

LENIN

Workers of All Countries, Unite!



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V. I. Lenin

**Between the Two
Revolutions**

**Articles and Speeches
of 1917**



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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The present collection consists of articles and speeches by V. I. Lenin shedding light on the events in Russia from the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 to the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The works included in this volume give a Marxist assessment of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, showing its specific features, characterising the struggle of classes and parties, and exposing the imperialist nature of the First World War and the anti-popular essence of the Provisional Government.

The material in the collection brings out the events of 1917 to show how the February bourgeois-democratic revolution developed into the October Socialist Revolution.

The collection includes editorial notes and a name index. The translations are from the English edition of V. I. Lenin's *Collected Works*, prepared by Progress Publishers, Moscow.

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В. И. ЛЕНИН

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LETTERS FROM AFAR

First Letter

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE FIRST REVOLUTION¹

The first revolution engendered by the imperialist world war has broken out. The first revolution but certainly not the last.

Judging by the scanty information available in Switzerland, the first stage of this first revolution, namely, of the *Russian* revolution of March 1, 1917, has ended. This first stage of our revolution will certainly not be the last.

How could such a "miracle" have happened, that in only eight days—the period indicated by Mr. Milyukov in his boastful telegram to all Russia's representatives abroad—a monarchy collapsed that had maintained itself for centuries, and that in spite of everything had managed to maintain itself throughout the three years of the tremendous, nation-wide class battles of 1905-07?

There are no miracles in nature or history, but every abrupt turn in history, and this applies to every revolution, presents such a wealth of content, unfolds such unexpected and specific combinations of forms of struggle and alignment of forces of the contestants, that to the lay mind there is much that must appear miraculous.

The combination of a number of factors of world-historic importance was required for the tsarist monarchy to have collapsed in a few days. We shall mention the chief of them.

Without the tremendous class battles and the revolutionary energy displayed by the Russian proletariat during the three years 1905-07, the second revolution could not possibly have been so rapid in the sense that its *initial stage* was

completed in a few days. The first revolution (1905) deeply ploughed the soil, uprooted age-old prejudices, awakened millions of workers and tens of millions of peasants to political life and political struggle and revealed to each other—and to the world—*all* classes (and all the principal parties) of Russian society in their true character and in the true alignment of their interests, their forces, their modes of action, and their immediate and ultimate aims. This first revolution, and the succeeding period of counter-revolution (1907-14), laid bare the very essence of the tsarist monarchy, brought it to the “utmost limit”, exposed all the rottenness and infamy, the cynicism and corruption of the tsar’s clique, dominated by that monster, Rasputin. It exposed all the bestiality of the Romanov family—those pogrom-mongers who drenched Russia in the blood of Jews, workers and revolutionaries, those *landlords*, “first among peers”, *who own millions* of dessiatines of land and are prepared to stoop to any brutality, to any crime, to ruin and strangle any number of citizens in order to preserve the “sacred right of property” for themselves *and their class*.

Without the Revolution of 1905-07 and the counter-revolution of 1907-14, there could not have been that clear “self-determination” of all classes of the Russian people and of the nations inhabiting Russia, that determination of the relation of these classes to each other and to the tsarist monarchy, which manifested itself during the eight days of the February-March Revolution of 1917. This eight-day revolution was “performed”, if we may use a metaphorical expression, as though after a dozen major and minor rehearsals; the “actors” knew each other, their parts, their places and their setting in every detail, through and through, down to every more or less important shade of political trend and mode of action.

For the first great Revolution of 1905, which the Guchkovs and Milyukovs and their hangers-on denounced as a “great rebellion”, led, after the lapse of twelve years, to the “brilliant”, the “glorious” Revolution of 1917—the Guchkovs and Milyukovs have proclaimed it “glorious” because it has put them in power (*for the time being*). But this required a great, mighty and all-powerful “stage manager”, capable, on the

one hand, of vastly accelerating the course of world history, and, on the other, of engendering world-wide crises of unparalleled intensity—economic, political, national and international. Apart from an extraordinary acceleration of world history, it was also necessary that history make particularly abrupt turns, in order that at one such turn the filthy and blood-stained cart of the Romanov monarchy should be overturned at *one stroke*.

This all-powerful “stage manager”, this mighty accelerator was the imperialist world war.

That it is a world war is now indisputable, for the United States and China are already half-involved today, and will be fully involved tomorrow.

That it is an imperialist war on *both* sides is now likewise indisputable. Only the capitalists and their hangers-on, the social-patriots and social-chauvinists, or—if instead of general critical definitions we use political names familiar in Russia—only the Guchkovs and Lvovs, Milyukovs and Shingaryovs on the one hand, and only the Gvozdyovs, Potresovs, Chkhenkelis, Kerenskys and Chkheidzes on the other, can deny or gloss over this fact. *Both* the German and the Anglo-French bourgeoisie are waging the war for the plunder of foreign countries and the strangling of small nations, for financial world supremacy and the division and redivision of colonies, and in order to save the tottering capitalist regime by misleading and dividing the workers of the various countries.

The imperialist war was bound, with objective inevitability, immensely to accelerate and intensify to an unprecedented degree the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie; it was bound to turn into a civil war between the hostile classes.

This *transformation has been started* by the February-March Revolution of 1917, the first stage of which has been marked, firstly, by a joint blow at tsarism struck by two forces: one, the whole of bourgeois and landlord Russia, with all her unconscious hangers-on and all her conscious leaders, the British and French ambassadors and capitalists, and the other, *the Soviet of Workers' Deputies*, which has begun to win over the soldiers' and peasants' deputies.

These three political camps, these three fundamental political forces—(1) the tsarist monarchy, the head of the feudal landlords, of the old bureaucracy and the military caste; (2) bourgeois and landlord-Octoberist-Cadet² Russia, behind which trailed the petty bourgeoisie (of which Kerensky and Chkheidze are the principal representatives); (3) the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, which is seeking to make the entire proletariat and the entire mass of the poorest part of the population its allies—these three *fundamental* political forces fully and clearly revealed themselves even in the eight days of the “first stage” and even to an observer so remote from the scene of events as the present writer, who is obliged to content himself with the meagre foreign press dispatches.

But before dealing with this in greater detail, I must return to the part of my letter devoted to a factor of prime importance, namely, the imperialist world war.

The war shackled the belligerent powers, the belligerent groups of capitalists, the “bosses” of the capitalist system, the slave-owners of the capitalist slave system, to each other with *chains of iron*. *One bloody clot*—such is the social and political life of the present moment in history.

The socialists who deserted to the bourgeoisie on the outbreak of the war—all these Davids and Scheidemanns in Germany and the Plekhanovs, Potresovs, Gvozdyovs and Co. in Russia—clamoured loud and long against the “illusions” of the revolutionaries, against the “illusions” of the Basle Manifesto,³ against the “farcical dream” of turning the imperialist war into a civil war. They sang praises in every key to the strength, tenacity and adaptability allegedly revealed by capitalism—*they*, who had aided the capitalists to “adapt”, tame, mislead and divide the working classes of the various countries!

But “he who laughs last laughs best”. The bourgeoisie has been unable to delay for long the revolutionary crisis engendered by the war. That crisis is growing with irresistible force in all countries, beginning with Germany, which, according to an observer who recently visited that country, is suffering “brilliantly organised famine”, and ending with England and France, where *famine is also* looming, but where organisation is far less “brilliant”.

It was natural that the revolutionary crisis should have broken out *first of all* in tsarist Russia, where the disorganisation was most appalling and the proletariat most revolutionary (not by virtue of any special qualities, but because of the living traditions of 1905). This crisis was precipitated by the series of extremely severe defeats sustained by Russia and her allies. They shook up the old machinery of government and the old order and roused the anger of *all* classes of the population against them; they embittered the army, wiped out a very large part of the old commanding personnel, composed of die-hard aristocrats and exceptionally corrupt bureaucratic elements, and replaced it by a young, fresh, mainly bourgeois, commoner,⁴ petty-bourgeois personnel. Those who, grovelling to the bourgeoisie or simply lacking backbone, howled and wailed about "defeatism", are now faced by the fact of the historical connection between the defeat of the most backward and barbarous tsarist monarchy and the *beginning* of the revolutionary conflagration.

But while the defeats early in the war were a negative factor that precipitated the upheaval, the *connection* between Anglo-French finance capital, Anglo-French imperialism, and Russian Octobrist-Cadet capital was a factor that hastened this crisis by the direct *organisation of a plot* against Nicholas Romanov.

This highly important aspect of the situation is, for obvious reasons, hushed up by the Anglo-French press and maliciously emphasised by the German. We Marxists must soberly face the truth and not allow ourselves to be confused either by the lies, the official sugary diplomatic and ministerial lies, of the first group of imperialist belligerents, or by the sniggering and smirking of their financial and military rivals of the other belligerent group. The whole course of events in the February-March Revolution clearly shows that the British and French embassies, with their agents and "connections", who had long been making the most desperate efforts to prevent "separate" agreements and a separate peace between Nicholas II (and last, we hope, and we will endeavour to make him that) and Wilhelm II, directly organised a plot in conjunction with the Octobrists and Cadets, in conjunction with a section of the generals and army

and St. Petersburg garrison officers, with the express object of *deposing* Nicholas Romanov.

Let us not harbour any illusions. Let us not make the mistake of those who—like certain O.C. supporters or Mensheviks⁵ who are oscillating between Gvozdyov-Potresov policy⁶ and internationalism and only too often slip into petty-bourgeois pacifism—are now ready to extol “agreement” between the workers’ party and the Cadets, “support” of the latter by the former, etc. In conformity with the old (and by no means Marxist) doctrine that they have learned by rote, they are trying to veil the plot of the Anglo-French imperialists and the Guchkovs and Milyukovs aimed at deposing the “chief warrior”, Nicholas Romanov, and putting more energetic, fresh and more capable *warriors* in his place.

That the revolution succeeded so quickly and—seemingly, at the first superficial glance—so radically, is only due to the fact that, as a result of an extremely unique historical situation, *absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogeneous class interests, absolutely contrary political and social strivings have merged*, and in a strikingly “harmonious” manner. Namely, the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists, who impelled Milyukov, Guchkov and Co. to seize power *for the purpose of continuing the imperialist war*, for the purpose of conducting the war still more ferociously and obstinately, for the purpose of *slaughtering fresh millions* of Russian workers and peasants in order that the Guchkovs might obtain Constantinople, the French capitalists Syria, the British capitalists Mesopotamia, and so on. This on the one hand. On the other, there was a profound proletarian and mass popular movement of a revolutionary character (a movement of the entire poorest section of the population of town and country) *for bread, for peace, for real freedom*.

It would simply be foolish to speak of the revolutionary proletariat of Russia “supporting” the Cadet-Oktoberist imperialism, which has been “patched up” with English money and is as abominable as tsarist imperialism. The revolutionary workers were destroying, have already destroyed to a considerable degree and will destroy to its foundations the infamous tsarist *monarchy*. They are neither elated nor dis-

mayed by the fact that at certain brief and exceptional historical conjunctures *they were aided* by the struggle of Buchanan, Guchkov, Milyukov and Co. to *replace* one monarch by *another monarch*, also preferably a Romanov!

Such, and only such, is the way the situation developed. Such, and only such, is the view that can be taken by a politician who does not fear the truth, who soberly weighs the balance of social forces in the revolution, who appraises every "current situation" not only from the standpoint of all its present, current peculiarities, but also from the standpoint of the more fundamental motivations, the deeper interest-relationship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, both in Russia and throughout the world.

The workers of Petrograd, like the workers of the whole of Russia, self-sacrificingly fought the tsarist monarchy—fought for freedom, land for the peasants, and *for peace*, against the imperialist slaughter. To continue and intensify that slaughter, Anglo-French imperialist capital hatched Court intrigues, conspired with the officers of the Guards, incited and encouraged the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, and fixed up a *complete new government*, which in fact *did seize power* immediately the proletarian struggle had struck the first blows at tsarism.

This new government, in which Lvov and Guchkov of the Octobrists and Peaceful Renovation Party,⁷ yesterday's abettors of Stolypin the Hangman, control *really important* posts, vital posts, decisive posts, the army and the bureaucracy—this government, in which Milyukov and the other Cadets are more than anything decorations, a signboard—they are there to deliver sentimental professorial speeches—and in which the Trudovik Kerensky is a balalaika on which they play to deceive the workers and peasants—this government is not a fortuitous assemblage of persons.⁸

They are representatives of the new class that has risen to political power in Russia, the class of capitalist landlords and bourgeoisie which has long been *ruling* our country economically, and which during the Revolution of 1905-07, the counter-revolutionary period of 1907-14, and finally—and with especial rapidity—the war period of 1914-17, was quick

to organise itself politically, taking over control of the local government bodies, public education, congresses of various types, the Duma,⁹ the war industries committees,¹⁰ etc. This new class was already "almost completely" in power by 1917, and therefore it needed only the first blows to bring tsarism to the ground and clear the way for the bourgeoisie. The imperialist war, which required an incredible exertion of effort, so accelerated the course of backward Russia's development that we have "at one blow" (*seemingly* at one blow) *caught up* with Italy, England, and almost with France. We have obtained a "coalition", a "national" (i.e., adapted for carrying on the imperialist slaughter and for fooling the people) "parliamentary" government.

Side by side with this government—which as regards the *present* war is but the agent of the billion-dollar "firm" "England and France"—there has arisen the chief, unofficial, as yet undeveloped and comparatively weak *workers' government*, which expresses the interests of the proletariat and of the entire poor section of the urban and rural population. This is the *Soviet of Workers' Deputies* in Petrograd, which is seeking connections with the soldiers and peasants, and also with the agricultural workers, with the latter particularly and primarily, of course, more than with the peasants.

Such is the *actual* political situation, which we must first endeavour to define with the greatest possible objective precision, in order that Marxist tactics may be based upon the only possible solid foundation—the foundation of *facts*.

The tsarist monarchy has been smashed, but not finally destroyed.

The Octobrist-Cadet bourgeois government, which wants to fight the imperialist war "to a finish", and which in reality is the agent of the financial firm "England and France", is *obliged to promise* the people the maximum of liberties and sops compatible with the maintenance of its power over the people and the possibility of continuing the imperialist slaughter.

The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is an organisation of the workers, the embryo of a workers' government, the representative of the interests of the entire mass of the *poor* section

of the population, i.e., of nine-tenths of the population, which is striving for *peace, bread and freedom*.

The conflict of these three forces determines the situation that has now arisen, a situation that is *transitional* from the first stage of the revolution to the second.

The antagonism between the first and second force is *not* profound, it is temporary, the result *solely* of the present conjuncture of circumstances, of the abrupt turn of events in the imperialist war. The *whole* of the new government is monarchist, for Kerensky's *verbal* republicanism simply cannot be taken seriously, is not worthy of a statesman and, *objectively*, is political chicanery. The new government, which has not dealt the tsarist monarchy the final blow, has already *begun to strike a bargain* with the landlord Romanov dynasty. The bourgeoisie of the Octobrist-Cadet type *needs* a monarchy to serve as the head of the bureaucracy and the army in order to protect the privileges of capital against the working people.

He who says that the workers must *support* the new government in the interests of the struggle against tsarist reaction (and apparently this is being said by the Potresovs, Gvozdyovs, Chkhinkelis and also, all *evasiveness* notwithstanding, by Chkheidze) is a traitor to the workers, a traitor to the cause of the proletariat, to the cause of peace and freedom. For actually, *precisely* this new government is *already* bound hand and foot by imperialist capital, by the imperialist policy of *war* and plunder, has *already* begun to strike a bargain (without consulting the people!) with the dynasty, *is already working to restore the tsarist monarchy*, is already soliciting the candidature of Mikhail Romanov as the new kinglet, is already taking measures to prop up the throne, to substitute for the legitimate (lawful, ruling by virtue of the old law) monarchy a Bonapartist, plebiscite monarchy (ruling by virtue of a fraudulent plebiscite).

No, if there is to be a real struggle against the tsarist monarchy, if freedom is to be guaranteed in fact and not merely in words, in the glib promises of Milyukov and Kerensky, it is *not* the workers that must support the new government; the government must "support" the workers! For the only *guarantee* of freedom and of the complete

destruction of tsarism lies in *arming the proletariat*, in strengthening, extending and developing the role, significance and power of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

All the rest is mere phrase-mongering and lies, self-deception on the part of the politicians of the liberal and radical camp, fraudulent trickery.

Help, or at least do not hinder, the arming of the workers, and freedom in Russia will be invincible, the monarchy irrestorable, the republic secure.

Otherwise the Guchkovs and Milyukovs will restore the monarchy and grant *none*, absolutely none of the "liberties" they promised. All bourgeois politicians in *all* bourgeois revolutions "fed" the people and fooled the workers with promises.

Ours is a bourgeois revolution, *therefore*, the workers must support the bourgeoisie, say the Potresovs, Gvozdyovs and Chkheidzes, as Plekhanov said yesterday.

Ours is a bourgeois revolution, we Marxists say, *therefore* the workers must open the eyes of the people to the deception practised by the bourgeois politicians, teach them to put no faith in words, to depend entirely on their *own* strength, their *own* organisation, their *own* unity, and their *own* weapons.

The government of the Octobrists and Cadets, of the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, *cannot*, even if it sincerely wanted to (only infants can think that Guchkov and Lvov are sincere), *cannot* give the people *either peace, bread, or freedom*.

It cannot give peace because it is a war government, a government for the continuation of the imperialist slaughter, a government of *plunder*, out to plunder Armenia, Galicia and Turkey, annex Constantinople, reconquer Poland, Courland, Lithuania, etc. It is a government bound hand and foot by Anglo-French imperialist capital. Russian capital is merely a branch of the world-wide "firm" which manipulates *hundreds of billions* of rubles and is called "England and France".

It cannot give bread because it is a bourgeois government. *At best*, it can give the people "brilliantly organised famine", as Germany has done. But the people will not accept famine. They will learn, and probably very soon, that there is bread

and that it can be obtained, but only by methods that *do not respect the sanctity of capital and landownership*.

It cannot give freedom because it is a landlord and capitalist government which *fears* the people and has already begun to strike a bargain with the Romanov dynasty.

The tactical problems of our immediate attitude towards this government will be dealt with in another article. In it, we shall explain the peculiarity of the present situation, which is a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second, and why the slogan, the "task of the day", at *this* moment must be: *Workers, you have performed miracles of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsarism. You must perform miracles of organisation, organisation of the proletariat and of the whole people, to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution.*

Confining ourselves for the *present* to an analysis of the class struggle and the alignment of class forces at this stage of the revolution, we have still to put the question: who are the proletariat's *allies* in *this* revolution?

It has *two* allies: first, the broad mass of the semi-proletarian and partly also of the small-peasant population, who number scores of millions and constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia. For this mass peace, bread, freedom and land are *essential*. It is inevitable that to a certain extent this mass will be under the influence of the bourgeoisie, particularly of the petty bourgeoisie, to which it is most akin in its conditions of life, vacillating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The cruel lessons of war, and they will be *the more* cruel the more vigorously the war is prosecuted by Guchkov, Lvov, Milyukov and Co., will *inevitably* push this mass towards the proletariat, compel it to follow the proletariat. We must now take advantage of the relative freedom of the new order and of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies to *enlighten* and *organise* this mass first of all and above all. Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Soviets of Agricultural Workers—that is one of our most urgent tasks. In this connection we shall strive not only for the agricultural workers to establish their own separate Soviets, but also for the propertyless and poorest peasants to organise

separately from the well-to-do peasants. The special tasks and special forms of organisation urgently needed at the present time will be dealt with in the next letter.

Second, the ally of the Russian proletariat is the proletariat of all the belligerent countries and of all countries in general. At present this ally is to a large degree repressed by the war, and all too often the European social-chauvinists speak in its name—men who, like Plekhanov, Gvozdyov and Potresov in Russia, have deserted to the bourgeoisie. But the liberation of the proletariat from their influence has progressed with every month of the imperialist war, and the Russian revolution will *inevitably* immensely hasten this process.

With these two allies, the proletariat, *utilising the peculiarities* of the present transition situation, can and will proceed, first, to the achievement of a democratic republic and complete victory of the peasantry over the landlords, instead of the Guchkov-Milyukov semi-monarchy, and then to *socialism*, which alone can give the war-weary people *peace, bread and freedom*.

N. Lenin

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Second Letter

THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND THE PROLETARIAT

The principal document I have at my disposal at today's date (March 8/21) is a copy of that most conservative and bourgeois English newspaper *The Times*¹¹ of March 16, containing a batch of reports about the revolution in Russia. Clearly, a source more favourably inclined—to put it mildly—towards the Guchkov and Milyukov government it would not be easy to find.

This newspaper's correspondent reports from St. Petersburg on Wednesday, March 1 (14), when the *first* Provisional Government still existed, i.e., the thirteen-member Duma Executive Committee,¹² headed by Rodzyanko and including two "socialists", as the newspaper puts it, Kerensky and Chkheidze:

"A group of 22 elected members of the Upper House [State Council]¹³ including M. Guchkov, M. Stakhovich, Prince Trubetskoi, and Professor Vassiliev, Grimm, and Vernadsky, yesterday addressed a telegram to the Tsar" imploring him in order to save the "dynasty", etc., etc., to convoke the Duma and to name as the head of the government some one who enjoys the "confidence of the nation". "What the Emperor may decide to do on his arrival today is unknown at the hour of telegraphing," writes the correspondent, "but one thing is quite certain. Unless His Majesty immediately complies with the wishes of the most moderate elements among his loyal subjects, the influence at present exercised by the Provisional Committee of the Imperial Duma will pass wholesale into the hands of the socialists, who want to see a republic established, but who are unable to institute

any kind of orderly government and would inevitably precipitate the country into anarchy within and disaster without. . . .”

What political sagacity and clarity this reveals! How well this Englishman, who thinks like (if he does not guide) the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, understands the alignment of class forces and interests! “The most moderate elements among his loyal subjects”, i.e., the monarchist landlords and capitalists, want to take power into their hands, fully realising that otherwise “influence” will pass into the hands of the “socialists”. Why the “socialists” and not somebody else? Because the English Guchkovite is fully aware that there is *no* other social force in the political arena, *nor can there be*. The revolution was made by the proletariat. It displayed heroism; it shed its blood; it swept along with it the broadest masses of the toilers and the poor; it is demanding bread, peace and freedom; it is demanding a republic; it sympathises with socialism. But the handful of landlords and capitalists headed by the Guchkovs and Milyukovs want to betray the will, or strivings, of the vast majority and conclude *a deal with the tottering monarchy*, bolster it up, save it: appoint Lvov and Guchkov, Your Majesty, and we will be with the monarchy against the people. Such is the entire meaning, the sum and substance of the new government’s policy!

But how to justify the deception, the fooling of the people, the violation of the will of the overwhelming majority of the population?

By slandering the people—the old but eternally new method of the bourgeoisie. And the English Guchkovite slanders, scolds, spits and splutters: “anarchy within and disaster without”, no “orderly government”!!

That is not true, Mr. Guchkovite! The workers want a republic; and a republic represents far more “orderly” government than monarchy does. What guarantee have the people that the second Romanov will not get himself a second Rasputin? Disaster will be brought on precisely by continuation of the war, i.e., precisely by the new government. Only a proletarian republic, backed by the rural workers and the poorest section of the peasants and town dwellers, can secure peace, provide bread, order and freedom.

All the shouts about anarchy are merely a screen to conceal the selfish interests of the capitalists, who want to make profit out of the war, out of war loans, who want to restore the monarchy *against* the people.

"... Yesterday," continues the correspondent, "the Social-Democratic Party issued a proclamation of a most seditious character, which was spread broadcast throughout the city. They [i.e., the Social-Democratic Party] are mere doctrinaires, but their power for mischief is enormous at a time like the present. M. Kerensky and M. Chkheidze, who realise that without the support of the officers and the more moderate elements of the people they cannot hope to avoid anarchy, have to reckon with their less prudent associates, and are insensibly driven to take up an attitude which complicates the task of the Provisional Committee..."

O great English, Guchkovite diplomat! How "imprudently" you have blurred out the truth!

"The Social-Democratic Party" and their "less prudent associates" with whom "Kerensky and Chkheidze have to reckon", evidently mean the Central or the St. Petersburg Committee of our Party, which was restored at the January 1912 Conference,¹⁴ those very same "Bolsheviks" at whom the bourgeoisie always hurl the abusive term "doctrinaires", because of their faithfulness to the "doctrine", i.e., the fundamentals, the principles, teachings, aims of *socialism*. Obviously, the English Guchkovite hurls the abusive terms seditious and doctrinaire at the manifesto¹⁵ and at the conduct of our Party in urging a fight for a republic, peace, complete destruction of the tsarist monarchy, bread for the people.

Bread for the people and peace—that's sedition, but ministerial posts for Guchkov and Milyukov—that's "order". Old and familiar talk!

What, then, are the tactics of Kerensky and Chkheidze as characterised by the English Guchkovite?

Vacillation: on the one hand, the Guchkovite praises them: they "realise" (Good boys! Clever boys!) that without the "support" of the army officers and the more moderate elements, anarchy cannot be avoided (we, however, have always thought, in keeping with our doctrine, with our socialist teachings, that it is the capitalists who introduce anarchy and war into human society, that only the transfer of *all* political power to the proletariat and the poorest people can

rid us of war, of anarchy and starvation!). On the other hand, they "have to reckon with their less prudent associates", i.e., the Bolsheviks, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, restored and united by the Central Committee.

What is the force that compels Kerensky and Chkhaidze to "reckon" with the Bolshevik Party to which they have *never* belonged, which they, or their literary representatives (Socialist-Revolutionaries, Popular Socialists,¹⁶ the Menshevik O.C. supporters, and so forth), have always abused, condemned, denounced as an insignificant underground circle, a sect of doctrinaires, and so forth? Where and when has it ever happened that in time of revolution, at a time of predominantly *mass* action, sane-minded politicians should "reckon" with "doctrinaires"??

He is all mixed up, our poor English Guchkovite: he has failed to produce a logical argument, has failed to tell either a whole lie or the whole truth, he has merely given himself away.

Kerensky and Chkhaidze are compelled to reckon with the Social-Democratic Party of the Central Committee¹⁷ by the influence it exerts on the proletariat, on the masses. Our Party was found to be with the masses, with the revolutionary proletariat, *in spite of* the arrest and deportation of our Duma deputies to Siberia, as far back as 1914,¹⁸ in spite of the fierce persecution and arrests to which the St. Petersburg Committee was subjected for its underground activities during the war, *against* the war and against tsarism.

"Facts are stubborn things," as the English proverb has it. Let me remind you of it, most esteemed English Guchkovite! That our Party guided, or at least rendered devoted assistance to, the St. Petersburg workers in the great days of revolution is a fact the English Guchkovite "*himself*" was *obliged* to admit. And he was equally obliged to admit the fact that Kerensky and Chkhaidze are oscillating *between* the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The Gvozdyovites, the "defencists", i.e., the social-chauvinists, i.e., the defenders of the imperialist, predatory war, are now completely following the bourgeoisie; Kerensky, by entering the ministry, i.e., the second Provisional Government, has also completely deserted to the bourgeoisie; Chkhaidze has not; he continues to *oscillate* be-

tween the Provisional Government of the bourgeoisie, the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, and the "provisional government" of the proletariat and the poorest masses of the people, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party united by the Central Committee.

Consequently, the revolution has confirmed what we especially insisted on when we urged the workers clearly to realise the class difference between the principal parties and principal trends in the working-class movement and among the petty bourgeoisie—what we wrote, for example, in the Geneva *Sotsial-Demokrat*⁴⁹ No. 47, nearly eighteen months ago, on October 13, 1915.

"As hitherto, we consider it admissible for Social-Democrats to join a provisional revolutionary government together with the democratic petty bourgeoisie, but *not* with the revolutionary chauvinists. By revolutionary chauvinists we mean those who want a victory over tsarism so as to achieve victory over Germany—plunder other countries—consolidate Great-Russian rule over the other peoples of Russia, etc. Revolutionary chauvinism is based on the class position of the petty bourgeoisie. The latter always vacillates between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. At present it is vacillating between chauvinism (which prevents it from being consistently revolutionary, even in the meaning of a democratic revolution) and proletarian internationalism. At the moment the Trudoviks,²⁰ the Socialist-Revolutionaries, *Nasha Zarya* (now *Dyelo*),²¹ Chkheidze's Duma group,²² the Organising Committee, Mr. Plekhanov and the like are political spokesmen for this petty bourgeoisie in Russia. If the revolutionary chauvinists won in Russia, we would be opposed to a defence of *their* "fatherland" in the present war. Our slogan is: against the chauvinists, even if they are revolutionary and republican—*against* them and *for* an alliance of the international proletariat for the socialist revolution."*

But let us return to the English Guchkovite.

"... The Provisional Committee of the Imperial Duma," he continues, "appreciating the dangers ahead, have purposely refrained from carrying

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 403.—Ed.

out the original intention of arresting Ministers, although they could have done so yesterday without the slightest difficulty. The door is thus left open for negotiations, thanks to which we ["we"—British finance capital and imperialism] may obtain all the benefits of the new regime without passing through the dread ordeal of the Commune and the anarchy of civil war...."

The Guchkovites were *for* a civil war from which *they* would benefit, but they are *against* a civil war from which the people, i.e., the actual majority of the working people, would benefit.

"...The relations between the Provisional Committee of the Duma, which represents the whole nation [imagine saying this about the committee of the landlord and capitalist Fourth Duma!], and the Council of Labour Deputies, representing purely class interests [this is the language of a diplomat who has heard learned words with one ear and wants to conceal the fact that the Soviet of Workers' Deputies represents the proletariat and the poor, i.e., nine-tenths of the population], but in a crisis like the present wielding enormous power, have aroused no small misgivings among reasonable men regarding the possibility of a conflict between them—the results of which might be too terrible to describe.

"Happily this danger has been averted, at least for the present [note the "at least"!], thanks to the influence of M. Kerensky, a young lawyer of much oratorical ability, who clearly realises [unlike Chkheidze, who also "realised", but evidently less clearly in the opinion of the Guchkovite?] the necessity of working with the Committee in the interests of his Labour constituents [i.e., to catch the workers' votes, to flirt with them]. A satisfactory agreement²³ was concluded today [Wednesday, March 1/14], whereby all unnecessary friction will be avoided."

What this agreement was, whether it was concluded with the *whole* of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies and on what terms, we do not know. On this *chief* point, the English Guchkovite says nothing at all this time. And no wonder! It is not to the advantage of the bourgeoisie to have these terms made clear, precise and known to all, for it would then be more difficult for it to violate them!

The preceding lines were already written when I read two very important communications. First, in that most conservative and bourgeois Paris newspaper *Le Temps*²⁴ of March 20, the text of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies manifesto appealing for "support" of the new government; second, excerpts from Skobelev's speech in the State Duma on March 1 (14), reproduced in a Zurich newspaper (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 1 Mit.-bl., March 21)²⁵ from a Berlin newspaper (*National-Zeitung*²⁶).

The manifesto of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, if the text has not been distorted by the French imperialists, is a most remarkable document. It shows that the St. Petersburg proletariat, at least, at the time the manifesto was issued, was under the predominating influence of petty-bourgeois politicians. You will recall that in this category of politicians I include, as has been already mentioned above, people of the type of Kerensky and Chkheidze.

In the manifesto we find two political ideas, and two slogans corresponding to them:

Firstly. The manifesto says that the government (the new one) consists of "moderate elements". A strange description, by no means complete, of a purely liberal, not of a Marxist character. I too am prepared to agree that in a certain sense—in my next letter I will show in precisely what sense—now, with the first stage of the revolution completed, every government must be "moderate". But it is absolutely impermissible to conceal from ourselves and from the people that this government wants to continue the imperialist war, that it is an agent of British capital, that it wants to restore the monarchy and strengthen the rule of the landlords and capitalists.

The manifesto declares that all democrats must "support" the new government and that the Soviet of Workers' Deputies requests and authorises Kerensky to enter the Provisional Government. The conditions—implementation of the promised reforms already during the war, guarantees for the "free cultural" (only??) development of the nationalities (a purely Cadet, wretchedly liberal programme), and the establishment of a special committee consisting of members of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies and of "military

men"²⁷ to supervise the activities of the Provisional Government.

This Supervising Committee, which comes within the second category of ideas and slogans, we will discuss separately further on.

The appointment of the Russian Louis Blanc, Kerensky, and the appeal to support the new government is, one may say, a classical example of betrayal of the cause of the revolution and the cause of the proletariat, a betrayal which doomed a number of nineteenth-century revolutions, irrespective of how sincere and devoted to socialism the leaders and supporters of such a policy may have been.

The proletariat cannot and must not support a war government, a restoration government. To fight reaction, to rebuff all possible and probable attempts by the Romanovs and their friends to restore the monarchy and muster a counter-revolutionary army, it is necessary not to support Guchkov and Co., but to *organise*, expand and strengthen a *proletarian* militia, to arm the people under the leadership of the workers. Without this principal, fundamental, radical measure, there can be no question either of offering serious resistance to the restoration of the monarchy and attempts to rescind or curtail the promised freedoms, or of firmly taking the road that will give the people bread, *peace* and freedom.

If it is true that Chkheidze, who, with Kerensky, was a member of the first Provisional Government (the Duma committee of thirteen), refrained from entering the second Provisional Government out of principled considerations of the above-mentioned or similar character, then that does him credit. That must be said frankly. Unfortunately, such an interpretation is contradicted by the facts, and primarily by the speech delivered by Skobelev, who has always gone hand in hand with Chkheidze.

Skobelev said, if the above-mentioned source is to be trusted, that "the social (? evidently the Social-Democratic) group and the workers are only slightly in touch (have little contact) with the aims of the Provisional Government", that the workers are demanding peace, and that if the war is continued there will be disaster in the spring anyhow, that

"the workers have concluded with society [liberal society] a temporary agreement (*eine vorläufige Waffenfreundschaft*), although their political aims are as far removed from the aims of society as heaven is from earth", that "the liberals must abandon the senseless [*unsinnige*] aims of the war", etc.

This speech is a sample of what we called above, in the excerpt from *Sotsial-Demokrat*, "oscillation" between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The liberals, while remaining liberals, *cannot* "abandon" the "senseless" aims of the war, which, incidentally, are not determined by them alone, but by Anglo-French finance capital, a world-mighty force measured by hundreds of billions. The task is not to "coax" the liberals, but to *explain* to the workers why the liberals find themselves in a blind alley, why *they* are bound hand and foot, why they *conceal* both the treaties tsarism concluded with England and other countries and the deals between Russian and Anglo-French capital, and so forth.

If Skobelev says that the workers have concluded an agreement with liberal society, no matter of what character, and since he does not protest against it, does not explain from the Duma rostrum how harmful it is for the workers, he thereby *approves* of the agreement. And that is exactly what he should not do.

Skobelev's direct or indirect, clearly expressed or tacit, approval of the agreement between the Soviet of Workers' Deputies and the Provisional Government is Skobelev's swing towards the bourgeoisie. Skobelev's statement that the workers are demanding peace, that their aims are as far removed from the liberals' aims as heaven is from earth, is Skobelev's swing towards the proletariat.

Purely proletarian, truly revolutionary and profoundly correct in design is the second political idea in the manifesto of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies that we are studying, namely, the idea of establishing a "Supervising Committee" (I do not know whether this is what it is called in Russian; I am translating freely from the French), of proletarian-soldier supervision over the Provisional Government.

Now, that's something real! It is worthy of the workers who have shed their blood for freedom, peace, bread for the

people! It is a *real step* towards *real guarantees* against tsarism, against a monarchy and against the monarchists Guchkov, Lvov and Co.! It is a sign that the Russian proletariat, in spite of everything, has made progress compared with the French proletariat in 1848, when it "authorised" Louis Blanc! It is proof that the instinct and mind of the proletarian masses are not satisfied with declamations, exclamations, promises of reforms and freedoms, with the title of "minister authorised by the workers", and similar tinsel, but are seeking support *only* where it is to be found, in the *armed* masses of the people organised and led by the proletariat, the class-conscious workers.

It is a step along the right road, but *only* the first step.

If this "Supervising Committee" remains a purely political-type parliamentary institution, a committee that will "put questions" to the Provisional Government and receive answers from it, then it will remain a plaything, will amount to nothing.

If, on the other hand, it leads, immediately and despite all obstacles, to the formation of a *workers' militia*, or *workers' home guard*, extending to the whole people, to all men and women, which would not only replace the exterminated and dissolved police force, not only make the latter's restoration *impossible* by *any* government, constitutional-monarchist or democratic-republican, *either* in St. Petersburg *or* anywhere else in Russia—then the advanced workers of Russia will really take the road towards new and great victories, the road to victory over war, to the realisation of the slogan which, as the newspapers report, adorned the colours of the cavalry troops that demonstrated in St. Petersburg, in the square outside the State Duma:

"Long Live Socialist Republics in All Countries!"

I will set out my ideas about this workers' militia in my next letter.

In it I will try to show, on the one hand, that the formation of a militia embracing the entire people and led by the workers is the correct slogan of the day, one that corresponds to the tactical tasks of the peculiar transitional moment through which the Russian revolution (and the world revolution) is passing; and, on the other hand, that to be successful,

this workers' militia must, firstly, embrace the entire people, must be a mass organisation to the degree of being *universal*, must really embrace the *entire* able-bodied population of both sexes; secondly, it must proceed to combine not only purely police, but general state functions with military functions and with the control of social production and distribution.

N. Lenin

Zurich, March 22 (9), 1917

P.S. I forgot to date my previous letter March 20 (7).

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Third Letter

CONCERNING A PROLETARIAN MILITIA

The conclusion I drew yesterday about Chkhaidze's vacillating tactics has been fully confirmed today, March 10 (23), by two documents. First—a telegraphic report from Stockholm in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*²⁸ containing excerpts from the manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, in St. Petersburg. In this document there is not a word about either supporting the Guchkov government or overthrowing it; the workers and soldiers are called upon to organise around the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, to elect representatives to it for the fight against tsarism and for a republic, for an eight-hour day, for the confiscation of the landed estates and grain stocks, and chiefly, for an end to the predatory war. Particularly important and particularly urgent in this connection is our Central Committee's absolutely correct idea that to obtain peace relations must be established with *the proletarians of all the belligerent countries*.

To expect peace from negotiations and relations between the bourgeois governments would be self-deception and deception of the people.

The second document is a Stockholm report, also by telegraph, to another German newspaper (*Vossische Zeitung*²⁹) about a conference between the Chkhaidze group in the Duma, the workers' group (? Arbeiterfraction) and representatives of fifteen workers' unions on March 2 (15) and a manifesto published next day. Of the eleven points of this manifesto, the telegram reports only three; the first, the

demand for a republic; the seventh, the demand for peace and immediate peace negotiations; and the third, the demand for "adequate participation in the government of representatives of the Russian working class".

If this point is correctly reported, I can understand why the bourgeoisie is praising Chkhaidze. I can understand why the praise of the English Guchkovites in *The Times* which I quoted elsewhere has been supplemented by the praise of the French Guchkovites in *Le Temps*. This newspaper of the French millionaires and imperialists writes on March 22: "The leaders of the workers' parties, particularly M. Chkhaidze, are exercising all their influence to moderate the wishes of the working classes."

Indeed, to demand workers' "participation" in the Guchkov-Milyukov government is a theoretical and political absurdity: to participate as a minority would mean serving as a pawn; to participate on an "equal footing" is impossible, because the demand to continue the war cannot be reconciled with the demand to conclude an armistice and start peace negotiations; to "participate" as a majority requires the strength to *overthrow* the Guchkov-Milyukov government. In practice, the demand for "participation" is the worst sort of Louis Blanc-ism, i.e., oblivion of the class struggle and the actual conditions under which it is being waged, infatuation with the most hollow-sounding phrase, spreading illusions among the workers, loss, in negotiations with Milyukov or Kerensky, of *precious* time which must be used to create a *real* class and revolutionary force, a proletarian militia that will *enjoy the confidence of all* the poor strata of the population, and they constitute the vast majority, and will *help them to organise*, help *them* to fight for bread, peace, freedom.

This mistake in the manifesto issued by Chkhaidze and his group (I am not speaking of the O. C., Organising Committee, *party*, because in the sources available to me there is not a word about the O.C.)—this mistake is all the more strange considering that at the March 2 (15) conference, Chkhaidze's closest collaborator, Skobelev, said, according to the newspapers: "Russia is on the eve of a second, real [*wirklich*] revolution."

Now that is the truth, from which Skobelev and Chkheidze have forgotten to draw the practical conclusions. I cannot judge from here, from my accursed afar, how near this second revolution is. Being on the spot, Skobelev can see things better. Therefore, I am not raising for myself problems, for the solution of which I have not and cannot have the necessary concrete data. I am merely emphasising the confirmation by Skobelev, an "outside witness", i.e., one who does not belong to our Party, of the *factual* conclusion I drew in my first letter, namely: that the February-March Revolution was merely the *first stage* of the revolution. Russia is passing through a peculiar historical moment of *transition* to the next stage of the revolution, or, to use Skobelev's expression, to a "second revolution".

If we want to be Marxists and learn from the experience of revolution in the whole world, we must strive to understand in what, precisely, lies the *peculiarity* of this *transitional* moment, and what tactics follow from its objective specific features.

The peculiarity of the situation lies in that the Guchkov-Milyukov government gained the first victory with extraordinary ease due to the following three major circumstances: (1) assistance from Anglo-French finance capital and its agents; (2) assistance from part of the top ranks of the army; (3) the already existing organisation of the entire Russian bourgeoisie in the shape of the Zemstvo³⁰ and urban local government institutions, the State Duma, the war industries committees, and so forth.

The Guchkov government is held in a vise: bound by the interests of capital, it is compelled to strive to continue the predatory, robber war, to protect the monstrous profits of capital and the landlords, to restore the monarchy. Bound by its revolutionary origin and by the need for an abrupt change from tsarism to democracy, pressed by the bread-hungry and peace-hungry masses, the government is compelled to lie, to wriggle, to play for time, to "proclaim" and promise (promises are the only things that are very cheap even at a time of madly rocketing prices) as much as possible and do as little as possible, to make concessions with one hand and to withdraw them with the other.

Under certain circumstances, the new government can at best postpone its collapse somewhat by leaning on all the organising ability of the entire Russian bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia. But even in that case it is *unable* to avoid collapse, because it is *impossible* to escape from the claws of the terrible monster of imperialist war and famine nurtured by world capitalism unless one renounces bourgeois relationships, passes to revolutionary measures, appeals to the supreme historic heroism of both the Russian and world proletariat.

Hence the conclusion: we cannot overthrow the new government at one stroke, or, if we can (in revolutionary times the limits of what is possible expand a thousandfold), we will not be able to maintain power *unless we counter* the magnificent organisation of the entire Russian bourgeoisie and the entire bourgeois intelligentsia with an equally magnificent *organisation of the proletariat*, which must lead the entire vast mass of urban and rural poor, the semi-proletariat and small proprietors.

Irrespective of whether the "second revolution" has already broken out in St. Petersburg (I have said that it would be absolutely absurd to think that it is possible from abroad to assess the actual tempo at which it is maturing), whether it has been postponed for some time, or whether it has already begun in individual areas (of which some signs are evident)—in *any* case, the slogan of the moment on the eve of the new revolution, during it, and on the morrow of it, must be *proletarian organisation*.

Comrade workers! You performed miracles of proletarian heroism yesterday in overthrowing the tsarist monarchy. In the more or less near future (perhaps even now, as these lines are being written) you will again have to perform the same miracles of heroism to overthrow the rule of the landlords and capitalists, who are waging the imperialist war. You will not achieve *durable victory* in this next "real" revolution if you do not perform *miracles of proletarian organisation*!

Organisation is the slogan of the moment. But to confine oneself to that is to say nothing, for, on the one hand, organisation is *always* needed; hence, mere reference to the ne-

cessity of "organising the masses" explains absolutely nothing. On the other hand, he who confines himself solely to this becomes an abettor of the liberals, for the *very thing* the *liberals* want in order to strengthen their rule is that the workers *should not go beyond their ordinary* "legal" (from the standpoint of "normal" bourgeois society) organisations, i.e., that they should *only* join their party, their trade union, their co-operative society, etc., etc.

Guided by their class instinct, the workers have realised that in revolutionary times they need *not only* ordinary, but an entirely different organisation. They have rightly taken the path indicated by the experience of our 1905 Revolution and of the 1871 Paris Commune;³¹ they have set up a *Soviet of Workers' Deputies*; they have begun to develop, expand and strengthen it by drawing in *soldiers'* deputies, and, undoubtedly, deputies from rural *wage-workers*, and then (in one form or another) from the entire peasant poor.

The prime and most important task, and one that brooks no delay, is to set up organisations of this kind in all parts of Russia without exception, for all trades and strata of the proletarian and semi-proletarian population without exception, i.e., for all the working and exploited people, to use a less economically exact but more popular term. Running ahead somewhat, I shall mention that for the entire mass of the peasantry our Party (its *special* role in the new type of proletarian organisations I hope to discuss in one of my next letters) should especially recommend Soviets of wage-workers and Soviets of small tillers who do not sell grain, to be formed *separately from* the well-to-do peasants. Without this, it will be impossible either to conduct a truly proletarian policy in general,* or correctly to approach the extremely important practical question which is a matter of life and death for millions of people: the proper distribution of *grain*, increasing its production, etc.

* In the rural districts a struggle will now develop for the small and, partly, middle peasants. The landlords, leaning on the well-to-do peasants, will try to lead them into subordination to the bourgeoisie. Leaning on the rural wage-workers and rural poor, we must lead them into the closest alliance with the urban proletariat.

It might be asked: What should be the function of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies? They "must be regarded as organs of insurrection, of revolutionary rule", we wrote in No. 47 of the Geneva *Sotsial-Demokrat*, of October 18, 1915.*

This theoretical proposition, deduced from the experience of the Commune of 1871 and of the Russian Revolution of 1905, must be explained and concretely developed on the basis of the practical experience of precisely the present stage of the present revolution in Russia.

We need revolutionary *government*, we need (for a certain transitional period) a *state*. This is what distinguishes us from the anarchists. The difference between the revolutionary Marxists and the anarchists is not only that the former stand for centralised, large-scale communist production, while the latter stand for disconnected small production. The difference between us precisely on the question of government, of the state, is that we are *for*, and the anarchists *against*, utilising revolutionary forms of the state in a revolutionary way for the struggle for socialism.

We need a state. But *not the kind* of state the bourgeoisie has created everywhere, from constitutional monarchies to the most democratic republics. And in this we differ from the opportunists and Kautskyites of the old, and decaying, socialist parties, who have distorted, or have forgotten, the lessons of the Paris Commune and the analysis of these lessons made by Marx and Engels.**

We need a state, but *not* the kind the bourgeoisie needs, with organs of government in the shape of a police force, an army and a bureaucracy (officialdom) separate from and opposed to the people. All bourgeois revolutions merely perfected *this* state machine, merely transferred *it* from the hands of one party to those of another.

* See pp. 56-61 of this book.—Ed.

** In one of my next letters, or in a special article, I will deal in detail with this analysis, given in particular in Marx's *The Civil War in France*, in Engels's preface to the third edition of that work, in the letters: Marx's of April 12, 1871, and Engels's of March 18-28, 1875, and also with the utter distortion of Marxism by Kautsky in his controversy with Pannekoek in 1912 on the question of the so-called "destruction of the state".³²

The proletariat, on the other hand, if it wants to uphold the gains of the present revolution and proceed further, to win peace, bread and freedom, must "*smash*", to use Marx's expression, this "ready-made" state machine and substitute a new one for it by *merging* the police force, the army and the bureaucracy with *the entire armed people*. Following the path indicated by the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian Revolution of 1905, the proletariat must organise and arm *all* the poor, exploited sections of the population in order that they *themselves* should take the organs of state power directly into their own hands, in order that *they themselves should constitute* these organs of state power.

And the workers of Russia have already *taken* this path in the first stage of the first revolution, in February-March 1917. The whole task now is clearly to understand what this new path is, to proceed along it further, boldly, firmly and perseveringly.

The Anglo-French and Russian capitalists wanted "only" to remove, or only to "frighten", Nicholas II and to leave intact the old state machine, the police force, the army and the bureaucracy.

The workers went further and smashed it. And now, not only the Anglo-French, but also the German capitalists are *howling* with rage and horror as they see, for example, Russian soldiers shooting their officers, as in the case of Admiral Nepenin, that supporter of Guchkov and Milyukov.

I said that the workers have smashed the old state machine. It will be more correct to say: *have begun* to smash it.

Let us take a concrete example.

In St. Petersburg and in many other places the police force has been partly wiped out and partly dissolved. The Guchkov-Milyukov government *cannot* either restore the monarchy or, in general, maintain power *without restoring* the police force as a special organisation of armed men under the command of the bourgeoisie, separate from and opposed to the people. That is as clear as daylight.

On the other hand, the new government must reckon with the revolutionary people, must feed them with half-concessions and promises, must play for time. That is why it resorts

to half-measures: it establishes a "people's militia" with elected officials (this sounds awfully respectable, awfully democratic, revolutionary and beautiful!)—*but . . . but*, firstly, it places this militia under the control of the rural and urban local government bodies, i.e., under the command of landlords and capitalists who have been elected in conformity with laws passed by Nicholas the Bloody and Stolypin the Hangman!! Secondly, although calling it a "people's militia" in order to throw dust in the eyes of the "people", it does *not* call upon the *entire* people to join this militia, *and does not compel* the employers and capitalists to *pay* workers and office employees their ordinary wages *for the hours and days* they spend in the *public service*, i.e., in the militia.

That's their trick. That is how the landlord and capitalist government of the Guchkovs and Milyukovs manages to have a "people's militia" on paper, while in reality, it is restoring, gradually and on the quiet, the *bourgeois*, anti-people's militia. At first it is to consist of "eight thousand students and professors" (as foreign newspapers describe the present St. Petersburg militia)—an obvious plaything!—and will gradually be built up of the old and new *police force*.

Prevent restoration of the police force! Do not let the local government bodies slip out of your hands! Set up a militia that will really embrace the entire people, be really universal, and be led by the proletariat!—such is the task of the day, such is the slogan of the moment which equally conforms with the properly understood interests of furthering the class struggle, furthering the revolutionary movement, and the democratic instinct of every worker, of every peasant, of every exploited toiler who cannot help hating the policemen, the rural police patrols, the village constables, the command of landlords and capitalists over armed men with power over the people.

What kind of police force do *they* need, the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, the landlords and capitalists? The same kind as existed under the tsarist monarchy. After the briefest revolutionary periods *all* the bourgeois and bourgeois-democratic republics in the world set up or restored *precisely such* a police force, a special organisation of armed men subordinate

to the bourgeoisie in one way or another, separate from and opposed to the people.

What kind of militia do we need, the proletariat, all the toiling people? A genuine *people's* militia, i.e., one that, first, consists of the *entire* population, of all adult citizens of *both* sexes; and, second, one that combines the functions of a people's army with police functions, with the functions of the chief and fundamental organ of public order and public administration.

To make these propositions more comprehensible I will take a purely schematic example. Needless to say, it would be absurd to think of drawing up any kind of a "plan" for a proletarian militia: when the workers and the entire people set about it practically, on a truly mass scale, they will work it out and organise it a hundred times better than any theoretician. I am not offering a "plan", I only want to illustrate my idea.

St. Petersburg has a population of about two million. Of these, more than half are between the ages of 15 and 65. Take half—one million. Let us even subtract an entire fourth as physically unfit, etc., taking no part in public service at the present moment for justifiable reasons. There remain 750,000 who, serving in the militia, say one day in fifteen (and receiving their pay for this time from their employers), would form an army of 50,000.

That's the type of "state" we need!

That's the kind of militia that would be a "people's militia" in deed and not only in words.

That is how we must proceed in order to *prevent* the restoration either of a special police force, or of a special army separate from the people.

Such a militia, 95 hundredths of which would consist of workers and peasants, would express the *real* mind and will, the strength and power of the vast majority of the people. Such a militia would really arm, and provide military training for, the entire people, would be a safeguard, but *not* of the Guchkov or Milyukov type, against all attempts to restore reaction, against all the designs of tsarist agents. Such a militia would be the executive organ of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, it would enjoy the *boundless*

respect and confidence of the people, for it itself would be an organisation of the entire people. Such a militia would transform democracy from a beautiful signboard, which covers up the enslavement and torment of the people by the capitalists, into a means of actually *training the masses* for participation in *all* affairs of state. Such a militia would draw the young people into political life and teach them not only by words, but also by action, by *work*. Such a militia would develop those functions which, speaking in scientific language, come within the purview of the "welfare police", sanitary inspection, and so forth, and would enlist for such work all adult women. If women are not drawn into public service, into the militia, into political life, if women are not torn out of their stupefying house and kitchen environment, it will be *impossible* to guarantee real freedom, it will be *impossible* to build even democracy, let alone socialism.

Such a militia would be a proletarian militia, for the industrial and urban workers would exert a guiding influence on the masses of the poor as naturally and inevitably as they came to hold the leading place in the people's revolutionary struggle both in 1905-07 and in 1917.

Such a militia would ensure absolute order and devotedly observed comradely discipline. At the same time, in the severe crisis that all the belligerent countries are experiencing, it would make it possible to combat this crisis in a really democratic way, properly and rapidly to distribute grain and other supplies, introduce "universal labour service", which the French now call "civilian mobilisation" and the Germans "civilian service", and without which *it is impossible—it has proved to be impossible*—to heal the wounds that have been and are being inflicted by the predatory and horrible war.

Has the proletariat of Russia shed its blood only in order to receive fine promises of political democratic reforms and nothing more? Can it be that it will not demand, and secure, that *every* toiler should *forthwith* see and feel some improvement in his life? That every family should have bread? That every child should have a bottle of good milk and that not a single adult in a rich family should dare take extra milk until children are provided for? That the palaces and

rich apartments abandoned by the tsar and the aristocracy should not remain vacant, but provide shelter for the homeless and the destitute? Who can carry out these measures except a people's militia, to which women must belong equally with men?

These measures do *not yet* constitute socialism. They concern the distribution of consumption, not the reorganisation of production. They would not yet constitute the "dictatorship of the proletariat", only the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry". Now, it is not a matter of finding a theoretical classification. We would be committing a great mistake if we attempted to force the complex, urgent, rapidly developing practical tasks of the revolution into the Procrustean bed of narrowly conceived "theory" instead of regarding theory primarily and predominantly as a *guide to action*.

Do the masses of the Russian workers possess sufficient class-consciousness, fortitude and heroism to perform "miracles of proletarian organisation" after they have performed miracles of daring, initiative and self-sacrifice in the direct revolutionary struggle? That we do not know, and it would be idle to indulge in guessing, for practice *alone* furnishes the answers to such questions.

What we do know definitely, and what we, as a party, must explain to the masses is, on the one hand, the immense power of the locomotive of history that is engendering an unprecedented crisis, starvation and incalculable hardship. That locomotive is the war, waged for predatory aims by the capitalists of *both* belligerent camps. This "locomotive" has brought a number of the richest, freest and most enlightened nations to the brink of doom. It is *forcing* the peoples to strain to the utmost all their energies, placing them in unbearable conditions, putting on the order of the day not the application of certain "theories" (an illusion against which Marx always warned socialists), but implementation of the most extreme practical measures; for *without* extreme measures, death—immediate and certain death from starvation—awaits millions of people.

That the revolutionary enthusiasm of the advanced class can do a *great deal* when the objective situation *demand*s

extreme measures from the entire people, needs no proof. *This* aspect is clearly seen and *felt* by everybody in Russia.

It is important to realise that in revolutionary times the objective situation changes with the same swiftness and abruptness as the current of life in general. And we must *be able to adapt* our tactics and immediate tasks to the *specific features* of every given situation. Before February 1917, the immediate task was to conduct bold revolutionary-internationalist propaganda, summon the masses to fight, rouse them. The February-March days required the heroism of devoted struggle to crush the immediate enemy—tsarism. Now we are in *transition* from that first stage of the revolution to the second, from “coming to grips” with tsarism to “coming to grips” with Guchkov-Milyukov landlord and capitalist imperialism. The immediate task is *organisation*, not only in the stereotyped sense of working to form stereotyped organisations, but in the sense of drawing unprecedentedly broad masses of the oppressed classes into an organisation that would take over the military, political and economic functions of the state.

The proletariat has approached, and will approach, this singular task in different ways. In some parts of Russia the February-March Revolution puts nearly complete power in its hands. In others the proletariat may, perhaps, in a “usurpatory” manner, begin to form and develop a proletarian militia. In still others, it will probably strive for immediate elections of urban and rural local government bodies on the basis of universal, etc., suffrage, in order to turn them into revolutionary centres, etc., until the growth of proletarian organisation, the coming together of the soldiers with the workers, the movement among the peasantry and the disillusionment of very many in the war-imperialist government of Guchkov and Milyukov bring near the hour when this government will be replaced by the “government” of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies.

Nor ought we to forget that close to St. Petersburg we have one of the most advanced, factually republican, countries, namely, Finland, which, from 1905 to 1917, shielded by the revolutionary battles of Russia, has in a relatively peaceful way developed democracy and has won the *majority* of the

people for socialism. The Russian proletariat will guarantee the Finnish Republic complete freedom, including freedom to secede (it is doubtful now whether a single Social-Democrat will waver on this point when the Cadet Rodichev is so meanly haggling in Helsingfors for bits of privileges for the Great Russians³³)—and precisely in this way will win the *complete* confidence and comradely assistance of the Finnish workers for the all-Russian proletarian cause. In a difficult and big undertaking mistakes are inevitable, nor will we avoid them. The Finnish workers are better organisers, they will help us in this sphere, they will, *in their own way*, push forward the establishment of the socialist republic.

Revolutionary victories in Russia proper—peaceful organisational successes in Finland shielded by these victories—the Russian workers' transition to revolutionary organisational tasks on a new scale—capture of power by the proletariat and poorest strata of the population—encouragement and development of the socialist revolution in the West—this is the road that will lead us to *peace and socialism*.

N. Lenin

Zurich, March 11 (24), 1917

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Collected Works, Vol. 23,
pp. 320-32

FAREWELL LETTER TO THE SWISS WORKERS

Comrades, Swiss workers,

Leaving Switzerland for Russia, to continue revolutionary-internationalist activity in our country, we, members of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party united under the Central Committee (as distinct from *another* party bearing the *same* name, but united under the Organising Committee), wish to convey to you our fraternal greetings and expression of our profound comradely gratitude for your comradely treatment of the political émigrés.

If the *avowed* social-patriots and opportunists, the Swiss Grütlians³⁴ who, like the social-patriots of all countries, have deserted the camp of the proletariat for the camp of the bourgeoisie; if these people have *openly* called upon you to fight the harmful influence of foreigners upon the Swiss labour movement; if the *disguised* social-patriots and opportunists who constitute a majority among the leaders of the Swiss Socialist Party³⁵ have been pursuing similar tactics *under cover*, we consider it our duty to state that on the part of the revolutionary, internationalist socialist workers of Switzerland we have met with warm sympathy, and have greatly benefited from comradely relations with them.

We have always been particularly careful in dealing with questions, acquaintance with which requires prolonged participation in the Swiss movement. But those of us—and there

were hardly more than 10 or 15—who have been members of the Swiss Socialist Party have considered it our duty steadfastly to maintain our point of view, the point of view of the Zimmerwald Left,³⁶ on general and fundamental questions of the international socialist movement. We considered it our duty determinedly to fight not only social-patriotism, but also the so-called “Centrist” trend to which belong R. Grimm, F. Schneider, Jacques Schmid and others in Switzerland, Kautsky, Haase, and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft³⁷ in Germany, Longuet, Pressemane and others in France, Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and others in England, Turati, Treves and their friends in Italy, and the above-mentioned party headed by the Organising Committee (Axelrod, Martov, Chkhaidze, Skobelev and others) in Russia.

