, we are a drop in the ocean in the people's masses, and we can only govern them if we give the right expression to the aspirations of the masses. Without this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the proletariat will not lead the masses, and the whole machine will fall to pieces."[2]

Lenin's profound faith in the masses, in the class instinct of the workers, brought him his incontestable prestige and the boundless devotion of the people. His addresses to the workers, Red Army men and poor peasantry invariably evoked an enthusiastic response. In reply to Lenin's call, the working masses volunteered to stand any privations and make any sacrifices in defence of the gains of the October Socialist Revolution.

As head of the Soviet state Lenin strictly adhered to the principle of collective leadership. Although his prestige was immense, Vladimir Ilyich never undertook the solution of problems personally, as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. He encouraged

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 94.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 273.

every worker to show initiative, he used persuasion rather than the weight of his authority. Flattery, servility and obsequiousness were inconceivable in Lenin's milieu. At the meetings of the C.P.C. or the C.L.D. all the speakers freely voiced their opinions on the questions under discussion. Heated arguments were not infrequent. It sometimes happened that Vladimir Ilyich disagreed with some decision approved by a majority vote of the C.P.C. members. He would submit to the majority, but if the question involved a principle, he would put it up before the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) or the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and go back to the question in dispute again and again.

It is well known, for instance, with what persistence Lenin fought for the adoption of the principle of one-man management in industry. The Decists[1] who held responsible posts in trade-union and administrative bodies, supported unlimited collective rights. Lenin opposed them in many speeches defending one-man management and proving that this system more than any other guaranteed the full utilization of a man's abilities, and not merely a verbal but an actual check on work done.

The discussion on one-man management embraced wide circles of trade-union and administrative workers. After his speeches at the A.R.C.C.T.U.[2] faction, the Third

[1] *The Decists*—an abbreviated form of the Democratic-Centralism group formed in 1919-1920. They denied the leading role of the Party in Soviets and trade unions, spoke against one-man management and personal responsibility of directors of industrial enterprises, and demanded freedom of factions and groupings inside the Party. The Party condemned the Decists as an anti-Party group.—*Ed.*

[2] All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions—the highest body of Soviet trade unions.—***Ed.***

Congress of National Economic Councils,[1] the congress of water transport workers, etc., where he found no support, Lenin, who was firmly convinced he was right, referred the question to the Ninth Party Congress for discussion.

At the Party congress the Decists made a fresh but futile attempt to push their decision through. The congress adopted the resolution supported by Lenin.

In the early stages, the agenda of the C.P.C. meetings included a huge number of questions, sometimes they were as many as 60 to be dealt with at one meeting, and it must be borne in mind that in the year 1918 meetings were called almost daily. This was due, in part, to the fact that experience in government work had not yet been accumulated by Soviet state bodies. Vladimir Ilyich fought hard and persistently against the inclusion of trifling matters on the C.P.C. agenda, he crossed them off the list and referred them back to the departments concerned for action.

Often, the questions put up for discussion were poorly substantiated and not previously agreed upon with the department concerned. Questions such as these were, on Lenin's instructions, also referred back to the departments for careful preparation before they were given a hearing. Before a matter became eligible for discussion, Vladimir Ilyich held that the following had to be submitted: a brief explanatory memorandum (no more than 2 or 3 pages), a drawn up draft resolution of the C.P.C. or the C.L.D. together with the comments of all the interested departments, and a draft counter-resolution in the event of some department's non-agree-

[1] Government bodies directing industry. The councils (regional, gubernia and uyezd) were headed by the Supreme Council of National Economy.—*Ed.*

ment. The secretariat had to send the materials to all the members of the C.P.C. well in advance. In December 1917, Vladimir Ilyich drafted a resolution on this matter, in which he prescribed that each People's Commissar who wanted to include a question into the C.P.C. agenda should be called upon to submit a "written statement beforehand." To cite Lenin's words:

"a) what the question is about (briefly) [the explanation here cannot be limited to 're: this and that' but must *give the contents* of the question.];

"b) what exactly is suggested that the C.P.C. should do? (give money; adopt *such and such* a resolution, or, a similar clear-cut explanation of *what* the person including the question wants);

"c) does the given question affect departments of other commissars? What departments exactly? Are there written opinions from them?"[1]

This draft was approved by the C.P.C. on the same day, and since then Vladimir Ilyich kept referring to it, placing ever more precise demands on the commissars and the secretariat of the C.P.C.

Improvement in procedure did not come easily, but Vladimir Ilyich took the matter up again and again, and stubbornly overcame the resistance of the People's Commissars, who, as a rule, tried to add some extra questions to the agenda when the meeting began, insisting that they were extremely urgent. In this connection I recall the following incident: at one of the C.P.C. meetings, F. E. Dzerzhinsky requested the inclusion of a certain urgent question in the agenda additionally. "Do you have the material on it?" Vladimir Ilyich asked. Dzerzhinsky answered in the affirmative. Vladimir Ilyich then turned to me: "Is the material here?" "No," I said. At this, Dzerzhinsky in his quick-

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXI*, p. 96.

tempered way declared that his secretariat had sent us the material and that it was the C.P.C. secretariat who had misplaced it. Still, Vladimir Ilyich refused to put the question on the agenda of that particular meeting. I had Dzerzhinsky's secretariat rung up at once and within a few minutes I was told that they had just dispatched the material to the C.P.C. I passed a note to Dzerzhinsky telling him in joking tones that he was bringing public disgrace down upon me, whereas it was his own secretariat that was to blame. Dzerzhinsky then asked for permission to speak and announced, for all to hear, that he owed me an apology. "I was wrong," he said, "the Council secretariat had not misplaced the papers. It's our secretariat that is to blame." Small though this incident may be, it illustrates what a scrupulous stickler for truth Felix Dzerzhinsky was.

In order to cope with the abundance of trifling questions which the commissars placed on the agenda of C.P.C. meetings, a proposal was approved, as early back as 1917, to form a special commission to deal with what Vladimir Ilyich called "vermicelli" matters. That is exactly how it was put down in the minutes of the meeting: "Form a 'vermicelli' commission for dealing with small, 'vermicelli' matters." Later, this commission was transformed into the Minor Council of People's Commissars which underwent a number of reorganizations during its existence. As distinct from the Major C.P.C., the members of the Minor C.P.C. were not People's Commissars but members of People's Commissariat collegiums and department chiefs. The chairman was a comrade specially appointed to the office. In the early stages, the minutes of the Minor Council meetings were heard at Major Council meetings and, if there were no objections, were included in the minutes of the latter as decisions adopted by the C.P.C. Later, the C.P.C. entrusted Lenin with the responsibil-

ity of approving the Minor Council's decisions on behalf of the C.P.C. Lenin, however, only approved them if they had been unanimously adopted by the Minor C.P.C. If any of the Minor C.P.C. members or People's Commissars objected, or if he himself disagreed, Vladimir Ilyich brought the matter up before the Major Council for discussion. To give an example: Vladimir Ilyich did not endorse the Minor Council's decision adopted on February 3, 1921, on the amalgamation of all construction projects in the R.S.F.S.R., and brought it before the Major Council for discussion.

V. I. Lenin watched the work of the Minor Council closely and advised the members against making hasty decisions.

In his letter to the Minor Council dated August 27, 1921, Vladimir Ilyich points to the need for a "more *careful, meticulous preparation* of the wording of decrees."

"Endless corrections are intolerable," he wrote.

"I have the impression ... that a number of recent decrees show hastiness.

"The most earnest measures must be taken against this poor practice, so as not to evoke a harsher protest from the population and have their objection to the Minor Council brought before the Central Committee."[1]

A similar system was adopted in the work of the C.L.D. Administrative meetings of the C.L.D. were held to deal with small matters. The administrative meetings differed from the plenary only in that Lenin presided over the latter and V. A. Avanesov or A. A. Andreyev usually presided over the former. It sometimes happened that a matter which seemed trifling would, in the course of discussion at the administrative meeting, assume size and importance as a matter involving

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXIII*, p. 226.

a principle. Vladimir Ilyich would then be invited in (his office directly adjoined the conference hall), and the meeting of the C.L.D. would be proclaimed plenary. Once the matter in question was settled, Vladimir Ilyich would go back to his office, and the C.L.D. would resume its work as an administrative meeting. This practice was also reflected in the minutes of the C.L.D. meetings.

Vladimir Ilyich approved the decisions adopted by the administrative meetings on behalf of the C.L.D. only on condition that there were no objections from among the members of the C.L.D. and C.P.C. If there were, the decisions were included for discussion in the agenda of the plenary meeting of the C.L.D.

Vladimir Ilyich never took it upon himself to decide even such a seemingly trifling question as changing the day or hour set for a meeting; instead, he had his secretary first secure the agreement of all the members of the C.P.C. by circular letter. True, no one ever objected to the change. The Institute of Marxism-Leninism preserves in its archives some of these circulars: a typewritten list of all the members of the C.P.C. with "yes" written against each name.

The right of attending the C.P.C. meetings was extended to the People's Commissars and their deputies who, in the absence of the Commissar, had a deciding vote. Members of collegiums present had deliberative votes. Vladimir Ilyich was against superfluous numbers attending the meetings which he wanted to be conducted in a business-like manner with as little waste of time as possible. He particularly objected to a large inflow of representatives from the People's Commissariats with reports to make. They used to come in great numbers at first. Most of them attended the meetings "just in case," on the off-chance that some data would be required which neither the Commissar nor

his deputy could supply. Vladimir Ilyich objected to this practice because it interfered with the meeting and took these representatives away from their own work. He demanded that the People's Commissars or their deputies be themselves capable of supplying all necessary data on the matters they introduced. The number of speakers was particularly great at Minor Council meetings.

Once, at an evening meeting of the C.P.C., Vladimir Ilyich ordered the speakers waiting in the next room to be admitted before the next question on the agenda came up for discussion. The door opened, and the speakers came pouring in—there were about twenty of them. The meeting was roaring with laughter by the time the last man trailed in. That same day, on Lenin's insistence the C.P.C. passed a resolution limiting the number of speakers on each point on the agenda to one or two per department. But even that was too many.

As a rule Vladimir Ilyich did not look into the room where the speakers sat waiting. Late one evening, however, happening to come through that room while the C.P.C. was in session, he found it crowded with bored, weary-looking men, languishing in clouds of smoke (some over a chess-board and others behind a newspaper), waiting to be summoned to the meeting. In many cases, however, they would only hear at the close of the meeting that their business had been adjourned.

Vladimir Ilyich was furious. He upbraided us severely for this ridiculous state of affairs, and issued orders on the procedure there and then. It was to be a rule from then on for speakers to arrive 15 minutes before the hearing of their business. With this in view, the agenda was to be gone through at the commencement of a meeting to decide on what was to stand or be adjourned, and also to establish the order in which the questions were to be heard. Matters involving the

hearing of reports were put at the head of the list, and the rest at the end. The secretary had to get in touch with the speaker before the meeting, make sure where to find him when the meeting began, and, arranging with him to have a car ready, notify him of the approximate time set for the hearing of his business the minute the agenda was settled. If, in the course of the meeting, it transpired that the business could not be heard until later, the secretary was to let the speaker know. Vladimir Ilyich called it "keeping the speaker at telephone distance."

On October 13, 1921, Vladimir Ilyich issued the following written instructions to the Administrative Manager of the C.P.C. and the C.L.D.: "Please see that the order of summoning speakers (to both Major and Minor C.P.C. meetings) is changed after duly agreeing it with the Chairman of the Minor C.P.C. (and arrangements with the secretaries).

"At present the speakers simply receive a summons to a meeting and then spend hours waiting for their business to come up.

"It's disgraceful and preposterous.

"It is imperative to make it a practice to summon speakers for *a definite hour.*

"A *double* check on the telephone—if and which speakers are needed, and a *correct* sequence of procedure at a given meeting (involving the hearing of reports or not) will and must result in the speakers *not* having *more than 15 minutes to wait.*

"I request you to work out a system on these lines at once, weighing everything up carefully, and let me know the decision after it has been passed by the Minor C.P.C."[1]

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 35, p. 447.

While exacting from others smartness and discipline in their work, V. I. Lenin showed by his own example how to achieve a high standard of efficiency by properly planning his work and allotting his time. As a result, Vladimir Ilyich was never in a state of nervous irritation, hastiness or fluster for all the immense scope of his work and the urgent matters, visitors and telephone conversations with which his days were packed beyond all limit. He worked calmly and always managed to do all that he had planned for the day. Lenin, better than any other, knew the value of time and how to make the best of it. He did not let a minute go to waste. He would come into his office at a set hour every morning and proceed with his routine: going through stacks of newspapers and documents, issuing orders to his secretary, receiving comrades, and presiding at meetings. At 4 p.m. sharp he went home for dinner. After his meal and a short rest, he would be back in the office at 6 p.m. always full of energy, and would stay there working until late into the night. But even during the dinner hour, Lenin's mind would not rest. He used to bring back with him a batch of notes made on a small writing pad—orders for his secretary on questions which had occurred to him while he rested. These orders had to be carried out at once.

Vladimir Ilyich valued the time of others as well as his own. He was never late anywhere. He arrived exactly on time, or a few minutes before the appointed hour, at the C.P.C. or C.L.D. meetings. With Lenin presiding these meetings were opened at the set hour irrespective of attendance. On Lenin's orders, the names of the late-comers and the time lapse were recorded in the minutes. The second time a person came late without good reason, he received a reprimand from Vladimir Ilyich and a warning that a recurrence would mean a reprimand published in the press.

Lenin was a skilled conductor of meetings. When presiding at C.P.C. or C.L.D. meetings, he always tried to make the debates as brief as possible, and the speakers to keep to the point without straying away from the subject. If a matter required no elucidation, he demanded that only figures and practical suggestions be offered. He considered long speeches at meetings a senseless waste of time. Vladimir Ilyich, quickly grasping the essence of the question under discussion, would occupy himself with other matters while listening to the debates. Lenin's well-known article on "The Purification of the Russian Language" was written during one of those meetings. He gave it a sub-title in brackets: "Musing at leisure, that is, while listening to speeches at meetings."[1]

However, the slightest noise disturbed Vladimir Ilyich and he demanded that absolute silence and order be maintained.

After smoking had been forbidden in the conference hall the members of the C.P.C. used to go and have a smoke behind the large tiled stove projecting from the wall facing the windows halfway down the room next to the door into the corridor. They would blow the smoke into the ventilation pipe, and, hidden from the chairman's view, would sometimes exchange whispered remarks. Vladimir Ilyich did not forbid smoking behind the stove and, jokingly, called the corner a club, but if he heard talking he would pull the smokers up and say: "Quiet there, the club behind the stove."

Vladimir Ilyich, objecting to long speeches at meetings, wrote the following note to D. I. Kursky, the People's Commissar of Justice, at a C.P.C. meeting in April 1919:

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 30, p. 274.

"It is time procedure at meetings *generally* was established by the C.P.C.

"1. *Ten minutes* for reports.

"2. Speakers: 5 min. the first time, and 3 min. the second.

"3. Limit speakers to two times.

"4. On the order of the agenda: 1 min. for, 1 min. against.

"5. Exceptions on *special* orders from the C.P.C."[1]

The procedure regulations were approved by the C.P.C. on a report submitted by Kursky on April 5, 1919. It was difficult to keep within the time limit and sometimes, to get an extra minute or two, the speaker would request time for "the order of the agenda." However, Vladimir Ilyich opposed this, saying it would lead to "disorder" rather than "order."

At a C.P.C. meeting one day, Vladimir Ilyich harshly criticized the report of a certain military specialist, a non-Party member, who was granted 20 minutes in view of the importance of the question in hand. Vladimir Ilyich made some specific critical remarks and suddenly said to the man: "Come and see me at 1 p.m. tomorrow, and I'll teach you how to make reports." The man arrived the next day as required. Vladimir Ilyich talked to him for a solid hour and when his visitor left, he came out into the secretaries' room looking well pleased. Walking up and down the room with a smile on his face he said: "There, you see, one *can* make a good report when one wants to." It appeared that the military man had stayed awake all night working over his report with Lenin's remarks for guidance. Vladimir Ilyich took a very stern view of shortcomings in work, but then every real success, however small, delighted him and he never failed to give credit for it.

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[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXIV*, p. 301.

In an effort to bring down the volume of paper work, Vladimir Ilyich insisted on brief written statements, repeating time and again that it was obvious enough that no one ever read or was capable of reading lengthy reports. "Write briefly, in telegraph style, attach enclosures if necessary," he wrote in one of his letters in September 1921. "I don't suppose I'd read a long report at all. If you have any practical suggestions, make a list of them in super-brief form, like a telegram, with a copy for the secretary."[1]

Usually, Vladimir Ilyich started reading the lengthy reports from the end, that is from the practical suggestion, skipping the "fiction" as he was wont to say. If the practical suggestion proved workable, he would look the whole report through. Vladimir Ilyich was an exceptionally fast reader. He needed but a glance to take in a whole page.

He never kept his visitors waiting if they came to him by appointment. On those rare occasions when he saw that the conversation he was engaged in with another earlier arrival would make him a few minutes late, he would call his secretary when the time of the next appointment fell due and send his apologies to the comrade kept waiting.

When Vladimir Ilyich received a visitor, he would usually get up and go to the door, smile and shake hands and then pull an easy chair closer to his desk and invite the man to sit down. He listened attentively, put in questions, and made comments, keeping the conversation focused on the main item.

Each talk with Vladimir Ilyich was an event which remained for ever imprinted on the memory of the person who had the good fortune to be received by him. The explanation for this was Lenin's wonderful per-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 35, p. 446.

sonality, his ability to raise the person's estimation of himself in his own eyes, and Lenin's respect for human dignity. Vladimir Ilyich could harshly scold and punish a slack worker, but he never hurt anyone's pride. Possessing a fine feeling of self-respect himself, he knew how to appreciate and spare it in every human being. Vladimir Ilyich read into the emotional state of each worker undertaking the strange and unfamiliar job of state management for the first time. Sometimes a comrade would lose faith in himself and in his own capabilities, feeling that the work was too heavy for him to shoulder, and would come to see Vladimir Ilyich in a mood of restlessness and weariness. A few words from Vladimir Ilyich were enough to lift the man's spirits and sharply change his mood. Lenin never reduced his demands on people, but he knew how to find and bring out the best in a person, uplift his spirits so that he saw new horizons opening before him and felt an influx of new strength. Lenin's ability to gauge a worker correctly and entrust him with a duty corresponding to his aptitude and capabilities made all those who worked with him feel that they were doing a big and useful job.

It is true what people say of Lenin's modesty, but one must interpret it in the most lofty communistic sense of the word and not in the vulgar sense which associates modesty with self-abasement. In Lenin, modesty was combined with a strong feeling of self-respect and a sense of tremendous responsibility before the Soviet people for all that was taking place in our country. That is why he felt the sufferings of the people so deeply and welcomed each success with such warm delight. Lenin used to say that a leader was answerable not just for what he himself did, but also for the actions of the people he was leading.

Vladimir Ilyich disliked luxury. He lived very mod-

estly, his requirements of material comforts were very moderate. Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, who loyally walked through life with Lenin, shared his habits and tastes. She wrote in her reminiscences: "People paint our life as one full of privations. That is not right. We never experienced the sort of need when one does not know what to buy bread with. Why, think of the way our comrades lived in emigration! There were some among them who went jobless for two years and had no money coming in from Russia. They actually went hungry. It was never like that with us. We lived modestly, it is true. But are abundant meals and luxurious living the joy of life?"[1] And indeed, Vladimir Ilyich and Nadezhda Konstantinovna found joy not in luxurious living, but in their struggle and work.

Lenin was usually very pleasant and polite with everyone, and had an easy manner. He never forgot to thank a person for a service rendered, even if it was as trifling as bringing him the newspaper. The charwoman who heated the stove in his office used to tell people with great feeling how kindly and pleasantly Vladimir Ilyich spoke to her if he came in when she was there. To appreciate and respect human dignity in everyone was one of Lenin's distinctive traits. He considered it loathsome and unworthy of a Soviet citizen and Communist to be rude to a person in a subordinate position.

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Lenin's constant concern for his fellowmen is well known. He used to send letters and notes to directors of institutions saying that some person or other had to be helped; he never made it an order, however, but simply a request to help a comrade with food, fire-

[1] N. K. Krupskaya, *Of Vladimir Ilyich*, 1925, p. 12.

wood, clothes, medical treatment, or give him leave. This concern of Lenin's was not only generous, it was also tactful and understanding. He was amazingly responsive to the most varied needs of the people.

Typical, in this respect, is Lenin's note addressed to the Moscow Department of Public Education in April 1921. It said: "Please make arrangements for a summer holiday for Ivan Ivanovich Skvortsov (Stepanov) in the environs of Moscow, with a kitchen garden if possible. Let me know."[1]

A. I. Khryashchova, assistant director of the Central Statistical Board, although not a member of the C.P.C., punctually attended all meetings which in those days commenced at 8.30 p.m. and ended at about 1 or 2 in the morning. Vladimir Ilyich noted this and wrote to his secretary during one of the meetings: "I'm sorry for Khryashchova if she lives far away and has to walk ... tell her she may leave earlier or even not come at all on nights when there are no statistical questions on the agenda." And, apparently afraid Khryashchova might take offence, he added: "Do it at an opportune moment and tactfully."[2]

Notes such as this Lenin usually wrote on a small writing pad, the notes were numerous but his verbal orders to the secretary were perhaps even more so: ring up such and such a comrade, ascertain what help can be offered, make definite arrangements and notify the comrade in need.

At one of the meetings of the C.L.D. the director of the Central Statistical Board, P. I. Popov, put on the agenda a request for a car to be placed at his disposal. The meeting complied with his request, but afterwards Vladimir Ilyich said to me: "He must be given a car,

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[1] *Lenin Miscellany XX*, p. 354.
[2] *Lenin Miscellany XXIV*, p. 287.

of course, but questions of this sort should not be brought before the C.L.D. meetings. Our comrades are working selflessly and are often helpless in matters of personal comfort, they have to be helped, there is too much for them to do and they can't be bothered, and so it's up to you to take care of them. You must be mother, sister, and nurse to every People's Commissar."

Vladimir Ilyich did in fact give me such jobs pretty often, and even issued a written order that I was to look after the health of A. D. Tsurupa, People's Commissar of Food. I was to see that he had proper nourishment and rest, that he left for the health home when he was due, and obeyed the doctor's orders.

In one of his letters to Tsurupa Vladimir Ilyich wrote: "You are getting quite impossible in your treatment of government property."[1] By government property he meant the health of a good worker. Vladimir Ilyich was insistent when a lengthy cure was prescribed to a worker, and called it "sending him in for a complete overhaul."

A dining-room was established at the C.P.C. on Lenin's initiative. There was famine in the country. The leading workers had only slightly better meals than the rest. One night, at a C.P.C. meeting, Tsurupa, People's Commissar of Food, fainted. The doctor who was called in put it down mainly to hunger. After that, Vladimir Ilyich said to me: "Watch the comrades well. Some of them are so emaciated, they look simply awful. Start a dining-room to feed about 30 to begin with, and include the most emaciated, the most famished." The dining-room was housed in the Kremlin, in the premises of the so-called Cavalier Wing, and at the start catered for 30 of the "most emaciated." Gradu-

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXI*, p. 280.

ally, the enterprise grew, and eventually it was removed from the Kremlin and placed under the management of the Kremlin Medical and Sanitary Inspection Department.

It was also on Lenin's initiative that the Medical Commission of the Central Committee was formed. It happened pretty often that one or another of the comrades would overwork himself so badly that the doctors would be adamant in insisting on an immediate rest and treatment. In such cases, Vladimir Ilyich demanded that the doctor's orders be obeyed to the letter. However, obedience was not always forthcoming, and as a result strength was sapped and health undermined because everyone believed himself irreplaceable and thought his going on leave would bring the work to a stop. When things went so far, Vladimir Ilyich brought the matter before the Political Bureau and left it to the secretary of the Central Committee to see that the order was carried out, i.e., that the comrade in question took his leave and treatment. However, the enthusiasm and selflessness with which the people worked made it a very hard job indeed to get them to obey. The secretariat of the Central Committee was obliged to spend a great deal of time and effort on this and, therefore, to relieve it, the Medical Commission of the Central Committee was formed on Lenin's instructions.

Lenin was a man immaculately pure in heart, a man of high principles, extremely exacting towards himself in matters big and small. Nadezhda Konstantinovna used to say that even when deciding purely personal issues Vladimir Ilyich would ask himself: "What will the workers say?" As Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Lenin remained as approachable and unassuming as he was in his emigrant days. His way of life was as modest. Lenin's life was never at odds

with the ideas he preached. In him the personal and the social made one harmonious whole.

Vladimir Ilyich was devoted to his family, he was very affectionate and full of tender concern for his wife and his sister, Maria Ilyinichna. If Nadezhda Konstantinovna fell ill he looked after her treatment himself. When that happened Vladimir Ilyich would sometimes, during a C.P.C. meeting ask me to go and see Nadezhda Konstantinovna in case she needed anything. In order not to disturb her by ringing the doorbell he would hand me the key to their flat.

Lenin set a high value on friendship and grew very attached to people. But no matter how strong the attachment it never deterred him from breaking off decisively and for good with anyone who betrayed the cause of the working class and became alien to him in ideology. That was how he broke with Martov, a friend of his youth, with Plekhanov, Potresov and others. But it would be erroneous to imagine that Lenin took it easily. Breaking with people once dear to him pained Vladimir Ilyich greatly.

* * *

The working people were devoted body and soul to Lenin. The boundless love they felt for their Ilyich found expression in the numerous letters addressed to him by the workers and peasants.

In a letter to V. I. Lenin the workers of the Klintsy Cloth Mill announced their decision to call their factory after Lenin in honour of the 5th anniversary of the October Revolution. They said:

"For this occasion we are sending you our heartfelt wishes on the holiday and a small gift of our own making.

"We shall be happy if you, our teacher and leader, will put on this suit made of cloth woven with our own hands.

"Wear it, Ilyich, with our wishes, and know that we are always with you.

"With loyalty to the Revolution and yourself.

"Workers of the Lenin Klintsy Cloth Mill,
"Klintsy, November 3, 1922."

Vladimir Ilyich answered the letter with great tact:

"Dear Comrades,

"I thank you sincerely for your good wishes and your gift. But I'll tell you in secret that presents should not be given me. I very much ask you to spread this secret request of mine as wide as you can among all the workers.