We have worked hand in hand with the revolutionary Social-Democrats of Switzerland grouped, in particular, around the magazine *Freie Jugend*.³⁸ They formulated and circulated (in the German and French languages) the proposals for a referendum in favour of a party congress in April 1917 to discuss the party's attitude on the war. At the Zurich cantonal congress in Töss they tabled a resolution on behalf of the Young and the “Lefts” on the war issue, and in March 1917 issued and circulated in certain localities of French Switzerland a leaflet, in the French and German languages, entitled “Our Peace Terms”, etc.

To these comrades, whose views we share, and with whom we worked hand in hand, we convey our fraternal greetings.

We have never had the slightest doubt that the imperialist government of England will under no circumstances permit the Russian internationalists, who are implacable opponents of the imperialist government of Guchkov-Milyukov and Co. and of Russia continuing the *imperialist* war, to pass through to Russia.

In this connection, we must briefly explain our understanding of the tasks of the Russian revolution. We believe this all the more necessary because through the Swiss workers we can and must address ourselves to the German, French and Italian workers, who speak the same languages as the population of Switzerland, a country that still enjoys the benefits of

peace and, relatively, the largest measure of political freedom.

We abide unconditionally by our declaration, which appeared in the Central Organ of our Party, *Sotsial-Demokrat* (No. 47, October 13, 1915), published in Geneva. In it we stated that, should the revolution prove victorious in Russia, and should a *republican* government come to power, a government intent on continuing the *imperialist* war, a war in alliance with the imperialist bourgeoisie of England and France, a war for the seizure of Constantinople, Armenia, Galicia, etc.,—we would most resolutely oppose such a government and would be *against* the “defence of the fatherland” in *such* a war.

A contingency approaching the above has now arisen. The new government of Russia, which has negotiated with the brother of Nicholas II for restoration of the monarchy, and in which the most important and influential posts are held by the *monarchists* Lvov and Guchkov, this government is trying to deceive the Russian workers with the slogan, “the Germans must overthrow Wilhelm” (correct! but why not add: the English, the Italians, etc., must overthrow their kings, and the Russians their monarchists, Lvov and Guchkov??). By issuing this slogan, but *refusing* to publish the imperialist, predatory treaties concluded by the tsar with France, England, etc., and *confirmed by the government of Guchkov-Milyukov-Kerensky*, this government is trying to represent its *imperialist* war with Germany as a war of “defence” (i.e., as a just war, legitimate even from the standpoint of the proletariat). It is trying to represent a war for the defence of the rapacious, imperialist, predatory aims of capital—Russian, English, etc.—as “defence” of the Russian republic (which does *not* yet exist, and which the Lvovs and the Guchkovs have *not* even *promised*!).

If there is any truth in the latest press reports about a rapprochement between the avowed Russian social-patriots (such as Plekhanov, Zasulich, Potresov, etc.) and the “Centre party”, the party of the “Organising Committee”, the party of Chkheidze, Skobelev, etc., based on the common slogan: “Until the Germans overthrow Wilhelm, our war remains a defensive war,”—if this is true, then we shall redouble

our energy in combating the party of Chkheidze, Skobelev, etc., which we have *always* fought for its opportunist, vacillating, unstable political behaviour.

Our slogan is: No support for the Guchkov-Milyukov government! He who says that such support is necessary to prevent restoration of the monarchy is deceiving the people. On the contrary, the Guchkov government *has already conducted* negotiations for restoration of the monarchy in Russia. *Only* the arming and organisation of the proletariat can *prevent* Guchkov and Co. from *restoring* the monarchy in Russia. Only the revolutionary proletariat of Russia and the *whole of Europe*, remaining loyal to internationalism, is capable of ridding humanity of the horrors of the imperialist war.

We do not close our eyes to the tremendous difficulties facing the revolutionary-internationalist vanguard of the Russian proletariat. The most abrupt and swift changes are possible in times such as the present. In No. 47 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* we gave a clear and direct answer to the question that naturally arises: What would our Party do, if the revolution *immediately* placed it in power? Our answer was: (1) We would forthwith offer peace to *all* the warring nations; (2) we would announce our peace terms—immediate liberation of *all* the colonies and *all* the oppressed and non-sovereign peoples; (3) we would immediately begin and carry out the liberation of all the peoples oppressed by the Great Russians; (4) we do not deceive ourselves for one moment, we know that these terms would be *unacceptable* not only to the monarchist, but also to the republican bourgeoisie of Germany, and *not only* to Germany, but also to the capitalist governments of England and France.

We would be forced to wage a revolutionary war against the German—and not only the German—bourgeoisie. *And we would wage this war.* We are not pacifists. We are opposed to imperialist wars over the division of spoils among the capitalists, but we have always considered it absurd for the revolutionary proletariat to disavow revolutionary wars that *may prove necessary in the interests of socialism.*

The task we outlined in No. 47 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* is a gigantic one. It can be accomplished only by a long series of

great class battles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. However, it was not our impatience, nor our wishes, but the *objective conditions* created by the imperialist war that brought the *whole* of humanity to an impasse, that placed it in a dilemma: either allow the destruction of more millions of lives and utterly ruin European civilisation, or hand over power in *all* the civilised countries to the revolutionary proletariat, carry through the socialist revolution.

To the Russian proletariat has fallen the great honour of *beginning* the series of revolutions which the imperialist war has made an objective inevitability. But the idea that the Russian proletariat is the chosen revolutionary proletariat among the workers of the world is absolutely alien to us. We know perfectly well that the proletariat of Russia is less organised, less prepared and less class-conscious than the proletariat of other countries. It is not its special qualities, but rather the special conjuncture of historical circumstances that *for a certain, perhaps very short, time* has made the proletariat of Russia the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world.

Russia is a peasant country, one of the most backward of European countries. Socialism *cannot* triumph there *directly* and *immediately*. But the peasant character of the country, with the vast reserve of land in the hands of the nobility, *may*, to judge from the experience of 1905, give tremendous sweep to the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia and *may* make our revolution the *prologue* to the world socialist revolution, a *step* toward it.

Our Party was formed and developed in the struggle for these ideas, which have been fully confirmed by the experience of 1905 and the spring of 1917, in the uncompromising struggle against all the other parties; and we shall continue to fight for these ideas.

In Russia, socialism cannot triumph directly and immediately. But the peasant mass *can* bring the inevitable and matured agrarian upheaval to the point of *confiscating* all the immense holdings of the nobility. This has always been our slogan and it has now again been advanced in St. Petersburg by the Central Committee of our Party and by *Pravda*,³⁹ our Party's newspaper. The proletariat will

fight for *this* slogan, without closing its eyes to the inevitability of cruel class conflicts between the agricultural labourers and the poorest peasants closely allied with them, on the one hand, *and the rich peasants*, whose position has been strengthened by Stolypin's agrarian "reform" (1907-14),⁴⁰ on the other. The fact should not be overlooked that the 104 peasant deputies in the First (1906) and Second (1907) Dumas introduced a revolutionary agrarian bill demanding the nationalisation of all lands and their distribution by local committees elected on the basis of complete democracy.⁴¹

Such a revolution would not, in itself, be socialism. But it would give a great impetus to the world labour movement. It would immensely strengthen the position of the socialist proletariat in Russia and its influence on the agricultural labourers and the poorest peasants. It would enable the city proletariat to develop, on the strength of this influence, such revolutionary organisations as the Soviets of Workers' Deputies to replace the old instruments of oppression employed by bourgeois states, the army, the police, the bureaucracy; to carry out—under pressure of the unbearably burdensome imperialist war and its consequences—a series of revolutionary measures to *control* the production and distribution of goods.

Single-handed, the Russian proletariat cannot bring the socialist revolution to a *victorious conclusion*. But it can give the Russian revolution a mighty sweep that would create the most favourable conditions for a socialist revolution, and would, in a sense, *start it*. It can facilitate the rise of a situation in which its *chief*, its most trustworthy and most reliable collaborator, the *European* and *American socialist* proletariat, could join the decisive battles.

Let the sceptics despair because of the temporary triumph within the European socialist movement of such disgusting lackeys of the imperialist bourgeoisie as the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co. in Germany; Sembat, Guesde, Renaudel and Co. in France; the Fabians and the Labourites⁴² in England. We are firmly convinced that this *filthy froth* on the surface of the world labour movement will be soon swept away by the waves of revolution.

In Germany there is already a *seething* unrest of the proletarian masses, who contributed so much to humanity and socialism by their persistent, unyielding, sustained organisational work during the long decades of European "calm", from 1871 to 1914. The future of German socialism is represented not by the traitors, the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co., nor by the vacillating and spineless politicians, Haase, Kautsky and their ilk, who have been enfeebled by the routine of the period of "peace".

The future belongs to the trend that has given us Karl Liebknecht, created the Spartacus group,⁴³ has carried on its propaganda in the Bremen *Arbeiterpolitik*.⁴⁴

The objective circumstances of the imperialist war make it certain that the revolution will not be limited to the *first stage* of the Russian revolution, that the revolution will *not* be limited to Russia.

The German proletariat is the most trustworthy, the most reliable ally of the Russian and the world proletarian revolution.

When, in November 1914, our Party put forward the slogan: "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war" of the oppressed against the oppressors for the attainment of socialism, the social-patriots met this slogan with hatred and malicious ridicule, and the Social-Democratic "Centre", with incredulous, sceptical, meek and expectant silence. David, the German social-chauvinist and social-imperialist, called it "insane", while Mr. Plekhanov, the representative of Russian (and Anglo-French) social-chauvinism, of socialism in words, imperialism in deeds, called it a "farcical dream" (*Mittelding zwischen Traum und Komödie*).^{*} The representatives of the Centre confined themselves to silence or to cheap little jokes about this "straight line drawn in empty space".

Now, after March 1917, only the blind can fail to see that it is a correct slogan. Transformation of the imperialist war into civil war is *becoming* a fact.

Long live the proletarian revolution that is *beginning* in Europe!

^{*} Something between a dream and a comedy.—Ed.

On behalf of the departing comrades, members of the R.S.D.L.P. (united under the Central Committee), who approved this letter at a meeting held April 8 (new style), 1917.

N. Lenin

Written on March 26 (April 8),
1917

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Collected Works, Vol. 23,
pp. 367-73

**SPEECH IN THE FINLAND STATION SQUARE
TO WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
APRIL 3 (16), 1917**

Newspaper Report

In the street, standing on top of an armoured car, Comrade Lenin greeted the revolutionary Russian proletariat and the revolutionary Russian army, who had succeeded not only in liberating Russia from tsarist despotism, but in starting a social revolution on an international scale, and added that the proletariat of the whole world looked with hope to the Russian proletariat's bold steps.

The whole crowd walked in a body behind the car to the Kshesinskaya mansion, where the meeting continued.

Pravda No. 24,
April 5, 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 41,
p. 399

THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE PRESENT REVOLUTION⁴⁵

I did not arrive in Petrograd until the night of April 3, and therefore at the meeting on April 4 I could, of course, deliver the report on the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat only on my own behalf, and with reservations as to insufficient preparation.

The only thing I could do to make things easier for myself—and for *honest* opponents—was to prepare the theses in *writing*. I read them out, and gave the text to Comrade Tsereteli. I read them *twice* very slowly: first at a meeting of Bolsheviks and then at a meeting of both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

I publish these personal theses of mine with only the briefest explanatory notes, which were developed in far greater detail in the report.

THESES

1) In our attitude towards the war, which under the new government of Lvov and Co. unquestionably remains on Russia's part a predatory imperialist war owing to the capitalist nature of that government, not the slightest concession to "revolutionary defencism" is permissible.

The class-conscious proletariat can give its consent to a revolutionary war, which would really justify revolutionary defencism, only on condition: (a) that the power pass to the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants aligned with the proletariat; (b) that all annexations be renounced

in deed and not in word; (c) that a complete break be effected in actual fact with all capitalist interests.

In view of the undoubted honesty of those broad sections of the mass believers in revolutionary defencism who accept the war only as a necessity, and not as a means of conquest, in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary with particular thoroughness, persistence and patience to explain their error to them, to explain the inseparable connection existing between capital and the imperialist war, and to prove that without overthrowing capital *it is impossible* to end the war by a truly democratic peace, a peace not imposed by violence.

The most widespread campaign for this view must be organised in the army at the front.

Fraternisation.

2) The specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that the country is *passing* from the first stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class-consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—to its *second* stage, which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants.

This transition is characterised, on the one hand, by a maximum of legally recognised rights (Russia is *now* the freest of all the belligerent countries in the world); on the other, by the absence of violence towards the masses, and, finally, by their unreasoning trust in the government of capitalists, those worst enemies of peace and socialism.

This peculiar situation demands of us an ability to adapt ourselves to the *special* conditions of Party work among unprecedentedly large masses of proletarians who have just awakened to political life.

3) No support for the Provisional Government; the utter falsity of all its promises should be made clear, particularly of those relating to the renunciation of annexations. Exposure in place of the impermissible, illusion-breeding “demand” that *this* government, a government of capitalists, should *cease* to be an imperialist government.

4) Recognition of the fact that in most of the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies our Party is in a minority, so far a small

minority, as against *a bloc of all* the petty-bourgeois opportunist elements, from the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries down to the Organising Committee (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc.), Steklov, etc., etc., who have yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie and spread that influence among the proletariat.

The masses must be made to see that the Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and that therefore our task is, as long as *this* government yields to the influence of the bourgeoisie, to present a patient, systematic, and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses.

As long as we are in the minority we carry on the work of criticising and exposing errors and at the same time we preach the necessity of transferring the entire state power to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, so that the people may overcome their mistakes by experience.

5) Not a parliamentary republic—to return to a parliamentary republic from the Soviets of Workers' Deputies would be a retrograde step—but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom.

Abolition of the police, the army and the bureaucracy.*

The salaries of all officials, all of whom are elective and displaceable at any time, not to exceed the average wage of a competent worker.

6) The weight of emphasis in the agrarian programme to be shifted to the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

Confiscation of all landed estates.

Nationalisation of *all* lands in the country, the land to be disposed of by the local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies. The organisation of separate Soviets of Deputies of Poor Peasants. The setting up of a model farm on each of the large estates (ranging in size from 100 to 300 dessiatines, according to local and other conditions, and to the decisions of the local bodies) under the control of the

* I.e., the standing army to be replaced by the arming of the whole people.

Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and for the public account.

7) The immediate amalgamation of all banks in the country into a single national bank, and the institution of control over it by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

8) It is not our *immediate* task to "introduce" socialism, but only to bring social production and the distribution of products at once under the *control* of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

9) Party tasks:

(a) Immediate convocation of a Party congress;

(b) Alteration of the Party Programme, mainly:

(1) On the question of imperialism and the imperialist war;

(2) On our attitude towards the state and *our* demand for a "commune state"*;

(3) Amendment of our out-of-date minimum programme.

(c) Change of the Party's name.**

10) A new International.

We must take the initiative in creating a revolutionary International, an International against the *social-chauvinists* and against the "Centre".***

In order that the reader may understand why I had especially to emphasise as a rare exception the "case" of honest opponents, I invite him to compare the above theses with the following objection by Mr. Goldenberg: Lenin, he said, "has planted the banner of civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy" (quoted in No. 5 of Mr. Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo*⁴⁶).

Isn't it a gem?

* I.e., a state of which the Paris Commune was the prototype.

** Instead of "Social-Democracy", whose official leaders *throughout* the world have betrayed socialism and deserted to the bourgeoisie (the "defencists" and the vacillating "Kautskyites"), we must call ourselves the *Communist Party*.

*** The "Centre" in the international Social-Democratic movement is the trend which vacillates between the chauvinists (= "defencists") and internationalists, i.e., Kautsky and Co. in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Chkheidze and Co. in Russia, Turati and Co. in Italy, MacDonald and Co. in Britain, etc.

I write, announce and elaborately explain: "In view of the undoubted honesty of those *broad* sections of the *mass* believers in revolutionary defencism . . . in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary with *particular* thoroughness, persistence and *patience* to explain their error to them. . . ."

Yet the bourgeois gentlemen who call themselves Social-Democrats, who *do not* belong either to the *broad* sections or to the *mass* believers in defencism, with serene brow present my views thus: "The banner (!)* of civil war" (of which there is not a word in the theses and not a word in my speech!) has been planted (!) "in the midst (!!) of revolutionary democracy. . . ."

What does this mean? In what way does this differ from riot-inciting agitation, from *Russkaya Volya*⁴⁷?

I write, announce and elaborately explain: "The Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and therefore our task is to present a patient, systematic, and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses."

Yet opponents of a certain brand present my views as a call to "civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy"!

I attacked the Provisional Government for *not* having appointed an early date, or any date at all, for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and for confining itself to promises. I argued that *without* the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is not guaranteed and its success is impossible.

And the view is attributed to me that I am opposed to the speedy convocation of the Constituent Assembly!

I would call this "raving", had not decades of political struggle taught me to regard honesty in opponents as a rare exception.

Mr. Plekhanov in his paper called my speech "raving". Very good, Mr. Plekhanov! But look how awkward, uncouth, and slow-witted you are in your polemics. If I delivered a

* Interpolations in square brackets (within passages quoted by Lenin) have been introduced by Lenin, unless otherwise indicated.—Ed.

raving speech for two hours, how is it that an audience of hundreds tolerated this "raving"? Further, why does your paper devote a whole column to an account of the "raving"? Inconsistent, highly inconsistent!

It is, of course, much easier to shout, abuse, and howl than to attempt to relate, to explain, to recall *what* Marx and Engels said in 1871, 1872 and 1875 about the experience of the Paris Commune⁴⁸ and about the *kind* of state the proletariat needs.

Ex-Marxist Mr. Plekhanov evidently does not care to recall Marxism.

I quoted the words of Rosa Luxemburg, who on August 4, 1914, called *German* Social-Democracy a "stinking corpse". And the Plekhanovs, Goldenbergs and Co. feel "offended". On whose behalf? On behalf of the *German* chauvinists, because they were called chauvinists!

They have got themselves in a mess, these poor Russian social-chauvinists—socialists in word and chauvinists in deed.

Written on April 4 and 5
(17 and 18), 1917

Published April 7, 1917
in *Pravda* No. 26
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 19-26

LETTERS ON TACTICS

FOREWORD

On April 4, 1917, I had occasion to make a report on the subject indicated in the title, first, at a meeting of Bolsheviks in Petrograd. These were delegates to the All-Russia Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who had to leave for their homes and therefore could not allow me to postpone it. After the meeting, the chairman, Comrade G. Zinoviev, asked me on behalf of the whole assembly to repeat my report immediately at a joint meeting of Bolshevik and Menshevik delegates, who wished to discuss the question of unifying the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

Difficult though it was for me immediately to repeat my report, I felt that I had no right to refuse once this was demanded of me by *my comrades-in-ideas* as well as by the Mensheviks, who, because of their impending departure, really could not grant me a delay.

In making my report, I read the theses which were published in No. 26 of *Pravda*, on April 7, 1917.*

Both the theses and my report gave rise to differences of opinion among the Bolsheviks themselves and the editors of *Pravda*. After a number of consultations, we unanimously concluded that it would be advisable *openly* to discuss our differences, and thus provide material for the All-Russia Conference of our Party (the Russian Social-Democratic

* I reprint these theses together with the brief comment from the same issue of *Pravda* as an appendix to this letter. (See pp. 56-61 of this book.—Ed.)

Labour Party, united under the Central Committee) which is to meet in Petrograd on April 20, 1917.

Complying with this decision concerning a discussion, I am publishing the following *letters* in which I do not claim to have made an *exhaustive* study of the question, but wish merely to outline the principal arguments, which are especially essential for the *practical* tasks of the working-class movement.

First Letter

ASSESSMENT OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

Marxism requires of us a strictly exact and objectively verifiable analysis of the relations of classes and of the concrete features peculiar to each historical situation. We Bolsheviks have always tried to meet this requirement, which is absolutely essential for giving a scientific foundation to policy.

"Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action,"⁴⁹ Marx and Engels always said, rightly ridiculing the mere memorising and repetition of "formulas", that at best are capable only of marking out *general* tasks, which are necessarily modifiable by the *concrete* economic and political conditions of each particular *period* of the historical process.

What, then, are the clearly established objective *facts* which the party of the revolutionary proletariat must now be guided by in defining the tasks and forms of its activity?

Both in my first *Letter from Afar* ("The First Stage of the First Revolution") published in *Pravda* Nos. 14 and 15, March 21 and 22, 1917, and in my theses, I define "the specific feature of the present situation in Russia" as a period of *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second. I therefore considered the basic slogan, the "task of the day" at *this* moment to be: "Workers, you have performed miracles of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsarism. You must perform miracles of organisation, organisation of the proletariat and of the

whole people, to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution" (*Pravda* No. 15).*

What, then, is the first stage?

It is the passing of state power to the bourgeoisie.

Before the February-March revolution of 1917, state power in Russia was in the hands of one old class, namely, the feudal landed nobility, headed by Nicholas Romanov.

After the revolution, the power is in the hands of a *different* class, a new class, namely, the *bourgeoisie*.

The passing of state power from one *class* to another is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a *revolution*, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of that term.

To this extent, the bourgeois, or the bourgeois-democratic, revolution in Russia is *completed*.

But at this point we hear a clamour of protest from people who readily call themselves "old Bolsheviks". Didn't we always maintain, they say, that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed only by the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry"? Is the agrarian revolution, which is also a bourgeois-democratic revolution, completed? Is it not a fact, on the contrary, that it has *not even* started?

My answer is: The Bolshevik slogans and ideas *on the whole* have been confirmed by history; but *concretely* things have worked out *differently*; they are more original, more peculiar, more variegated than anyone could have expected.

To ignore or overlook this fact would mean taking after those "old Bolsheviks" who more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our Party by reiterating formulas senselessly *learned by rote* instead of *studying* the specific features of the new and living reality.

"The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" has *already* become a reality** in the Russian revolution, for this "formula" envisages only a *relation of classes*, and not a *concrete political institution implementing* this relation, this co-operation. "The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies"—there you have the "rev-

* See p. 21 of this book.—*Ed.*

** In a certain form and to a certain extent.

olutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" already accomplished in reality.

This formula is already antiquated. Events have moved it from the realm of formulas into the realm of reality, clothed it with flesh and bone, concretised it and *thereby* modified it.

A new and different task now faces us: to effect a split *within* this dictatorship between the proletarian elements (the anti-defencist, internationalist, "Communist" elements, who stand for a transition to the commune) and the *small-proprietor* or *petty-bourgeois* elements (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the other revolutionary defencists, who are opposed to moving towards the commune and are in favour of "supporting" the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government).

The person who *now* speaks only of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" is behind the times, consequently, he has in *effect gone over* to the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle; that person should be consigned to the archive of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiques (it may be called the archive of "old Bolsheviks").

The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has already been realised, but in a highly original manner, and with a number of extremely important modifications. I shall deal with them separately in one of my next letters. For the present, it is essential to grasp the incontestable truth that a Marxist must take cognisance of real life, of the true facts of *reality*, and not cling to a theory of yesterday, which, like all theories, at best only outlines the main and the general, only *comes near* to embracing life in all its complexity.

"Theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life."⁵⁰

To deal with the question of "completion" of the bourgeois revolution *in the old way* is to sacrifice living Marxism to the dead letter.

According to the old way of thinking, the rule of the bourgeoisie could and should be *followed* by the rule of the proletariat and the peasantry, by their dictatorship.

In real life, however, things have *already* turned out *differently*; there has been an extremely original, novel and unprecedented *interlacing of the one with the other*. We have side by side, existing together, simultaneously, *both* the rule of the bourgeoisie (the government of Lvov and Guchkov) and a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which is *voluntarily* ceding power to the bourgeoisie, voluntarily making itself an appendage of the bourgeoisie.

For it must not be forgotten that actually, in Petrograd, the power is in the hands of the workers and soldiers; the new government is *not* using and cannot use violence against them, because *there is no* police, *no* army standing apart from the people, *no* officialdom standing all-powerful *above* the people. This is a fact, the kind of fact that is characteristic of a state of the Paris Commune type. This fact does not fit into the old schemes. One must know how to adapt schemes to facts, instead of reiterating the now meaningless words about a "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" *in general*.

To throw more light on this question let us approach it from another angle.

A Marxist must not abandon the ground of careful analysis of class relations. The bourgeoisie is in power. But is not the mass of the peasants *also* a bourgeoisie, only of a different social stratum, of a different kind, of a different character? Whence does it follow that *this* stratum *cannot* come to power, thus "completing" the bourgeois-democratic revolution? Why should this be impossible?

This is how the old Bolsheviks often argue.

My reply is that it is quite possible. But, in assessing a given situation, a Marxist must proceed *not* from what is possible, but from what is real.

And the reality reveals the *fact* that freely elected soldiers' and peasants' deputies are freely joining the second, parallel government, and are freely supplementing, developing and completing it. And, just as freely, they are *surrendering* power to the bourgeoisie—a fact which does not in the least "contravene" the theory of Marxism, for we have always known and repeatedly pointed out that the bourgeoisie main-

tains itself in power *not* only by force but also by virtue of the lack of class-consciousness and organisation, the routinism and downtrodden state of the masses.

In view of this present-day reality, it is simply ridiculous to turn one's back on the fact and talk about "possibilities".

Possibly the peasantry may seize all the land and all the power. Far from forgetting this possibility, far from confining myself to the present, I definitely and clearly formulate the agrarian programme, taking into account the *new* phenomenon, i.e., the deeper cleavage between the agricultural labourers and the poor peasants on the one hand, and the peasant proprietors on the other.

But there is also another possibility; it is possible that the peasants will take the advice of the petty-bourgeois party of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, which has yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie, has adopted a defencist stand, and which advises waiting for the Constituent Assembly, although not even the date of its convocation has yet been fixed.*

It is possible that the peasants will *maintain* and prolong their deal with the bourgeoisie, a deal which they have now concluded through the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies not only in form, but in fact.

Many things are possible. It would be a great mistake to forget the agrarian movement and the agrarian programme. But it would be no less a mistake to forget the *reality*, which reveals the *fact* that an *agreement*, or—to use a more exact, less legal, but more class-economic term—*class collaboration* exists between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

When this fact ceases to be a fact, when the peasantry separates from the bourgeoisie, seizes the land and power

* Lest my words be misinterpreted, I shall say in advance, right now that I am positively in favour of the *Soviets* of Agricultural Labourers and Peasants *immediately* taking over *all* the land; but they should *themselves* observe the strictest order and discipline, not permit the slightest damage to machines, structures, or livestock, and in no case disorganise agriculture and grain production, but rather *develop* them, for the soldiers need *twice* as much bread, and the people must not be allowed to starve.

despite the bourgeoisie, that will be a new stage in the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and that matter will be dealt with separately.

A Marxist who, in view of the possibility of such a future stage, were to forget his duties *in the present*, when the peasantry is *in agreement* with the bourgeoisie, would turn petty bourgeois. For he would in practice be preaching to the proletariat *confidence* in the petty bourgeoisie ("this petty bourgeoisie, this peasantry, must separate from the bourgeoisie while the bourgeois-democratic revolution is still on"). Because of the "possibility" of so pleasing and sweet a future, in which the peasantry would *not* be the tail of the bourgeoisie, in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Chkhedizes, Tseretelis, and Steklovs would *not* be an appendage of the bourgeois government—because of the "possibility" of so pleasing a future, he would be forgetting *the unpleasant present*, in which the peasantry still forms the tail of the bourgeoisie, and in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats have not yet given up their role as an appendage of the bourgeois government, as "His Majesty" Lvov's Opposition.⁵¹

This hypothetical person would resemble a sweetish Louis Blanc, or a sugary Kautskyite, but certainly not a revolutionary Marxist.

But are we not in danger of falling into subjectivism, of wanting to arrive at the socialist revolution by "skipping" the bourgeois-democratic revolution—which is not yet completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement?

I might be incurring this danger if I said: "No Tsar, but a *workers' government*."⁵² But I did *not* say that, I said something else. I said that there *can be no government* (barring a bourgeois government) in Russia *other than* that of the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. I said that power in Russia now can pass from Guchkov and Lvov *only* to these Soviets. And in these Soviets, as it happens, it is the peasants, the soldiers, i.e., petty bourgeoisie, who preponderate, to use a scientific, Marxist term, a class characterisation, and not a common, man-in-the-street, professional characterisation.

In my theses, I absolutely ensured myself against skipping over the peasant movement, which has not outlived itself, or the petty-bourgeois movement in general, against any *playing* at "seizure of power" by a workers' government, against any kind of Blanquist adventurism; for I pointedly referred to the experience of the Paris Commune. And this experience, as we know, and as Marx proved at length in 1871 and Engels in 1891,⁵³ absolutely excludes Blanquism, absolutely ensures the direct, immediate and unquestionable rule of the *majority* and the activity of the masses only to the extent that the majority itself acts *consciously*.

In the theses, I very definitely reduced the question to one of *a struggle for influence within* the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies. To leave no shadow of doubt on this score, I *twice* emphasised in the theses the need for patient and persistent "explanatory" work "adapted to the *practical* needs of the *masses*".

Ignorant persons or renegades from Marxism, like Mr. Plekhanov, may shout about anarchism, Blanquism, and so forth. But those who want to think and learn cannot fail to understand that Blanquism means the seizure of power by a minority, whereas the Soviets are *admittedly* the direct and immediate organisation of the *majority* of the people. Work confined to a struggle for influence *within* these Soviets cannot, simply *cannot*, stray into the swamp of Blanquism. Nor can it stray into the swamp of anarchism, for anarchism denies *the need for a state and state power* in the period of *transition* from the rule of the bourgeoisie to the rule of the proletariat, whereas I, with a precision that precludes any possibility of misinterpretation, *advocate* the need for a state in this period, although, in accordance with Marx and the lessons of the Paris Commune, I advocate not the usual parliamentary bourgeois state, but a state *without* a standing army, *without* a police opposed to the people, *without* an officialdom placed above the people.

When Mr. Plekhanov, in his newspaper *Yedinstvo*, shouts with all his might that this is anarchism, he is merely giving further proof of his break with Marxism. Challenged by me in *Pravda* (No. 26) to tell us what Marx and Engels taught

on the subject in 1871, 1872 and 1875,* Mr. Plekhanov can only preserve silence on the question at issue and shout out abuse after the manner of the enraged bourgeoisie.

Mr. Plekhanov, the ex-Marxist, has *absolutely* failed to understand the Marxist doctrine of the state. Incidentally, the germs of this lack of understanding are also to be found in his German pamphlet on anarchism.⁵⁴

* * *

Now let us see how Comrade Y. Kamenev, in *Pravda* No. 27, formulates his "disagreements" with my theses and with the views expressed above. This will help us to grasp them more clearly.

"As for Comrade Lenin's general scheme," writes Comrade Kamenev, "it appears to us unacceptable, inasmuch as it proceeds from the assumption that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is *completed*, and builds on the immediate transformation of this revolution into a socialist revolution."

There are two big mistakes here.

First. The question of "completion" of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is *stated* wrongly. The question is put in an abstract, simple, so to speak one-colour, way, which does *not* correspond to the objective reality. To put the question *this way*, to ask *now* "whether the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed" and say *no more*, is to prevent oneself from seeing the exceedingly complex reality, which is at least two-coloured. This is in theory. In practice, it means surrendering helplessly to *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*.

Indeed, reality shows us *both* the passing of power into the hands of the bourgeoisie (a "completed" bourgeois-democratic revolution of the usual type) and, side by side with the real government, the existence of a parallel government which represents the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry". This "second-government" has *itself* ceded the power to the bourgeoisie, has chained *itself* to the bourgeois government.

* See p. 61 of this book.—Ed.

Is this reality covered by Comrade Kamenev's old-Bolshevik formula, which says that "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed"?

It is not. The formula is obsolete. It is no good at all. It is dead. And it is no use trying to revive it.

Second. A practical question. Who knows whether it is still possible at present for a *special* "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry", *detached* from the bourgeois government, to emerge in Russia? Marxist tactics cannot be based on the unknown.

But *if* this is still possible, then there is one, and only one, way towards it, namely, an immediate, resolute, and irrevocable separation of the proletarian Communist elements from the petty-bourgeois elements.

Why?

Because the entire petty bourgeoisie has, not by chance but of necessity, turned towards chauvinism (=defencism), towards "support" of the bourgeoisie, towards dependence on it, towards the *fear* of having to do without it, etc., etc.

How can the petty bourgeoisie be "pushed" into power, if even now it can take the power, but *does not want to*?

This can be done only by separating the proletarian, the Communist, party, by waging a proletarian class struggle *free from* the timidity of those petty bourgeois. Only the consolidation of the proletarians who are free from the influence of the petty bourgeoisie in deed and not only in word can make the ground so hot under the feet of the petty bourgeoisie that it will be *obliged* under certain circumstances to take the power; it is even within the bounds of possibility that Guchkov and Milyukov—again under certain circumstances—will be for giving full and sole power to Chkheidze, Tsereteli, the S.R.s, and Steklov, since, after all, these are "*defencists*".

To separate the proletarian elements of the Soviets (i.e., the proletarian, Communist, party) from the petty-bourgeois elements right now, immediately and irrevocably, is to give correct expression to the interests of the movement in *either* of two possible events: in the event that Russia will yet experience a special "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" independent of the bourgeoisie, and in the event

that the petty bourgeoisie will not be able to tear itself away from the bourgeoisie and will oscillate eternally (that is, until socialism is established) between us and it.

To be guided in one's activities merely by the simple formula, "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed", is like taking it upon oneself to guarantee that the petty bourgeoisie is definitely capable of being independent of the bourgeoisie. To do so is to throw oneself at the given moment on the mercy of the petty bourgeoisie.

Incidentally, in connection with the "formula" of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, it is worth mentioning that, in *Two Tactics* (July 1905), I made a point of emphasising (*Twelve Years*, p. 435) this:

"Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy, and privilege. . . . Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage-worker against the employer, the struggle for socialism. . . ."

Comrade Kamenev's mistake is that even in 1917 he sees only *the past* of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. *As a matter of fact* its *future* has already begun, for the interests and policies of the wage-worker and the petty proprietor have *actually* diverged already, even in such an important question as that of "defencism", that of the attitude towards the imperialist war.

This brings me to the second mistake in Comrade Kamenev's argument quoted above. He criticises me, saying that my scheme "builds" on "the immediate transformation of this [bourgeois-democratic] revolution into a socialist revolution".

This is incorrect. I not only do not "build" on the "immediate transformation" of our revolution into a *socialist* one, but I actually warn against it, when in Thesis No. 8, I state: "It is *not* our *immediate* task to 'introduce' socialism. . . ."

Is it not clear that no person who builds on the immediate transformation of our revolution into a socialist revo-

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, pp. 84-85.—Ed.

** See p. 59 of this book.—Ed.

lution could be opposed to the immediate task of introducing socialism?

Moreover, even a "commune state" (i.e., a state organised along the lines of the Paris Commune) *cannot* be introduced in Russia "immediately", because to do that it would be necessary for the *majority* of the deputies in all (or in most) Soviets to clearly realise all the erroneousness and harm of the tactics and policy pursued by the S.R.s, Chkhaidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, etc. As for me, I declared unmistakably that in this respect I "build" only on "patient" explaining (does one have to be patient to bring about a change which can be effected "immediately"?).

Comrade Kamenev has somewhat overreached himself in his eagerness, and has repeated the bourgeois prejudice about the Paris Commune having wanted to introduce socialism "immediately". This is not so. The Commune, unfortunately, was too slow in introducing socialism. The real essence of the Commune is not where the bourgeois usually looks for it, but in the creation of a *state* of a special type. Such a state has *already* arisen in Russia, it is the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!

Comrade Kamenev has not pondered on the *fact*, the significance, of the *existing* Soviets, their identity, in point of type and socio-political character, with the commune state, and instead of studying the *fact*, he began to talk about something I was supposed to be "building" on for the "immediate" future. The result is, unfortunately, a repetition of the method used by many bourgeois: from the question as to *what are* the Soviets, whether they are of a *higher* type than a parliamentary republic, whether they are *more useful* for the people, *more democratic*, *more convenient* for the struggle, for combating, for instance, the grain shortage, etc.—from this real, urgent, vital issue, attention is diverted to the empty, would-be scientific, but actually hollow, professorially dead question of "building on an immediate transformation".

An idle question falsely presented. I "build" *only* on this, *exclusively* on this—that the workers, soldiers and peasants will deal better than the officials, better than the police, with the difficult *practical* problems of producing more

grain, distributing it better and keeping the soldiers better supplied, etc., etc.

I am deeply convinced that the Soviets will make the independent activity of the *masses* a reality more quickly and effectively than will a parliamentary republic (I shall compare the two types of state in greater detail in another letter). They will more effectively, more practically and more correctly decide what *steps* can be taken towards socialism and how these steps should be taken. Control over a bank, the merging of all banks into one, is *not yet* socialism, but it is *a step towards* socialism. Today such steps are being taken in Germany by the Junkers and the bourgeoisie against the people. Tomorrow the Soviet will be able to take these steps more effectively for the benefit of the people if the whole state power is in its hands.

What *compels* such steps?

Famine. Economic disorganisation. Imminent collapse. The horrors of war. The horrors of the wounds inflicted on mankind by the war.

Comrade Kamenev concludes his article with the remark that "in a broad discussion he hopes to carry his point of view, which is the only possible one for revolutionary Social-Democracy if it wishes to and should remain to the very end the party of the revolutionary masses of the proletariat and not turn into a group of Communist propagandists".

It seems to me that these words betray a completely erroneous estimate of the situation. Comrade Kamenev contraposes to a "party of the masses" a "group of propagandists". But the "masses" have now succumbed to the craze of "revolutionary" defencism. Is it not more becoming for internationalists at this moment to show that they can resist "mass" intoxication rather than to "wish to remain" with the masses, i.e., to succumb to the general epidemic? Have we not seen how in all the belligerent countries of Europe the chauvinists tried to justify themselves on the grounds that they wished to "remain with the masses"? Must we not be able to remain for a time in the minority against the "mass" intoxication? Is it not the work of the propagandists at the present moment that forms the key point for *disentan-*

gling the proletarian line from the defencist and petty-bourgeois "mass" intoxication? It was this fusion of the masses, proletarian and non-proletarian, regardless of class differences within the masses, that formed one of the conditions for the defencist epidemic. To speak contemptuously of a "group of propagandists" advocating a *proletarian* line does not seem to be very becoming.

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THE DUAL POWER

The basic question of every revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood, there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, not to speak of guidance of the revolution.

The highly remarkable feature of our revolution is that it has brought about a *dual power*. This fact must be grasped first and foremost: unless it is understood, we cannot advance. We must know how to supplement and amend old "formulas", for example, those of Bolshevism, for while they have been found to be correct on the whole, their concrete realisation *has turned out to be* different. *Nobody* previously thought, or could have thought, of a dual power.

What is this dual power? Alongside the Provisional Government, the government of the *bourgeoisie*, another government has arisen, so far weak and incipient, but undoubtedly a government that actually exists and is growing—the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

What is the class composition of this other government? It consists of the proletariat and the peasants (in soldiers' uniforms). What is the political nature of this government? It is a revolutionary dictatorship, i.e., a power directly based on revolutionary seizure, on the direct initiative of the people from below, and *not on a law* enacted by a centralised state power. It is an entirely different kind of power from the one that generally exists in the parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republics of the usual type still prevailing in the advanced countries of Europe and America. This circumstance is often overlooked, often

not given enough thought, yet it is the crux of the matter. *This power is of the same type* as the Paris Commune of 1871. The fundamental characteristics of this type are: (1) the source of power is not a law previously discussed and enacted by parliament, but the direct initiative of the people from below, in their local areas—direct “seizure”, to use a current expression; (2) the replacement of the police and the army, which are institutions divorced from the people and set against the people, by the direct arming of the whole people; order in the state under such a power is maintained by the armed workers and peasants *themselves*, by the armed people *themselves*; (3) officialdom, the bureaucracy, are either similarly replaced by the direct rule of the people themselves or at least placed under special control; they not only become elected officials, but are also *subject to recall* at the people’s first demand; they are reduced to the position of simple agents; from a privileged group holding “jobs” remunerated on a high, bourgeois scale, they become workers of a special “arm of the service”, whose remuneration *does not exceed* the ordinary pay of a competent worker.

This, and this *alone*, constitutes the *essence* of the Paris Commune as a special type of state. This essence has been forgotten or perverted by the Plekhanovs (downright chauvinists who have betrayed Marxism), the Kautskys (the men of the “Centre”, i.e., those who vacillate between chauvinism and Marxism), and generally by all those Social-Democrats,⁵⁵ Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., etc., who now rule the roost.

They are trying to get away with empty phrases, evasions, subterfuges; they congratulate each other a thousand times upon the revolution, but refuse to *consider what* the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies *are*. They refuse to recognise the obvious truth that inasmuch as these Soviets exist, *inasmuch as* they are a power, we have in Russia a state of the *type* of the Paris Commune.

I have emphasised the words “inasmuch as”, for it is only an incipient power. By direct agreement with the bourgeois Provisional Government and by a series of actual concessions, it has itself *surrendered and is surrendering* its positions to the bourgeoisie.

Why? Is it because Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov and Co. are making a "mistake"? Nonsense. Only a philistine can think so—not a Marxist. The reason is *insufficient class-consciousness* and organisation of the proletarians and peasants. The "mistake" of the leaders I have named lies in their petty-bourgeois position, in the fact that instead of clarifying the minds of the workers, they are *befogging* them; instead of dispelling petty-bourgeois illusions, they are *instilling* them; instead of freeing the people from bourgeois influence, they are *strengthening* that influence.

It should be clear from this why our comrades, too, make so many mistakes when putting the question "simply": Should the Provisional Government be overthrown immediately?

My answer is: (1) it should be overthrown, for it is an oligarchic, bourgeois, and not a people's government, and *is unable* to provide peace, bread, or full freedom; (2) it cannot be overthrown just now, for it is being kept in power by a direct and indirect, a formal and actual *agreement* with the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and primarily with the chief Soviet, the Petrograd Soviet; (3) generally, it cannot be "overthrown" in the ordinary way, for it rests on the "*support*" given to the bourgeoisie by the *second* government—the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and that government is the only possible revolutionary government, which directly expresses the mind and will of the majority of the workers and peasants. Humanity has not yet evolved and we do not as yet know a type of government superior to and better than the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies.

To become a power the class-conscious workers must win the majority to their side. *As long as* no violence is used against the people there is no other road to power. We are not Blanquists, we do not stand for the seizure of power by a minority. We are Marxists, we stand for proletarian class struggle against petty-bourgeois intoxication, against chauvinism-defencism, phrase-mongering and dependence on the bourgeoisie.

Let us create a proletarian Communist Party; its elements have already been created by the best adherents of Bol-

shevism; let us rally our ranks for proletarian class work; and larger and larger numbers from among the proletarians, from among the *poorest* peasants will range themselves on our side. For *actual experience* will from day to day shatter the petty-bourgeois illusions of those "Social-Democrats", the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis, Steklovs and others, the "Socialist-Revolutionaries", the petty bourgeois of an even purer water, and so on and so forth.

The bourgeoisie stands for the undivided power of the bourgeoisie.

The class-conscious workers stand for the undivided power of the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies—for undivided power made possible not by adventurist acts, but by *clarifying* proletarian minds, by *emancipating* them from the influence of the bourgeoisie.

The petty bourgeoisie—"Social-Democrats", Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., etc.—vacillate and, thereby, *hinder* this clarification and emancipation.

This is the actual, the *class* alignment of forces that determines our tasks.

Pravda No. 28, April 9, 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
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THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OUR REVOLUTION

Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party

The moment of history through which Russia is now passing is marked by the following main characteristics:

THE CLASS CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE

1. The old tsarist power, which represented only a handful of feudalist landowners who commanded the entire state machinery (the army, the police, and the bureaucracy), has been overthrown and removed, but not completely destroyed. The monarchy has not been formally abolished; the Romanov gang continues to hatch monarchist intrigues. The vast landed possessions of the feudalist landowners have not been abolished.

2. State power in Russia has passed into the hands of a new *class*, namely, the bourgeoisie and landowners who had become bourgeois. *To this extent* the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia is completed.

Having come to power, the bourgeoisie has formed a bloc (an alliance) with the overt monarchists, who are notorious for their exceptionally ardent support of Nicholas the Bloody and Stolypin the Hangman in 1906-14 (Guchkov and other politicians to the right of the Cadets). The new bourgeois government of Lvov and Co. has attempted and has begun to negotiate with the Romanovs for the restoration of the monarchy in Russia. Behind a screen of revolutionary phrases, this government is appointing partisans of the old

regime to key positions. It is striving to reform the whole machinery of state (the army, the police, and the bureaucracy) as little as possible, and has turned it over to the bourgeoisie. The new government has already begun to hinder in every way the revolutionary initiative of mass action and the seizure of power by the people *from below*, which is the *sole* guarantee of the real success of the revolution.

Up to now this government has not even fixed a date for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It is not laying a finger on the landed estates, which form the material foundation of feudal tsarism. This government does not even contemplate starting an investigation into, and making public, the activities of the monopolist financial organisations, the big banks, the syndicates and cartels of the capitalists, etc., or instituting control over them.

The key positions, the decisive ministerial posts in the new government (the Ministry of the Interior and the War Ministry, i.e., the command over the army, the police, the bureaucracy—the entire apparatus for oppressing the people) are held by outright monarchists and supporters of the system of big landed estates. The Cadets, those day-old republicans, republicans against their own will, have been assigned minor posts, having no direct relation to the *command* over the people or to the apparatus of state power. A. Kerensky, a Trudovik and “would-be socialist”, has no function whatsoever, except to lull the vigilance and attention of the people with sonorous phrases.

For all these reasons, the new bourgeois government does not deserve the confidence of the proletariat even in the sphere of internal policy, and no support of this government by the proletariat is admissible.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

3. In the field of foreign policy, which has now been brought to the forefront by objective circumstances, the new government is a government for the continuation of the imperialist war, a war that is being waged in alliance with the

imperialist powers—Britain, France, and others—for division of the capitalist spoils and for subjugating small and weak nations.

Subordinated to the interests of Russian capitalism and its powerful protector and master—Anglo-French imperialist capitalism, the wealthiest in the world, the new government, notwithstanding the wishes expressed in no uncertain fashion on behalf of the obvious majority of the peoples of Russia through the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, has taken no real steps to put an end to the slaughter of peoples for the interests of the capitalists. It has not even published the secret treaties of an obviously predatory character (for the partition of Persia, the plunder of China, the plunder of Turkey, the partition of Austria, the annexation of Eastern Prussia, the annexation of the German colonies, etc.), which, as everybody knows, bind Russia to Anglo-French predatory imperialist capital. It has *confirmed* these treaties concluded by tsarism, which for centuries robbed and oppressed more nations than other tyrants and despots, and which not only oppressed, but also disgraced and demoralised the Great-Russian nation by making it an executioner of other nations.

The new government has confirmed these shameful predatory treaties and has not proposed an immediate armistice to all the belligerent nations, in spite of the clearly expressed demand of the majority of the peoples of Russia, voiced through the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. It has evaded the issue with the help of solemn, sonorous, bombastic, but absolutely empty declarations and phrases, which, in the mouths of bourgeois diplomats, have always served, and still serve, to deceive the trustful and naïve masses of the oppressed people.

4. Not only, therefore, is the new government unworthy of the slightest confidence in the field of foreign policy, but to go on demanding that it should proclaim the will of the peoples of Russia for peace, that it should renounce annexations, and so on and so forth, is in practice merely to deceive the people, to inspire them with false hopes and to retard the clarification of their minds. It is indirectly to reconcile them to the continuation of a war the true social

character of which is determined not by pious wishes, but by the class character of the government that wages the war, by the connection between the class represented by this government and the imperialist finance capital of Russia, Britain, France, etc., by *the real and actual policy* which that class is pursuing.

THE PECULIAR NATURE OF THE DUAL POWER AND ITS CLASS SIGNIFICANCE

5. The main feature of our revolution, a feature that most imperatively demands thoughtful consideration, is the *dual power* which arose in the very first days after the triumph of the revolution.

This dual power is evident in the existence of *two* governments: one is the main, the real, the actual government of the bourgeoisie, the "Provisional Government" of Lvov and Co., which holds in its hands all the organs of power; the other is a supplementary and parallel government, a "controlling" government in the shape of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which holds no organs of state power, but directly rests on the support of an obvious and indisputable majority of the people, on the armed workers and soldiers.

The class origin and the class significance of this dual power is the following: the Russian revolution of March 1917 not only swept away the whole tsarist monarchy, not only transferred the entire power to the bourgeoisie, but also *moved close towards* a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The Petrograd and the other, the local, Soviets constitute precisely such a dictatorship (that is, a power resting not on the law but directly on the force of armed masses of the population), a dictatorship precisely of the above-mentioned classes.

6. The second highly important feature of the Russian revolution is the fact that the Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, which, as everything goes to show, enjoys the confidence of most of the local Soviets, is *voluntarily* transferring state power to the bourgeoisie and *its* Provisional Government, is voluntarily *ceding* supremacy

to the latter, having entered into an agreement to support it, and is limiting its own role to that of an observer, a supervisor of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (the date for which has not even been announced as yet by the Provisional Government).

This remarkable feature, unparalleled in history in such a form, has led to the *interlocking of two* dictatorships: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (for the government of Lvov and Co. is a dictatorship, i.e., a power based not on the law, not on the previously expressed will of the people, but on seizure by force, accomplished by a definite class, namely, the bourgeoisie) and the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry (the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies).

There is not the slightest doubt that such an "interlocking" *cannot* last long. Two powers *cannot exist* in a state. One of them is bound to pass away; and the entire Russian bourgeoisie is already trying its hardest everywhere and in every way to keep out and weaken the Soviets, to reduce them to nought, and to establish the undivided power of the bourgeoisie.

The dual power merely expresses a *transitional* phase in the revolution's development, when it has gone farther than the ordinary bourgeois-democratic revolution, *but has not yet reached* a "pure" dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The class significance (and the class explanation) of this transitional and unstable situation is this: like all revolutions, our revolution required the greatest heroism and self-sacrifice on the part of the people for the struggle against tsarism; it also immediately *drew* unprecedentedly vast numbers of ordinary citizens *into the movement*.

From the point of view of science and practical politics, one of the chief symptoms of *every* real revolution is the unusually rapid, sudden, and abrupt increase in the number of "ordinary citizens" who begin to participate actively, independently and effectively in political life and in the *organisation of the state*.

Such is the case in Russia. Russia at present is seething. Millions and tens of millions of people, who had been polit-

ically dormant for ten years and politically crushed by the terrible oppression of tsarism and by inhuman toil for the landowners and capitalists, *have awakened and taken eagerly* to politics. And who are these millions and tens of millions? For the most part small proprietors, petty bourgeois, people standing midway between the capitalists and the wage-workers. Russia is the most petty-bourgeois of all European countries.

A gigantic petty-bourgeois wave has swept over everything and overwhelmed the class-conscious proletariat, not only by force of numbers but also ideologically; that is, it has infected and imbued very wide circles of workers with the petty-bourgeois political outlook.

The petty bourgeoisie are in real life dependent upon the bourgeoisie, for they live like masters and not like proletarians (from the point of view of their *place* in social production) and follow the bourgeoisie in their outlook.

An attitude of unreasoning trust in the capitalists—the worst foes of peace and socialism—characterises the politics of the *popular masses* in Russia at the present moment; this is the fruit that has *grown* with revolutionary rapidity on the social and economic soil of the most petty-bourgeois of all European countries. This is the *class* basis for the “*agreement*” between the Provisional Government and the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies (I emphasise that I am referring not so much to the formal agreement as to *actual* support, a tacit agreement, the surrender of power inspired by unreasoning trust), an agreement which has given the Guchkovs a fat piece—real power—and the Soviet merely promises and honours (for the time being), flattery, phrases, assurances, and the bowings and scrapings of the Kerenskys.

On the other side we have the inadequate numerical strength of the proletariat in Russia and its insufficient class-consciousness and organisation.

All the Narodnik parties, including the Socialist-Revolutionaries, have always been petty-bourgeois. This is also true of the party of the Organising Committee (Chkheidze, Tsereveli, etc.). The non-party revolutionaries (Steklov and others) have similarly yielded to the tide, or have not been able to stand up to it, have not had the time to do it.

THE PECULIAR NATURE OF THE TACTICS WHICH FOLLOW FROM THE ABOVE

7. For the Marxist, who must reckon with objective facts, with the masses and classes, and not with individuals and so on, the peculiar nature of the actual situation as described above must determine the peculiar nature of the tactics for the *present* moment.

This peculiarity of the situation calls, in the first place, for the "pouring of vinegar and bile into the sweet water of revolutionary-democratic phraseology" (as my fellow-member on the Central Committee of our Party, Teodorovich, so aptly put it at yesterday's session of the All-Russia Congress of Railwaymen in Petrograd). Our work must be one of criticism, of *explaining* the mistakes of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and Social-Democratic parties, of preparing and welding the elements of a *consciously* proletarian, Communist Party, and of *curing* the proletariat of the "general" petty-bourgeois intoxication.

This *seems* to be "nothing more" than propaganda work, but in reality it is most *practical revolutionary* work; for there is no advancing a revolution that has come to a standstill, that has choked itself with phrases, and that keeps "marking time", *not because* of external obstacles, *not because of the violence* of the bourgeoisie (Guchkov is still only threatening to employ violence against the soldier mass), but *because* of the unreasoning trust of the people.

Only by overcoming this unreasoning trust (and we can and should overcome it only ideologically, by comradely persuasion, by pointing to the *lessons of experience*) can we set ourselves free from the prevailing *orgy of revolutionary phrase-mongering* and really stimulate the consciousness both of the proletariat and of the mass in general, as well as their bold and determined initiative *in the localities*—the independent realisation, development and consolidation of liberties, democracy, and the principle of people's ownership of all the land.

8. The world-wide experience of bourgeois and landowner governments has evolved *two* methods of keeping the people in subjection. The first is violence. Nicholas Romanov I, nick-

named Nicholas of the Big Stick, and Nicholas II, the Bloody, demonstrated to the Russian people the maximum of what can and cannot be done in the way of these hangmen's practices. But there is another method, best developed by the British and French bourgeoisie, who "learned their lesson" in a series of great revolutions and revolutionary movements of the masses. It is the method of deception, flattery, fine phrases, promises by the million, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential.

The peculiar feature of the present situation in Russia is the transition at a dizzy speed from the first method to the second, from violent oppression of the people to *flattering* and deceiving the people by promises. Vaska the Cat listens, but goes on eating. Milyukov and Guchkov are holding power, they are protecting the profits of the capitalists, conducting an imperialist war in the interests of Russian and Anglo-French capital, and trying to get away with promises, declamation and bombastic statements in reply to the speeches of "cooks" like Chkheidze, Tsereteli and Steklov, who threaten, exhort, conjure, beseech, demand and proclaim. . . . Vaska the Cat listens, but goes on eating.

But from day to day trustful lack of reasoning and unreasoning trust will be falling away, especially among the proletarians and *poor* peasants, who are being taught by experience (by their social and economic position) to distrust the capitalists.

The leaders of the petty bourgeoisie "must" teach the people to trust the bourgeoisie. The proletarians must teach the people to distrust the bourgeoisie.

REVOLUTIONARY DEFENCISM AND ITS CLASS SIGNIFICANCE

9. *Revolutionary defencism* must be regarded as the most important, the most striking manifestation of the petty-bourgeois wave that has swept over "nearly everything". It is the worst enemy of the further progress and success of the Russian revolution.

Those who have yielded on this point and have been unable to extricate themselves are lost to the revolution. But

the masses yield in a different way from the leaders, and they extricate themselves *differently*, by a different course of development, by different means.

Revolutionary defencism is, on the one hand, a result of the deception of the masses by the bourgeoisie, a result of the trustful lack of reasoning on the part of the peasants and a section of the workers; it is, on the other, an expression of the interests and point of view of the small proprietor, who is to some extent interested in annexations and bank profits, and who "sacredly" guards the traditions of tsarism, which demoralised the Great Russians by making them do a hangman's work against the other peoples.

The bourgeoisie deceives the people by working on their noble pride in the revolution and by pretending that the *social and political* character of the war, as far as Russia is concerned, underwent a change because of this stage of the revolution, because of the substitution of the near-republic of Guchkov and Milyukov for the tsarist monarchy. And the people believed it—for a time—largely owing to age-old prejudices, which made them look upon the other peoples of Russia, i.e., the non-Great Russians, as something in the nature of a property and private estate of the Great Russians. This vile demoralisation of the Great-Russian people by tsarism which taught them to regard the other peoples as something inferior, something belonging "by right" to Great Russia, could not disappear *instantly*.

What is required of us is the *ability* to explain to the masses that the social and political character of the war is determined not by the "good will" of individuals or groups, or even of nations, but by the position of the *class* which conducts the war, by the class *policy* of which the war is a continuation, by the *ties* of capital, which is the dominant economic force in modern society, by the *imperialist character* of international capital, by Russia's dependence in finance, banking and diplomacy upon Britain, France, and so on. To explain this skilfully in a way the people would understand is *not easy*; none of us would be able to do it at once without committing errors.

But this, and only this, must be the aim or, rather, the message of our propaganda. The slightest concession to revo-

lutionary defencism is a *betrayal of socialism*, a complete renunciation of *internationalism*, no matter by what fine phrases and "practical" considerations it may be justified.

The slogan "Down with the War!" is, of course, correct. But it fails to take into account the specific nature of the tasks of the present moment and the necessity of *approaching* the broad mass of the people *in a different way*. It reminds me of the slogan "Down with the Tsar!" with which the inexperienced agitator of the "good old days" went simply and directly to the countryside—and got a beating for his pains. The mass believers in revolutionary defencism are *honest*, not in the personal, but in the class sense, i.e., they belong to *classes* (workers and the peasant poor) which *in actual fact* have nothing to gain from annexations and the subjugation of other peoples. This is nothing like the bourgeois and the "intellectual" fraternity, who know very well that you *cannot* renounce annexations without renouncing the rule of capital, and who unscrupulously deceive the people with fine phrases, with unlimited promises and endless assurances.

The rank-and-file believer in defencism regards the matter in the simple way of the man in the street: "I don't want annexations, but the Germans are 'going for' *me*, therefore I'm defending a just cause and not any kind of imperialist interests at all." To a man like this it must be explained again and again that it is not a question of his personal wishes, but of mass, *class*, political relations and conditions, of the connection between the war and the interests of capital and the international network of banks, and so forth. Only such a struggle against defencism will be serious and will promise success—perhaps not a very rapid success, but one that will be real and enduring.

HOW CAN THE WAR BE ENDED?

10. The war cannot be ended "at will". It cannot be ended by the decision of one of the belligerents. It cannot be ended by "sticking your bayonet into the ground", as one soldier, a defencist, expressed it.

The war cannot be ended by an "agreement" among the socialists of the various countries, by the "action" of the proletarians of all countries, by the "will" of the peoples, and so forth. All the phrases of this kind, which fill the articles of the defencist, semi-defencist, and semi-internationalist papers as well as innumerable resolutions, appeals, manifestos, and the resolutions of the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies—all such phrases are nothing but idle, innocent and pious wishes of the petty bourgeois. There is nothing more harmful than phrases like "ascertaining the will of the peoples for peace", like the *sequence* of revolutionary actions of the proletariat (after the Russian proletariat comes the turn of the German), etc. All this is Blancism, fond dreams, a playing at "political campaigning", and in reality just a repetition of the fable of Vaska the Cat.

The war is not a product of the evil will of rapacious capitalists, although it is undoubtedly being fought *only* in their interests and they alone are being enriched by it. The war is a product of half a century of development of world capitalism and of its billions of threads and connections. It is *impossible* to slip out of the imperialist war and achieve a democratic, non-coercive peace without overthrowing the power of capital and transferring state power to *another* class, the proletariat.

The Russian revolution of February-March 1917 was the beginning of the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war. This revolution took the *first* step towards ending the war; but it requires a *second* step, namely, the transfer of state power to the proletariat, to make the end of the war a *certainty*. This will be the beginning of a "break-through" on a world-wide scale, a break-through in the front of capitalist interests; and only by breaking through *this* front *can* the proletariat save mankind from the horrors of war and endow it with the blessings of peace.

It is directly to such a "break-through" in the front of capitalism that the Russian revolution has *already* brought the Russian proletariat by creating the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

A NEW TYPE OF STATE EMERGING FROM OUR REVOLUTION

11. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies are not understood, not only in the sense that their class significance, their role in the *Russian* revolution, is not clear to the majority. They are not understood also in the sense that they constitute a new form or rather a new *type of state*.

The most perfect, the most advanced type of bourgeois state is the *parliamentary democratic republic*: power is vested in parliament; the state machine, the apparatus and organ of administration, is of the customary kind: the standing army, the police, and the bureaucracy—which in practice is undisplaceable, is privileged and stands *above* the people.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, however, revolutionary epochs have advanced a *higher* type of democratic state, a state which in certain respects, as Engels put it, ceases to be a state, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word".⁵⁶ This is a state of the Paris Commune type, one in which a standing army and police divorced from the people are *replaced* by the direct arming of the people themselves. It is *this feature* that constitutes the very essence of the Commune, which has been so misrepresented and slandered by the bourgeois writers, and to which has been erroneously ascribed, among other things, the intention of immediately "introducing" socialism.

This is the type of state which the Russian revolution *began* to create in 1905 and in 1917. A Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and other Deputies, united in an All-Russia Constituent Assembly of people's representatives or in a Council of Soviets, etc., is what is *already being realised* in our country now, at this juncture. It is being realised by the initiative of the nation's millions, who are creating a democracy on their own, *in their own way*, without waiting until the Cadet professors draft their legislative bills for a parliamentary bourgeois republic, or until the pedants and routine-worshippers of petty-bourgeois "Social-Democracy", like Mr. Plekhanov or Kautsky, stop distorting the Marxist teaching on the state.

Marxism differs from anarchism in that it recognises the *need* for a state and for state power in the period of revolution in general, and in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism in particular.

Marxism differs from the petty-bourgeois, opportunist "Social-Democratism" of Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co. in that it recognises that what is required during these two periods is *not* a state of the usual parliamentary bourgeois republican type, but a state of the Paris Commune type.

The main distinctions between a state of the latter type and the old state are as follows.

It is quite easy (as history proves) to revert from a parliamentary bourgeois republic to a monarchy, for all the machinery of oppression—the army, the police, and the bureaucracy—is left intact. The Commune and the Soviets *smash* that machinery and do away with it.

The parliamentary bourgeois republic hampers and stifles the independent political life of the *masses*, their direct participation in the *democratic* organisation of the life of the state from the bottom up. The opposite is the case with the Soviets.

The latter reproduce the type of state which was being evolved by the Paris Commune and which Marx described as "the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour".⁵⁷

We are usually told that the Russian people are not yet prepared for the "introduction" of the Commune. This was the argument of the serf-owners when they claimed that the peasants were not prepared for emancipation. The Commune, i.e., the Soviets, does not "introduce", does not intend to "introduce", and must not introduce *any* reforms which have not absolutely matured both in economic reality and in the minds of the overwhelming majority of the people. The deeper the economic collapse and the crisis produced by the war, the more urgent becomes the need for the most perfect political form, which will *facilitate* the healing of the terrible wounds inflicted on mankind by the war. The less the organisational experience of the Russian people, the more resolutely must we *proceed* to organisational development by

the *people themselves*, and not merely by the bourgeois politicians and "well-placed" bureaucrats.

The sooner we shed the old prejudices of pseudo-Marxism, a Marxism falsified by Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co., the more actively we set about helping the people to organise Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies everywhere and immediately, and helping the latter to take life *in its entirety* under their control, and the longer Lvov and Co. delay the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the easier will it be for the people (through the medium of the Constituent Assembly, or independently of it, if Lvov delays its convocation too long) to cast their decision in favour of a republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. Errors in the new work of organisational development by the people themselves are at first inevitable; but it is better to make mistakes and go forward than to *wait* until the professors of law summoned by Mr. Lvov draft their laws for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, for the perpetuation of the parliamentary bourgeois republic and for the strangling of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

If we organise ourselves and conduct our propaganda skilfully, not only the proletarians, but nine-tenths of the peasants will be opposed to the restoration of the police, will be opposed to an undisplaceable and privileged bureaucracy and to an army divorced from the people. And that is all the new type of state stands for.

12. The substitution of a people's militia for the police is a reform that follows from the entire course of the revolution and that is now being introduced in most parts of Russia. We must explain to the people that in most of the bourgeois revolutions of the usual type, this reform was always extremely short-lived, and that the bourgeoisie—even the most democratic and republican—restored the police of the old, tsarist type, a police divorced from the people, commanded by the bourgeoisie and capable of oppressing the people in every way.

There is only one way to *prevent* the restoration of the police, and that is to create a people's militia and to fuse it with the army (the standing army to be replaced by the arming of the entire people). Service in this militia should extend to all citizens of both sexes between the ages of fifteen and

sixty-five without exception, if these tentatively suggested age limits may be taken as indicating the participation of adolescents and old people. Capitalists must pay their workers, servants, etc., for days devoted to public service in the militia. Unless women are brought to take an independent part not only in political life generally, but also in daily and universal public service, it is no use talking about full and stable democracy, let alone socialism. And such "police" functions as care of the sick and of homeless children, food inspection, etc., will never be satisfactorily discharged until women are on an equal footing with men, not merely nominally but in reality.

The tasks which the proletariat must put before the people in order to safeguard, consolidate and develop the revolution are to prevent the restoration of the police and to enlist the organisational forces of the entire people in forming a people's militia.

THE AGRARIAN AND NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

13. At the present moment we cannot say for certain whether a mighty agrarian revolution will develop in the Russian countryside in the near future. We cannot say exactly how profound the class cleavage is among the peasants, which has undoubtedly grown more profound of late as a division into agricultural labourers, wage-workers and poor peasants ("semi-proletarians"), on the one hand, and wealthy and middle peasants (capitalists and petty capitalists), on the other. Such questions will be, and can be, decided only by experience.

Being the party of the proletariat, however, we are unquestionably in duty bound not only immediately to advance an agrarian (land) programme but also to advocate practical measures which can be immediately realised *in the interests* of the peasant agrarian revolution in Russia.

We must demand the nationalisation of *all* the land, i.e., that all the land in the state should become the property of the central state power. This power must fix the size, etc., of the resettlement land fund, pass legislation for the conservation of forests, for land improvement, etc., and absolutely

prohibit any middlemen to interpose themselves between the owner of the land, i.e., the state, and the tenant, i.e., the tiller (prohibit all subletting of land). However, the *disposal* of the land, the formulation of the *local regulations* governing ownership and tenure of land, must in no case be placed in the hands of bureaucrats and officials, but wholly and exclusively in the hands of the regional and local *Soviets of Peasants' Deputies*.

In order to improve grain production techniques and increase output, and in order to develop rational cultivation on a large scale under public control, we must strive within the peasants' committees to secure the transformation of every confiscated landed estate into a large model farm controlled by the *Soviet of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies*.

In order to counteract the petty-bourgeois phrase-mongering and the policy prevailing among the Socialist-Revolutionaries, particularly the idle talk about "subsistence" standards or "labour" standards,⁵⁸ "socialisation of the land", etc., the party of the proletariat must make it clear that small-scale farming under commodity production *cannot* save mankind from poverty and oppression.

Without necessarily splitting the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies at once, the party of the proletariat must explain the need for organising separate Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and separate Soviets of deputies from the poor (semi-proletarian) peasants, or, at least, for holding regular separate conferences of deputies of *this class status* in the shape of separate groups or parties within the general Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. Otherwise all the honeyed petty-bourgeois talk of the Narodniks regarding the peasants in general will serve as a shield for the deception of the propertyless mass by the wealthy peasants, who are merely a variety of *capitalists*.

To counteract the bourgeois-liberal or purely bureaucratic sermons preached by many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who advise the peasants not to seize the landed estates and not to start the agrarian reform pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the party of the proletariat must urge the peasants to carry out the agrarian reform at once on their own, and

to confiscate the landed estates immediately, upon the decisions of the peasants' deputies in the localities.

At the same time, it is most important to insist on the necessity of *increasing* food production for the soldiers at the front and for the towns, and on the absolute inadmissibility of causing any damage or injury to livestock, implements, machinery, buildings, etc.

14. As regards the national question, the proletarian party first of all must advocate the proclamation and immediate realisation of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or forcibly kept within the boundaries of, the state, i.e., annexed.

All statements, declarations and manifestos concerning renunciation of annexations that are not accompanied by the realisation of the right of secession in practice, are nothing but bourgeois deception of the people, or else petty-bourgeois pious wishes.

The proletarian party strives to create as large a state as possible, for this is to the advantage of the working people; it strives to *draw* nations *closer together*, and bring about their *further fusion*; but it desires to achieve this aim not by violence, but exclusively through a free fraternal union of the workers and the working people of all nations.

The more democratic the Russian republic, and the more successfully it organises itself into a Republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the more powerful will be the force of *voluntary* attraction to such a republic for the working people of *all* nations.

Complete freedom of secession, the broadest local (and national) autonomy, and elaborate guarantees of the rights of national minorities—this is the programme of the revolutionary proletariat.

NATIONALISATION OF THE BANKS AND CAPITALIST SYNDICATES

15. Under no circumstances can the party of the proletariat set itself the aim of "introducing" socialism in a country of

small peasants so long as the overwhelming majority of the population has not come to realise the need for a socialist revolution.

But only bourgeois sophists, hiding behind "near-Marxist" catchwords, can deduce from this truth a justification of the policy of postponing immediate revolutionary measures, the time for which is fully ripe; measures which *have been frequently resorted to during the war by a number of bourgeois states*, and which are absolutely indispensable in order to combat impending total economic disorganisation and famine.

Such measures as the nationalisation of the land, of all the banks and capitalist syndicates, or, at least, the *immediate* establishment of the *control* of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, etc., over them—measures which do not in any way constitute the "introduction" of socialism—must be absolutely insisted on, and, whenever possible, carried out in a revolutionary way. Without such measures, which are only steps towards socialism, and which are perfectly feasible economically, it will be impossible to heal the wounds caused by the war and to avert the impending collapse; and the party of the revolutionary proletariat will never hesitate to lay hands on the fabulous profits of the capitalists and bankers, who are enriching themselves on the war in a particularly scandalous manner.

THE SITUATION WITHIN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

16. The international obligations of the working class of Russia are precisely now coming to the forefront with particular force.

Only lazy people do not swear by internationalism these days. Even the chauvinist defencists, even Plekhanov and Potresov, even Kerensky, call themselves internationalists. It becomes the duty of the proletarian party all the more urgently, therefore, to clearly, precisely and definitely counterpose internationalism in deed to internationalism in word.

Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to fix a "sequence" of action by the revolutionary

proletariat in the various belligerent countries, laborious efforts to conclude "agreements" between the socialists of the belligerent countries *on the question* of the revolutionary struggle, all the fuss over the summoning of socialist congresses *for the purpose* of a peace campaign, etc., etc.,—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, attempts, and plans may be—amount, as far as their *objective* significance is concerned, to mere phrase-mongering, and *at best* are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the *deception* of the people by the chauvinists. The *French* social-chauvinists, who are the most adroit and accomplished in methods of parliamentary hocus-pocus, have long since broken the record for ranting and resonant pacifist and internationalist phrases *coupled with* the incredibly brazen betrayal of socialism and the International,⁵⁹ the acceptance of posts in governments which conduct the imperialist war, the voting of credits *or loans* (as Chkheidze, Skobelev, Tsereteli and Steklov have been doing recently in Russia), opposition to the revolutionary struggle in *their own country*, etc., etc.

Good people often forget the brutal and savage setting of the imperialist world war. This setting does not tolerate phrases, and mocks at innocent and pious wishes.

There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) *this struggle*, this, *and only this*, line, in *every* country without exception.

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.⁶⁰

During the two odd years of the war the international socialist and working-class movement in *every* country has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores *reality* and refuses to recognise the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight consistently for the trend that is really internationalist, is doomed to impotence, helplessness and errors.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in word and chauvinists in deed, people who recognise "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war (and above all in the present imperialist war).

These people are our *class* enemies. They have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

They are the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in *all* countries—Plekhanov and Co. in Russia, the Scheidemanns in Germany, Renaudel, Guesde and Sembat in France, Bissolati and Co. in Italy, Hyndman, the Fabians and the Labourites (the leaders of the "Labour Party") in Britain, Branting and Co. in Sweden, Troelstra and his party in Holland, Stauning and his party in Denmark, Victor Berger and the other "defenders of the fatherland" in America, and so forth.

2) The second trend, known as the "Centre", consists of people who vacillate between the social-chauvinists and the true internationalists.

The "Centre" all vow and declare that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for bringing every kind of "pressure" to bear upon the governments, for "demanding" in every way that their own government should "ascertain the will of the people for peace", that they are for all sorts of peace campaigns, for peace without annexations, etc., etc.—*and for peace with the social-chauvinists*. The "Centre" is for "unity", the Centre is opposed to a split.

The "Centre" is a realm of honeyed petty-bourgeois phrases, of internationalism in word and cowardly opportunism and fawning on the social-chauvinists in deed.

The crux of the matter is that the "Centre" is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one's own government; it does not preach revolution; it does not carry on a whole-hearted revolutionary struggle; and in order to evade such a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra-"Marxist"-sounding *excuses*.

The social-chauvinists are our *class* enemies, they are *bourgeois* within the working-class movement. They represent a stratum, or groups, or sections of the working class which *objectively* have been bribed by the bourgeoisie (by better wages, positions of honour, etc.), and which help *their own* bourgeoisie to plunder and oppress small and weak peoples and to fight for the division of the capitalist spoils.

The "Centre" consists of routine-worshippers, eroded by the canker of legality, corrupted by the parliamentary

atmosphere, etc., bureaucrats accustomed to snug positions and soft jobs. Historically and economically speaking, they are not a *separate* stratum but represent only a *transition* from a past phase of the working-class movement—the phase between 1871 and 1914, which gave much that is valuable to the proletariat, particularly in the indispensable art of slow, sustained and systematic organisational work on a large and very large scale—to a new *phase* that became *objectively* essential with the outbreak of the first imperialist world war, which inaugurated *the era of social revolution*.

The chief leader and spokesman of the "Centre" is Karl Kautsky, the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889-1914), since August 1914 a model of utter bankruptcy as a Marxist, the embodiment of unheard-of spinelessness, and the most wretched vacillations and betrayals. This "Centrist" trend includes Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and the so-called workers' or labour group in the Reichstag; in France it includes Longuet, Pressemane and the so-called minoritaires⁶¹ (Mensheviks) in general; in Britain, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and many other leaders of the Independent Labour Party,⁶² and some leaders of the British Socialist Party⁶³; Morris Hillquit and many others in the United States; Turati, Trèves, Modigliani and others in Italy; Robert Grimm and others in Switzerland; Victor Adler and Co. in Austria; the party of the Organising Committee, Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Tsereteli and others in Russia, and so forth.

Naturally, at times individuals unconsciously drift from the social-chauvinist to the "Centrist" position, and vice versa. Every Marxist knows that classes are distinct, even though individuals may move freely from one class to another; similarly, *trends* in political life are distinct in spite of the fact that individuals may change freely from one trend to another, and in spite of all attempts and efforts to *amalgamate* trends.

3) The third trend, that of the true internationalists, is best represented by the "Zimmerwald Left". (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto of September 1915, to enable the reader to learn of the inception of this trend at first hand.)

Its distinctive feature is its complete break with both social-chauvinism and "Centrism", and its gallant revolutionary struggle against *its own* imperialist government and *its own* imperialist bourgeoisie. Its principle is: "Our chief enemy is at home." It wages a ruthless struggle against honeyed social-pacifist phrases (a social-pacifist is a socialist in word and a bourgeois pacifist in deed; bourgeois pacifists dream of an everlasting peace *without* the overthrow of the yoke and domination of capital) and against all *subterfuges* employed to deny the possibility, or the appropriateness, or the timeliness of a proletarian revolutionary struggle and of a proletarian socialist revolution *in connection* with the present war.

The most outstanding representative of this trend in Germany is the Spartacus group or the *Internationale* group, to which Karl Liebknecht belongs. Karl Liebknecht is a most celebrated representative of this trend and of the *new*, and genuine, proletarian International.

Karl Liebknecht called upon the workers and soldiers of Germany to *turn their guns* against *their own* government. Karl Liebknecht did that openly from the rostrum of parliament (the Reichstag). He then went to a demonstration in Potsdamer Platz, one of the largest public squares in Berlin, with illegally printed leaflets proclaiming the slogan "Down with the Government!" He was arrested and sentenced to *hard labour*. He is now serving his term in a German convict prison, like *hundreds*, if not thousands, of other *true* German socialists who have been imprisoned for their anti-war activities.

Karl Liebknecht in his speeches and letters mercilessly attacked not only *his own* Plekhanovs and Potresovs (Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co.), *but also his own Centrists*, his own Chkheidzes and Tseretelis (Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and Co.).

Karl Liebknecht and his friend Otto Rühle, two out of one hundred and ten deputies, violated discipline, destroyed the "unity" with the "Centre" and the chauvinists, and *went against all of them*. Liebknecht *alone* represents socialism, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution. *All* the rest of German Social-Democracy, to quote the apt words of Rosa

Luxemburg (also a member and one of the leaders of the Spartacus group), is a "*stinking corpse*".

Another group of true internationalists in Germany is that of the Bremen paper *Arbeiterpolitik*.

Closest to the internationalists in deed are: in France, Lorient and his friends (Bourderon and Merrheim have slid down to social-pacifism), as well as the Frenchman Henri Guilbeaux, who publishes in Geneva the journal *Demain*⁶⁴; in Britain, the newspaper *The Trade Unionist*,⁶⁵ and some of the members of the British Socialist Party and of the Independent Labour Party (for instance, Russel Williams, who openly called for a break with the leaders who have *betrayed* socialism), the Scottish socialist schoolteacher *MacLean*, who was sentenced to *hard labour* by the bourgeois government of Britain for his revolutionary fight against the war, and hundreds of British socialists who are in jail for the same offence. They, and they alone, are internationalists *in deed*. In the United States, the Socialist Labour Party⁶⁶ and those within the opportunist Socialist Party,⁶⁷ who in January 1917 began publication of the paper, *The Internationalist*⁶⁸; in Holland, the Party of the "Tribunists" which publishes the paper *De Tribune* (Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Wijnkoop, and Henriette Roland-Holst, who, although Centrist at Zimmerwald, has now joined our ranks)⁶⁹; in Sweden, the Party of the Young, or the Left,⁷⁰ led by Lindhagen, Ture Nerman, Carleson, Ström and Z. Höglund, who at Zimmerwald was personally active in the organisation of the "Zimmerwald Left", and who is now in prison for his revolutionary fight against the war; in Denmark, Trier and his friends who have left the now purely *bourgeois* "Social-Democratic" Party of Denmark, headed by the *Minister* Stauning; in Bulgaria, the "Tesnyaki"⁷¹; in Italy, the nearest are Constantino Lazzari, secretary of the party, and Serrati, editor of the central organ, *Avanti!*; in Poland, Radek, Hanecki and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Regional Executive", and Rosa Luxemburg, Tyszka and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Chief Executive"⁷²; in Switzerland, those of the Left who drew up the argument for the "referendum" (January 1917) in order to fight the social-chauvinists and the "Centre" in *their own* country and who

at the Zurich Cantonal Socialist Convention, held at Töss on February 11, 1917, moved a consistently revolutionary resolution against the war; in Austria, the young Left-wing friends of Friedrich Adler, who acted partly through the Karl Marx Club in Vienna, now closed by the arch-reactionary Austrian Government, which is ruining Adler's life for his heroic though ill-considered shooting at a minister, and so on.

It is not a question of shades of opinion, which certainly exist even among the Lefts. It is a question of *trend*. The thing is that it is not easy to be an internationalist in deed during a terrible imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people *alone* that the future of socialism depends; they *alone* are the *leaders of the people*, and not their corrupters.

The distinction between the reformists and the revolutionaries, among the Social-Democrats, and socialists generally, was objectively bound to undergo a change under the conditions of the imperialist war. Those who confine themselves to "demanding" that the bourgeois governments should conclude peace or "ascertain the will of the peoples for peace", etc., are *actually* slipping into reforms. For, objectively, *the problem of the war* can be solved only in a *revolutionary way*.

There is no possibility of this war ending in a democratic, non-coercive peace or of the people being relieved of the burden of *billions* paid in interest to the capitalists, who have made fortunes out of the war, except through a revolution of the proletariat.

The most varied reforms can and must be demanded of the bourgeois governments, but one cannot, without sinking to Manilovism and reformism, demand that people and classes entangled by the thousands of threads of imperialist capital should *tear* those threads. And unless they are torn, all talk of a war against war is idle and deceitful prattle.

The "Kautskyites", the "Centre", are revolutionaries in word and reformists in deed, they are internationalists in word and accomplices of the social-chauvinists in deed.

**THE COLLAPSE OF THE ZIMMERWALD INTERNATIONAL.—
THE NEED FOR FOUNDING A THIRD INTERNATIONAL**

17. From the very outset, the Zimmerwald International⁷³ adopted a vacillating, "Kautskyite", "Centrist" position, which immediately compelled the *Zimmerwald Left* to dissociate itself, to separate itself from the rest, and to issue *its own* manifesto (published in Switzerland in Russian, German and French).

The chief shortcoming of the Zimmerwald International, and the cause of its *collapse* (for politically and ideologically it has already collapsed), was its vacillation and indecision on such a momentous issue of *crucial* practical significance as that of breaking completely with social-chauvinism and the old social-chauvinist International, headed by Vandervelde and Huysmans at The Hague (Holland), etc.

It is not as yet known in Russia that the Zimmerwald majority are *nothing but Kautskyites*. Yet this is the fundamental fact, one which cannot be ignored, and which is now generally known in Western Europe. Even that chauvinist, that extreme German chauvinist, Heilmann, editor of the ultra-chauvinistic *Chemnitzer Volksstimme* and contributor to Parvus's ultra-chauvinistic *Glocke*⁷⁴ (a "Social-Democrat", of course, and an ardent partisan of Social-Democratic "unity"), was compelled to acknowledge in the press that the Centre, or "Kautskyism", and the *Zimmerwald majority* were one and the same thing.

This fact was definitely established at the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917. Although social-pacifism was condemned by the Kienthal Manifesto,⁷⁵ the *whole* Zimmerwald Right, the *entire* Zimmerwald majority, sank to social-pacifism: Kautsky and Co. in a series of utterances in January and February 1917; Bourderon and Merrheim in France, who cast their votes *in unanimity* with the social-chauvinists for the pacifist resolutions of the Socialist Party (December 1916) and of the Confédération Générale du Travail (the national organisation of the French trade unions, also in December 1916); Turati and Co. in Italy, where the entire party took up a social-pacifist position, while Turati himself, in a speech delivered on December 17, 1916, "slipped" (not by accident,

of course) into *nationalist* phrases whitewashing the imperialist war.

In January 1917, the chairman of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, Robert Grimm, joined the social-chauvinists in *his own* party (Greulich, Pflüger, Gustav Müller and others) *against* the internationalists in deed.

At two conferences of *Zimmerwaldists* from various countries in January and February 1917, this equivocal, double-faced behaviour of the Zimmerwald majority was formally stigmatised by the Left internationalists of several countries: by Münzenberg, secretary of the international youth organisation and editor of the excellent internationalist publication *Die Jugendinternationale*⁷⁶; by Zinoviev, representative of the Central Committee of our Party; by K. Radek of the Polish Social-Democratic Party (the "Regional Executive"), and by Hartstein, a German Social-Democrat and member of the Spartacus group.

Much is given to the Russian proletariat; nowhere in the world has the working class yet succeeded in developing so much revolutionary energy as in Russia. But to whom much is given, of him much is required.

The Zimmerwald bog can no longer be tolerated. We must not, for the sake of the Zimmerwald "Kautskyites", continue the semi-alliance with the chauvinist International of the Plekhanovs and Scheidemanns. We must break with this International immediately. We must remain in Zimmerwald *only* for purposes of information.

It is we who must found, and right now, without delay, a *new*, revolutionary, proletarian International, or rather, we must not fear to acknowledge publicly that this new International is *already established* and operating.

This is the International of those "internationalists in deed" whom I precisely listed above. They and they alone are representatives of the revolutionary, internationalist mass, and not their corrupters.

And if socialists of *that type* are few, let every Russian worker ask himself whether there were many really class-conscious revolutionaries in Russia *on the eve* of the February-March revolution of 1917.

It is not a question of numbers, but of giving correct expres-

sion to the ideas and policies of the truly revolutionary proletariat. The thing is not to "proclaim" internationalism, but to be able to be an internationalist in deed, even when times are most trying.

Let us not deceive ourselves with hopes of agreements and international congresses. As long as the imperialist war is on, international intercourse is held in the iron vise of the military dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie. If even the "republican" Milyukov, who is obliged to tolerate the parallel government of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, *did not allow Fritz Platten*, the Swiss socialist, secretary of the party, an internationalist and participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, to enter Russia in April 1917, in spite of the fact that Platten has a Russian wife and was on his way to visit his wife's relatives, and in spite of the fact that he had taken part in the revolution of 1905 in Riga, for which he had been confined in a Russian prison, had given bail to the tsarist government for his release and wished to recover that bail—if the "republican" Milyukov could *do* such a thing in April 1917 in Russia, one can judge what value can be put on the promises and assurances, the phrases and declarations of the bourgeoisie on the subject of peace without annexations, and so on.

And the arrest of Trotsky by the British Government? And the refusal to allow Martov to leave Switzerland, and the attempt to lure him to Britain, where Trotsky's fate awaits him?

Let us harbour no illusions. We must not deceive ourselves.

To "wait" for international congresses or conferences is simply to *betray* internationalism, since it has been shown that even from Stockholm neither socialists loyal to internationalism *nor even their letters* are allowed to come here, although this is quite possible and although a ferocious military censorship exists.

Our Party must not "wait", but must immediately *found* a Third International. Hundreds of socialists imprisoned in Germany and Britain will then heave a sigh of relief, thousands and thousands of German workers who are now holding strikes and demonstrations that are frightening that scoundrel and brigand, Wilhelm, will learn from *illegal* leaflets of our

decision, of our fraternal confidence in Karl Liebknecht, and in him alone, of *our* decision to fight "revolutionary defenceism" *even now*; they will read this and be strengthened in their revolutionary internationalism.

To whom much is given, of him much is required. No other country in the world is as free as Russia is *now*. Let us make use of this freedom, not to advocate support for the bourgeoisie, or bourgeois "revolutionary defenceism", but in a bold, honest, proletarian, Liebknecht way to *found the Third International*, an International uncompromisingly hostile both to the social-chauvinist traitors and to the vacillating "Centrists".

18. After what has been said, there is no need to waste many words explaining that the amalgamation of Social-Democrats in Russia is out of the question.

It is better to remain with one friend only, like Liebknecht, and *that means remaining with the revolutionary proletariat*, than to entertain even for a moment any thought of amalgamation with the party of the Organising Committee, with Chkhaidze and Tsereteli, who can tolerate a bloc with Potresov in *Rabochaya Gazeta*,⁷⁷ who voted for the loan in the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies,⁷⁸ and who have sunk to "defenceism".

Let the dead bury their dead.

Whoever wants to *help* the waverers must first stop wavering himself.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE NAME OF OUR PARTY—ONE THAT WILL BE CORRECT SCIENTIFICALLY AND HELP TO CLARIFY THE MIND OF THE PROLETARIAT POLITICALLY?

19. I now come to the final point, the name of our Party. We must call ourselves the *Communist Party*—just as Marx and Engels called themselves.

We must repeat that we are Marxists and that we take as our basis the *Communist Manifesto*, which has been distorted and betrayed by the Social-Democrats on two main points: (1) the working men have no country: "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war is a betrayal of socialism;

and (2) the Marxist doctrine of the state has been distorted by the Second International.

The name "Social-Democracy" is *scientifically* incorrect, as Marx frequently pointed out, in particular, in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1875, and as Engels reaffirmed in a more popular form in 1894.⁷⁹ From capitalism mankind can pass directly only to socialism, i.e., to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual. Our Party looks farther ahead: socialism must inevitably evolve gradually into communism, upon the banner of which is inscribed the motto, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs".

That is my first argument.

Here is the second: the second part of the name of our Party (Social-*Democrats*) is also scientifically incorrect. Democracy is a form of *state*, whereas we Marxists are opposed to *every kind* of state.

The leaders of the Second International (1889-1914), Plekhanov, Kautsky and their like, have vulgarised and distorted Marxism.

Marxism differs from anarchism in that it recognises *the need for a state* for the purpose of the transition to socialism; but (and here is where we differ from Kautsky and Co.) *not a state of the type* of the usual parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republic, but a state like the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Soviets of Workers' Deputies of 1905 and 1917.

My third argument: *living reality*, the revolution, has *already actually* established in our country, albeit in a weak and embryonic form, precisely this new type of "state", which is not a state in the proper sense of the word.

This is *already* a matter of the practical action of the people, and not merely a theory of the leaders.

The state in the proper sense of the term is domination over the people by contingents of armed men divorced from the people.

Our *emergent*, new state is also a state, for we too need contingents of armed men, we too need the *strictest* order, and must *ruthlessly* crush by force all attempts at either a tsarist or a Guchkov-bourgeois counter-revolution.

But our *emergent*, new state is *no longer* a state in the proper sense of the term, for in some parts of Russia these contingents of armed men are *the masses themselves*, the entire people, and not certain privileged persons placed over the people, and divorced from the people, and for all practical purposes undisplaceable.

We must look forward, and not backward to the usual bourgeois type of democracy, which consolidated the rule of the bourgeoisie with the aid of the old, *monarchist* organs of administration, the police, the army and the bureaucracy.

We must look forward to the emergent new democracy, which is already ceasing to be a democracy, for democracy means the domination of the people, and the armed people cannot dominate themselves.

The term democracy is not only scientifically incorrect when applied to a Communist Party; it has now, since March 1917, simply become *blinkers* put on the eyes of the revolutionary people and *preventing* them from boldly and freely, on their own initiative, building up the new: the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and all other Deputies, as *the sole power* in the "state" and as the harbinger of the "withering away" of the state *in every form*.

My fourth argument: we must reckon with the actual situation in which socialism finds itself internationally.

It is not what it was during the years 1871 to 1914, when Marx and Engels knowingly put up with the inaccurate, opportunist term "Social-Democracy". For *in those days*, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history made slow organisational and educational work the task of the day. Nothing else was possible. The anarchists were then (as they are now) fundamentally wrong not only theoretically, but also economically and politically. The anarchists misjudged the character of the times, for they failed to understand the world situation: the worker of Britain corrupted by imperialist profits, the Commune defeated in Paris, the recent (1871) triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany, the age-long sleep of semi-feudal Russia.

Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately; they understood the international situation; they understood that the

approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be *slow*.

We, in our turn, must also understand the specific features and tasks of the new era. Let us not imitate those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said: "I have sown dragon's teeth and harvested fleas."⁸⁰

The objective inevitability of capitalism which grew into imperialism brought about the imperialist war. The war has brought mankind to the *brink of a precipice*, to the brink of the destruction of civilisation, of the brutalisation and destruction of more millions, countless millions, of human beings.

The *only* way out is through a proletarian revolution.

At the very moment when such a revolution is beginning, when it is taking its first hesitant, groping steps, steps betraying too great a confidence in the bourgeoisie, at such a moment the majority (that is the truth, that is a fact) of the "Social-Democratic" leaders, of the "Social-Democratic" parliamentarians, of the "Social-Democratic" newspapers—and these are precisely the *organs* that influence the people—have *deserted* socialism, have *betrayed* socialism and have gone over to the side of "their own" national bourgeoisie.

The people have been confused, led astray and deceived by *these* leaders.

And we shall aid and abet that deception if we retain the old and out-of-date Party name, which is as decayed as the Second International!

Granted that "many" workers *understand* Social-Democracy in an honest way; but it is time to learn how to distinguish the subjective from the objective.

Subjectively, such Social-Democratic workers are most loyal leaders of the proletarians.

Objectively, however, the world situation is such that the old name of our Party *makes it easier* to fool the people and *impedes* the onward march; for at every step, in every paper, in every parliamentary group, the masses see *leaders*, i.e., people whose voices carry farthest and whose actions are most conspicuous; yet they are all "would-be Social-Democrats", they are all "for unity" with the betrayers of socialism, with the social-chauvinists; and they are all presenting for payment the old bills issued by "Social-Democracy"....

And what are the arguments against? . . . We'll be confused with the Anarchist-Communists, they say. . . .

Why are we not afraid of being confused with the Social-Nationalists, the Social-Liberals, or the Radical-Socialists, the foremost bourgeois party in the French Republic and the most adroit in the bourgeois deception of the people? . . . We are told: The people are used to it, the workers have come to "love" *their* Social-Democratic Party.

That is the only argument. But it is an argument that dismisses the science of Marxism, the tasks of the morrow in the revolution, the objective position of world socialism, the shameful collapse of the Second International, and the harm done to the practical cause by the packs of "would-be Social-Democrats" who surround the proletarians.

It is an argument of routinism, an argument of inertia, an argument of stagnation.

But we are out to rebuild the world. We are out to put an end to the imperialist world war into which hundreds of millions of people have been drawn and in which the interests of billions and billions of capital are involved, a war which cannot end in a truly democratic peace without the greatest proletarian revolution in the history of mankind.

Yet we are afraid of our own selves. We are loth to cast off the "dear old" soiled shirt. . . .

But it is time to cast off the soiled shirt and to put on clean linen.

Petrograd, April 10, 1917

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Signed: *N. Lenin*

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POLITICAL PARTIES IN RUSSIA AND THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This pamphlet was written at the beginning of April 1917, before the coalition cabinet was formed.⁸¹ Since then much water has flown under the bridge, but the principal characteristics of the major political parties have held true in the course of all subsequent stages of the revolution—both during the coalition cabinet, which came into being on May 6, 1917, during the union between the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in June (and July) 1917 against the Bolsheviks, during the Kornilov events,⁸² and during the October Revolution of 1917 and after it.

The correctness of the characteristic given to the principal parties and their *class foundations* has been borne out by the whole course of the Russian revolution. Today the progress of the revolution in Western Europe shows that there, too, the line-up of the principal parties is the same. The role of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries is being played by the social-chauvinists of all countries (socialists in word and chauvinists in deed) as well as by the Kautskyites in Germany, the Longuetists in France, and so on.

N. Lenin

Moscow, October 22, 1918

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The following is an attempt to formulate, first, the more important and then the less important questions and answers characterising the present political situation in Russia and the way it is understood by the various parties.

QUESTIONS:

1) What Are the Chief Political Party Groupings in Russia?

ANSWERS:

A. (to the right of the C.D.). Parties and groups to the right of the Constitutional-Democrats.

B. (C.D.). The Constitutional-Democratic Party (Cadets, or the people's freedom party) and kindred groups.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). The Social-Democrats, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and kindred groups.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). The party which properly should be called the *Communist Party*, but which at present is named the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party united under the Central Committee or, popularly, the "Bolsheviks".

2) What Classes Do These Parties Represent? What Class Standpoint Do They Express?

A. (to the right of the C.D.). The feudalist landowners and the most backward sections of the bourgeoisie (capitalists).

B. (C.D.). The bourgeoisie as a whole, that is, the capitalist class, and the landowners who have become bourgeois, i.e., who have become capitalists.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Small proprietors, small and middle

peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, and that section of the workers which has come under the influence of the bourgeoisie.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Class-conscious proletarians, wage-workers and the poor peasantry (semi-proletarians) standing close to them.

3) What Is Their Attitude Towards Socialism?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Decidedly hostile, since it threatens the profits of the capitalists and landowners.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). For socialism, but it is too early to think of it or to take any immediate practical steps for its realisation.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). For socialism. The Soviets must immediately take all possible practicable steps for its realisation.*

4) What Form of Government Do They Want at Present?

A. (to the right of the C.D.). A constitutional monarchy, the absolute power of the bureaucracy and the police.

B.(C.D.). A bourgeois parliamentary republic, i.e., the consolidation of the rule of the capitalists, while retaining the old bureaucracy and the police.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). A bourgeois parliamentary republic, with reforms for the workers and peasants.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). A republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and other Deputies. Abolition of the standing army and the police, who are to be replaced by the arming of the whole people; officials to be not only elective, but also displaceable; their pay not to exceed that of a competent worker.

5) What Is Their Attitude Towards Restoration of the Romanov Monarchy?

A. (to the right of the C.D.). They are for it, but act covertly and cautiously, for they are afraid of the people.

* For the nature of these steps, see questions 20 and 22.

B. (C.D.). When the Guchkovs seemed to be a power, the Cadets were for putting a brother or the son of Nicholas on the throne; but when the people began to seem a power, the Cadets became anti-monarchist.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). and D. ("Bolsheviks"). Decidedly opposed to restoration of the monarchy in any form.

6) What Is Their Attitude Towards the Seizure of Power? What Do They Regard As Order, and What As Anarchy?

A. (to the right of the C.D.). If a tsar or some gallant general seizes power, that is God-given, that is order. All else is anarchy.

B. (C.D.). If the capitalists seize power, even by force, that is order; to seize power against the capitalists would be anarchy.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). If the Soviets alone seize all the power, that means a threat of anarchy. Let the capitalists keep the power for the time being, and the Soviets keep the "Contact Commission".

D. ("Bolsheviks"). All power must be in the hands of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', Agricultural Labourers' and other Deputies. All propaganda, agitation and the organisation of the millions must immediately be *directed* towards this end.*

7) Should the Provisional Government Be Supported?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Unquestionably, since it is the only government capable at this moment of safeguarding the interests of the capitalists.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). It should, but on condition that it carries out its agreement with the Soviet and attends the meetings of the Contact Commission.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). No; let the capitalists support it. Our job is to *prepare* the people for full and undivided power wielded by the Soviets.

* Anarchy is the complete negation of state power, whereas the Soviets are *themselves* a state power.

8) For Undivided Power or Dual Power?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). For the undivided power of the capitalists and landowners.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). For dual power. The Soviets to exercise "control" over the Provisional Government. It is bad to reflect whether control can be effective without power.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). For the undivided power of the Soviets from the bottom up all over the country.

9) Should a Constituent Assembly Be Convened?

A. (to the right of the C.D.). No, for it might prejudice the landowners. You never know—the peasants in the Constituent Assembly may decide that the landowners ought to have their estates taken away from them.

B. (C.D.). Yes, but without fixing a date. As much time as possible should be spent consulting professors of law; first, because, as Bebel said, jurists are the most reactionary people in the world; and, second, because the experience of all revolutions has shown that the cause of popular freedom is lost when it is entrusted to professors.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Yes, and as quickly as possible. A date must be fixed; we have already said so two hundred times at the meetings of the Contact Commission, and shall say so again tomorrow, for the last and two-hundred-and-first time.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Yes, and as soon as possible. But there is only one way to assure its convocation and success, and that is by increasing the number and *strength* of the Soviets and organising and *arming* the working-class masses. That is the only guarantee.

10) Does the State Need the Usual Type of Police and a Standing Army?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). It certainly does, for they are the only firm guarantee of the rule of the capitalists; in case of need, as the experience of all countries

has shown, the return from a republic to a monarchy is thus greatly facilitated.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). On the one hand, they are perhaps not necessary. On the other hand, is not so radical a change premature? However, we shall raise the matter in the Contact Commission.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). It definitely does not. The arming of the entire people must be proceeded with everywhere immediately and unreservedly, and they must be merged with the militia and the army. The capitalists must pay the workers for days served in the militia.

11) Does the State Need a Bureaucracy of the Usual Type?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Most decidedly. Nine-tenths of them are the sons and brothers of landowners and capitalists. They must continue to remain a privileged and, in practice, permanent body of people.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). It is hardly fitting to raise so hastily a question that was raised practically by the Paris Commune.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). It certainly does not. All officials and all and every kind of deputy must not only be elective, but displaceable at any moment. Their pay must not exceed that of a competent worker. They must be replaced (gradually) by the people's militia and its detachments.

12) Should Officers Be Elected by the Soldiers?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). No. That would be detrimental to the landowners and capitalists. If the soldiers cannot be pacified otherwise, they must be temporarily promised this reform, but it must be withdrawn at the earliest possible moment.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). *Yes, they should.*

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Not only must they be elected, but every step of every officer and general must be supervised by persons specially elected for the purpose by the soldiers.

13) Is It Desirable for the Soldiers, on Their Own Decision, to Displace Their Superiors?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). It is distinctly harmful. Guchkov has already forbidden it. He has already threatened to use force. Guchkov must be supported.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). It is. But it is not clear whether they should be replaced before the matter is taken up with the Contact Commission, or vice versa.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). It is desirable and essential in every way. The soldiers will obey and *respect* only elected authorities.

14) For or Against the Present War?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Decidedly for, because it yields the capitalists untold profits and promises to consolidate their rule by disuniting the workers and setting them against one another. We shall fool the workers by calling the war a war for national defence, the real object of which is to dethrone Wilhelm.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). In general we are opposed to imperialist wars, but we are willing to be fooled, and are prepared to call the support given to the imperialist war waged by the imperialist government of Guchkov, Milyukov and Co. "revolutionary defencism".

D. ("Bolsheviks"). We are decidedly against all imperialist wars and *all* bourgeois governments waging such wars, including our own Provisional Government; we are decidedly against "revolutionary defencism" in Russia.

15) For or Against the Predatory International Treaties Between the Tsar, Great Britain, France, etc. (For the Subjugation of Persia, the Partition of China, Turkey, Austria, etc.)?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Absolutely and entirely *for*. At the same time, we must not publish these treaties, both because Anglo-French imperialist capital and its governments will not permit it, and because Russian capital cannot afford to reveal its shady affairs to the public.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Against, but we still hope that with the aid of the Contact Commission and a series of "campaigns" among the masses, it may be possible to "influence" the capitalist government.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Against. The whole point is to enlighten the masses as to the utter hopelessness of expecting anything in this respect from capitalist governments, and as to the necessity of the power being transferred to the proletariat and the poor peasants.

16) For or Against Annexations?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). If it is a question of annexations by the German capitalists and their robber chieftain, Wilhelm, we are against. If by the British, we are not against, for they are "our" Allies. If by our capitalists, who are forcibly keeping within the boundaries of Russia the peoples who were oppressed by the tsar, we are *in favour*; we do *not* call that annexation.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Against annexations, but we still hope it will be possible to secure even from the capitalist government a promise to renounce annexations.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Against annexations. All promises on the part of capitalist governments to renounce annexations are a sheer fraud. There is only one method of exposing it, namely, to demand the liberation of the peoples oppressed by *their own* capitalists.

17) For or Against the Liberty Loan?⁸³

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Decidedly for, since it facilitates the conduct of the imperialist war, that is, a war to *determine* which group of capitalists shall rule the world.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). *For*, since the incorrect stand of "revolutionary defencism" forces us into this obvious departure from internationalism.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Against, since the war remains an imperialist war, waged by the capitalists in alliance with the capitalists and in the interests of the capitalists.

18) For or Against the Capitalist Governments Ascertaining the Peoples' Will to Peace?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). For, since the experience of the French republican social-chauvinists was excellent proof that the people can be fooled in this way; we can say anything we like, but in practice we shall keep the spoils seized from the Germans (their colonies), while depriving the German robbers of the spoils *they* have seized.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). For, since we have not yet relinquished a good many of the unfounded hopes placed by the petty bourgeoisie in the capitalists.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Against, since the class-conscious workers place *no hopes whatever* in the capitalists, and it is our task to open the eyes of the masses to the futility of such hopes.

19) Must All Monarchies Be Abolished?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B.(C.D.). No; the British, Italian and Allied monarchies generally must not be abolished, but only the German, Austrian, Turkish, and Bulgarian, since victory over them will multiply our profits.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). A certain "sequence" must be observed, and in any case we should begin with Wilhelm; as to the Allied monarchies, we had perhaps better wait a bit.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). No sequence can be established for revolutions. We must help *only* the revolutionaries *in deed* to abolish *all* monarchies in all countries without exception.

20) Shall the Peasants Take All the Landed Estates Immediately?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). By no means. We must wait for the Constituent Assembly. Shingaryov has already explained that when the capitalists seize power from the tsar, that is a great and glorious revolution; but when the peasants take the land away from the landowners, that is

arbitrary action. Conciliation commissions must be appointed on which landowners and peasants shall be equally represented, while the chairmen shall be officials, that is, people drawn from among the capitalists and landowners.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Better the peasants waited for the Constituent Assembly.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). All the land must be taken over immediately. Order must be strictly maintained by the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. More grain and meat must be produced, and the soldiers better fed. Injury and damage to livestock, implements, etc., must in no case be permitted.

21) Can We Leave Land Disposal and All Rural Affairs in the Hands of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies Alone?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). The landowners and capitalists are generally opposed to full and undivided power being vested in the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies in the countryside; but if these Soviets are unavoidable, then we had better confine ourselves to them alone, for the rich peasants are also capitalists.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). For the present, perhaps, yes, although Social-Democrats "in principle" do not deny the necessity of a separate organisation for the agricultural wage-workers.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). We cannot confine ourselves to the general Soviets of Peasants' Deputies alone, for the wealthy peasants are also capitalists and are always liable to wrong or cheat the agricultural labourers, day-labourers, and poor peasants. Therefore separate organisations for these groups of the rural population must be set up immediately both within the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and as separate Soviets of deputies from the agricultural labourers.

22) Shall the People Take Over the Largest and Most Powerful Capitalist Monopolies, the Banks, the Syndicates of Manufacturers, etc.?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). On no account, as this might injure the landowners and capitalists.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Generally speaking, we are in favour of transferring such organisations to the entire people, but it is too early just now to think of this or prepare for it.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). We must at once start *preparing* the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, the Soviets of Bank Employees' Deputies, etc., for taking practical and practicable steps towards merging all banks into a single national bank, to be followed by the establishment of control by the Soviets of Workers' Deputies over the banks and syndicates, and then by their nationalisation, i.e., their transfer to the possession of the whole people.

23) What Kind of Socialist International Implementing a Fraternal Union of the Workers of All Countries Do the Peoples Now Need?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). Generally speaking, any kind of Socialist International is harmful and dangerous to the capitalists and landowners; but if the German Plekhanov, that is, Scheidemann, comes to an agreement and understanding with the Russian Scheidemann, that is, Plekhanov, and if they discover in each other vestiges of a socialist conscience, then it were perhaps better for us capitalists to welcome *such* an International of *such* socialists who take the side of *their own* respective governments.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). We need a Socialist International that will unite everybody: the Scheidemanns, the Plekhanovs and the "Centrists", i.e., those who vacillate between social-chauvinism and internationalism. The greater the hotch-potch, the greater the "unity". Long live the great socialist unity!

D. ("Bolsheviks"). The peoples need only such an International as will unite the really revolutionary workers, who are capable of putting an end to this frightful, criminal slaughter of the peoples and of delivering humanity from the yoke of capital. Only people (groups, parties, etc.) like the German Socialist Karl Liebknecht, who is now in a convict prison, only people who are resolutely fighting their

own government, their *own* bourgeoisie, their *own* social-chauvinists, their *own* "Centre" can and must establish immediately the International which the peoples need.

24) Should Fraternisation at the Front Between Soldiers of the Belligerent Countries Be Encouraged?

A. (to the right of the C.D.) and B. (C.D.). No, it is bad for the interests of the landowners and capitalists, as it is likely to hasten the liberation of humanity from their yoke.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Yes, it is desirable. But we are not all fully convinced that such an encouragement of fraternisation should be started immediately in all the belligerent countries.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Yes, it is desirable and essential. It is absolutely essential to encourage immediately in all the belligerent countries attempts at fraternisation between the soldiers of *both* warring groups.

25) What Colour Banner Would Be in Character with the Various Political Parties?

A. (to the right of the C.D.). Black, for they are the real Black Hundreds.

B. (C.D.). Yellow, for that is the international banner of workers who serve capitalism willingly, heart and soul.

C. (S.D. and S.R.). Pink, for their whole policy is a rose-water one.

D. ("Bolsheviks"). Red, for this is the banner of the international proletarian revolution.

This pamphlet was written at the beginning of April 1917. To the question whether it is out of date now, after May 6, 1917, after the formation of the "new", coalition, government, my answer is: No, for the Contact Commission

has not really disappeared, it has merely moved to another room, which it shares with the gentlemen of the cabinet. The fact that the Chernovs and the Tseretelis have moved to another room has not changed their policy, nor the policy of their parties.

Written early in April 1917

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A PARTNERSHIP OF LIES

A popular method always used by the bourgeois press in every country with unerring effect is to lie, scream, raise a hullabaloo, and keep on reiterating lies on the off-chance that "something may stick".

"Lenin makes a great noise in the Kshesinskaya mansion," writes *Rech.* "Lenin addresses a meeting from the roof of the Modern,"⁸⁴ a number of newspapers report.

All this is untrue. Lenin was not present at the Modern meeting. Lenin made no noise at all; he delivered only *one* report to a gathering of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, and published a number of short articles in the small newspaper *Pravda*.

It is the capitalists and the capitalist press who are making a great noise, who are trying to *shout down* the truth, to prevent it from being heard, to drown it in a torrent of invective and shouts, to *prevent* an earnest *elucidation* of the facts.

This is what the efforts of the capitalists add up to at the present moment, as do also the efforts of those so-called socialists who, like Mr. Plekhanov, have completely deserted to the capitalist side.

In an editorial of special "national importance", today's *Rech* again fulminates against the "preaching of anarchy", and while doing so, most strikingly confutes itself. This is clear to anyone who ponders what he has read or heard.

"The great revolution has swept away all the old organisation of power. . . ." This is not true. Not all of it, far from it. "It can be restored

only by a change in the national psychology (in a broad sense of the word)—or rather, by the new psychology which recognises the need for authority and the duty of submission."

We have here a patent lie, a patent partnership of lies contracted by the capitalists, on the one hand, and the Plekhanovs, Cherevanins and Co., who are shouting about anarchy, on the other.

In conversational usage as well as in science it is accepted without question that anarchism means the *negation of the state* in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

That socialism leads to the "withering away" of the state is one of the tenets of Marxism. The Milyukovs, Plekhanovs, Cherevanins and others, who are partners in lies, know this very well.

Do the Pravdists or Lenin deny the need for *the state now*? Do they deny the need for an "organisation of power", the "duty of submission" to it?

Anybody who knows his politics, anybody except the partnership of liars, is perfectly well aware that they do not.

Both *Pravda* and Lenin have stated and repeated as clear as clear can be that all of us unreservedly recognise the need for the state and for an organisation of power not only for the present, but also for the later historical period when the transition from capitalism to socialism will be taking place.

Only the partnership of lies can deny this, or fail to see it.

The question is *what* "organisation of power" we *propose to the people*.

Not the old organisation of power, not the police, not the bureaucracy, not the standing army, but a new organisation—the *Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies*.

Such Soviets already exist; they have been brought forth by the revolution; they are already *recognised* by everyone, even by the capitalist government, as a *semi-government*.

And we have stated as clear as clear can be that *these* Soviets are the *only possible* form of a revolutionary government.

Can there be anything less ambiguous?

Since it is the "only possible" form, that means we must act *only* through propaganda, unless someone begins to practise violence upon the masses.

"The need for authority and the duty of submission" has been recognised by *all* the Pravdists, who are preaching it to the people.

The Milyukovs, Plekhanovs, Cherevanins and Co. lie in order to conceal the truth from the people; they lie in order to suppress the *most important thing of all*—the question of the class character of *any given* organisation of power.

That is the crux of the matter.

The capitalist calls the Soviets *anarchy*, because *such* an organisation of power does not commit the people beforehand and unconditionally to capitalist subjection, but provides liberty and order together with the possibility of a peaceful and gradual transition to socialism.

This and this alone is what rouses the displeasure, the indignation and resentment of the capitalists. Hence the partnership of lies. Hence the torrent of slander and the howl of rage.

Hence, the underhand *riot-mongering* which *Rech*⁸⁵ resorts to in the above-mentioned editorial when it calls for "counteraction", for "renunciation of passivity, indifference", and so on.

If you have the majority of the nation behind you, if your alliance with the Soviets is a lasting one (and we frankly admit that at the present moment the majority in the Soviets is not with us), then what do you fear, gentlemen, why do you lie?

All we want is to *make clear* to the workers and to the poor peasants the errors of their tactics. We recognise the *Soviets* as the only possible authority. We advocate the need for authority and the duty of submitting to it.

Why, then, are you afraid? Why do you lie?

It is the truth that you fear. You lie in order to *prevent* this truth from *emerging*, prevent it by means of riot-mongering, slander, violence, and filth.

Even some of our opponents now see this. Read today's *Dyelo Naroda*,⁸⁶ organ of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, an organ to which Minister Kerensky contributes.

This is what that organ says about Plekhanov, the most faithful ally of *Russkaya Volya* and *Rech*:

"We are accustomed to see such words and such a method of struggle in the columns of *Russkaya Volya*. But to see them employed in articles written by socialists is, frankly speaking, painful and depressing. . . ."

Thus write our opponents.

Thus write democrats whose democratic conscience has been awakened.

It is hopeless trying to put the Milyukovs, Plekhanovs and Cherevanins to shame. But when even a newspaper to which Minister Kerensky is a contributor turns away in disgust from the madly chauvinistic, infamously slanderous, riot-mongering methods employed by Plekhanov, then we may safely say:

They are dead people, the heroes of such methods.

Written April 13 (26), 1917

Published April 14, 1917
in *Pravda* No. 32

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 118-21

**CITIZENS! SEE WHAT METHODS
THE CAPITALISTS OF ALL
COUNTRIES ARE USING!**

Today's *Rech* concludes its editorial with the following words:

"The German Government is endeavouring to preserve the inner unity of Germany and sow discord among the Allies.⁸⁷ Our 'Pravdists' are making every effort to undermine unity in revolutionary Russia and to set the Russian Government upon the governments of our Allies, Britain and France. Are we not entitled to say that the Lenin crew is working for von Bethmann-Hollweg and Wilhelm II?"

No, gentlemen of the capitalist fold, you are not entitled to say it. It is we Pravdists, and we alone, who, far from preserving the inner unity of Germany, are, *on the contrary, actually engaged in destroying it.*

This is a fact which no lies of the Russian capitalists can ever obliterate.

It is a fact that we Pravdists, and we alone, demand that the German socialists should unconditionally and immediately break with the German Plekhanovs, i.e., the Scheidemanns, and with the German "Centre", i.e., those vacillating people who cannot make up their minds to break away, definitely, on principle, from the Scheidemanns.

It is a fact that we Pravdists, and we alone, stand for unity with *only* two German socialist groups (the Spartacus and the Arbeiterpolitik) which support the policy of Karl Liebknecht, i.e., *the policy of destroying the inner unity of Germany.* The policy of Karl Liebknecht, a policy of *deeds*, not words, is to destroy the "inner unity" of the capitalists and workers *in Germany.*

Clearly realising that the German capitalists and their Wilhelm are imperialists, i.e., brigands, Karl Liebknecht as far back as September 1915 sent a letter to the Zimmerwald Conference, which was not published, because Liebknecht was then still a legal person. But everyone who was at Zimmerwald knew about this letter.

The letter called, not for a civil truce, but for a civil war.

That was how *our* comrade-in-idea, Karl Liebknecht, preached "inner unity" in Germany. That is what we ourselves have preached in the German translation of our Pravdist pamphlet *Socialism and War* (by Zinoviev and Lenin).*

Karl Liebknecht not only spoke this way, he acted this way. From the platform of the German parliament, he called upon the German soldiers to turn their guns against *their own* German Government. Then he joined a street demonstration with revolutionary proclamations reading: "Down with the Government."

That is how Karl Liebknecht, an adherent of our Pravdist policy, has been "endeavouring to preserve the inner unity of Germany". That is why he has been thrown into a convict prison.

And Karl Liebknecht is denounced as a Judas and a traitor not only by the entire press of the German capitalists, but by all the papers of the German Plekhanovs, who accuse him more or less directly of treason or anarchism.

In *all* countries the capitalists are spewing out a torrent of lies, slander, abuse and accusations of treason against those socialists who are behaving the way Karl Liebknecht is behaving in Germany, or the way the Pravdists are behaving in Russia, i.e., who are *destroying* the "inner unity" between the workers and the capitalists, the workers and the Plekhanovs, the workers and the "Centrists" in *every* country, and who are *creating unity among the workers of all countries* in order to put an end to the predatory, murderous imperialist war, in order to rid mankind of the yoke of capitalism.

In Germany the capitalists are hounding Karl Liebknecht and his friends as traitors. In Germany, too, our comrade

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 313-16.—Ed.

Karl Liebknecht has been repeatedly threatened with mob violence. This has been mentioned even by that German Plekhanov, the social-chauvinist David. In Russia the capitalists hound the Pravdists as traitors. In Britain the capitalists hound the Scotch public school-teacher MacLean as a traitor. He, too, has been thrown into a convict prison for the *same* kind of crime, for the same kind of "treason" as that which Karl Liebknecht and we Pravdists are guilty of.

In France the republican capitalist government is keeping in prison the Frenchman *Content* and the Russian Rayev for issuing a proclamation entitled "Impose peace".

Gentlemen of *Rech*, ministers, members of the revolutionary government, put us Pravdists in a convict prison, or tell the Russian people to shut us up in a convict prison! Then you will be actually following in the footsteps of capitalist Britain, our "Ally" (the ally of Tsar Nicholas II, for it was *he* who concluded the treaty with the Allies), which is keeping the British Pravdists in a convict prison.

Down with the "inner unity" of the workers and capitalists in *all* countries, for this "unity" has condemned and is still condemning humanity to the horrors of the predatory imperialist war waged in the interests of the capitalists!

Long live unity among *those* socialists and workers in *all* countries who not only sympathise with Karl Liebknecht in words, but actually pursue the Liebknecht policy against *their own* capitalists!

Written April 14 (27), 1917

Published April 15, 1917
in *Pravda* No. 33

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 131-33

THE SOLDIERS AND THE LAND

Most of the soldiers come from the peasantry. Every peasant knows how the landowners have been oppressing the people. But wherein lies the power of the landowners?

In the land.

The landowners have tens of millions of dessiatines of land. That is why millions of peasant families have no choice but to enslave themselves to the landowners.

No "liberties" can help the peasants so long as the landowners are in possession of tens of millions of dessiatines of land.

All the landed estates must be taken over by the people. All the land in the country must become the property of the whole people, and be disposed of by the local Soviets of Peasants' and Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

How is this to be accomplished? We must immediately set up all over Russia, in every village without exception, Soviets of Peasants' and Agricultural Labourers' Deputies modelled after the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in the cities. Unless the peasants and agricultural labourers *themselves* unite, unless they *themselves* take their fate into their own hands, no one in the world will help them, no one will free them from their bondage to the landowners.

To enable the peasants to take over all the land from the landowners in their own districts immediately and to dispose of it properly, while preserving perfect order and guarding against any damage to property, the peasants must be supported by the soldiers.

The peasants, soldiers, and workers constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. This majority *wants* all the land to pass immediately into the hands of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. No one can stop the majority, *if* it is well organised (solidly united), *if* it is class-conscious, *if* it is armed.

Soldiers! Help to unite and arm all the workers and peasants!

Soldiers! You, too, unite more solidly, and form closer ties with the workers and the peasants! Do not allow your armed power to be taken away from you!

Then, and only then, will the people get all the land, and free themselves from their bondage to the landowners.

Soldatskaya Pravda No. 1,
April 15, 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 137-38

BANKRUPTCY?

We have been informed that the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has just received a Note which our Provisional Government forwarded to all its representatives abroad.

This Note, apparently, is that very "statement" which N. S. Chkheidze had expected to be issued within three days and which was to contain definite pronouncements against annexations.

But what do we find?

The Note contains a forthright declaration by the Provisional Government to the effect that Russia will fight to the end, that Russia remains true to her obligations to the Allies.

This Note has had the effect of a bombshell.