"With my best thanks, regards and wishes,
Yours V. Ulyanov (Lenin)."[1]

Early in 1919, Vladimir Ilyich received a peasant, Ivanov by name. The visitor thought it was too cold in Lenin's office. When Ivanov returned home from his business trip, he made a report at a meeting of the Volost Executive Committee. He said that Lenin approved the committee's policy, sent his regards and cordial thanks. Ivanov went on to mention that the room Lenin worked in was cold. In response, the Milinovo Volost Executive Committee of the Sudogda Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia, adopted a decision in February 1919: "To send Comrade Lenin a wagonload of firewood, payable by the executive committee, and in case of need provide him with an iron stove made by our own smith."[2]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 376.
[2] *Pravda*, February 26, 1919.

These and numerous other letters and documents show that the working people loved and trusted Lenin as their leader, and also treated him as someone infinitely near and dear to them.

Work, practically without a break or rest, resulting in overstrain, together with the long difficult years in emigration, and the after-effects of the wound dealt him by a terrorist, undermined Lenin's health too early in life. In December 1922, he had a serious attack of his illness. But even while gravely ill, Vladimir Ilyich went on working till what was virtually the limit of human endurance. Bedridden, in his Kremlin flat, Vladimir Ilyich devoted his thoughts to the cause which he had served all life long.

LENIN'S WORKING DAY

Lenin's immense capacity for work is widely known. The source that fed it was, in the first place, his perfect mastery of the method of revolutionary dialectics, and also his huge practical experience in directing the revolutionary struggle of the working class. A role of significance was also played by his extraordinary self-discipline, and his ability to order his day and make good use of every single minute. According to his sister, Maria Ilyinichna, Vladimir Ilyich had cultivated these qualities in his character from an early age.

Materials published in Lenin's Works, Lenin Miscellanies and other editions, as well as those preserved in the archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, make it possible to draw up a list of the problems and issues that took up Lenin's working day. These documents cannot cover, of course, the entire volume and content of his work, for it was highly varied in form and his everyday activity was anything but confined to the documents he wrote.

Lenin had an amazing talent for doing several things at a time, he would work on a problem of major state significance and yet give thought to matters of secondary importance, or even matters that seemed quite trifling but which served the good of the Soviet state. Just as amazing was Lenin's ability to find the time and the energy, greatly overtaxed though he was with affairs of state, to busy himself with the health, material comforts and other needs of the comrades.

When Vladimir Ilyich arrived at his office in the morning, his secretary briefly informed him of current urgent matters and accounted for the execution of his orders the day before. After that, Lenin perused the letters and documents awaiting him, issued instructions on them, talked on the telephone, received callers, gave numerous orders to his secretary and the Administrative Manager on matters that occurred to him in the course of his conversations and the perusal of letters and documents, ran through the agenda and the materials for the next meeting, presided and spoke at meetings of the C.P.C., the C.L.D., the Political Bureau and commissions, acquainted himself with the work of the Minor C.P.C., studied and endorsed the resolutions passed by the administrative meeting of the C.L.D. or the Minor C.P.C., wrote business letters and telegrams, read the latest news in international affairs, and glanced through Russian and foreign newspapers, magazines and books, sometimes making margin remarks.

In addition to this, Lenin often spoke at mass gatherings and meetings of workers, Red Army men and peasants, and delivered reports at conferences and congresses. He usually wrote out a plan of the report he was preparing to make, but he hardly ever glanced at his notes when delivering it.

Vladimir Ilyich combined his strenuous everyday work with the writing of political articles for the press and his major theoretical works. There was always a close link between his theoretical works and the practical current problems of home or international policy confronting the Soviet Government.

Moreover, Vladimir Ilyich personally directed the work of his staff. None of the workers of his small secretariat, which was also the secretariat of the C.P.C. and the C.L.D., had had any previous experience in

office work. Lenin taught us how to work, going through all the different duties of a secretariat with us. We learned from him the surest and fastest way to dispatch letters, prepare the agenda and compile pertinent material for meetings, draw up the minutes of a meeting, and notify institutions of decisions adopted, etc. The directions he gave us, verbal in most cases, invariably had a bearing on some concrete practical problem or some mistake of ours, and never came as abstract, previously evolved and ready-made instructions.

The foregoing enumeration of the tasks, different in form and nature, which made up Lenin's routine is in itself sufficient to illustrate how packed his working day was. Moreover, it stands to reason that a considerable part of his work was beyond calculation in both quantity and content. For instance, there was no tallying things that did not go on record, such as his telephone conversations, his verbal orders to the staff, the talks he had with callers and even delegations, the subject of such talks and the questions raised in the course of them.

In spite of the fact that Vladimir Ilyich hardly ever left Moscow, he was closely linked by thousands of visible and invisible ties with the entire population of the country. No one could grasp the sentiments of the masses or appreciate their needs as Lenin did. He had cultivated this acumen in the long and hard years of emigration when, cut off from Russia by distance and tsarist censorship but bound up to her in all his feelings and thoughts, he created and guided our Party, faultlessly gauging the revolutionary sentiment of the working class and peasantry.

Receiving callers took up a great deal of Lenin's time and was almost a daily occurrence. He had no set receiving days, appointments were made through the

secretary who reported the names of the applicants and the subject matter to Vladimir Ilyich each morning. Not infrequently Lenin received people on his own initiative. Thus, in February 1921, working on the problem of the transition to the new economic policy,[1] Lenin invited a group of peasants from the Beketovo Village, Bulgakovo Volost, Ufa Uyezd, to Moscow to talk about the needs of the peasants. On February 14, 1921, Lenin heard the report of N. M. Nemtsev, secretary of the Tambov Gubernia Committee, summoned to the capital in connection with the lifting of the surplus appropriation system in Tambov Gubernia before the set date. On the evening of the same day, Lenin received a delegation of Tambov Gubernia peasants. He made notes.

Vladimir Ilyich used to make a note of the appointment on his loose-leaf calendar, putting down the exact hour.

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[1] *New Economic Policy (NEP)*—the economic policy of the Soviet Government adopted when the Civil War ended, and intended for the transition period from capitalism to socialism. The New Economic Policy allowed a certain development of capitalism and freedom of trade, controlled by the proletarian state while the commanding positions remained in the hands of the state (industry, transport, finance, foreign trade monopoly, nationalized land). The policy was aimed at overcoming capitalistic elements and at building socialism. It was called "New" as compared to the policy of War Communism adopted during the years of the Civil War. To explain the meaning of the latter policy, the Soviet Government took under its control the middle-sized and small industries, in addition to large-scale industry, introduced a state monopoly of the grain trade, prohibited private trading and established the surplus-appropriation system, under which all surplus produce in the hands of the peasants was to be turned over to the state, and, lastly, introduced universal labour service. This measure bore a temporary character, necessitated by the war and problems of national defence.—*Ed.*

When making an appointment by telephone, Vladimir Ilyich would make sure that his and the other man's watches showed the same time. In his recollections, L. I. Goltsman tells how he once rang up Lenin and asked him to receive him. "Vladimir Ilyich wanted to know what time I made it, and I remember that there was a difference of three minutes between his watch and mine. Vladimir Ilyich set the hour for the appointment by my watch."

As a rule Lenin received two or three visitors a day, but sometimes the number was considerably larger. For instance, on February 9, 1921, he received eight. It took four hours of his time. The eight people included F. E. Dzerzhinsky, Chairman of the VECHEKA, M. N. Pokrovsky, Deputy People's Commissar of Public Education, Béla Kun, Secretary of the Comintern Executive Committee, O. I. Chernov, a Siberian peasant, member of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection dealing with the problems of the transition to the New Economic Policy, Deputy People's Commissar of Agriculture, the Russian Federation's Ambassador to Latvia, and Manabendra Nath Roy, a member of the Communist Party of India, with whom Lenin remained in conversation for an hour and a half. The impression which O. I. Chernov carried away from his talk with Lenin is vividly described in his recollections. He says: "What makes Lenin great? It's this. He did not listen to me as to some outstanding sort of person, of course, but *through me he listened to the peasantry as a whole, and through me he grasped the situation in the countryside in all its complexity.*"[1]

Almost every day Vladimir Ilyich had to preside at meetings of the leading Government or Party bodies

[1] *Recollections of V. I. Lenin*, Gospolitizdat, 1957, Part 2, p. 721.

and commissions (C.P.C., C.L.D., Political Bureau, Economic Commission, Finance Committee, Grain Commission and others). The last-named was formed on January 31, 1921, to exercise control over the movement of grain consignments to the centre and to remove obstacles in their way. Presiding at meetings consumed a great deal of Lenin's time.

Furthermore, one cannot take a working day of Lenin's as an isolated unit, cut off by an impenetrable wall from the preceding and following days, each bringing its own great problems for the Party, the Soviet Government and Lenin, as the leader, to solve. Even if these problems were not framed in the concrete form of a document on that particular day, they certainly continued to occupy Lenin's mind and could not but worry him.

To get a better idea of Lenin's truly titanic capacity for work, let us go through an ordinary working day of his, say, February 2, 1921.

At that time, the Party and the Soviet Government were facing a number of major problems connected with the transition from a state of war to peace-time economic construction. It was one of the most difficult periods in the life of the Soviet state: national economy in ruins; stoppage of factories; hunger and shortage of everything—foodstuff, fuel, the sheer necessities of life—growing discontent among the peasants with the policy of War Communism; kulak and Socialist-Revolutionary riots in a number of gubernias; the problem of demobilizing the army with all means of communication wrecked; and unrelaxed international tension. And within the Party: a trade-union discussion forced on the Party by Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other anti-Party groupings, diverting the strength of the Party from vital problems. Lenin's genius found the right path in all this tangle of interconnected and, occasionally,

seemingly conflicting problems, needs and requirements, and confidently led the Party and the Soviet Government along that path.

Lenin spent the first months of 1921 evolving and preparing the transition to the new economic policy, promoting the implementation of the GOELRO[1] plan, adopted by the Eighth Congress of Soviets in December 1920—a grandiose plan for the rehabilitation and development of the national economy on a socialist basis, preparing for the Third Congress of the Comintern, and making draft resolutions for the Tenth Party Congress. At the same time, Lenin had to solve a number of practical and urgent problems arising from the current needs of the day.

As evidenced by documents and the notes of secretaries, Lenin spent February 2, 1921, as follows:

Vladimir Ilyich presided at 4 meetings. The Economic Commission sat from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee from 2 to 4 p.m. At 3 p.m., while presiding at the Political Bureau meeting, Lenin was handed a telephone message from the secretary of the Petrograd Gubernia Committee advising him of the uneasy situation in Petrograd, and the stoppage of the Putilov, Baltic and some other plants as a result of the non-receipt of food rations by the workers and the shortage of fuel. Lenin wrote out the following telegram in reply: "Yesterday, Council of Defence decided to buy $18^1/_2$ million poods of coal abroad. The food situation will improve because we have today decided to allocate two more trains for grain deliveries from the Caucasus."

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[1] *GOELRO*—Plan for the Electrification of Soviet Russia. It was the first long-range plan for the development of the country's national economy, drawn up on Lenin's instructions in 1920 by the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia.—*Ed.*

Lenin speaks in Teatralnaya Square to the troops leaving for the front to fight the Polish Whites.
May 1920

Lenin reports on the international situation to the Second Congress of the Communist International held in Tavrichesky Palace. Petrograd, July 1920

From 6 to 7 p.m. Vladimir Ilyich presided at a meeting of the Central Committee commission on the reorganization of the People's Commissariat of Education. During the meeting he received a note from his secretary saying: "Could you receive Sokolov (a member of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee) today? He says his business is very urgent, he rings up several times a day, and very much asks you to receive him." On the back of the note Lenin wrote: "Very well. 1) I have Krzhizhanovsky coming today. For one hour. 2) After that Sokolov. Get his telephone number." Later that night, Vladimir Ilyich again presided at a meeting of the commission on the reorganization of the People's Commissariat of Education.

In the course of the same day, Vladimir Ilyich did the following:

Wrote letters 1) to the director of the Marx and Engels Institute enclosing a German edition of Marx's and Engels's letters and wanting to know where the parts he had underlined were taken from, where the letters had been published in full and if it was possible to buy a complete volume of letters by Marx and Engels (or photo copies of them) from Scheidemann & Co., and collect in Moscow all that had been published; 2) to N. Gorbunov, the Administrative Manager of the C.P.C., saying that our representative in America, L. K. Martens, had to be helped in the work of organizing technical assistance for our mills and factories; 3) to the vice-chairman of the Minor C.P.C. about the Commissars' reports made to the C.P.C., drawing the former's attention to the implementation of the more important resolutions, in particular to control over the distribution of living space in Moscow in view of the growing number of office employees and the decision prohibiting the employment of more workers in government bodies.

Vladimir Ilyich read (and made notes on): 1) a letter from Louise Bryant (Reed), an American journalist who requested an interview and advised that some books for Lenin had been dispatched; 2) a telegram from Rostov-on-Don in which the Chief of Staff of the Cavalry Army advised that the 16th Division had been caught in a snow-storm.

He read a note from Syromolotov dealing with the resolution passed by the C.L.D. on the mobilization of the miners, and wrote back: "Write to the Central Committee in 10-15 lines laconically and clearly."

He signed Syromolotov's credentials for his Urals assignment, authorizing him to inspect the Urals industry and take urgent steps to steeply raise its productivity.

Lenin read a letter from N. A. Semashko requesting that measures be taken in the movement of hospital trains bringing workers to the Crimea.

Lenin exchanged notes with his secretary about M. N. Pokrovsky attending the meeting of the Central Committee commission on the reorganization of the People's Commissariat of Education. He answered his secretary's note asking when he could receive Vladimirov, as follows: "Let Vladimirov leave his telephone number; *I hope* to be free by *9* or *10* tonight."

He made some amendments to the draft resolution of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on aiding the peasantry hit by crop failure.

He perused the report and draft resolution submitted by V. N. Sokolov, a member of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, on the organization of land exploitation and the food policy in Siberia. He also read a telegram from Omsk on the situation in Siberia, and made some notes.

After making some amendments Lenin signed the minutes of a C.L.D. administrative meeting, which in-

cluded 59 items and 15 resolutions on matters of fuel (extraction, loading, delivery), on securing specialists in motor transport, workers for ship repairing and shipbuilding, appointing Red Army surveyors to the Department of Geodesy of the All-Russian Council of National Economy, etc.

Lenin approved and signed 6 items (out of 12) of the minutes of the Minor C.P.C. meeting on matters of finance.

He approved and signed the minutes of the Economic Commission's meeting.

Lenin signed the resolution of the C.P.C. and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on measures to combat desertion, the C.P.C. decision on "Polish war prisoners" and on "Placing at the disposal of the Revolutionary Committee of the Autonomous Votsk Region the sum of 1,500,000,000 rubles to cover the first half of 1921."

He endorsed a provisional ruling on the payment of bonuses in kind.

During the course of the day, February 2, 1921, Vladimir Ilyich wrote, read, made notes on or signed no less than 40 documents, not counting the papers discussed at meetings at which he presided.

That same day, Vladimir Ilyich received G. M. Krzhizhanovsky,[1] chairman of the State Planning Committee, Vladimirov, Deputy People's Commissar of Finance, V. N. Sokolov, member of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, and a Czech comrade, Ruzicka.

And that was just an ordinary working day for Lenin.

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[1] G. M. Krzhizhanovsky (1872-1959)—one of the oldest workers of the revolutionary movement, a scholar in energetics, Party member since 1893.—*Ed.*

LENIN'S OFFICE IN THE KREMLIN

The truly primitive conditions in which Vladimir Ilyich had to work in 1918 and 1919 are difficult to picture now.

They actually seem hard to justify, and yet they had their explanation in the situation then obtaining: the country was war-ravaged, the very existence of the Soviet state was threatened daily, and an intense struggle was on.

The other institutions had inherited the old apparatuses which for all their many imperfections, still had the necessary experience and were outwardly well equipped. The apparatus of the Council of People's Commissars—the first workers' and peasants' government in history—naturally had to be built up anew, and most of the people had never done office work before. This had its good side, and it was precisely this absence of bureaucratic staleness that set the apparatus of the C.P.C. to advantage against those of the other institutions.

We ourselves built the apparatus of the C.P.C., and we approached the task creatively. But, alas, how often we found ourselves making discoveries made long before us! Step by step, slowly and gradually we learned to work and make working conditions more convenient for Vladimir Ilyich.

I want to describe Vladimir Ilyich's office in the Kremlin the way it was at the very beginning and the way it remained, with but few changes, to our days.

Vladimir Ilyich spent most of his time in that room during his five years of work in Moscow. The modestly furnished room was the centre to which the thoughts, hopes and love of people were directed from all ends of the globe, the place where the greatest genius of our time worked and fought for people's happiness.

When the government first moved to Moscow from Petrograd, the entire premises of the C.P.C. in the Kremlin comprised six rooms in a row, including Lenin's office. His own flat of four small, very modestly furnished rooms adjoined the C.P.C. premises at the end of a wide corridor. Eventually, when the premises of the C.P.C. spread on to another wing of the building, a room was added to Vladimir Ilyich's flat. During his illness it was used by the doctors on duty.

To get to the office from his flat, Vladimir Ilyich had to go along the corridor. In 1918, the whole of it except for a narrow passage, was taken up with the telegraph, where work went on at a hard pace day and night, transmitting and receiving telegrams, and making telephone connections by direct line. It was this telegraph that was used for all urgent and confidential communications; the operators were tested people and could be relied upon.

Anyone who came to see Vladimir Ilyich in 1918 will remember the telegraph: it was an inseparable part of Lenin's office. It was the nerve centre of the country's life. It was here that reports from all the fighting fronts were received, and it was from here that orders were transmitted.

The door into the office through which Vladimir Ilyich usually went leads from this corridor. The door into the street directly faces it. Towards the end of 1918, the telegraph was transferred elsewhere, and a sentry was placed in the corridor outside the office

door. Later, the sentry was replaced by a worker of the VECHEKA.

Whoever was on his way to the C.P.C. passed that door, and in those days anyone who had any business with the C.P.C. had all but free admittance.

Another door leads from the office into the so-called "booth" (the Kremlin "upstairs" switchboard). The "booth" was as inseparable a part of Vladimir Ilyich's office as the telegraph out in the corridor, and remained as such to the end. All the comrades who used to come to see Lenin in those days will certainly remember both the "booth" and the telegraph. Contact could be made from the "booth" with the offices and homes of People's Commissars, the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B)., the headquarters of the Red Army, with Petrograd, Kharkov and other towns.

It was a time of fighting fronts, "disastrous situations," crises and whiteguard plots. At first there were no telephones in Vladimir Ilyich's office, and he made his calls from the "booth." In crucial moments, when everyone gathered around Vladimir Ilyich, other comrades came into the "booth" as well. The telephone operators of 1918 and 1919 were tried and tested workers who had come with the Council of People's Commissars from Smolny.[1] Vladimir Ilyich called them his secretaries and often gave them odd jobs to do, such as sending letters, taking down requests for an appointment and notifying the comrades when they would be received, delivering messages by telephone, etc. The

[1] *Smolny*—a building in Petrograd which prior to the Revolution housed a boarding-school for noblemen's daughters. In 1917 Smolny was turned into the Headquarters of the October Revolution. It was from there that Lenin directed the armed uprising. After the overthrow of the Provisional Government it was taken over by the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.—*Ed.*

"booth" was the first to hear all the news. There was a door leading from it on to the staircase, while the one into the office was never locked. There were several cases of strangers making their way into Lenin's office absolutely unchecked through the "booth." After that the outer door was kept locked and a sentry was placed outside it with orders to let no one in but the few comrades whose names were put down on a special list.

I remember Tsurupa, the People's Commissar of Food who had once fainted from overwork and hunger at a C.P.C. meeting, wanting to use the sofa in the "booth" for a few minutes' rest, and how vainly he pleaded with the sentry to let him in!

Eventually, when telephones had been installed in Lenin's office and life began to flow more smoothly, the functions of the "booth," apart from the switchboard, included carrying out Vladimir Ilyich's small commissions.

The staff of telephone operators was changed too. Vladimir Ilyich turned to the "booth" very often, especially if he wanted a letter sent off with the utmost dispatch and a reply brought back promptly. On his instructions we kept a record of the covers he handed us, marking the time of dispatch and receipt. During Lenin's illness, connection with Gorki[1] was maintained through the "booth," which received and forwarded to Vladimir Ilyich whatever he needed.

The third door in the office led into the conference hall, originally a room with two windows called the

[1] *Gorki*—a spot 35 km. away from Moscow where, beginning from the end of September 1918, V. I. Lenin used to spend his days of rest. It was there that he wrote many of his works. The last year of his life, from the middle of May, 1923, he lived in Gorki and he passed away there on January 21, 1924. The house he lived in has now been turned into a museum.—*Ed.*

"Red Hall." In the years 1918 and 1919, Vladimir Ilyich used to spend every single evening in that room, for in those days the C.P.C. met daily except for Sundays. With all the men smoking, one could hardly breathe there. When Vladimir Ilyich returned to work after recuperating from his wound, the doctors found it necessary to forbid him to work in a smoke-filled room, and smoking in the conference hall was thereafter prohibited. In 1921 the wall into the next room, a two-windowed one as well, was pulled down to make a spacious conference hall with four windows in a row.

During Lenin's lifetime the secretariat of the C.P.C. used to work in the conference hall. The reason for this was lack of space, for one thing, and also the need to be close at hand in order to execute Vladimir Ilyich's orders without delay.

All Lenin's orders were treated with exceptional promptness and accuracy. I recall a funny thing that happened once when a worker of ours over-zealously carried out Vladimir Ilyich's order to the letter. One evening (I believe it was in 1920) he said to the secretary on duty: "I want the whole collegium of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture." He meant a list of the members, of course, but the secretary took him literally and began to put urgent calls through to all the members summoning them to the office. One can well imagine the commotion that ensued. The misunderstanding was cleared up only when Vladimir Ilyich, tired of waiting, called the secretary in and repeated his order. Urgent calls had to be put through again to call the order off. When Vladimir Ilyich heard about the misunderstanding for which his inexact wording of the order was partly to blame, he said contritely: "Did I really say that!"

All the people received by Lenin used to come into his office through the door connecting it with the con-

ference hall. His closest comrades, a few of them, came in directly from the corridor, having first received permission by telephone.

To think of the hundreds of people who, in the course of the five years, entered Lenin's room with their troubles unsolved, and left it hopefully inspired by him, with new horizons spread out before them, with strength revived!

The original appointments of the room remained practically unaltered to the end. As time went on certain additions were made but the style remained unchanged. The main features of this small, modest room with its two windows were simplicity and usefulness. There was hardly anything in the room that held no meaning for Vladimir Ilyich or did not in some way reflect his personality. The exception was a big, ancient clock that always showed the wrong time. To Vladimir Ilyich a clock was bad enough if it gained or lost a minute a day, and this one erred by as much as fifteen sometimes! The old watch-maker who wound and repaired all the clocks in the Kremlin for many a decade, was called in time and again by Vladimir Ilyich about the clock, but it must have been past repair. Vladimir Ilyich, however, refused to have it replaced. "The others will be just as bad," he would say. But the old clock was eventually replaced by a new one, just the same.

There were no draperies on either the doors or the windows of the office. Such was Lenin's wish. He disliked draperies and could not stand drawn curtains because a room seemed cramped and stuffy to him if there was a curtain cutting it off from the outer world.

A temperature of 14° C. had to be kept up in the office. Vladimir Ilyich did not take well to a higher room temperature.

He was used to his office and liked it. He refused our many offers to move his office into a larger and better room in another wing of the building, and as resolutely refused to have his desk changed for a better and bigger one.

Every single thing lying on his desk, which stood practically in the middle of the room, had its own set place and purpose. To the right there were three telephones with amplifiers. Everyone knows what an important role the telephone played in Lenin's work and how often he used it. One can well appreciate, therefore, how angry Vladimir Ilyich got when connection was bad, especially long-distance, with poor audibility, interruptions and outside noises. We handled many a written and verbal order from Vladimir Ilyich addressed to the Administrative Manager of the C.P.C., to the People's Commissar of Post and Telegraph, and to other officials charging them with getting the telephone to work faultlessly. However, it was evidently more than anyone could do, and the faults were very slow to be corrected.

I remember speaking to Vladimir Ilyich on the telephone early in 1922 when he was staying in Gorki. A telephone with a direct line had been installed for him there, and he dictated his instructions and letters to me. But even that telephone was not without fault. Noises and interferences were particularly annoying to Vladimir Ilyich then, probably because his illness had already begun to develop. He would comment on the working of the telephone in practically every single conversation. "Now, today the telephone has been working well," he would say, or "I could hear you well a minute ago, but now it's become worse for some reason," and so on. We particularly remember the Kharkov line which Vladimir Ilyich used very often and which was always breaking down.

As a rule there were some files lying on the desk to his left. All the years I worked for Vladimir Ilyich, I kept trying, both on his instructions and on my own initiative, to make those files of better use to him in his work, but I never managed it. Vladimir Ilyich would tell me to start different files for him for papers that were urgent, not urgent, important, less important, dealt with, pending, and so on. I would get the files, put in the papers in proper order, pin a note on each one giving the gist of the matter, and enclose a list of contents. The files were then placed on the desk in the most "convincing" order and . . . and remained there undisturbed. If Vladimir Ilyich had to leave the room he simply swept all the papers he needed into the centre of the table and anchored them down with a huge pair of scissors. That meant "do not touch." Or else he would thrust all the papers he needed into some file that had no bearing on the matter at all, and take it away with him. The file would assume vital importance with Vladimir Ilyich working on the documents it contained. At last it would swell out of all proportion, because Vladimir Ilyich kept adding more and more papers to it which for one reason or another engaged his attention, and would not let anyone touch them for a while. As soon as he let me, I would sort out the accumulated papers, file them in the corresponding files, and transfer the out-dated papers to the archives.

Although these attempts at orderly filing invariably met with failure, Vladimir Ilyich for some reason kept bringing the matter up. He even said to me once: "Such and such has all his papers in order, and I simply can't learn to do it." Finally, we started for him a large file divided into sections, but the result was no different. The section "most urgent and most important" lived an active life, and the rest "slept in peace." Life was mov-

ing at such high speed, there was so much that was "most urgent and most important" in it, that no time could be spared for the rest. After all, papers were not of paramount importance in Lenin's work; he had a way of learning all that he needed to know through conversations and observations.

Vladimir Ilyich always kept his desk drawers locked except for the top left one where he put his written orders and instructions. We would take them out several times a day for immediate execution.

One day, Vladimir Ilyich had been receiving a delegation from Bukhara. After the men had gone we found to our surprise that the door leading from the office into the conference hall was locked on the inside, although it was an hour when Vladimir Ilyich always went home for dinner. Thinking that it was the Cheka man, guarding the door into the corridor, who had locked it, and worried that Vladimir Ilyich's orders left in the desk for us would not be carried out in time, we started banging on the door for all we were worth. In a minute or two it was opened by Vladimir Ilyich himself, wreathed in smiles and wearing a robe, the national dress of Bukhara, presented him by the delegation. He had locked the door to try it on.