Among the majority of the Executive Committee, Chkheidze, Tsereteli, and others, there is complete bewilderment. The bankruptcy of the entire policy of "agreements" is obvious—and it has come much sooner than we expected.

Talk in the Contact Commission will not end the imperialist war.

Pravda No. 36,
May 3 (April 20), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
p. 183

APPEAL TO THE SOLDIERS OF ALL THE BELLIGERENT COUNTRIES

Brothers, soldiers!

We are all worn out by this frightful war, which has cost millions of lives, crippled millions of people and caused untold misery, ruin, and starvation.

And more and more people are beginning to ask themselves: What started this war, what is it being waged for?

Every day it is becoming clearer to us, the workers and peasants, who bear the brunt of the war, that it was started and is being waged by the capitalists of all countries for the sake of the capitalists' interests, for the sake of world supremacy, for the sake of markets for the manufacturers, factory owners and bankers, for the sake of plundering the weak nationalities. They are carving up colonies and seizing territories in the Balkans and in Turkey—and for this the European peoples must be ruined, for this we must die, for this we must witness the ruin, starvation and death of our families.

The capitalist class in all countries is deriving colossal, staggering, scandalously high profits from contracts and war supplies, from concessions in annexed countries, and from the rising price of goods. The capitalist class has imposed contribution on all the nations for decades ahead in the shape of high interest on the billions lent in war loans. And we, the workers and peasants, must die, suffer ruin, and starve, must patiently bear all this and strengthen our oppressors, the capitalists, by having the workers of the different countries exterminate each other and feel hatred for each other.

Are we going to continue submissively to bear our yoke, to put up with the war between the capitalist classes? Are we going to let this war drag on by taking the side of our own national governments, our own national bourgeoisies, our own national capitalists, and thereby destroying the international unity of the workers of all countries, of the whole world?

No, brother soldiers, it is time we opened our eyes, it is time we took our fate into our own hands. In all countries popular wrath against the capitalist class, which has drawn the people into the war, is growing, spreading, and gaining strength. Not only in Germany, but even in Britain, which before the war had the reputation of being one of the freest countries, hundreds and hundreds of true friends and representatives of the working class are languishing in prison for having spoken the honest truth against the war and against the capitalists. The revolution in Russia is only the first step of the first revolution; it should be followed and will be followed by others.

The new government in Russia—which has overthrown Nicholas II, who was as bad a crowned brigand as Wilhelm II—is a government of the capitalists. It is waging just as predatory and imperialist a war as the capitalists of Germany, Britain, and other countries. It has endorsed the predatory secret treaties concluded by Nicholas II with the capitalists of Britain, France, and other countries; it is not publishing these treaties for the world to know, just as the German Government is not publishing its secret and equally predatory treaties with Austria, Bulgaria, and so on.

On April 20 the Russian Provisional Government published a Note re-endorsing the old predatory treaties concluded by the tsar and declaring its readiness to fight the war to a victorious finish, thereby arousing the indignation even of those who have hitherto trusted and supported it.

But, in addition to the capitalist government, the Russian revolution has given rise to spontaneous revolutionary organisations representing the vast majority of the workers and peasants, namely, the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in Petrograd and in the majority of Russia's cities. Most of the soldiers and some of the workers in Russia—like

very many workers and soldiers in Germany—still preserve an unreasoning trust in the government of the capitalists and in their empty and lying talk of a peace without annexations, a war of defence, and so on.

But, unlike the capitalists, the workers and poor peasants have no interest in annexations or in protecting the profits of the capitalists. And, therefore, every day, every step taken by the capitalist government, both in Russia and in Germany, will expose the deceit of the capitalists, will expose the fact that as long as capitalist rule lasts there can be no really democratic, non-coercive peace based on a real renunciation of all annexations, i.e., on the liberation of all colonies without exception, of all oppressed, forcibly annexed or underprivileged nationalities without exception, and the war will in all likelihood become still more acute and protracted.

Only if state power in both the, at present, hostile countries, for example, in both Russia and Germany, passes wholly and exclusively into the hands of the revolutionary Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which are really capable of rending the whole mesh of capitalist relations and interests, will the workers of both the belligerent countries acquire confidence in each other and be able to put a speedy end to the war on the basis of a really democratic peace that will really liberate *all* the nations and nationalities of the world.

Brothers, soldiers!

Let us do everything we can to hasten this, to achieve this aim. Let us not fear sacrifices—any sacrifice for the workers' revolution will be less painful than the sacrifices of war. Every victorious step of the revolution will save hundreds of thousands and millions of people from death, ruin, and starvation.

Peace to the hovels, war on the palaces! Peace to the workers of all countries! Long live the fraternal unity of the revolutionary workers of all countries! Long live socialism!

*Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.
Petrograd Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.
Editorial Board of Pravda*

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT'S NOTE

The cards are on the table. We have every reason to be grateful to Guchkov and Milyukov for their Note, printed today in all the newspapers.

The majority of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Narodniks,⁸⁸ Mensheviks, all those who until now have appealed for confidence in the Provisional Government, have received con-dign punishment. They hoped, expected, and believed that the Provisional Government, under the beneficent influence of "contact" with Chkheidze, Skobelev, and Steklov, would for ever repudiate annexations. Things have turned out somewhat differently....

In its Note of April 18, the Provisional Government speaks of "the desire of the whole nation[!] to fight the world war out *to a decisive victory*".

"Needless to say," the Note adds, "the Provisional Government... will fully stand by its obligations towards our Allies."

Short and clear. War to a decisive victory. The alliance with the British and French bankers is sacred....

Who concluded this alliance with "our" Allies, i.e., with the British and French multimillionaires? The tsar, Rasputin, the tsar's gang, of course. But to Milyukov and Co. this treaty is sacred.

Why?

Some say: because Milyukov is insincere, he is a crafty person and so on.

But that is not the point. The point is that Guchkov, Milyukov, Tereshchenko, and Konovalov are spokesmen of the *capitalists*. And the seizure of foreign lands is necessary to the capitalists. They will receive new markets, new places to export capital to, new opportunities to arrange profitable jobs for tens of thousands of their sons, etc. The point is that at the present moment the *interests* of the Russian capitalists are identical with those of the British and French capitalists. That, and that alone, is the reason why the tsar's treaties with the British and French capitalists are precious to the Provisional Government of the Russian capitalists.

The new Note of the Provisional Government will pour oil on the flames. It can only arouse a bellicose spirit in Germany. It will help Wilhelm the Brigand to go on deceiving "his own" workers and soldiers and drag them into a war "to a finish".

The new Note of the Provisional Government puts the issue squarely: what next?

From the very first moment of our revolution, the British and French capitalists have been assuring us that the Russian revolution was made solely and exclusively in order to fight the war out "to a finish". The capitalists want to plunder Turkey, Persia, and China. If this should entail the slaughter of another ten million or so Russian muzhiks—what of it? What we need is a "decisive victory". . . . And now the Provisional Government, with utter frankness, has adopted the same course.

"Fight—because we want to plunder."

"Die in your tens of thousands every day—because 'we' have not yet fought it out and have not yet got our share of the spoils!"

No class-conscious worker, no class-conscious soldier will support the policy of "confidence" in the Provisional Government any longer. The policy of confidence is bankrupt.

Our Social-Democratic City Conference stated in its resolution that the correctness of *our* view would be corroborated now every day.* But not even we had expected events to move so fast.

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 154-55.—Ed.

The present Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is faced with the alternative: either to swallow the pill offered by Guchkov and Milyukov, which would mean renouncing an independent political role once and for all, for tomorrow Milyukov would put his "feet on the table" and reduce the Soviet to a mere cipher; or to reject Milyukov's Note, which would mean breaking with the old policy of confidence and adopting the course proposed by *Pravda*.

Naturally, a middle-of-the-road course might be found. But would it be for long?

Workers and soldiers, you must now loudly declare that there must be only one power in the country—the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The Provisional Government, the government of a handful of capitalists, must make way for these Soviets.

Written April 20 (May 3), 1917

Published May 4 (April 21), 1917
in *Pravda* No. 37

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 189-91

ICONS VERSUS CANNONS, PHRASES VERSUS CAPITAL

The Note of the Provisional Government on war to a victorious finish has aroused indignation even among those who nourished illusory hopes for a possible renunciation of annexations on the part of the government of capitalists. The newspapers that have been acting as mouthpieces of this petty-bourgeois policy of illusory hopes are today either mumbling in dismay, like *Rabochaya Gazeta*, or are trying to turn this indignation against individuals.

*Novaya Zhizn*⁸⁹ writes: "There is no place in the government of democratic Russia for a champion of the interests of international capital! We are sure the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies will act promptly in taking the most energetic measures towards rendering Mr. Milyukov harmless." And *Dyelo Naroda* expresses the same piece of philistine wisdom in the following words. Milyukov's Note, it says, "tries to reduce to nought a statement of the greatest international importance approved by the entire cabinet".

Icons versus cannons. Phrases versus capital. The government's statement renouncing annexations was a piece of utterly worthless diplomatic verbiage, which might deceive an ignorant muzhik, but could not "confuse" the leaders of the petty-bourgeois Social-Democratic and Socialist-Revolutionary parties, the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* and *Dyelo Naroda*, unless they were willing to be deceived. What empty phrases are these about there being "no place in the government of democratic Russia for a champion of the interests of international capital!" Educated people ought to be ashamed of themselves, writing such piffle.

The whole Provisional Government is a government of the capitalist class. It is a matter of class, not of persons. To attack Milyukov personally, to demand, directly or indirectly, his dismissal, is a silly comedy, for *no* change of personalities can change anything so long as the *classes* in power are unchanged.

To draw a line between the "democracy" of Russia, Britain, France, etc., and the championing of capital is to sink to the level of the economic and political wisdom of a Gapon.

It is pardonable for ignorant muzhiks to demand of the capitalist a "promise" that he "live righteously" and not capitalistically, that he should *not* "champion the interests of capital". But for the leaders of the Petrograd Soviet, for the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* and *Dyelo Naroda* to adopt such methods means to nourish the illusory hopes which the people place in the capitalists, hopes that are most harmful and ruinous to the cause of freedom, to the cause of the revolution.

Pravda No. 37,
May 4 (April 21), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 196-97

**RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE R.S.D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS)
ADOPTED APRIL 21 (MAY 4), 1917**

Having considered the situation which has arisen in Petrograd after the imperialist, annexationist, and predatory Note of the Provisional Government of April 18, 1917, and after a number of meetings and demonstrations of the people held in the streets of Petrograd on April 20, the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. resolves:

1. Party propagandists and speakers must refute the despicable lies of the capitalist papers and of the papers supporting the capitalists to the effect that we are holding out the threat of *civil war*. This is a despicable lie, for only at the present moment, as long as the capitalists and their government cannot and dare not use force against the masses, as long as the mass of soldiers and workers are freely expressing their will and freely electing and displacing *all* authorities—at *such a moment* any thought of civil war would be naïve, senseless, preposterous; at such a moment *there must be compliance with the will of the majority of the population* and free criticism of this will by the discontented minority; should violence be resorted to, the responsibility will fall on the Provisional Government and its supporters.

2. By their outcries against civil war the government of the capitalists and its newspapers are only trying to conceal the reluctance of the capitalists, who admittedly constitute an insignificant minority of the people, to submit to the will of the majority.

3. In order to learn the will of the majority of the population in Petrograd, where there is now an unusually large number of soldiers who are familiar with the sentiment of the peasants and correctly express it, a popular vote must at once be arranged in all the districts of Petrograd and its suburbs to ascertain what the attitude is towards the government's Note, what support the various parties enjoy, and what kind of Provisional Government is desired.

4. All Party propagandists must advocate these views and this proposal at factories, in regiments, in the streets, etc., by means of *peaceful* discussion and peaceful demonstrations, as well as meetings everywhere; we must endeavour to organise regular voting in factories and regiments, taking care that order and comradely discipline are strictly observed.

5. Party propagandists must again and again protest against the despicable slander spread by the capitalists alleging that our Party stands for a separate peace with Germany. We consider Wilhelm II as bad as a crowned brigand meriting execution as Nicholas II, and the German Guchkovs, i.e., the German capitalists, just as much annexationists, robbers, and imperialists as the Russian, British, and all other capitalists. We *are against* negotiating with the capitalists, we are for negotiating and fraternising *with the revolutionary workers and soldiers of all countries*. We are convinced that the reason why the Guchkov-Milyukov government is trying to aggravate the situation is because it knows that the workers' revolution in Germany is beginning, and that this revolution will be a blow to the capitalists of all countries.

6. When the Provisional Government spreads rumours about utter and unavoidable economic chaos, it is not only trying to frighten the people into leaving the power in the hands of this Provisional Government, but is also vaguely, fumblingly expressing the profound and indubitable truth that *all* the nations of the world have been led into a blind alley, that the war waged in the interests of the capitalists has driven them to the brink of an abyss, and that there is really no way out except through the transfer of power to the revolutionary class, i.e., to the revolutionary proletariat,

which is capable of adopting revolutionary measures.

If there are any stocks of grain, etc., in the country, the new government of the workers and soldiers will know how to dispose of them too. But if the capitalist war has brought economic ruin to a stage where there is no bread at all, the capitalist government will only aggravate the condition of the people instead of improving it.

7. We consider the policy of the present majority of leaders of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, of the Narodnik and Menshevik parties, to be profoundly erroneous, since confidence in the Provisional Government, attempts to compromise with it, dicker over amendments, etc., would in fact mean only so many more useless scraps of paper and useless delays; and besides, this policy threatens to create a divergence between the will of the Soviet on the one hand, and that of the majority of revolutionary soldiers at the front and in Petrograd and of the majority of workers, on the other.

8. We call upon those workers and soldiers who believe that the Soviet must change its policy and renounce the policy of confidence in and compromise with the capitalist government, to hold new elections of delegates to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and to send to that body only people who would steadfastly hold to a quite definite opinion consonant with the actual will of the majority.

Pravda No. 38,
May 5 (April 22), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 201-03

HONEST DEFENCISM REVEALS ITSELF

Events in Petrograd during the last few days, especially yesterday, illustrate how right we were in speaking of the "honest" defencism of the *mass* as distinguished from the defencism of the leaders and parties.

The mass of the population is made up of proletarians, semi-proletarians, and poor peasants. They are the vast majority of the nation. *These* classes are not at all interested in annexations. Imperialist policies, the profits of banking capital, incomes from railways in Persia, lucrative jobs in Galicia and Armenia; putting restraints on the freedom of Finland—all these are things in which these classes are *not* interested.

But all these things taken together just go to make up what is known in science and the press as imperialist, annexationist, predatory policy.

The crux of the matter is that the Guchkovs, Milyukovs, and Lvovs—be they even all paragons of virtue, disinterestedness, and love of their fellow-man—are the spokesmen, leaders, and chosen representatives of the capitalist *class*, a class which has a vested interest in a predatory, annexationist policy. This class invested billions "in the war", and is making hundreds of millions "out of the war" and annexations (i.e., out of the subjugation or forced *incorporation* of alien nationalities).

To believe that the capitalist *class* will "mend its ways", will cease to be a capitalist class, will give up its profits, is a fatuous hope, an idle dream, and in effect a deception of the people. Only petty-bourgeois politicians, fluctuating

between capitalist and proletarian policies, can entertain or encourage such fatuous hopes. Herein lies the mistake of the present leaders of the Narodnik parties and the Mensheviks, Chkhcheidze, Tsereteli, Chernov, and the others.

The mass representatives of defencism are not at all versed in politics. They have not been able to learn politics from books, from participation in the Duma, or from close observation of people engaged in politics.

The mass representatives of defencism still do not know that wars are waged by *governments*, that governments represent the interests of certain *classes*, that the present war, on the part of both belligerent groups, is waged by the capitalists in the predatory interests of and for the predatory aims of the capitalists.

Unaware as they are of this, the mass representatives of defencism argue quite simply: we do not want annexations, we demand a democratic peace, we do not want to fight for Constantinople, for putting down Persia, for plundering Turkey, and so on; we "demand" that the Provisional Government give up its policy of annexations.

The mass representatives of defencism are *sincere* in wishing this, not in a personal but in a class sense, because they speak for classes that are *not interested* in annexations. But what these representatives of the masses do not know is that the capitalists and their government may throw over the policy of annexations in words, may dangle promises and mouth fine phrases, but cannot *really* abandon the idea of annexations.

That is why the mass representatives of defencism were so strongly and legitimately shocked by the Provisional Government's Note of April 18.

People familiar with politics could not have been surprised by this Note, for they knew only too well that when the capitalists "renounce annexations" they do not really mean it. It is just the usual trick and phrase-mongering of diplomats.

But the "honest" mass representatives of defencism were surprised, shocked, indignant. They *felt*—they did not understand it quite clearly, but they felt that they had been tricked.

This is the *essence* of the crisis and it should be clearly distinguished from the opinions, expectations, and suppositions of single individuals and parties.

To patch up this crisis for a while with a new declaration, with a new Note (that is what Mr. Plekhanov's advice in *Yedinstvo* and the aspirations of Milyukov and Co., on the one hand, and those of Chkheidze and Tsereteli, on the other, amount to)—to paper over the cracks with a new promise is of course possible, but this can do nothing but harm. A new promise would inevitably mean a new deception of the masses; therefore a new outburst of indignation, and such an outburst, if lacking intelligent orientation, might easily become very harmful.

The masses should be told the whole truth. The government of the capitalists *cannot* abandon annexations; it is caught in its own meshes, and there is no escape. It feels, it realises, it sees that without revolutionary measures (of which only a revolutionary class is capable) *there is no way out*, and it is becoming panicky, losing its head; it promises one thing, but does another; at one minute it threatens the masses with violence (Guchkov and Shingaryov), at the next it proposes that the power be taken out of its hands.

Economic ruin, crisis, the horrors of war, an impasse from which there is no way out—this is what the capitalists have brought *all* the nations to.

Indeed there is no way out—*except* through the transfer of power to the revolutionary class, to the revolutionary proletariat, which alone, supported by the majority of the population, is capable of aiding the revolution to victory in *all* the belligerent countries and leading humanity to lasting peace and liberation from the yoke of capitalism.

**RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE R.S.D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS)
ADOPTED IN THE MORNING
OF APRIL 22 (May 5), 1917**

The political crisis that developed between April 19 and 21 must be regarded, at least in its initial stage, as having passed.

The petty-bourgeois mass, angered by the capitalists, first swung *away from* them *towards* the workers; but two days later they again followed the Menshevik and Narodnik leaders, who stand for "confidence" in and "compromise" with the capitalists.

These leaders have compromised, completely surrendered all their positions, contenting themselves with the empty and purely verbal reservations of the capitalists.

The causes of the crisis have not been removed, and the recurrence of such crises is unavoidable.

The nature of the crisis is that the petty-bourgeois mass is vacillating between its age-old faith in the capitalists and its resentment against them, a tendency to place its faith in the revolutionary proletariat.

The capitalists are dragging out the war and covering up the fact by phrase-mongering. Only the revolutionary proletariat can put an end to, and is working towards putting an end to the war by means of a world revolution of the workers, a revolution which is obviously mounting in our country, ripening in Germany, and drawing closer in a number of other countries.

The slogan "Down with the Provisional Government!" is an incorrect one at the present moment because, in the absence of a solid (i.e., a class-conscious and organised)

majority of the people on the side of the revolutionary proletariat, such a slogan is either an empty phrase, or, objectively, amounts to attempts of an adventurist character.⁹⁰

We shall favour the transfer of power to the proletarians and semi-proletarians only when the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies adopt our policy and are willing to take the power into their own hands.

The organisation of our Party, the consolidation of the proletarian forces, clearly proved inadequate at the time of the crisis.

The slogans of the moment are: (1) To *explain* the proletarian line and the proletarian way of ending the war; (2) To *criticise* the petty-bourgeois policy of placing trust in the government of the capitalists and compromising with it; (3) To carry on propaganda and agitation from group to group *in every regiment*, *in every factory*, and, particularly, among the most backward masses, such as domestic servants, unskilled labourers, etc., since it was their backing in the first place that the bourgeoisie tried to gain during the crisis; (4) To *organise*, *organise* and once more *organise* the proletariat, in every factory, in every district and in every city quarter.

The resolution of the Petrograd Soviet of April 21 banning all street meetings and demonstrations for two days must be unconditionally obeyed by every member of our Party. The Central Committee already distributed yesterday morning, and is today publishing in *Pravda*, a resolution which states that "at such a moment any thought of civil war would be senseless and preposterous", that all demonstrations must be peaceful ones, and that the responsibility for violence will fall on the Provisional Government and its supporters.* Our Party therefore considers that the above-mentioned resolution of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies as a whole (and especially the part banning armed demonstrations and shooting in the air) is entirely correct and must be *unconditionally obeyed*.

We call upon all the workers and soldiers to consider carefully the results of the crisis of the last two days and to send

* See p. 143 of this book.—Ed

as delegates to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and to the Executive Committee only such comrades as express the will of the majority. In all cases where a delegate does not express the opinion of the majority, new elections should be held in the factories and barracks.

Pravda No. 39,
May 6 (April 23), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 210-12

LESSONS OF THE CRISIS

Petrograd and the whole of Russia have passed through a serious political crisis, the first political crisis since the revolution.

On April 18 the Provisional Government issued its unhappily notorious Note, which confirmed the predatory aims of the war clearly enough to arouse the indignation of the masses, who had honestly believed in the desire (and ability) of the capitalists to "renounce annexations". On April 20-21 Petrograd was in a turmoil. The streets were crowded; day and night knots and groups of people stood about, and meetings of various sizes sprang up everywhere; big street processions and demonstrations went on without a break. Yesterday evening, April 21, the crisis, or, at any rate, the first stage of the crisis, apparently came to an end with the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and later the Soviet itself, declaring themselves satisfied with the "explanations", the amendments to the Note and the "elucidations" made by the government (which in fact boil down to empty phrases, saying absolutely nothing, changing nothing and committing the government to nothing). They considered the "incident settled".

Whether the masses consider the "incident settled", the future will show. Our task now is to make a careful study of the *forces*, the classes, that revealed themselves in the crisis, and to draw the relevant lessons for our proletarian party. For it is the great significance of all crises that they make manifest what has been hidden; they cast aside all that

is relative, superficial, and trivial; they sweep away the political litter and reveal the real mainsprings of the *class struggle*.

Strictly speaking, the capitalist government on April 18 merely reiterated its previous notes, in which the imperialist war was invested with diplomatic equivocations. The soldiers were angry because they had honestly believed in the sincerity and peaceful intentions of the capitalists. The demonstrations began as *soldiers'* demonstrations, under the contradictory, misguided and ineffectual slogan: "Down with Milyukov" (as though a change of persons or groups could change the *substance* of policy!).

This means that the broad, unstable, and vacillating mass, which is closest to the peasantry and which by its scientific class definition is petty-bourgeois, swung *away from* the capitalists *towards* the revolutionary workers. It was the swing or movement of this mass, strong enough to be a *decisive* factor, that caused the crisis.

It was at this point that other sections began to stir: *not* the middle but the extreme elements, *not* the intermediary petty bourgeoisie but the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, started to come out on to the streets and organise.

The bourgeoisie seized Nevsky Prospekt—or "Milyukov" Prospekt as one paper called it—and the adjacent quarters of prosperous Petrograd, the Petrograd of the capitalists and the government officials. Officers, students, and "the middle classes" demonstrated *in favour* of the Provisional Government. Among the slogans, "Down with Lenin" frequently appeared on the banners.

The proletariat rallied in *its own* centres, the working-class suburbs, around the slogans and appeals of our Party's Central Committee. On April 20-21 the Central Committee adopted resolutions, which were immediately passed on to the proletariat through the Party organisations. The workers poured through the *poor*, less central districts, and then in groups got through to Nevsky. By their mass character and solidarity, these demonstrations were very different from those of the bourgeoisie. Many banners carried the inscription "All Power to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies".

On Nevsky there were clashes. The "hostile" demonstrations tore down each other's banners. The Executive Committee received news by telephone from various places that there was shooting on both sides, that there were killed and wounded; but the information was extremely contradictory and unconfirmed.

The bourgeoisie shouted about the "spectre of civil war", thus expressing its fear that the real masses, the actual majority of the nation, might seize power. The petty-bourgeois leaders of the Soviet, the Mensheviks and Narodniks—who since the revolution in general, and during the crisis in particular, have had no definite party policy—allowed themselves to be intimidated. In the Executive Committee almost half the votes were cast against the Provisional Government on the eve of the crisis, but now thirty-four votes (with nineteen against) are cast *in favour* of returning to a policy of confidence in and agreement with the capitalists.

And the "incident" was considered "settled".

What is the *essence* of the class struggle? The capitalists are *for* dragging out the war under cover of empty phrases and false promises. They are caught in the meshes of Russian, Anglo-French and *American* banking capital. The proletariat, as represented by its class-conscious vanguard, stands *for* the transfer of power to the revolutionary class, the working class and the semi-proletarians, *for* the development of a world workers' revolution, a revolution which is clearly developing also in Germany, and *for* terminating the war by means of *such* a revolution.

The vast mass of people, chiefly the petty bourgeoisie, who still believe the Menshevik and Narodnik leaders and who have been absolutely intimidated by the bourgeoisie and are carrying out *its* policy, although with reservations, are swinging now to the right, now to the left.

The war is terrible; it has hit the vast mass of the people hardest of all; it is these people who are becoming aware, albeit still very vaguely, that the war is criminal, that it is being carried on through the rivalry and scramble of the capitalists, for the division of *their* spoils. The world situation is growing more and more involved. *The only way out* is a world workers' revolution, a revolution which is *now*

more advanced in Russia than in any other country, but which is clearly mounting (strikes, fraternisation) in Germany too. And the people are wavering: wavering between confidence in their old masters, the capitalists, and bitterness towards them; between confidence in the new class, the only consistently revolutionary class, which opens up the prospect of a bright future for all the working people—the proletariat—and a vague awareness of its role in world history.

This is not the first time the petty bourgeoisie and semi-proletarians have wavered *and it will not be the last!*

The lesson is clear, comrade workers! There is no time to be lost. The first crisis will be followed by others. You must devote *all* your efforts to enlightening the backward, to making extensive, comradely and direct contact (not only by meetings) with every regiment and with every group of working people who have not had their eyes opened yet! *All* your efforts must be devoted to consolidating your own ranks, to organising the workers from the bottom upwards, including every district, every factory, every quarter of the capital and its suburbs! Do *not* be misled by those of the petty bourgeoisie who “compromise” with the capitalists, by the defencists and by the “supporters”, nor by individuals who are inclined to be in a hurry and to shout “Down with the Provisional Government!” before the majority of the people are solidly united. The crisis cannot be overcome by violence practised by individuals against individuals, by the local action of small groups of armed people, by Blanquist attempts to “seize power”, to “arrest” the Provisional Government, etc.

Today's task is to explain more precisely, more clearly, more widely the proletariat's policy, *its* way of terminating the war. Rally more resolutely, more widely, wherever you can, to the ranks and columns of the proletariat! Rally round your Soviets; and within them endeavour to rally behind you a majority by comradely persuasion and by re-election of individual members!

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"DISGRACE" AS THE CAPITALISTS AND THE PROLETARIANS UNDERSTAND IT

Today's *Yedinstvo* prints on its front page in bold type a proclamation signed by Plekhanov, Deutsch, and Zasulich. We read:

"Every nation has a right freely to determine its own destiny. Wilhelm of Germany and Karl of Austria will never agree to this. In waging war against them, we are defending our own freedom, as well as the freedom of others. Russia cannot betray her Allies. That would bring disgrace upon her."

That is how all capitalists argue. To them non-observance of treaties *between* capitalists is a disgrace, just as to monarchs non-observance of treaties between monarchs is a disgrace.

What about the workers? Do they regard non-observance of treaties concluded by monarchs and capitalists a disgrace?

Of course not! Class-conscious workers are *for* scrapping *all* such treaties, they are for recognising only such agreements *between the workers and soldiers of all* countries as would benefit the people, i.e., not the capitalists, but the workers and poor peasants.

The workers of the world *have* a treaty of their own, namely, the Basle Manifesto of 1912 (signed, among others, by Plekhanov and betrayed by him). This workers' "treaty" calls it a "crime" for workers of different countries to shoot at each other for the sake of the capitalists' profits.

The writers in *Yedinstvo* argue like capitalists (so do *Rech* and others), and not like workers.

It is quite true that neither the German monarch nor the Austrian will agree to freedom for every nation, as both these monarchs are crowned brigands, and so was Nicholas II. Nor, for one thing, are the English, Italian, and other monarchs (the "Allies" of Nicholas II) any better. To forget this is to become a monarchist or a defender of the monarchists.

Secondly, the *uncrowned* brigands, i.e., the capitalists, have shown themselves in the present war to be no better than the monarchs. Has not American "democracy", i.e., the democratic capitalists, robbed the Philippines, and does it not rob Mexico?

The German Guchkovs and Milyukovs, if they were to take the place of Wilhelm II, would be brigands, *too*, no better than the British and Russian capitalists.

Third, will the Russian capitalists "agree" to "freedom" for nations which they themselves oppress: Armenia, Khiva, Ukraine, Finland?

By evading this question the *Yedinstvo* writers are, in effect, turning into defenders of "our own" capitalists in their predatory war with other capitalists.

The internationalist workers of the world stand for the overthrow of *all* capitalist governments, for the rejection of all agreements and understandings with any capitalists, for *universal peace* concluded by *the revolutionary workers of all countries*, a peace capable of giving real freedom to "every" nation.

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pp. 220-21

**INTERVIEW GIVEN TO E. TORNIAINEN
APRIL 23 (MAY 6), 1917**

We believe the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies at the present moment represents the majority of the workers and soldiers. On our part, we (Bolsheviks) are working for influence and a majority in the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and in all the local Soviets. We advise the workers and soldiers to re-elect members of the Soviets who do not fully represent the will of the majority.

So far the majority of the Soviet follows the Narodnik and Menshevik leaders.

We have no doubt that the Soviet will be able to retain power so long as it is supported by a considerable and strong majority of workers and soldiers. The more so as that power, instead of dragging on the war, would bring it to a speedy end on terms most favourable to the masses. We also believe that the Soviet, being a body elected by the workers and soldiers, can definitely win over the overwhelming majority of workers and soldiers.

Whether or not the capitalist government will refuse to convoke the Constituent Assembly will depend upon the development and strength of the counter-revolution. The elements of such a counter-revolution without doubt already exist.

Ending the war by a truly democratic peace depends upon the course which the revolution of the world proletariat will

take. This revolution has gained good ground now in Russia, and is undoubtedly gaining ground in Germany (mass strikes, fraternisation).

Työmies No. 122, May 8, 1917

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Works, Vol. XX, Part 2

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
p. 222

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FRATERNISATION

The capitalists either sneer at the fraternisation of the soldiers at the front or savagely attack it. By lies and slander they try to make out that the whole thing is "deception" of the Russians by the Germans, and threaten—through *their* generals and officers—punishment for fraternisation.

From the point of view of safeguarding the "sacred right of property" in capital and the profits on capital, such a policy of the capitalists is quite correct. Indeed, if the proletarian socialist revolution is to be *suppressed* at its inception it is *essential* that fraternisation be regarded the way the capitalists regard it.

The class-conscious workers, followed by the mass of semi-proletarians and poor peasants guided by the true instinct of oppressed classes, regard fraternisation with profound sympathy. Clearly, fraternisation is a path to peace. Clearly, this path does not run through the capitalist governments, through an alliance with them, but runs *against* them. Clearly, this path tends to develop, strengthen, and consolidate fraternal confidence between the workers of different countries. Clearly, this path is *beginning to wreck* the hateful discipline of the barrack prisons, the discipline of blind obedience of the soldier to "his" officers and generals, to his capitalists (for most of the officers and generals either belong to the capitalist class or protect its interests). Clearly, fraternisation is the revolutionary initiative of the *masses*, it is the awakening of the conscience, the mind, the courage of the oppressed classes; in other words, it is a rung in the ladder leading up to the socialist proletarian revolution.

Long live fraternisation! Long live the *rising* world-wide socialist revolution of the proletariat!

In order that fraternisation achieve the goal we set it more easily, surely and rapidly, we must see to it that it is well organised and has a clear political programme.

However much the enraged press of the capitalists and their friends may slander us, calling us anarchists, we shall never tire of repeating: we are not anarchists, we are ardent advocates of the best possible organisation of the masses and the firmest "state" power—only the state we want is not a bourgeois parliamentary republic, but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

We have always recommended that fraternisation be conducted in the most organised manner, taking care—with the help of the intelligence, experience and observation of the soldiers themselves—that there should be no catch in it, and that the officers and generals, who for the most part spread vicious slander against fraternisation, be kept away from the meetings.

Our aim is not to have fraternisation confine itself to talk about peace in general, but pass on to a discussion of a *clear* political programme, to a discussion of *how* to end the war, *how* to throw off the yoke of the capitalists, who started this war and are now dragging it out.

Our Party has therefore issued an appeal to the soldiers of all the belligerent countries (for the text of which see *Pravda* No. 37),* which gives a definite and precise answer to these questions and a clear political programme.

It is a good thing that the soldiers are cursing the war. It is a good thing that they are demanding peace. It is a good thing that they are beginning to realise that the war is advantageous to the capitalists. It is a good thing that they are wrecking the harsh discipline and beginning to fraternise on all the fronts. All this is good.

But it is not enough.

The soldiers must now pass to a form of fraternisation in which a clear political programme is discussed. We are not anarchists. We do not think that the war can be ended by

* See pp. 135-37 of this book.—Ed.

a simple "refusal", a refusal of individuals, groups or casual "crowds". We are for the war being ended, as it will be, by a *revolution* in a number of countries, i.e., by the conquest of *state* power by a new class, not the capitalists, not the small proprietors (who are always half-dependent on the capitalists), but by the proletarians and semi-proletarians.

And so, in our appeal to the soldiers of all the belligerent countries we have set forth our programme for a workers' revolution in all countries, namely, the transfer of all state power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Comrades, soldiers, discuss this programme among yourselves and with the German soldiers! Such a discussion will help you to find the true path, the most organised and shortest path, to end the war and overthrow the yoke of capital.

* * *

A word about one of the servants of capital, Plekhanov. It is pitiful to see how low this former socialist has sunk! He compares fraternisation to "treachery"! His argument is: will not fraternisation, if it succeeds, lead to a separate peace?

No, Mr. ex-socialist, fraternisation, which we have supported on *all* the fronts, will not lead to a "separate" peace between the capitalists of several countries, but to a universal peace between the revolutionary workers of all countries, *despite* the capitalists of all countries, *against* the capitalists, and for the overthrow of their yoke.

Pravda No. 43,
May 11 (April 28), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 318-20

WHAT THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY STEPS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT LEAD TO

We have received the following telegram:

"*Yeniseisk*. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has taken cognisance of Minister Lvov's telegram to the appointed Commissar of Yeniseisk Gubernia, Krutovsky, sent to Yeniseisk for guidance.

"We protest against the intention to reintroduce a bureaucracy. We declare, first, that we will not stand for being ruled by appointed officials. Second, there can be no return for officials who have been driven out by the peasants. Third, we recognise only such local bodies as have been set up in Yeniseisk Uyezd by the people themselves. Fourth, appointed officials can rule here only over our dead bodies.

"Yeniseisk Soviet of Deputies."

And so the Provisional Government appoints "commissars" from Petrograd to "direct" the activities of the Yeniseisk Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, or the Yeniseisk organ of self-government, in general. What is more, this appointment is made in such a form as to evoke the protest of the Yeniseisk Soviet against "the intention to reintroduce a bureaucracy".

Moreover, the Yeniseisk Soviet declares that "appointed officials can rule here only over our dead bodies". The behaviour of the Provisional Government has brought this remote uyezd in Siberia, as represented by its popularly elected governing body, to a point when a direct threat of *armed resistance* is made against the Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government bosses have certainly asked for it!

Yet they will go on thundering denunciations against those mischievous people who "preach" "civil war"!

What was the idea of appointing "commissars" from Petrograd or from any other centre to "direct" the activities of the *elected* local body? Are we to believe that a man from outside is more familiar with local needs, more capable of "directing" the local population? What cause did the people of Yeniseisk give for such an absurd measure? Even if the people of Yeniseisk did somehow run counter to the decisions of a majority of citizens in other localities, would it not have been better to try, for a start, to obtain *some information* instead of giving occasion for talk about "bureaucracy", and provoking legitimate dissatisfaction and resentment on the part of the local population?

To all these questions there can be only one answer. The representatives of the landowners and capitalists sitting in the Provisional Government are determined to *preserve* the old tsarist *machinery* of government: officials "appointed" from above. That is what all bourgeois parliamentary republics in the world have nearly always been doing, except for brief periods of revolution in some countries. That is what was done to prepare the ground for the return *from* a republic to a monarchy, for a return to the Napoleons, to the military dictators. And that is what the Cadets are bent on doing when they copy those unhappy examples.

This is a very serious matter. We should not deceive ourselves. By such measures the Provisional Government, whether it means to or not, is *preparing the ground* for a restoration of the monarchy in Russia.

The entire responsibility for any possible—and to a certain extent inevitable—attempt to restore the monarchy in Russia rests with the Provisional Government, which is undertaking such counter-revolutionary measures. Officials "appointed" from above to "direct" the local population have always been, and will be, a sure step towards the restoration of the monarchy, in the same way as the standing army and the police.

The Yeniseisk Soviet is a thousand times right, both practically and in principle. The return of local officials who have been driven out by the peasants should not be allowed.

The introduction of "appointed" officials should not be tolerated. Only such bodies in the local areas should be recognised as have been set up by the people themselves.

The idea of "direction" by officials "appointed" from above is essentially false and undemocratic, it is Caesarism, Blanquist *adventurism*. Engels was quite right when, in criticising in 1891 the draft programme of the German Social-Democrats who were badly infected with bureaucratism, he pressed the demand for no supervision from above over local self-government. Engels was right when he quoted the experience of France, which, governed between 1792 and 1798 by local elective bodies without any supervision from above, did not "fall apart", did not "disintegrate", but, on the contrary, gained strength, became democratically consolidated and organised.⁹¹

Foolish bureaucratic prejudices, tsarist red-tapism, reactionary professorial ideas as to the indispensability of bureaucratism, the counter-revolutionary tendencies and attempts of the landowners and capitalists—this is the soil which nourishes such measures of the Provisional Government as we have been discussing.

The healthy democratic feeling of the workers and peasants, roused by the insulting attempt of the Provisional Government to "appoint" officials from above to "direct" the activities of the adult local population, the overwhelming majority, who had elected their own representatives—this is what the Yeniseisk Soviet has revealed.

What the people need is a really democratic, workers' and peasants' republic, whose authorities have been elected by the people and are displaceable by the people any time they may wish it. And it is for *such* a republic that the workers and peasants should fight, *resisting* all attempts of the Provisional Government to restore the monarchist, tsarist methods and machinery of government.

THE "CRISIS OF POWER"

The whole of Russia remembers the days of April 19-21, when civil war was about to break out in the streets of Petrograd.

On April 21 the Provisional Government penned a new reassuring missive purporting to "explain" its predatory Note of the 18th.

After this the majority of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies decided to consider the "incident settled".

Another couple of days passed, and the question of a coalition cabinet cropped up. The Executive Committee was almost equally divided: 23 against a coalition cabinet, 22 for it. The incident had been "settled" only on paper.

Two more days passed, and we now have another "incident". War Minister Guchkov, one of the leaders of the Provisional Government, has resigned. There is talk of the whole Provisional Government having decided to resign. (At the time of writing, we still do not know for certain whether the government has resigned.) A new "incident" has occurred, one that throws all previous "incidents" into the shade.

Whence this spate of "incidents"? Is there no root cause which inevitably engenders "incident" upon "incident"?

There is such a cause. It is what we know as the dual power, that state of unstable equilibrium resulting from the agreement between the Soviet and the Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government is a government of the capitalists. It cannot give up its dreams of conquests (annexations), it cannot end the predatory war by a democratic peace, it cannot but protect the profits of its own class (the capitalist class), it cannot but protect the estates of the landowners.

The Soviet represents other classes. Most of the workers and soldiers in the Soviet do not want this predatory war, they are not interested in the profits of the capitalists or in preserving the privileges of the landowners. At the same time, however, they still have faith in the Provisional Government of the capitalists, they are for having agreements with it, for keeping in contact with it.

The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies are themselves a government in embryo. On some questions they attempt to exercise power parallel with the Provisional Government. We thus have an overlapping of power, or, as it is now called, a "crisis of power".

This cannot go on for long. Such a state of affairs is bound every day to cause new "incidents" and fresh complications. It is easy enough to inscribe on a bit of paper "the incident is settled". In real life, however, these incidents do not disappear. And this for the simple reason that they are not "incidents" at all, they are not chance happenings, not trifles. They are the outward signs of a deep-rooted inner crisis. They are a result of the impasse in which humanity now finds itself. There can be no way out of this predatory war unless we accept the measures proposed by the internationalist socialists.

The Russian people are offered three ways of ending this "crisis of power". Some say: Leave things as they are, put still greater trust in the Provisional Government. The threat to resign may be a trick calculated to make the Soviet say: We trust you still more. The Provisional Government wants the Soviet to beg it: Come and rule over us; what shall we do without you. . . .

Others propose a coalition cabinet. Let us share the ministerial portfolios with Milyukov and Co., they say, let us get some of our own people into the cabinet; it will be quite another pair of shoes then.

We propose a third way: A complete change of the Soviets' policy, no confidence in the capitalists, and the *transfer of all power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies*. A change of *personalities* will give nothing; the *policy* must be changed. Another class must assume power. A government of workers and soldiers would be trusted by the whole world, for everyone knows that a worker and a poor peasant would want to rob no one. Only this can put a speedy end to the war, only this can help us through the economic debacle.

All power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies! No confidence in the government of the capitalists!

Every "incident", every day, every hour will confirm the *soundness* of this watchword.

Pravda No. 46,
May 15 (2), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 332-34

DEFENCE OF IMPERIALISM CLOAKED WITH SPECIOUS PHRASES

That is what the proclamation of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet to the socialists of the world, published in today's papers, amounts to. It has a lot to say against imperialism, but all these words are nullified by a single little phrase which reads:

"The Provisional Government of revolutionary Russia has adopted this platform" (i.e., peace without annexations and indemnities on the basis of self-determination of nations).

The gist of the matter is summed up in this one phrase. This phrase is a defence of *Russian* imperialism, which it cloaks and whitewashes. As a matter of fact, our Provisional Government, far from "adopting" a platform of peace without annexations, is trampling upon it daily and hourly.

Our Provisional Government has "diplomatically" renounced annexations, just as the government of the German capitalists, those brigands Wilhelm and Bethmann-Hollweg, have done. In words, *both* governments have renounced annexations. In practice, *both* continue the policy of annexations. The German capitalist government forcibly holds Belgium, a part of France, Serbia, Montenegro, Rumania, Poland, Danish provinces, Alsace, etc.; the Russian capitalist government holds part of Galicia, Turkish Armenia, Finland, Ukraine, etc. The British capitalist government is the most annexationist government in the world, for it forcibly keeps the greatest number of nationalities within the British Empire: India (three hundred million), Ireland, Turkish Mesopotamia, the German colonies in Africa, etc.

The Executive Committee's proclamation covers up its lies about annexations with specious phrases, and thereby does great harm to the cause of the proletariat and the revolution. First of all, the proclamation does not differentiate between the renunciation of annexations in words (in this sense, *all* capitalist governments, without exception, have "adopted" the "platform of peace without annexations") and *renunciation of annexations in deeds* (in this sense, *not one* capitalist government in the world has renounced annexations). Secondly, the proclamation—without any justification, without any basis, contrary to the truth—whitewashes the *Russian* Provisional Government of the capitalists, which is not a bit better (and, probably, not worse) than any other capitalist government.

To cloak an unpleasant truth with a specious phrase is most harmful and most dangerous to the cause of the proletariat, to the cause of the toiling masses. The truth, however bitter, must be faced squarely. A policy that does not meet this requirement is a ruinous policy.

And the truth about annexations is that *all* capitalist governments, the Russian Provisional Government included, are deceiving the people with *promises*—they renounce the policy of annexations in words, but continue it *in deeds*. Any intelligent person can prove this truth for himself by simply making up a *full list* of the annexations of, say, only *three* countries: Germany, Russia, and Britain.

Just try it, gentlemen!

By refusing to do this, by whitewashing *one's own* government and blackening others, one becomes in effect a defender of imperialism.

In conclusion we would remark that at the end of the proclamation we have another fly in the ointment, namely, the assurance that "whatever the differences that have been rending socialism during the three years of war, no faction of the proletariat should decline to participate in the general struggle for peace".

This, too, we regret to say, is a specious phrase, an utterly empty and meaningless one. Plekhanov and Scheidemann both assert that they are "fighting for peace", a "peace without annexations" at that. But it is clear to everyone that

they are both fighting to defend each his own imperialist government of the capitalists. What good do we do the cause of the working classes by uttering sugar-coated lies, by playing down the fact that the Plekhanovs and the Scheidemanns have gone over to the side of *their* respective capitalists? Is it not obvious that such glossing over of the truth amounts to whitewashing imperialism and its defenders?

Pravda No. 47,
May 16 (3), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 340-42

FRIGHTENING THE PEOPLE WITH BOURGEOIS TERRORS

The capitalist newspapers, led by *Rech*, are falling over backwards in their attempt to scare the people with the bogey of "anarchy". Not a day passes without *Rech* screaming about anarchy, whipping up rumours and reports of casual and minor breaches of the law, and frightening the people with the bogey of a frightened bourgeoisie.

In the wake of *Rech* and other capitalist papers comes the press of the Narodniks (including the Socialist-Revolutionaries) and the Mensheviks. They, too, have allowed themselves to be frightened. The editorial in today's *Izvestia* of the Petrograd Soviet,⁹² whose leaders are all members of these parties, shows this paper to have definitely taken sides with the pedlars of "bourgeois terrors". It has talked itself into a statement, which, to put it mildly, is grossly exaggerating:

"There is demoralisation in the army. In some places there is disorderly seizure of the land, and destruction and looting of livestock and farm implements. Arbitrary action is on the increase."

By arbitrary action the Narodniks and Mensheviks, that is, the parties of the petty bourgeoisie, mean, among other things, the seizure by the peasants in the local areas of all the land without waiting for the Constituent Assembly. It was this bogey ("arbitrary action") that Minister Shingaryov once trotted out in his famous telegram, which was widely featured in the press (see *Pravda*, No. 33).*

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 134.—Ed.

Arbitrary action, anarchy—what terrifying words! But let any Narodnik or Menshevik who wishes to *think for himself* consider for a minute the following question.

Before the revolution the land belonged to the landowners. That was *not* called anarchy. And what did *that* lead to? It led to a break-down all along the line, to “anarchy” in the fullest sense of the word, i.e., to the utter ruin of the country, the ruin of the majority of the population.

Is a way out of this conceivable *other than* by the widest application of energy, initiative and determination on the part of the *majority* of the population? Obviously, it is not.

What does all this add up to?

1. The tsar's supporters stand for the absolute rule of the landowners in the countryside and for their keeping all the land. They are *not* afraid of the “anarchy” which this actually entailed.

2. The Cadet Shingaryov, representing all the capitalists and landowners (with the exception of a small group of tsarists), advocates “agricultural conciliation chambers under the rural supply committees for the purpose of effecting voluntary agreements between the tillers of the land and the landowners” (see his telegram). The petty-bourgeois politicians—the Narodniks and Mensheviks—are following in Shingaryov's footsteps when they advise the peasants “to wait” until the Constituent Assembly meets and when they call the immediate confiscation of the land by the peasants in the local areas “anarchy”.

3. The party of the proletariat (the Bolsheviks) stands for the immediate seizure of the land by the peasants in the local areas and recommends the greatest possible degree of organisation. We see no “anarchy” in this, for it is this decision, and this decision alone, that happens to be a *majority* decision of the local population.

Since when has a majority decision come to be called “anarchy”? Would it not be more correct to apply this appellation to the *minority* decision which *both* the tsarists and Shingaryov are proposing in various forms?

When Shingaryov tries to force the peasants into a “voluntary” “reconciliation” with the landowners, he is imposing a minority decision, because there is an average of

300 peasant families in Russia to every one family of the big landowners. If I tell three hundred families to come to a "voluntary" "agreement" with *one* family of a rich exploiter, I am offering a decision in favour of the minority, and that means anarchy.

In raising this hullabaloo about "anarchy", you capitalists are trying to disguise the fact that you stand for the interests of the one against those of the three hundred. This is the crux of the matter.

We may be told: But you want to have the matter decided by the local people alone, without waiting for the Constituent Assembly! And that is anarchy!

To this we reply: And what does Shingaryov want? He, too, wants the matter settled locally (by a "voluntary agreement" between the peasants and the landowners) without waiting for the Constituent Assembly!

On this point Shingaryov and we do not differ—we are both for a final decision by the Constituent Assembly and a preliminary decision—and enforcement—by the local people. We differ with Shingaryov only in saying that 300 shall decide and I shall submit, whereas Shingaryov says: if the 300 decide, that will be "arbitrary action", so let the 300 "agree" with the 1.

How low the Narodniks and Mensheviks must have fallen to help Shingaryov and Co. spread bourgeois terrors.

Fear of the people—that is what these alarmists and panic-mongers are actuated by.

There is no reason to fear the people. The decision of the majority of workers and peasants is *not* anarchy. Such a decision is the only possible guarantee of democracy in general, and of success in the search for effective ways of combating the debacle in particular.

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pp. 346-48

CLASS COLLABORATION WITH CAPITAL, OR CLASS STRUGGLE AGAINST CAPITAL?

That is how history puts the issue—and not history in general, but the economic and political history of the Russia of *today*.

The Narodniks and Mensheviks, Chernov and Tsereteli, have transferred the Contact Commission from the room adjacent to the one the ministers used to meet in to the ministerial chamber itself. This, and this alone, is the purely political significance of the “new” cabinet.

Its economic and class significance is that, at the best (from the point of view of the stability of the cabinet and the preservation of capitalist domination), the upper crust of the peasant bourgeoisie, headed since 1906 by Peshekhonov, and the petty-bourgeois “leaders” of the Menshevist workers have *promised* the capitalists their class collaboration. (At the worst—for the capitalists—the whole change has a purely personal or clique significance, but no class significance at all.)

Let us assume that the more favourable eventuality is the case. Even so, there is not a shadow of doubt that the promises will be unable to fulfil their promises. “We shall—in co-operation with the capitalists—help the country out of its crisis, save it from ruin and get it out of the war”—that is what the action of the petty-bourgeois leaders, the Chernovs and Tseretelis, in joining the cabinet really amounts to. Our answer is: Your help is not enough. The crisis has advanced infinitely farther than you imagine. Only the revolutionary class, by taking revolutionary measures against capital, can save the country—and not our country alone.

The crisis is so profound, so widespread, of such vast world-wide scope, and so closely bound up with Capital itself, that the class struggle against Capital must inevitably assume the form of political supremacy by the proletariat and semi-proletariat. There is no other way out.

You want to have revolutionary enthusiasm in the army, Citizens Chernov and Tsereteli? But you cannot create it, because the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses is not begotten by a change of "leaders" in cabinets, by florid declarations, or by promises to take steps to revise the treaty with the British capitalists; it can be aroused only by acts of revolutionary policy patent to all and undertaken daily and everywhere *against* almighty Capital and against its making profits out of the war, a policy that will make for a radical improvement in the standard of living of the mass of the poor.

Even if you were to hand over all the land to the people immediately, this would not end the crisis unless revolutionary measures were taken against Capital.

You want an offensive, Citizens Chernov and Tsereteli? But you cannot rouse the army to an offensive, because you cannot use force *against* the people today. And unless force is used against them the people would undertake an offensive only in the great interests of the great revolution against Capital in all countries; and not merely a revolution promised and proclaimed, but a revolution actually in process of a realisation, a revolution which is being carried out in actual fact, and is tangible to all.

You want to organise supply, Citizens Peshekhonovs and Skobelevs, the supply of goods for the peasants, of bread and meat for the army, of raw material for industry, and so forth? You want control over, and partly even the organisation of, production?

You cannot do this without the revolutionary enthusiasm of the proletarian and semi-proletarian mass. This enthusiasm can be aroused only by taking revolutionary measures against the privileges and profits of Capital. Failing this, your promised control will remain a dead, capitalist, bureaucratic palliative.

The experiment at class collaboration with Capital is now being made by the Chernovs and Tseretelis, and by certain sections of the petty bourgeoisie, on a new, gigantic, all-Russia scale.

All the more valuable will be its lessons for the people, when the latter become convinced—and that apparently will be soon—of the futility and hopelessness of such collaboration.

Pravda No. 50,
May 19 (6), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 357-59

A STRONG REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT

We are for a strong revolutionary government. Whatever the capitalists and their flunkys may shout about us to the contrary, their lies will remain lies.

The thing is not to let phrases obscure one's consciousness, disorient one's mind. When people speak about "revolution", "the revolutionary people", "revolutionary democracy", and so on, *nine times out of ten* this is a lie or self-deception. The question is—*what class* is making this revolution? A revolution *against whom*?

Against tsarism? In that sense most of Russia's landowners and capitalists today are revolutionaries. When the revolution is an accomplished fact, even reactionaries come into line with it. There is no deception of the masses at present more frequent, more detestable, and more harmful than that which lauds the revolution against tsarism.

Against the landowners? In this sense most of the peasants, even most of the well-to-do peasants, that is, probably nine-tenths of the population in Russia, are revolutionaries. Very likely, some of the capitalists, too, are prepared to become revolutionaries on the grounds that the landowners cannot be saved anyway, so let us better side with the revolution and try to make things safe for capitalism.

Against the capitalists? Now that is the real issue. That is the crux of the matter, because without a revolution against the capitalists, all that prattle about "peace without annexations" and the speedy termination of the war by such a peace is either naïveté and ignorance, or stupidity and

deception. But for the war, Russia could have gone on living for years and decades without a revolution against the capitalists. The war has made that objectively impossible. The alternatives are either utter ruin or a revolution against the capitalists. That is how the question stands. That is how the very trend of events poses it.

Instinctively, emotionally, and by attraction, the bulk of Russia's population, namely, the proletarians and semi-proletarians, i.e., the workers and poor peasants, are in sympathy with a revolution against the capitalists. So far, however, there is no clear consciousness of this, and, as a result, no determination. To develop these is our chief task.

The leaders of the petty bourgeoisie—the intellectuals, the prosperous peasants, the present parties of the Narodniks (the S.R.s included) and the Mensheviks—are *not* at present in favour of a revolution against the capitalists and some of them are even opposed to it, greatly to the detriment of the people's cause. The coalition cabinet is the kind of "experiment" that is going to help the people as a whole to quickly *discard* the illusion of petty-bourgeois conciliation with the capitalists.

The conclusion is obvious: only assumption of power by the proletariat, backed by the semi-proletarians, can give the country a really strong and really revolutionary government. It will be really strong because it will be supported by a solid and class-conscious majority of the people. It will be strong because it will not, of necessity, have to be based on a precarious "agreement" between capitalists and small proprietors, between millionaires and petty bourgeoisie, between the Konovalovs-Shingaryovs and the Chernovs-Tsetelis.

It will be a truly revolutionary government, the only one capable of showing the people that at a time when untold suffering is inflicted upon the masses it will not be awed and deterred by capitalist profits. It will be a truly revolutionary government because it alone will be capable of evoking and sustaining the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses and increasing it tenfold, provided the masses, every day and every hour, see and feel that the government believes in the people, is not afraid of them, that it helps the poor to im-

prove their lot right now, that it makes the rich bear an *equal share* of the heavy burden of the people's suffering.

We are for a strong revolutionary government.

We are for a strong revolutionary government because it is the only possible and the only reliable government.

Pravda No. 50,
May 19 (6), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 360-61

**AN OPEN LETTER TO THE DELEGATES
TO THE ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS
OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES**

Comrades, peasant deputies,

The Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks), to which I have the honour to belong, wanted me to represent our Party at the Peasant Congress, but illness has prevented me from carrying out this commission. I therefore take the liberty of addressing this open letter to you in order to greet the all-Russia union of the peasantry and briefly to point out the deep-seated differences that divide our Party on the one hand and the party of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Menshevik Social-Democrats on the other.

These profound differences concern the three most important issues: the land, the war, and state organisation.

All the land must belong to the people. All the landed estates must be turned over to the peasants without compensation. This is clear. The dispute here is whether or not the peasants in the local areas should take all the land at once, without paying any rent to the landowners or waiting until the Constituent Assembly meets.

Our Party believes that they should, and advises the peasants locally to take over all the land without delay, and to do it in as organised a way as possible, under no circumstances allowing damage to property and exerting every effort to increase the production of grain and meat since the troops at the front are in dire straits. In any case, although the final decision on how to dispose of the land will be made by the Constituent Assembly, a preliminary settlement now,

at once, in time for the spring sowing, can be made only by local bodies, inasmuch as our Provisional Government, which is a government of the landowners and capitalists, is putting off the convocation of the Constituent Assembly and so far has not even fixed a date for it.

Only local bodies are able preliminarily to take charge of the land. The fields must be sown to crops. Most of the peasants in the local areas are quite capable of making use of the land in an organised way, of ploughing and putting it all under crops. This is essential if the supply of food to the soldiers at the front is to be improved. Hence, to wait for the Constituent Assembly is out of the question. We by no means deny the right of the Constituent Assembly finally to institute public ownership of the land and to regulate its disposal. In the meantime, however, right now, this spring, the peasants themselves must decide locally what to do with it. The soldiers at the front can and should send delegates to the villages.

Further. For all the land to pass over to the working people, a close alliance of the urban workers and the poor peasants (semi-proletarians) is essential. Unless such an alliance is formed, the capitalists cannot be defeated. And if they are not defeated, no transfer of the land to the people will deliver them from poverty. You cannot eat land, and without money, without capital, there is no way of obtaining implements, livestock, or seed. The peasants must trust not the capitalists or the rich muzhiks (who are capitalists too), but only the urban workers. Only in alliance with the latter can the poor peasants ensure that the land, the railways, the banks, and the factories become the property of all the working people; if this is not done, the mere transfer of the land to the people cannot abolish want and pauperism.

Workers in certain localities in Russia are already beginning to establish their supervision (control) over the factories. Such control by the workers is to the peasants' advantage, for it means increased production and cheaper products. The peasants must give their fullest support to this initiative on the part of the workers and not believe the slander which the capitalists spread against the workers.

The second question is the question of the war.

This war is a war of conquest. It is being waged by the capitalists of all countries with predatory aims, to increase their profits. To the working people this war can spell only ruin, suffering, devastation, and brutalisation. That is why our Party, the party of class-conscious workers and poor peasants, emphatically and unqualifiedly condemns this war, refuses to justify the capitalists of the one country as against the capitalists of another, refuses to support the capitalists of any country whatever, and is working for the speediest termination of the war through the overthrow of the capitalists in all countries, through a workers' revolution in all countries.

In our new Provisional Government, there are ten ministers belonging to the landowner and capitalist parties and six to the Narodnik (Socialist-Revolutionary) and Menshevik Social-Democratic parties. In our opinion the Narodniks and Mensheviks have made a grave and fatal mistake in joining the capitalist government and in general agreeing to support it. Men like Tsereteli and Chernov are hoping to induce the capitalists to bring the present predatory war to a speedy and more honourable end. But these leaders of the Narodnik and Menshevik parties are mistaken: they are, in effect, helping the capitalists to prepare an offensive by the Russian troops against Germany, that is, to drag out the war, to add to the incredibly enormous sacrifices the Russian people have made in the war.

We are convinced that the capitalists in all countries are deceiving the people by promising an early and just peace when they are actually prolonging the war of conquest. The Russian capitalists, who controlled the old Provisional Government and continue to control the new one, did not even wish to publish the secret predatory treaties ex-Tsar Nicholas Romanov concluded with the capitalists of Britain, France, and other countries with the object of wresting Constantinople from the Turks, Galicia from the Austrians, Armenia from the Turks, and so on. The Provisional Government has confirmed these treaties.

Our Party maintains that these treaties are just as criminal and predatory as the treaties the German brigand-

capitalists and their brigand-Emperor Wilhelm have with their allies.

The blood of the workers and peasants must not be shed for the sake of such predatory aims of the capitalists.

This criminal war must be brought to a speedy end, *not* by a separate peace with Germany, *but by a universal peace*, not by a capitalist peace, but by a peace of the working masses *against* the capitalists. There is only one way to do this, and that is by transferring all state power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies both in Russia and in other countries. Only such Soviets will be able effectively to prevent the capitalists from deceiving the peoples, and prevent the war being dragged on by the capitalists.

This brings me to the third and last of the questions I have mentioned: the question of state organisation.

Russia must become a democratic republic. Even the majority of the landowners and capitalists, who have always stood for the monarchy but now see that the people of Russia will on no account allow it to be restored, are in agreement with this. The capitalists now have directed all their efforts at making the Russian republic as much like a monarchy as possible so that it might be changed back into a monarchy with the least difficulty (this has happened time and again in many countries). For this purpose the capitalists want to preserve the bureaucracy, which stands *above* the people, to preserve the police and the standing army, which is separated from the people and commanded by non-elective generals and other officers. And the generals and other officers, unless they are elected, will almost invariably be landowners and capitalists. That much we know from the experience of all the republics in the world.

Our Party, the party of class-conscious workers and poor peasants, is therefore working for a democratic republic of another kind. We want a republic where there is no police that browbeats the people; where all officials, from the bottom up, are elective and displaceable whenever the people demand it, and are paid salaries not higher than the wages of a competent worker; where all army officers are similarly elective and where the standing army separated

from the people and subordinated to classes alien to the people is replaced by the universally armed people, by a people's militia.

We want a republic where all state power, from the bottom up, belongs wholly and exclusively to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and other Deputies.

The workers and peasants are the majority of the population. The power must belong to them, not to the landowners or the capitalists.

The workers and peasants are the majority of the population. The power and the functions of administration must belong to *their Soviets*, not to the bureaucracy.

Such are our views, comrade peasant deputies. We are firmly convinced that experience will soon show the broad masses how erroneous the policy of the Narodniks and Mensheviks is. Experience will soon show the masses that compromise with the capitalists cannot save Russia, which, like Germany and other countries, is standing on the brink of disaster, cannot save the war-wearied peoples. The transfer of all state power directly to the majority of the population alone can save the peoples.

Petrograd, May 7, 1917

N. Lenin

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Pravda No. 19

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 370-74

NOTHING HAS CHANGED

Now that "socialists" have become members of the cabinet,⁹³ things will be different, the defencists have been assuring us. It did not take more than a few days to reveal the falsity of these assurances.

We all know what indignation was aroused among the soldiers and workers by ex-Minister Milyukov's statement that he had no intention of publishing the secret treaties which ex-Tsar Nicholas II had concluded with the British and French capitalists. And now, what does Mr. Tereshchenko, the *new* Minister of Foreign Affairs, the associate of Skobelev and Tsereteli, have to say on this question?

Tereshchenko admits that "this question [i.e., the secret treaties] arouses passions". But what does he do to cool these passions? He simply *repeats* what Milyukov, who has just been deposed, said before him.

"Immediate publication of the treaties would amount to a break with the Allies," Tereshchenko declared in a statement to the press.

And the "socialist" ministers are silent and condone the system of secret diplomacy.

The coalition cabinet has brought no changes. The tsar's secret treaties remain sacred to it.

And you, gentlemen, want this not to "arouse passions"? What do you take the class-conscious workers and soldiers for? Or do you really regard them as "rebellious slaves"?

A REGRETTABLE DEVIATION FROM THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

Today's *Izvestia* carries a report of the meeting of the Soldiers' Section of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. This meeting, among other things,

"considered the question of whether *soldiers could perform the duties of militiamen*. The Executive Committee proposed to the meeting a resolution to the following effect:

"'In view of the fact that soldiers must perform their *direct* duty, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies *declares against the soldiers' participation* in the militia, and proposes that all soldiers serving in the militia *be immediately returned to their units*.'

"After a brief debate, the resolution was passed with an *amendment* permitting soldiers *discharged from active service as well as wounded soldiers* to perform militia duties."

It is to be regretted that the exact texts of the resolution and the amendment have not been published. More regrettable still is the fact that the Executive Committee proposed and the meeting adopted a resolution which is a complete abandonment of the fundamental principles of democracy.

There is hardly a democratic party in Russia that does not include in its programme a demand for the universal arming of the people as a substitute for the standing army. There is hardly a Socialist-Revolutionary or a Menshevik Social-Democrat who would dare oppose such a demand. The trouble is that it has become a "custom" "nowadays", under the cover of high-sounding phrases about "revolutionary democracy", to accept democratic (the more so socialist) programmes "in principle", but reject them in practice.

To oppose the participation of soldiers in the militia on the ground that "soldiers must perform their direct duty" is to forget completely the principles of democracy and involuntarily, unconsciously, perhaps, to adopt the idea of a standing army. The soldier is a professional; his direct duty is *not* social service at all—such is the point of view of those who are for a standing army. It is not a democratic point of view. It is the point of view of the Napoleons. It is the point of view of the supporters of the old regime and the capitalists, who dream of an easy transition backward, from a republic to a constitutional monarchy.

A democrat is opposed to such a view on principle. Soldiers' participation in the militia amounts to breaking down the wall that separates the army from the people. It amounts to breaking with the accursed "barrack" past where a special group of citizens, detached from and opposed to the people, were trained, "knocked into shape" and drilled for the "direct task" of following only a military profession. Soldiers' participation in the militia is a cardinal issue involving the re-education of the "soldiers" into militiamen citizens, the re-education of the population into public-spirited armed citizens. Democracy will remain an idle deceitful phrase, or merely a half-measure, unless the *entire* people is given a chance immediately and unqualifiedly to learn how to handle arms. Without the systematic, regular, and widespread participation of the soldiers in the militia this will be impossible.

The objection may be raised that soldiers should not be *deflected* from their *direct* duties. No one said they should. To make a point of this is as ridiculous as saying that a physician engaged at the bedside of a patient who is dangerously ill has no right to leave that bedside in order to go and hand in his voting-paper, or that a worker engaged in production, which admittedly must not be interrupted, has no right to go away to exercise his political rights until he is relieved by another worker. Such arguments would simply be frivolous and even unscrupulous.

Participation in the militia is one of the cardinal and basic principles of democracy, one of the most important guarantees of freedom. (We might add, parenthetically, that

there is no better way of enhancing the purely military strength and capacity of the army than by substituting the universal arming of the people for the standing army, and by using the soldiers to instruct the people; this method has always been used and always will be used in every truly revolutionary war.) The immediate, unqualified, universal organisation of a people's militia and the widest participation of soldiers in that militia are in the vital interests of the workers, peasants, and soldiers, that is to say, the vast majority of the population, a majority that is not interested in safeguarding the profits of the landowners and the capitalists.

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IMPENDING DEBACLE

News, speculation, apprehensions and rumours of an impending disaster are becoming more and more frequent. The capitalist newspapers are trying to frighten people; they are fulminating against the Bolsheviks and making play of Kutler's cryptic allusions to "a certain" factory, to "certain" factories, to "a certain" enterprise, and so forth. Peculiar methods, strange "proofs". Why not *name* a definite factory? Why not give the public *and the workers* a chance to verify these rumours, which are deliberately calculated to excite alarm?

It should not be difficult for the capitalists to understand that by withholding the exact facts about definite specified factories they are only making themselves ridiculous. Why, gentlemen—you capitalists are the government, you have ten out of the sixteen ministers, you bear the responsibility, you give the orders. Is it not ridiculous that people who run the government, people who have a majority in it, should confine themselves to Kutler's anonymous references, should be afraid to come out in the open and should try to shift responsibility to other parties that are not at the helm of the state?

The newspapers of the petty-bourgeois parties, the Narodniks and Mensheviks, are also complaining, though in a somewhat different tone. They do not so much level accusations against the terrible Bolsheviks (that, of course, is all in the day's work) as heap one good wish upon another. Most typical in this respect is *Izvestia*, which is run by a

bloc of the two above-named parties. In its issue No. 63 for May 11 are two articles on the subject of combating economic chaos. The articles are identical in character. One of them, to put it mildly, is injudiciously headed (altogether as "injudicious" as the very fact of the Narodniks and Mensheviks joining the imperialist cabinet): "What Does the Provisional Government Want?" It would have been more correct to say: "What the Provisional Government Does *Not* Want and What It Promises."

The other article is a "resolution of the Economic Department of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies". Here are some quotations from it, best illustrative of its contents:

"Many branches of industry are ripe for a state trade monopoly (grain, meat, salt, leather), others are ripe for the organisation of state-controlled trusts (coal, oil, metallurgy, sugar, paper); and, finally, present conditions demand in the case of nearly all branches of industry state control of the distribution of raw materials and manufactures, as well as price fixing.... Simultaneously, it is necessary to place all banking institutions under state and public control in order to combat speculation in goods subject to state control.... At the same time, the most energetic measures should be taken against the workshy, even if labour conscription has to be introduced for that purpose.... The country is already in a state of catastrophe, and the only thing that can save it is the creative effort of the whole nation *headed by a government* which has consciously shouldered [hem, hem!] the stupendous task of rescuing a country ruined by war and the tsarist regime."

With the exception of the last phrase beginning with the words we have italicised, a phrase which with purely philistine credulity places on the "shoulders" of the capitalists tasks they are incapable of fulfilling, the programme is an excellent one. We have here control, state-controlled trusts, the combating of speculation, labour conscription—in what way does this differ from "terrible" Bolshevism, what more could these "terrible" Bolsheviks want?

That is just the point, that is the crux of the matter, that is just what petty bourgeois and philistines of all shades and colours stubbornly refuse to see. They are *forced* to accept the programme of "terrible" Bolshevism, because no other programme offers a way out of the really calamitous debacle that is impending. But—there is this but—the capi-

talists "accept" this programme (see the famous § 3 of the declaration of the "new" Provisional Government⁹⁴) *in order not to carry it out*. And the Narodniks and Mensheviks trust the capitalists, and encourage the people to share this fatal trust. That is the sum and substance of the political situation.

Control over the trusts, with publication of their full reports, with immediate conferences of their employees, with the unqualified participation in this control of the *workers themselves*, with independent control on the part of representatives of every important political party—all this can be introduced by decree which can be drafted in a *single day*.

What is the difficulty then, Citizens Shingaryovs, Tereshchenkos, Konovalovs? What is stopping you, citizens, near-socialist ministers Chernov and Tsereteli? What is stopping you, Citizens Narodnik and Menshevik leaders of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies?

Neither we nor anybody else could have proposed anything but the *immediate* establishment of such control over the trusts, banks, trade, food supply, and the *workshy* (a surprisingly good word to come from the pen of the *Izvestia* editors!). Nothing better could be devised than "the creative effort of the whole nation".

Only we must not trust the word of the capitalists; we must not believe the naïve (at best, naïve) hope of the Mensheviks and Narodniks that the capitalists can establish such control.

A debacle is impending. Disaster is imminent. The capitalists are heading all countries to destruction. There is only one way out: revolutionary discipline, revolutionary measures by the *revolutionary class*, the proletarians and semi-proletarians, the transfer of all power in the state to that class, a class that is really capable of instituting such control, that is able to cope effectively with the "workshy".

WAR AND REVOLUTION

A Lecture Delivered May 14 (27), 1917

The question of war and revolution has been dealt with so often lately in the press and at every public meeting that probably many of you are not only familiar with many aspects of the question but have come to find them tedious. I have not yet had a single opportunity to address or even attend any Party or for that matter any public meetings in this district, and therefore I run the risk, perhaps, of repetition or of not dealing in sufficient detail with those aspects of the question that interest you most.

It seems to me that the most important thing that is usually overlooked in the question of the war, a key issue to which insufficient attention is paid and over which there is so much dispute—useless, hopeless, idle dispute, I should say—is the question of the class character of the war: what caused that war, what classes are waging it, and what historical and historico-economic conditions gave rise to it. As far as I have been able to follow the way the question of the war is dealt with at public and Party meetings, I have come to the conclusion that the reason why there is so much misunderstanding on the subject is because, all too often, when dealing with the question of the war, we speak in entirely different languages.

From the point of view of Marxism, that is, of modern scientific socialism, the main issue in any discussion by socialists on how to assess the war and what attitude to adopt towards it is this: what is the war being waged for, and what classes staged and directed it. We Marxists do not belong

to that category of people who are unqualified opponents of all war. We say: our aim is to achieve a socialist system of society, which, by eliminating the division of mankind into classes, by eliminating all exploitation of man by man and nation by nation, will inevitably eliminate the very possibility of war. But in the war to win that socialist system of society we are bound to encounter conditions under which the class struggle within each given nation may come up against a war between the different nations, a war conditioned by this very class struggle. Therefore, we cannot rule out the possibility of revolutionary wars, i.e., wars arising from the class struggle, wars waged by revolutionary classes, wars which are of direct and immediate revolutionary significance. Still less can we rule this out when we remember that though the history of European revolutions during the last century, in the course of 125-135 years, say, gave us wars which were mostly reactionary, it also gave us revolutionary wars, such as the war of the French revolutionary masses against a united monarchist, backward, feudal and semi-feudal Europe. No deception of the masses is more widespread today in Western Europe, and latterly here in Russia, too, than that which is practised by citing the example of revolutionary wars. There are wars and wars. We must be clear as to what historical conditions have given rise to the war, what classes are waging it, and for what ends. Unless we grasp this, all our talk about the war will necessarily be utterly futile, engendering more heat than light. That is why I take the liberty, seeing that you have chosen war and revolution as the subject of today's talk, to deal with this aspect of the matter at greater length.

We all know the dictum of Clausewitz, one of the most famous writers on the philosophy and history of war, which says: "War is a continuation of policy by other means."⁹⁵ This dictum comes from a writer who reviewed the history of wars and drew philosophic lessons from it shortly after the period of the Napoleonic wars. This writer, whose basic views are now undoubtedly familiar to every thinking person, nearly eighty years ago challenged the ignorant man-in-the-street conception of war as being a thing apart from the policies of the governments and classes concerned, as

being a simple attack that disturbs the peace, and is then followed by restoration of the peace thus disturbed, as much as to say: "They had a fight, then they made up!" This is a grossly ignorant view, one that was repudiated scores of years ago and is repudiated by any more or less careful analysis of any historical epoch of wars.

War is a continuation of policy by other means. All wars are inseparable from the political systems that engender them. The policy which a given state, a given class within that state, pursued for a long time before the war is inevitably continued by that same class during the war, the form of action alone being changed.

War is a continuation of policy by other means. When the French revolutionary townspeople and revolutionary peasants overthrew the monarchy at the close of the eighteenth century by revolutionary means and established a democratic republic—when they made short work of their monarch, and short work of their landowners, too, in a revolutionary fashion—that policy of the revolutionary class was bound to shake all the rest of autocratic, tsarist, imperial, and semi-feudal Europe to its foundations. And the inevitable continuation of this policy of the victorious revolutionary class in France was the wars in which all the monarchist nations of Europe, forming their famous coalition, lined up against revolutionary France in a counter-revolutionary war. Just as within the country the revolutionary people of France had then, for the first time, displayed revolutionary energy on a scale it had never shown for centuries, so in the war at the close of the eighteenth century it revealed a similar gigantic revolutionary creativeness when it remodelled its whole system of strategy, broke with all the old rules and traditions of warfare, replaced the old troops with a new revolutionary people's army, and created new methods of warfare. This example, to my mind, is noteworthy in that it clearly demonstrates to us things which the bourgeois journalists are now always forgetting when they pander to the philistine prejudices and ignorance of the backward masses who do not understand this intimate economic and historical connection between every kind of war and the preceding policy of every country, every class that ruled

before the war and achieved its ends by so-called "peaceful" means. So-called, because the brute force required to ensure "peaceful" rule in the colonies, for example, can hardly be called peaceful.

Peace reigned in Europe, but this was because domination over hundreds of millions of people in the colonies by the European nations was sustained only through constant, incessant, interminable wars, which we Europeans do not regard as wars at all, since all too often they resembled not wars, but brutal massacres, the wholesale slaughter of unarmed peoples. The thing is that if we want to know what the present war is about we must first of all make a general survey of the policies of the European powers as a whole. We must not take this or that example, this or that particular case, which can easily be wrenched out of the context of social phenomena and which is worthless, because an opposite example can just as easily be cited. We must take the whole policy of the entire system of European states in their economic and political interrelations if we are to understand how the present war steadily and inevitably grew out of this system.

We are constantly witnessing attempts, especially on the part of the capitalist press—whether monarchist or republican—to read into the present war an historical meaning which it does not possess. For example, no device is more frequently resorted to in the French Republic than that of presenting this war on France's part as a continuation and counterpart of the wars of the Great French Revolution of 1792. No device for hoodwinking the French masses, the French workers and the workers of all countries is more widespread than that of applying to our epoch the "jargon" of that other epoch and some of its watchwords, or the attempt to present matters as though now, too, republican France is defending her liberty against the monarchy. One "minor" fact overlooked is that then, in 1792, war was waged in France by a revolutionary class, which had carried out an unparalleled revolution and displayed unmatched heroism in utterly destroying the French monarchy and rising against a united monarchist Europe with the sole and single aim of carrying on its revolutionary struggle.

The war in France was a continuation of the policy of the revolutionary class which had carried out the revolution, won the republic, settled accounts with the French capitalists and landowners with unprecedented vigour, and was waging a revolutionary war against a united monarchist Europe in continuation of that policy.

What we have at present is primarily two leagues, two groups of capitalist powers. We have before us all the world's greatest capitalist powers—Britain, France, America, and Germany—who for decades have doggedly pursued a policy of incessant economic rivalry aimed at achieving world supremacy, subjugating the small nations, and making threefold and tenfold profits on banking capital, which has caught the whole world in the net of its influence. That is what Britain's and Germany's policies really amount to. I stress this fact. This fact can never be emphasised strongly enough, because if we forget this we shall never understand what this war is about, and we shall then be easy game for any bourgeois publicist who tries to foist lying phrases on us.

The real policies of the two groups of capitalist giants—Britain and Germany, who, with their respective allies, have taken the field against each other—policies which they were pursuing for decades before the war, should be studied and grasped in their entirety. If we did not do this we should not only be neglecting an essential requirement of scientific socialism and of all social science in general, but we should be unable to understand anything whatever about the present war. We should be putting ourselves in the power of Milyukov, that deceiver, who is stirring up chauvinism and hatred of one nation for another by methods which are applied everywhere without exception, methods which Clausewitz wrote about eighty years ago when he ridiculed the very view some people are holding today, namely, that the nations lived in peace and then they started fighting. As if this were true! How can a war be accounted for without considering its bearing on the preceding policy of the given state, of the given system of states, the given classes? I repeat: this is a basic point which is constantly overlooked. Failure to understand it makes nine-tenths of all war dis-

cussions mere wrangling, so much verbiage. We say: if you have not studied the policies of both belligerent groups over a period of decades—so as to avoid accidental factors and the quoting of random examples—if you have not shown what bearing this war has on preceding policies, then you don't understand what this war is all about.

These policies show us just one thing—continuous economic rivalry between the world's two greatest giants, capitalist economies. On the one hand we have Britain, a country which owns the greater part of the globe, a country which ranks first in wealth, which has created this wealth not so much by the labour of its workers as by the exploitation of innumerable colonies, by the vast power of its banks which have developed at the head of all the others into an insignificantly small group of some four or five super-banks handling billions of rubles, and handling them in such a way that it can be said without exaggeration that there is not a patch of land in the world today on which this capital has not laid its heavy hand, not a patch of land which British capital has not enmeshed by a thousand threads. This capital grew to such dimensions by the turn of the century that its activities extended far beyond the borders of individual states and formed a group of giant banks possessed of fabulous wealth. Having begotten this tiny group of banks, it has caught the whole world in the net of its billions. This is the sum and substance of Britain's economic policy and of the economic policy of France, of which even French writers, some of them contributors to *L'Humanité*,⁹⁶ a paper now controlled by ex-socialists (in fact, no less a man than Lysis, the well-known financial writer), stated several years before the war: "France is a financial monarchy, France is a financial oligarchy, France is the world's money-lender."

On the other hand, opposed to this, mainly Anglo-French group, we have another group of capitalists, an even more rapacious, even more predatory one, a group who came to the capitalist banqueting table when all the seats were occupied, but who introduced into the struggle new methods for developing capitalist production, improved techniques, and superior organisation, which turned the old capitalism, the capitalism of the free-competition age, into the capitalism

of giant trusts, syndicates, and cartels. This group introduced the beginnings of state-controlled capitalist production combining the colossal power of capitalism with the colossal power of the state into a single mechanism and bringing tens of millions of people within the single organisation of state capitalism. Here is economic history, here is diplomatic history, covering several decades, from which no one can get away. It is the one and only guide-post to a proper solution of the problem of war; it leads you to the conclusion that the present war, too, is the outcome of the policies of the classes who have come to grips in it, of the two supreme giants, who, long before the war, had caught the whole world, all countries, in the net of financial exploitation and economically divided the globe up among themselves. They were bound to clash, because a redivision of this supremacy, from the point of view of capitalism, had become inevitable.

The old division was based on the fact that Britain, in the course of several centuries, had ruined her former competitors. A former competitor was Holland, which had dominated the whole world. Another was France, which had fought for supremacy for nearly a hundred years. After a series of protracted wars Britain was able, by virtue of her economic power, her merchant capital, to establish her unchallenged sway over the world. In 1871 a new predator appeared, a new capitalist power arose, which developed at an incomparably faster pace than Britain. That is a basic fact. You will not find a book on economic history that does not acknowledge this indisputable fact—the fact of Germany's faster development. This rapid development of capitalism in Germany was the development of a young strong predator, who appeared in the concert of European powers and said: "You ruined Holland, you defeated France, you have helped yourself to half the world—now be good enough to let us have our fair share." What does "fair share" mean? How is it to be determined in the capitalist world, in the world of banks? There power is determined by the number of banks, there power is determined in the way described by a mouthpiece of the American multimillionaires, which declared with typically American frankness and typically American cynicism: "The war in Europe is

being waged for world domination. To dominate the world two things are needed: dollars and banks. We have the dollars, we shall make the banks and we shall dominate the world." This statement was made by a leading newspaper of the American multimillionaires. I must say, there is a thousand times more truth in this cynical statement of a blustering American multimillionaire than in thousands of articles by bourgeois liars who try to make out that this war is being waged for national interests, on national issues, and utter similar glaringly patent lies which dismiss history completely and take an isolated example like the case of the German beast of prey who attacked Belgium. The case is undoubtedly a real one. This group of predators did attack Belgium with brutal ferocity,⁹⁷ but it did the same thing the other group did yesterday by other means and is doing today to other nations.

When we argue about annexations—and this bears on the question I have been trying briefly to explain to you as the history of the economic and diplomatic relations which led up to the present war—when we argue about annexations we always forget that these, generally, are what the war is being waged for; it is for the carve-up of conquered territories, or, to put it more popularly, for the division of the plundered spoils by the two robber gangs. When we argue about annexations we constantly meet with methods which, scientifically speaking, do not stand up to criticism, and which, as methods of public journalism, are deliberate humbug. Ask a Russian chauvinist or social-chauvinist what annexation by Germany means, and he will give you an excellent explanation, because he understands that perfectly well. But he will never answer a request for a general definition of annexation that will fit them all—Germany, Britain, and Russia. He will never do that! And when *Rech* (to pass from theory to practice) sneered at *Pravda*, saying, "These Pravdists consider Kurland a case of annexation! How can you talk to such people!" and we answered: "Please give us such a definition of annexation as would apply to the Germans, the English, and the Russians, and we add that either you evade this issue or we shall expose you on the spot!"—*Rech*

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 35-36.—Ed.

kept silent. We maintain that no newspaper, either of the chauvinists in general, who simply say that the fatherland must be defended, or of the social-chauvinists, has ever given a definition of annexation that would fit both Germany and Russia, that would be applicable to any side. It cannot do this for the simple reason that this war is the continuation of a policy of annexations, that is, a policy of conquest, of capitalist robbery on the part of both groups involved in the war. Obviously, the question of which of these two robbers was the first to draw the knife is of small account to us. Take the history of the naval and military expenditures of these two groups over a period of decades, take the history of the little wars they waged before the big war—"little" because few Europeans died in those wars, whereas hundreds of thousands of people belonging to the nations they were subjugating died in them, nations which from their point of view could not be regarded as nations at all (you couldn't very well call those Asians and Africans nations!); the wars waged against these nations were wars against unarmed people, who were simply shot down, machine-gunned. Can you call them wars? Strictly speaking, they were not wars at all, and you could forget about them. That is their attitude to this downright deception of the masses.

The present war is a continuation of the policy of conquest, of the shooting down of whole nationalities, of unbelievable atrocities committed by the Germans and the British in Africa, and by the British and the Russians in Persia—which of them committed most it is difficult to say. It was for this reason that the German capitalists looked upon them as their enemies. Ah, they said, you are strong because you are rich? But we are stronger, therefore we have the same "sacred" right to plunder. That is what the real history of British and German finance capital in the course of several decades preceding the war amounts to. That is what the history of Russo-German, Russo-British, and German-British relations amounts to. There you have the clue to an understanding of what the war is about. That is why the story that is current about the cause of the war is sheer duplicity and humbug. Forgetting the history of finance

capital, the history of how this war had been brewing over the issue of redivision, they present the matter like this: two nations were living at peace, then one attacked the other, and the other fought back. All science, all banks are forgotten, and the peoples are told to take up arms, and so are the peasants, who know nothing about politics. All they have to do is to fight back! The logical thing, following this line of argument, would be to close down all newspapers, burn all books and ban all mention of annexations in the press. In this way such a view of annexations could be justified. They can't tell the truth about annexations because the whole history of Russia, Britain, and Germany has been one of continuous, ruthless and sanguinary war over annexations. Ruthless wars were waged in Persia and Africa by the Liberals, who flogged political offenders in India for daring to put forward demands which were being fought for here in Russia. The French colonial troops oppressed peoples too. There you have the pre-history, the real history of unprecedented plunder! Such is the policy of these classes, of which the present war is a continuation. That is why, on the question of annexations, they cannot give the reply that we give, when we say that any nation joined to another one, not by the voluntary choice of its majority but by a decision of a king or government, is an annexed nation. To renounce annexation is to give each nation the right to form a separate state or to live in union with whomsoever it chooses. An answer like that is perfectly clear to every worker who is at all class-conscious.

In every resolution, of which dozens are passed, and published even in such a paper as *Zemlya i Volya*,⁹⁸ you will find the answer, poorly expressed: We don't want a war for supremacy over other nations, we are fighting for our freedom. That is what all the workers and peasants say, that is how they express the view of the workingman, his understanding of the war. They imply by this that if the war were in the interests of the working people against the exploiters they would be for such a war. So would we, and there is not a revolutionary party that could be against it. Where they go wrong, these movers of numerous resolutions, is when they believe that the war is being waged by them. We

soldiers, we workers, we peasants are fighting for our freedom. I shall never forget the question one of them asked me after a meeting. "Why do you speak against the capitalists all the time?" he said. "I'm not a capitalist, am I? We're workers, we're defending our freedom." You're wrong, you are fighting because you are obeying your capitalist government; it's the governments, not the peoples, who are carrying on this war. I am not surprised at a worker or peasant, who doesn't know his politics, who has not had the good or bad fortune of being initiated into the secrets of diplomacy or the picture of this finance plunder (this oppression of Persia by Russia and Britain, say)—I am not surprised at him forgetting this history and saying naïvely: Who cares about the capitalists, when it's me who's fighting! He doesn't understand the connection between the war and the government, he doesn't understand that the war is being waged by the government, and that he is just a tool in the hands of that government. He can call himself a revolutionary people and write eloquent resolutions—to Russians this means a lot, because this has come into their lives only recently. There has recently appeared a "revolutionary" declaration by the Provisional Government. This doesn't mean anything. Other nations, more experienced than we are in the capitalist art of hoodwinking the masses by penning "revolutionary" manifestos, have long since broken all the world's records in this respect. If you take the parliamentary history of the French Republic since it became a republic supporting tsarism, you will find dozens of examples during the decades of this history when manifestos full of the most eloquent phrases served to mask a policy of the most outrageous colonial and financial plunder. The whole history of the Third Republic in France⁹⁹ is a history of this plunder. Such are the origins of the present war. It is not due to malice on the part of capitalists or the mistaken policy of some monarch. To think so would be incorrect. No, this war is an inevitable outgrowth of super-capitalism, especially banking capital, which resulted in some four banks in Berlin and five or six in London dominating the whole world, appropriating the world's funds, reinforcing their financial policy by armed force, and finally clashing in a savage armed conflict because

they had come to the end of their free tether in the matter of conquests. One or the other side had to relinquish its colonies. Such questions are not settled voluntarily in this world of capitalists. This issue could only be settled by war. That is why it is absurd to blame one or another crowned brigand. They are all the same, these crowned brigands. That is why it is equally absurd to blame the capitalists of one or another country. All they are to blame for is for having introduced such a system. But this has been done in full keeping with the law, which is safeguarded by all the forces of a civilised state. "I am fully within my rights, I am a buyer of shares. All the law courts, all the police, the whole standing army and all the navies in the world are safeguarding my sacred right to these shares." Who's to blame for banks being set up which handle hundreds of millions of rubles, for these banks casting their nets of plunder over the whole world, and for their being locked in mortal combat? Find the culprit if you can! The blame lies with half a century of capitalist development, and the only way out of this is by the overthrow of the rule of the capitalists and by a workers' revolution. That is the answer our Party has arrived at from an analysis of the war, and that is why we say: the very simple question of annexations has been so muddled up and the spokesmen of the bourgeois parties have uttered so many lies that they are able to make out that Kurland is not annexation by Russia. They have shared Kurland and Poland between them, those three crowned brigands. They have been doing this for a hundred years, carving up the living flesh. And the Russian brigand snatched most because he was then the strongest. And now that the young beast of prey, Germany, who was then a party to the carve-up, has grown into a strong capitalist power, she demands a redivision. You want things to stay as they were? she says. You think you are stronger? Let's try conclusions!

That is what the war boils down to. Of course, the challenge "let's try conclusions" is merely an expression of the decade-long policy of plunder, the policy of the big banks. That is why no one but we can tell this truth about annexations, a simple truth that every worker and peasant will understand. That is why the question of treaties, such

a simple question, is deliberately and disgracefully confused by the whole press. You say that we have a revolutionary government, that there are ministers in that government who are well-nigh socialists—Narodniks and Mensheviks. But when they make declarations about peace without annexations, on condition that this term is not defined (because it means taking away German annexations and keeping our own), then we say: Of what value are your "revolutionary" cabinet, your declarations, your statements that you are not out for a war of conquest, if at the same time you tell the army to take the offensive? Don't you know that we have treaties, that these treaties were concluded by Nicholas the Bloody in the most predatory fashion? You don't know it? It is pardonable for the workers or peasants not to know that. They did not plunder, they read no clever books. But when educated Cadets preach this sort of stuff they know perfectly well what these treaties are about. Although they are "secret" treaties, the whole diplomatic press in all countries talks about them, saying: "You'll get the Straits, you'll get Armenia, you'll get Galicia, you'll get Alsace-Lorraine, you'll get Trieste, and we'll make a final carve-up of Persia." And the German capitalist says: "I'll seize Egypt, I'll subjugate the European nations unless you return my colonies to me with interest." Shares are things that can't do without interest. That is why the question of treaties, itself a clear, simple question, has touched off such a torrent of barefaced outrageous lies as those that are now pouring from the pages of all the capitalist newspapers.

Take today's paper *Dyen*.¹⁰⁰ Vodovozov, a man absolutely innocent of Bolshevism, but who is an honest democrat, states in it: I am opposed to secret treaties; let me say this about the treaty with Rumania. There is a secret treaty with Rumania and it says that Rumania will receive a number of foreign peoples if she fights on the side of the Allies. The treaties which the other Allies have are all the same. They wouldn't have started to subjugate nations if they had not had these treaties. To know their contents you do not have to burrow in special journals. It is sufficient to recollect the basic facts of economic and diplomatic history. For decades Austria has been after the Balkans with an eye to subjugate-

tion. And if they have clashed it is because they couldn't help clashing. That is why, when the masses demand that these treaties should be published, a demand that is growing more insistent every day, ex-Minister Milyukov and the present Minister Tereshchenko (one in a government without socialist ministers, the other in a government with a number of near-socialist ministers) declare that publication of the treaties would mean a break with the Allies.

Obviously, you can't publish the treaties because you are all participants in the same gang of robbers. We agree with Milyukov and Tereshchenko that the treaties cannot be published. Two different conclusions can be drawn from this. If we agree with Milyukov and Tereshchenko that the treaties cannot be published—what follows from this? If the treaties cannot be published, then we've got to help the capitalist ministers continue the war. The other conclusion is this: since the capitalists cannot publish the treaties themselves, then the capitalists have got to be overthrown. Which of these two conclusions you consider to be correct, I leave it to you to decide, but be sure to consider the consequences. If we reason the way the Narodnik and Menshevik ministers reason, we come to this: once the government says that the treaties cannot be published, then we must issue a new manifesto. Paper is not so dear yet that we cannot write new manifestos. We shall write a new manifesto and start an offensive. What for? With what aims? Who is to set these aims? The soldiers are called upon to carry out the predatory treaties with Rumania and France. Send Vodovozov's article to the front and then complain that this is all the Bolsheviks' doing, the Bolsheviks must have invented this treaty-with-Rumania business. In that case you would not only have to make life a hell for *Pravda*, but even kick Vodovozov out for having studied history. You would have to make a bonfire of all Milyukov's books—terribly dangerous books those. Just open any book by the leader of the party of "people's freedom",¹⁰¹ by this ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs. They are good books. What do they say? They say that Russia has "a right" to the Straits, to Armenia, to Galicia, to Eastern Prussia. He has carved them all up, and even appends a map. Not only the Bolsheviks and Vodo-

vozov will have to be sent to Siberia for writing such revolutionary articles, but Milyukov's books will have to be burnt too, because if you collected simple quotations from these books today and sent them to the front, no inflammatory leaflet would have such an inflammatory effect as this would have.

It remains for me now, according to the brief plan of this talk I have sketched for myself, to touch on the question of "revolutionary defencism". I believe, after what I have had the honour of reporting to you, that I may now be allowed to touch only briefly on this question.

By "revolutionary defencism" we mean vindication of the war on the plea that, after all, we have made the revolution, after all, we are a revolutionary people, a revolutionary democracy. But what answer do we give to that? What revolution did we make? We overthrew Nicholas. The revolution was not so very difficult compared with one that would have overthrown the whole class of landowners and capitalists. Who did the revolution put in power? The landowners and capitalists—the very same classes who have long been in power in Europe. Revolutions like this occurred there a hundred years ago. The Tereshchenkos, Milyukovs, and Konovalovs have been in power there for a long time, and it doesn't matter a bit whether they have a civil list¹⁰² to pay their tsars or whether they do without this luxury. A bank remains a bank, whether capital is invested in concessions by the hundred or not; profits remain profits, be it in a republic or in a monarchy. If any savage country dares to disobey our civilised Capital, which sets up such splendid banks in the colonies, in Africa and Persia—if any savage nation should disobey our civilised bank, we send troops out who restore culture, order, and civilisation, as Lyakhov did in Persia, and the French "republican" troops did in Africa, where they exterminated peoples with equal ferocity. What difference does it make? We have here the same "revolutionary defencism", displayed only by the unenlightened masses, who see no connection between war and the government, who do not know that this policy is sanctioned by treaties. The treaties have remained, the banks have remained, the concessions have remained. In Russia the best men

of their class are in the government, but the nature of the war has not changed a bit because of this. The new "revolutionary defencism" uses the great concept of revolution merely as a cloak to cover up the dirty and bloody war waged for the sake of dirty and outrageous treaties.

The Russian revolution has not altered the war, but it has created organisations which exist in no other country and were seldom found in revolutions in the West. Most of the revolutions were confined to the emergence of governments of our Tereshchenko and Kononov type, while the country remained passive and disorganised. The Russian revolution has gone further than that. In this we have the germ of hope that it may overcome the war. Besides the government of "near-socialist" ministers, the government of imperialist war, the government of offensive, a government tied up with Anglo-French capital—besides this government and independent of it we have all over Russia a network of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. Here is a revolution which has not said its last word yet. Here is a revolution which Western Europe, under similar conditions, has not known. Here are organisations of those classes which really have no need for annexations, which have not put millions in the banks, and which are probably not interested in whether the Russian Colonel Lyakhov and the British Liberal ambassador divided Persia properly or not. Here is the pledge of this revolution being carried further, i.e., that the classes which have no interest in annexations, and despite the fact that they put too much trust in the capitalist government, despite the appalling muddle and appalling deception contained in the very concept "revolutionary defencism", despite the fact that they support the war loan, support the government of imperialist war—despite all this—have succeeded in creating organisations in which the mass of the oppressed classes are represented. These are the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, which, in very many local areas in Russia, have gone much further than the Petrograd Soviet in their revolutionary work. It is only natural, because in Petrograd we have the central authority of the capitalists.

And when Skobelev in his speech yesterday said: "We'll take all the profits, we'll take 100 per cent," he was just letting himself go with ministerial *élan*. If you take today's *Rech* you will see what the response is to this passage in Skobelev's speech. They write there: "Why, this means starvation, death! One hundred per cent means all!" Minister Skobelev goes farther than the most extreme Bolshevik. It's slandering the Bolsheviks to say that they are the extreme Left. Minister Skobelev is much more "Left". They called me all the ugly names they could think of, saying that I wanted to take their last shirt from the capitalists. At any rate, it was Shulgin who said: "Let them take our last shirt!" Imagine a Bolshevik going up to Citizen Shulgin and wanting to take his shirt from him. He could just as well and with greater justification accuse Minister Skobelev of this. We never went as far as that. We never suggested taking 100 per cent of profits. Nevertheless, it is a valuable promise. If you take the resolution of our Party you will see that we propose there, only in a more closely reasoned form, exactly what I have been proposing. Control must be established over the banks, followed by a fair tax on incomes. And nothing more! Skobelev suggests taking a hundred kopeks in the ruble. We proposed and propose nothing of the sort. Skobelev doesn't really mean it, and if he does he would not be able to do it for the simple reason that to promise such things while making friends with Tereshchenko and Konovalov is somewhat ludicrous. You could take 80 or 90 per cent of a millionaire's income, but not arm in arm with such ministers. If the Soviets had the power they would really take it, but not all of it—they have no need to. They would take the bulk of the income. No other state authority could do that. Minister Skobelev may have the best of intentions. I have known those parties for several decades—I have been in the revolutionary movement for thirty years. I am the last person, therefore, to question their good intentions. But that is not the point. It is not a question of good intentions. Good intentions pave the road to hell. All the government offices are full of papers signed by our ministers, but nothing has changed as a result of it. If you want to introduce control, start it! Our programme is such that in reading

Skobelev's speech we can say: we do not demand more. We are much more moderate than Minister Skobelev. He proposes both control and 100 per cent. We don't want to take 100 per cent, but we say: "Until you start doing things we don't believe you!" Here lies the difference between us: we don't believe words and promises and don't advise others to believe them. The lessons of parliamentary republics teach us not to believe in paper utterances. If you want control, you've got to start it. One day is enough to have a law on such control issued. The employees' council at every bank, the workers' council at every factory, and all the parties receive the right of control. But you can't do that, we shall be told. This is a commercial secret, this is sacred private property. Well, just as you like, make your choice. If you want to safeguard all those ledgers and accounts, all the transactions of the trusts, then don't chatter about control, about the country going to ruin.

In Germany the situation is still worse. In Russia you can get grain but in Germany you can't. You can do a lot in Russia through organisation, but you can do nothing more in Germany. There is no more grain left, and the whole nation is faced with disaster. People today write that Russia is on the brink of ruin. If that is so, then it is a crime to safeguard "sacred" private property. Therefore, what do the words about control mean? Surely you haven't forgotten that Nicholas Romanov, too, wrote a good deal about control. You will find him repeating a thousand times the words "state control", "public control", "appointment of senators". In the two months following the revolution the industrialists have robbed the whole of Russia. Capitalists have made staggering profits; every financial report tells you that. And when the workers, two months after the revolution, had the "audacity" to say they wanted to live like human beings, the whole capitalist press throughout the country set up a howl. Every number of *Rech* is a wild howl about the workers wanting to rob the country, but all we promise is merely control over the capitalists. Can't we have less promises and more deeds? If what you want is bureaucratic control, control through the same organs as before, our Party declares its profound conviction that you

cannot be given support in this, even if there were a dozen Narodnik and Menshevik ministers in your government instead of half a dozen. Control can only be exercised by the people. You must arrange control by bank employees' councils, engineers' councils, and workers' councils, and start that control right away, tomorrow. Every official should be made responsible, on pain of criminal persecution, for any wrong information he may give in any of these institutions. It is a matter of life and death to the country. We want to know how much grain there is, how much raw material, how many work hands there are and where they are to be placed.

This brings me to the last question—that of how to end the war. The ridiculous view is ascribed to us that we are out for a separate peace. The German robber capitalists are making peace overtures, saying: "We'll give you a piece of Turkey and Armenia if you give us ore-bearing lands." That is what the diplomats are talking about in every neutral city! Everybody knows it. Only it is veiled with conventional diplomatic phrases. That's what diplomats are for—to speak in diplomatic language. What nonsense it is to allege that we are for ending the war by a separate peace! To end the war which is being waged by the capitalists of all the wealthiest powers, a war stemming from the decade-long history of economic development, by one-sided withdrawal from military operations is such a stupid idea that it would be absurd even to refute it. The fact that we specially drew up a resolution to refute it is because we wanted to explain things to the broad masses before whom we were being slandered. It is not a matter that can be seriously discussed. The war which the capitalists of all countries are waging cannot be ended without a workers' revolution against these capitalists. So long as control remains a mere phrase instead of deed, so long as the government of the capitalists has not been replaced by a government of the revolutionary proletariat, the government is doomed merely to reiterate: We are heading for disaster, disaster, disaster. Socialists are now being jailed in "free" Britain for saying what I am saying. In Germany Liebknecht has been imprisoned for saying what I am say-

ing, and in Austria Friedrich Adler is in jail for saying the same thing with the help of a revolver (he may have been executed by now). The sympathy of the mass of workers in all countries is with these socialists and not with those who have sided with their capitalists. The workers' revolution is mounting throughout the world. In other countries it is a more difficult matter, of course. They have no half-wits there like Nicholas and Rasputin. There the best men of their class are at the head of the government. They lack conditions there for a revolution against autocracy. They have there a government of the capitalist class. The most talented representatives of that class have been governing there for a long time. That is why the revolution there, though it has not come yet, is bound to come, no matter how many revolutionaries, men like Friedrich Adler and Karl Liebknecht, may die in the attempt. The future belongs to them, and the workers of all countries follow their lead. The workers in all countries are bound to win.

On the question of America entering the war I shall say this. People argue that America is a democracy, America has the White House. I say: Slavery was abolished there half a century ago. The anti-slave war ended in 1865. Since then multimillionaires have mushroomed. They have the whole of America in their financial grip. They are making ready to subdue Mexico and will inevitably come to war with Japan over a carve-up of the Pacific. This war has been brewing for several decades. All literature speaks about it. America's real aim in entering the war is to prepare for this future war with Japan. The American people do enjoy considerable freedom and it is difficult to conceive them standing for compulsory military service, for the setting up of an army pursuing any aims of conquest—a struggle with Japan, for instance. The Americans have the example of Europe to show them what this leads to. The American capitalists have stepped into this war in order to have an excuse, behind a smoke-screen of lofty ideals championing the rights of small nations, for building up a strong standing army.

The peasants refuse to give up their grain for money and demand implements, boots, and clothes. There is a great

measure of profound truth in this decision. Indeed, the country has reached a stage of ruin when it now faces the same situation, although to a less intensive degree, that other countries have long been facing, a situation in which money has lost its value. The rule of capitalism is being so strongly undermined by the whole course of events that the peasants, for instance, refuse to accept money. They say: "What do we want money for?" And they are right. The rule of capitalism is being undermined not because somebody is out to seize power. "Seizure" of power would be senseless. It would be impossible to put an end to the rule of capitalism if the whole course of economic development in the capitalist countries did not lead up to it. The war has speeded up this process, and this has made capitalism impossible. No power could destroy capitalism if it were not sapped and undermined by history.

And now we see this clearly demonstrated. The peasant expresses what everybody sees—that the power of money has been undermined. The only way out is for the Soviets to agree to give implements, boots, and clothes in exchange for grain. This is what we are coming to, this is the answer that life dictates. Without this, tens of millions of people will go hungry, without clothes and boots. Tens of millions of people are facing disaster and death; safeguarding the interests of the capitalists is the last thing that should bother us. The only way out is for all power to be transferred to the Soviets, which represent the majority of the population. Possibly mistakes may be made in the process. No one claims that such a difficult task can be disposed of offhand. We do not say anything of the sort. We are told that we want the power to be in the hands of the Soviets, but they don't want it. We say that life's experience will suggest this solution to them, and the whole nation will see that there is no other way out. We do not want a "seizure" of power, because the entire experience of past revolutions teaches us that the only stable power is the one that has the backing of the majority of the population. "Seizure" of power, therefore, would be adventurism, and our Party will not have it. If the government will be a government of the majority, it may perhaps embark on a policy that will prove, at first, to be erroneous,

but there is no other way out. We shall then have a peaceful policy shift within the same organisations. No other organisations can be invented. That is why we say that no other solution of the question is conceivable.

How can the war be ended? If the Soviet were to assume power and the Germans continued the war—what would we do then? Anyone interested in the views of our Party could have read in *Pravda* the other day an exact quotation of what we said abroad as far back as 1915, namely, that if the revolutionary class in Russia, the working class, comes to power, it will have to offer peace. And if our terms are rejected by the German capitalists or by the capitalists of any other country, then that class will stand wholly for war.* We are not suggesting that the war be ended at one blow. We do not promise that. We preach no such impossible and impracticable thing as that the war can be ended by the will of one side alone. Such promises are easy to give but impossible to fulfil. There is no easy way out of this terrible war. It has been going on for three years. You will go on fighting for ten years unless you accept the idea of a difficult and painful revolution. There is no other way out. We say: The war which the capitalist governments have started can only be ended by a workers' revolution. Those interested in the socialist movement should read the Basle Manifesto of 1912 adopted unanimously by all the socialist parties of the world, a manifesto that was published in our newspaper *Pravda*, a manifesto that can be published now in none of the belligerent countries, neither in "free" Britain nor in republican France, because it said the truth about war before the war. It said that there would be war between Britain and Germany as a result of capitalist competition. It said that so much powder had accumulated that the guns would start shooting of their own accord. It told us what the war would be fought for, and said that the war would lead to a proletarian revolution. Therefore, we tell those socialists who signed this Manifesto and then went over to the side of their capitalist governments that they have betrayed socialism. There has been a split among the

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 394.—Ed.

socialists all over the world. Some are in ministerial cabinets, others in prison. All over the world some socialists are preaching a war build-up, while others, like Eugene Debs, the American Bebel, who enjoys immense popularity among the American workers, say: "I'd rather be shot than give a cent towards the war. I'm willing to fight only the proletariat's war against the capitalists all over the world." That is how the socialists have split throughout the world. The world's social-patriots think they are defending their country. They are mistaken—they are defending the interests of one band of capitalists against another. We preach proletarian revolution—the only true cause, for which scores of people have gone to the scaffold, and hundreds and thousands have been thrown into prison. These imprisoned socialists are a minority, but the working class is for them, the whole course of economic development is for them. All this tells us that there is no other way out. The only way to end this war is by a workers' revolution in several countries. In the meantime we should make preparations for that revolution, we should assist it. For all its hatred of war and desire for peace, the Russian people could do nothing against the war, so long as it was being waged by the tsar, except work for a revolution against the tsar and for the tsar's overthrow. And that is what happened. History proved this to you yesterday and will prove it to you tomorrow. We said long ago that the mounting Russian revolution must be assisted. We said that at the end of 1914. Our Duma deputies were deported to Siberia¹⁰³ for this, and we were told: "You are giving no answer. You talk about revolution when the strikes are off, when the deputies are doing hard labour, and when you haven't a single newspaper!" And we were accused of evading an answer. We heard those accusations for a number of years. We answered: You can be indignant about it, but so long as the tsar has not been overthrown we can do nothing against the war. And our prediction was justified. It is not fully justified yet, but it has already begun to receive justification. The revolution is beginning to change the war on Russia's part. The capitalists are still continuing the war, and we say: Until there is a workers' revolution in several countries the war cannot be stopped,

because the people who want that war are still in power. We are told: "In a number of countries everything seems to be asleep. In Germany all the socialists to a man are for the war, and Liebknecht is the only one against it." To this I say: This only one, Liebknecht, represents the working class. The hopes of all are in him alone, in his supporters, in the German proletariat. You don't believe this? Carry on with the war then! There is no other way. If you don't believe in Liebknecht, if you don't believe in the workers' revolution, a revolution that is coming to a head—if you don't believe this, then believe the capitalists!

Nothing but a workers' revolution in several countries can defeat this war. The war is not a game, it is an appalling thing taking toll of millions of lives, and it is not to be ended easily.

The soldiers at the front cannot tear the front away from the rest of the state and settle things their own way. The soldiers at the front are a part of the country. So long as the country is at war the front will suffer along with the rest. Nothing can be done about it. The war has been brought about by the ruling classes and only a revolution of the working class can end it. Whether you will get a speedy peace or not depends on how the revolution will develop. Whatever sentimental things may be said, however much we may be told: Let us end the war immediately—this cannot be done without the development of the revolution. When power passes to the Soviets the capitalists will come out against us. Japan, France, Britain—the governments of all countries will be against us. The capitalists will be against, but the workers will be for us. That will be the end of the war which the capitalists started. There you have the answer to the question of how to end the war.

HAS DUAL POWER DISAPPEARED?

It has not. Dual power still remains. The basic question of every revolution, that of state power, is still in an uncertain, unstable, and obviously transitory state.

Compare the papers of the cabinet, *Rech*, for instance, with *Izvestia*, *Dyelo Naroda*, and *Rabochaya Gazeta*. Scan the meagre—unfortunately all too meagre—official reports of what is going on at the meetings of the Provisional Government, of how the government “postpones” discussion of the most vital issues, because of its inability to take any definite course. Study the resolution of the Soviet’s Executive Committee passed on May 16, which deals with such a crucial and momentous question as that of how to cope with economic chaos and avert imminent debacle—and you will see that dual power is absolutely intact.

Everyone admits that the country is swiftly heading for disaster—yet all that is done about it is to brush the question under the carpet.

Is it not side-stepping the issue, when a resolution on such a grave question as impending economic catastrophe, at such a grave moment, merely creates a spate of commissions, departments, and sub-departments; when the same Executive Committee passes a resolution expressing nothing but pious wishes on such a scandalous affair as that of the Donets colliery owners who were found guilty of deliberately disorganising production? Price fixing, profit regulation, the establishment of a minimum wage, and the for-

mation of state-controlled trusts—yes, but how, through whom? “Through the central and local institutions in the Donets-Krivoi Rog Basin. These institutions must be democratic in character and made up of representatives of the workers, employers, the government, and democratic revolutionary organisations”!

This would be comic if the matter involved were not a tragedy.

It is common knowledge that such “democratic” institutions have existed and still exist locally and in Petrograd (the very same Executive Committee of the Soviet) but they are powerless to do anything. Meetings between the Donets workers and the employers have been going on since the end of March—March! Over six weeks have passed and the result is that the Donets workers have been forced to the conclusion that the colliery owners are deliberately disorganising production!

And again the people are fed with promises, commissions, meetings between representatives of the workers and employers (in equal numbers?), and the old rigmarole starts all over again.

The root of the evil is in the dual power. The root of the Narodniks’ and Mensheviks’ error is that they do not understand the class struggle, and want to replace or cloak it, reconcile it by means of phrases, promises, resolutions, commissions “with the participation” of representatives... of the same dual government!

The capitalists have made fantastic, outrageous fortunes out of the war. They have the majority of the government on their side. They want to rule supreme; in view of their class position they are bound to make a bid for supreme power and fight for it.

The working masses constitute the vast majority of the population, they control the Soviets, they are aware of their power as a majority, they see everywhere the promise of a “democratised” life, they know that democracy is the rule of the majority over the minority (*and not the reverse*—which is what the capitalists want), they have been striving to better their lives only since the revolution (and then not everywhere), and not since the beginning of the war—the-

refore they cannot but aspire towards supreme rule by the people, i.e., the majority of the population, towards affairs being managed according to the will of the worker majority as opposed to the capitalist minority, and not according to "an agreement" between the majority and the minority.

Dual power still remains. The government of the capitalists remains a government of the capitalists, despite the appended tag of Narodniks and Mensheviks in a minority capacity. The Soviets remain the organisation of the majority. The Narodnik and Menshevik leaders are floundering helplessly in an attempt to straddle two stools.

Meanwhile the crisis is growing. Things have reached a point where the capitalists—the colliery owners—are brazenly committing outrageous *crimes*—they are *disorganising and stopping* production. Unemployment is spreading. There is talk of lockouts. Actually they have *started* in the form of disorganisation of production by the capitalists (for coal is the *bread of industry*!), in the form of growing unemployment.

Sole responsibility for this crisis, for the impending catastrophe, rests with the Narodnik and Menshevik leaders. For it is they who are at present the leaders of the Soviets, i.e., of the majority. That the minority (the capitalists) should be unwilling to submit to the majority is inevitable. No person who has not forgotten the lessons which science and the experience of all countries teach us, no person who has not forgotten the class struggle, will look trustfully towards "an agreement" with the capitalists on such an essential, burning question.

The majority of the population, i.e., the Soviets, the workers and peasants, would be fully able to save the situation, prevent the capitalists from disorganising and stopping production, establish *their own* immediate and effective control over production if it were not for the "conciliatory" policy of the Narodnik and Menshevik leaders. They bear full responsibility for the crisis and the catastrophe.

There is *no* way out, however, other than by the worker and peasant majority deciding to act against the capitalist minority. Playing for time will not help, it will only make matters worse.

Viewed from a Marxist angle, the "conciliatory" attitude of the Narodnik and Menshevik leaders is a manifestation of petty-bourgeois indecision. The petty bourgeoisie is afraid to trust the workers, and is afraid to break with the capitalists. Such wavering is inevitable, as inevitable is our struggle, the struggle of the proletarian party, to overcome indecision, and to make the people see the necessity for rehabilitating, organising, and increasing production in the teeth of capitalist opposition.

There is no other way out. Either we go back to supreme rule by the capitalists, or forward towards real democracy, towards majority decisions. This dual power cannot last long.

Pravda No. 62,
June 2 (May 20), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
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FIRST ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES

May 4-28 (May 17-June 10), 1917¹⁰⁴

1

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

1) All landed estates and privately-owned lands, as well as crown¹⁰⁵ and church lands, etc., are to be turned over immediately to the people without any compensation.

2) The peasantry must in an organised manner, through their Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, immediately take over all the land in their localities for the purpose of its economic exploitation, without however in any way prejudicing thereby the final establishment of land regulations by the Constituent Assembly or by the All-Russia Council of Soviets, should the people decide to vest the central power of the state in such a Council of Soviets.

3) Private property in land must be abolished altogether, i.e., all the land shall belong only to the nation as a whole, and its disposal shall be placed in the hands of the local democratic institutions.

4) The peasants must reject the advice of the capitalists and landowners and their Provisional Government to come to "an agreement" with the local landowners on the immediate disposal of the land; the disposal of all the land must be governed by the organised decision of the majority of the local peasants, and not by an agreement between the majority, i.e., the peasants, and the minority, and an insignificant minority at that, i.e., the landowners.

5) Not only the landowners are fighting and will continue to fight as hard as they can against the transfer of all land-

ed estates to the peasants without compensation, but also the capitalists, who wield great power both because of their money and because of their influence on the as yet unenlightened masses through the newspapers and the numerous officials, employees, etc., who are accustomed to the domination of capital. Hence, the transfer of all the landed estates to the peasantry without compensation cannot be carried through on a complete and secure basis unless the confidence of the peasant masses in the capitalists is destroyed, unless a close alliance is established between the peasantry and the urban workers, and unless state power is taken over completely by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and other Deputies. Only state power wielded by such Soviets and administering the state not through a police, or a bureaucracy, or a standing army isolated from the people, but through a nation-wide, universal and armed militia of the workers and peasants, can guarantee the realisation of the above-mentioned agrarian reforms, which are being demanded by the entire peasantry.

6) Agricultural labourers and poor peasants, i.e., those who, because of the lack of sufficient land, cattle, and implements, earn a living partly by working for hire, must strive their hardest to organise themselves independently into separate Soviets, or into separate groups within the general peasants' Soviets, in order to protect their interests against the rich peasants, who inevitably strive towards an alliance with the capitalists and landowners.

7) As a result of the war, Russia, like all other belligerent and many neutral (non-belligerent) countries, is facing an economic debacle, disaster and famine owing to the shortage of workers, coal, iron, etc. The only way to save the country is by the workers' and peasants' deputies assuming control and management of the entire production and distribution of goods. It is therefore necessary to proceed immediately to arrange agreements between Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Soviets of Workers' Deputies on the exchange of grain and other rural products for implements, footwear, clothing, etc., without the medium of the capitalists, who must be removed from the management of the factories. With the same purpose in view, the peasant com-

mittees must be encouraged to take over the livestock and implements of the landowners, such livestock and implements to be used in common. Similarly, the conversion of all large landed estates into model farms must be encouraged, the land to be cultivated collectively with the aid of the best implements under the direction of agricultural experts and in accordance with the decision of the local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

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1917

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2

**SPEECH ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION
MAY 22 (JUNE 4), 1917**

Comrades, the resolution that I am privileged to present to you in the name of the Social-Democratic group of the Peasants' Soviet has been printed and distributed to the delegates. If any delegates have not received it we shall have more copies printed tomorrow for distribution to all who wish to have them.

In a short report I can, of course, deal only with the main, basic questions, those that are of greatest interest to the peasantry and the working class. To those interested in the question in greater detail, I can recommend the resolution of our Party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks), published as a Supplement to *Soldatskaya Pravda*¹⁰⁶ No. 13, and repeatedly dealt with in our newspaper *Pravda*.* At the moment I shall have to confine myself to elucidating the more important points of my resolution and of our Party programme on the agrarian question that are most controversial or give rise to misunderstanding. One of the first of these moot points is that touched

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 290-93.—Ed.

upon yesterday or the day before in the Chief Land Committee¹⁰⁷ at the session you have probably heard about or read about in the newspapers of yesterday or the day before. That session of the Chief Land Committee was attended by a representative of our Party, Comrade Smilga, a colleague of mine on the Central Committee. He proposed to the session that the Chief Land Committee should express itself in favour of the immediate organised seizure by the peasants of the landed estates, but a number of violent objections were raised to Comrade Smilga's proposal. (*Voice*: "Here, too.") I am now told that a number of comrades here will also speak against that proposal. All the more reason for my clarifying that point in our programme, because I believe that most of the objections against our programme are based on a misunderstanding or misrepresentation of our views.

What do all our Party resolutions, all the articles in our newspaper *Pravda* say? We say that all the land, without exception, must become the property of the whole nation. We have come to this conclusion after having studied, in particular, the peasant movement of 1905 and the statements made by peasant deputies to the First and Second Dumas, where many peasant deputies from all over Russia were able to speak with relative—*relative*, of course—freedom.