A large pair of scissors was a fixture on Lenin's desk to cut open envelopes marked "Personal, Not to be Opened by Anyone Else," which contained highly confidential letters from his closest comrades and were thus marked on Vladimir Ilyich's suggestion. There was also a mother-of-pearl paper knife. Vladimir Ilyich used to say about it with comical amazement: "I mentioned in passing that I'd like a knife like that, and the very next day I had one sent to me!"

It must be said that Vladimir Ilyich was as annoyed and angered by inefficiency, and as ready to scold the culprit properly, as he was delighted with a job well

and promptly done, grudging no praise, even if the matter were small. I well remember how pleased he was with the wall calendar put out by the State Publishing House for 1919 or 1920. The numerals were so colossal, one could easily see them from the other end of the room. Vladimir Ilyich said with a twinkle in his eye: "Our people know how to make those things. Amazing!" The calendar was hung above the sofa facing Vladimir Ilyich's desk, and he used to tear off the leaves himself.

He always had a number of pens and well-sharpened pencils on his desk, and also a bottle of mucilage with a rubber stopper, which he called the "mucilage with the nose." He used it to seal letters of top secrecy.

When Vladimir Ilyich handed us a top secret letter to send off, he would invariably say: "Punch it, run a string through and seal down the ends yourself," adding with a smile: "D'you know how to do it?"

Vladimir Ilyich was very fond of a joke. Speaking of the way he worked, I think it can be said that he worked jovially. He had an amazing sense of humour. One could hear him breaking into a laugh now and again when he was talking to someone in his office, and he often laughed at C.P.C. meetings, too. He had an extraordinarily infectious laughter, without any malice in it ever. It was the laughter of a man of ebullient energy and vigour. This ebullience of his infected others, and the people around him lived eagerly, happily and joyfully. It was only in the last ten weeks (October-December 1922), when his illness was already weighing heavily on him, that his laughter sounded more rarely. He had a way of making his orders with a joke or a smile. It was a joy to work with him, and no matter how exacting he was, how stiff the discipline he instilled, we all took it very readily.

Vladimir Ilyich disliked overstuffed chairs, and the one at his desk was a plain wooden armchair with a wicker-work back and seat. Another one like it was kept for him in the conference hall.

In 1918, after a small meeting held in Vladimir Ilyich's office, he told me to get him "an ordinary human table on four legs, at which one could both sit and write" (that is, not a writing desk with drawers down both sides). This table was placed at right angles to the writing desk, and several large leather armchairs were put around it. When someone came in to see Vladimir Ilyich, he would rise and pull up one of the armchairs to the desk and move close to his visitor. He had a way of bending forward a little the better to hear. Vladimir Ilyich made a wonderful listener if the conversation was worth while.

On his request a piece of felt was laid on the floor under his desk because his feet were chilly. One day we replaced the felt with a white bearskin rug. Vladimir Ilyich reproved me sternly for this uncalled-for luxury, and it was not until I had assured him that I had allegedly seen rugs like that in the rooms of not very big workers in other institutions, that he became somewhat reconciled to the change.

On the desk there was a reading lamp with a green glass shade. In the evenings, if he was alone, Vladimir Ilyich used only this lamp and did not switch on the chandelier. He never once left his office without first switching off all the lights, and if he discovered the light left on by one of us, he would make sure to scold us next morning for wasting electric energy. In the autumn of 1922, the glass lamp-shade was replaced by a silk one, on Vladimir Ilyich's request.

Vladimir Ilyich used the writing pad he always had before him on his desk to jot down notes, instructions,

and the names of comrades requesting an appointment. Occasionally he also used his loose-leaf calendar for notes.

There was a small table beside the door leading into the corridor on which atlases and maps were kept. Maps meant a great deal in Lenin's work. A whole stack of them was kept in the bottom drawer of one of the bookcases. Pasted on to the stove wall by Vladimir Ilyich himself was a small map of Russia's borders with Persia and Turkey. It seemed useless to me, but Vladimir Ilyich would not let me take it down saying that he was used to it being there. Altogether he liked the things about him in the room to be familiar and unchangeable. It was as if he found relaxation from the life packed with events in this tranquility of things, unchanging and never shifting from their old, familiar places.

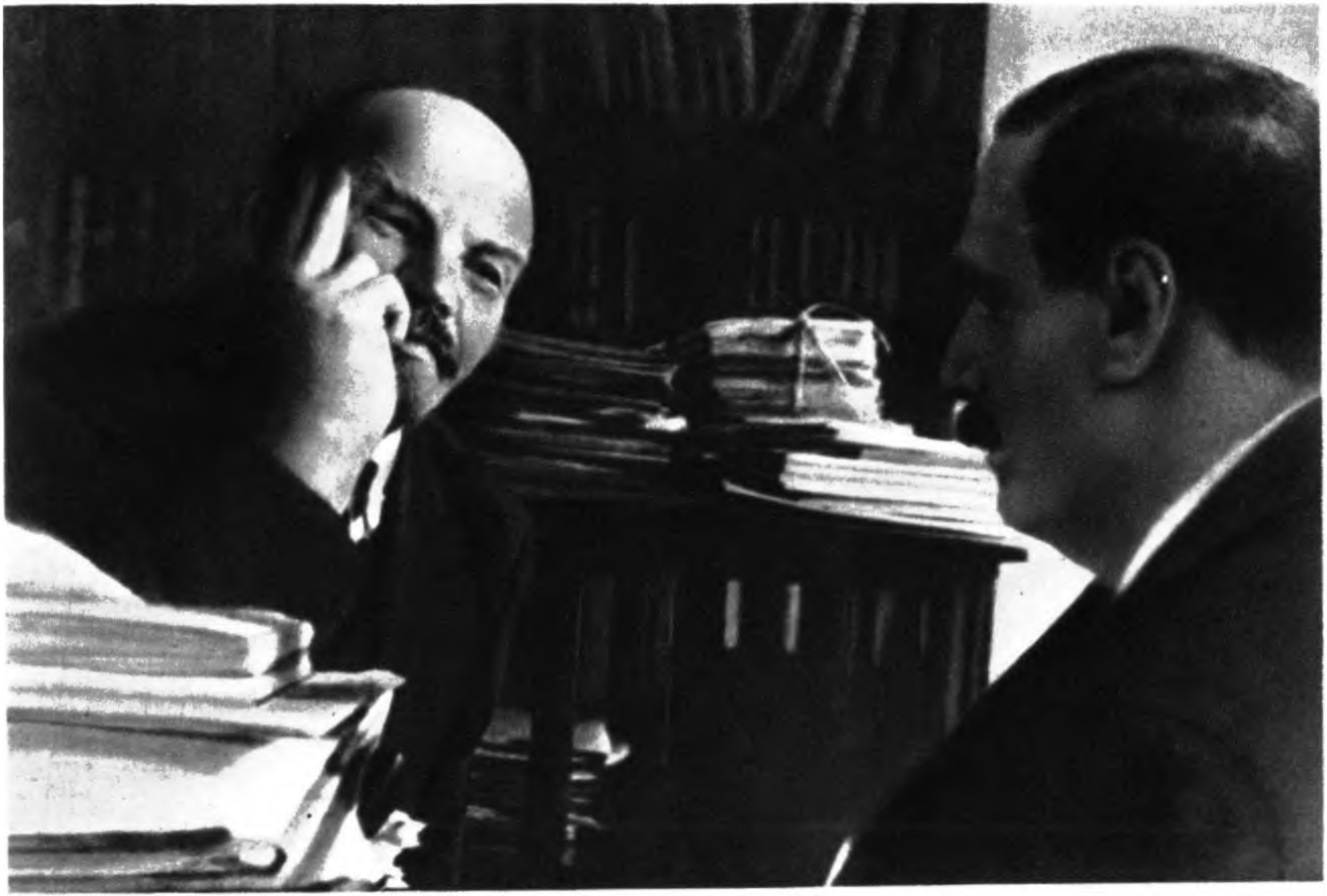
One map or another, depending on the part of the country where the Civil War was at its most decisive, was usually spread out on the "ordinary human table." Vladimir Ilyich often said he would like to have some sort of contrivance so that unfolded maps could always be available for use and a quick change of maps could be made as the need arose. I hunted long and vainly for a contrivance like that, and at long last (late in 1919 or early in 1920, I think) managed to get an engineer to make me what I wanted. It was a large construction, and it took up the whole wall space between the door leading into the corridor and that leading into the conference hall. The large map of the Russian Federation's railways which used to hang there had to be put between the two windows, necessitating the banishment of a pier glass for which, though it had always been there, Vladimir Ilyich had no use at all. To describe the new contraption twelve large maps were pasted on to a square of linen stretched on a

frame supported on a stand about a yard in height. There was a handle to the frame and by turning it one could move the linen-backed maps up and down. It had taken ten workmen, the engineer said, to make the device. When it was delivered at last there was a great deal of excitement, and I confess I blamed the engineer, quite undeservedly perhaps, because the maps were not pasted on too smoothly and the whole thing moved crookedly. However, Vladimir Ilyich was pleased and dismissed the flaws good-naturedly. "It's a difficult job," he said, "pasting paper on linen without wrinkles, so how could we be expected to do it yet!"

Bookshelves of a Swedish type took up all the free wall space in the room. Vladimir Ilyich had a small library of approximately two thousand volumes. His Marxist literature included works by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Plekhanov, Rosa Luxemburg and others. He had Granat, Brockhaus and Efron, and other encyclopedias. Two of the bookcases along the left wall contained Russian literature: Tolstoi, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Uspensky, Leskov, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Chekhov, Gorky and others. The works of publicists and revolutionary democrats were also kept there: Radishchev, Herzen, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Pisarev, Chernyshevsky and others.

In the beginning Vladimir Ilyich had no librarian, and the books were simply put on the shelves without any system.

Later, a certain young comrade who had some knowledge of the business was appointed to sort the books out and draw up a catalogue. In 1920 Sh. M. Manucharyants, a member of the State Publishing House staff, was invited to run the library. Order was established little by little, and the books were arranged in sections. There was a small section of fiction, comprising, for the most part, Russian classics. Other sections



Lenin talks with H. G. Wells in his study in the Kremlin.
October 1920

Lenin and N. K. Krupskaya among peasants of Kashino Village at the opening of the Kashino Electric Power Station. November 1920

were devoted to Marxist literature, encyclopedias, the writings of publicists, foreign literature and so on. Vladimir Ilyich wanted all the latest publications to be kept in the bottom drawer of one of the bookcases that happened to be empty at the time. And although he did have to squat before it to leaf through them, he refused to let us move the books elsewhere, saying that he was used to them being there.

Running through the lists of books sent him and the bibliographic sections of newspapers, Vladimir Ilyich would tick off the books he wanted ordered with a red or blue pencil, or else he would write a note about it and place it in his left-hand drawer. From the time the librarian took over, he had the books delivered to him the very next day. "Imagine, I only wrote about it yesterday, and the books are here already!" he would remark with the pleasure and comical amazement he usually showed in such cases.

To the left and right of his desk there were two revolving stands. A selection of Party and Soviet literature which Vladimir Ilyich might need for reference in his work, as well as some dictionaries, were kept on the right-hand stand. Vladimir Ilyich himself saw to it that the selection was wisely made. He often referred to it, and he also made extensive use of encyclopedias.

The left-hand stand had partitions put in on Vladimir Ilyich's instructions in order that files could be stood there upright and space cleared from them on the desk. On this stand Vladimir Ilyich used to keep books which he intended to go through soon.

One of the reference books constantly used by Vladimir Ilyich was a railway guide which usually lay on his desk. It disappeared one day to the annoyance of Vladimir Ilyich because he had been making notes in it. He told us to circulate an inquiry among all the comrades who frequented his office to return the guide

if they had taken it, in exchange for a clean copy, but the inquiry yielded no results and the book was never found. Vladimir Ilyich wrote "Lenin's Copy" on his new guide, and told us not to strew books about the room since people were apt to forget to return a book they had borrowed.

Behind the desk, to the right and left of the bookcases standing against the wall, there were two book stands on which were kept complete bound sets of Russian newspapers and foreign ones in files marked "French," "German," "English" and "Italian." A bound set of *Pravda* for 1917, in photocopies, was also kept there.

Another book stand was in front of the window, and on it we used to keep Russian newspapers for the current month and some of the files.

Facing that book stand there was a large tubbed palm. Vladimir Ilyich was very fond of it and always took care of it himself, sending for the gardener whenever it showed signs of wilting. Vladimir Ilyich disliked cut flowers because they were so short-lived and would never have any in his room.

On the shelf above the sofa there was a portrait of Marx, presented to Vladimir Ilyich by the Petrograd Soviet, and a bas-relief of Khalturin[1] by the sculptor Altman. The word "Khalturin" was sunk in and was barely decipherable. Vladimir Ilyich outlined the name in chalk saying that it was not everybody who knew whose portrait it was. Later, Altman made the inscription in gold paint.

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[1] S. N. Khalturin (1856-1882)—a Russian revolutionary, a worker who founded one of the first workers' organizations in Russia, the Northern Union of Russian Workers. Khalturin was executed in 1882 for participation in the murder of the Odessa military procurator.—*Ed.*

There were several souvenirs on the desk—all gifts from the working people to Lenin. There was a cast-iron monkey examining a human skull, a writing set of Caucasian workmanship, a carbolite ink-well with two small hanging lamps, and an ash-tray with a lighter shaped like a shell.

There were no photographs of Vladimir Ilyich either in his office or in any of the Council rooms where he was liable to go. He thrust them away with indignation whenever he happened to come across one, and only had them taken through sheer necessity and the dauntless energy of the photographers. They stopped at nothing to get a picture of Lenin. There was Otsup, for instance, a photographer known for his push, who came to the Council one day in October 1922 and, deceiving me into believing he had an appointment with Vladimir Ilyich for that hour, followed me right into the office without waiting to be asked. Vladimir Ilyich was very much annoyed at this intrusion, but agreed to be photographed just the same.

Many artists and sculptors wanted to make portraits of Lenin, but as a rule he flatly refused them. He finally gave in to Altman's pleas, however, and in 1920 agreed to sit for a bust provided he would have freedom of action during the sittings. Altman promised to finish it in 2 or 3 sittings, but actually it took him about two months, I believe, working several hours almost every day. At the same time, in 2 or 3 sittings of no more than half an hour each, Andreyev made some pencilled sketches of Vladimir Ilyich and a miniature sculpture of his head.

During the sittings Vladimir Ilyich went on working, speaking on the telephone, receiving callers, writing and generally behaving as if he did not know the sculptor was there.

Besides Vladimir Ilyich no one used the office except Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov.[1] While Lenin was recuperating from his wound, inflicted on August 30, 1918, Y. M. Sverdlov was instructed by him to work in the office for 2 or 3 hours a day to deal with the most urgent and important matters. This went on for about two weeks.

The last day Vladimir Ilyich spent working in his office was December 12, 1922.

A few months later we were shattered with grief to see Vladimir Ilyich being carried out of the building on stretchers and put in a car destined for Gorki.

After that, Vladimir Ilyich looked into his office only once, and then only for a minute. It was on October 18, 1923. Taking a walk in the garden at Gorki, he suddenly turned his steps to the garage, got into his car and told the driver to take him to Moscow. He arrived there in the afternoon of October 18. He spent the night at his flat; in the morning he looked into the conference hall and his office, and went out for a walk in the Kremlin grounds. After dinner, he started back for Gorki, driving through the main streets of the capital, and past the agricultural exhibition then in preparation in the Neskuchny Gardens. It was Lenin's last trip to Moscow.

There are many portraits of Vladimir Ilyich, and many books of recollections about him. But to people who had never known or seen Lenin none of these portraits give a true-to-life physical likeness, and as for his spiritual portrait, this is even harder to paint.

[1] Y. M. Sverdlov (1885-1919)—one of the outstanding organizers and builders of the Communist Party and the Soviet state. Lenin's closest associate. After the October Revolution Sverdlov was Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.—*Ed.*

Vladimir Ilyich's personality had so many facets and such enormous significance, that a true portrait of him could only be created by dint of common endeavour, with people who had known him well working collectively, putting in ever new strokes and new details descriptive of his appearance, his life and his activity.

It is precisely this aim my book would pursue: to add a few more strokes, a few more details, authentically true I honestly believe, to the collective work on Lenin's portrait.

ABOUT THE FIRST MONTHS OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS WORK IN MOSCOW

(March-May 1918)

At 8 p.m. on March 11, 1918, the Soviet Government headed by V. I. Lenin arrived in Moscow. The next day, March 12, the newspaper *Izvestia of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee* No. 46 carried Lenin's article "The Chief Task of Our Day" evidently written on the train or late the night before at the National Hotel where Vladimir Ilyich put up on arrival in Moscow. Moscow became the capital of the Soviet state.

The Brest-Litovsk Peace[1] had just been concluded, the Seventh Party Congress was just over, having adopted Lenin's resolution on war and peace in the face of the "Left Communists' "[2] determined objec-

[1] The Peace Treaty concluded in Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, between Soviet Russia on the one part and Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey on the other, put an end to Russia's participation in the imperialist World War.

The terms of the peace treaty were exceptionally severe, but the young Soviet Republic needed a respite to organize an army and to accumulate strength for the defeat of the counter-revolution within the country and the forces of the foreign intervention.

The treaty was annulled after the November revolution in Germany (1918).—*Ed.*

[2] An anti-Party group formed in 1918 and headed by Bukharin, Radek and Pyatakov, which took a stand against the Party over the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. This group of "Left Communists" masking their policy by Left phraseology on rev-

tions. The "Leftists" headed by Bukharin flatly refused to join the Central Committee of the Party, and, notwithstanding the Central Committee resolutions and categorical proposals, took no part in its work until the group of "Left Communists" was defeated in the summer of 1918. The "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries[1] also conducted a frenzied campaign against the conclusion of the distressing Brest-Litovsk Peace.

What was then the principal task which Lenin set the Party and the Soviet Government under the circumstances? It was to cast away all despondency, all "revolutionary" phrase-mongering about the conclusion of the distressing peace, and muster up strength to start laying a strong foundation for socialist society, stone by stone, and to work indefatigably to build up discipline and self-discipline, on better organization, order, accounting and control. This course of action alone could lead to the creation of a military and a socialist might, to the remaking of destitute, impotent Russia into a powerful and plentiful state.

olutionary war, actually pursued an adventurist policy of involving the young Soviet Republic, which had not yet any army, in a war with imperialist Germany, exposing the Soviet power to peril.

Under Lenin's leadership, the Party resolutely repulsed the policy of provocateurs pursued by the "Left Communists" and defeated them.—*Ed.*

[1] The Left Wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, a petty-bourgeois party formed in Russia in 1902. The "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries seceded from the Party and formed an independent party in 1917. While desirous of retaining their influence over the peasant masses (the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries considered themselves a peasant party) they officially recognized Soviet power, whereas in actual fact they reflected the interests of the kulaks. However, with the development of the class struggle in the countryside, they became the organizers of kulak revolts. The "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries, as did the "Left Communists," opposed the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace. Later they connived in plots against the Soviet power.—*Ed.*

The above-mentioned newspaper article already carried the thoughts which Lenin developed somewhat later in his paper "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government."

A circular telegram signed by Lenin and Bonch-Bruyevich was sent to all Soviets of Working People's Deputies—city, uyezd and gubernia, notifying everyone of the government's removal to Moscow and instructing all mail and telegrams to be henceforth addressed to the Council of People's Commissars, Moscow.

On March 12, Lenin visited the Kremlin for the first time since the Revolution. He came in a car with Bonch-Bruyevich, driving in through the Troitskie Gate. Vladimir Ilyich, on making the rounds of the Kremlin, was very anxious to know whether all the treasures of the palaces and the Armoury had been preserved.

That same day Lenin made a speech on current problems at a meeting of the Moscow Soviet held in the large hall of the Polytechnical Museum.

In the evening, Lenin spoke at a meeting to mark the anniversary of the February Revolution held at the Alexeyevsky Manège in Lefortovo, attended by approximately ten thousand people.

The Fourth Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets, convened for the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, was held in the Hall of Columns, at the House of Trade Unions (formerly the Club of Nobility) on March 14 to 16. On March 13, Vladimir Ilyich spoke at the Bolshevik faction of the congress. He delivered a comprehensive report on the ratification of the peace treaty to the congress (March 14), and a concluding speech (March 15).

The congress had a very big attendance—1,232 delegates. The *Izvestia* No. 48 of March 15, 1918, said: "By 6 p.m. the hall of the former Club of Nobility was

packed. All seating accommodation, both provided and improvised, was literally jammed with listeners."

M. N. Pokrovsky, greeting the congress on behalf of the workers, peasants and soldiers of Moscow Region, said: "The Moscow proletariat welcomes you, the true representatives of Russia's working people."

The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, "Left Communists," Mensheviks and anarchists, in an effort to break the congress, persisted in their campaign against the signing of the Brest Peace. However, they were in the minority. The congress adopted the resolution submitted by Lenin by an overwhelming majority of votes given by name. The seven Left Socialist-Revolutionaries included in the government on December 10, 1917, who had sworn to pursue the policy of the C.P.C. but were actually hindering the work, announced their resignation from the C.P.C. after the Fourth Congress of Soviets, on orders from their Central Committee. At the same time they retained their offices in the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and local Soviets with the intention of carrying on their fight there.

Lenin knew beforehand that the Brest Treaty was not durable or workable, and clearly foresaw the imminent and inevitable collapse of the military strength of German imperialism.

In his recollections, V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich says:

"We were already in Moscow when the German Government sent us the peace treaty, printed in Russian and German in excellent type, on excellent paper, excellently bound. I received it at the Administrative Office of the C.P.C., and took it to Vladimir Ilyich at once. He took the volume in his hands, looked at it and said with a laugh: 'The binding is good, the print is beautiful, but before six months are up there will not be a trace left of this pretty piece of paper.' "

The business of accommodating and setting up the commissariats took up the greater part of our first few days in Moscow. The leading comrades, as well as the personnel of some of the institutions, were accommodated in hotels where bookings had been made in advance. Vladimir Ilyich, Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Maria Ilyinichna put up at the National Hotel (the First House of Soviets), as did Y. M. Sverdlov, J. V. Stalin, F. E. Dzerzhinsky, V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich, A. D. Tsurupa and others. The People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs had rooms at the Metropol Hotel (Second House of Soviets), and the *Pravda* editorial office—at the Dresden Hotel. The People's Commissariat of Railways and the All-Russian Council of National Economy took up the Delovoi Dvor. Other hotels and large buildings were also put at the disposal of the government bodies.

It is difficult to establish now precisely how long Vladimir Ilyich stayed at the National Hotel, but it must have been not more than ten or fourteen days. The premises for the C.P.C. Administrative Office were made ready before Vladimir Ilyich's Kremlin flat was. While the repairs to his flat were going on, he lived for a while in the Cavalier Wing of the Kremlin, having moved there from the hotel. Vladimir Ilyich occupied two rooms. A memorial plaque was unveiled there on March 12, 1958. It was from these rooms that Lenin went to preside at the first meetings of the C.P.C. in Moscow. He moved into his own flat in April, either the middle or the end of the month, next to the C.P.C. premises in the former court building.

The C.P.C., Lenin's office and flat were all housed in the same wing of the building, on the second floor. In 1918 the planning and the appointments of the rooms were somewhat different from what they were in later years.

As of March 11, 1918, the staff of the Administrative Office of the C.P.C. numbered 43 people who were transferred from Smolny, and comprised, in the main, junior and service personnel such as charwomen, telephone operators, bicycle messengers, mailing clerks, typists, etc. In the beginning, the secretariat proper of the C.P.C. comprised only 4 or 5 people, but by the end of May 1918, another 18 people had been taken on. The staff of the Administrative Office of the C.P.C. was quite small compared to the swollen and unwieldy commissariat staffs.

The first meeting of the C.P.C. in Moscow took place on March 18, which like the second meeting (March 19) was devoted to questions of organization. The first question up for discussion, proposed by Y. M. Sverdlov, was the "All-Ministry Crisis," that is, the need to appoint People's Commissars to offices resigned by the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries and "Left Communists." The business of the day included appointing men to the posts of People's Commissars of Agriculture, Justice, Post and Telegraph, State Property, and to the post of Chairman of the All-Russian Council of National Economy. A resolution was adopted on the establishment of a People's Commissariat of Social Maintenance to replace the existing Commissariat of State Charity, on the setting up of a Supreme Military Council, etc., etc.

The very first meeting adopted a decision on the proposal submitted by Sverdlov to close down immediately the Moscow bourgeois newspapers, bring the editors and publishers before the revolutionary court, and apply the harshest penalties in their cases.

As from March 18, meetings of the C.P.C. took place almost daily, with the exception of Sundays and sometimes Thursdays when meetings of the Political Bureau were held instead.

The day and hour of the next meeting were recorded in the minutes of the preceding one. As a rule, the meetings began at 8 p.m. and occasionally at 6 or 7 p.m.

The personnel of the Council of People's Commissars—the first people's government in the world—was fresh and eager, but it lacked experience, traditions and knowledge of office routine. Our duties included preparing material for and working at C.P.C. meetings, checking incoming mail addressed to Vladimir Ilyich, and reading a great number of letters coming in from the working people. But a special and all-important duty was to carry out Vladimir Ilyich's orders, report to him on all urgent matters and on inquiries made by People's Commissars. It is to be regretted that we did not make a record of the orders at the time, and at this late date they cannot be recalled, of course. Vladimir Ilyich required us to be fully acquainted with everything that had any direct or indirect bearing on our work. We were not allowed to answer "I don't know," even if the question he asked was utterly unexpected.

Although in 1918 our working day was very long and strenuous—from about 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. with an hour for lunch—we all worked with a will. But how could it have been otherwise with Lenin for our leader and comrade?

The C.P.C. meetings usually went on from 8 p.m. till 11 or midnight, and sometimes later. Vladimir Ilyich took great pains to bring efficiency and order into the meetings, but it was a very slow process. The People's Commissariats were still staffed to a great extent with old officials, who were not bad specialists in their own particular fields but who, instead of doing their work at a revolutionary pace of which they had no inkling, introduced their old, bureaucratic methods. They would

write voluminous memoranda, sincerely believing that the longer they were the greater their value. These screeds, signed by the People's Commissar, were addressed to the C.P.C. to support a point on the agenda of a meeting. For instance, the volume of such memoranda and other material supporting a mere 5 points on the agenda of the meeting held on May 14, 1918, equalled 120 pages.

Lengthy memoranda were a source of constant annoyance to Vladimir Ilyich who insisted that it was both impossible and inexpedient to read through all that material.