All the land must be the property of the whole nation. From this it follows that in advocating the immediate transfer, without payment, of the landed estates to the local peasants we do not by any means advocate the seizure of those estates as private property, we do not by any means advocate the division of those estates. We believe the land should be taken by the local peasantry for one sowing in accordance with a decision adopted by the majority of local peasant deputies. We do not by any means advocate the transfer of this land as private property to those peasants who are now taking it for one sowing. All objections of this kind to our proposal that I am constantly hearing and reading in the columns of the capitalist newspapers are based on a sheer misinterpretation of our views. Since we have said—and I repeat: we have said that in all our resolutions—

that the land must be the property of the whole nation and must be taken over by it without payment—it is obvious that arrangements for the final disposal of the land, the final establishment of land regulations must be made only by a central state power, that is, by a Constituent Assembly or an All-Russia Council of Soviets, should the masses of peasants and workers establish such state power as a Council of Soviets. On this score there are no differences of opinion.

The differences begin after this, when we are told: "If that is so, then any immediate uncompensated transfer of the landed estates to the peasantry would be an unauthorised act." That is the view that was expressed most exactly, most authoritatively and most weightily by Minister of Agriculture Shingaryov in his well-known telegram; we consider this view to be fallacious, unfair, most prejudicial to the peasantry, prejudicial to the farmers, and the least likely to ensure the country a supply of grain. Allow me to read that telegram to show you what we mostly object to.

"An independent solution of the land question in the absence of a general state law is inadmissible. Arbitrary action will lead to a national calamity... the lawful solution of the land question is the business of the Constituent Assembly. At the present time agricultural conciliation chambers have been set up by the tillers of the land and the landowners in each local area under the rural supply committees."

This is the chief passage from the government's statement on this question. If you acquaint yourselves with the resolution of the Chief Land Committee on this question adopted yesterday or the day before, and the resolution adopted, also the other day, at a private meeting of Duma deputies, you will see that the two resolutions proceed from the same viewpoint. The peasants who want land handed over immediately to the peasants without payment and distributed by local peasant committees are accused of unauthorised acts on the assumption that only a voluntary agreement between peasants and landowners, between the tillers and the owners of the land, would be in accordance with the needs and interests of the state. That is what we deny, that is what we dispute.

Let us examine the objections raised to our proposal. The usual objections are that the land in Russia is distributed very unevenly, both between individual small units such as villages and volosts and between the bigger units such as gubernias and regions. It is said that if the local population were to take over the land by a majority decision against the will of the landowners and without payment at that, the unevenness would remain and there would even be a danger of it becoming perpetuated. We say in reply that this argument is based on a misunderstanding. The uneven distribution will remain in any case until the Constituent Assembly or some other central state power finally establishes a new system. Until such a system is established the uneven distribution will remain whether the question is settled in the peasant's or in the landowner's way, whether in our way, with the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants, or in the way of the landowners, who are prepared to lease their land out at a high rent provided the tenant farmer and the landowner each retains his own rights. This objection is obviously incorrect and unjust. We say that a central state power must be established as quickly as possible, one that not only relies on the will and the decision of the peasant majority, but also directly expresses the opinion of that majority. There are no differences on this score. When we hear objections to the Bolsheviks, attacks levelled against us in the capitalist newspapers accusing us of being anarchists, we repudiate such accusations most emphatically and regard them as an attempt to spread malicious lies and slander.

Anarchists are those who deny the need for a state power, whereas we say that a state power is absolutely necessary, not only for Russia today but for any state, even one that goes over directly to socialism. Without doubt the firmest possible authority is necessary. All we want is for that power to be wholly and exclusively in the hands of the majority of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies. That is where we differ from other parties. By no means do we deny the need for a firm state power; we only say that all landed estates must pass into the hands of the peasants without payment, in accordance with a decision of the local peasant committee adopted by the majority, and on the condition that no

damage is done to property. This is stated most explicitly in our resolution. We emphatically reject any allegation that our view implies an arbitrary act.

In our opinion, on the contrary, if the landowners keep back the land for their own use or charge money for it, that is an arbitrary act, but if the majority of peasants say that the landed estates must not remain in the hands of their owners, and that the peasantry has known nothing but oppression by those landowners for decades, for centuries, that is not arbitrary, that is the *restitution of justice*, and we cannot put off that restitution. If the land is transferred to the peasants immediately the unevenness among the regions cannot be eliminated, that is indisputable; but nobody can eliminate that unevenness until the Constituent Assembly meets. If you were to ask Shingaryov today—that same Shingaryov who raises objections to us and reviles the champions of our views in official papers for “arbitrary action”—if you were to ask him what he proposes to do about that unevenness, he would be unable to answer you. He does not and cannot propose anything.

He speaks about “voluntary agreement between peasants and landowners”. What does that mean? I will cite two basic figures on landownership in European Russia. These figures show that at one end of the Russian village there are the most wealthy landowners, among them the Romanovs, the richest and the worst of landowners, and at the other end are the extremely poor peasants. I am citing two figures to show you the significance of the sermon preached by Shingaryov and all landowners and capitalists. These are the two figures: if we take the richest landowners of European Russia, we shall see that the biggest of them, numbering less than 30,000, own about 70,000,000 dessiatines of land. That works out at over 2,000 dessiatines each. If you take the upper crust of rich Russian landowners, irrespective of what social estate they belong to (most of them are nobles, but there are other landowners as well), you find that there are 30,000 of them and they own 70,000,000 dessiatines! And if you take the poor peasants according to the same 1905 Census, which is the latest available information gathered uniformly throughout Russia—information, which, like

all statistics gathered in tsarist times by tsarist civil servants, is none too trustworthy, although it does give some approximation of the truth, some data can be compared—if you take the poor peasantry you get 10,000,000 households owning from 70,000,000 to 75,000,000 dessiatines of land. This means that one person has over 2,000 dessiatines and the other seven and a half dessiatines per household! And they say the peasants are guilty of arbitrary acts if they do not enter into a voluntary agreement. What is meant by “voluntary agreement”? It means that the landowners may perhaps let you have land for a good rent but will not give it up to anybody without payment. Is that just? Of course it is not. Is that profitable to the peasant population? Of course it is not. The form in which landed property will ultimately be established is for the future central state authority to decide, but at the present time the landed estates must be immediately transferred to the peasantry without compensation, provided the seizure is organised. Minister Chernov, opposing my colleague Smilga, said in the Chief Land Committee that the two words “organised seizure” are a contradiction in terms; if it’s a seizure, then it is unorganised, and if it’s organised, then it is not a seizure. I do not think this criticism is correct. I think that if the peasantry make a majority decision in any village or volost, any uyezd or gubernia—in some gubernias, if not all, the peasant congresses have set up local authorities representing the interests and will of the majority, the will of the population, i.e., of the majority of the tillers of the soil—once these authorities are set up in the localities the decision they make will be the decision of authorities recognised by the peasants. The local peasantry are certain to respect these authorities, for there is no doubt that these freely elected authorities will decide that the landed estates must immediately pass into the hands of the peasants. Let the peasant know that he is taking the estate of the landowner, and if he pays anything, let him pay it into a local peasant fund, and let him know that the money will go towards farm improvements, paving and road building, etc. Let him know that the land he is taking is not his land, *nor is it the landowner’s*, but the common property of the people, which the

Constituent Assembly will, in the end, dispose of. For this reason the landowners must have no right to the land from the very beginning of the revolution, from the moment the first land committee was set up, and no payment should be required for it.

The basic difference between ourselves and our opponents is in our respective understanding of what order is and what law is. Up to now law and order have been regarded as things that suited the landowners and bureaucrats, but we maintain that law and order are things that suit the majority of the peasantry. Until there is an All-Russia Council of Soviets, until there is a Constituent Assembly, local authority—*uyezd* and *gubernia* committees—constitutes the supreme law and order! We call it lawlessness when one landowner, on the basis of ancient rights, demands a "voluntary" agreement with three hundred peasant families who have an average of seven and a half *dessiatines* of land each! We say: "Let a decision be taken by the majority; we want the peasants to obtain the landed estates now, without losing a single month, a single week or even a single day."

We are told: "If the peasants seize the land now, it is the richer peasants who will get it, those who have animals, implements, etc.; would this, therefore, not be dangerous from the point of view of the poor peasants?" Comrades, I must dwell on this argument, because our Party, in all our decisions, programmes and appeals to the people, declares: "We are the party of wage-workers and poor peasants; it is their interests we are out to protect; it is through them, and through them alone, through those classes, that mankind can escape the horrors into which the capitalists' war has plunged it."

To objections like these, claiming that our decisions are contrary to the interests of the poor peasants, we pay careful attention and invite a most careful study of them because they touch the very heart of the matter, the very root of the problem. And the heart of the matter is this: how can the interests of the wage-workers, both urban and rural, and the interests of the poor peasants be protected in the revolution, in the transformation of the political system, that is

now taking place in Russia, how can and should their interests be protected against those of the landowners or rich peasants who are also capitalists? That, of course, is the crux of the matter, the nub of the whole problem. But we are told that if we advise the peasants to seize the land immediately, it is those who have implements and animals who will mostly do the seizing and the poor will be left out of the picture. And now I ask you—will a voluntary agreement with the landowners help?

You know very well that the landowners are not anxious to rent out land to those peasants who have not got a kopek in their pockets, but, on the contrary, resort to "voluntary" agreements where they are promised substantial payment. Up to now the landowners do not seem to have been giving their land away for nothing—at least nobody in Russia ever noticed it.

To speak of voluntary agreements with the landowners means greatly increasing and consolidating the privileged, preferential position and the advantages enjoyed by the rich peasant, because the rich peasant can certainly pay the landowner and every landowner regards him as a person who is good for his money. The landowner knows that the rich peasant can pay and that he can be sued for the money, so that the rich peasant has more to gain by such "voluntary" deals with the landowners than the poor peasant. If there is any possibility of helping the poor peasant straight away, it is by a measure such as I propose—the land must go to the peasants immediately and without payment.

Landed estates always have been and will be a flagrant injustice. The free tenure of that land by the peasants, if the tenure is in accordance with the will of the majority, will not be an arbitrary act but a restitution of justice. That is our point of view, and that is why we consider the argument that the poor peasantry would lose by it to be a great injustice. The agreement is called "voluntary"—only Shingaryov could call it that—when one landowner has 2,000 dessiatines and 300 peasants have an average of seven and a half per family. To call such an agreement voluntary is sheer mockery of the peasants. For the peasant it is not a voluntary agreement, but a compulsory one, and will be such

until every volost, gubernia or uyezd peasant Soviet or the All-Russia Council of Soviets declares that the landed estates are a gross injustice and that they must be abolished without losing a single hour, a single minute.

The land must be the property of the entire people, and must be declared such by a central state power. Until that power is established, the local authorities, I again repeat, should take over the landed estates and should do so in an organised manner according to the will of the majority. It is not true, as the newspapers assert, that disorder reigns in Russia! It isn't true—there is greater order in the countryside than ever before, because majority decisions are being made; there have been scarcely any acts of violence against the landowners; unfair treatment of the landowners has occurred only in isolated cases; they are insignificant and in Russia as a whole are not more in number than those which formerly occurred.

Now I want to mention another argument that I have heard and had occasion to deal with in our newspaper *Pravda* in connection with the immediate transfer of the land to the peasantry.

The argument is this: if we advise the peasants to take over the landed estates immediately and without payment, this will cause discontent, annoyance and anxiety and perhaps even indignation among the soldiers at the front who may say, "If the peasants take the land now and we have to stay at the front, we shall be left without land." Perhaps the soldiers would all leave the front and chaos and anarchy would result. But in answer to this we say that this objection has nothing to do with the real issue; whether the land is taken for payment, by agreement with the landowners, or by a decision of the majority of the peasantry, in either case the soldiers will remain at the front and will certainly remain there as long as the war lasts and will not be able to return to their villages. Why should the soldiers at the front not be anxious about the landowners imposing unfavourable terms in the form of a voluntary agreement, why should they be anxious about the peasants making a majority decision against the landowners? It is incomprehensible! Why should the soldier at the front place his trust

in the landowner, in a "voluntary" agreement with the landowner? I can understand the political parties of the landowners and capitalists talking like this, but I do not believe that the Russian soldier at the front sees it that way. If there is a "voluntary" agreement with the landowner, the soldier will not call it good order, will not place his trust in it, he is more likely to see in it a continuation of the old disorder that existed under the landowners.

If the soldier is told that the land is being taken over by the people, that the local peasants are renting land and paying rent, not to the landowner but to their own committee for the common good, for those very soldiers at the front, and not for the landowner, he is more likely to have faith in this. If this is a majority decision, the soldier at the front will know that there cannot be any "voluntary" agreements with landowners, that the landowners are also citizens with equal rights whom nobody wishes to wrong; the land belongs to the entire nation, consequently it belongs also to the landowner, not as a privilege of the nobility, but in the same way as it belongs to any other citizen. From the day the power of the tsar was overthrown—a tsar who was the biggest landowner and oppressor of the masses—there must be no privileges for the landowners. With the establishment of liberty, the power of the landowners must be considered overthrown once and for all. The soldier at the front does not stand to lose anything from this point of view; on the contrary, he will have much greater faith in the state authorities, he will not worry about his household or about his family being treated unjustly or being neglected.

There remains one other objection that has been raised to our proposal. This argument is that if the peasants were to seize the landed estates immediately, such immediate, poorly prepared seizure might lead to a deterioration in the tilling and sowing of the land. I must say that a government of the majority, a central state power, has not yet been established, the peasants have not yet acquired sufficient confidence in themselves and have not lost their trust in the landowners and capitalists; I believe that we are drawing closer to this day by day, that the peasantry are day by day losing their confidence in the old state power and realising

that only the peasants', soldiers', workers', and other elected deputies and nobody else can constitute the government in Russia; I believe that every passing day brings us closer to this, not because any political party has advised it—millions of people will never listen to the advice of parties if that advice does not fall in with their own experience. We are rapidly approaching the time when there will be no other state power in Russia except the power of the representatives of the peasants and workers. When I am told that the immediate seizure of the land is likely to lead to its being poorly cultivated, that the sowing will be poor, I must say that our peasants cultivate the land very poorly because of their downtrodden condition, because of centuries of oppression by the landowners. There is, of course, a fearful crisis in Russia, a crisis that has hit her as it has other belligerent countries, and Russia can only weather it by better cultivation of the land and the greatest economy of manpower. But today, at the time of the first sowing of crops, can anything be changed by "voluntary" agreements with the landowners? Are we to understand that the landowners will better look after the cultivation of the soil, that the peasants will sow worse if they know they are sowing the land which is the property of the whole people and not of the landowner? If they pay rent into their own peasant funds and not to the landowner? This is such nonsense that I am astonished to hear such arguments; it is absolutely unbelievable and is nothing but a ruse on the part of the landowners.

The landowners realise that they can no longer rule by means of the big stick; they realise that very well, and are adopting a form of rule that is new to Russia but which has existed for a long time in Western Europe, in the West-European countries. Two revolutions in Russia have shown that the rule of the stick is no longer possible, and in the West-European countries dozens of revolutions have demonstrated it. Those revolutions have taught the landowners and capitalists a lesson; they have taught them that they have to rule the people by deception, by flattery; that they have to adapt themselves, wear a red badge on their jackets, and, sharks though they are, declare: "We are revolutionary democrats, please wait a bit and we'll do everything for

you." The argument that the peasants will make a worse job of the sowing now if they sow land which no longer belongs to the landowners but is national property, is simply making fun of the peasants, it is an attempt to maintain rule over them by means of deception.

I repeat—there must be no landed proprietorship at all; tenure is not proprietorship, tenure is a temporary measure and it changes from year to year. The peasant who rents a plot of land does not dare regard the land as his own. The land is not his nor the landowner's, it belongs to the people. I repeat that this cannot make the sowing of crops this year, this spring, any worse. That assumption is so monstrous and improbable that there is only one thing for me to say—beware of the landowners, do not trust them, do not be taken in by fair words and promises. It must be remembered that a decision made by a majority of peasants, who are careful enough in making decisions, is a lawful decision of state significance. In this respect the peasants are to be relied upon. I have, for example, a decision passed by Penza peasants which is worded throughout with extraordinary caution; the peasants are not planning any immediate changes for the whole of Russia, but they do not want to place themselves in intolerable bondage, and in this they are right. The greatest bondage was that of the peasant to the landowner, and such it remains, bondage to the landowners and oppressors. The abolition of that bondage, therefore, must not be put off for a single week, even a single hour; but every seizure must be an organised seizure, not to make property of the seized land, not to divide it up, but to use it in common, as the property of the whole people.

I could finish with this question of the seizure of land by answering that the objections against our proposal are based on deception when they come from the landowners and capitalists, and on misunderstanding, on a too credulous belief in what the landowners and capitalists say untruthfully against us when they come from those who are neither landowners nor capitalists but people who have the interests of the working people at heart. If you examine our arguments you will see that the just demand that the landed estates be abolished immediately and similarly that property in land

belong to the people cannot be put into effect until a central government is established, but what we do advise, and urge most insistently, is that the peasants themselves, right on the spot, in the localities, take over the land so as to avoid any breach of good order. We offer this advice in our resolutions, but perhaps it is superfluous, since the peasants are doing this without our advice.

I shall pass to the second question, the one to which the greatest attention should be drawn, the question of what we think should be done with the land in the best interests of the masses when it becomes the property of the whole people, when private property is abolished. That time is close at hand in Russia. In fact, the landowners' power, if not destroyed, has been undermined. When all the peasants are in possession of the land, when there are no landowners, how are we to distribute the land? It seems to me that we must have some sort of common, basic view on this question, because, obviously, local arrangements will always be made by the peasantry. It cannot be otherwise in a democratic state; this is so obvious that there is no need even to talk about it. But in answer to the question of what must be done to secure the land for the working people, we say: "We want to protect the interests of the wage-workers and poor peasants." Our Russian Social-Democratic Party of Bolsheviks regards this as its duty. We ask ourselves: If we say that the land will belong to the nation is that the same as saying the land will belong to the working people? Our answer is: No, it is not the same thing! By saying that the land will belong to the nation, we mean that landed property will be abolished; we mean that all the land will belong to the whole people; we mean that anyone who uses land will rent it from the nation. If such an arrangement is made no differences in land tenure will remain, all the land will be alike, and, as the peasants often say, "All the old bounds and barriers will fall away, the land will be unfenced—there will be free soil, and free labour."

Does that mean that the land will be handed over to all working people? No, it does not. Free labour on free soil means that all the old forms of land tenure will be abolished and there will be no other form of ownership than

national ownership; everyone rents land from the state; there is a single state authority, that of all the workers and peasants; a peasant can rent land from it as a leaseholder; between the peasant and the state there are no middlemen; the terms on which land is rented are equal for all; that is free labour on free soil.

Does that mean that the land will be handed over to all the working people? No, it does not. You cannot eat land, and to farm it you need implements, animals, equipment, and money; without money, without implements, you cannot farm. And so, when you set up a system of free labour on free soil, there will be no landed estates, no categories on the land. There will be only land which is national property and free tenants renting land from the state. When you set up this system it will not mean the transfer of the land to all the working people, it will merely mean that every farmer will freely dispose of his land; anybody who wants land will be free to rent it from the state. That will be a big step forward compared with the Russia of the tsars and landowners. It will be a big step forward because Russia of the tsars and landowners was a country in which 70,000,000 dessiatines were given over to 30,000 Markovs, Romanovs and other such landowners; it will be a Russia in which there will be free labour on free soil. This has already been done in many places. Already now Russia is ahead of the Russia of the tsars and landowners, but this is not a transfer of land to the working people, it is the transfer of land to the farmer, because if the land belongs to the state, and those people take it who want to farm it, that is not enough; it is not enough to want to farm, the ability to farm is also needed, and even ability is not enough. Any farm labourer or day-labourer has that ability, but he does not have sufficient animals, implements, and capital, so that no matter how many decisions are taken, no matter how much we talk about it, we shall not establish free labour on free soil in that way. Even if we were to hang up notices about free soil in every volost administration, it would not improve matters as far as the working people are concerned, any more than the prisons in West-European republics would cease to be prisons because they had the words "Liberty,

Equality and Fraternity" inscribed on them. If the words "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" are written on a factory, as in America, the factory does not thereby cease to be a hell for the workers and a paradise for the capitalists.

And so we have to think of what to do further, how to ensure that there should not be merely free labour—that is a step forward, but it is still not a step towards protecting the interests of the working people; it is a step towards liberation from the landowner sharks, from exploitation by the landowners, liberation from the Markovs, from the police, etc., but it is not a step towards protecting the interests of the working people, because the poor, propertyless peasant cannot do anything with the land without animals, implements, and capital. That is why I am very sceptical about the two so-called norms or standards of land tenure, the labour standard and the subsistence standard. I know that arguments about these two norms and explanations of them are always to be met with in the Narodnik parties. I know that those parties hold the view that these two norms, these two standards, must be established—the labour standard is the largest amount of land a family can till; the subsistence standard is one just sufficient to feed the family, less would mean hunger. I have said that I am very sceptical about this question of standards or norms and I believe it is a bureaucrat's plan that will not do any good; it can't be put into practice even if it were decided upon here. That is the crux of the whole matter! That plan cannot relieve the position of the hired labourers and poor peasants to any appreciable extent, and even if you accept it, it will remain on paper so long as capitalism dominates. That plan does not help us find the true road for the transition from capitalism to socialism.

When people speak of these two norms, these two standards, they imagine that only two things exist—the land and the citizen, as if there had never been anything else in the world. If that were so, the plan would be a good one. But that is not so—there exists the power of capital, the power of money; without money there cannot be any farming on the freest land, no matter what "standards" of it you have, because as long as money remains wage-labour will

remain. And this means that the rich peasants—and there are no less than a million families of them in Russia—are oppressing and exploiting hired labourers, and will continue to oppress them on the “free” soil. Those rich peasants constantly, not by way of exception but as a general rule, resort to the hiring of workers by the year, by the season and by the day, that is, they resort to the exploitation of the poor peasants, the proletarians. Alongside this you have millions and millions of peasants who have no horses and cannot exist without selling their labour-power, without doing seasonal work for somebody else,¹⁰⁸ etc. As long as the power of money, the power of capital, remains, no matter what “standards” of land tenure you establish they will at best be useless in practice because they do not take into consideration the chief factor—that property in implements, animals, and money is distributed unevenly; they do not take into consideration the existence of the hired labour that is exploited. That is a basic fact in the present-day life of Russia, and there is no getting away from it; but if we establish any kind of “standards”, life will bypass them and they will remain on paper. To protect the interests of the propertyless, poor peasants in this great transformation of Russia in which you are now engaged and which you will undoubtedly carry through, when private property in land will be abolished and a step forward will have been made towards the better, socialist future; to protect the interests of the workers and poor peasants in this great work of transformation that you are only just beginning, which will go a long way forward and which, it may be said without exaggeration, will undoubtedly be brought to completion in Russia because there is no power that can stop it, we must not take the road of establishing norms or standards, but must find some other way.

I and my Party comrades, in whose name I have the honour to speak, know of only two ways of protecting the interests of agricultural labourers and poor peasants, and we recommend these two ways to the Peasants’ Soviet for its attention.

The first way is to organise the agricultural labourers and poor peasants. We should like, and we advise it, to have

in each peasant committee, in each volost, uyezd and gubernia, a separate group of agricultural labourers and poor peasants who will have to ask themselves: "If the land becomes the property of the whole people tomorrow—and it certainly will, because the people want it to—then where do we come in? Where shall we, who have no animals or implements, get them from? How are we to farm the land? How must we protect our interests? How are we to make sure that the land, which will belong to the whole people, which will really be the property of the nation, should not fall *only* into the hands of *proprietors*? If it falls into the hands of those who own enough animals and implements, shall we gain anything by it? Is that what we made this great revolution for? Is that what we wanted?"

The "people" will have the land, but that is *not enough* to protect the interests of agricultural labourers. It is not a matter of us here, from above, or the peasant committee, establishing a "standard" of land to be held by individuals. Such measures will not help as long as capital is dominant, and they will not offer deliverance from the domination of capitalism. There is only one way to escape the yoke of capitalism and ensure that the people's land goes to the *working people*, and that is by organising the agricultural labourers, who will be guided by their experience, their observations and their distrust of what the village sharks tell them, even though these sharks wear red rosettes in their buttonholes and call themselves "revolutionary democrats".

The poor peasants can only be taught by independent organisation in the localities, they can only learn from their own experience. That experience will not be easy, we cannot and do not promise them a land flowing with milk and honey. The landowners will be thrown out because the people wish it, but *capitalism* will remain. It is much more difficult to do away with capitalism, and the road to its overthrow is a different one. It is the road of independent, separate organisation of the agricultural labourers and the poor peasants. And that is what our Party proposes in the first instance.

Only this road promises a gradual, difficult, but real and certain transfer of the land to the working people.

The second step which our Party recommends is that every big economy, for example, every big landed estate, of which there are 30,000 in Russia, should be organised as soon as possible into a model farm for the *common* cultivation of the land jointly by agricultural labourers and scientifically trained agronomists, using the animals, implements, etc., of the landowner for that purpose. Without this *common* cultivation under the direction of the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers the land will not go entirely to the *working people*. To be sure, joint cultivation is a difficult business and it would be madness of course for anybody to imagine that joint cultivation of the land can be decreed from above and imposed on people, because the centuries-old habit of farming on one's own cannot suddenly disappear, and because money will be needed for it and adaptation to the new mode of life. If this advice, this view, on the common cultivation of the land with commonly owned animals and implements to be used to the best purpose jointly with agronomists—if this advice were the invention of individual political parties, the case would be a bad one, because changes are not made in the life of a people on the advice of a party, because tens of millions of people do not make a revolution on the advice of a party, and such a change would be much more of a revolution than the overthrow of the weak-minded Nicholas Romanov. I repeat, tens of millions of people will not make a revolution to order, but will do so when driven to it by dire need, when their position is an impossible one, when the joint pressure and determination of tens of millions of people break down the old barriers and are actually capable of creating a new way of life. When we advise such a measure, and advise caution in the handling of it, saying that it is becoming necessary, we are not drawing that conclusion from our programme, from our socialist doctrine alone, but because we, as socialists, have come to this conclusion by studying the life of the West-European nations. We know that there have been many revolutions over there and that they have established democratic republics; we know that in America in 1865 the slave-owners were defeated and hundreds of millions of dessiatines of land were distributed among the peasantry for nothing or next to nothing.

ing, and nevertheless capitalism dominates there more than anywhere else and oppresses the mass of the working people as badly as, if not worse than, in other countries. This is the socialist teaching, this is our study of other nations that firmly convinces us that without the common cultivation of the land by agricultural labourers using the best machinery and guided by scientifically trained agronomists there is no escape from the yoke of capitalism. But if we were to be guided only by the experience of the West-European countries it would be very bad for Russia, because the Russian people in the mass are only capable of taking a serious step along that new path when the direst need arises. And we say to you: the time has now come when that dire need for the entire Russian people is knocking at the door. The dire need I speak of is precisely this—we cannot continue farming in the old way. If we continue as before on our small isolated farms, albeit as free citizens on free soil, we are still faced with imminent ruin, for the debacle is drawing nearer day by day, hour by hour. Everyone is talking about it; it is a grim fact, due not to the malice of individuals but to the world war of conquest, to capitalism.

The war has exterminated millions of people, has drenched the world in blood, brought it to the brink of disaster. This is no exaggeration, nobody can vouch for what will happen tomorrow; everyone is talking about it. Take the newspaper *Izvestia* of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—everybody there is saying that the capitalists are resorting to slow-down tactics and lockouts. That means there is no work and the capitalists are laying off large numbers of workers. That is what this criminal war has brought all countries to, and not Russia alone.

That is why we say that farming on individual plots, even if it is "free labour on free soil", is no way out of the dreadful crisis, it offers no deliverance from the general ruin. A *universal labour service* is necessary, the greatest economy of manpower is necessary, an exceptionally strong and firm authority is necessary, an authority capable of effecting that universal labour service; it cannot be done by officials, it can be done only by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, because they are the peo-

ple, they are the masses, because they are not a government of officials, because they, knowing the life of the peasant from top to bottom, can organise labour conscription, can organise that protection of human labour that would not permit the squandering of the peasant's labour, and the transition to common cultivation would, under these circumstances, be carried out gradually and with circumspection. It is a difficult business, but it is necessary to go over to common cultivation on big model farms; if that is not done it will be impossible for Russia to find a way out of the debacle, out of the truly desperate situation in which she finds herself, and it would be the greatest mistake to think that such a gigantic transformation in the life of the people can be made at a single stroke. That cannot be done, it requires the greatest labour effort, it requires concentration, determination and energy on the part of each peasant and worker at his own place, at his own particular job, which he knows and has been working at for years. It is not a thing that can be done by any sort of decree, but it is a thing that must be done, because this war of conquest has brought all mankind to the brink of destruction; tens of millions of lives have been lost, and still more will be lost in this terrible war unless we strain our efforts, unless all organisations of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies take joint and determined action towards the common cultivation of the soil without the capitalists and without the landowners. That path is the only one that will lead to the real transfer of the land to the working people.

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pp. 486-505

A QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE

"Forgotten Words" of Democracy

The filthy torrent of lies and slander which the capitalist papers have spewed out against the Kronstadt comrades¹⁰⁹ has revealed once more how dishonest these papers are. They have seized on a quite ordinary and unimportant incident and magnified it to the dimensions of a "state" affair, of "secession" from Russia and so on and so forth.

Izvestia of the Petrograd Soviet No. 74 reports that the Kronstadt incident has been settled. As was to have been expected, Ministers Tsereteli and Skobelev easily came to an understanding with the Kronstadt people on the basis of a compromise resolution. Needless to say, we express our hope and confidence that this compromise resolution, provided *both* sides faithfully live up to it, will, for a sufficiently lengthy period of time, eliminate conflicts in the work of the *revolution* both in Kronstadt and the rest of Russia.

The Kronstadt incident is a matter of principle to us in two respects.

First, it has revealed a fact long ago observed by us and officially recognised in our Party's resolution (on the Soviets), namely, that in the *local areas* the revolution has gone farther than it has in Petrograd. Succumbing to the current craze for the revolutionary phrase, the Narodniks and Mensheviks as well as the Cadets did not wish to or could not grasp the significance of this fact.

Secondly, the Kronstadt incident raised an important, fundamental issue of programmatic significance, which no honest democrat, to say nothing of a socialist, can afford

to treat with indifference. It is the question of whether the central authority has the right to *endorse* officials elected by the local population or not.

The Mensheviks, to whose party Ministers Tsereteli and Skobelev belong, still claim to be Marxists. Tsereteli and Skobelev got a resolution passed in favour of such endorsement. In doing so, did they stop to think of their duty as Marxists?

Should the reader find this question naïve and pass a remark to the effect that the Mensheviks now have really become a petty-bourgeois, even defencist (i.e., chauvinist) party, and therefore it would be ludicrous even to talk about Marxism, we shall not argue the point. All we shall say is that Marxism always gives close attention to questions of democratism, and the name of democrats can hardly be denied to citizens Tsereteli and Skobelev.

Did they stop to think of their duty as democrats, of their "title" as democrats, when they passed the resolution authorising the Provisional Government to "endorse" officials elected by the Kronstadt population?

Obviously, they did not.

In support of this conclusion, we shall quote the opinion of a writer who, we hope, even in the eyes of Tsereteli and Skobelev, is considered something of a scientific and Marxian authority. That writer is Frederick Engels.

In criticising the draft programme of the German Social-Democrats (now known as the Erfurt Programme¹¹⁰) Engels wrote in 1891 that the German proletariat was in need of a single and united republic.

"But not," Engels added, "such a republic as the present French Republic, which is really an empire founded in 1798 but without an emperor. From 1792 to 1798 every French department, every commune enjoyed complete self-government after the American pattern. That is what we [the German Social-Democrats] should have too. How self-government can be organised and how a bureaucracy can be dispensed with has been demonstrated to us by America and the First French Republic, as well as by Australia, Canada and other British colonies even today. Such provincial and communal self-government is much freer than,

for instance, Swiss federalism, where each canton is really independent of the confederation (i.e., the central government) but at the same time is the supreme authority as far as the minor subdivisions of the canton are concerned—the Bezirk and the Commune. The cantonal governments appoint the Bezirkestatthalter and Prefects. This right of appointing local officers is entirely unknown in English-speaking countries, and in future we must politely abolish this right (i.e., appointment from above), just as we should the Prussian Landrätthe and Regierungsrätthe.”¹¹¹

Such was Engels’s opinion on questions of democracy as applied to the right of appointing officers from above. To express these views with greater precision and accuracy, he proposed that the German Social-Democrats should insert in their programme the following demand:

“Complete self-government in the communes, districts, and regions through officers elected by universal suffrage; *abolition of all state-appointed local and regional authorities.*”

The italicised words leave nothing to be desired in the way of clarity and definiteness.

Worthy citizens, Ministers Tsereteli and Skobelev! You are probably flattered to have your names mentioned in history books. But will it be flattering to have every Marxist—and every honest democrat—say that Ministers Tsereteli and Skobelev helped the Russian capitalists to build such a republic in Russia as would turn out to be not a republic at all, but *a monarchy without a monarch?*

P.S. This article was written *before* the Kronstadt incident entered its last stage, as reported in today’s papers. The Kronstadt people have *not* broken the compromise agreement. *Not a single fact* remotely suggesting a breach of this agreement has been cited. *Rech’s* reference to newspaper articles is mere subterfuge, since you can only break an agreement by deeds and not by newspaper articles. The fact then remains, that Ministers Tsereteli, Skobelev and Co. have allowed themselves to be scared for the hundredth and thousandth time by the screams of the frightened bour-

geoisie and have resorted to *gross threats* against the people of Kronstadt. Crude, absurd threats, that merely serve the counter-revolution.

Pravda No. 68,
June 10 (May 28), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 536-38

THE HARM OF PHRASE-MONGERING

The answers of the French and the British governments clearly demonstrate the soundness of our repeated assertions that neither the Russian, nor the French, nor the British, nor the German capitalist government can throw over the policy of annexations, and that all such promises are designed to deceive the peoples.¹¹²

We are fighting to seize Alsace-Lorraine, we are fighting for victory, the French replied. Be good enough to comply with the treaty and fight for Russian and German Poland, the British replied.

The bitter truth that capitalism cannot be reconciled to a non-annexationist policy has been exposed once more. The policy of the "conciliators", of those who wish to reconcile the capitalists and the proletariat, the policy of the Narodnik and Menshevik ministerialists, is an obvious failure. All their hopes on a coalition government have been shattered, all their promises have been exposed as mere verbiage.

And most harmful of all, as far as the cause of the revolution and the interests of the toiling masses are concerned, is the attempt to cover up the whole thing with phrases. Two shadings stand out in this torrent of phrases, one as bad as the other.

Rabochaya Gazeta, the organ of the Menshevik ministerialists, brings grist to the Cadet mill. On the one hand, it says: "On this basis [on the basis of the answers of the two Allied powers] there can be no agreement between them and us..." When they say "us", do they mean the Rus-

sian *capitalists*? The theory of the class struggle is thrown overboard; it is much more profitable to spout phrases about "democracy" in the abstract, while trampling underfoot the elementary truth of Marxism, namely, that it is precisely *within* a "democracy" that the gulf between the capitalists and the proletarians is widest.

On the other hand, *Rabochaya Gazeta* wishes to make "an attempt at revision [of the agreements and the treaties] through a conference of representatives of the Allied governments to be specially convened". The same old story: agreement with the capitalists, which, in fact, signifies *deception of the workers* by playing at negotiations with their class foes.

"The pressure of the rank and file of the French and British democracies, even pressure by the French and British proletariat alone upon their respective governments..." writes *Rabochaya Gazeta*. In Russia the Mensheviks are supporting *their own* imperialist government, but in other countries they want *pressure* to be brought to bear. . . . What is this, if not sheer phrase-mongering and humbug from beginning to end?

"We are working for it [for world peace] by convening an international socialist conference" . . . to be attended by ministers from among those ex-socialists who have sided with *their* governments! This is "working" with a vengeance to deceive the people on a major scale by means of a series of minor deceptions.

We have *Dyelo Naroda* phrase-mongering "à la Jacobin". That stern tone, those spectacular revolutionary exclamations: "we know enough" . . . "faith in the victory of our Revolution" (with a capital letter, of course), "upon this or that step . . . of the Russian revolutionary democracy . . . depend the destinies . . . of the *entire* Uprising [with a capital letter, of course] which the working people have so happily and so victoriously begun."

Obviously, if you write the words Revolution and Uprising with capital letters it makes the thing look "awfully" frightening, just as the Jacobins had it. Plenty of effect at small expense. For the people who write this are virtually helping to crush the revolution and impede the uprising of

the working people by supporting the *Russian* government of the imperialists, by supporting *their* methods of concealing from the people the secret treaties, *their* tactics of putting off the immediate abolition of the landed estates, by supporting *their* war policy of "offensive", *their* high-handed insulting behaviour towards the local representative bodies, *their* presumption to appoint or endorse the local officers elected by the local population, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Gentlemen, heroes of the phrase, knights of revolutionary bombast! Socialism demands that we distinguish between capitalist democracy and proletarian democracy, between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution, between a rising of the rich against the tsar and a rising of the working people *against the rich*. Socialism demands that we distinguish our bourgeois revolution, which has ended (the bourgeoisie now is counter-revolutionary), from the mounting revolution of the proletarians and poor peasants. The former revolution is *for* war, *for* preserving the landed estates, *for* "subordinating" the local organs of self-government to the central government, *for* secret treaties. The latter revolution has *begun* to throttle the war by revolutionary fraternisation, by abolishing the power of the landowners in the local areas, by increasing the number and the power of the Soviets, and by introducing everywhere the elective principle.

The Narodnik and Menshevik ministerialists are spouting phrases about "democracy" in the abstract, about "Revolution" in the abstract in order to *cover up* their agreement with the imperialist, now definitely counter-revolutionary, bourgeoisie of their own country—an agreement which, in effect, is turning into a struggle *against* the revolution of the proletarians and semi-proletarians.

CAPITALIST MOCKERY OF THE PEOPLE

The meeting of representatives of the capitalists and workers of the southern mining industry ended on May 23.

The meeting came to *nothing*. The capitalists found all the demands of the workers unacceptable. The workers' delegation attending the meeting read a statement *disclaiming all responsibility for possible complications*.

The case is as clear as clear can be. The crisis has not been averted in the least. The employers have not been curbed.

And now we read—it would be amusing, were it not so sad—that it has been decided to appoint a committee made up of representatives of the government and the two conflicting parties (!) and that the employers have asked for an *immediate* increase in prices!

To give the reader an idea to what lengths the capitalists go in defying the people, we quote a few passages from a *ministerial* newspaper (i.e., the mouthpiece of a party that has representatives in the cabinet):

"The workers' delegation [from the southern mining industry] informed the Economic Department of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies about the actual state of affairs. On the basis of this information, we can declare that the employers' figures quoted by N. N. Kutler are absolutely untrustworthy.

"The colliery owners had been making enormous profits before the revolution, and yet, just before its outbreak, they were haggling with the old government for a rise in the requisition prices on coal. In addition to the three kopeks which the government was willing to grant, the colliery owners were asking five more kopeks. From the revolutionary Provisional Government, on the other hand, they succeeded, during the very first days of the revolution, in obtaining a rise of eight kopeks, this

new rate being extended to the old deliveries to the railways, and to requisitions dating back to January. Afterwards they managed to get three kopeks more, making a total of eleven kopeks.

"Before the revolution the requisition price was eighteen kopeks; now it is twenty-nine. Government contracts at that time brought twenty-two kopeks per pood, while now the prices are thirty-three and thirty-four and even more."

What is this if not the most outrageous *mockery* of the people on the part of the capitalists?

Taking advantage of the revolution, the capitalist government, styling itself a "revolutionary" government and using this "noble" name to hoodwink the ignorant people, is putting more and more money into the pockets of the capitalists, helping them to amass more and more millions!

The country is on the verge of ruin, and the ten capitalist members of the Provisional Government are accommodating the employers who are looting the land, robbing the people, and *swelling* the colossal profits of capital.

"The Ministry of Commerce and Industry is under the beck and call of the congress of the South Russian mine owners. Faced by the catastrophe towards which industry in the South is heading, it does nothing to avert it; on the contrary, it systematically submits to the pressure of the southern industrialists."

Thus wrote the very same ministerial paper, the organ of the Mensheviks, *Rabochaya Gazeta*, on May 14, 1917, over a week after the coalition cabinet was formed.

Since then absolutely nothing has changed.

But the ministerial paper has been forced to admit even more damaging facts. Listen to this:

"The owners are sabotaging. They are deliberately letting things slide. If a pump is needed, no one looks for it. If wire gauze is needed for the miners' safety lamps, it is not supplied. The owners do not want to increase production. Nor do they want to spend any money on essential repairs, or on replacing worn-out equipment. The machines are getting old, and will soon be out of commission. Frequently the workers themselves, when told that this or that article cannot be obtained, go out to buy the necessary tools, and they generally find what they need. The employers do nothing to ship their products, such as coal, cast-iron, etc. Products to the value of tens and hundreds of millions of rubles lie idle, while the country is in dire need of them."

Thus wrote the ministerial paper, mouthpiece of that same Menshevik party to which Tsereteli and Skobelev belong.

This is sheer mockery of the people on the part of the capitalists. It's like a madhouse, with the capitalists acting in collusion with the bourgeois section of the Provisional Government (among the members of which are Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), with the capitalists using *obstruction* and *wrecking* tactics, and *doing nothing* to ship their products, without which the country is facing *ruin*.

Without coal, the factories and railways are coming to a stand. Unemployment is spreading. There is a shortage of goods. The peasants cannot part with their grain without getting anything in return. Famine is imminent.

And all this because of the capitalists, who are in collusion with the government!

And all this is tolerated by the Narodniks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the Mensheviks! They dismiss the matter with phrases. They wrote about these crimes of the capitalists *on May 14*. It is now May 31. Over a fortnight has passed. But nothing has changed. Famine is steadily approaching.

To cover up the crimes of the capitalists and distract the attention of the people, all the capitalist newspapers—*Rech*, *Dyen*, *Novoye Uremya*,¹¹³ *Russkaya Uolya*, *Birzheviye Uedomosti*¹¹⁴ and *Yedinstvo*—vie with each other in daily emptying their slop pails of lies and calumny over the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks are to blame for the colliery owners acting in collusion with the government, for their stopping and wrecking production!

This would indeed resemble a madhouse, were it not for the theory and world-wide experience of the class struggle which have shown us that the capitalists and *their* government (supported by the Mensheviks) will stop at nothing when it comes to safeguarding their profits.

When is this going to stop? Must we wait until disaster sweeps the land, and people begin to die of starvation by the hundred and the thousand?

INFAMY JUSTIFIED

The International Relations Department of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet has sent a letter to Huysmans, well-known as Secretary of the bankrupt Second International, whose members went over to the side of "their" national governments.

This letter, published in issue No. 78 of *Izvestia*, tries to prove that the Russian Narodniks and Mensheviks, who joined the bourgeois and imperialist government, cannot be "compared" to the West-European betrayers of socialism, who joined "their" governments. The "Department's" case is so feeble and pitiful, so ludicrously impotent that it needs to be shown up again and again in all its unsightly futility.

Argument 1. In other countries these people joined the government "under entirely different conditions". This is not true. The difference between Britain, France, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, etc., on the one hand, and present-day Russia, on the other, is "entirely" *negligible*. Everyone who has *not* betrayed socialism knows that the question at issue is the class *rule* of the bourgeoisie. In *this* respect conditions in all the countries mentioned above are the same, and not "different". National peculiarities do not in the least affect the basic issue of bourgeois class rule.

Argument 2. "Our" ministers have joined a "revolutionary" government. This is a disgraceful method of hoodwinking the people by means of the great word "revolution", which the Mensheviks and Narodniks use to cover up their betrayal of it. Everyone knows that ten of the sixteen

ministers in today's "revolutionary" government belong to the parties of the landowners and capitalists, who stand for the imperialist war and non-publication of the secret treaties, and that these parties are now pursuing a *counter-revolutionary* policy. This was clearly demonstrated by the elections to the District Councils of Petrograd on May 27-29, when *all* the Black-Hundred elements rallied to *support* the majority in our "revolutionary" government.

Argument 3. "Our" ministers joined "with a definite mandate to achieve world peace by agreement among the nations and not to drag out the imperialist war for the sake of liberating the nations by force of arms". For one thing, this mandate is not "definite" at all, since it implies neither a definite *programme* nor any definite *action*. These are mere words. It is like the secretary of a labour union becoming an executive member of a capitalist association at a salary of 10,000 rubles "with a definite mandate" to work for the welfare of labour and not drag out the rule of capitalism. Second, *all* imperialists, including Wilhelm and Poincaré, are out for "an agreement among the nations". This, too, is an empty phrase. Third, the war on Russia's part, since May 6, 1917, is obviously being "dragged out", among other reasons, because our imperialist government has so far failed to announce or propose clear and precise terms of peace, terms of an agreement.

Argument 4. "Our" ministers' aim "is not cessation of the class struggle, but its continuation by means of the instruments of political power". Splendid! All you need to do is to cloak vileness with a good aim or a good excuse for participation in vileness—and the trick is done! Participation in a bourgeois imperialist government, which is *actually* waging an imperialist war, may, it appears, be called "continuation of the class struggle by means of instruments of political power". This is a perfect gem. We suggest that at every workers' and public meeting three cheers should be raised for Chernov, Tsereteli, Peshekhonov and Skobelev, who are waging "*a class struggle*" against Tereshchenko, Lvov and Co.

You will be laughed to scorn, gentlemen of the "Department", for defending ministerialism with such arguments.

You are not original, though. The famous Vandervelde, friend of Plekhanov (whom you scold, although, since you have joined the cabinet, you have no moral right to do so), said long ago that he, too, had joined the cabinet "to continue the class struggle".

Argument 5. "Our" ministers joined the cabinet after the overthrow of tsarism and the expulsion of "the enemies of the Russian proletariat [i.e., Milyukov and Guchkov] by the movement of the revolutionary mass on April 20-21".

You can hardly blame the French for having overthrown their autocracy 122 years ago, instead of 100 days ago, or the English for having done it over 260 years ago, or the Italians for having done it decades ago. April 20 saw Milyukov ejected and replaced by Tereshchenko, i.e., absolutely nothing has changed as far as class or party relations are concerned. New promises do not imply a new policy.

You could dismiss the Metropolitan and put the Pope in his place, but that does not mean you would cease to be a clerical.

Argument 6. In Russia "there is full freedom for the proletariat and the army". That is untrue—it is *not* full. It is fuller than in other countries, and all the more shameful therefore is it to *soil* this young unsullied freedom with the dirt of participation in a bourgeois imperialist government.

The Russian betrayers of socialism differ from their European namesakes no more than the rapist differs from the ravisher.

Argument 7. "Moreover the Russian proletariat has the means of exercising complete control over those it elects."

That is untrue. Partyism in Russia is so young and disintegration among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries is so evident (Martov's semi-breakaway, Kamkov's protests and his forming a bloc with us at the elections against *his own* party, the Menshevik-S.R. bloc with *Yedinstvo*, which they themselves call *imperialist*, etc.) that there can be no question of any serious, not to say "complete", control of the ministers on the part of the proletariat.

Besides, proletariat is a *class* concept, which the Mensheviks and Narodniks have no right to use, because they rely mostly on the support of the *petty bourgeoisie*. Once you speak of classes, be precise!

Argument 8. "The fact that representatives of the Russian socialist (?) proletariat (?) have joined the government does not imply any weakening of its bonds with the socialists of all countries who are fighting against imperialism. On the contrary, it signifies a strengthening of those bonds in the joint struggle for world peace."

That is untrue. A mere phrase.

Everyone knows that their joining the government in Russia has strengthened the *bonds* that unite the *adherents* of imperialism, the social-chauvinists, the *social-imperialists* of all countries—Henderson and Co., Thomas and Co., Scheidemann and Co.

Yes, Scheidemann, too! For he realises that *German* social-imperialism will be *safe* to continue exercising its baneful influence on the world's labour movement, since *even* the Russians, their great measure of freedom and their revolution notwithstanding, have entered into a shameful alliance with *their* imperialist bourgeoisie.

Pravda No. 70,
June 14 (1), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 24,
pp. 558-61

THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS STAND ON THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC DISORGANISATION

Novaya Zhizn today publishes a resolution introduced by Comrade Avilov at a meeting of shop committees. Unfortunately, this resolution must be regarded as an example of a petty-bourgeois attitude that is neither Marxist nor socialist. Because this resolution accentuates in sharp focus all the weaknesses peculiar to the Menshevik and Narodnik Soviet resolutions, it is typical and worthy of attention.

The resolution begins with an excellent general statement, with a splendid indictment of the capitalists: "The present economic debacle . . . is a result of the war and the *predatory anarchic rule of the capitalists and the government.*" Correct! That capital is oppressive, that it is a predator, that it is the original source of anarchy—in this the petty bourgeois is ready to agree with the proletariat. But there the similarity ends. The proletariat regards capitalist economy as a robber economy, and therefore wages a class struggle against it, shapes his whole policy on unconditional distrust of the capitalist class, and in dealing with the question of the state his first concern is to distinguish which class the "state" serves, whose class interests it stands for. The petty bourgeois, at times, gets "furious" with capital, but as soon as the fit of anger is over he goes back to his old faith in the capitalists, to the hopes placed in the "state" . . . of the capitalists!

The same thing has happened with Comrade Avilov.

After a splendid, strongly worded, formidable introduction accusing the capitalists and even the government of the capitalists of running a "robber" economy, Comrade Avilov, throughout his resolution, in all its concrete substance and all its practical proposals, *forgets the class standpoint*, and, like the Mensheviks and Narodniks, lapses into bombast about the "state" in general, about "revolutionary democracy" in the abstract.

Workers! Predatory capital is creating anarchy and economic chaos, and the government of the capitalists, too, is ruling by anarchy. Salvation lies in control on the part of "the state with the co-operation of revolutionary democracy". This is the substance of Avilov's resolution.

What are you talking about, Comrade Avilov! How can a Marxist forget that the state is an organ of class rule? Is it not ridiculous to appeal to a *capitalist state* to take action against "predatory capitalists"?

How can a Marxist forget that in the history of all countries the capitalists, too, have often been "revolutionary democrats", as in England in 1649, in France in 1789, in 1830, 1848, and 1870, and in Russia in February 1917?

Can you have forgotten that the revolutionary democracy of the capitalists, of the petty bourgeoisie and of the proletariat must be distinguished one from the other? Does not the *whole* history of *all* the revolutions I have just mentioned show a distinction of classes *within* "revolutionary democracy"?

To continue in Russia to speak of "revolutionary democracy" in general after the experience of February, March, April and May 1917 is to deceive the people knowingly or unknowingly, consciously or unconsciously. The "moment" of general fusion of classes against tsarism has come and gone. The very first agreement between the first "Provisional Committee" of the Duma and the Soviet marked the *end* of the class fusion and the beginning of the class struggle.

The April crisis (April 20), followed by that of May 6, then May 27-29 (the elections), etc., etc., have brought about a definite cleavage of *classes* in the Russian revolution within the Russian "revolutionary democracy". To ignore

this is to sink to the level of the helpless petty bourgeois.

To appeal now to the "state" and to "revolutionary democracy" on the matter of predatory capitalism of all questions, is to drag the working class backward. *In effect* it means preaching complete stoppage of the revolution. For our "state" *today*, after April, after May, is a state of "predator" capitalists, who, in the persons of Chernov, Tsereteli and Co., have *tamed* a fairly considerable portion of "revolutionary (petty-bourgeois) democracy".

This state is hindering the revolution everywhere, in all fields of home and foreign policy.

To hand over to *this* state the job of fighting the capitalist "predators" is like *throwing the pike into the river*.*

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* The offending pike, in Krylov's fable, was sentenced to be drowned by being thrown into the river.—*Ed.*

A MOTE IN THE EYE

Algeria let them down. . . . Our ministeriable "Socialist-Revolutionaries" had almost succeeded in stunning the public—and themselves—into believing all their talk about "peace without annexations", but . . . Algeria let them down. *Dyelo Naroda*, a newspaper to which two Socialist-Revolutionary ministers, Kerensky and Chernov, contribute, was . . . incautious enough to invite the views of three Allied cabinet ministers (belonging to the same near-socialist camp) on Algeria. How terribly careless this was on the part of the newspaper of the Kerenskys and Chernovs will be seen from the following.

The three Allied ministers—Henderson, Thomas and Vandervelde of Britain, France and Belgium, stated that they did not want "annexation", but only "liberation of territories". The paper of the Kerenskys and Chernovs described this—quite rightly—as a "sleight of hand" on the part of the "tamed socialists", and poured out on them the following angry and sarcastic tirade:

"True, they [the three ministers] demand the liberation of territories' only 'in conformity with the will of the population'. Very well! But in that case we ought to demand that they, and we, be consistent and recognise the 'liberation' of Ireland and Finland on the one hand, and Algeria or Siam on the other. It would be very interesting to hear the opinion of, say, the socialist Albert Thomas on 'self-determination' for Algeria."

Indeed, "it would be very interesting to hear the opinion" also of Kerensky, Tsereteli, Chernov and Skobelev on "self-

determination" for Armenia, Galicia, Ukraine, and Turkestan.

Don't you see, you Narodnik and Menshevik members of the Russian Government, that by citing the example of Ireland and Algeria you have exposed the whole lie and falsity of your own position and behaviour. You have shown that "annexation" *cannot* be interpreted merely as the seizure of territory *in this war*. In other words, you have refuted yourselves and *Izvestia* of the Petrograd Soviet which only the other day declared with proud ignorance that the term annexation could be applied only to territories seized in the present war. But who does not know that Ireland and Algeria were annexed decades and centuries before the outbreak of this war?

Careless, very careless of *Dyelo Naroda!* It has exposed its utter confusion of ideas, and that of the Mensheviks and *Izvestia*, on such a key issue as annexations.

Nor is that all. You question Henderson about Ireland, and Albert Thomas about Algeria; you contrast the views on annexation of the "French *bourgeoisie* now in power" with the views of the French *people*; you call Henderson and Albert Thomas "tamed socialists"—but what about yourselves?

What are you, Kerensky, Tsereteli, Chernov, Skobelev, if not "tamed socialists"? Did *you* raise the question of the *Russian* Ireland and the *Russian* Algeria, i.e., of Turkestan, Armenia, Ukraine, Finland, etc., before the government of the "Russian *bourgeoisie* now in power"? When did you raise this question? Why don't you tell the Russian "people" about it? Why don't you qualify as "sleight of hand" the *Russian* Narodniks' and Mensheviks' blether about "peace without annexations" in the Soviet, in the government and before the people, *without raising*, clearly and unambiguously, the question of *all Russian* annexations of the same type as Ireland and Algeria?

The Russian ministeriable Narodniks and Mensheviks are in a hopeless muddle; every passing day adds to their self-exposure.

Their "final" stock argument is that we are having a revolution. But that argument is false from beginning to

end. For our revolution *so far* has only brought the *bourgeoisie* to power, as in France and Britain, with a "harmless minority" of "tamed socialists", as in France and Britain. What our revolution will produce tomorrow—whether a return to the monarchy, the strengthening of the bourgeoisie, or the transfer of power to more advanced classes—neither we nor anyone else knows. Consequently, the plea of "revolution" in general is a gross deception of the people and of oneself.

The annexation issue is a good touchstone for the Narodniks and Mensheviks, who are entangled in a web of lies. They are *just as* muddled as Plekhanov, Henderson, Scheide-mann and Co.; they are distinguishable from each other *only in words*, for as far as *deeds* are concerned they are all alike—dead to socialism.

Pravda No. 70,
June 14 (1), 1917

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FIRST ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

June 3-24 (June 16-July 7), 1917⁴¹⁵

1

SPEECH ON THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT JUNE 4(17)

Comrades, in the brief time at my disposal, I can dwell—and I think this best—only on the main questions of principle raised by the Executive Committee rapporteur and by subsequent speakers.

The first and fundamental issue before us was: *what is this assembly* we are attending, what are these Soviets now gathered at the All-Russia Congress, and what is this revolutionary democracy that people here speak so much about to conceal their utter misunderstanding and complete repudiation of it? To talk about revolutionary democracy at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and obscure this institution's character, its class composition and its role in the revolution—not to say a word about this and yet lay claim to the title of democrats really is peculiar. They map out a programme to us for a bourgeois parliamentary republic, the sort of programme that has existed all over Western Europe; they map out a programme to us for reforms which are now recognised by all bourgeois governments, including our own, and yet they talk to us about revolutionary democracy. Whom are they talking to? To the Soviets. But I ask you, is there a country in Europe, a bourgeois, democratic, republican country, where anything like these Soviets exists? You have to admit there isn't.

Nowhere is there, nor can there be, a similar institution because you must have one or the other: *either* a bourgeois government with "plans" for reforms like those just mapped out to us and proposed dozens of times in every country but remaining on paper, *or* the institution to which they are now referring, the new type of "government" created by the revolution, examples of which can be found only at a time of greatest revolutionary upsurge, as in France, 1792 and 1871, or in Russia, 1905. The Soviets are an institution which does not exist in any ordinary bourgeois-parliamentary state and cannot exist side by side with a bourgeois government. They are the new, more democratic type of state which we in our Party resolutions call a peasant-proletarian democratic republic, with power belonging solely to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. People are wrong in thinking that this is a theoretical issue. They are wrong in pretending that it can be evaded and in protesting that at present certain institutions exist side by side with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Yes, they do exist side by side. But this is what breeds countless misunderstandings, conflicts and friction. And this is why the original upswing, the original advance, of the Russian revolution is giving way to stagnation and to those steps backwards which we can now see in our coalition government, in its entire home and foreign policy, in connection with preparations for an imperialist offensive.

One or the other: either the usual bourgeois government, in which case the peasants', workers', soldiers' and other Soviets are useless and will either be broken up by the generals, the counter-revolutionary generals, who keep a hold on the armed forces and pay no heed to Minister Kerensky's fancy speeches, or they will die an inglorious death. They have no other choice. They can neither retreat nor stand still. They can exist only by advancing. This is a type of state not invented by the Russians but advanced by the revolution because the revolution can win in no other way. Within the All-Russia Council, friction and the struggle of parties for power are inevitable. But this will be the elimination of possible mistakes and illusions through the

political experience of the masses themselves (*commotion*), and not through the reports of Ministers who refer to what they said yesterday, what they will write tomorrow and what they will promise the day after tomorrow. This, comrades, is ridiculous from the point of view of the institution created by the Russian revolution and now faced with the question: to be or not to be? The Soviets cannot continue to exist as they do now. Grown people, workers and peasants, are made to meet, adopt resolutions and listen to reports that cannot be subjected to any documentary verification! This kind of institution is a transition to a republic which will establish a stable power without a police and a standing army, not in words alone but in action, a power which cannot yet exist in Western Europe and without which the Russian revolution cannot win in the sense of victory over the landowners and over imperialism.

Without this power there can be no question of our gaining such a victory by ourselves. And the deeper we go into the programme recommended to us here, and into the facts with which we are confronted, the more glaringly the fundamental contradiction stands out. We are told by the rapporteur and by other speakers that the first Provisional Government was a bad one! But when the Bolsheviks, those wretched Bolsheviks, said, "No support for and no confidence in this government", how often we were accused of "anarchism"! Now everybody says that the previous government was a bad one. But how does the coalition government with its near-socialist Ministers differ from the previous one? Haven't we had enough talk about programmes and drafts? Haven't we had enough of them? Isn't it time to get down to business? A month has passed since May 6 when the coalition government was formed. Look at the facts, look at the ruin prevailing in Russia and other countries involved in the imperialist war. What is the reason for the ruin? The predatory nature of the capitalists. There's your real anarchy. And this is admitted in statements published, not in our newspaper, not in any Bolshevik newspaper—Heaven forbid!—but in the ministerial *Rabochaya Gazeta*, which has reported that industrial coal prices were raised by the "revolutionary" government!! The coalition

government hasn't changed a thing in this respect. We are asked whether socialism can be introduced in Russia, and whether, generally speaking, radical changes can be made at once. That is all empty talk, comrades. The doctrine of Marx and Engels, as they always explained, says: "Our doctrine is not a dogma, but a guide to action."¹¹⁶ Nowhere in the world is there pure capitalism developing into pure socialism, nor can there be in war-time. But there is something in between, something new and unprecedented, because hundreds of millions of people who have been involved in the criminal war among the capitalists are losing their lives. It is not a question of promising reforms—that is mere talk. It is a question of taking the step we now need.