On April 20, the C.P.C. reaffirmed its resolution binding the People's Commissars to have their draft decrees typed out and sent to all the departments concerned for their information prior to inclusion in the agenda.

During the meetings, Vladimir Ilyich would write down the names of those asking for the floor, either on the agenda or on a clean sheet of paper, crossing the man's name out after he had spoken. Sometimes he would also take down a spoken word or sentence which he wanted to refer to later in his speech. Lenin used to put his own name down together with the others, and when he got up to speak he always began with "I've put my name down." Notes that have been preserved show that he took the floor 3 or 4 times at each meeting.

In the early days smoking was not forbidden at meetings, and since there was no ventilation in the room it was terribly stuffy with everyone smoking hard. Vladimir Ilyich brought up the problem of ventilation again and again, but nothing was done about it, our technical facilities were really poor in those days.

In the summer, weather permitting, we kept the windows open, and towards the end of a meeting Vladimir

Ilyich would make repeated trips to the window and, sitting on the window-sill, would lean out as far as he could to get some fresh air.

The C.P.C. meetings were attended by numerous representatives of departments. On May 18, Lenin submitted a carefully worded proposal on the "desirability to reduce the number of representatives of Soviet organizations for participation in the discussion of special problems." The C.P.C. adopted the following decision: to approve in principle the need to reduce the number of representatives; to advise the pertinent commissariats to determine the essential minimum for every case, keeping it down to three persons if possible, so that each point of view should be represented.

Enthusiasm was keen at the C.P.C. meetings, loaded as they were with vital issues. Everyone felt alive and keen. A. V. Lunacharsky in his recollections gave a very good account of the impressions he carried away from those meetings. He said:

"A condensed sort of atmosphere reigned at the C.P.C. meetings, it seemed that time itself had become condensed, so many were the facts, thoughts and decisions packed into each minute. At the same time there was not the least sign of any bureaucratic tendencies, no hint of self-importance, no show of strain natural enough for people overburdened with work. For all the responsibility involved, the work seemed 'easy' especially with Lenin there.

"At the C.P.C. meetings they worked smartly and eagerly, with a smile and a joke."[1]

This mood was unimpaired even by the inevitable arguments. I remember the heated debates that went on around the grain trade monopoly. Tsurupa, the People's Commissar of Food, fought for it in his tempera-

[1] *Recollections of V. I. Lenin*, Part 2, page 351.

mental way, supported by his well-knit collegium and backed by Lenin, against those who wanted freedom of the grain trade with all the attendant consequences—black-marketing, profiteering and so on. Sometimes the arguments went so far that Tsurupa would declare in the heat of the debate that he would resign unless his proposals were accepted. However, Lenin's backing decided the issue, and the highly important decree establishing a food dictatorship,[1] so vigorously championed by Tsurupa and his commissariat, was passed on May 8, 1918.

The protocol decisions of the C.P.C. were more often than not dictated by V. I. Lenin.

He would form the wording in his mind and dictate it at a great speed, ending on a question to us "Did you get it?", "Got it all down?", abruptly going on to the next question on which we were required to have the material in readiness. It was very difficult to take down his words, and we had no stenographer among us. It was a great strain on both hearing and concentration, yet I never ventured to tell Vladimir Ilyich that his abrupt question confused me. Usually I only managed to take down the initial letters of the words he dictated so rapidly, and the deciphering of my notes had to be left till after the meeting.

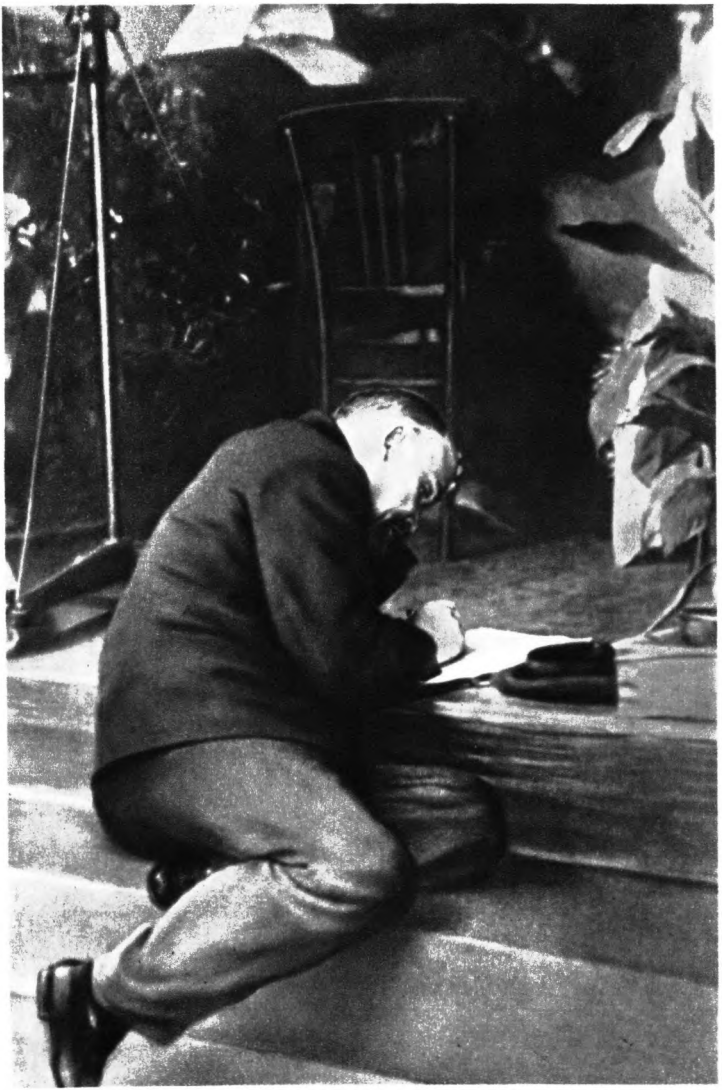
On May 15, the C.P.C. passed a resolution on the proposal submitted by the People's Commissar of Justice, P. I. Stuchka, to have the minutes of meetings typed out with enough copies to hand one each to every People's Commissar, who was to sign a receipt

[1] This decree confirmed the inviolability of the state monopoly on the grain trade, centralized the Republic's food supply and distribution under control of the People's Commissariat of Food, and conferred emergency powers on the same Commissariat for the struggle against the rural bourgeoisie hoarding grain and profiteering.—*Ed.*

and be personally responsible for it. This relieved us of the worrisome job of answering the Commissariats' never-ending inquiries and providing them with excerpts of the minutes on the various decisions adopted.

On that same day, May 15, a decision was adopted to instruct Stuchka to submit a draft resolution on the procedure of publishing government decrees and orders. This must have been necessitated by certain mistakes in the past. Comrade Stuchka stated that not all decrees subject to publication actually appeared in the press: for instance, the decree "On Revolutionary Tribunals" was not given timely publication. On the other hand, a decree on moving the clock one hour forward that had not been enacted found its way into the press. The C.P.C. ordered the manager of the Administrative Office to investigate the case and send a denial to the newspapers at once.

At first, our lack of experience and knowledge of the rudiments of office work caused us a great deal of trouble, and led to unfortunate mistakes. It once took me till 3 a.m. to draw up the minutes of a C.P.C. meeting held that night, and in order to make sure that the enactment of a certain important decree would get into the morning paper, I simply sent an unsigned copy of the decree to *Izvestia* instead of writing out a news item, certain that they would do that themselves. I signed the copy of the decree: "Certified true copy, L. Fotieva." The next morning, when I came to work and opened the newspaper, I was staggered to see the decree published in full with my signature attached. The words: "Certified true copy" were missing. Vladimir Ilyich called me in at once and asked: "Since when have you taken to signing decrees in your own name?" It was one of those lessons that taught us to be on our guard in matters big and small alike. Nothing ever escaped Vladimir Ilyich's notice.



Lenin makes notes while sitting on the rostrum steps during the Third Congress of the Communist International. June-July 1921

Lenin talks with American economist Christensen (centre) in his study. November 1921

Gradually, step by step, we were getting the C.P.C. apparatus to work smoothly.

Vladimir Ilyich gave himself up entirely to work. Indeed, it could not have been otherwise. Today, one can hardly go back in mind to the first years of the Revolution completely enough to feel with all one's being, and not simply to know through one's intellect, the enormous difficulties the young Soviet state had to overcome in its path. Led by the Communist Party with Lenin at its head, the young Soviet state was paving the way to socialism while hemmed in by the enemy on all sides. The workers and peasants of the Soviet Republic took the reins of power into their own hands without experience or knowledge, without outside help, and nothing but sabotage from the bourgeois intelligentsia. Could Lenin, an ardent revolutionary, have spared himself at a time when the cause he had dedicated his life to had at last brought tangible results, when the working people of the Soviet Republic were fighting a strenuous battle in defence of the gains of the Great October Revolution and were laying the foundation of socialist society? Of course, he could not. Lenin was profoundly conscious of his own personal responsibility as leader for all the actions of Soviet and Party bodies. And so no matter how insistent and reasonable his comrades' pleas that he take a rest or a cure, they could not have been but futile in the stress of those years.

To think what a strain it was on him! In the spring and summer of 1918, the only breathing spell Lenin allowed himself was taking short out-of-town trips in a car with Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Maria Ilyinichna. Vladimir Ilyich tried staying in a summer cottage at Tarasovka, but he could not stand it for long because of the noise and the mosquitoes. After that, Maria Ilyinichna recalls, they made a habit of driving

out of town for a few hours, taking some sandwiches along to do for dinner. The spot they liked best was a grove on the bank of the Moskva River, near Barvikha. It was only to recuperate from his wound that Vladimir Ilyich went to Gorki for three weeks; since then it became his favourite place to relax in. He spent all his Sundays there, and often drove to Gorki for a few hours late after work both winter and summer.

The C.P.C. under Lenin's direction occupied itself with a wide range of questions. In the course of the first two months after the government's removal to Moscow, the C.P.C. examined and adopted decisions on vital organizational matters, among them the establishment of the State Control, the centralized management of the railways, the post and telegraph, the administration of the Baltic Fleet, and the publication of the collection of government statutes and decrees, etc.

On April 8, the C.P.C. approved the state flag of the Russian Federation, and on Lenin's orders it was flown over the Kremlin.

The C.P.C. examined such major problems of national economy as the cotton-growing programme, the irrigation scheme in Turkestan, the development of Murmansk territory, the laying of narrow-gauge lines to keep Moscow supplied with bread, the nationalization of the metal industry, the nationalization of foreign trade, the rehabilitation of the sugar industry and the organization of the central peat committee. In connection with the last mentioned problem, Vladimir Ilyich received a delegation of the sugar industry workers on April 16, and had a long talk with them. The same month, Lenin wrote his articles on the fundamentals of the economic and, particularly, the banking policy.

Decisions were adopted to supply agriculture with instruments of production and metals, to organize trade

between town and country, to form detachments of workers to fight the kulaks, etc.

In matters of national defence, the decision was adopted to set up a Supreme Military Council empowered to direct the country's defence, build up armed forces, etc.

In that period Lenin devoted much effort to the consolidation of revolutionary law and the uprooting of bribery. On March 30, he proposed radically changing the draft decree on revolutionary tribunals, submitted to the C.P.C. by the People's Commissariat of Justice, with a view to stressing "what has been done in practice to set up courts that would act with real promptness and real revolutionary implacability towards counter-revolutionaries, bribe-takers and disorganizers who violate discipline."[1]

On Lenin's proposal, approved by the C.P.C., the People's Commissariat of Justice worked out a draft decree "On a High Minimum Punishment for Bribery and All and Every Connection with Bribery."

From the outset, Lenin turned his attention to the problem of electrification. In April the C.P.C. adopted a decision to favour the Academy of Sciences' proposal on drawing scientists into the work of exploring the country's natural wealth, and to finance the undertakings of the Academy in this connection. In view of this decision, Vladimir Ilyich wrote his "Rough Plan of Scientific and Technical Work," outlining in a concrete way the direction in which the Academy had to work. Lenin suggested that the Academy of Sciences be instructed by the All-Russian Council of National Economy to set up a number of commissions to expeditiously draw up a plan for the reorganization of Russia's industry and the development of

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 27, p. 193.

its economy. The plan was to provide, in particular, for the electrification of industry and transport, and the use of electricity in farming. This letter served as a guide to the Academy of Sciences and formed a basis for the elaboration of the GOELRO plan—the plan for the electrification of Russia.

In March, Vladimir Ilyich received the engineer A. V. Vinter; they spoke about the construction of the Shatura Power Station and the organization of the peat industry.

On April 27, the C.P.C. adopted a decision on the construction of hydro-electric power stations on the Svir and Volkhov rivers.

On April 14, the C.P.C. enacted a decree on the removal of tsarist monuments and sanctioned a contest for a monument to the October Revolution.

V. I. Lenin's activities were many and varied. He often spoke at mass gatherings and meetings—no less than ten times in the first two months of the Council's work in Moscow. The working people invariably received Lenin's speeches with stormy ovations. His confidence in the victory of the Soviet power over all its foes, and his certainty that all difficulties would be overcome spread to all who heard him.

In a speech at the meeting of the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Red Armymen's Deputies on April 23, 1918, Lenin said: "In order to overcome all difficulties, and combat hunger and unemployment successfully, we shall go into work that is unseen and unpretentious, but difficult work of national importance, and whoever goes against us will be regarded as a mortal enemy of the world proletariat.... We are on the right path, it will bring us to a complete victory of socialism."[1] The concluding words of Lenin's speech brought stormy applause from everyone present.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 27, p. 206.

In that same short space of time, Lenin completed a work of great theoretical and political importance: *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*. Vladimir Ilyich began to work on the theses soon after arrival in Moscow, when he was still living in the Cavalier Wing. In this work of outstanding importance he pointed out that the major current task included the inculcation of labour discipline, the establishment of new production relations, the building up of a new socialist economy, and the solution of other problems of socialist construction. Lenin's work became the programme of action for the Party, the Soviet Government, and the entire people.

Lenin's "Theses" were approved by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), and on April 29, he made a report and the concluding speech at a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee which adopted as resolutions six of Lenin's theses embodying the main points of his report.

The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government was published in pamphlet form.

Another work of major importance: " 'Left Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" was completed by Lenin on May 5, 1918. It was aimed against the "Left Communists" and their coming out in defence of petty-bourgeois slovenliness, clearly expressed in their magazine *Communist* (No. 1, of April 20, 1918). This article appeared in the same pamphlet as "The Chief Task of Our Day." In the preface Lenin wrote that "both articles dealt with the same subject embodied in the title, though from different angles."

In his pamphlet *The Tax in Kind* (1921) Lenin went back to the problems raised in those two articles, written in the first turbulent and difficult months of Soviet power. Now came a period when the Soviet

state, having gone triumphantly through the years of the Civil War and foreign military intervention, took a steady course towards the building of socialism, and having done with the policy of War Communism, adopted the New Economic Policy.

In the first half of May 1918, the political situation became very tense. At home, the state had to deal with famine, kulak and Socialist-Revolutionary revolts, a rising tide of civil war in the countryside, hostile agitation of the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries and "Left Communists," whiteguard conspiracies and revolts, and an attempt on the part of the monarchists in Tobolsk to arrange the former tsar's escape. At the same time the young Soviet Republic was surrounded by enemies everywhere—in the North, the Far East, the Transcaucasus, the Ukraine and the Crimea.

On May 9, 1918, Nogin, the People's Commissar of Labour, requested information from the C.P.C. on the political situation. The C.P.C. empowered Lenin to provide the information. In this connection, Lenin wrote his "Theses on the Present-Day Political Situation" endorsed by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on May 13. The theses helped greatly in the comprehension of the country's external and internal situation and the Soviet Government's foreign policy. On instructions from the Central Committee, Lenin put forward the theses at the Moscow city conference of the R.C.P.(B.) held the same day. The conference adopted the theses as resolutions.

In his theses Lenin pointed to the sharp aggravation of the political situation during the first ten days of May resulting from both external and internal causes, he enumerated the signs of this aggravation and indicated what the foreign policy should be in order to put off the imminent threat of war for as long as possible.

"The foreign policy of the Soviet Government must by no means be changeable. Our military preparations are not yet completed, and therefore the slogan for all remains unchanged: manoeuvre, retreat, bide time, in the meantime putting every effort into the preparations."[1]

Lenin spoke of the necessity to wage a ruthless struggle against the urban and rural bourgeoisie engaged in subversive activity in an effort to break the state grain monopoly. He stressed the need for iron discipline among the proletariat and for expediting military preparations.

On May 14 and 15, Lenin's theses were adopted by the Moscow regional and district conferences of the R.C.P.(B.).

The threat of war was growing. In the summer of 1918, the peaceful respite ended and the Soviet Republic was once again plunged into a bitter war. The problem of national defence assumed priority. The slogan was "All for the Front." The Soviet Government adopted the economic policy known as War Communism.

Enormous problems of unprecedented difficulty confronted the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. Under the threat of an imminent war, during the war itself, hemmed in by the enemy, fighting off internal and external foes, the country was paving a heretofore unknown road to socialism, undertaken for the first time in the history of mankind. The Communist Party and the Soviet Government under the guidance of Lenin, their great leader, were putting through their vitally important organizational, economic and cultural plans to set up a Soviet state apparatus, rehabilitate the national economy and rebuild it on so-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 27, p. 325.

cialist lines, and consolidate the alliance of workers and peasants which formed the basis for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The problem of decisive importance and priority was building up an army to defend the socialist state from external and internal foes. Of equal importance was the vital problem of strengthening the position at home. In his article: "On a Business-like Basis" Lenin wrote: "Even the best of armies, even people most sincerely devoted to the revolutionary cause will be immediately exterminated by the enemy, if they are not adequately armed, supplied with food and trained."[1]

The Red Army was forged in the flame of battle. Although surrounded by the enemy on all sides, the Soviet state continued to develop and strengthen. Lenin personally directed the country's defence.

The Soviet Government was going through a very hard time, but then it was headed by Lenin. In his modesty he attached no significance to the position he held; he was the strongest, the wisest and the most fearless of men, and with that Lenin inspired others. He could always find a way to overcome any difficulty. The Party he headed and the entire Soviet people loved him devotedly. He was linked with the masses by a thousand threads. Guided by the Party under Lenin's leadership the workers and peasants performed miracles of heroism both at the front and in the rear.

The Civil War, which began in 1918, and the armed foreign intervention went on for three years and ended in the victory of the Soviet people. History will never forget the heroism of the workers and peasants who, guided by the Party led by Lenin, defeated the armies of the foreign invaders in unequal battle and drove them out of the Soviet land.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 27, p. 54.

ATTEMPT ON LENIN'S LIFE

August 30, 1918

In the summer of 1918, the foreign intervention forces supported by the Russian whiteguards seized three-quarters of the territory of Soviet Russia. By August, the country was inside a flaming ring of fighting fronts. During those troubled days, the counter-revolutionaries, both home and foreign, in their rabid hatred of the Soviet power, hatched plots and committed acts of terrorism against the leaders of the Soviet Republic in an attempt to render the Revolution leaderless and thus doom it to failure.

On the morning of August 30, M. I. Uritsky, Chairman of the Petrograd Cheka, empowered to combat the counter-revolution, was assassinated in Petrograd. F. E. Dzerzhinsky, Chairman of the VECHEKA, started for Petrograd the minute the news came through to Moscow.

On the evening of the same day, in Moscow, an attempt was made on Lenin's life.

In the summer of 1918, the Moscow Party Committee used to arrange meetings at factories and plants each Friday night with Vladimir Ilyich usually taking the floor. On August 28, Lenin had two engagements: one to speak at a meeting in the Basmanny District of Moscow (since renamed Bauman) to be held in the building of the corn-exchange, and the other at the former Michelson Plant (since renamed Vladimir Ilyich

Plant) in the Zamoskvorechye District. In view of the murder of Uritsky, the Moscow Committee called off Lenin's scheduled appearance, but Vladimir Ilyich went to the meetings notwithstanding. After speaking in the Basmanny District, he immediately proceeded to the former Michelson Plant.

The meeting held in the hand grenade shop of the plant had a large attendance. In his speech on the subject "Two Powers (dictatorship of the proletariat or dictatorship of the bourgeoisie)" Vladimir Ilyich called upon the workers to mobilize all their strength to rout the forces of the counter-revolution who were using slogans of liberty and equality as a cover but who were, in fact, shooting the workers and peasants in their hundreds and thousands. He ended his speech with the words: "We have one way out: victory or death!"

When, on conclusion of the meeting, Vladimir Ilyich emerged from the shop into the yard, he was heavily wounded by Fanny Kaplan, a terrorist, who shot at him on orders of the Central Committee of the Party of Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. She fired three shots at Lenin, two bullets wounded him and the third glanced off and tore Lenin's coat on the back. It was the coat Vladimir Ilyich had on when he returned to Russia from emigration in April 1917, and which he went on wearing for as long as he lived. The bullets left lasting marks on it.

In the meantime, the members of the C.P.C. were gathered for one of their regular meetings which in view of Lenin's engagements was scheduled for 9 p.m. instead of 8.30 as usual. When at 9 p.m. sharp Vladimir Ilyich failed to make an appearance, everyone began to feel uneasy. The minutes passed and the alarm grew. Suddenly came the monstrous news: Vladimir Ilyich had been brought home wounded. Our

one thought was to be with him. The door into his flat, which was usually kept closed, was thrown wide open. The guard stood by the window looking lost. I followed the members of the C.P.C. into the flat. Vladimir Ilyich lay on his bed and was groaning loudly. He did not know of the danger to his life, he only felt the pain in his wounded arm. But it was the other wound that threatened his life.

Lenin was wounded with explosive, poisoned bullets.

In April 1922, when the bullet embedded in the region of his collar-bone was surgically extracted, it proved to have a crosswise incision made down the whole length. The inquest into the case of the Socialist-Revolutionaries held in the summer of 1922, confirmed that the bullets with which the terrorist shot at Lenin had been incised and filled with curare, a strong poison. M. I. Ulyanova in her recollections *Three Bullets* wrote: "He was saved for us by an infinitely rare chance. The explosive bullets did not explode. For reasons unknown the poison lost its virulence."

When they brought Vladimir Ilyich back to the Kremlin he refused to be carried in on a stretcher, as suggested by the driver Gil, and though seriously wounded insisted on walking up to his flat on the second floor. This is how Maria Ilyinichna describes the return of the wounded Lenin to the Kremlin: "One hour went by, two hours. I stayed by the window anxiously watching for the return of the car I knew so well. There it was at last, coming in at an unusual speed. But what was that? The driver jumped out and opened the rear door. It had never happened before. Some strangers were helping Ilyich out. He had on neither overcoat nor coat, he was walking supported by the comrades. I rushed down the stairs and met them as they were starting up. Ilyich was very pale, but he was walking, supported on either side. Behind

us came the driver, Gil. When I asked him what had happened, Ilyich answered reassuringly that he was only wounded in the arm, and lightly. I ran ahead to open the door and make ready his bed where he was laid a few minutes later."

The doctors Vinokurov, Velichkina, Veisbrod, Obukh and Mints gathered around Vladimir Ilyich, later to be joined by doctors Rosanov and Mamonov. They were obviously alarmed. There was fear of haemorrhage spreading in the lung, in which case death would imminently follow. We wandered about the rooms silently, in an agony of anxiety and grief. There were three rooms besides the one where Lenin lay: the dining-room, Nadezhda Konstantinovna's small study, and Maria Ilyinichna's bedroom. Nadezhda Konstantinovna was out. One of the comrades reminded the others that she was not very strong and that she should be prepared for the shock. A member of the C.P.C. went to meet her and soon returned with her. As usual in moments of crisis, Nadezhda Konstantinovna remained outwardly composed. She asked how big the danger was.

Vladimir Ilyich was groaning loudly, the door into his room was open. Trying hard not to make a sound we looked in. And in that moment of unbearable pain Lenin, faithful to himself, thought of his comrades' anxiety and said: "It's nothing, it's only my arm."

The hours dragged by tormentingly. At last we were told that the immediate danger had passed. Hope surged in us. However, the doctors said that complications might set in within the next three or four days, and only after the days were safely over could one speak of recuperation with any confidence. The comrades left one by one. Only the closest ones stayed behind to keep watch during the night—some in Vladimir Ilyich's flat, others in the Council rooms. His

wounds had bled badly. We were short of bandages since there was no first-aid station at the Kremlin yet at that time, and one of Vladimir Ilyich's secretaries remained there all night washing the soiled bandages.

Slowly Vladimir Ilyich began to get well. The doctors were afraid that one arm would be shorter than the other. A weight moving on a pulley was tied to the arm to stretch it in the right direction. It was both painful and annoying; Vladimir Ilyich objected to the treatment saying that he did not necessarily have to have both arms the same length and would readily reconcile himself to one being shorter than the other. The doctors, however, insisted on the proper treatment.

His arm would not function properly for quite a long time afterwards, and exercises were recommended. With the persistence so characteristic of Lenin, he used every opportune moment to do it.

During the meetings of the C.P.C. Vladimir Ilyich would often stand with his injured hand behind his back (tired of sitting down he sometimes preferred to stand at meetings), doing finger and wrist exercises with it. Eventually he could use the arm quite satisfactorily.

On the same evening of August 30, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee issued an appeal to "All Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Armymen' Deputies, All Armies, All, All, All!" "A few hours ago a villainous attempt was made on the life of Comrade Lenin.... The working class will respond to attempts against its leaders by rallying its forces and by a ruthless mass terror against all the enemies of the Revolution."

This appeal was broadcast over the radio throughout the world that same night.

On September 2, by a decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the Soviet Republic was proclaimed an armed camp.

During his illness Vladimir Ilyich received a great number of telegrams and letters from the workers and peasants expressing their wrath and hatred for the vile criminals, wishing their leader, and sometimes actually demanding, quick recovery.

"You will live, such is the will of the proletariat!" wrote the members of the tanning industry union. Summing up the many thousands of letters and telegrams coming in from the working people, *Pravda* wrote: "Lenin is fighting his illness. He will conquer it! The proletariat wants it so, wills it so, and thus it orders fate!"

The working people expressed their love for Lenin by performing deeds of heroism at the fighting and home fronts.

The peasants of the Pankovo Volost, Novosil Uyezd, Tula Gubernia, wrote to Lenin: "Get well to gladden us and spite the imperialists. We understand your tasks of making the socialist revolution, and in order not to let the revolution die of hunger, we have made the kulaks deliver their bread to the station, and tomorrow we'll send off 4,000 poods of rye."

Ill though he was and suffering badly from his wounds, Vladimir Ilyich devoted all his thoughts to political work and the situation in the country.

On September 7, when he was first able to write, Vladimir Ilyich pencilled a note in a shaky hand to the People's Commissar of Agriculture, Sereda, on the unsatisfactory collection of grain in the Yelets Uyezd, Orel Gubernia. "Comrade Sereda! I am very sorry you did not come to see me. You should not have listened to the 'overzealous' doctors.

"Why *aren't* things turning out well in the Yelets Uyezd? It worries me very much....

"It's obvious they are not. From the 19 volosts with Committees of Poor Peasants, *not one* clear, definite answer! . . . There are no reports from *anywhere* to show that the work is *in full swing*!"[1] Lenin went on to request that a correspondent be appointed in each volost to keep in touch with him. On the envelope he wrote with his own hand: "*Com. Sereda* (*People's Commissar of Agriculture*) (*from Lenin*)."

On September 17, Lenin received telegrams from all the Committees of Poor Peasants in Yelets Uyezd, but, dissatisfied with the information they gave, he sent the following circular telegram in reply:

"You cannot confine yourselves to general, vague statements, which too often mask the complete failure of the undertaking. Exact weekly figures are essential. Without such data everything else is mere wordage. Reply more definitely."[2]

During his convalescence Vladimir Ilyich responded with lively interest to news from the fighting fronts, and noted the successes of the Red Army with profound joy. His letters and telegrams of the period are imbued with unshakable faith in the invincibility of Soviet power and with admiration for the heroism of the Red Army.

On September 11, V. I. Lenin wrote in connection with the liberation of Kazan: "I am delighted to acclaim the brilliant victory of the Red Armies."[3]

On September 12, the Red Army liberated Simbirsk. The fighters of the First Army telegraphed Lenin as follows: "Dear Vladimir Ilyich! The taking of your home town is our answer for your one wound, for the other it will be Samara!"

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[1] *Lenin Miscellany XVIII*, p. 182.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 183.
[3] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 74.

In reply, Vladimir Ilyich wrote: "The taking of Simbirsk, my home town, is the most curative, the best bandage for my wounds. I feel an extraordinary surge of energy and strength. I wish to congratulate the Red Army men on their victory, and on behalf of all the working people I thank them for all their sacrifices."[1]

Vladimir Ilyich had an enormous will to live. This will, fortified by the will of the people, together with his strong constitution, conquered his illness. Recovery came quickly now, and as soon as he could Lenin went back to work.

On September 15, Lenin held a conference with Sverdlov and Stalin on the situation on the Tsaritsin front. On September 16, Vladimir Ilyich attended a meeting of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), on September 17, presided at a meeting of the C.P.C., and wrote a letter to the presidium of the conference of proletarian cultural and educational organizations, in which he emphasized that all our successes came as a result of the workers taking over the management of the state through their Soviets, but that they were sometimes still "too *timid* in the matter of promoting *working men to the state governing bodies.* Strive for this, comrades!"[2]

The last medical bulletin was issued on September 18, stating that Vladimir Ilyich had recovered and was allowed to go back to work. Vladimir Ilyich wrote on the bulletin: "In view of this bulletin and my fitness, I make a personal and very earnest request not to bother the doctors with telephone calls and questions." The bulletin, with Lenin's request was published in *Pravda* of September 19, 1918.

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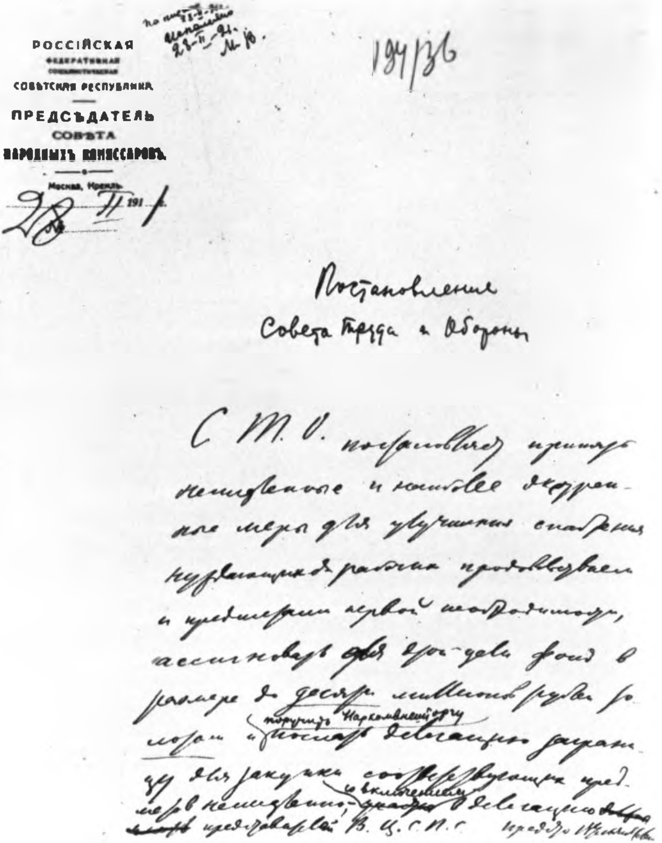
[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 75.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

General view of Lenin's study in the Kremlin



РОССІЙСКАЯ
Федеративная
Социалистическая
Совѣтская Республика

ПРЕДСѢДАТЕЛЬ
СОВѢТА
НАРОДНЫХЪ КОМИССАРОВЪ

Москва, Кремль
28 II 1921 г.

194/36

Постановление
Совета Труда и Обороны

С.Т.О. постановляет принять немедленные и наиболее экстренные меры для улучшения снабжения нуждающихся рабочих продовольствием и предметами первой необходимости, ассигновать для этой цели фонд в размере до десяти миллионов рублей золотом и поручить Наркомвнешторгу послать делегацию заграницу для закупки соответствующих предметов немедленно, с включением в делегацию представителя В.Ц.С.П.С. Пред. СТО Ульянов

Decree of the Council of Labour and Defence on Improving Supplies for the Workers, drafted by Lenin, February 1921. Manuscript.

The Council of Labour and Defence decrees that immediate and most urgent measures be taken to improve the supply to needy workers of food and articles of prime necessity, that a fund be assigned for this purpose in the amount of up to *ten* million *gold* rubles, and that a delegation be sent abroad for the purchase of the required articles immediately, the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions to be represented on the delegation.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)
Chairman of the Council of Labour and Defence

That same day, in a telegram of congratulations to 400 Petrograd workers, the first graduates of the Red Army Commanders' Courses, Lenin said: "The success of the Russian and world socialist revolution depends on the energy with which the workers will go into the management of the state and take command of the army of working people and the exploited who are fighting for the overthrow of the yoke of capital."[1]

These documents go to show that even during his illness Lenin did not lose close contact with the working masses for a minute.

However, his health was not restored completely after the grave illness, and towards the end of September, Vladimir Ilyich had to obey the doctors' orders and take a rest cure in the countryside near Moscow.

Vladimir Ilyich left for Gorki on September 24, accompanied by his physician, a Communist, Professor Veisbrod. They stayed there for three weeks in the small "north" wing. Relieved for a while from the worries and strain of his daily activities, Lenin devoted himself to theoretical work, writing his immortal *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, which has made a worthy addition to the treasure-house of Marxism-Leninism.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 77.

LENIN THE AGITATOR

The great Lenin was an unexcelled master of agitation. This gift was manifested particularly in the Soviet period, when he had the opportunity of addressing the broadest masses of the people directly and through the press on frequent occasions. In many of his speeches Lenin explained the difference of the tasks set before propaganda and agitation in the pre-revolutionary period of the Party's underground activity, when the propagandist and agitator were representatives of a given circle or given organization, and the period after the working class had taken over power, when each propagandist and agitator was a member of "the Party that governs, that directs the whole state and the universal struggle of Soviet Russia against the bourgeois system." Agitation and propaganda in these new conditions, Lenin taught, should re-educate the masses, it should always and in the first place tie up the elucidation of the Communist Party's policy with economic construction. "Every agitator and propagandist should base his work on this, and once he has grasped it, success will be assured." Each agitator, Vladimir Ilyich used to say, should be a plenipotentiary representative of the Soviet Government, a leader of all the workers and peasants in economic construction.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, guiding the Communist Party and the Soviet state and doing immense theoretical and organizational work, was always in the thick of

the masses showing by his own example what an ardent agitator should be. The forms and methods of agitation used by Lenin varied widely: he spoke at mass gatherings and meetings, addressed letters and appeals to the working people through the press, talked with numerous workers' and peasants' delegations, and with single workers.

Lenin did not believe in ossified forms of agitation. He demanded that different methods and forms of agitation be used at different times depending on the situation and the definite aim in view. In April 1919, when the Soviet Republic was gravely imperilled by Kolchak's advance in the Urals, Lenin called for a supreme rallying of strength to defeat Kolchak. Practical measures proposed by Lenin included intensifying agitation, particularly among the recruits and Red Army men, laying more stress on personal agitation, and on encouraging initiative in agitators. "The usual methods of agitation, such as lectures, meetings, and so forth, are not enough," Lenin wrote. "Agitation should be carried on among Red Army men by workers singly, or in groups; barracks, Red Army units, and factories should be distributed among such groups of ordinary workers, members of trade unions. The trade unions must institute a check to see that every one of their members takes part in house-to-house agitation, distribution of leaflets and personal talks."[1]

The main feature of Lenin's entire activity was the close and constant contact he maintained with the masses. Lenin looked upon the close link with the masses as an earnest of success and victory for Soviet power. He believed in the creative forces of the people, in the class instinct of the workers, he believed that they were capable of supreme effort and self-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 29, p. 252.

sacrifice if the defence of the rightful cause demanded it.

The main characteristics of Lenin's agitation were his direct appeal to the masses, his straight talks of a leader with the people about the difficulties confronting the young Soviet Republic, and his ability to point out ways of overcoming those difficulties.

Vladimir Ilyich sympathized deeply with the sufferings of the people and appreciated the sacrifices made and the privations endured by the working people during the years of the Civil War and economic dislocation. In setting before the masses the grandiose tasks of building up socialism, Lenin made it clear that the safeguarding of Soviet power depended on the energy of the masses themselves. In the spring of 1918, the problem of food became dire. Hunger tormented the workers. Lenin sent a telegram to the workers of Petrograd calling on them to organize food detachments and send them into the country to fight for bread. He said: "Comrade workers! Remember that the Revolution is in a critical situation. Remember that *you alone* can save the Revolution; nobody else." This appeal met with an ardent response. The workers' food detachments helped to break down the economic sabotage of the kulaks.

In the country's most crucial moments, when to some weaker men the situation appeared hopeless, Lenin was always able to put heart into the working people with his own unshakable faith in the victory of the people's cause, to encourage them with ardent, compelling and infinitely truthful words, to point out to the masses ways and means of overcoming the difficulties, and define not only the immediate practical aim of the struggle, but also unfold before them the great prospects of building a new society. The following words taken from Lenin's letter written in May

1918 "On the Famine," show his faith in the might of the Socialist Revolution and the working class. "We need ten times more *iron detachments* of the proletariat, class-conscious and boundlessly devoted to communism. Then we shall triumph over famine and unemployment. Then we shall advance the revolution to be the real prelude to socialism."[1]

Lenin not only taught the masses, but also learned from them. He was linked to the people by a thousand threads. He was amazingly well-informed on everything that was happening in the country. Besides the study of official documents, Lenin gathered this information from personal talks with the working people, and from the vast amount of letters pouring in from all over the country. Vladimir Ilyich keenly followed events in all, even the most remote, districts, paid heed to the people's sentiments, considered their needs, aspirations and requirements, and based the key problems of the Party's and Government's policy in conformity with the interests and will of the masses.

When, after the Civil War was over, the peasantry began to show displeasure with the policy of War Communism, and a danger arose that the unity of workers and peasants might be disrupted, Lenin proposed that a sharp turn be taken to a new economic policy. Prior to putting forward the proposal Lenin did a vast amount of groundwork: he talked with the peasants' messengers, with peasant delegations from Tambov, Vladimir and other gubernias, closely followed the debates at meetings of non-Party peasants—delegates to the VIII All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and wrote 28 memoranda, "notes on debates and statements" on the needs of the peasants, which he handed to the members of the Central Committee and

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 27, p. 361-362.

to the People's Commissars for their information. A careful analysis of the situation obtaining in the country and an all-round appraisal of the sentiments of the labouring peasantry brought Lenin to the conclusion that the surplus-appropriation system had to be replaced with a tax in kind. In this connection he wrote his "Rough Draft of Theses on the Peasants," the first paragraph of which stated: "Satisfy the wishes of the non-Party peasantry to replace the surplus-appropriation system by a grain tax."

Speaking at the Tenth Party Congress, Lenin said: "Under all circumstances we must not try to hide anything, but must declare outright that the peasantry is dissatisfied with the form our relations with it have taken, that it does not want this form and will not continue to live as it has hitherto. This is unquestionable. The peasantry has expressed its will, the will of the vast masses of the toiling population. We must reckon with this, and we are sober enough politicians to say frankly: let us re-examine our policy in regard to the peasantry."[1] The New Economic Policy proclaimed by the Party on Lenin's proposal paved the way to socialism.

Lenin was a popular tribune in the true sense of the word. The speeches he made at meetings and gatherings, addressed to thousands upon thousands of workers, soldiers and peasants, evoked a tremendous response, they stimulated enthusiasm, energy and mass heroism. Sometimes Lenin had to appear several times a day. On August 2, 1918, for instance, he spoke 5 times: at a meeting of agitators starting out for the fighting lines, in the Butyrki District, to the Warsaw revolutionary regiment, in the Zamoskvorechye District, and at a meeting of Red Army men in Khodynka.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 192-193.

According to incomplete data, Lenin spoke 216 times at mass meetings during the years of the Civil War and foreign armed intervention alone.

Lenin always spoke simply and comprehensibly. However intricate a point, he could word it in a way that made it clear to every one of the listeners. Lenin convinced and inspired his audiences not with showy phrases or studied tricks of oratory—which he never resorted to—but with iron-clad logic, deep conviction and unshakable faith in the rightfulness of the cause he championed. His manner of speaking was very expressive and graphic. He often made use of apt comparisons, proverbs, sayings, and quotations from Russian and world classics.

Lenin always oriented himself on his audience. He used to say that one cannot speak of the Soviet power in the same manner at a factory meeting, in a peasant's hut, at a student gathering, and so on. The agitator had to take into account the peculiar interests of each given audience, the different needs of the strata of population or group he was speaking to, and the cultural level of his listeners.

Lenin never read his speeches from written texts. When preparing comprehensive reports he usually drafted a plan of his speech, and in some cases, when the speech was to be of particular import and responsibility, he wrote out the theses beforehand. If the report called for figures or factual data, he would jot them down, but with his extraordinary memory he seldom had to refer to his notes. Every speech of Lenin's was inspired and ingenious.

Listening to Lenin's speeches and addresses, reading his letters and articles, the masses gained understanding of the greatness and heroism of the struggle they were waging, and followed their Ilyich with selfless devotion.

Lenin spoke on several occasions at the Tryokhgornaya Textile Mills in Moscow, and this is how the workers describe the effect the leader's speeches had on them:

"With every word he uttered, confidence in victory grew in the workers' hearts, a will to fight, a will to overcome any difficulties that may stand in our way. The people believed every word of Lenin's, each word he uttered rang with truth and wisdom."

Chernyak, one of the workers, recalls that the premises where Lenin spoke on the fourth anniversary of the October Revolution were packed to overflowing. And when Ilyich appeared, "a wave of excitement stirred the gathering, Ilyich could not begin to speak for the prolonged shouts of welcome. The women held their children high above their heads. The younger people, pushing and jostling through the crowd clambered on to the window-sills and tables. The presidium had a hard time calling the audience to order, so uncontrollable was the joy that swept through every one of us at the sight of our very own, modest and wise teacher and leader. We became all attention. Strong ties of mutual understanding, love and devotion united the speaker and the listeners."

Of tremendous importance was Lenin's agitation in print—his letters, appeals and addresses published in the newspapers, put out in leaflet form, and broadcast over the radio. Through them Lenin addressed the millions of people.

To give an example of this form of agitation, let us take Lenin's appeal "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger" written on February 21, 1918, following the breaking off of the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations and the offensive started by the German imperialists against Petrograd. Briefly but clearly the appeal set out the basic tasks in the struggle against the inter-

ventionists and expressed firm conviction in the victory of our rightful cause. "The Socialist fatherland is in danger! Long live the Socialist fatherland." In response to Lenin's appeal, the masses rose to action, detachments of the Red Army were formed and heroically repelled the German troops. The advance on Petrograd was checked, the Socialist fatherland was saved.

Another outstanding document of agitation is Lenin's letter written in August 1918: "Comrade Workers! Onward, to the Last, the Decisive Fight!" With fire and appeal, Lenin explained the significance of the poor peasants' fight against the kulaks, and called for a ruthless suppression of the kulak revolts. "Ruthless war must be waged on these kulaks! Death to them! . . . The workers must crush with an iron hand the revolts of the kulaks. . . ." In this letter, Lenin explained the policy of the Soviet power towards different strata of the peasant population, and stated that "the workers' power has never wronged and never will wrong the middle peasant."[1]

In November 1919, Lenin wrote a circular letter on behalf of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to the Party organizations in which he called them on to fight the fuel crisis—the worst enemy at that time, which threatened to bring all the work of the Soviets to nought. The letter gives a brilliant analysis of the source of the Soviet power's strength and the reasons for its victories.

"The chief source of our strength is the class-consciousness and heroism of the workers, whom the labouring peasants could not and cannot but sympathize with and support," Lenin pointed out. "The reason for our victories was the direct appeal of our

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, pp. 39-40.

Party and of the Soviet Government to the working masses, pointing to every new difficulty and problem as it arose; our ability to explain to the masses why it was necessary to devote all energies first to one, then to another aspect of Soviet work at any given moment; our ability to rouse the energy, heroism and enthusiasm of the masses and to concentrate every ounce of revolutionary effort on the most important task of the hour."[1]

Profound truthfulness in all his addresses to the masses is a characteristic trait of Lenin the agitator. He never told the people anything he himself did not believe, he never made a secret of the difficulties or the danger of a situation. The more of the truth the working people know, the more readily they will side with the Soviet Government, was what Lenin often said. In the speech he made at a non-Party conference of workers and Red Army men of the Presnya District on January 24, 1920, Lenin said that it would be ridiculous to think that the people followed the Bolsheviks because their agitation was more eloquent than that of the whiteguards or the Constituents. "No, the point is that their agitation was truthful."

Lenin's agitational speeches were always well-aimed, his slogans were worded with the utmost clarity, they were concrete and roused to action. They expressed the chief, immediate task on which all attention and all effort had to be focused at the given stage of historical development.

During the years of the Civil War and foreign armed intervention, Lenin proclaimed the slogan "Everything for the Front" and declared that the agitators' primary and compulsory task was to put that slogan over at every gathering, meeting and business conference.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 30, p. 118.

When the problem of restoring the national economy came to the fore, Lenin proclaimed new slogans. In his speech on labour discipline (March 1920) Lenin said: "We shall now say: 'Down with the self-seekers, down with those who think of personal enrichment and profiteering, with those shirking their duty, and shrinking from sacrifices indispensable for victory! Long live labour discipline, zeal for work, devotion to the workers' and peasants' cause!' "[1]

Lenin often said that agitation should be in closer contact with reality, that there should be less phrasemongering, for phrases alone would not satisfy the working people. In his article "The Character of Our Newspapers" he said that the newspapers were devoting too much space to political agitation on old themes and much too little to the everyday facts of building up a new life. Lenin demanded that more attention be paid to the everyday life of the factories, villages and regiments where the new was growing up more than elsewhere, where this new experience called for more concern, verification and study than anywhere else. Lenin took a lively interest in every new development. When *subbotniks*[2] were first started on the initiative of some front-ranking railway workers, Lenin was quick to appreciate their tremendous significance, and called the movement a "great beginning." The most convincing agitation for this undertaking was Lenin's personal participation in the May Day All-Russian *Subbotnik* held in 1920.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 30, p. 408.

[2] *Subbotnik*—voluntary work without pay on Sundays or after working hours for the good of the Soviet Republic. The first *subbotnik* was held on May 10, 1919, on the initiative of some Party-member workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway.—*Ed.*

The day was a Saturday—*Subbota* in Russian—hence the name *Subbotnik*.—*Tr.*

Lenin attached vast importance to the expansion of agitation. In August 1918, in a telegram to the Penza Gubernia Executive Committee he strongly objected to their reduction of agitation and leaflet circulation, allegedly, for lack of funds. "We shall spare no expense on agitation, be it hundreds of thousands. Urgently demand funds from the All-Russian Executive Committee, you'll have no shortage of money, we shall not accept such excuses."

Vladimir Ilyich looked upon agitation as a powerful means of overcoming difficulties, of elucidating the Party's policy, winning over the vacillating sections of society to the side of the Soviet Government, re-educating the masses and drawing them into socialist construction, and explaining to the workers and peasants their tasks and the aims of the struggle.

A PAGE FROM REMINISCENCES
(October-November 1922)

In this short chapter I should like to tell, even if very briefly, of Lenin's work in October and November 1922, when he resumed guidance of the Soviet state and the Communist Party after his illness.

Once he had recuperated from his wound, Vladimir Ilyich worked as hard as before, ignoring the pleas and persuasions of his doctors, his family and his closest friends to take more care of himself. While worrying about the health of his comrades, seeing that they took their leave when due and insisting on a "complete overhaul" for the more overworked and overtired, Vladimir Ilyich flatly refused to listen to any suggestions that he himself should take a rest and a cure, and dismissing the matter with a joke said that so far a "routine check-up" was all he needed. However, towards the end of 1921, his health began to give way. It was all a result of his long, difficult years in emigration, the after-effects of his wound, and constant overstrain. He began to suffer from bad headaches and insomnia. But nothing could draw him away from the work to which he had devoted his entire life.

In April 1922, when his condition took a turn for the worse, Vladimir Ilyich agreed to consider a trip to the South, and wrote to Orjonikidze[1] asking him to help him choose a good place to go to.

[1] G. K. Orjonikidze (Party nickname Sergo) (1886-1937)—a veteran Bolshevik, one of the leaders of the Communist Party

But even then, Vladimir Ilyich thought more of the comfort of his family than he did of his own much-needed rest. In a letter to Orjonikidze dated April 17, 1922, he said:

"Comrade Sergo! I'm sending you more bits of information supplied by the doctor, who has been there himself and who can be trusted entirely. Abastuman, he says, is no good at all because it resembles a "coffin," a narrow hollow; unsuitable for sick nerves; there are no walks, unless you climb, but climbing is out for Nadezhda Konstantinovna. Borzhom is very suitable, because there are walks along even ground, and that is what Nadezhda Konstantinovna needs. Besides, the altitude at Borzhom is suitable. As for Abastuman, the altitude is excessive, it's over 1,000 metres. *Out.* Our doctor warns us particularly against starting too early, he says there will be cold and rain well into the middle of June. That last does not frighten me too much if the house has a roof that doesn't leak and is heated, for then the cold and rain are nothing to fear."[1]

The trip was never made.

Towards the end of May, 1922, Vladimir Ilyich's illness was so exacerbated that he had to give in to the doctors' insistence and move to Gorki for a long rest and treatment. He had to stay in Gorki for four months. But even there his thoughts were ever on affairs of state. As soon as he was a little better, Vladimir Ilyich demanded full information on everything, material on various matters, he wrote letters of direction, and advanced vital problems. The better he felt the more creative initiative he displayed.

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and the Soviet state, outstanding director of the economic construction in the U.S.S.R. In 1922 he was the secretary of the Transcaucasian Territorial Committee of the Communist Party. —*Ed.*

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 345.

In August and September, although Lenin had not yet officially resumed the duties of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence, he was already working on the major issues then engaging the attention of the Party and the Government. He wanted to know more about the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, the Central Commission on Concessions, the State Planning Commission, about the situation in Donbas, and at the radio laboratory in Nizhny Novgorod, the labour and cartage tax, the fixing of wages and output rates, and in particular about the census of employees of government institutions. Vladimir Ilyich carried on a correspondence on all these matters.

On September 25, he wrote: "I think it absolutely imperative to take a one-day census of all the officials and government employees of Moscow. We had it done once, but that was too long ago.

"To do it with a minimum of expense (cost of paper only, and even some of that can be taken away from the common stocks of the Central Statistical Board) make it binding upon all those receiving their pay from the Soviet Government and trusts to provide the information on their personal cards. *Until they give the proper information, pay no salaries to anyone.*

"We'll get it quickly enough then....

"Our apparatus is so abominable that it requires radical repair. We can't do without a census. As for the Central Statistical Board they deserve a dressing down for academism: they are busy writing 'volumes' and give no thought to what is essential...."[1]

Lenin's letters and notes, as well as his instructions to his staff, breathed good cheer and energy, they

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 352.

showed how eager he was to get back to Moscow and plunge into his work again.

On October 1, we, the members of Lenin's secretariat, received the following joyful note: "I am coming tomorrow, prepare everything, minutes of meetings, books."

On October 2, Vladimir Ilyich returned to Moscow.

On October 3, he presided at a C.P.C. meeting. The attendance was exceptionally large. Everyone was there, whoever had the right, no matter how remote, to attend C.P.C. meetings. Everyone was impatient to see their Ilyich again after his long absence.

From the very first day Vladimir Ilyich took on the full brunt of his duties. The doctors insisted on a strict regime, on a proper balance of work and rest. Rather than argue the point, Vladimir Ilyich side-tracked the doctors' orders by means of numerous ruses and small deceits.

A five-hour working day was prescribed: from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m. No work at all was to be done on Sundays and on one other day during the week. Vladimir Ilyich chose Wednesday. However, instead of starting work at 11 a.m., he would come to his office at 9.30 and go through all the newspapers received that day. "I'm not working, I'm just reading," Vladimir Ilyich would smilingly say when we looked into the office to see who was there.

At 10.45 a.m. he would call in his secretary, hear a report on the mail that had come in, arrange the time to receive callers requesting an appointment, give routine instructions, and thus steal a march on the strict regime suggested by the doctors by another 15 minutes.

At 11 a.m. his busy day began: callers, telephone calls, conferences, meetings and so on. At 2 p.m. Vladimir Ilyich went home, taking a sheaf of papers along

Lenin among his relatives in his flat in the Kremlin. 1922. First row (on Lenin's left): N. K. Krupskaya and A. I. Yelizarova (Lenin's sister). Second row: M. I. Ulyanova and D. I. Ulyanov (Lenin's sister and brother), and Gora, A. I. Yelizarova's adopted son.

Lenin's flat in the Kremlin. The dining-room

with him, and was back in the office at 6 p.m. with numerous verbal orders to give and his writing pad covered with instructions for his secretaries.