If you want to talk of "*revolutionary*" democracy, then you must distinguish this concept from *reformist* democracy under a capitalist Ministry, because it is high time to stop talking about "revolutionary democracy", handing out mutual congratulations on "revolutionary democracy", and get on with a *class* definition, as we have been taught by Marxism, and by scientific socialism generally. It is being proposed that we should pass to reformist democracy under a capitalist Ministry. That may be all well and good from the standpoint of the usual West-European models. A number of countries, however, are today on the brink of destruction, and we can clearly see the practical measures said to be too complicated to carry out easily, and in need of special elaboration, according to the previous speaker, the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs. He said there was no political party in Russia expressing its readiness to assume full power. I reply: "Yes, there is. No party can refuse this, and our Party certainly doesn't. It is ready to take over full power at any moment." (*Applause and laughter.*) You can laugh as much as you please, but if the Minister confronts us with this question side by side with a party of the Right, he will receive a suitable reply. No party can refuse this. And at a time when liberty still prevails, when threats of arrest and exile to Siberia—threats from the counter-revolutionaries with whom our near-socialist Ministers are sharing government—are still no more than

threats, every party says: give us your confidence and we shall give you our programme.

This programme was given by our conference on April 29.¹¹⁷ Unfortunately, it is being ignored and not taken as a guide. It seems to need a popular exposition. I shall try to give the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs a popular exposition of our resolution and our programme. With regard to the economic crisis, our programme is immediately—it need not be put off—to demand the publication of all the fabulous profits—running as high as 500 and 800 per cent—which the capitalists are making on war supplies, and not as capitalists in the open market under “pure” capitalism. This is where workers’ control really is necessary and possible. This is a measure which, if you call yourselves “revolutionary” democrats, you should carry out in the name of the Council, a measure which can be carried out overnight. It is not socialism. It is opening the people’s eyes to the real anarchy and the real playing with imperialism, the playing with the property of the people, with the hundreds of thousands of lives that tomorrow will be lost because we continue to throttle Greece. Make the profits of the capitalists public, arrest fifty or a hundred of the biggest millionaires. Just keep them in custody for a few weeks, if only in the same privileged conditions in which Nicholas Romanov is being held, for the simple purpose of making them reveal the hidden springs, the fraudulent practices, the filth and greed which even under the new government are costing our country thousands and millions every day. That is the chief cause of anarchy and ruin. That is why we say that everything remains as of old, that the coalition government hasn’t changed a thing and has only added a heap of declarations, of pompous statements. However sincere people may be, however sincerely they may wish the working people well, things have not changed—the *same class* remains in power. The policy they are pursuing is not a democratic policy.

You talk to us about “democratisation of the central and local power”. Don’t you know that these words are a novelty only in Russia, and that elsewhere dozens of near-socialist Ministers have given their countries similar promises? What

are they worth when we are faced by the real, concrete fact that while the population elects the authorities locally, the elementary principles of democracy are violated by the centre claiming the right to appoint or confirm the local authorities? The capitalists continue to plunder the people's property. The imperialist war continues. And yet we are promised reforms, reforms and more reforms, which cannot be accomplished at all under these circumstances, because the war crushes and determines everything. Why do you disagree with those who say the war is *not* being waged over capitalist profits? What is the criterion? It is, first of all, which class is in power, which class continues to be the master, which class continues to make hundreds of thousands of millions from banking and financial operations. It is the same capitalist class and the war therefore continues to be imperialist. Neither the first Provisional Government nor the government with the near-socialist Ministers has changed anything. The secret treaties remain secret. Russia is fighting for the Straits, fighting to continue Lyakhov's policy in Persia, and so on.

I know you don't want this, that most of you don't want it, and that the Ministers don't want it, because no one can want it, for it means the slaughter of hundreds of millions of people. But take the offensive which the Milyukovs and Maklakovs are now talking about so much. They know full well what that means. They know it is linked with the question of power, with the question of revolution. We are told we must distinguish between political and strategic issues. It is ridiculous to raise this question at all. The Cadets perfectly understand that the point at issue is a political one.

It is slander to say the revolutionary struggle for peace that has begun from below might lead to a separate peace treaty. The first step we should take if we had power would be to arrest the biggest capitalists and cut all the threads of their intrigues. Without this, all talk about peace without annexations and indemnities is utterly meaningless. Our second step would be to declare to all people over the head of their governments that we regard all capitalists as robbers—Tereshchenko, who is not a bit better

than Milyukov, just a little less stupid, the French capitalists, the British capitalists, and all the rest.

Your own *Izvestia* has got into a muddle and proposes to keep the status quo instead of peace without annexations and indemnities. Our idea of peace "without annexations" is different. Even the Peasant Congress¹¹⁸ comes nearer the truth when it speaks of a "federal" republic, thereby expressing the idea that the Russian republic does not want to oppress any nation, either in the new or in the old way, and does not want to force any nation, either Finland or the Ukraine, with both of whom the War Minister is trying so hard to find fault and with whom impermissible and intolerable conflicts are being created. We want a single and undivided republic of Russia with a firm government. But a firm government can be secured only by the voluntary agreement of all the peoples concerned. "Revolutionary democracy" are big words, but they are being applied to a government that by its petty fault-finding is complicating the problem of the Ukraine and Finland, which do not even want to secede. They only say, "Don't postpone the application of the elementary principles of democracy until the Constituent Assembly!"

A peace treaty without annexations and indemnities cannot be concluded until you have renounced your own annexations. It is ridiculous, a comedy, every worker in Europe is laughing at us, saying: You talk very eloquently and call on the people to overthrow the bankers, but you send your own bankers into the Ministry. Arrest them, expose their tricks, get to know the hidden springs! But that you don't do although you have powerful organisations which cannot be resisted. You have gone through 1905 and 1917. You know that revolution is not made to order, that revolutions in other countries were made by the hard and bloody method of insurrection, and in Russia there is no group, no class, that would resist the power of the Soviets. In Russia, this revolution can, by way of exception, be a peaceful one. Were this revolution to propose peace to all peoples today or tomorrow, by breaking with all the capitalist classes, both France and Germany, their people, that is, would accept very soon, because these countries

are perishing, because Germany's position is hopeless, because she cannot save herself, and because France—*(Chairman: "Your time is up.")*

I shall finish in half a minute. *(Commotion; requests from the audience that the speaker continue; protests and applause.)*

(Chairman: "I inform the Congress that the Steering Committee proposes the speaker's time be extended. Any objections? The majority are in favour of an extension.")

I stopped at the point that if the revolutionary democrats in Russia were democrats in fact and not merely in words, they would further the revolution and not compromise with the capitalists, not talk about peace without annexations and indemnities but abolish annexations by Russia, and declare in so many words that they consider all annexations criminal and predatory. It would then be possible to avert the imperialist offensive which is threatening death to thousands and millions of people over the partitioning of Persia and the Balkans. The way to peace would then be open, not an easy way—we do not say it is easy—and one which does not preclude a truly revolutionary war.

We do not put this question as Bazarov does in today's *Novaya Zhizn*.¹¹⁹ All we say is that Russia has been placed in such a position that at the end of the imperialist war her tasks are easier than might have been expected. And her geographical position is such that any power would have a hard job on its hands if it risked using capital and its predatory interests and risked rising against the Russian working class and the semi-proletariat associated with it, i.e., the poor peasants. Germany is on the brink of defeat, and since the war was joined by the United States, which wants to swallow up Mexico and which tomorrow will probably start fighting Japan, Germany's position has become hopeless, and she will be destroyed. France, who suffers more than the others because of her geographical position and whose state of exhaustion is reaching the limit—this country, while not starving as much as Germany, has lost infinitely more people than Germany. Now if the first step were to restrict the profits of the Russian capitalists and deprive them of all possibility of raking in hundreds

of millions in profits, if you were to propose to *all* nations a peace treaty directed against the capitalists of *all* countries and openly declare that you will not enter into any negotiations or relations with the German capitalists and with those who abet them directly or indirectly or are involved with them, and that you refuse to speak with the French and British capitalists, then you would be acting to condemn them in the eyes of the workers. You would not regard it as a victory that a passport has been issued to MacDonald,¹²⁰ a man who has never waged a revolutionary struggle against capital and who is being allowed to come because he has never expressed the ideas, principles, practice or experience of the revolutionary struggle against the British capitalists, a struggle for which our Comrade MacLean and hundreds of other British socialists are in prison, and for which our Comrade Liebknecht is confined to a convict prison because he said, "German soldiers, fire on your Kaiser!"

Wouldn't it be more proper to consign the imperialist capitalists to that penal servitude which most of the Provisional Government members in an expressly reconstituted Third Duma—I don't know, incidentally, whether it is the Third or the Fourth Duma—are daily preparing for us and promising us and about which the Ministry of Justice is already drafting new Bills? MacLean and Liebknecht—those are the names of socialists who are putting the idea of a revolutionary struggle against imperialism into practice. That is what we must say to all governments if we want to fight for peace. We must condemn them before their people. You will then put all the imperialist governments in a difficult position. But now you have complicated your own position by addressing your Peace Manifesto of March 14¹²¹ to the people and saying, "Overthrow your tsars, your kings and your bankers!" while we who possess an organisation unprecedentedly rich in number, experience and material strength, the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, join a bloc with our bankers, institute a coalition, near-socialist government, and draft the kind of reforms that have been drafted in Europe for decades. People there in Europe laugh at this kind of

peace struggle. There they will understand it only when the Soviets take power and act in a revolutionary way.

Only one country in the world can at the moment take steps to stop the imperialist war on a class scale, in the face of the capitalists and without a bloody revolution. Only one country can do it, and that country is Russia. And she will remain the only one as long as the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies exists. The Soviet cannot exist long side by side with the ordinary type of Provisional Government, and will remain what it is only until the offensive is taken. The offensive will be a turning-point in the whole policy of the Russian revolution, that is, it will be a transition from waiting, from paving the way for peace by means of a revolutionary uprising from below, to the resumption of the war. The path that opened up was transition from fraternisation on one front to fraternisation on every front, from spontaneous fraternisation, such as the exchange of a crust of bread with a hungry German worker for a penknife—which is punishable by penal servitude—to conscious fraternisation.

When we take power into our own hands, we shall curb the capitalists, and then the war will *not be the kind* of war that is being waged now, because the nature of a war is determined by what class wages it, not by what is written on paper. You can write on paper anything you like. But as long as the capitalist class has a majority in the government the war will remain an imperialist war no matter what you write, no matter how eloquent you are, no matter how many near-socialist Ministers you have. Everyone knows that, and everyone can see it. And the cases of Albania, Greece and Persia¹²² have shown this so clearly and graphically that I am surprised everyone is attacking our written declaration about the offensive,¹²³ and no one says a word about specific cases! It is easy to promise Bills, but specific measures are being postponed time and again. It is easy to write a declaration about peace without annexations, but the Albanian, Greek and Persian events took place *after* the coalition Ministry was formed. After all, it was *Dyelo Naroda*, not an organ of our Party, but a government organ, a ministerial organ, which said that it is Russian democracy

that is being subjected to this humiliation, and that Greece is being strangled. And this very same Milyukov, whom you imagine to be heaven knows who, although he is just an ordinary member of his party—Tereshchenko in no way differs from him—wrote that the pressure exerted on Greece came from Allied diplomats. The war remains an imperialist war, and however much you may desire peace, however sincere your sympathy for the working people and your desire for peace—I am fully convinced that by and large it must be sincere—you are powerless, because the war can only be ended by taking the revolution further. When the revolution began in Russia, a revolutionary struggle for peace from below also began. If you were to take power into your hands, if power were to pass to the revolutionary organisations to be used for combating the Russian capitalists, then the working people of some countries would believe you and you could propose peace. Then our peace would be ensured at least from two sides, by the two nations who are being bled white and whose cause is hopeless—Germany and France. And if circumstances then obliged us to wage a revolutionary war—no one knows, and we do not rule out the possibility—we should say: “We are not pacifists, we do not renounce war when the revolutionary class is in power and has actually deprived the capitalists of the opportunity to influence things in any way, to exacerbate the economic dislocation which enables them to make hundreds of millions.” The revolutionary government would explain to absolutely every nation that every nation must be free, and that just as the German nation must not fight to retain Alsace and Lorraine, so the French nation must not fight for its colonies. For, while France is fighting for her colonies, Russia has Khiva and Bokhara, which are also something like colonies. Then the division of colonies will begin. And how are they to be divided? On what basis? According to strength. But strength has changed. The capitalists are in a situation where their only way out is war. When you take over revolutionary power, you will have a revolutionary way of securing peace, namely, by addressing a revolutionary appeal to all nations and explaining your tactics by your own example. Then the way to peace secured by revolu-

tionary means will be open to you, and you will most probably be able to avert the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Then you may be certain that the German and French people will declare in your favour. As for the British, American and Japanese capitalists, even if they wanted a war against the revolutionary working class—whose strength will grow tenfold once the capitalists have been curbed and put down and control has passed into the hands of the working class—even if the American, British and Japanese capitalists wanted a war, the chances would be a hundred to one against them being able to wage it. For peace to be ensured, you will only have to declare that you are not pacifists, that you will defend your republic, your workers', proletarian democracy, against the German, French and other capitalists.

That is why we attached such fundamental importance to our declaration about the offensive. The time has come for a radical turn in the whole history of the Russian revolution. When the Russian revolution began it was assisted by the imperialist bourgeoisie of Britain who imagined Russia to be something like China or India. Yet, side by side with a government in which the landowners and capitalists now have a majority, the Soviets arose, a representative institution unparalleled and unprecedented anywhere in the world in strength, an institution which you are killing by taking part in a coalition Ministry of the bourgeoisie. In reality, the Russian revolution has made the revolutionary struggle from below against the capitalist governments welcome everywhere, in all countries, with three times as much sympathy as before. The question is one of advance or retreat. No one can stand still during a revolution. That is why the offensive is a turn in the Russian revolution, in the political and economic rather than the strategic sense. An offensive now means the continuation of the imperialist slaughter and the death of more hundreds of thousands, of millions of people—objectively, irrespective of the will or awareness of this or that Minister, with the aim of strangling Persia and other weak nations. Power transferred to the revolutionary proletariat, supported by the poor peasants, means a transition to revolutionary struggle for peace in

the surest and most painless forms ever known to mankind, a transition to a state of affairs under which the power and victory of the revolutionary workers will be ensured in Russia and throughout the world. (*Applause from part of the audience.*)

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June 28 and 29 (15 and 16),
1917

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pp. 17-28

IS THERE A WAY TO A JUST PEACE?

Is there a way to peace without an exchange of annexations, without the division of spoils among the capitalist robbers?

There is: through a workers' revolution against the capitalists of the world.

Russia today is nearer to the beginning of such a revolution than any other country.

Only in Russia can power pass to existing institutions, to the Soviets, immediately, peacefully, without an uprising, for the capitalists could not resist the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

With such a transfer of power it would be possible to curb the capitalists, now making thousands of millions in profits from contracts, to expose all their tricks, arrest the millionaire embezzlers of public property, break their unlimited power.

Only after the transfer of power to the oppressed classes could Russia approach the oppressed classes of other countries, not with empty words, not with mere appeals, but calling their attention to her example, and immediately and explicitly *proposing* clear-cut terms for *universal peace*.

"Comrade workers and toilers of the world," she would say in the proposal for an immediate peace. "Enough of the bloodshed. Peace is possible. A just peace means peace without annexations, without seizures. Let the German capitalist robbers and their crowned robber Wilhelm know that we shall not come to terms with them, that we regard as robbery on their part not only what they have grabbed

since the war, but also Alsace and Lorraine, and the Danish and Polish areas of Prussia.

"We also consider that Poland, Finland, the Ukraine, and other non-Great-Russian lands were seized by the Russian tsars and capitalists.

"We consider that *all* colonies, Ireland, and so on, were seized by the British, French and other capitalists.

"We Russian workers and peasants shall *not* hold *any* of the non-Great-Russian lands or colonies (such as Turkestan, Mongolia, or Persia) by force. Down with war *for the division of colonies*, for the division of annexed (seized) lands, for the division of capitalist spoils!"

The example of the Russian workers will be followed inevitably, perhaps not tomorrow (revolutions are not made to order), but inevitably all the same by the workers and all the working people of *at least two great countries*, Germany and France.

For *both are perishing*, the first of hunger, the second of depopulation. Both will conclude peace on our terms, which are just, *in defiance of their capitalist governments*.

The road to peace lies before us.

Should the capitalists of England, Japan and America try to resist *this* peace, the oppressed classes of Russia and other countries will not shrink from a revolutionary war *against the capitalists*. In *this* war they will defeat the capitalists of *the whole world*, not just those of the three countries lying far from Russia and taken up with their own rivalries.

The road to a just peace lies before us. Let us not be afraid to *take it*.

"THE GREAT WITHDRAWAL"

"The great withdrawal of the bourgeoisie from the government." This is what the main speaker of the Executive Committee, in a report he submitted last Sunday, called the formation of the coalition government and the entry of former socialists into the Ministry.

Only the first three words in this phrase are correct. "The great withdrawal" does indeed characterise and explain May 6 (the formation of the coalition government). It was on that day that "the great withdrawal" really began, or, to be exact, manifested itself most clearly. Only, it was not a great withdrawal of the bourgeoisie from the government but a great withdrawal of the Menshevik and Narodnik leaders *from* the revolution.

The significance of the Congress of Soviets of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies now in session lies in the fact that it has made this circumstance clearer than ever.

May 6 was a triumph for the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois government was on the verge of defeat. The masses were definitely and absolutely, sharply and irreconcilably opposed to it. One word from the Narodnik and Menshevik leaders of the Soviet would have sufficed to induce the government to relinquish its power unquestioningly. Lvov had to admit that openly at the sitting in the Mariinsky Palace.

The bourgeoisie resorted to a skilful manoeuvre which was new to the Russian petty bourgeoisie and to Russia's masses in general, which intoxicated the intellectual Menshevik and Narodnik leaders, and which took proper ac-

count of their Louis Blanc nature. The reader may recall that Louis Blanc was a renowned petty-bourgeois socialist who entered the French Government in 1848 and became as sadly famed in 1871. Louis Blanc imagined himself to be *the leader* of the "labour democrats" or "socialist democrats" (the term "democracy" was used in the France of 1848 as frequently as in *Socialist-Revolutionary* and Menshevik writings in 1917), but in reality he was the *tail-end* of the bourgeoisie, a plaything in their hands.

During the almost seventy years that have elapsed since then, that manoeuvre, which is a novelty in Russia, has been made many times by the bourgeoisie in the West. The purpose of this manoeuvre is to make the "socialist democratic" leaders who "withdraw" from socialism and from the revolution harmless *appendages* of a bourgeois government, to shield this government from the people by means of near-socialist Ministers, to cover up the counter-revolutionary nature of the bourgeoisie by a glittering, spectacular façade of "socialist" ministerialism.

This method has been developed to a veritable art in France. It has also been tested on many occasions in Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and many of the Latin countries. It is this manoeuvre that was made in Russia on May 6, 1917.

"Our" near-socialist Ministers found themselves in a situation in which the bourgeoisie began to use *them* as their cat's paw, to do *through them* what the bourgeoisie could never have done without them.

Through Guchkov it would have been impossible to lure the people into continuing the *imperialist*, predatory war, a war *for* redivision of the colonies and annexed territories in general. Through Kerensky (and Tsereteli, who was busier defending Tereshchenko than defending the post and telegraph workers), the bourgeoisie were able, as correctly admitted by Milyukov and Maklakov, to begin "organising" the continuation of this kind of war.

Through Shingaryov it would have been impossible to ensure the preservation of the landed estates system at least until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (if an offensive were to take place, it would "enable Russia to recover completely", said Maklakov. That means that the

Constituent Assembly itself would be "healthier"). Through Chernov, this can be brought about. The peasants have been told, although they have not been very glad to hear it, that to rent land from the landowners by agreement with each individual owner is "order", while to abolish the landed estates at one stroke and rent *from the people*, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, land formerly owned by the landowners is "anarchy". This counter-revolutionary idea of the landowners could only be put into effect through Chernov.

Through Konovalov it would have been impossible to ensure the safeguarding (*and the increase*—see what the ministerial newspaper, *Rabochaya Gazeta*, writes about the coal industrialists) of the scandalous profits from war contracts. Through Skobelev, or with his participation, this safeguarding can be ensured by allegedly preserving the old order, by near-"Marxist" rejection of the possibility of "introducing" socialism.

Because socialism cannot be introduced the scandalously high profits made by the capitalists not from their purely capitalist business *but from supplies to the armed forces, to the state*—these profits *can* be both concealed from the people and retained!—this is the wonderful Struvean argument which has brought together Tereshchenko and Lvov, on the one hand, and the "Marxist" Skobelev, on the other.

Popular meetings and the Soviets cannot be influenced through Lvov, Milyukov, Tereshchenko, Shingaryov and the rest. But they can be influenced through Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. in the same old bourgeois direction. And one can pursue *the same old* bourgeois-imperialist policy by means of particularly impressive, particularly "nice"-sounding phrases, to the point of denying the people the elementary democratic right to *elect* local authorities and prevent both their appointment and confirmation from above.

By denying this right, Tsereteli, Chernov and Co. have unwittingly turned from ex-socialists into ex-democrats.

A "great withdrawal", all right!

**SPEECH ON THE CANCELLATION
OF THE DEMONSTRATION,
DELIVERED AT A MEETING OF THE PETROGRAD
COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.(B.),
JUNE 11 (24), 1917**

The dissatisfaction voiced by most comrades over the cancellation of the demonstration is quite natural, but the Central Committee had no alternative for two reasons: first, we were formally banned from holding the demonstration by the semi-organ of power¹²⁴; secondly, the motive for the ban was stated as follows: "We know that concealed forces of the counter-revolution want to take advantage of your demonstration." In support of this motive, we were given names, such as that of a general, whom they promised to arrest within three days, and others. And they declared that a demonstration of the Black Hundreds¹²⁵ had been arranged for June 10 with the intention of breaking into our demonstration and turning it into a skirmish.

Even in ordinary warfare, it sometimes happens that a planned offensive has to be cancelled for strategic reasons. This is all the more likely to occur in class warfare, depending on the vacillation of the middle, petty-bourgeois groups. We must be able to take account of the situation and be bold in adopting decisions.

The cancellation was absolutely necessary, as subsequent developments proved. Today Tsereteli has delivered his historical and hysterical speech.¹²⁶ Today the revolution has entered a new phase of its development. They began by banning our peaceful demonstration for three days, and now they want to ban it for the entire duration of the Congress.

They demand that we obey the decision of the Congress under threat of expulsion from the Congress. But we have declared that we prefer arrest rather than renounce freedom of propaganda.

Tsereteli, whose speech showed him up as a blatant counter-revolutionary, declared that the Bolsheviks must not be fought by words and resolutions, but must be deprived of all the technical means they have at their disposal. The result of all bourgeois revolutions is: first arm the proletariat and then disarm it to prevent it from going any further. The fact that a peaceful demonstration had to be banned shows that the situation must be very serious.

Tsereteli, who emerged from the depths of the Provisional Government to attend the Congress, clearly expressed a desire to disarm the workers. He was savagely furious in demanding that the Bolshevik Party be ousted from the ranks of the revolutionary democrats. The workers must clearly realise that there can now be no question of a peaceful demonstration. The situation is far more serious than we thought. We were going to hold a peaceful demonstration in order to exercise maximum pressure on the decisions of the Congress—that is our right—but we are accused of hatching a plot to arrest the government.

Tsereteli says that there are no counter-revolutionaries apart from the Bolsheviks. The meeting that passed judgement on us was organised with particular solemnity. It consisted of the Congress Steering Committee, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in full force and the bureaus of the groups of all the parties attending the Congress. At that meeting they blurted out the whole truth, namely, that they are calling an offensive against us.

The proletariat must reply by showing the maximum calmness, caution, restraint and organisation, and must remember that peaceful processions are a thing of the past.

We must give them no pretext for attack. Let them attack, and the workers will realise that it is an attack on the very existence of the proletariat. But reality is on our side, and it is a moot point whether their attack will succeed—at the front there are the troops, among whom discontent

is very strong, and in the rear there is the high cost of living, economic dislocation and so on.

The Central Committee does not want to force your decision. Your right, the right to protest against the actions of the Central Committee, is a legitimate one, and your decision must be a free one.

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Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 79-81

THE TURNING-POINT

At the first stage of its development the Russian revolution transferred power to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and created, alongside of that power, the Soviets of Deputies, with the petty-bourgeois democrats in the majority. The second stage of the revolution (May 6) formally removed from power the cynically frank spokesmen of imperialism, Milyukov and Guchkov, and virtually transformed the majority parties in the Soviets into governing parties. Our Party remained, before and after May 6, a minority opposition. This was inevitable, for we are the party of the socialist proletariat, a party holding an internationalist position. A socialist proletariat whose outlook during an imperialist war is internationalist cannot but be in opposition to any power waging that war, regardless of whether that power is a monarchy or republic, or is held by defencist "socialists". And the party of the socialist proletariat is bound to attract an increasingly large mass of people who are being ruined by the protracted war and are growing distrustful of "socialists" committed to the service of imperialism, in the same way as they previously grew distrustful of imperialists themselves. The struggle against our Party, therefore, began in the very first days of the revolution. And however infamous and abominable the forms of struggle carried on by the Cadets and the Plekhanov people against the party of the proletariat, the meaning of the struggle is quite clear. It is the same struggle as the imperialists and the Scheidemann people waged against Lieb-

knecht and Adler (both of whom were, in fact, declared "mad" by the central organ of the German "socialists",¹²⁷ to say nothing of the bourgeois press, which described these comrades simply as "traitors" working for Britain). This is a struggle of the *whole* of bourgeois society, *including the petty-bourgeois democrats*, however r-r-revolutionary they may be, against the socialist, internationalist proletariat.

In Russia, this struggle has reached a stage where the imperialists are trying, through the petty-bourgeois-democratic leaders, the Tseretelis, Chernovs, etc., to destroy the growing power of the workers' party at a single hard and decisive blow. As a pretext for this decisive blow, Minister Tsereteli has struck upon a method repeatedly used by counter-revolutionaries: *the charge of conspiracy*. This charge is a mere pretext. The point is that the petty-bourgeois democrats, who take their cue from the Russian and the Allied imperialists, need to do away with the internationalist socialists once and for all. They think that the moment is ripe for the blow. They are agitated and frightened, and under the whip of their masters they have made up their minds: now or never.

The socialist proletariat and our Party must be as cool and collected as possible, must show the greatest staunchness and vigilance. Let the future Cavaignacs begin first. Our Party conference has already given warning of their arrival. The workers of Petrograd will give them no opportunity to disclaim responsibility. They will bide their time, gathering their forces and preparing for resistance *when* those gentlemen decide to turn from words to action.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

No idea could be more erroneous or harmful than to separate foreign from home policy. The monstrous falsity of this separation becomes even more monstrous in war-time. Yet the bourgeoisie are doing everything possible and impossible to suggest and promote this idea. Popular ignorance of foreign policy is incomparably greater than of home policy. The "secrecy" of diplomatic relations is sacredly observed in the freest of capitalist countries, in the most democratic republics.

Popular deception has become a real art in foreign "affairs", and our revolution suffers very badly from this deception. The poison of deception is spread far and wide by the millions of copies of bourgeois newspapers.

You must side with one of the two immensely wealthy and immensely powerful groups of imperialist predators—that is how capitalist reality poses the basic issue of present-day foreign policy. That is how this issue is posed by the capitalist class. And that, it goes without saying, is how it is posed by the broad mass of the petty bourgeoisie who have retained their old, capitalist views and prejudices.

Those whose thinking does not go beyond capitalist relations cannot understand why the workers, if they are politically conscious, cannot side with *either* group of imperialist plunderers. Conversely, the worker cannot understand why socialists who remain true to the fraternal alliance of the workers of the world against the capitalists of the world are accused of being inclined towards a separate peace treaty with the Germans, or of virtually serving such

a peace treaty. Under no circumstances can these socialists (and hence the Bolsheviks) agree to a separate peace treaty between the capitalists. The basis for the foreign policy of the politically conscious proletariat is no separate peace treaty with the German capitalists and no alliance with the Anglo-French capitalists.

By rising up in arms against that programme because they fear a break with "Britain and France", our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are virtually carrying out a capitalist foreign policy programme, while embellishing it with florid and innocent phrases about "revision of treaties", declarations in support of "peace without annexations", etc. All these pious wishes are doomed to remain hollow phrases, for *capitalist* reality puts the issue bluntly: either submit to the imperialists of one of the two groups, or wage a revolutionary struggle against all imperialists.

Have we any allies for this struggle? Yes. The oppressed classes of Europe, primarily the proletariat. The peoples oppressed by imperialism, primarily our neighbours in Asia.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who call themselves "revolutionary democrats", are in fact pursuing a counter-revolutionary and anti-democratic foreign policy. Were they revolutionaries, they would advise the workers and peasants of Russia to march at the head of all peoples oppressed by imperialism and of all the oppressed classes.

"But in that event the capitalists of all other countries would rally against Russia," the frightened philistines object. That is not impossible. No "*revolutionary*" democrat has the right to renounce revolutionary war in advance. But the practical likelihood of such a war is not very great. The British and German imperialists will not be able to "come to terms" against revolutionary Russia.

The Russian revolution, which as early as 1905 led to revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China, would have placed the German and British imperialists in a very difficult position if it had begun to establish a truly revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants of the colonies and semi-colonies against the despots, against the khans, for expulsion of the Germans from Turkey, the British from Turkey, Persia, India, Egypt, etc.

Social-chauvinists, both French and Russian, like to refer to 1793. By this spectacular reference they try to cover up their betrayal of the revolution. But people here refuse to think that the *truly* "revolutionary" democrats in Russia could and should act *in the spirit* of 1793 towards the oppressed and backward nations.

The foreign policy of the capitalists and the petty bourgeoisie is "alliance" with the imperialists, that is, disgraceful dependence on them. The foreign policy of the proletariat is alliance with the revolutionaries of the advanced countries and with all the oppressed nations against all and any imperialists.

Pravda No. 81,
June 27 (14), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 85-87

THE CLASS ORIGINS OF PRESENT-DAY AND "FUTURE" CAVAIGNACS

"When a real Cavaignac comes, we shall fight in the same ranks with you," we were told in No. 80 of *Rabochaya Gazeta*, organ of the very same Menshevik party whose member, Minister Tsereteli, in his notorious speech, went to such lengths as to threaten to disarm the Petrograd workers.

The above-quoted statement clearly brings out the fundamental errors of Russia's two ruling parties, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and therefore deserves attention. The ministerial organ's arguments mean that you are looking for Cavaignacs at the wrong time and in the wrong place.

Remember the class role played by Cavaignac. In February 1848 the French monarchy was overthrown. The bourgeois republicans came to power. Like our Cadets, they wanted "order", by which they meant the restoration and strengthening of monarchic instruments for oppressing the masses: the police, the standing army and the privileged bureaucracy. Like our Cadets, they wanted to put an end to the revolution, for they hated the revolutionary workers with their "social" (i.e., socialist) aspirations, at that time very hazy. Like our Cadets, they were implacably hostile to the policy of extending the French Revolution to the rest of Europe, the policy of transforming it into a world proletarian revolution. Like our Cadets, they skilfully used the petty-bourgeois "socialism" of Louis Blanc by making him a Minister and so transforming him from leader of the

socialist workers, which he had wanted to be, into an appendage, a hanger-on, of the bourgeoisie.

These were the class interests, the position and policy of the ruling class.

The petty bourgeoisie, vacillating, frightened by the red spectre, and falling for the outcries against the "anarchists", were another basic social force. Dreamily and bombastically "socialist" in their aspirations, and readily calling themselves "socialist democrats" (even this term is now taken up by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks!), the petty bourgeoisie were afraid to entrust themselves to the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat, and did not realise that fear condemned them to entrusting themselves to the bourgeoisie. For there can be *no* "middle" course in a society rent by bitter class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, particularly when this struggle is inevitably aggravated by a revolution. And the whole essence of the class position and aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie is that they want the impossible, that they aspire to the impossible, i.e., to a "middle course".

The third decisive class force was the proletariat, which aspired not to "reconcile itself" with the bourgeoisie, but to defeat them, to fearlessly promote the revolution, doing so, moreover, on an international scale.

That was the objective historical soil which *brought forth* Cavaignac. The vacillation of the petty bourgeoisie "debarred" them from an active role, and the French Cadet, General Cavaignac, taking advantage of the petty bourgeoisie's fear of entrusting themselves to the proletariat, decided to *disarm* the Paris workers and shoot them down *en masse*.

The revolution ended in that historic shooting. The petty bourgeoisie, while numerically superior, had been and remained the politically impotent tail of the bourgeoisie, and three years later France saw the restoration of a particularly vile form of Caesarist monarchy.

Tsereteli's historic speech on June 11, clearly inspired by the Cadet Cavaignacs (perhaps directly inspired by the bourgeois Ministers, or perhaps indirectly prompted by the bourgeois press and bourgeois public opinion—it does not matter

which), was remarkable and historic in that Tsereteli *let out*, with inimitable naïveté, the "secret malady" of the entire petty bourgeoisie, both Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik. This "secret malady" consists, first, in a complete inability to pursue an independent policy; secondly, in the fear to entrust themselves to the revolutionary proletariat and wholeheartedly support the independent policy of *the latter*; thirdly, in a drift—inevitably following from this—towards submitting to the Cadets or to the bourgeoisie in general (*i.e., submitting to the Cavaignacs*).

This is the heart of the matter. Tsereteli, Chernov and even Kerensky are not destined as individuals to play the role of Cavaignacs. There will be other people to do that, people who at the right moment will tell the Russian Louis Blancs: "Step aside." But the Tseretelis and Chernovs are leaders pursuing a petty-bourgeois policy that makes the appearance of Cavaignacs possible and necessary.

"When a real Cavaignac comes, we shall be with you"—an excellent promise, a splendid intention! Only, it is a pity that it reveals a misunderstanding of the class struggle, typical of the sentimental or timid petty bourgeoisie. For a Cavaignac is not an accident, his "advent" is not an isolated development. A Cavaignac represents a class (the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie) and carries out the policies of that class. And it is that class and those policies that you Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik gentlemen support *today*. It is to that class and its policies that *you*, who at the moment admittedly command a majority in the country, give *predominance* in the government, *i.e., an excellent basis on which to work*.

Indeed, the All-Russia Peasant Congress was almost entirely dominated by the Socialist-Revolutionaries. At the All-Russia Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik bloc had a vast majority. The same is true of the elections to the Petrograd district councils. The fact is there: the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are the ruling party now. And this ruling party is voluntarily ceding power (the majority in the government) to the *party of the Cavaignacs!!*

Wherever there's a swamp there's sure to be the devil. Once there is a shaky, vacillating petty bourgeoisie dreading the revolution's progress, the Cavaignacs are sure to appear.

In Russia there are many things now that make our revolution different from the French Revolution of 1848: the imperialist war, the proximity of more advanced countries (and not of more backward ones, as was the case of France at the time), an agrarian and a national movement. But all this may modify only the form in which the Cavaignacs come forward, the moment, the external causes, etc. It cannot change the essence of the matter, for the essence lies in the *class relationships*.

In words, Louis Blanc, too, was as far removed from Cavaignac as heaven is from earth. Louis Blanc, too, made countless promises "to fight in the same ranks" as the revolutionary workers against the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries. Nevertheless, no Marxist historian, no socialist, would venture to doubt that it was the weakness, the instability, the credulity of the Louis Blancs with regard to the bourgeoisie that brought forth Cavaignac and assured his success.

The Russian Cavaignacs are inevitable products of the counter-revolutionary character of the Russian bourgeoisie led by the Cadets and of the instability, timidity and vacillation of the petty-bourgeois parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. Whether the Russian Cavaignacs will win or lose the battle depends solely on the staunchness, vigilance, and strength of Russia's revolutionary workers.

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Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 93-96

THE EIGHTEENTH OF JUNE

In one way or another, June 18 will go down as a turning-point in the history of the Russian revolution.

The mutual position of the classes, their correlation in the struggle against each other, their strength, particularly in comparison with the strength of the parties, were all revealed so distinctly, so strikingly, so impressively by last Sunday's demonstration that, whatever the course and pace of further development, the gain in political awareness and clarity has been tremendous.

The demonstration in a few hours scattered to the winds, like a handful of dust, the empty talk about Bolshevik conspirators and showed with the utmost clarity that the vanguard of the working people of Russia, the industrial proletariat of the capital, and the overwhelming majority of the troops support slogans that our Party has always advocated.

The measured step of the battalions of workers and soldiers. Nearly half a million demonstrators. A concerted onslaught. Unity around the slogans, among which overwhelmingly predominated: "All power to the Soviets", "Down with the ten capitalist Ministers", "Neither a separate peace treaty with the Germans nor secret treaties with the Anglo-French capitalists", etc. No one who saw the demonstration has any doubt left about the victory of these slogans among the organised vanguard of Russia's workers and soldiers.

The demonstration of June 18 was a demonstration of the strength and policy of the revolutionary proletariat,

which is showing the direction for the revolution and indicating the way out of the impasse. This is the tremendous historical significance of last Sunday's demonstration, and its essential difference from the demonstrations during the funeral of the victims of the revolution and on May Day. Then it was a universal *tribute* to the revolution's first victory and to its heroes. The people looked back over the first stage of the road to freedom, which they had passed very rapidly and very successfully. May Day was a *holiday* of hopes and aspirations linked with the history of the world labour movement and with its ideal of peace and socialism.

Neither of the two demonstrations was intended to point the *direction* for the revolution's further development, nor could it do so. Neither demonstration put before the people, or raised in the name of the people, specific, definite and urgent questions as to how and in what direction the revolution should proceed.

In this sense, June 18 was the first political demonstration of *action*, an explanation of how the various classes act, how they want to and will act, in order to further the revolution—an explanation not given in a book or newspaper, but on the streets, not through leaders, but through the people.

The bourgeoisie kept out of the way. They refused to participate in that peaceful demonstration of a clear majority of the people, in which there was freedom of party slogans, and the chief aim of which was to protest against counter-revolution. That is natural. The bourgeoisie are the counter-revolution. They hide from the people. They organise real counter-revolutionary conspiracies against the people. The parties now ruling Russia, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, clearly showed themselves on that historic day, June 18, as waverers. Their slogans spoke of wavering, and it was obvious to all that the supporters of their slogans were in a minority. By their slogans and wavering *they* advised the people to remain where they were, to leave everything unchanged for the time being. And the people felt, and they themselves felt, that that was impossible.

Enough of wavering, said the vanguard of the proletariat, the vanguard of Russia's workers and soldiers. Enough of wavering. The policy of trust in the capitalists, in *their* government, in *their* vain attempts at reform, in *their* war, in *their* policy of an offensive, is a hopeless policy. Its collapse is imminent. Its collapse is inevitable. And that collapse will also be the collapse of the ruling parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. Economic disruption is coming nearer. There is *no* escaping it except by the revolutionary measures of the revolutionary class which has taken power.

Let the people break with the policy of trust in the capitalists. Let them put their trust in the revolutionary class—the proletariat. The source of power lies in it and only in it. It alone is the pledge that the interests of the *majority* will be served, the interests of the working and exploited people, who, though held down by war and capital, are capable of defeating war and capital!

A crisis of unprecedented scale has descended upon Russia and the whole of humanity. The only way out is to put trust in the most organised and advanced contingent of the working and exploited people, and support its policy.

We do not know whether the people will grasp this lesson soon or how they will put it into effect. But we do know for certain that apart from this lesson there is no way out of the impasse, that possible waverings or brutalities on the part of the counter-revolutionaries will lead nowhere.

There is no way out unless the masses put complete confidence in their leader, the proletariat.

TO WHAT STATE HAVE THE SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE MENSHEVIKS BROUGHT THE REVOLUTION?

They have brought it to a state of subjection to the imperialists.

The offensive is a renewal of the imperialist war. Nothing essential has changed in the relations between the two gigantic capitalist blocs waging war on one another. Even after the revolution of February 27, Russia remains under the complete sway of the capitalists, who are bound to Anglo-French imperialist capital by alliance and by the old, tsarist, secret treaties. Both the economics and politics of the continuing war are the same as before: the same old imperialist banking capital dominating economic life, and the same old secret treaties, the same old foreign policy of alliances of one group of imperialists against another.

The empty phrases of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are still empty phrases, in practice only serving to adorn the resumption of the imperialist war, which quite naturally meets with enthusiastic howls of approval from all the counter-revolutionaries, the whole bourgeoisie, and Plekhanov, "who tails after the bourgeois press", as the Menshevik *Rabochaya Gazeta* put it, which itself tails after the whole horde of social-chauvinists.

But we must not overlook the distinguishing features of this particular resumption of the imperialist war. The resumption came after three months of hesitation, during which time the mass of workers and peasants thousands of times expressed their condemnation of a war of conquest (while continuing in practice to support the government of the

predatory Russian bourgeoisie bent on conquest). The masses hesitated, as though they were about to carry out *at home* the advice which the March 14 appeal to the peoples of the world gave to *other* peoples, namely, "Refuse to serve as tools of conquest and violence in the hands of the *bankers!*" But here at home, in "revolutionary-democratic" Russia, the masses have remained in effect an instrument of conquest and violence in "the hands of the bankers".

A distinguishing feature of this situation is that it was created by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties at a time when the people enjoyed a comparatively large measure of freedom of organisation. It is these parties that have gained the majority at the moment: the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and the All-Russia Peasants' Congress have undoubtedly proved this.

It is these parties that are at present responsible for Russia's policy.

It is these parties that are responsible for the resumption of the imperialist war, for more hundreds of thousands of lives sacrificed virtually with the aim of enabling certain capitalists to "overcome" other capitalists, and for the further aggravation of the economic dislocation inevitably resulting from the offensive.

Here we had, in the purest form, the self-deception of the petty-bourgeois masses and the deception of them by the bourgeoisie with the aid of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. These parties both claim to be "revolutionary democrats". But in fact it was they who placed the people's fate in the hands of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, the Cadets; it was they who deserted the revolution to continue the imperialist war, who deserted democracy to make "concessions" to the Cadets on the issue of power (take, for instance, the "confirmation" from above of the authorities elected by the local population), on the land issue (the Mensheviks' and Socialist-Revolutionaries' renunciation of *their own* programme, namely, to support the revolutionary actions of the peasants, *including confiscation* of the landed estates), and on the national question (defence of the undemocratic attitude of the Cadets towards the Ukraine and Finland).

The petty-bourgeois masses cannot help vacillating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This has been the case in all countries, especially between 1789 and 1871. And it is also the case in Russia. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have *induced the masses* to submit to the policy of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

That is the heart of the matter. That is the meaning of the offensive. That is the peculiarity of the situation: it was not violence, but trust in the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks that led the people astray.

Will it be for long?

No, not long. The masses will learn from their own experience. The sad experience of the new stage of the war (a stage already begun), of further ruin accentuated by the offensive, will inevitably lead to the *political* downfall of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties.

The task of the workers' party is, first of all, to help the masses realise and take proper account of this experience, to prepare properly for this great downfall, which will show the masses their true leader—the organised urban proletariat.

Pravda No. 88,
July 5 (June 22), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 117-19

CAN "JACOBINISM" FRIGHTEN THE WORKING CLASS?

The bourgeois and chauvinistic *Dyen*, an organ of "socialist thought" (don't laugh!), returns in issue No. 91 to *Rech's* really interesting editorial of June 18. *Dyen* has completely failed to understand that editorial, in which a *historian* speaks out alongside an embittered counter-revolutionary bourgeois. *Dyen* reads into the editorial "the Cadets' intention—which has become a firm resolve—to withdraw from the coalition government".

That is nonsense. The Cadets threaten so as to frighten the Tseretelis and Chernovs. That is not serious.

What is serious and interesting is how the *Rech* editorial on June 18 posed the question of power from a historian's standpoint.

"Whereas," he wrote, "with the previous government composition it was possible, at least to some extent, to direct the course of the Russian revolution, from now on it is apparently destined to develop in accordance with the spontaneous laws of all revolutions. . . . The inadvisability of the further existence of a government arrangement that has not justified itself is a question already being put not only by the Bolsheviks [note this: *not* only by the Bolsheviks!] . . . and not only by the majority in the Soviet. . . . It is a question which the capitalist Ministers themselves must raise."

The historian is correct in admitting that *not* only the Bolsheviks, but the entire interrelation of classes, the life of society as a whole, has brought to the fore the question of "the inadvisability of the further existence of a government arrangement that has not justified itself". What we

actually have is vacillation. The offensive is a possible road to victory for the imperialist bourgeoisie. Is there any other possible road?

The historian in *Rech* answers this question as follows:

"Once they have got 'all power' the Soviets will soon see that they have very little power. And they will have to make up for lack of power by resorting to the historically tested methods of the Young Turks or the Jacobins. . . . Will they, once the whole issue has again been raised, be willing to stoop to Jacobinism and terrorism, or will they make an attempt to wash their hands of it? This is the pressing question that will be answered in a few days."

The historian is right. In a few days or not in a few days, that is the question that will soon be answered. *Either* the offensive, a turn to counter-revolution, a success (for how long?) for the cause of the imperialist bourgeoisie, "a washing of hands" by the Chernovs and Tseretelis, *or* "Jacobinism".

Bourgeois historians see Jacobinism as a fall ("to stoop"). Proletarian historians see Jacobinism as one of the highest *peaks* in the emancipation struggle of an oppressed class. The Jacobins gave France the best models of a democratic revolution and of resistance to a coalition of monarchs against a republic. The Jacobins were not destined to win complete victory, chiefly because eighteenth-century France was surrounded on the continent by much too backward countries, and because France herself lacked the material basis for socialism, there being no banks, no capitalist syndicates, no machine industry and no railways.

"Jacobinism" in Europe or on the boundary line between Europe and Asia in the twentieth century would be the rule of the revolutionary class, of the proletariat, which, supported by the peasant poor and taking advantage of the existing material basis for advancing to socialism, could not only provide all the great, ineradicable, unforgettable achievements of the Jacobins in the eighteenth century, but bring about a lasting world-wide victory for the working people.

It is natural for the bourgeoisie to hate Jacobinism. It is natural for the petty bourgeoisie to dread it. The class-

conscious workers and working people generally put their trust in the transfer of power to the revolutionary, oppressed class, for *that* is the essence of Jacobinism, the only way out of the present crisis, and the only remedy for economic dislocation and the war.

Pravda No. 90,
July 7 (June 24), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 120-21

A CLASS SHIFT

Every revolution, if it is a real revolution, amounts to a class shift. Therefore, the best way of enlightening the people, and of fighting those who deceive the people by invoking the revolution, is to analyse the class shift that has taken or is taking place in the present revolution.

From 1904 to 1916, in the last years of tsarism, the relative positions of the classes in Russia became particularly clear. A handful of feudal-minded landowners, headed by Nicholas II, was in power and maintained the closest alliance with the financial magnates who were reaping profits unheard of in Europe and for whose benefit predatory treaties were concluded with foreign countries.

The liberal bourgeoisie, led by the Cadets, were in opposition. They were more afraid of the people than of reaction and were moving closer and closer to power by compromising with the monarchy.

The people, i.e., the workers and peasants, whose leaders had been driven underground, were revolutionary. They constituted the "revolutionary democrats"—proletarian and petty-bourgeois.

The revolution of February 27, 1917, swept away the monarchy and put the liberal bourgeoisie in power, who, operating in direct concord with the Anglo-French imperialists, had wanted a minor court revolution. Under no circumstances were they willing to go beyond a constitutional monarchy with an electoral system conditioned by various qualifications. And when the revolution actually went

further, completely abolishing the monarchy and establishing Soviets (of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies), the entire liberal bourgeoisie became counter-revolutionary.

Now, four months after the revolution, the counter-revolutionary character of the Cadets, the main party of the liberal bourgeoisie, is as clear as day. Everyone sees that. And everyone is compelled to admit it. But not nearly everyone is willing to face up to it and think about what it implies.

Russia today is a democratic republic governed by a free agreement between *political parties* which are freely advocating their views among the people. The four months since February 27 have fully consolidated and given final shape to *all* parties of any importance, showed them up during the elections (to the Soviets and to local bodies), and revealed their links with the various classes.

In Russia, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie are in power today, while the petty-bourgeois democrats, namely, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, have become "His Majesty's opposition".¹²⁸ The policy of these parties is essentially one of *compromise* with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The petty-bourgeois democrats are rising to power by filling local bodies to begin with (just as the liberals did under tsarism—by first winning places in the zemstvos). These petty-bourgeois democrats want to *share power* with the bourgeoisie but not overthrow them, in exactly the same way as the Cadets wanted to share power with the monarchy but not overthrow it. The petty-bourgeois democrats (the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks) compromise with the Cadets because of the close class kinship between the petty and the big bourgeoisie, just as the class kinship between the capitalist and the land-owner, living in the twentieth century, made them embrace each other at the feet of their "adored" monarch.

It is the *form* of compromise that has changed. Under the monarchy it was crude, and the tsar allowed a Cadet no further than the Duma backyard. In a democratic republic, compromise has become as refined as in Europe, the petty bourgeoisie being permitted, in a harmless minority, to occupy harmless (for capital) posts in the Ministry.

The Cadets have taken the place of the monarchy. The Tseretelis and Chernovs have taken the place of the Cadets. Proletarian democracy has taken the place of a *truly* revolutionary democracy.

The imperialist war has hastened developments fantastically. Had it not been for this war, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks might have sighed for decades for ministerial posts. The same war, however, is hastening further developments. For it *poses* problems in a revolutionary rather than a reformist manner.

The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties could have given Russia many a reform by agreement with the bourgeoisie. But the objective situation in world politics is revolutionary and reforms are *not a way out*.

The imperialist war is crushing the peoples and threatens to crush them completely. The petty-bourgeois democrats can perhaps stave off disaster for a while. But it is only the revolutionary proletariat that can prevent a tragic end.

Pravda No. 92,
July 10 (June 27), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 130-32

ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS!

"Drive nature out of the door and she will rush back through the window." It seems that the ruling Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties have to "learn" this simple truth time and again by their own experience. They undertook to be "revolutionary democrats" and found themselves in the shoes of revolutionary democrats—they are now forced to draw the conclusions which every revolutionary democrat must draw.

Democracy is the rule of the majority. As long as the will of the majority was not clear, as long as it was possible to make it out to be unclear, at least with a grain of plausibility, the people were offered a counter-revolutionary bourgeois government disguised as "democratic". But this delay could not last long. During the several months that have passed since February 27 the will of the majority of the workers and peasants, of the overwhelming majority of the country's population, has become clear in more than a general sense. Their will has found expression in mass organisations—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

How, then, can anyone oppose the transfer of all power in the state to the Soviets? Such opposition means nothing but renouncing democracy! It means no more no less than imposing on the people a government which *admittedly* can neither come into being nor hold its ground *democratically*, i.e., as a result of truly free, truly popular elections.

It is a fact, strange as it may seem at first sight, that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have *forgotten* this perfectly simple, perfectly obvious and palpable truth. Their position is so false, and they are so badly confused and bewildered, that they are unable to "recover" this truth they have lost. Following the elections in Petrograd and in Moscow, the convocation of the All-Russia Peasant Congress, and the Congress of Soviets, the classes and parties throughout Russia have shown what they stand for so clearly and specifically that people who have not gone mad or deliberately got themselves into a mess simply cannot have any illusions on this score.

To tolerate the Cadet Ministers or the Cadet government or Cadet policies means challenging democrats and democracy. This is the source of the political crises since February 27, and this is also the source of the shakiness and vacillation of our government system. At every turn, daily and even hourly, appeals are being made to the people's revolutionary spirit and to their democracy on behalf of the most authoritative government institutions and congresses. Yet the government's policies in general, and its foreign and economic policies in particular, are all departures from revolutionary principles, and breaches of democracy.

This sort of thing will not do.

It is inevitable that a situation like the present should show elements of instability now for one reason, now for another. And it is not exactly a clever policy to jib. Things are moving by fits and starts towards a point where power will be transferred to the Soviets, which is what our Party called for long ago.

Written not later than
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pp. 153-54

THREE CRISES

The more violent the slander and lies against the Bolsheviks these days, the more calmly must we, while refuting the lies and slander, reflect upon the historical interrelation of events and the political, i.e., *class* significance of the revolution's present course.

To refute the lies and slander, we only have to refer again to *Listok "Pravdy"*¹²⁹ of July 6, and to call the reader's attention especially to the article printed below which gives documentary evidence that on July 2 the Bolsheviks campaigned *against* the demonstration (as admitted by the Socialist-Revolutionaries' paper). The article indicates that on July 3 the popular mood exploded into action and the demonstration started against our advice. It shows that on July 4, in a leaflet (reprinted by the Socialist-Revolutionary paper *Dyelo Naroda*), we called for a *peaceful* and *organised* demonstration, that on the night of July 4 we passed a decision to call off the demonstration.¹³⁰ Slanderers, continue your slander! You can never refute these facts and their decisive significance in every connection!

Let us turn to the question of the historical interrelation of the events. When, as early as the beginning of April, we opposed support for the Provisional Government, we were attacked by both the S.R.s and the Mensheviks. But what has reality proved?

What have the three political crises proved—April 20 and 21, June 10 and 18, July 3 and 4?

They have proved, in the first place, that the masses are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the bourgeois policy of the Provisional Government's bourgeois majority.

It is rather interesting to note that the ruling Socialist-Revolutionaries' newspaper, *Dyelo Naroda*, despite its marked hostility to the Bolsheviks, is compelled to admit, in its July 6 issue, the deep economic and political causes of the action of July 3 and 4. The stupid, crude, infamous lie that this action was artificially created, that the Bolsheviks campaigned *in favour* of action, will daily be more and more exposed.

The common cause, the common origin, the deep common root of the three above-mentioned political crises is clear, especially if we look at them in their interrelation, as science demands that politics be looked at. It is absurd even to think that three such crises could be produced artificially.

In the second place, it is instructive to grasp what each one of them had in common with the others, and what was its specific features.

What is common to all three is a mass dissatisfaction overflowing all bounds, a mass resentment with the bourgeoisie and *their* government. Whoever forgets, ignores or underestimates *this essence of the matter*, renounces the ABC of socialism concerning the class struggle.

Let those who call themselves socialists, who know something about the character of the class struggle in European revolutions, think about the class struggle in the Russian revolution.

These crises are peculiar in the ways they manifested themselves. The first (April 20-21) was stormy and spontaneous, and completely unorganised. It led to Black Hundreds firing on the demonstrators and to unprecedentedly savage and lying accusations against the Bolsheviks. After the outburst came a political crisis.

In the second case, the demonstration was called by the Bolsheviks, and was cancelled after a stern ultimatum and direct ban by the Congress of Soviets; then, on June 18, came a general demonstration in which the Bolshevik slogans clearly predominated. As the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks themselves admitted on the evening of June 18,

a political crisis would certainly have broken out had it not been for the offensive at the front.

The third crisis broke out spontaneously on July 3 despite the Bolsheviks' efforts on July 2 to check it. Reaching its climax on July 4, it led to a furious outburst of counter-revolution on July 5 and 6. The vacillation of the S.R.s and Mensheviks expressed itself in Spiridonova and a number of other S.R.s declaring for the transfer of power to the Soviets, and in the Menshevik internationalists,¹³¹ previously opposed to it, voicing the same idea.

The last, and perhaps the most instructive, conclusion to be drawn from considering the events in their interconnection is that *all* three crises manifested some form of demonstration that is new in the history of our revolution, a demonstration of a more complicated type in which the movement proceeds in waves, a sudden drop following a rapid rise, revolution and counter-revolution becoming more acute, and the middle elements being eliminated for a more or less extensive period.

In all three crises, the movement took the form of a *demonstration*. An anti-government demonstration—that would be the most exact, formal description of events. But the fact of the matter is that it was not an ordinary demonstration; it was something considerably more than a demonstration, but less than a revolution. It was an outburst of revolution and counter-revolution *together*, a sharp, sometimes almost sudden elimination of the middle elements, while the proletarian and bourgeois elements made a stormy appearance.

In this respect it is extremely typical that, for *each* of these movements, the middle elements blame *both* of the specific class forces—the proletariat as well as the bourgeoisie. Look at the S.R.s and Mensheviks. They lean over backwards to frantically shout that, by their extremes, the Bolsheviks are helping the counter-revolution. At the same time, however, they admit again and again that the Cadets (with whom they form a bloc in the government) are counter-revolutionary. "Our urgent task is to draw a line," wrote *Dyelo Naroda* yesterday, "to dig a deep moat between ourselves and all the Right elements, including *Yedinstvo*,

which has gone militant" (with which, we may add, the S.R.s formed a bloc during the elections).

Compare that with today's (July 7) issue of *Yedinstvo*, in which Plekhanov's editorial is compelled to state the indisputable fact that the Soviets (i.e., the S.R.s and Mensheviks) will "think over the matter for a fortnight" and that, if power were to pass to the Soviets, "it would be tantamount to victory for Lenin's supporters". "If the Cadets don't stick to the rule—the worse, the better...", says Plekhanov, "they themselves will have to admit that they have made a big mistake [by withdrawing from the Cabinet], making the work of Lenin's supporters easier."

Isn't that typical? The middle elements blame the Cadets for making the Bolsheviks' work easier, and the Bolsheviks for making the Cadets' work easier! Is it so hard to guess that if we substitute class names for political ones we have before us the dreams of the petty bourgeoisie about the disappearance of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? Isn't the petty bourgeoisie complaining about the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? Is it really so hard to guess that no Bolsheviks in the world could have "created" even a single "popular movement", let alone three movements, if the deepest economic and political causes had not set the proletariat into action? Is it so difficult to guess that no Cadets and monarchists combined could have called forth any movement "from the Right" if it had not been for the equally deep causes that make the bourgeoisie as a class counter-revolutionary?

Both we and the Cadets were blamed for the April 20-21 movement—for intransigence, extremes, and for aggravating the situation. The Bolsheviks were even accused (absurd as it may be) of the firing on Nevsky. When the movement was over, however, those same S.R.s and Mensheviks, in their joint, official organ, *Izvestia*, wrote that the "popular movement" had "swept away the imperialists, Milyukov, etc.", i.e., they *praised* the movement!! Isn't that typical? Doesn't it show very clearly that the petty bourgeoisie do not understand the workings, the meaning, of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie?

The objective situation is this. The vast majority of the country's population is petty-bourgeois by its living conditions and more so by its ideas. But big capital rules the country, primarily through banks and syndicates. There is an urban proletariat in this country, mature enough to go its own way, but not yet able to draw at once the majority of the semi-proletarians to its side. From this fundamental, class fact follows the inevitability of such crises as the three we are now examining, as well as their forms.

In future the forms of crises may, of course, change, but the substance of the issue will remain the same even if, for instance, the S.R. Constituent Assembly meets in October. The S.R.s have promised the peasants: (1) to abolish private landownership; (2) to transfer the land to the working people; (3) to confiscate the landed estates and transfer them to the peasants without compensation. These great reforms can never be realised without the most decisive revolutionary measures against the bourgeoisie, measures that can *only* be taken when the poor peasants join the proletariat, *only* when the banks and syndicates are nationalised.

The credulous peasants, believing for a time that these beautiful things can be achieved by compromising with the bourgeoisie, will inevitably be disappointed and ... "dissatisfied" (mildly speaking) with the sharp class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the implementation of the promises of the S.R.s. So it was, and so it will be.