In compliance with Vladimir Ilyich's wish, the C.P.C. and C.L.D. meetings at which he presided were now timed for 5.30 p.m. instead of 6, and thus he added another half-hour to his "legitimate" working day.

Vladimir Ilyich demanded absolute silence and order during meetings. Occasionally someone would ask the secretary for information on a point; on hearing the talking Vladimir Ilyich would write to the secretary: "Exchange notes, don't talk." And if that did not help, he would add: "Or else I'll show you out."

He had a habit of doing a number of other things while listening and participating in debates at C.P.C. and C.L.D. meetings. He would leaf through new books, read and sign papers, exchange numerous notes with those present on various business matters not necessarily connected with what was being discussed just then.

When I learned from the doctors that this splitting of attention was a strain on the nerves, I asked the comrades to channel their answers to Vladimir Ilyich's notes through me, so that I would hand them to him after the meeting. Vladimir Ilyich saw through my schemes and wrote me: "I believe you are plotting against me. Where are the answers to my notes?"[1]

Hardly a day passed without people coming to see Vladimir Ilyich by appointment, especially in the evenings. On his instructions, the appointments were made through the secretariat, which had to take down the following particulars: name of applicant, date, subject matter. Vladimir Ilyich looked at the list each morn-

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 356.

ing and either confirmed the appointment, in which case he made a note of it on his loose-leaf calendar, or directed the applicant to other comrades.

Whenever Vladimir Ilyich refused to receive someone, he instructed his secretary to make sure and tell the man so in the most polite way. "Wave him off, but very politely," Vladimir Ilyich used to say.

The secretaries' notes show that during October-December 1922, Vladimir Ilyich received up to 10 people a day. Before going in they would swear solemnly not to outstay the prescribed 10 or 15 minutes, but very often they stretched it to half an hour and more.

Indeed, one never wanted to bring a conversation with Vladimir Ilyich to an end, and then sometimes he himself was interested and kept his visitor longer. I would then have to come into the office and look meaningfully at the clock, but it did not help much. Vladimir Ilyich would smile and say: "We are not working, we are merely talking." Or sometimes with annoyance: "Go and don't disturb us."

When a meeting of the C.P.C. or C.L.D. was on in the conference hall next to Lenin's office, he would speak in an undertone and demand the same from others, although the door was hung with a thick double curtain on his orders.

Wednesday, his extra day of rest, was only used as such to a certain extent. Not infrequently Vladimir Ilyich worked throughout the day, taking papers home with him, and the only difference was that he did not preside at or attend meetings. Here are the secretary's notes about one of those Wednesdays: "November 1. Day: conference with Stalin present. Evening: 7 to 8 receiving two Italian comrades. Vladimir Ilyich went home at 8.30 p.m. Such was his day of rest."

In the course of October and November 1922, Vladimir Ilyich spoke three times at large meetings on vari-

ous international and home problems. Those were Lenin's last public appearances.

On October 31, he spoke at the Fourth Session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. He had prepared the plan of his speech a few days in advance. It was Lenin's first public appearance after his grave illness. Everyone looked forward to it with great excitement. Vladimir Ilyich was excited and worried too; would he speak well? how would it go? He spoke for 20 minutes. The secretary's notes say that both the audience and Lenin himself were pleased with the speech. "I said everything I had wanted to say."

Pravda described the session that took place in the Andreyevsky Hall of the Great Kremlin Palace. Representatives of the diplomatic corps were present. Lenin was welcomed with stormy applause. When the chairman gave Lenin the floor, there was another outburst of enthusiastic applause.

In his speech, Lenin hailed the Red Army for pushing the last whiteguard forces into the sea, and pointed out that our diplomacy was also due some of the merit. He then proceeded to speak of the work done by the session in enacting the code of labour laws, the land law, in establishing the judicial system, etc. The enactment of these codes and laws, Lenin said, undoubtedly belonged to the successes achieved by Soviet power.

On November 13, Vladimir Ilyich spoke at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern. He made his report entitled "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution" in German.

This report Vladimir Ilyich prepared with particular care. On November 10, he asked for the short-hand record of the Third Congress of the Comintern, and his own pamphlet in German on the tax-in-kind system. He spent the morning of November 11 preparing for the report, and received no one. That same evening,

he received the editor of the German section of the Comintern and had a long talk with him about the report.

The following is taken from *Pravda*: "The hall was more overcrowded than at any previous meeting. Everyone moved his chair up closer to the rostrum not to miss a word.... All wanted to catch every expression, every smallest thing in their dear Ilyich.

"The audience to a man welcomed the appearance of Comrade Lenin with prolonged, stormy applause and a great ovation. Everyone stood up and sang the *Internationale.*"

Lenin spoke of the success achieved since the New Economic Policy had been adopted. Without loans or outside help the country had overcome famine, checked economic dislocation, restored light industry and was making progress in heavy industry as well. Strict economy was practised, in the state apparatus especially, and as a result a sum of twenty million rubles in gold was put into heavy industry. It was not much, but a beginning had been made. We were on the right track, said Lenin.

Lenin's report lasted over an hour and was a great success.

On the evening of the same day he received comrades by appointment as usual.

On November 20, at 6.30 p.m. Lenin made a speech at a joint plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet and members of the district Soviets. It was his last public appearance before the masses.

This is what *Pravda* of November 21, 1922, said: "The appearance of Comrade Lenin on the stage was met with thunderous shouts of 'hurrah,' and enthusiastic, prolonged applause, growing into a long-unceasing ovation that all but drowned the no less powerful strains of the *Internationale*.... Comrade Lenin tried

to speak, but he was interrupted again and again by the passionate cries of the audience: 'Long Live the Leader of the World Revolution!' "

Lenin's speech rang with his firm conviction in victory, in the correctness of the course taken by the Soviet Government when adopting the New Economic Policy. He concluded with the momentous words: "NEP Russia will become socialist Russia."

Lenin returned to the Kremlin at 7.30 p.m. and went straight into his office where he received several comrades. At 7.50 p.m. he went home.

In the second half of November, Vladimir Ilyich had a relapse, he felt fatigued and overworked. The secretaries' notes of November 25, 1922, say: "Today the doctors ordered a week's rest, and absolutely no work." From then on, Vladimir Ilyich came into his office less often, he did not always preside at meetings, and instead devoted himself to reading. Lenin could not give up work altogether.

Even while staying out of town and supposedly resting Vladimir Ilyich read the minutes of Political Bureau, C.P.C. and C.L.D. meetings, studied other material of interest, held telephone conversations and wrote letters.

His illness intensified. But whenever he felt slightly better, Lenin resumed work in spite of his sufferings, he continued to work as long as it was humanly possible, giving all his strength to the cause to which he had dedicated his life.

FROM RECOLLECTIONS ABOUT V. I. LENIN

(December 1922 to March 1923)

In these recollections the author has made an attempt to describe the selflessness with which Lenin worked from December 7, 1922 to March 6, 1923, when his sharply exacerbated illness compelled him to reduce his creative work considerably. In the three months—December 7, 1922 to March 6, 1923—Lenin wrote a number of works and made many recommendations concerning the development of Soviet society in its more important aspects, which recommendations serve as a programme of action for the Communist Party and the Soviet people to this day.

The author's aim was to describe V. I. Lenin's work of that period day by day with no omissions, if possible. However, there are gaps in this diary because there were days when Vladimir Ilyich's condition was so aggravated that he could not work at all. On such days he did not call in his secretaries or give them any instructions.

To make the account as accurate as possible, the following notes have been preserved in their original form as made at the time, with practically no editing of the style.

In the summer of 1922, Lenin fell gravely ill. His health was undermined by the long difficult years in emigration, the wound he received on August 30, 1918,

and the constant strain of work from which he hardly ever took a respite.

On October 2, 1922, Vladimir Ilyich returned to Moscow after an absence of more than four months, which he spent in Gorki.

The very next day after his return to Moscow, on October 3, Vladimir Ilyich presided at a meeting of the C.P.C., and from that day on took over once again his duties of personally directing the work of the C.P.C., C.L.D. and the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)

The working people were overjoyed to welcome Lenin back. With their numerous letters and gifts they tried to express their love and devotion to him.

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Great October Revolution, the workers of one of the factories incorporated in the Petrograd textile trust sent Vladimir Ilyich a rug they had made. They wrote: "Petrotextil wants you, our dear one, to feel not only a physical warmth from our modest present, but also the warmth of our workers' hearts in which we would like to envelope you, and we also want you to see that in conditions of extremely run-down machinery, dislocation, shortages and crises, we are working no worse than we did before the war, and consequently can achieve all we want. Wear it, our dear one, with our best wishes."

On November 3, 1922, Vladimir Ilyich wrote the following note in reply: "Dear comrades! My heartfelt thanks for the rug you have sent me, I find it excellent."[1]

In the second half of November Vladimir Ilyich again showed signs of nervous overstrain—bad headaches and persistent insomnia. The disease was developing. However, in spite of the doctors' protests, Vladimir Ilyich went on working as strenuously as ever. His in-

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, pp. 356-357.

domitable will and the sense of his enormous responsibility to the Party and people helped him to endure the sufferings his illness caused.

Doctor Kozhevnikov, who was constantly in attendance, found it quite impossible to regulate Lenin's work. Vladimir Ilyich had endless meetings with "just friends and acquaintances" as he used to say, but in actual fact they were long business talks with all sorts of different people, representatives of various Soviet institutions and of the Communist parties of England, America, Germany, etc. Vladimir Ilyich refused to look upon any of these conversations as work.

During the period October-December 1922, Vladimir Ilyich worked on a great number of major economic and political problems, conferred with numerous comrades, carried on a business correspondence, followed the more important problems discussed by leading Soviet and Party bodies, presided at meetings of the C.P.C. and C.L.D., Political Bureau and commissions, took an active part in the debates, prepared his report for the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and made three public appearances at which he delivered big speeches. At the same time, he busied himself with international affairs: making preparations for the participation of the Soviet delegation in the Lausanne conference and the international congress in the Hague, and studying the problems of the Comintern. Lenin also gave two interviews to correspondents of the foreign bourgeois press, etc.

From October 2 to December 16, 1922, Vladimir Ilyich wrote 224 business letters and notes, received 171 people (125 calls), and presided at 32 meetings and conferences of the C.P.C., C.L.D., the Political Bureau and commissions.

Even this dry and far from complete enumeration of his activities speaks with sufficient eloquence of the

enormous and many-sided work performed by Lenin in those months.

Vladimir Ilyich worked without sparing his strength at all. He neither could nor would work differently. Professor Förster[1] said to Maria Ilyinichna that all attempts to persuade Lenin to cut down his working hours did little good.

However, early in December Vladimir Ilyich realized for himself that he was in dire need of an immediate and long rest. He gave in to the doctors' insistent demands and promised to go to Gorki for a few days on December 7, after the Political Bureau meeting in which he particularly wanted to take part. Vladimir Ilyich kept the promise.

On December 7, he came into his office at 10.55 a.m. The Political Bureau meeting began at 11 a.m. Vladimir Ilyich remained until 2.20 p.m. after which he went home. That evening he came to the office at 5.30 p.m., spoke to J. V. Stalin on the telephone, and gave a number of orders to his secretary.

Vladimir Ilyich remained in the office until 6.15 p.m. and then left for Gorki, taking along with him some documents dealing with current matters.

A telephone call came through from Gorki later that evening. Vladimir Ilyich dictated a letter to the Administrative Manager of the C.P.C. and to his secretary, in which he ordered all incoming correspondence from the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to be entered in a separate book with a brief description of contents. "If there is any vagueness or inaccuracy (on questions such as what it is they want, how much they are asking for, what they are complaining about, what they

[1] Otfried Förster, a Breslau neuropathologist, invited as a consultant in connection with V. I. Lenin's illness.

want to be done), you will be answerable for that inaccuracy,"[1] wrote Lenin.

He stayed in Gorki until December 12.

Actually he did not discontinue work while he was there; he wrote and dictated letters, issued various orders to his staff, held business talks on the telephone, and demanded to be kept fully informed on current work and supplied with pertinent data.

On receiving the minutes of the Political Bureau meeting held on December 7, Vladimir Ilyich wrote to J. V. Stalin on December 8, protesting decisions on two questions which had been adopted after he had left the meeting, and dictated his "Proposal to the Plenum in Connection with the Political Bureau Regulations."[2]

Vladimir Ilyich voted for four draft resolutions sent to him by the Political Bureau: 1) on the composition of the commission preparing draft resolutions for the Tenth Congress of Soviets; 2) on the address of greetings to the All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets; 3) on the trial of Socialist-Revolutionaries in Baku on the telegram from Kirov[3], Vasilyev and Poluyan; 4) on the postponement of the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.). After that, Vladimir Ilyich dictated a letter about the work of his deputies (vice-chairmen of the C.P.C. and the C.L.D.), a draft resolution on keeping all schools supplied with bread, both pupils and teachers, and an order to the People's Commissar of Food and his two deputies to calculate the amount of bread that had to be reserved for the purpose.

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[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 359.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 359-360.

[3] S. M. Kirov (Kostrikov) (1886-1934)—veteran Bolshevik, one of the leaders of the Communist Party and Soviet Government. In 1922 he was Secretary of the C.C. of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Azerbaijan.—*Ed.*

In those same few days, Vladimir Ilyich prepared his speech for the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and made a draft of it. This was to be Lenin's last manuscript, not counting the short notes he made in the following days, up to December 16. The draft has been published under the heading: "Draft of the Speech Not Made at the Tenth Congress of Soviets."[1]

Thus, the days of "rest" from December 7 to December 10, were as packed with unceasing activity as usual. December 11 was the only day on which Vladimir Ilyich made no telephone calls or issued any orders.

On December 12, Vladimir Ilyich arrived from Gorki at 11 a.m. and came to his office at 11.15 a.m. He only stayed for a moment and went home. At noon he came to the office again and remained there till 2 p.m. talking to the vice-chairmen of the C.P.C. and C.L.D. After that he went home, giving us no instructions for the evening.

He was back at 5.30 p.m. and spoke on the telephone for a few minutes. He told us to dispatch the letter we had in readiness (written in French) to the Italian Socialist Lazzari[2] on the task set by the Third Congress of the Comintern to unite revolutionaries in Italy. Vladimir Ilyich asked us to make sure that the letter was "taken to him by a trustworthy comrade."

At 6.45 p.m. F. E. Dzerzhinsky came to see Lenin.

At 7.45 p.m. Lenin received the Soviet trade repre-

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, pp. 538-539.

[2] Lazzari Constantino (Ladsari) (1857-1927)—Italian Socialist. In 1882 he was editor of *Fascio Operaio*. Lazzari was one of the founders of the Workers' Party in Milan. Siding with the Left, proletarian wing, he took a stand against the reformists Turati, Treves and others. During the 1914-1918 war he adopted a centrist position. After the war, he championed an alliance with the Comintern. Lazzari took part in the work of the Third Congress of the Comintern.

sentative in Berlin and talked with him on matters of foreign trade and the work of his trade mission.

That evening, Vladimir Ilyich went home at 8.15 p.m. It was Lenin's last working day in his Kremlin office.

On December 13, Vladimir Ilyich had two attacks of his illness. With great difficulty the doctors managed to persuade him to give up work altogether for a while and to take a long rest and a course of treatment in Gorki. Vladimir Ilyich finally consented to do this, and said that he would begin winding up his affairs that very day.

Vladimir Ilyich spent the next few days working at home, calling me in every now and again and giving me various things to do. He was anxious to settle certain matters to which he attached particular importance.

Realizing that his illness was developing, Vladimir Ilyich kept saying that haste was to be made so that "the illness would not catch him unawares." He dictated letters, spoke on the telephone, received some of the comrades at home, and prepared his speech for the Tenth Congress of Soviets.

On December 13, at about noon, when the doctors had gone, Vladimir Ilyich summoned me and dictated three letters: 1) to the C.C. about Rozhkov,[1]

[1] Lenin's letter to the Central Committee about Rozhkov came as a result of his disagreement with the resolution passed by the Political Bureau meeting of December 7, permitting professor N. A. Rozhkov, a former member of the Menshevik Central Committee, to reside in Moscow. Vladimir Ilyich considered it an erroneous resolution. He had no faith in Rozhkov's sincerity. In a note to the members of the Political Bureau (undated) he said: "... as a matter of fact, I am very much afraid: he will speak any amount of lies, through the press if need be. He'll lie and we'll have been tricked. That's what I am afraid of. They have a slogan: lie, resign from the Party, and stay in Russia. That's what we should consider and discuss."

On December 13, Lenin once again raised the question of Rozhkov with the Central Committee, requesting that the res-

2) to Frumkin[1] on foreign trade; 3) to Tsurupa and other vice-chairmen on the order and distribution of vice-chairmen's work.

At 12.30 p.m. Vladimir Ilyich received Stalin with whom he stayed in conversation until 2.35 p.m.

I was called in again at 5.55 p.m.

Vladimir Ilyich made an appointment with G. M. Krzhizhanovsky for noon, December 14, and he also wanted to see Frumkin, but later he cancelled the appointment.

He was not in bad spirits that day, he even joked. The winding up of his affairs worried him, however.

The letter he dictated on December 13 about the distribution of work among the vice-chairmen was an answer to the remarks made by them on his previous suggestions.

Throughout 1922, Vladimir Ilyich devoted a great deal of attention to the organization of the vice-chairmen's work, associating it closely with the problem of reorganizing and improving the apparatus to which, as everyone knows, he attached priority significance. He proposed radically reorganizing the work of the vice-chairmen. Their foremost duty was to verify the implementation of the Soviet Government's decrees and orders in practice; in addition to the Administrative Office of the C.P.C. and C.L.D. they had to draw the personnel of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the Minor C.P.C. into the work; a struggle was to be waged against bureaucratic practices and red tape; the

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olution passed by the Political Bureau on December 7 be annulled. On December 14, the Political Bureau annulled its decision in accordance with Lenin's suggestion. On hearing this, Vladimir Ilyich said it was very good news.

[1] M. I. Frumkin, Communist, a statistician. In 1922, he was a Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Trade.—*Ed.*

C.P.C. and the C.L.D. were to be relieved of trifling matters, and attention was to be focused on matters of economic administration. To ensure firmer and better guidance of the People's Commissariats, Vladimir Ilyich intended distributing control over the commissariats among the vice-chairmen with due regard for their individual abilities and leanings.

In his letter, dictated over the telephone from Gorki on December 9, 1922 (during his supposed "rest"), Vladimir Ilyich said: "Since the work of improving and regulating the whole state apparatus is much more important than that of presiding and chatting with deputy People's Commissars and People's Commissars, which until now has been taking up all of our vice-chairmen's time, it is indispensable to establish a rule, and adhere to it strictly, whereby each vice-chairman spends *not less than two hours* a week going down into the depths, and subjecting to a personal examination the most diverse parts of the apparatus, both higher and lower, and the least expected ones at that."[1]

Some of Vladimir Ilyich's suggestions, particularly the ones connected with the distribution of control over People's Commissariats, were opposed by the vice-chairmen.

Vladimir Ilyich considered that in view of his illness and his enforced temporary discontinuance of work his differences with the vice-chairmen had no practical significance at the moment. He therefore decided to leave the matter of distributing the work among the vice-chairmen until after he came back. Still, Vladimir Ilyich drew attention to the fact that he radically disagreed with Rykov who held that as a general rule he, Vladimir Ilyich, should only give personal interviews to people who had been picked beforehand by the vice-

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*, p. 361.

chairmen of the C.P.C. and the C.L.D., or by the secretary of the Central Committee of the Party.

The question of foreign trade monopoly worried Vladimir Ilyich particularly. The thought that it might be incorrectly solved or put off too long weighed heavily on him. Vladimir Ilyich was convinced that to dispense with the state monopoly of foreign trade, which he regarded as one of the commanding positions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, would be disastrous for the Soviet power. However, not all the members of the Central Committee shared this view. Bukharin and Sokolnikov were particularly vehement in their opposition.

On October 6, the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) had already adopted a compromise decision on permitting free import and export of certain classes of goods or, on some frontiers, substituting the imposition of high customs duties for the state monopoly which, in practice, would have led to an abolition of the monopoly.

The Plenary Session had discussed this matter in Lenin's absence on October 6, when he was too ill to attend.

On October 13, Vladimir Ilyich wrote a long, excited letter to Stalin. There were five and a half closely written pages and two postscripts. Vladimir Ilyich explained the erroneousness of the Plenary Session's decision, which appeared to establish a partial reform but was in fact leading to the abolition of the state monopoly. Vladimir Ilyich went on to say that the question had been put before the Plenary Session with undue haste and without prior serious discussion, whereas questions of less significance were weighed up again and again and not infrequently took several months to decide. He therefore suggested postponing the final decision on the question of state monopoly for

two months, that is until the next plenary session of the Central Committee.

"I am extremely sorry," wrote Lenin, "that illness had prevented me from attending the meeting that day, and that I am now compelled to solicit for a certain exception to the rules.

"But I think that the question needs weighing and studying, and that haste is harmful."[1]

In compliance with Lenin's request, the question was put on the agenda of the December Plenary Session of the Central Committee.

In preparation for the new discussion, Vladimir Ilyich collected data, formed a commission to examine it and draw conclusions, authorized a careful examination of the work of missions abroad insofar as foreign trade was concerned, wrote letters, persuaded comrades of the correctness of his point of view, and rallied supporters to his side.

In early December, Vladimir Ilyich instructed Frumkin to inform him briefly on the foreign trade situation, spoke to different comrades, and studied reports received from Avanesov[2] on December 3 and 5, which gave the conclusions of the commissions examining the work of the trade missions abroad. Vladimir Ilyich did not find the reports satisfactory and wrote "rough draft" on the first and "another rough draft" on the second.

On December 10, in a note sent from Gorki Vladimir Ilyich asked Frumkin to give a short resumé of the last edition of the report submitted by Avanesov's commission.

On December 13, and in the days that followed, Vladimir Ilyich wrote a number of letters and notes to

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 339-340.

[2] V. A. Avanesov (1884-1930)—veteran Bolshevik, prominent Soviet worker. In 1922, he was a deputy People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.—*Ed.*

The house in Gorki where Lenin lived

Lenin's room in Gorki

Avanesov, Frumkin and others on the question of the state monopoly of foreign trade, sent them materials and asked for their comments, studied their answers, held conversations with Frumkin and Y. Yaroslavsky[1], and dictated a long letter[2] to Stalin for the plenary session of the Central Committee.

Copies of the letter were sent to the members of the Central Committee as material for the forthcoming plenary session.

The next two days Vladimir Ilyich devoted entirely to the same question of state monopoly of foreign trade.

On December 18, 1922, the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) met again without Lenin whose condition had worsened, and adopted a decision on the necessity to retain the state monopoly of foreign trade. Vladimir Ilyich, however, was not satisfied with this. He considered it imperative to have the decision endorsed by the resolution of a Party congress.

The question of the state monopoly of foreign trade was put on the agenda of the Twelfth Party Congress, which Lenin was unable to attend. In the resolution on the political report of the Central Committee, the Twelfth Party Congress confirmed the inviolability of the state monopoly of foreign trade and the impermissibility of any evasion or vacillation in putting it in practice, and ordered the new Central Committee to

[1] Y. M. Yaroslavsky—the pseudonym of M. I. Gubelman (1878-1943), one of the oldest leaders of the revolutionary movement, member of the Communist Party from 1898, historian and publicist. In 1922 he was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.—*Ed.*

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 417-420. In this letter Lenin defended the inviolability of state monopoly of foreign trade and harshly criticized Bukharin who was against the monopoly.—*Ed.*

adopt regular measures towards strengthening and developing the system.

Thus, the recommendations made by Lenin were accepted. His wisdom and far-sightedness had obviated the adoption of an erroneous decision which might have grievously affected the economic and political position of the Soviet state.

Lenin's fight for the monopoly of foreign trade is a striking example of the zeal and persistence with which he strove for the adoption of correct decisions on questions involving a principle. Vladimir Ilyich would adduce more and more reasons as he subjected the question to an all-round examination, he would draw into the discussion a number of workers whom he considered competent, he gave their remarks careful consideration and never imposed his authority and influence on people. The whole story of how the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) arrived at the establishment of state monopoly of foreign trade, speaks of the profound respect Lenin had for collective leadership.

On December 14, Vladimir Ilyich rang up at 11 a.m. He spoke of the letter he had written to Stalin the day before on foreign trade and told us not to give it to anyone because he had a postscript to make. He wanted to know if Krzhizhanovsky would be there. He rang up again at 11.10 a.m. At 1.10 p.m. he asked to be put in touch with Y. Yaroslavsky, but since the latter could not be located, Vladimir Ilyich said he would speak to him or see him that evening.

At 2.25 p.m. Vladimir Ilyich handed me a note which was to be sent to Avanesov together with a copy of his letter to Stalin on foreign trade. The note said: "I'm sending you my letter. Return it by 7 p.m. Think hard what should be added, what taken out, how best to plan the battle."

Vladimir Ilyich instructed us to send the letter when

we had it back, to Frumkin, whom he would probably receive that evening.

He appeared to be in a good mood, he laughed and joked.

Later that afternoon, at 5.45, Vladimir Ilyich rang up to ask if the minutes of the Political Bureau meeting had come in, and said that he had something to dictate. He asked us to connect him with Y. Yaroslavsky, whom he received later and with whom he spoke about the foreign trade monopoly.

Frumkin came some time after six but he did not see Vladimir Ilyich because the doctor arrived just then. It was after 8 p.m. when Vladimir Ilyich asked me to remind him of his appointment with Frumkin when the latter came to see Tsurupa at noon the next day.

Amending his instructions of the morning, Vladimir Ilyich told me to send off the letter to Stalin as it was, the addition he wanted to make he would put in a separate letter. However, Maria Ilyinichna telephoned at about 10 p.m. and said that Vladimir Ilyich would do no dictating that night.

Although he was not feeling well that day, Vladimir Ilyich remembered to write a note to the Administrative Manager of the C.P.C., N. P. Gorbunov, about providing a flat for Professor Averbach[1], the oculist.

Everyone knows how solicitous Lenin was for people's welfare. His amazingly touching care for others while he himself was suffering so badly from his illness was noted by all. Maria Ilyinichna told us about his astonishing concern for his comrades, the warmth and anxiety with which he questioned every one of his visitors to know if he was feeling well and getting enough rest; and if he thought the man showed signs of over-

[1] M. I. Averbach (1872-1944)—an ophthalmologist prominent in Soviet medicine. He treated V. I. Lenin.

work, he would immediately pack him off for a rest cure.

Doctor Kozhevnikov said that when he visited Vladimir Ilyich on November 7 and told him that he was on his way to watch the parade from the Kremlin wall, the first thing Lenin wanted to know was if the doctor's clothes were warm enough. When Kozhevnikov told him that he was wearing his cloth overcoat, Vladimir Ilyich protested most vehemently and made him put on his own warm winter overcoat. So the doctor attended the parade wearing Lenin's overcoat.

On December 15, Vladimir Ilyich rang up at 11.50 a.m. He asked for copies of letters written the day before. He called me to his flat and handed me a confidential letter he had written, telling me to type it out and send it off. The copy was to be kept in a sealed envelope in the secret archives. Writing was very much of a strain for Vladimir Ilyich.

He made the following arrangements about his books: technical and medical books were to be checked and returned; books on agriculture to be handed to Maria Ilyinichna; books on the propaganda of industrial methods, organization of labour and pedagogy to Nadezhda Konstantinovna; fiction to await further orders; works by publicists, political memoirs, recollections, to be kept for his own use. In addition, Vladimir Ilyich asked for all the minutes of the Finance Committee together with the secretary's explanatory note, "not too long, but not too short either," which would give him a clear idea of how the committee stood. Vladimir Ilyich was not too happy, he was feeling worse, he said he had not slept the night.

Apparently, Vladimir Ilyich was now satisfied in his mind that he had completed work on matters that worried him particularly, and in this connection he addressed a letter to Stalin. He began to dictate it at

8.30 p.m. over the telephone, but then he called me into his flat and went on with the dictation there.

In this well-known letter, Vladimir Ilyich said: "I have now wound up my affairs and can leave in peace. There is only one thing that worries me extremely—that is my inability to speak at the Congress of Soviets. The doctors are coming to see me on Tuesday and we shall then decide whether there is any chance at all of me speaking. Giving it up would inconvenience me greatly, to put it mildly. I had the theses of my speech put into writing several days ago. I therefore suggest that while someone else goes on preparing to speak in my place, the question should be kept open till Wednesday when I will know whether I shall perhaps be able to appear myself with a speech much shorter than usual, lasting, say, 45 minutes. A speech like that will in no way interfere with the one made by my substitute (whoever you may choose for the purpose), but I think it would be useful both in the political and the personal sense, for it will remove the cause for any great anxiety. Please bear this in mind, and if the opening of the congress is to be put off any longer, let me know beforehand through my secretary."[1] In the theses of the speech he intended to make, Vladimir Ilyich outlined problems which he later expounded in detail in his letters and articles.

Vladimir Ilyich's letter shows how much he resented his enforced rest from work and his inability to take active part in the discussion of important issues.

On December 16, Vladimir Ilyich's condition took a turn for the worse. That night he had an attack which lasted for 35 minutes. In spite of this, he dictated another letter about the work of vice-chairmen before the arrival of the doctor, early in the morning.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 421.

The doctors stayed with him from 11 a.m. to 11.45 a.m.

Vladimir Ilyich had no means of getting from Moscow to Gorki: travel by aero-sleigh was fatiguing, and it was impossible to go by car. A telegram came from Prof. Förster confirming that Vladimir Ilyich had to have at least seven days complete rest before he could speak at the congress. That day Vladimir Ilyich did not ring up once to give us any instructions.

In the evening, Nadezhda Konstantinovna rang up and requested that a message be given to Stalin from Vladimir Ilyich to the effect that he would not be able to speak at the Congress of Soviets. I asked her how Vladimir Ilyich was and she said: "Middling, he does not look bad, but on the whole it's difficult to tell." Vladimir Ilyich, Nadezhda Konstantinovna said, also wanted me to ring up Y. Yaroslavsky and tell him to take down the speeches of the opponents of the state monopoly—Bukharin, Pyatakov, and, if possible, others as well, when the question of foreign trade monopoly came up for discussion at the Plenary Session.

His inability to speak at the Tenth Congress of Soviets had a very adverse effect on Vladimir Ilyich's health. His condition grew sharply worse, paralysis affected his right arm and right leg. That period marked a new stage in the development of his illness.

The Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) sat in the morning and evening of December 18. Vladimir Ilyich was unable to attend. On Stalin's report the session adopted a draft law on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The question of forming the U.S.S.R. had first been discussed at the October (1922) Plenary Session of the Central Committee.

A commission, formed by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee on August 10 and headed by

Stalin, had been entrusted with the groundwork on the draft law to be discussed at the Plenary Session. The commission elaborated the theses, the main point of which was the principle of "autonomization," in other words, the principle of uniting the republics by their inclusion in the Russian Federation with rights of autonomy.

After Lenin had studied Stalin's theses during his stay in Gorki in September 1922, he wrote to all the members of the Political Bureau on September 27, setting forth his emphatic objections to the principle of "autonomization" and insisting on a federal union of the republics with the Russian Federation on an equal basis, the formation of an All-Union Central Executive Committee and the election of four chairmen of the Executive Committee, one from each republic.

Vladimir Ilyich wrote: "I think the question is of super-importance; Stalin has a slight tendency to hurry."

On October 6, the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) accepted the theses of Stalin's commission revised in accordance with Lenin's remarks, and appointed a new commission, headed by Stalin, for the elaboration of the draft law on the formation of the U.S.S.R. for submission to the December Plenary Session.

The Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the foregoing congresses of Soviets of the Ukrainian S.S.R., Byelorussian S.S.R. and Transcaucasian S.F.S.R. adopted the decisions to unite these republics on the basis of voluntariness and equality of peoples.

While the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the First All-Union Congress of Soviets were on, Vladimir Ilyich lay ill in his Kremlin flat. The doctors insisted on his complete and unconditional rest, and de-

manded that he give up all work and even the reading of newspapers.

But even in his suffering Lenin displayed the matchless greatness of his spirit. He went on thinking of the future of his country, of the cause which he had served selflessly all his life, and with a superhuman exercise of strength and will he fought down his illness. Utilizing every smallest respite it gave him, he dictated his plans for the further development of the Soviet state, those wise behests to the Party and the Soviet people, which have come to be Lenin's political testament.

On December 23, doctor Kozhevnikov said, Vladimir Ilyich asked the doctors' permission to dictate something to his stenographer for five minutes, because there was a question that worried him and he was afraid he would not have the time left to him to do it later. Permission was granted and he felt easier in his mind.

That same evening, soon after eight, Vladimir Ilyich called M. A. Volodicheva[1] to his flat and gave her four minutes' dictation. According to Volodicheva, Vladimir Ilyich was feeling very sick. Before starting on the dictation he said to her: "I am going to dictate a letter to the congress. Take it down." He spoke very quickly, but his condition told. When he was through he asked Volodicheva what day of the month it was, why she was looking so pale and was not attending the congress. A simple and friendly attitude to the members of his staff was very much in character with Vladimir Ilyich. He gave no other instructions to Volodicheva.

On December 24, between 6 and 8 p.m., Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in again and dictated for ten

[1] M. A. Volodicheva (b. 1891)—member of the C.P.S.U. since 1917. From 1918 to 1924 she worked in the secretariat of the Council of People's Commissars.—*Ed.*

minutes. He warned her that what he had dictated the day before (23 December) and that day (24 December)[1] was highly confidential. He stressed the point several times, and ordered transcriptions of all he dictated to be kept in a safe place.

We know from Maria Ilyinichna that when the doctors remonstrated with Vladimir Ilyich about the sessions he had with his secretary and stenographer, he told them point-blank: either he would be allowed to dictate to his stenographer, if only for a very short time each day, or he would refuse treatment altogether. Vladimir Ilyich's most characteristic trait was displayed here: steadfastness of purpose which had always been a part of him. He saw no sense in life without revolutionary work, and though bedridden, suffering from bad headaches and the torments of insomnia, he tried with superhuman stubbornness to seize every opportunity to do something for the Party, for the cause of the working class.

Vladimir Ilyich was persistent in his efforts to get the doctors' permission for him to dictate his "diary," which is what he called his notes, believing, most probably, that this innocent-sounding word would help to get their approval.

On December 24, the doctors held a conference with Stalin and other members of the Political Bureau. It was decided that Vladimir Ilyich would be allowed to dictate for 5 or 10 minutes a day, but that he was not to expect any replies to his notes. Visitors were forbidden. No political news was to be brought to him by either his friends or his family. Vladimir Ilyich could call in either Volodicheva or myself to dictate his notes.

Availing himself of the doctors' permission, Vladimir Ilyich in late December 1922 and early January 1923,

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, pp. 543-545.

dictated his letters and articles which are of an inestimable significance for our Party.

Little by little his dictation time was increased to 20 minutes a day, and finally to 40 minutes in two goes—morning and evening.

Occasionally Vladimir Ilyich overstepped the time limit, and went on dictating the article he had begun. Actually he worked much longer than the time prescribed. During the dictation period we would sometimes read over the typed transcription of what he had dictated earlier. On some days, he also read before going to sleep.

One may be sure that Vladimir Ilyich spent many hours during the day and also during his sleepless nights thinking over the wording of what he urgently had to say to the Party, restricted as he was by the time limit set for his dictation.

The need to dictate rather than write was undoubtedly causing Vladimir Ilyich very much trouble. He never liked dictating, even before he fell ill. He used to say that he was accustomed to seeing what he had written in front of him, and was therefore finding dictation difficult. Another thing that irked him was the sight of the stenographer sitting there with pencil poised, waiting for him to go on, while he took a few minutes' pause to think of what he wanted to say next. He had to adjust himself to it, however, and thought it would help if the stenographer had a book to read in the pauses, but that was not much good either. In the end the stenographer was placed in the adjoining room and given ear-phones, so Vladimir Ilyich could dictate to her over the phone. However, he resorted to this method but rarely and then with reluctance.

His utter inability to write in the difficult period from the end of December 1922 to March 1923, compelled Vladimir Ilyich to dictate.

When dictating his last letters and articles, Vladimir Ilyich would quickly, in a rush of words, say the sentence he had formed in his mind, and make a short pause to consider the next one. He never repeated a sentence twice, and neither Volodicheva nor myself ever asked him to, afraid to disturb the course of his thoughts.

We had to transcribe and type out our notes at once and hand them to Vladimir Ilyich. On his orders the notes were then typed in five copies, one of which remained with him, three were given to Nadezhda Konstantinovna, and one was filed by his secretariat.

The copy intended for *Pravda*, with all the amendments and corrections, was shown to Vladimir Ilyich after it had been retyped. It was then handed to Maria Ilyinichna for forwarding to the newspaper. The other copies were amended accordingly, and the rough notes burnt.

Top-secret notes were kept in sealed envelopes on which Vladimir Ilyich had us write that they could only be opened by V. I. Lenin. He had also added at the time: "And after his death by Nadezhda Konstantinovna," but these words were not written on the envelopes.

Maria Ilyinichna, who hardly left her brother's side, took charge of all the business and household arrangements. Nadezhda Konstantinovna was in constant attendance on Vladimir Ilyich as well. He loved the two people dearest to him with all his heart, and always showed tender concern for them.

A stand was made to go on his bed, something like a music stand. Vladimir Ilyich would place the article he was checking on it, turn the pages with his good left hand, and occasionally put in a few corrections. Whenever he felt a little better, he smiled and joked, and asked if the members of his staff were not too

overworked. But his headaches came back very often.

Those were hard and unforgettable days. All our life seemed to be centred in those few minutes which we spent by Vladimir Ilyich's bedside, anxious not to miss a word or even a momentary shade of expression on his face.

All our comrades, the members of Lenin's small secretariat staff, anxiously awaited Volodicheva or myself every time we were called in to Vladimir Ilyich. The first thing they all wanted to know was how Vladimir Ilyich was feeling and looking that day. Sometimes, after we had left him either Nadezhda Konstantinovna or Maria Ilyinichna would come into the secretariat to read us what he had just dictated, or to share with us their thoughts on his condition.

On December 24, Vladimir Ilyich received Sukhanov's *Notes on the Revolution*,[1] volumes 3 and 4, which he had asked for.

On December 25 and 26, Vladimir Ilyich carried on with his dictation of the "Letter to the Congress"[2] begun on December 23.

On December 27 and 28, Vladimir Ilyich dictated his

[1] The 3rd and 4th volumes of *Notes on the Revolution* by the Menshevik N. Sukhanov, the 4th edition of which was put out by Z. I. Grzhebin's publishing house, Berlin-Petrograd-Moscow, 1922, dealt with the period from April 3 to July 8, 1917. In connection with these books V. I. Lenin wrote his notes "Our Revolution" (V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 436-439).

[2] In the "Letter to the Congress" Lenin stressed the need to safeguard the unity of the Party. As one of the measures ensuring unity Lenin advocated increasing the membership of the Central Committee, then numbering 27 people, to from 50 to 100.

In this letter, Lenin characterized several members of the Central Committee, commenting on their good and bad points.

The "Letter to the Congress" was made public at the Thirteenth Party Congress.—*Ed.*

letter "Attribution of Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission,"[1] which he finished on December 29.

In this letter Vladimir Ilyich spoke of the necessity to expand the sphere of action of the State Planning Commission, and pointed out that there the matter in principle was closely interwoven with the question of personalities, to be precise, the people heading the Commission. Vladimir Ilyich referred to his previously expressed opinion (in 1921 and in September 1922) that the scientific work of the State Planning Commission should be combined with administrative functions.

N. K. Krupskaya handed the letter to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee on June 2, 1923, and on instructions from Stalin copies were sent on June 3, 1923, to all members and candidate members of the Political Bureau and to members of the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.[2]

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, pp. 548-551.

In his letter "Attribution of Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission," Lenin emphasizes the enhanced role of the Commission in socialist construction, points to the necessity of expanding its functions, and defines the political and business requirements which the leaders of the State Planning Commission should answer.—*Ed.*

[2] The highest Party control body operating from 1921 to 1934. It was first elected at the Tenth Party Congress to consolidate the unity of the Party, strengthen Party discipline, combat bureaucratic practices and the abuse of their positions by Party members in the Party and Soviets. In conformity with Lenin's proposal submitted in his last articles "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" and "Better Fewer but Better," the Twelfth Party Congress united the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection into one body to which were entrusted the duties of safeguarding the unity of the Party, strengthening Party and civic discipline, and improving the state apparatus in every way.—*Ed.*

On December 28, Vladimir Ilyich dictated for about 20 minutes and spent as much time reading.

On December 29, Nadezhda Konstantinovna told us that the doctors had permitted Vladimir Ilyich to read books, that he was now reading Sukhanov's *Notes on the Revolution*, and wanted us to make up lists of all the new books that came in, excluding fiction, which did not interest him just then.

Vladimir Ilyich's dictating time was increased to ten minutes twice a day, but he often went beyond that. Maria Ilyinichna told us that Vladimir Ilyich wanted very much to get well and so he obeyed the doctors' orders as far as medicines went but ignored them when it came to work.

During that period, Lenin's activity was not confined to the dictating of his notes to which, as the doctors put it, "he was not to expect any replies"; he also took an interest in current affairs and tried to influence their course.

On December 29, Vladimir Ilyich finished his letter "Attribution of Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission" and dictated another one "With Reference to Increasing the Central Committee Membership."[1] He had two dictation periods of ten minutes each, and read for two minutes each time.

Needless to say, Vladimir Ilyich had frequently turned his attention to the question of the structure of the Central Committee before. He considered it particularly important that there should be continuity in the work of the Central Committee, that the younger people should join in the work and get used to it.

On December 30, Vladimir Ilyich dictated his letter "The Question of Nationalities or of 'Autonomization'"[1] in two periods of fifteen minutes each, and had two twenty-minute reading periods.

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 552.

On the evening of December 31, Vladimir Ilyich finished the letter in two dictation periods.

In his letter Vladimir Ilyich gave a highly-principled analysis of the Communist Party's policy towards the national minorities. The letter was necessitated by the conflict in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia. The conflict started mainly over the proposed formation of the Transcaucasian Federative Republic. A group of members of the Georgian Central Committee (Mdivani, Makharadze and others) held that the question was premature and insufficiently studied. They were against the formation of a federation and wanted the direct inclusion of the Georgian S.S.R. into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

On November 24, the secretariat of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) had appointed a commission to make an urgent study of the resignations handed in by the members of the old Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia (F. Makharadze and others), and to work out measures necessary for the establishment of a durable peace within the Communist Party of Georgia. This decision had been placed before the Political Bureau for approval. In the voting, Vladimir Ilyich had abstained.

The commission had travelled to Tiflis to investigate. The work had been completed in December, and Dzerzhinsky had reported the results to Vladimir Ilyich before his illness. The whole thing had a most dire effect on Vladimir Ilyich.

He had been dissatisfied with the work of F. E. Dzerzhinsky's commission, and considered that it had not displayed the necessary impartiality in its investigations of the "Georgian incident."

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, pp. 553-559.

In his letter "The Question of Nationalities or of 'Autonomization'" Vladimir Ilyich pointed out that the distortion of the policy of proletarian internationalism was liable to undermine our authority among the peoples of the East, and was particularly detrimental and dangerous at a moment when hundreds of millions of people in Asia were beginning to stir to the fight for their liberation. Vladimir Ilyich concluded his letter with the following prophetic words: "And tomorrow in world history will be just such a day when the peoples oppressed by imperialism will finally be aroused and awakened and the long, hard and decisive struggle for their liberation will begin."[1]

V. I. Lenin's letter "The Question of Nationalities or of 'Autonomization'" and his letter of September 27 on the formation of the U.S.S.R. are documents of exceptional importance. They put the Party on its guard against distortions of the Soviet Government's national policy, and violations of the principle of proletarian internationalism.

Prior to the Twelfth Party Congress the contents of Lenin's letter "The Question of Nationalities or of 'Autonomization'" were only known to some members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. It was read at a conference of the heads of the delegations to the Twelfth Party Congress.

1923

Vladimir Ilyich dictated his last 5 articles[2] in the course of January and February 1923.

January 2. Vladimir Ilyich dictated "Pages from a Diary."

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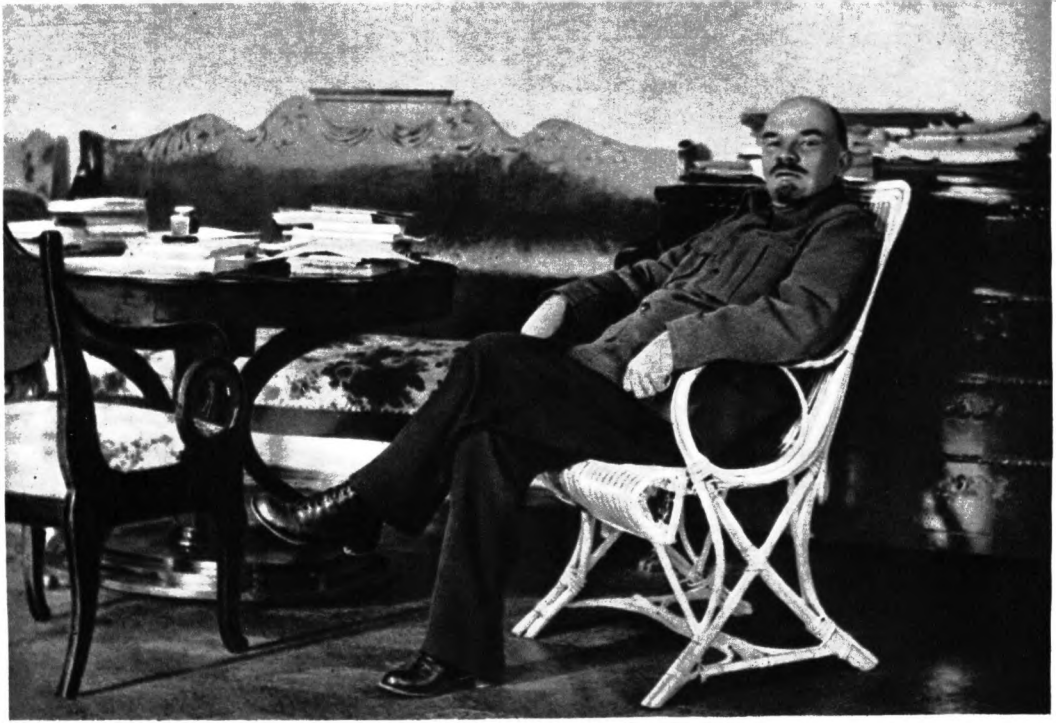
[1] V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. Ed., Vol. 36, p. 559.

[2] The 5 articles include: "Pages from a Diary," "On Co-operation," "Our Revolution," "How We Should Reorganize the



Lenin at his desk in Gorki. August-September 1922

Lenin and N. K. Krupskaya in the garden in Gorki.
August-September 1922

January 4. Vladimir Ilyich dictated an addition to his "Letter to the Congress" and started on his article "On Co-operation." He finished it on January 6.

January 5. Vladimir Ilyich did not call any of us in, but asked for the list of new books received since January 3, and Titlinov's "New Church."

January 9. Vladimir Ilyich dictated his article "What Shall We Do with the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" (the first variant of "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection"). He went on with it on January 13.

January 10. In the morning Vladimir Ilyich felt bad. When the doctors were leaving after their morning call Maria Ilyinichna asked Doctor Kozhevnikov to come again later, and told him that Vladimir Ilyich was insisting on calling his secretary in for no more than a couple of minutes. The doctor's permission secured, Vladimir Ilyich called me in and told me to get in touch with the Central Statistical Board and ask for the results of the census of employees of government institutions.

January 16. Vladimir Ilyich dictated his article "Our Revolution."

January 17. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in for half an hour between 6 and 7 p.m. He read and made amendments to his article "Our Revolution,"

Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" and "Better Fewer but Better."

These articles formed the concluding stage in Lenin's elaboration of the plan for building socialism in the U.S.S.R. They embraced the industrialization of the country, the reconstruction of the countryside on socialist lines, the strengthening of the unity of workers and peasants, stabilization and improvement of the state apparatus, and safeguarding of the monolithic unity of the Party.

In effect, Lenin's articles formed his political testament to the Party.—*Ed.*

dictating more of it for the next 10 or 15 minutes. He was pleased with the new stand which made it easier for him to read his manuscripts and books.

Volodicheva told us that when Vladimir Ilyich was dictating the sentence "Our Sukhanovs . . . could not even dream . . ." he paused to consider his next words, and said jokingly: "What a memory! I've quite forgotten what I was going to say! The devil, what an amazingly poor memory!"

He asked for the notes to be typed out at once and brought to him.

"Our Revolution" is the only article dictated by Vladimir Ilyich in December 1922-February 1923, that he failed to give a title to. N. K. Krupskaya handed it in to *Pravda* and there it was entitled. The article appeared in print on May 30, 1923.

January 19. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in twice, once at about 7 p.m. and again at a little past 8. He dictated for about 30 minutes. It was his second variant of the article "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection." He said he wanted to get the article finished as soon as possible. Doctor Kozhevnikov told us that Vladimir Ilyich was pleased with his work and was not too tired.

January 20. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in between noon and 1 p.m. She stayed there for about 30 minutes, while Vladimir Ilyich read through his article on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, made corrections and additions. He said that Nadezhda Konstantinovna would get him the data concerning one part of his article, and commissioned me to find out how many and what sort of institutions on the scientific organization of labour we had, how many congresses had been held on the subject and what groups had taken part in them. He then asked whether there was perhaps any material on this in Petrograd. M. I. Khlop-

lyankin,[1] he said, had sent him the same material Nadezhda Konstantinovna already had, except that it was a little more detailed. Vladimir Ilyich then asked me to give him a complete list of books that had come in for him.

January 22. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in for 25 minutes (from 12 to 12.25 p.m.). He made amendments to the second variant of his article on Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and finally decided to let the second variant stand. His working time was restricted and so he was in a great hurry. He asked Volodicheva to put the article in order, type it out, and bring it in that evening. When she came later, Nadezhda Konstantinovna, who opened the door for her, said that Vladimir Ilyich had gone against the rules and given himself a few more minutes to look the article through. Nadezhda Konstantinovna also said that the nurse on duty was against admitting visitors that day. Later, Nadezhda Konstantinovna looked into the secretariat and told Volodicheva that Vladimir Ilyich wanted her to leave a space if she had not managed to take everything down. Vladimir Ilyich had been in such a hurry that he was afraid it had been difficult to follow him.

January 23. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in between noon and 1 p.m. He glanced through the article once again and made some minor amendments. He asked Volodicheva to correct his copy and our own accordingly, and to give one copy to Maria Ilyinichna for *Pravda*. The copies were amended and one handed to Maria Ilyinichna before 3 p.m. Vladimir Ilyich wanted to know if I had returned from Petro-

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[1] M. I. Khloplyankin—member of the Minor Council of People's Commissars and the collegium of People's Commissariat of Labour.

grad and if our holidays were over. The article "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" was published in *Pravda* on January 25, 1923.

January 24. Vladimir Ilyich called me in and told me to get the commission's data on the Georgian question either from Dzerzhinsky or Stalin, and that M. I. Glyasser,[1] N. P. Gorbunov and I were to study them thoroughly and submit a report to him. He added that he needed them for the Party congress. Apparently, he did not know that the "Georgian question" was on the agenda of the Political Bureau. Vladimir Ilyich said: "Just before I fell ill, Dzerzhinsky told me about the work of the commission and about the 'incident,' and it affected me painfully." In giving us the order to study the data on the "Georgian question," Vladimir Ilyich was moved by the need to "complete the examination or examine anew all the data of Dzerzhinsky's commission with a view to correcting the huge mass of injustices and biased opinions that are certainly there."

January 25. Vladimir Ilyich wanted to know if the commission had sent in the data. I replied that Dzerzhinsky was only due from Tiflis on Saturday, January 27.

January 26. Vladimir Ilyich asked me to tell Tsurupa, Svidersky[2] and Avanesov that if they agreed with his article on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, they were to call some meetings to discuss, prior to the congress, whether it would not be best to draw up a plan, a

[1] M. I. Glyasser (1890-1951)—member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union since 1917. From 1918 to 1924 she worked in the secretariat of the Council of People's Commissars.

[2] A. I. Svidersky (1876-1933)—professional revolutionary, member of the Communist Party since 1899. From May 1921 to 1923 member of the collegium of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

compendium of text-books on fixing rates and wages. Vladimir Ilyich also wanted to know if they were acquainted with the books by Kerzhentsev[1] and Yermansky.[2]

January 27. I asked Dzerzhinsky for the data on the "Georgian question" but he told me that Stalin had it. I sent a letter to Stalin, but he happened to be away from Moscow.

January 29. Stalin told me on the telephone that he could not give me the data without the Political Bureau's sanction. He asked me if I was not telling Vladimir Ilyich more than I should, since he seemed to be well-informed about current matters. For instance, his article about the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection showed that certain circumstances were known to him. I replied that I told Vladimir Ilyich nothing and had no reason to believe that he was fully informed on current matters.

January 30. Vladimir Ilyich called me in and when I told him what Stalin had answered, he said that he would fight for the data to be given him. He then asked me what Tsurupa had said about his article on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and whether he (Tsurupa), Svidersky, Avanesov, Reske, and the other members of the collegium were in agreement with it. Mindful of the rule not to talk on business matters with Vladimir Ilyich, I said that I did not know. Vladimir Ilyich said he was wondering if Tsurupa was in two minds about it, perhaps, if he was not trying to put

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[1] P. M. Kerzhentsev ((1881-1940)—veteran Bolshevik, journalist, diplomat. At one time he was engaged in the study of the scientific organization of labour. Lenin was referring to his book *Principles of Organization*, published in 1922.—*Ed.*

[2] O. A. Yermansky—Social Democrat, Menshevik. Lenin was referring to his book *Scientific Organization of Labour and the Taylor System* published in 1922.—*Ed.*

the matter off, and if he was frank in his conversations with me. I replied that so far I had had no chance to talk to him, and had only given him the message on which, he said, he would act.

Vladimir Ilyich told me that he had asked the doctor the day before if he would be able to speak at the Party Congress on March 30. The doctor said no, but promised that Vladimir Ilyich would be up by then, and that in a month's time he would be allowed to read newspapers. When we returned to the "Georgian question" Vladimir Ilyich said, laughingly: "This is not a newspaper, and so I may read it now."

He was in a good frame of mind that day.

February 1. Vladimir Ilyich called me in at 6.30 p.m. I told him that the Political Bureau had agreed to let him have the Georgian commission's reports. Vladimir Ilyich pointed out what should be noted particularly when examining them and how we were to approach the work in general. "If only I were free . . ." he began, then repeated it with a laugh: "If only I were free, I'd do it all myself easily."

On Vladimir Ilyich's instructions I made out a list of questions that had to be answered in the process of studying the material.

He then asked me again what Tsurupa and the other members of the collegium of the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection thought of his article. I answered, as prompted by Tsurupa and Svidersky, that the latter approved of it entirely and the former, though welcoming the part about drawing in the members of the Central Committee, had his doubts about whether it would be possible to carry out all the present duties of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection if the personnel were reduced to 300 or 400 people. Avanesov's viewpoint I did not know.

Vladimir Ilyich seemed satisfied with the information,

and went on to ask me if the Central Committee had taken up the question of the article. I replied that I did not know.

February 2. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in at 11.45 a. m. and dictated his article "Better Fewer but Better" until 12.30 p.m.

He asked Volodicheva to tell me that I should come in every other day. She had said: what time? To this Vladimir Ilyich had replied that he was now a free man! He had mentioned in passing that any time would do except from 2 to 5 p.m., but after a moment's thought added that 6 p.m. would be all right, although perhaps it would be better for me to arrange it with his sister.

Volodicheva told us that Vladimir Ilyich's condition had improved considerably, judging by outward appearances: his colour was good, he looked cheerful, he dictated excellently, without pausing and rarely searching for a word, or, to express it better, he spoke rather than dictated, stressing his meaning with energetic gestures.

February 3. Vladimir Ilyich called me in at 7 p.m. for a few minutes. He asked me whether we had looked through the Georgian commission's data. I replied that I had just looked at the papers and that they had proved to be less numerous than we supposed. After that Vladimir Ilyich wanted to know if the question had been brought up for discussion at the Political Bureau. I said that I had no right to speak about it. Vladimir Ilyich then asked: "Have you been forbidden to speak to me about this particular matter?" I replied that I had no right to speak to him about current matters at all. "In other words, this is a current matter?" he said. I knew then that I had made a blunder. Vladimir Ilyich went on questioning me. "I've known about this business from Dzerzhinsky since before I fell ill. Did the commission make a report at a Political

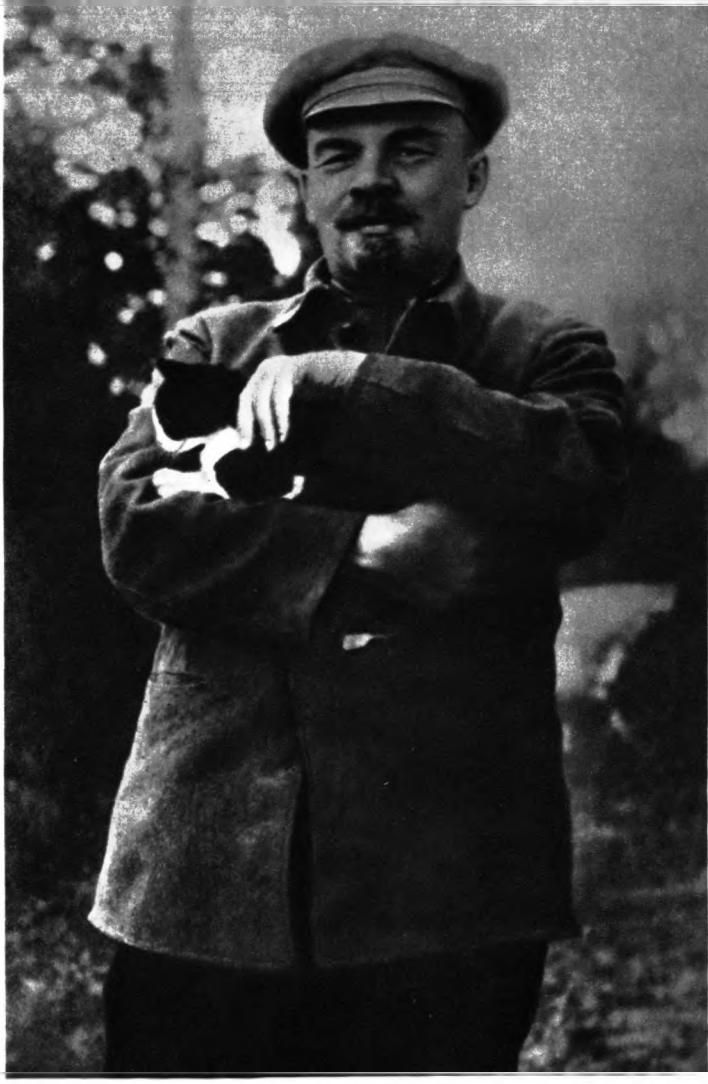
Bureau meeting?" There was nothing else I could do but tell Vladimir Ilyich that the commission did make a report at a Political Bureau meeting and that on the whole the Bureau had approved the conclusions. After that Vladimir Ilyich said: "Well, I believe you will give me your account in about three weeks from now, and then I shall write a letter." Soon the doctors came (Prof. Förster who had just arrived, Drs. Kozhevnikov and Kramer), and I left. Vladimir Ilyich looked cheerful and lively that day.

February 4, Sunday. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in at about 6 p.m. He asked her if she minded being called in on holidays as well. "After all, you, too, will want a rest some time," he said.

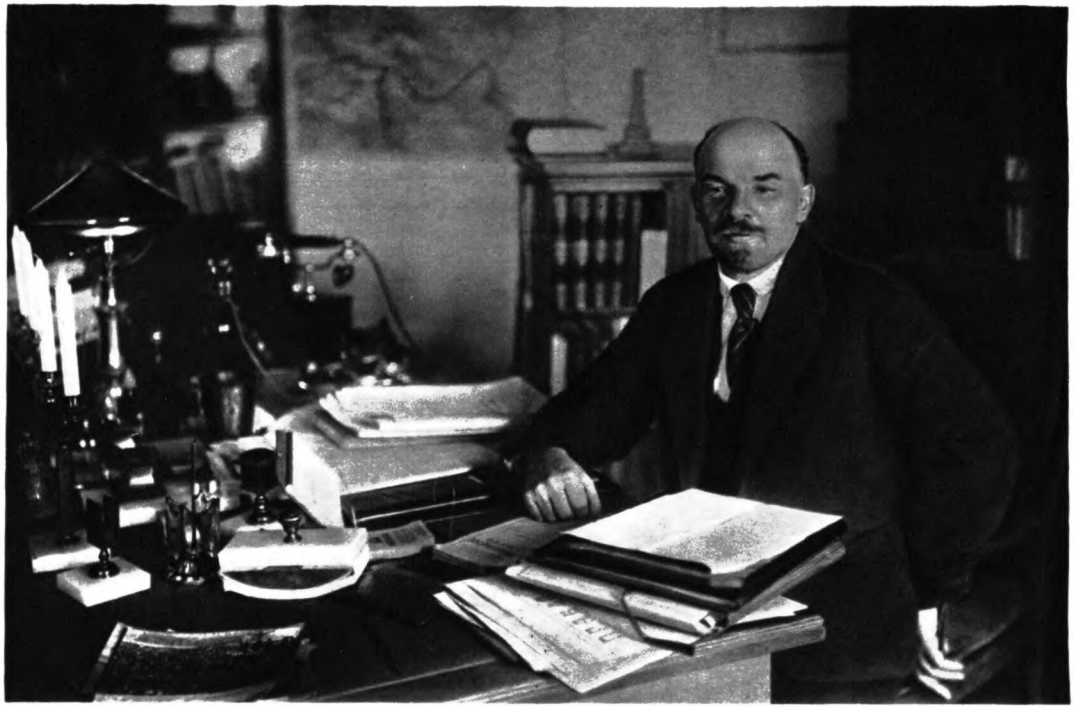
He dictated for over half an hour, continuing with his article "Better Fewer but Better." According to Volodicheva Vladimir Ilyich had a fresh, cheerful voice that day. He ended his dictation with the words: "Well, enough for now. I'm a bit tired." He told Volodicheva to ring him up when she was through with transcribing her notes, because he would probably want to go on with the dictation that evening. He added that it was an old habit of his to write with his manuscript in front of him, and that he was finding it difficult to do without it.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna told us afterwards that Prof. Förster had said many heartening things to Vladimir Ilyich that day, that he had allowed him to do exercises and had extended his dictation time. Vladimir Ilyich was very happy about it all.

At 8 p.m. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in again, but instead of dictating he read over her typed notes and made some additions. When he had finished he told her that before sending his article to the press he intended to show it to Tsurupa and perhaps some other members of the collegium, and was also expect-



Lenin taking a stroll in Gorki. August-September 1922



Lenin in his study in the Kremlin, after his convalescence. October 1922

ing to add something to the thoughts he had set down.

February 5. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in at noon. She stayed with him for three-quarters of an hour. Dictation was going slowly that day. The right expression escaping him, Vladimir Ilyich said: "It's not going smoothly with me today for some reason, not briskly." (He stressed the word "briskly.") He asked for his article "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" and perused it for three or four minutes. He dictated for a little longer and then decided to stop, saying that he would call Volodicheva in again at 4, 5, or maybe 6 p.m. that evening.

Vladimir Ilyich called me in at 7 p.m. but I was unwell and Glyasser went instead. She wrote out a brief account of her conversation with Vladimir Ilyich which has been preserved and which I give below with hardly any alterations: "Vladimir Ilyich asked me if we had started on the reports of the Georgian commission and how soon we expected to complete the work. I replied that we had distributed the material among us and had begun to read it; as for the date of completion, we were planning to do it in the time he gave us, that is three weeks. Vladimir Ilyich next wanted to know how we intended to do the reading. I said that we had come to the conclusion that it was imperative for every one of us to read through everything. 'Was this decision unanimous?' he asked. I said it was. Vladimir Ilyich tried to work out how long we had until the congress, and when I told him we had a month and 25 days, he said that it was perhaps long enough but might prove insufficient if some additional information had to be obtained from the Caucasus. He asked me how many hours each of us worked, and said that if need be we could get Volodicheva and Manucharyants to help us. Vladimir Ilyich wanted to know if our decision for each

one to read everything had been made formally. I replied that we had not put it on record anywhere, and asked if perhaps he thought it wrong. Vladimir Ilyich said that he would like us all to read the material, of course, but then the tasks set before us were extremely vague. On the one hand, he did not want to trouble us unduly, but on the other it was to be expected that in the course of work it would prove necessary to add to our tasks. Perhaps additional data would be needed. Vladimir Ilyich asked me where the documents were kept, our method of using them, whether we were going to make a summary of all the documents and type it out, and if it was not going to be too much trouble. Finally, Vladimir Ilyich said that within the week we would decide how much time we needed and how we were to work on the material; we should be guided in our work by the need to draw up a general review of all the data on questions outlined by the commission, and also on questions which Vladimir Ilyich would put before us in the course of the work.

"Vladimir Ilyich told me to ask Popov how matters were progressing at the Central Statistical Board with the final returns of the census taken in Petrograd, Moscow and Kharkov (if a census had been taken in the latter town), how soon he expected them to be ready and whether they would be published. Vladimir Ilyich said that he would like to see the returns in print before the Party congress, and that in view of the exceptional importance of the census the returns should be published, in spite of the fact that the previous ones had not been, Popov having simply sent the statements to Vladimir Ilyich. Therefore, pressure should be put on Popov, and an official request sent to him after having first discussed it with him verbally." The conversation lasted 20 minutes.

February 6. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in between 7 and 9 in the evening. She stayed there for close on an hour and a half. According to what Volodicheva says, Vladimir Ilyich began by reading over his article "Better Fewer but Better." The amendments in red ink put him in a gay mood (not the amendments as such, but the way they had been put in). On his instructions, the short-hand notes were usually transcribed and given to him in the rough to be added to or amended. But since the corrections were put in in a clerical rather than a proof-reader's manner, Vladimir Ilyich found the second reading difficult. In future, he said, a clean copy was to be made.

As he ran through the article, he spoke again of his habit of writing and not dictating, and that now he knew why he never seemed to be satisfied with his stenographers. The fact was that he was used to seeing his writing before him, to stop and think over a difficult passage in which he was "getting stuck," to walk up and down the room and sometimes even run out of doors for a walk. He said that now, too, he sometimes badly wanted to pick up a pencil and write or put in the corrections himself.

Vladimir Ilyich recalled his early attempts, in 1918, to dictate an article to his stenographer. When he felt that he was "getting stuck" he had "raced on" in confusion at an "incredible speed," and as a result had had to commit his manuscript to the flames, after which he had proceeded to write out his article "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," with which he had been well pleased.

Vladimir Ilyich laughed his infectious laughter and spoke about it all in a very gay manner. Volodicheva said that she had never yet seen him in such a cheerful mood. He then dictated more of the same article for

about 15 or 20 minutes. He said himself that time was up.

February 7. Vladimir Ilyich called me in in the morning. He spoke to me on three points:

1) The census returns. He asked to be shown the proofs of the volume.

2) The Georgian commission. He wanted to know how work was progressing, when we expected to be through with the reading, when we were to meet, and so on.

3) The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. Vladimir Ilyich asked me if the collegium intended adopting some immediate decision and taking some steps of state importance, or were putting the matter off till the congress. He said that he was writing an article but that it was not going well; nevertheless, he wanted to finish it off and let Tsurupa read it before sending it to the press. He told me to find out from Tsurupa whether he need hurry with the article or not. (Vladimir Ilyich was referring to his article "Better Fewer but Better.")

That day, doctor Kozhevnikov said that Vladimir Ilyich's condition was showing an improvement: he could already move his hand, and he himself was beginning to believe that he would eventually have the use of it.

Later that day (around 12.30 p.m.) Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in and said that he would dictate on different subjects. The first was: how could the work of Party and Soviet institutions be amalgamated, and the second was: whether it was convenient to combine teaching and functional activities (3rd and 4th parts of the article "Better Fewer but Better").

Vladimir Ilyich stopped at the sentence "and the more rigorous the revolution. . ." repeating it several times evidently at a loss for a word. He asked Volodicheva to help him out by reading back what had gone

before, laughed and said: "I've got stuck completely here, it seems, put it down—I got stuck at this very spot!"

Between 7 and 9 p.m. that night Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in again, and kept her for close on an hour and a half. To begin with, Volodicheva said, he finished the sentence at which he had broken off earlier in the afternoon, and said: "Now I shall try to develop the next theme." He asked Volodicheva to read out to him the themes he had outlined earlier, and when she had done so remarked that he had left one out, namely, the correlation of the Central Board of Professional Education and the general educational work in the countryside.[1] Vladimir Ilyich dictated the

[1] The themes outlined by Lenin were as follows:

1) The Central Union of Consumers' Societies and its significance from the point of view of the New Economic Policy; 2) the national question and internationalism (in view of the recent conflict in the Communist Party of Georgia); 3) the new book *Statistics of Public Education* which came out in 1922; 4) the correlation of the Central Board of Professional Education and general educational work in the countryside.

It is difficult to say whether those themes were exhaustively covered in the letters and articles dictated in late December 1922, and January, February 1923.

Themes 3 and 4 were only mentioned in passing in the article "Pages from a Diary." Besides, the subject of the Central Board of Professional Education was included by Lenin in his list of themes on February 7, whereas the article "Pages from a Diary" had been dictated on January 2.

Vladimir Ilyich had developed the theme of the national question and internationalism in his letter "The Question of Nationalities or of 'Autonomization.'" He may have intended to dictate another article devoted entirely to this subject.

And finally, did his article "On Co-operation" deal exhaustively with the theme of the Central Union of Consumers' Societies from the point of view of the New Economic Policy? Most probably not. One is led to believe that with illness cutting his work short, Vladimir Ilyich did not manage to dictate all he had to say on the subjects outlined.

general part of his article "Better Fewer but Better" quickly and easily, gesticulating and finding no difficulty in choosing the right words. When he was through he said that he would try to tie up that part with the article as a whole later.

Volodicheva learned later from Nadezhda Konstantinovna that Vladimir Ilyich would give her no dictation on the morrow, because he wanted to do some reading.

February 9. Vladimir Ilyich called me in and told me that he would bring the question of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection before the congress.

He was worried about the proper printing of the census returns. He agreed with my suggestion to authorize Krzhizhanovsky and Svidersky to find out either from Tsurupa or Kamenev how the work was going.

Vladimir Ilyich looked fine and was in excellent humour. He told me that Förster was now inclined to permit visitors first and newspapers afterwards. To my remark that from a medical point of view it really seemed better, Vladimir Ilyich replied very earnestly and after some thought that in his opinion it was precisely from the medical point of view that it was worse, because printed matter was read and done with while seeing people led to an exchange of opinion.

February 9. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in some time after midday, and told her that the re-typed notes pleased him better. He read through the part he had dictated the day before, and hardly made any amendments. When he finished reading he said: "I made this rather intelligible, I believe." Volodicheva said that Vladimir Ilyich was very pleased with that part of the article.

That evening Nadezhda Konstantinovna asked for the general part of the article which Vladimir Ilyich wanted her to read.

February 10. Vladimir Ilyich called me in after 6 in the evening and told me to give Tsurupa the article "Better Fewer but Better" to read through in two days' time if possible. Vladimir Ilyich then asked me to give him the books he had marked on the list, among them Rozhitsyn's *New Science and Marxism*, and a collection of articles *Fundamental Problems of the Theory of Money*, Faulkner's *Turning-Point in the Development of the World Industrial Crisis*, Arthur Drews' *The Myth About Christ*, Kurlov's *The End of Russian Tsarism*, and Modzalevsky's *Proletarian Myth-Making. On the Idealist Tendencies of Contemporary Proletarian Poesy*, and others.

Vladimir Ilyich looked tired and spoke with an effort.

February 12. Vladimir Ilyich called me in for a few minutes. He was worse, he had a severe headache. According to Maria Ilyinichna, the doctors had upset him. The day before Förster had told him that he absolutely forbade newspapers, visitors and political information. When asked by Vladimir Ilyich what he meant by political information, Förster said: "Well, to take an example, there is your interest in the census of employees. . . ." Apparently it was the knowledge that the doctors were so well posted that had upset Vladimir Ilyich. He talked to me about the same three themes, and complained of a headache.

February 14. Vladimir Ilyich called me in soon after midday. He said that his headache was gone and he felt better, his was a nervous disease and so at times he was perfectly well, that is, his head was perfectly clear, and at others he grew worse. That is why we had to make haste in carrying out his orders, because there was something he was bent on putting through before the congress, and was hoping to manage it. If we pro-

crastinated and thereby ruined the plan, he would be very much annoyed.

Our conversation was cut short by the arrival of the doctors.

Vladimir Ilyich called me in again that evening. He spoke with an effort, evidently he was tired. He again talked about the three themes, particularly the "Georgian question" which worried him most of all. He asked us to hurry, and gave me some additional instructions.

The following days Vladimir Ilyich felt bad. He did not call any of us in. He wanted to read, but the doctors talked him out of it.

February 20. In the evening, Vladimir Ilyich asked to be given the report on the Tenth Congress of Soviets of the R.S.F.S.R. Nadezhda Konstantinovna promised to bring it, but Maria Ilyinichna advised her against it saying that reading the report would be bad for him.

Vladimir Ilyich was sorely disappointed and argued that he had already read the report and only wanted it in connection with one point which was then occupying his mind. Still, he did not get the report and was very much upset.

He spent the next few days reading. He asked to be given the 7th volume of Sukhanov's *Notes About the Revolution*, and talked a little on business matters.

March 2. Vladimir Ilyich read his article "Better Fewer but Better" over for the last time, and sent it to the press. It appeared in *Pravda*. This article came as a logical continuation of the one entitled "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection," and formed a single whole with it, as it were.

March 3. I handed Vladimir Ilyich our memorandum and findings on the examination of the data submitted by Dzerzhinsky's commission on the "Georgian question."

March 5. Vladimir Ilyich called Volodicheva in at about noon and dictated two letters to her which took him 15 or 20 minutes.

Doctor Kozhevnikov said afterwards that Vladimir Ilyich had told him the letters had not upset him at all since they were purely business ones. And yet, as soon as the stenographer (Volodicheva) had gone, he had begun to feel feverish.

Later, Vladimir Ilyich called me in and gave me a number of commissions.

March 6. Vladimir Ilyich called in both Volodicheva and myself, and only dictated a line and a half to her.

He read over the letter to Stalin he had dictated the day before, and told me to hand it to Stalin personally and bring back an answer.

Vladimir Ilyich was unable to read Stalin's answer, because he had a bad attack of his illness the day it arrived. That day marked a sharp change for the worse in Vladimir Ilyich's condition generally.

March 10. The doctors arranged to do night duty from then on.

Vladimir Ilyich was no longer able to work at all. Until May 15, he remained in his Kremlin flat attended by the best Russian and foreign doctors and cared for by his family and the Central Committee of the Party.

March 12. The government published a bulletin on Lenin's health. Thereafter these bulletins were published regularly. The entire country awaited them with anxiety.

When the days grew warmer Vladimir Ilyich moved to Gorki on the doctors' suggestion.

Lenin fought his disease with all the strength of his iron will. In July, his health showed a certain improvement. He even began to walk about unsupported, just leaning on a stick. The doctors said that there was now hope of recovery.

November 2. Lenin had his last meeting with workers. A delegation from the Glukhovo Textile Mill came to see him with a gift of 18 cherry-trees to be planted in the Gorki hot-house. This is what Kholodova, one of the workers, says about the visit: "After we had been warned not to stay too long, we were taken to the reception room. A minute or two later we heard Maria Ilyinichna's voice in the next room: 'Volodya, you have guests.' The door opened, and Ilyich came in with a smile. He came up to us, took his cap off with his left hand, placed it in his right, and offered us his left hand. We were so happy we did not know what to do and started crying like children. We handed Ilyich the address signed by the workers and the management, and said a few words of greeting from the local organizations. We stayed with Ilyich for five minutes, and then said good-bye to him with every one of us kissing him. The last to take his leave was Comrade Kuznetsov, a sixty-year-old worker. He and Ilyich stood with their arms round one another for two minutes. Old Kuznetsov[1] kept repeating through his tears: "I'm a toiling blacksmith, Vladimir Ilyich. I'm a blacksmith. We'll forge all you have planned. . . ." This meeting with the workers had been a great joy for Ilyich. Maria Ilyinichna said that afterwards he had read their address over and over again.

And that was Lenin's last meeting with the workers. In their person he may have been saying good-bye to the representatives of the class to whose cause he had given his life.

Lenin's bonds with the working masses were strong and unbreakable. Even when gravely ill, he was entirely with the people in thought. Not for a day, not for a moment was the bond severed. Hundreds and thou-

[1] Kuznets means blacksmith in Russian.—*Tr.*

sands of letters and telegrams came pouring in from all over our multi-national country bringing to Lenin the working people's wishes for his recovery. "Our thoughts, our feelings, our hearts are with him, by his bedside," wrote *Pravda* expressing the sentiments of the masses.

In 1923, the non-Party members on the staff of the Moscow depot of the Ryazan-Urals Railway marked the coming sixth anniversary of the Moscow Railway Station cell of the R.C.P.(B.) by carrying out repairs on engine No. 127, series U, in their off-time. They attached a banner to the head of the engine: "From the non-Party members to the Communists." The engine was presented to Vladimir Ilyich with the following letter: "On May 20, when the workers of the Moscow depot gathered to celebrate the anniversary and hand over engine No. 127 to the cell, it was unanimously agreed to elect you, dear Vladimir Ilyich, honorary engine driver. In delivering the engine into your hands, we have no doubt that like an engine driver of experience, you, Vladimir Ilyich, will take us into the bright future.

"As from the date of your election as honorary engine driver, dear Comrade Vladimir Ilyich, you have been included in our engine-drivers' staff according to the 14th grade of our 24-grade wage scale, and in view of this we are enclosing herewith your worker's pay-book."

It was this engine that pulled the funeral train from Gorki to Moscow, bearing the coffin with the body of Vladimir Ilyich.

The world has not known another leader to equal Lenin in the confidence and devotion he enjoyed among the people.

TO THE READER

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Л. ФОТИЕВА

ИЗ ЖИЗНИ ЛЕНИНА

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The author shows Lenin in all his greatness, with his hatred of oppression and exploitation and his selfless devotion to the cause of the proletariat, of the working people.

N. Krupskaya

OCTOBER DAYS

In this pamphlet N. Krupskaya shares with the reader her recollections of the Bolsheviks' preparations for and the carrying through of the October armed uprising, and of the leading role played in it by Lenin. Her recollections, packed with colourful and stirring pictures of the popular revolution, have retained their freshness and fascination to this day.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF LENIN

The volume is a collection of reminiscences of the oldest Russian Communists who had at one period or another worked under Lenin's personal guidance. The authors include G. Krzhizhanovsky, an active member of the Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class which was the predecessor of the Marxist Party in Russia, T. Zelikson-Bobrovskaya, agent of the first Russian Marxist newspaper *Iskra*, V. Karpinsky, a Party writer during Lenin's emigration days in Geneva, S. Gopner, a propagandist, and others.

The book also contains recollections of the old weavers of the Moscow Textile Mill Tryokhgornaya Manufactura, who had at every election nominated Lenin as deputy of the Moscow Soviet.