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Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 169-73

THE POLITICAL SITUATION¹³²

Four Theses

1. The counter-revolution has become organised and consolidated, and has actually taken state power into its hands.¹³³

The complete organisation and consolidation of the counter-revolution consists in a combination of its three main forces, a combination excellently conceived and already put into practice: (1) The Constitutional-Democratic Party, i.e., the real leader of the organised bourgeoisie, has, by withdrawing from the Cabinet, confronted it with an ultimatum, thus clearing the way for the Cabinet's overthrow by the counter-revolution. (2) The General Staff and the military leaders, with the deliberate or semi-deliberate assistance of Kerensky, whom even the most prominent Socialist-Revolutionaries now call a Cavaignac, have seized actual state power and have proceeded to shoot down revolutionary units at the front, disarm the revolutionary troops and workers in Petrograd and Moscow, suppress unrest in Nizhni-Novgorod, arrest Bolsheviks and ban their papers, not only without trial, but even without a government order. At present, basic state power in Russia is virtually a military dictatorship. This fact is still obscured by a number of institutions that are revolutionary in words but powerless in deeds. Yet it is so obvious and fundamental a fact that without understanding it, one cannot understand anything about the political situation. (3) The Black Hundred-monarchist and bourgeois press, which has switched from hounding Bolsheviks to hounding the Soviets, the "incendiary" Chernov, etc., has indicated with the utmost clarity that the true meaning of the

policy of military dictatorship, which now reigns supreme and is supported by the Cadets and monarchists, is preparations for disbanding the Soviets. Many of the leaders of the S.R.s and Mensheviks, i.e., the present majority in the Soviets, have admitted and expressed this during the past few days, but, true to their petty-bourgeois nature, they shrug off this formidable reality with meaningless high-sounding phrases.

2. The leaders of the Soviets and of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, headed by Tsereteli and Chernov, have completely betrayed the cause of the revolution by putting it in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries and by turning themselves, their parties and the Soviets into mere fig-leaves of the counter-revolution.

Proof of this is that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have betrayed the Bolsheviks and have tacitly agreed to close down their papers without daring to tell the people plainly and openly that they are doing so and why. By sanctioning the disarming of the workers and the revolutionary regiments, they have deprived themselves of all real power. They have turned into the most loud-mouthed ranters who help the reaction to "divert" the people's attention until it is finally ready to disband the Soviets. It is impossible to understand anything at all about the present political situation without realising this complete and final bankruptcy of the S.R.s and Mensheviks and the present majority in the Soviets and without realising that their "Directory" and other masquerades are an absolute sham.

3. All hopes for a peaceful development of the Russian revolution have vanished for good. This is the objective situation: either complete victory for the military dictatorship, or victory for the workers' armed uprising; the latter victory is only possible when the insurrection coincides with a deep, mass upheaval against the government and the bourgeoisie caused by economic disruption and the prolongation of the war.

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" was a slogan for peaceful development of the revolution which was possible in April, May, June, and up to July 5-9, i.e., up to the time when actual power passed into the hands of the military

dictatorship. This slogan is no longer correct, for it does not take into account that power has changed hands and that the revolution has in fact been completely betrayed by the S.R.s and Mensheviks. Reckless actions, revolts, partial resistance, or hopeless hit-and-run attempts to oppose reaction will not help. What will help is a clear understanding of the situation, endurance and determination of the workers' vanguard, preparation of forces for the armed uprising, for the victory of which conditions at present are extremely difficult, but still possible if the facts and trends mentioned above coincide. Let us have no constitutional or republican illusions of any kind, no more illusions about a peaceful path, no sporadic actions, no yielding *now* to provocation from the Black Hundreds and Cossacks. Let us gather forces, reorganise them, and resolutely prepare for the armed uprising, if the course of the crisis permits it on a really mass, country-wide scale. The transfer of land to the peasants is impossible at present without armed uprising, since the counter-revolutionaries, having taken power, have completely united with the landowners as a class.

The aim of the insurrection can only be to transfer power to the proletariat, supported by the poor peasants, with a view to putting our Party programme into effect.

4. The party of the working class, without abandoning legal activity, but never for a moment overrating it, must *combine* legal with illegal work, as it did in 1912-14.

Don't let slip a single hour of legal work. But don't cherish any constitutional or "peaceful" illusions. Form illegal organisations or cells everywhere and at once for the publication of leaflets, etc. Reorganise immediately, consistently, resolutely, all along the line.

Act as we did in 1912-14, when we could speak about overthrowing tsarism by a revolution and an armed uprising, without at the same time losing our legal base in the Duma, the insurance societies, the trade unions, etc.

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1917, in *Proletarskoye Dyelo* No. 6

Signed: *W*

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 176-78

ON SLOGANS

Too often has it happened that, when history has taken a sharp turn, even progressive parties have for some time been unable to adapt themselves to the new situation and have repeated slogans which had formerly been correct but had now lost all meaning—lost it as “suddenly” as the sharp turn in history was “sudden”.

Something of the sort seems likely to recur in connection with the slogan calling for the transfer of all state power to the Soviets. That slogan was correct during a period of our revolution—say, from February 27 to July 4—that has now passed irrevocably. It has patently ceased to be correct now. Unless this is understood, it is impossible to understand anything of the urgent questions of the day. Every particular slogan must be deduced from the totality of specific features of a definite political situation. And the political situation in Russia now, after July 4, differs radically from the situation between February 27 and July 4.

During that period of the revolution now past, the so-called “dual power” existed in the country, which both materially and formally expressed the indefinite and transitional condition of state power. Let us not forget that the issue of power is the fundamental issue of every revolution.

At that time state power was unstable. It was shared, by voluntary agreement, between the Provisional Government and the Soviets. The Soviets were delegations from the mass of free—i.e., not subject to external coercion—and armed

workers and soldiers. What *really mattered* was that arms were in the hands of the people and that there was no coercion of the people from without. That is what opened up and ensured a peaceful path for the progress of the revolution. The slogan "All Power Must Be Transferred to the Soviets" was a slogan for the next step, the immediately feasible step, on that peaceful path of development. It was a slogan for the peaceful development of the revolution, which was possible and, of course, most desirable between February 27 and July 4 but which is now absolutely impossible.

Apparently, not all the supporters of the slogan "All Power Must Be Transferred to the Soviets" have given adequate thought to the fact that it was a slogan for peaceful progress of the revolution—peaceful not only in the sense that nobody, no class, no force of any importance, would then (between February 27 and July 4) have been able to resist and prevent the transfer of power to the Soviets. That is not all. Peaceful development would then have been possible, even in the sense that the struggle of classes and parties *within* the Soviets could have assumed a most peaceful and painless form, provided full state power had passed to the Soviets in good time.

The latter aspect of the matter has similarly not yet received adequate attention. In their class composition, the Soviets were organs of the movement of the workers and peasants, a ready-made form of their dictatorship. Had they possessed full state power, the main shortcoming of the petty-bourgeois groups, their chief sin, that of trusting the capitalists, really would have been overcome, would have been criticised by the experience of their own measures. The change of classes and parties in power could have proceeded peacefully within the Soviets, provided the latter wielded exclusive and undivided power. The contact between all the Soviet parties and the people could have remained stable and unimpaired. One must not forget for a single moment that only such a close contact between the Soviet parties and the people, freely growing in extent and depth, could have helped peacefully to get rid of the illusion of petty-bourgeois compromise with the bourgeoisie. The

transfer of power to the Soviets would not, and could not, in itself have changed the correlation of classes; it would in no way have changed the petty-bourgeois nature of the peasants. But it would have taken a big and timely step towards separating the peasants from the bourgeoisie, towards bringing them closer to, and then uniting them with, the workers.

This is what might have happened had power passed to the Soviets at the proper time. That would have been the easiest and the most advantageous course for the people. This course would have been the least painful, and it was therefore necessary to fight for it most energetically. Now, however, this struggle, the struggle for the timely transfer of power to the Soviets, has ended. A peaceful course of development has become impossible. A non-peaceful and most painful course has begun.

The turning-point of July 4 was precisely a drastic change in the objective situation. The unstable condition of state power has come to an end. At the decisive point, power has passed into the hands of the counter-revolution. The development of the parties on the basis of the collaboration of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties and the counter-revolutionary Cadets has brought about a situation in which both these petty-bourgeois parties have virtually become participants in and abettors of counter-revolutionary butchery. As the struggle between parties developed, the unreasoning trust which the petty bourgeoisie put in the capitalists led to their deliberate support of the counter-revolutionaries. The development of party relations has completed its cycle. On February 27, all classes found themselves united against the monarchy. After July 4, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, working hand in glove with the monarchists and the Black Hundreds, secured the support of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, partly by intimidating them, and handed over real state power to the Cavaignacs, the military gang, who are shooting insubordinate soldiers at the front and smashing the Bolsheviks in Petrograd.

The slogan calling for the transfer of state power to the Soviets would now sound quixotic or mocking. Objectively

it would be deceiving the people; it would be fostering in them the delusion that even *now* it is enough for the Soviets to want to take power, or to pass such a decision, for power to be theirs, that there are still parties in the Soviets which have not been tainted by abetting the butchers, that it is possible to undo what has been done.

It would be a profound error to think that the revolutionary proletariat is capable of "refusing" to support the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks against the counter-revolution by way of "revenge", so to speak, for the support they gave in smashing the Bolsheviks, in shooting down soldiers at the front and in disarming the workers. First, this would be applying philistine conceptions of morality to the proletariat (since, *for the good of the cause*, the proletariat will always support not only the vacillating petty bourgeoisie but even the big bourgeoisie); secondly—and that is the important thing—it would be a philistine attempt to obscure the political substance of the situation by "moralising".

And the political substance is that power can no longer be taken peacefully. It can be obtained only by winning a decisive struggle against those actually in power at the moment, namely, the military gang, the Cavaignacs, who are relying for support on the reactionary troops brought to Petrograd and on the Cadets and monarchists.

The substance of the situation is that these new holders of state power can be defeated only by the revolutionary masses, who, to be brought into motion, must not only be led by the proletariat, but must also turn their backs on the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which have betrayed the cause of the revolution.

Those who introduce philistine morals into politics reason as follows: let us assume that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did commit an "error" in supporting the Cavaignacs, who are disarming the proletariat and the revolutionary regiments; still, they must be given a chance to "rectify" their "error"; the rectification of the "error" "should not be made difficult" for them; the swing of the petty bourgeoisie towards the workers should be facilitated. Such reasoning would be childishly naïve or simply stupid,

if not a new deception of the workers. For the swing of the petty-bourgeois masses towards the workers would mean, and could only mean, that these masses had turned their backs upon the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties could now rectify their "error" only by denouncing Tsereteli, Chernov, Dan and Rakitnikov as the butchers' aides. We are wholly and unconditionally in favour of their "error" being "rectified" in this way. . . .

We said that the fundamental issue of revolution is the issue of power. We must add that it is revolutions that show us at every step how the question of *where* actual power lies is obscured, and reveal the divergence between formal and real power. That is one of the chief characteristics of every revolutionary period. It was not clear in March and April 1917 whether real power was in the hands of the government or the Soviet.

Now, however, it is particularly important for class-conscious workers to soberly face the fundamental issue of revolution, namely, who holds state power at the moment? Consider its material manifestations, do not mistake words for deeds, and you will have no difficulty in finding the answer.

Frederick Engels once wrote the state is primarily contingents of armed men with material adjuncts, such as prisons.⁴³⁴ Now it is the military cadets⁴³⁵ and the reactionary Cossacks, who have been specially brought to Petrograd, those who are keeping Kamenev and the others in prison, who closed down *Pravda*, who disarmed the workers and a certain section of the soldiers, who are shooting down an equally certain section of the soldiers, who are shooting down an equally certain section of troops in the army. These butchers are the real power. The Tseretelis and Chernovs are ministers without power, puppet ministers, leaders of parties that support the butchery. That is a fact. And the fact is no less true because Tsereteli and Chernov themselves probably "do not approve" of the butchery, or because their papers timidly dissociate themselves from it. Such changes of political garb change nothing in substance.

The newspaper of 150,000 Petrograd voters has been

closed down. The military cadets on July 6 killed the worker Voinov for carrying *Listok "Pravdy"* out of the printers'. Isn't that butchery? Isn't that the handiwork of Cavaignacs? But neither the government nor the Soviets are to "blame" for this, they may tell us.

So much the worse for the government and the Soviets, we reply; for that means that they are mere figureheads, puppets, and that real power is not in their hands.

Primarily, and above all, the people must know the *truth*—they must know who actually wields state power. The people must be told the whole truth, namely, that power is in the hands of a military clique of Cavaignacs (Kerensky, certain generals, officers, etc.), who are supported by the bourgeois class headed by the Cadet Party, and by all the monarchists, acting through the Black Hundred papers, *Novoye Uremya*, *Zhivoye Slovo*,¹³⁶ etc., etc.

That power must be overthrown. Unless this is done, all talk of fighting the counter-revolution is so much phrase-mongering, "self-deception and deception of the people".

That power now has the support both of the Tseretelis and Chernovs in the Cabinet and of their parties. We must explain to the people the butcher's role they are playing and the fact that such a "finale" for these parties was inevitable after their "errors" of April 21, May 5, June 9 and July 4 and after their approval of the policy of an offensive, a policy which went nine-tenths of the way to predetermining the victory of the Cavaignacs in July.

All agitational work among the people must be reorganised to ensure that it takes account of the specific experience of the present revolution, and particularly of the July days, i.e., that it clearly points to the real enemy of the people, the military clique, the Cadets and the Black Hundreds, and that it definitely unmasks the petty-bourgeois parties, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which played and are playing the part of butcher's aides.

All agitational work among the people must be reorganised so as to make clear that it is absolutely hopeless to expect the peasants to obtain land as long as the power of the mili-

tary clique has not been overthrown, and as long as the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties have not been exposed and deprived of the people's trust. That would be a very long and arduous process under the "normal" conditions of capitalist development, but both the war and economic disruption will tremendously accelerate it. These are "accelerators" that may make a month or even a week equal to a year.

Two objections may perhaps be advanced against what has been said above: first, that to speak now of a decisive struggle is to encourage sporadic action, which would only benefit the counter-revolutionaries; second, that their overthrow would still mean transferring power to the Soviets.

In answer to the first objection, we say: the workers of Russia are already class-conscious enough not to yield to provocation at a moment which is obviously unfavourable to them. It is indisputable that for them to take action and offer resistance at the moment would mean aiding the counter-revolutionaries. It is also indisputable that a decisive struggle will be possible only in the event of a new revolutionary upsurge in the very depths of the masses. But it is not enough to speak in general terms of a revolutionary upsurge, of the rising tide of revolution, of aid by the West-European workers, and so forth; we must draw a definite conclusion from our past, from the lessons we have been given. And that will lead us to the slogan of a decisive struggle against the counter-revolutionaries, who have seized power.

The second objection also amounts to a substitution of arguments of too general a character for concrete realities. No one, no force, can overthrow the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries except the revolutionary proletariat. Now, after the experience of July 1917, it is the revolutionary proletariat that must independently take over state power. Without that the victory of the revolution is *impossible*. The only solution is for power to be in the hands of the proletariat, and for the latter to be supported by the poor peasants or semi-proletarians. And we have already indicated the factors that can enormously accelerate this solution.

Soviets may appear in this new revolution, and indeed are bound to, but *not* the present Soviets, not organs collaborating with the bourgeoisie, but organs of revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. It is true that even then we shall be in favour of building the whole state on the model of the Soviets. It is not a question of Soviets in general, but of combating the *present* counter-revolution and the treachery of the *present* Soviets.

The substitution of the abstract for the concrete is one of the greatest and most dangerous sins in a revolution. The present Soviets have failed, have suffered complete defeat, because they are dominated by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties. At the moment these Soviets are like sheep brought to the slaughterhouse and bleating pitifully under the knife. The Soviets *at present* are powerless and helpless against the triumphant and triumphing counter-revolution. The slogan calling for the transfer of power to the Soviets might be construed as a "simple" appeal for the transfer of power to the present Soviets, and to say that, to appeal for it, would now mean deceiving the people. Nothing is more dangerous than deceit.

The cycle of development of the class and party struggle in Russia from February 27 to July 4 is complete. A new cycle is beginning, one that involves not the old classes, not the old parties, not the old Soviets, but classes, parties and Soviets rejuvenated in the fire of struggle, tempered, schooled and refashioned by the process of the struggle. We must look forward, not backward. We must operate not with the old, but with the new, post-July, class and party categories. We must, at the beginning of the new cycle, proceed from the triumphant bourgeois counter-revolution, which triumphed because the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks compromised with it, and which can be defeated only by the revolutionary proletariat. Of course, in this new cycle there will be many and various stages, both before the complete victory of the counter-revolution and the complete defeat (without a struggle) of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and before a new upsurge of a new revolution. But it will only be pos-

sible to speak of this later, as each of these stages is reached.

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OUR THANKS TO PRINCE G. Y. LVOV

In a farewell talk to members of the Committee of Journalists under the Provisional Government, Prince G. Y. Lvov, former head of the Provisional Government, made some valuable admissions for which the workers will certainly be grateful.

"What strengthens my optimism above all else," Lvov said, "are the events of the past few days inside the country. I am convinced that our 'deep breach' in the Lenin front is incomparably more significant for Russia than the German breach in our South-Western Front."

How can the workers not be grateful to the prince for this sober appraisal of the class struggle? They will be more than grateful, they will take a lesson from Lvov.

What an endless flow of fine words and infinite hypocrisy all the bourgeois people and landowners, as well as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks trailing after them, pour out while orating against "civil war"! But look at Prince Lvov's valuable admission and you will see that he very calmly appraises Russia's internal situation from the point of view of civil war. What the paltry truth of the prince's admissions amounts to is that the bourgeoisie, which head the counter-revolution, have made a deep breach in the revolutionary workers' front. Two enemies, two hostile camps, and one has made a breach in the front of the other—this is how Prince Lvov sums up Russia's internal situation. Let us, then, give Prince Lvov our heartfelt thanks for his frankness! After all, he is a thousand times more correct than those sentimental Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik philistines who imagine that the

class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which inevitably becomes exceedingly aggravated during a revolution, is likely to disappear because of their curses and magic spells!

Two enemies, two hostile camps, and one has made a breach in the front of the other—this is Prince Lvov's correct philosophy of history. He is right in practically discounting the third camp, the petty bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. This third camp appears to be big, but, in fact, it cannot decide anything independently. That is clear to the sober-minded prince, just as it is clear to every Marxist who understands the economic position of the petty bourgeoisie, and as it is clear, lastly, to anyone who thinks about the lessons of the revolution's history, which have always revealed the impotence of the petty-bourgeois parties whenever the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat became acute.

Even in war-time, the internal class struggle is far more important than the struggle against the foreign enemy. What savage abuse the big and petty bourgeoisie have hurled at the Bolsheviks for recognising this truth! What efforts to deny it have been made by the numerous lovers of alluring words about "unity", "revolutionary democracy", and so on, and so forth!

But when a serious and decisive moment came, Prince Lvov at once fully admitted this truth, openly declaring that a "victory" over the class enemy at home was more important than the position in the struggle against the foreign enemy. An incontestable truth. A useful truth. The workers will be very grateful to Prince Lvov for admitting it, for reminding them of it, for spreading it around. And to express their gratitude to the prince, the workers will use their Party to see that the greatest number of working and exploited people understand and assimilate this truth as well as possible. Nothing is more useful to the working class in the struggle for emancipation than this truth.

What is this "breach" in the civil war front which Prince Lvov is so triumphant about? This question must be dealt with very carefully if the workers are to learn well from Lvov.

The "breach in the front" of the internal war on this occasion came, firstly, from the fact that the bourgeoisie had poured oceans of filth and slander on their class enemies, the Bolsheviks, and had shown exceptional tenacity in this really infamous and vile business of slandering their political opponents. It was the "ideological preparation", if we may call it that, for the "breach in the front of the class struggle".

Secondly, the material and really essential "breach" came from the arrest and outlawing of people of hostile political trends, from the murder of some of them in the street without trial (Voinov was murdered on July 6 for carrying publications out of the *Pravda* printers'), from the closing down of their newspapers and the disarming of the workers and revolutionary soldiers.

This is what the "breach in the front of the war against the class enemy" means. Let the workers think this over well so as to be able to apply it to the bourgeoisie when the time is ripe.

The proletariat will never resort to slander. They will close down the bourgeoisie's newspapers after openly declaring by law, by government decree, that the capitalists and their defenders are enemies of the people. The bourgeoisie, in the shape of our enemy, the government, and the petty bourgeoisie, in the shape of the Soviets, are afraid to say a single open and frank word about the ban on *Pravda*, about the reason for closing it down. The proletariat will tell the truth instead of resorting to slander. They will tell the peasants and everyone else the truth about the bourgeois newspapers and why they must be closed down.

Unlike the petty-bourgeois—Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik—windbags, the proletariat will know very well what is actually meant by a "breach in the front" of the class struggle and by making the enemy, the exploiters, harmless. Prince Lvov has helped the workers realise this truth. Thank you, Prince Lvov.

CONSTITUTIONAL ILLUSIONS

Constitutional illusions are what we call a political error when people believe in the existence of a normal, juridical, orderly and legalised—in short, “constitutional”—system, although it does not really exist. At first glance it may appear that in Russia today, July 1917, when no constitution has yet been drafted, there can be no question of constitutional illusions arising. But it would be very wrong to think so. In reality, the essential characteristic of the present political situation in Russia is that an extremely large number of people entertain constitutional illusions. It is impossible to understand anything about the political situation in Russia today without appreciating this. Positively no step can be taken towards a correct formulation of our tactical tasks in Russia today unless we above all concentrate on systematically and ruthlessly exposing constitutional illusions, revealing all their roots and re-establishing a proper political perspective.

Let us take three ideas which are most typical of the current constitutional illusions, and look into them carefully.

Idea No. 1 is that our country is about to have a Constituent Assembly; therefore, everything going on now is temporary, transitory, inessential and non-decisive, and everything will soon be revised and firmly regulated by the Constituent Assembly. Idea No. 2 is that certain parties, such as the Socialist-Revolutionaries or the Mensheviks, or their alliance, command an obvious and undisputed majority among the people or in “the most influential” institu-

tions, such as the Soviets; therefore, the will of these parties and institutions, like the will of the majority of the people in general, cannot be ignored, and even less violated, in republican, democratic and revolutionary Russia. Idea No. 3 is that *a certain measure*, such as closing down *Pravda*, was not legalised either by the Provisional Government or by the Soviets; therefore, it was only a passing phase, a chance occurrence, which cannot at all be regarded as something decisive.

Let us look into each of these ideas.

I

The first Provisional Government promised to convene a Constituent Assembly. It considered that its main job was to prepare the country for a Constituent Assembly. The second Provisional Government fixed September 30 for convening a Constituent Assembly. The third Provisional Government, after July 4, solemnly reaffirmed that date.

Nevertheless, the chances are a hundred to one against the Constituent Assembly being convened on that date. And even if it is, the chances are again a hundred to one that it will be as impotent and useless as was the First Duma—until a second revolution triumphs in Russia. To appreciate this, you only have to detach yourself for a moment from the present hubbub of empty phrases, promises and petty doings which fuddles your thinking, and take a look at the main thing, at what determines everything in public life—the class struggle.

It is clear that the bourgeoisie in Russia have become very closely tied up with the landowners. This is shown by the whole press, the elections, the entire policy of the Cadet Party and the parties to the right of it, and by speeches made at “congresses” of “interested” persons. The bourgeoisie understand perfectly what the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and “Left” Menshevik windbags cannot understand, namely, that private landownership in Russia *cannot* be abolished, and this without compensation, except by carrying through a gigantic economic revolution, by bringing the banks under popular control, by nationalising

the syndicates and adopting the most ruthless revolutionary measures against capital. The bourgeoisie understand that perfectly. At the same time, however, they must know, see and feel that the vast majority of peasants in Russia will now be much more to the left than Chernov as well as declaring for confiscation of the landed estates. For the bourgeoisie know better than we do, both as to how many partial concessions were made them by Chernov, say, from May 6 to July 2, over delaying and curtailing the various peasant demands, and as to how much effort it took the *Right* Socialist-Revolutionaries (Chernov, believe it or not, is regarded as a "centre" man by the Socialist-Revolutionaries!) at the Peasant Congress¹³⁷ and on the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies to "reassure" the peasants and feed them on promises.

The big bourgeoisie differ from the petty bourgeoisie in that they have learned, from their economic and political experience, the conditions under which "order" (i.e., keeping down the people) can be preserved under capitalism. The bourgeoisie are businessmen, people who make big commercial transactions and are accustomed to getting down even to political matters in a strictly business-like manner. They take the bull by the horns rather than putting their trust in words.

The Constituent Assembly in Russia today will yield a majority to peasants who are more to the left than the Socialist-Revolutionaries. The bourgeoisie know this and therefore are bound to put up a tremendous resistance to an early convocation. *With* a Constituent Assembly convened, it will be impossible, or exceedingly difficult, to carry on the imperialist war in the spirit of the secret treaties concluded by Nicholas II, or to defend the landed estates or the payment of compensation for them. The war will not wait. The class struggle will not wait. This was evident enough even in the brief span from February 28 to April 21.

From the very beginning of the revolution there have been two views on the Constituent Assembly. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, completely swayed by constitutional illusions, viewed the matter with the credulity of the petty bourgeoisie who will not hear of the class

struggle: the Constituent Assembly has been proclaimed, there will be a Constituent Assembly and that's all there is to it! Everything else is of the devil's making. Meanwhile the Bolsheviks said: only the growing strength and authority of the Soviets can guarantee the convocation and success of the Constituent Assembly. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries laid emphasis on the act of law: the proclamation, the promise, the declaration to call a Constituent Assembly. The Bolsheviks laid emphasis on the class struggle: if the Soviets were to win, the Constituent Assembly would be certain to meet; if not, there would be no such certainty.

That is exactly what happened. The bourgeoisie have all along been waging both in the open and under cover a continuous and relentless struggle against calling a Constituent Assembly. This struggle was prompted by a desire to delay its convocation until after the war. It expressed itself in the fact that several times they postponed the date of convocation. When, after June 18, or more than a month after the formation of the coalition Cabinet, the convocation date was at last set, a Moscow bourgeois paper declared this had been done under the pressure of Bolshevik propaganda. *Pravda* has published an exact quotation from that paper.

After July 4, when the servility and timidity of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had led to the "victory" of the counter-revolution, a brief but highly significant phrase—the "impossibly early" convocation of a Constituent Assembly!!—slipped into *Rech.* And on July 16, an item appeared in *Volya Naroda*¹³⁸ and *Russkaya Volya*, saying that the Cadets insisted on postponing the convocation of the Constituent Assembly under the pretext that it was "impossible" to convene it at such "short" notice, and adding that the Menshevik Tsereteli, a lackey of the counter-revolution, had consented to its postponement until November 20!

Undoubtedly, this item slipped in against the will of the bourgeoisie who cannot benefit from such "revelations". But murder will out. The counter-revolutionaries, letting themselves go after July 4, blurted out the truth. The very first seizure of power by the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie

after July 4 was immediately followed by a measure (a very serious measure) *against* calling a Constituent Assembly.

That is a fact. And that fact reveals the utter futility of constitutional illusions. Unless a new revolution takes place in Russia, unless the power of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie (primarily the Cadets) is overthrown, and unless the people withdraw their trust from the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, parties compromising with the bourgeoisie, the Constituent Assembly will either never meet, or else will be just a "Frankfurt talking shop",¹³⁹ an impotent and worthless assembly of petty bourgeois people frightened to death by the war and the prospect of the bourgeoisie "boycotting the government", and helplessly torn between frantic efforts to rule without the bourgeoisie and the fear of getting along without them.

The Constituent Assembly issue is *subordinate* to that of the course and outcome of the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Some time ago, *Rabochaya Gazeta* blurted out the remark that the Constituent Assembly would be a Convention.¹⁴⁰ This is an example of the empty, wretched and contemptible bragging of our Menshevik lackeys of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. If it is not to be a "Frankfurt talking shop" or a First Duma, if it is to be a Convention, it must have the courage, the capacity and the strength to strike merciless blows at the counter-revolutionaries instead of compromising with them. For this purpose power must be in the hands of the most advanced, most determined and most revolutionary class of today. For this purpose that class must be supported by the whole mass of the urban and rural poor (the semi-proletarians). For this purpose the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, i.e., primarily the Cadets and the high-ranking army officers, must be dealt with mercilessly. These are the real, the class, the material conditions necessary for a Convention. You have only to list these conditions in a precise and clear way to understand the stupidity of *Rabochaya Gazeta's* bragging and the utter foolishness of the constitutional illusions of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks regarding a Constituent Assembly in Russia today.

II

When lashing the petty-bourgeois "Social-Democrats" of 1848, Marx was particularly severe in his condemnation of their unrestrained use of empty phrases about "the people" and the majority of the people in general.¹⁴¹ It is well to recall this in examining the second idea, in analysing constitutional illusions about a "majority".

For the majority in the state to really decide, definite conditions are required, one of which is the firm establishment of a political system, a form of state power, making it possible to decide matters by a majority and guaranteeing the translation of this possibility into reality. That is one thing. Another is that the class composition of this majority and the interrelation of classes inside (and outside) it should *enable* it to draw the chariot of state concertedly and effectively. Every Marxist knows that these two concrete conditions play a decisive part in the question of a popular majority and of the direction of state affairs in line with the will of the majority. And yet the political literature of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and their political conduct even more so, betray a complete lack of understanding of these conditions.

If political power in the state is in the hands of a class whose interests coincide with those of the majority, that state can be governed truly in line with the will of the majority. But if political power is in the hands of a class whose interests diverge from those of the majority, any form of majority rule is bound to become deception or suppression of the majority. Every bourgeois republic provides hundreds and thousands of examples of this kind. In Russia, the bourgeoisie rule both the economic and political life. Their interests, particularly during the imperialist war, violently conflict with the interests of the majority. Hence, from a materialist and Marxist, and not from a formally juridical point of view, we must expose this conflict and combat bourgeois deception of the people.

Our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, on the contrary, have fully demonstrated and proved that their true role is to be an instrument of the bourgeoisie for deceiving

the people (the "majority"), to be the vehicle of that deception and contribute to it. However sincere individual Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks may be, their fundamental political ideas—that it is possible to break free of the imperialist war and gain "peace without annexations and indemnities" without the dictatorship of the proletariat and the triumph of socialism, and that it is possible to secure the transfer of land to the people without compensation and establish "control" over production in the people's interests without the same condition—these fundamental political (and, of course, economic) ideas of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are, in practice, nothing but petty-bourgeois self-deception, or deception of the masses (the "majority") by the bourgeoisie, which is the same thing.

That is our first and main "amendment" to the majority issue as understood by the petty-bourgeois democrats, socialists of the Louis Blanc type, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. What, in fact, is the value of a "majority" when a majority is in itself only a formal thing and when materially, in actual fact, that majority is a majority of the parties through which the bourgeoisie deceive the majority?

And, of course—and this leads us to our second "amendment", to the second of the above-mentioned fundamental conditions—this deception can only be properly understood by ascertaining its class roots and class meaning. This is not self-deception, not (to put it bluntly) a "swindle", but an illusory idea arising out of the economic situation in which a class finds itself. The petty-bourgeois is in such an economic position, the conditions of his life are such that he cannot help deceiving himself, he involuntarily and inevitably gravitates one minute towards the bourgeoisie, the next towards the proletariat. It is *economically impossible* for him to pursue an independent "line".

His past draws him towards the bourgeoisie, his future towards the proletariat. His better judgement gravitates towards the latter, his prejudice (to use a familiar expression of Marx's) towards the former.¹⁴² For the majority of the people to become an actual majority in state administra-

tion, the actual servant of the interests of the majority, and the actual protector of its rights, and so on, a certain class condition is required, namely, that the majority of the petty bourgeoisie should join forces with the revolutionary proletariat, at least at the decisive moment and in the decisive place.

Without this, a majority is mere fiction which may prevail for a while, may glitter and shine, make a noise and reap laurels, but is absolutely and inevitably doomed to failure nonetheless. This, incidentally, was where the majority of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks came to grief, as the Russian revolution showed in July 1917.

Further, a revolution differs from a "normal" situation in the state precisely because controversial issues of state life are decided by the direct class and popular struggle to the point of armed struggle. It cannot be otherwise when the masses are free and armed. This fundamental fact implies that in time of revolution it is not enough to ascertain the "will of the majority"—you must *prove to be stronger* at the decisive moment and in the decisive place; you must *win*. Beginning with the Peasant War in the Middle Ages in Germany, and throughout all the big revolutionary movements and epochs, including 1848, 1871 and 1905, we have seen innumerable examples of the better organised, more politically-conscious and better armed minority forcing its will upon the majority and defeating it.

Frederick Engels particularly stressed the lesson to be drawn from experience, a lesson which to some degree is common to the peasant revolt of the sixteenth century and to the Revolution of 1848 in Germany, namely, disunity of action and lack of centralisation on the part of the oppressed owing to their petty-bourgeois status in life.¹⁴³ Examining the matter from this point of view, we come to the same conclusion, namely, that a simple majority of the petty-bourgeois masses does not and cannot decide anything, for the disunited millions of rural petty proprietors can *only* acquire organisation, political consciousness in action and centralisation of action (which is indispensable for victory) when they are led either by the bourgeoisie or by the proletariat.

In the long run we know that the problems of social life are resolved by the class struggle in its bitterest and fiercest form—civil war. In this war, as in any other war—a fact also well known and in principle not disputed by anyone—it is economics that decide. It is quite typical and significant that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, while not denying this “in principle” and while realising perfectly the capitalist character of Russia today, dare not face the truth soberly. They are afraid to admit the truth that every capitalist country, including Russia, is basically divided into three main forces: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The first and third are spoken of and recognised by all. Yet the second—which really is the numerical *majority*!—nobody cares to appraise soberly, neither from the economic, political nor military point of view.

Truth does not flatter. That is why the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks shrink from recognising themselves.

III

When I was just beginning this article, the closing down of *Pravda* was merely an “incident”, one that had not yet been legalised by the government. But now, after July 16, the government has formally closed *Pravda* down.

If viewed historically and as a whole, throughout the process of its preparation and realisation, this measure casts a remarkably bright light on the “nature of the constitution” in Russia and on the danger of constitutional illusions.

It is known that the Cadet Party, headed by Milyukov and the newspaper *Rech*, has been demanding repressive measures against the Bolsheviks ever since April. This demand for repression, presented in various forms—from “statesman-like” articles in *Rech* to Milyukov’s repeated cries “Arrest them” (Lenin and other Bolsheviks)—has been one of the major components, if not the major component, of the Cadet political programme in the revolution.

The Cadet Party had been systematically, relentlessly and continuously demanding repressive measures against the Bolsheviks long before Alexinsky and Co. in June and July

invented and fabricated the foully slanderous charge that the Bolsheviks were German spies or were receiving German money, and long before the equally slanderous charge—running counter to generally known facts and published documents—of “armed uprising” or of “rebellion”. Since this demand has now been met, what are we to think of the honesty or intelligence of those who forget, or pretend to forget, the true class and party origin of this demand? How on earth can we help describing as crude falsification or incredible political stupidity the futile efforts of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to make out they believe the “occasion” which presented itself on July 4 for the repressive measures against the Bolsheviks was an “accident” or an “isolated” incident? There must surely be a limit to the distortion of indisputable historical facts!

You have only to compare the movement of April 20-21 with that of July 3-4 to realise immediately that they are alike in character: both contained such objective facts as the spontaneous popular outburst of discontent, impatience and indignation, the provocative shots from the right, the killings on Nevsky, the slanderous outcries from the bourgeoisie, particularly the Cadets, to the effect that “it was the Lenin people who fired the shots on Nevsky”, the extreme aggravation and exacerbation of the struggle between the workers and the bourgeoisie, the utter confusion of the petty-bourgeois parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and the tremendous range of vacillation in their policy and in their approach to the issue of state power generally. June 9-10 and June 18 give us just the same class picture in a different form.

The course of events is as clear as can be: it shows growing popular discontent, impatience and indignation and an increasing aggravation of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, particularly for influence over the petty-bourgeois masses. Linked with this are two very important historical developments which have made the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks dependent on the counter-revolutionary Cadets. These developments are, first, the formation on May 6 of a coalition Cabinet in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks turned out to be

the hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, getting themselves more and more into a tangle by making deals and agreements with the latter, rendering them thousands of "services", delaying the most essential revolutionary measures time and again; and secondly, the offensive at the front. The offensive inevitably implied the resumption of the imperialist war, a vast increase in the influence, weight and role of the imperialist bourgeoisie, the most widespread chauvinism among the people, and, last but not least*, the transfer of power—first military power and then state power generally—to the counter-revolutionary high-ranking army officers.

This was the course of historical events which between April 20-21 and July 3-4 deepened and sharpened class antagonisms, and which after July 4 enabled the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie to accomplish what on April 20-21 had stood out very clearly as their programme and tactics, their immediate aim and their "clean" methods, which were to lead to the achievement of that aim.

Nothing could be more pointless historically, more pitiful theoretically or more ridiculous practically than the philistine whining (echoed, incidentally, by L. Martov as well) over July 4, to the effect that the Bolsheviks "contrived" to defeat themselves, that this defeat came from their own "adventurism", and so on, and so forth. All this whining, all these arguments to the effect that we "should not have" participated (in the attempt to lend a "peaceable and organised" character to the perfectly legitimate popular discontent and indignation!!), are either sheer apostasy, if coming from Bolsheviks, or the usual expression of the usual cowed and confused state of the petty bourgeoisie. In actual fact, the movement of July 3-4 grew out of the movement of April 20-21 and after as inevitably as summer follows spring. It was the imperative duty of the proletarian party to remain with the masses and try to lend as peaceable and organised a character as possible to their justified action rather than stand aside and wash its hands like Pontius Pilate,¹⁴⁴ on the pedantic plea that the masses were not organised down to the last man and that their movement

* These four words are given in English by Lenin.—Ed.

sometimes went to excesses—as though there had been no excesses on April 20-21, as though there had ever in history been a serious popular movement free of excesses!

The defeat of the Bolsheviks after July 4 followed with historical inevitability from the whole preceding course of events because on April 20-21 the petty-bourgeois masses and their leaders, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were not yet tied by the offensive and had not yet got themselves into a tangle by their deals with the bourgeoisie in the "coalition Cabinet", whereas by July 4 they had become so tied and entangled they could not but stoop to co-operation (in repressive measures, in slander, in butchery) with the counter-revolutionary Cadets. On July 4 the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks slid for good into the cesspool of counter-revolution; they had been steadily sliding towards it throughout May and June due to their role in the coalition Cabinet and their approval of the policy of offensive.

We may appear to have digressed from our subject, the closing down of *Pravda*, to a historical estimation of the events of July 4. But this only appears so, for the one cannot be understood without the other. We have seen that, if we look into the matter and the interconnection of events, the closing down of *Pravda*, and the arrests and the other forms of persecution of the Bolsheviks are nothing but the realisation of the long-standing programme of the counter-revolutionaries, the Cadets in particular.

It would now be highly instructive to see *who* specifically carried out this programme, and by what means.

Let us have a look at the facts. On July 2-3 the movement was growing; the people were seething with indignation at government inaction, the high coast of living, economic dislocation and the offensive. The Cadets withdrew, playing a give-away game and presenting an ultimatum to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, leaving them, tied to power but lacking power, to pay for the people's defeat and indignation.

On July 2-3 the Bolsheviks were trying to restrain the masses from action. This has been acknowledged *even* by an eyewitness from *Dyelo Naroda*, who reported on what

took place in the Grenadier Regiment on July 2. On the evening of July 3, the movement overflowed its banks and the Bolsheviks drew up an appeal stressing that the movement must be "peaceable and organised". On July 4, provocative shots from the right increased the number of victims of the firing on both sides. It should be pointed out that the Executive Committee's promise to investigate the incidents, to issue bulletins twice a day, etc., etc., has remained an empty promise! The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did nothing whatsoever, they didn't even publish a complete list of the dead on both sides!!

On the night of July 4 the Bolsheviks drew up an appeal to stop the action and *Pravda* printed it that same night. But that same night, firstly, counter-revolutionary troops began to arrive in Petrograd (apparently upon the summons or with the consent of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, of their Soviets—a "delicate" point regarding which, of course, the strictest silence is maintained even now when every bit of need for secrecy is past!). Secondly, that same night military cadets and suchlike, clearly acting upon instructions from Polovtsev, commanding, and from the General Staff, began raids on the Bolsheviks. On the night of July 4-5, *Pravda's* office was raided. On July 5 and 6, its printers', "Trud", was wrecked; a worker named Voinov was murdered in broad daylight for carrying *Listok "Pravdy"* from the printers'; house searches and arrests were made among the Bolsheviks and the revolutionary regiments were disarmed.

Who started it all? Not the government or the Soviet, but the counter-revolutionary military gang grouped around the General Staff and acting in the name of the "counter-intelligence service", circulating the lies of Pereverzev and Alexinsky in order to stir up the army, and so on.

The government is absent. So are the Soviets; they are trembling for their own fate as they receive message after message that the Cossacks may come and smash them up. The Black Hundred and Cadet press, which led the hounding of the Bolsheviks, is beginning to hound the Soviets.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have bound themselves hand and foot by their entire policy. Being bound,

they called (or tolerated the calling of) counter-revolutionary troops to Petrograd. And that bound them even more. They have sunk to the very bottom of the foul counter-revolutionary cesspool. They cravenly dismissed their own commission, appointed to investigate the "case" of the Bolsheviks. They basely betrayed the Bolsheviks to the counter-revolutionaries. They abjectly participated in the funeral procession of the Cossacks who were killed, and so kissed the hand of the counter-revolutionaries.

They are completely bound. They are at the bottom of the cesspool.

They try this, that and the other; they hand Kerensky the Cabinet, they go to Canossa¹⁴⁵ to the Cadets, they organise a "Zemsky Sobor" or a "coronation" of the counter-revolutionary government in Moscow.¹⁴⁶ Kerensky dismisses Polovtsev.

But nothing comes of all those efforts. They in no way change the *actual state of affairs*. Kerensky dismisses Polovtsev, but at the same time gives shape and legality to Polovtsev's *measures* and to his policy; he closes down *Pravda*, he introduces capital punishment for the soldiers, he bans meetings at the front, he continues to arrest Bolsheviks (even Kollontai!) in accordance with Alexinsky's programme.

The "nature of the constitution" in Russia is coming out with striking clarity: the offensive at the front and the coalition with the Cadets in the rear have cast the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks into the cesspool of counter-revolution. *In reality*, state power is passing into the hands of the counter-revolutionaries, the military gang. Kerensky and the government of Tsereteli and Chernov are *only a screen for it*; they are compelled to legalise its measures, actions and policies *post factum*.

The haggling going on between the Cadets and Kerensky, Tsereteli and Chernov is of secondary importance, if not entirely unimportant. Whether the Cadets win in this haggling, or whether Tsereteli and Chernov hold out "alone", will have no effect on the actual state of affairs. The fundamental, the main and decisive fact is that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have swung over to the

counter-revolutionaries (a swing forced by the policy they have been pursuing since May 6).

The cycle of party development is complete. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have slid steadily downwards—from their expression of “confidence” in Kerensky on February 28 to May 6, which bound them to the counter-revolutionaries, and then to July 5, when they touched rock bottom.

A new period is coming in. The victory of the counter-revolutionaries is making the people disappointed with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties and is paving the way for the masses to adopt a policy of support for the revolutionary proletariat.

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THE BEGINNING OF BONAPARTISM

Now that the Cabinet of Kerensky, Nekrasov, Avksentyev and Co.¹⁴⁷ has been formed, the gravest and most disastrous error Marxists could make would be to mistake words for deeds, deceptive appearances for reality or generally for something serious.

Let's leave this pastime to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who have already gone as far as to play the part of clowns around the Bonapartist Kerensky. Indeed, it certainly is buffoonery on the part of the Chernovs, Avksentyevs and Tseretelis to start striking postures and uttering fancy words at a time when Kerensky, clearly at the Cadets' bidding, forms something of a secret Directory composed of himself, Nekrasov, Tereshchenko and Savinkov, keeps quiet about both the Constituent Assembly and the declaration of July 8,¹⁴⁸ proclaims the sacred union of classes in his address to the people, concludes an agreement on terms unknown to anyone with Kornilov, who has presented a most brazen ultimatum, and continues the policy of scandalously outrageous arrests.

At a time like this, it certainly is buffoonery on the part of Chernov to challenge Milyukov to appear before a court of arbitration, of Avksentyev to shout about the futility of a narrow class point of view, or of Tsereteli and Dan to push through the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets the emptiest resolutions stuffed with utterly meaningless phrases, resolutions that call to mind the Cadet First Duma during its worst period of impotence in the face of tsarism.

Just as the Cadets in 1906 prostituted the first assembly of popular representatives in Russia by reducing it to a miserable talking shop in face of the growing tsarist counter-revolution, so the S.R.s and Mensheviks in 1917 have prostituted the Soviets by reducing them to a miserable talking

shop in face of the growing Bonapartist counter-revolution.

Kerensky's Cabinet is undoubtedly a cabinet taking the first steps towards Bonapartism.

We see the chief historical symptom of Bonapartism: the manoeuvring of state power, which leans on the military clique (on the worst elements of the army) for support, between two hostile classes and forces which more or less balance each other out.

The class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has reached the limit and on April 20 and 21, as well as on July 3-5, the country was within a hair's breadth of civil war. This socio-economic condition certainly forms the classical basis for Bonapartism. And then, this condition is combined with others that are quite akin to it; the bourgeoisie are ranting and raving against the Soviets, but are *as yet* powerless to disperse them, while the Soviets, prostituted by Tsereteli, Chernov and Co., are *now* powerless to put up serious resistance to the bourgeoisie.

The landowners and peasants, too, live as on the eve of civil war: the peasants demand land and freedom, they can be kept in check, if at all, only by a Bonapartist government capable of making the most unscrupulous promises to all classes without keeping any of them.

Add to this the situation created by a foolhardy offensive and military reverses, in which fancy phrases about saving the country are particularly fashionable (concealing the desire to save the imperialist programme of the bourgeoisie), and you have a perfect picture of the socio-political setting for Bonapartism.

Don't let us be deluded by phrases. Don't let us be misled by the idea that all we have is the first steps of Bonapartism. It is the first steps we must be able to discern unless we want to find ourselves in the ridiculous predicament of the stupid philistine who laments the second step although he himself helped to take the first.

It would now be nothing short of stupid philistinism to entertain constitutional illusions, such as, for instance, that the present Cabinet is probably more Left than all the preceding ones (see *Izvestia*), that well-meaning criticism by the Soviets could rectify the errors of the government, that the

arbitrary arrests and suppression of newspapers were isolated incidents which, it is to be hoped, will never recur, or that Zarudny is an honest man and that in republican and democratic Russia a fair trial is possible and everyone should appear at it, and so on, and so forth.

The stupidity of these constitutional philistine illusions is too obvious to require special refutation.

The struggle against the bourgeois counter-revolution demands soberness and the ability to see and speak of things as they are.

Bonapartism in Russia is no accident but a natural product of the evolution of the class struggle in a petty-bourgeois country with a considerably developed capitalism and a revolutionary proletariat. Historical stages like April 20 and 21, May 6, June 9 and 10, June 18 and 19, and July 3-5 are landmarks which show clearly how preparations for Bonapartism proceeded. It would be a very big mistake to think that a democratic situation rules out Bonapartism. On the contrary, it is exactly in a situation like this (the history of France has confirmed it twice) that Bonapartism emerges, given a certain relationship between classes and their struggle.

However, to recognise the inevitability of Bonapartism does not at all mean forgetting the inevitability of its downfall.

If we *only* said the counter-revolution had temporarily gained the upper hand here in Russia we should be dodging the issue.

If we analysed the origin of Bonapartism and, fearlessly facing the truth, told the working class and the whole people that the beginning of Bonapartism is a fact, we should thereby start a real and stubborn struggle to overthrow Bonapartism, a struggle waged on a large political scale and based on far-reaching class interests.

The Russian Bonapartism of 1917 differs from the beginnings of French Bonapartism in 1799 and 1849 in several respects, such as the fact that not a single important task of the revolution has been accomplished here. The struggle to settle the agrarian and the national questions is only just gathering momentum.

Kerensky and the counter-revolutionary Cadets who use him as a pawn can neither convoke the Constituent Assembly on the appointed date, nor postpone it, without in both cases promoting the revolution. And the catastrophe engendered by the prolongation of the imperialist war keeps on approaching with even greater force and speed than ever.

The advance contingents of the Russian proletariat succeeded in emerging from our June and July days without losing too much blood. The proletarian party has every opportunity to choose the tactics and form, or forms, of organisation that will in any circumstances prevent unexpected (seemingly unexpected) Bonapartist persecutions from cutting short its existence and its regular messages to the people.

Let the Party loudly and clearly tell the people the whole truth that Bonapartism is beginning; that the "new" government of Kerensky, Avksentyev and Co. is merely a screen for the counter-revolutionary Cadets and the military clique which is in power at present; that the people can get no peace, the peasants no land, the workers no eight-hour day, and the hungry no bread unless the counter-revolution is completely stamped out. Let the Party say so, and every step in the march of events will bear it out.

With remarkable speed Russia has gone through a whole epoch in which the majority of the people put their faith in the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties. And now the majority of the working people are beginning to pay heavily for their credulity.

All indications are that the march of events is continuing at a very fast pace and that the country is approaching the next epoch, when the majority of the working people will have to entrust their fate to the revolutionary proletariat. The revolutionary proletariat will take power and begin a socialist revolution; despite all the difficulties and possible zigzags of development, it will draw the workers of all the advanced countries into the revolution, and will defeat both war and capitalism.

LESSONS OF THE REVOLUTION

Every revolution means a sharp turn in the lives of a vast number of people. Unless the time is ripe for such a turn, no real revolution can take place. And just as any turn in the life of an individual teaches him a great deal and brings rich experience and great emotional stress, so a revolution teaches an entire people very rich and valuable lessons in a short space of time.

During a revolution, millions and tens of millions of people learn in a week more than they do in a year of ordinary, somnolent life. For at the time of a sharp turn in the life of an entire people it becomes particularly clear what aims the various classes of the people are pursuing, what strength they possess, and what methods they use.

Every class-conscious worker, soldier and peasant should ponder thoroughly over the lessons of the Russian revolution, especially now, at the end of July, when it is clear that the first phase of our revolution has failed.

I

Let us see, in fact, what the workers and peasants were striving for when they made the revolution. What did they expect of the revolution? As we know, they expected liberty, peace, bread and land.

But what do we see now?

Instead of liberty, the old tyranny is coming back. The death penalty is being introduced for the soldiers at the

front.¹⁴⁹ Peasants are prosecuted for the unauthorised seizure of landed estates. Printing presses of workers' newspapers are wrecked. Workers' newspapers are closed down without trial. Bolsheviks are arrested, often without any charge or upon blatantly trumped-up charges.

It may be argued that the persecution of Bolsheviks does not constitute a violation of freedom, for only certain individuals are being prosecuted and on certain charges. Such an argument, however, would be a deliberate and obvious lie; for how can anyone wreck printing presses and close down newspapers for the crimes of individuals, even if these charges were proved and established by a court of law? It would be a different thing if the government had legally declared the whole party of the Bolsheviks, their very trend and views, to be criminal. But everybody knows that the government of free Russia could not, and did not, do anything of the kind.

What chiefly exposes the libellous character of the charges against the Bolsheviks is that the newspapers of the landowners and capitalists furiously abused the Bolsheviks for their struggle against the war and against the landowners and capitalists, and openly demanded the arrest and prosecution of the Bolsheviks even when not a single charge against a single Bolshevik had been trumped up.

The people want peace. Yet the revolutionary government of free Russia has resumed the war of conquest on the basis of those very same secret treaties which ex-Tsar Nicholas II concluded with the British and French capitalists so that the Russian capitalists might plunder other nations. Those secret treaties remain unpublished. The government of free Russia resorted to subterfuges, and to this day has not proposed a just peace to all nations.

There is no bread. Famine is again drawing near. Everybody sees that the capitalists and the rich are unscrupulously cheating the treasury on war deliveries (the war is now costing the nation fifty million rubles daily), that they are raking in fabulous profits through high prices, while nothing whatsoever has been done to establish effective control by the workers over the production and distribution of goods. The capitalists are becoming more brazen every day; they

are throwing workers out into the street, and this at a time when the people are suffering from shortages.

A vast majority of the peasants, at congress after congress, have loudly and clearly declared that landed proprietorship is an injustice and robbery. Meanwhile, a government which calls itself revolutionary and democratic has been leading peasants by the nose for months and deceiving them by promises and delays. For months the capitalists did not allow Minister Chernov to issue a law prohibiting the purchase and sale of land. And when this law was finally passed, the capitalists started a foul slander campaign against Chernov, which they are still continuing. The government has become so brazen in its defence of the landowners that it is beginning to bring peasants to trial for "unauthorised" seizures of land.

They are leading the peasants by the nose, telling them to wait for the Constituent Assembly. The convocation of the Assembly, however, is being steadily postponed by the capitalists. Now that owing to Bolshevik pressure it has been set for September 30, the capitalists are openly clamouring about this being "impossibly" short notice, and are demanding the Constituent Assembly's postponement. The most influential members of the capitalist and landowner party, the "Cadet", or "people's freedom", Party, such as Panina, are openly urging that the convocation of the Constituent Assembly be delayed until after the war.

As to land, wait until the Constituent Assembly. As to the Constituent Assembly, wait until the end of the war. As to the end of the war, wait until complete victory. That is what it comes to. The capitalists and landowners, having a majority in the government, are plainly mocking at the peasants.

II

But how could this happen in a free country, after the overthrow of the tsarist regime?

In a non-free country, the people are ruled by a tsar and a handful of landowners, capitalists and bureaucrats who are not elected by anybody.

In a free country, the people are ruled only by those who

have been elected for that purpose by the people themselves. At the elections the people divide themselves into parties, and as a rule each class of the population forms its own party; for instance, the landowners, the capitalists, the peasants and the workers all form separate parties. In free countries, therefore, the people are ruled through an open struggle between parties and by free agreement between these parties.

For about four months after the overthrow of the tsarist regime on February 27, 1917, Russia was ruled as a free country, i.e., through an open struggle between freely-formed parties and by free agreement between them. To understand the development of the Russian revolution, therefore, it is above all necessary to study the chief parties, the class interests they defended, and the relations among them all.

III

After the overthrow of the tsarist regime state power passed into the hands of the first Provisional Government, consisting of representatives of the bourgeoisie, i.e., the capitalists, who were joined by the landowners. The "Cadet" Party, the chief capitalist party, held pride of place as the ruling and government party of the bourgeoisie.

It was no accident this party secured power, although it was not the capitalists, of course, but the workers and peasants, the soldiers and sailors, who fought the tsarist troops and shed their blood for liberty. Power was secured by the capitalist party because the capitalist class possessed the power of wealth, organisation and knowledge. Since 1905, and particularly during the war, the class of the capitalists, and the landowners associated with them, have made in Russia the greatest progress in organising.

The Cadet Party has always been monarchist, both in 1905 and from 1905 to 1917. After the people's victory over tsarist tyranny it proclaimed itself a republican party. The experience of history shows that whenever the people triumphed over a monarchy, capitalist parties were willing to become republican as long as they could uphold the privi-

leges of the capitalists and their unlimited power over the people.

The Cadet Party pays lip-service to "people's freedom". But actually it stands for the capitalists, and it was immediately backed by all the landowners, monarchists and Black Hundreds. The press and the elections are proof of this. After the revolution, all the bourgeois papers and the whole Black Hundred press began to sing in unison with the Cadets. Not daring to come out openly, all the monarchist parties supported the Cadet Party at the elections, as, for example, in Petrograd.

Having obtained state power, the Cadets made every effort to continue the predatory war of conquest begun by Tsar Nicholas II, who had concluded secret predatory treaties with the British and French capitalists. Under these treaties, the Russian capitalists were promised, in the event of victory, the seizure of Constantinople, Galicia, Armenia, etc. As to the people, the government of the Cadets put them off with empty subterfuges and promises, deferring the decision of all matters of vital and essential importance to the workers and peasants until the Constituent Assembly met, without appointing the date of its convocation.

Making use of liberty, the people began to organise independently. The chief organisation of the workers and peasants, who form the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, was the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. These Soviets already began to be formed during the February Revolution, and within a few weeks all class-conscious and advanced workers and peasants were united in Soviets in most of the larger cities of Russia and in many rural districts.

The Soviets were elected in an absolutely free way. They were genuine organisations of the people, of the workers and peasants. They were genuine organisations of the vast majority of the people. The workers and peasants in soldiers' uniforms were armed.

It goes without saying that the Soviets could and should have taken over state power in full. Pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly there should have been no other power in the state but the Soviets. Only then would

our revolution have become a truly popular and truly democratic revolution. Only then could the working people, who are really striving for peace, and who really have no interest in a war of conquest, have begun firmly and resolutely to carry out a policy which would have ended the war of conquest and led to peace. Only then could the workers and peasants have curbed the capitalists, who are making fabulous profits "from the war" and who have reduced the country to a state of ruin and starvation. But in the Soviets only a minority of the deputies were on the side of the revolutionary workers' party, the Bolshevik Social-Democrats, who demanded that all state power should be transferred to the Soviets. The majority of the deputies to the Soviets were on the side of the parties of the Menshevik Social-Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were opposed to the transfer of power to the Soviets. Instead of removing the bourgeois government and replacing it by a government of the Soviets, these parties insisted on supporting the bourgeois government, compromising with it and forming a coalition government with it. This policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie pursued by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, who enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the people, is the main content of the entire course of development of the revolution during the five months since it began.

IV

Let us first see how this compromising of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie proceeded, and then let us try to explain why the majority of the people trusted them.

V

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have compromised with the capitalists in one way or another at every stage of the Russian revolution.

At the very close of February 1917, as soon as the people had triumphed and the tsarist regime had been overthrown,

the capitalist Provisional Government admitted Kerensky as a "socialist". As a matter of fact, Kerensky has never been a socialist; he was only a Trudovik, and he enlisted himself with the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" only in March 1917, when it was already safe and quite profitable to do so. Through Kerensky, as Deputy Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, the capitalist Provisional Government immediately set about gaining control of and taming the Soviet. The Soviet, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who predominated in it, allowed itself to be tamed, agreeing immediately after the formation of the capitalist Provisional Government to "support it"—"to the extent" that it carried out its promises.

The Soviet regarded itself as a body verifying and exercising control over the activities of the Provisional Government. The leaders of the Soviet established what was known as a Contact Commission to keep in touch with the government. Within that Contact Commission, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Soviet held continuous negotiations with the capitalist government, holding, properly speaking, the status of Ministers without portfolio or unofficial Ministers.

This state of affairs lasted throughout March and almost the whole of April. Seeking to gain time, the capitalists resorted to delays and subterfuges. Not a single step of any importance to further the revolution was taken by the capitalist government during this period. It did absolutely nothing even to further its direct and immediate task, the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; it did not submit the question to the localities or even set up a central commission to handle the preparations. The government was concerned with only one thing, namely, surreptitiously renewing the predatory international treaties concluded by the tsar with the capitalists of Britain and France, thwarting the revolution as cautiously and quietly as possible, and promising everything without fulfilling any of its promises. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the Contact Commission acted like simpletons who were fed on fancy phrases, promises, and more promises. Like the crow in the fable, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks succumbed to

flattery and listened with pleasure to the assurances of the capitalists that they valued the Soviets highly and did not take a single step without them.

But time passed and the capitalist government did absolutely nothing for the revolution. On the contrary, during this period it managed, to the detriment of the revolution, to renew the secret predatory treaties, or, rather, to reaffirm them and "vitalise" them by supplementary and no less secret negotiations with Anglo-French imperialist diplomats. During this period it managed, to the detriment of the revolution, to lay the foundations of a counter-revolutionary organisation of (or at least of a rapprochement among) the generals and officers in the army in the field. To the detriment of the revolution it managed to start the organisation of industrialists, of factory-owners, who, under the onslaught of the workers, were compelled to make concession after concession, but who at the same time began to sabotage (damage) production and prepare to bring it to a standstill when the opportunity came.

However, the organisation of the advanced workers and peasants in the Soviets made steady progress. The foremost representatives of the oppressed classes felt that, in spite of the agreement between the government and the Petrograd Soviet, in spite of Kerensky's pompous talk, in spite of the "Contact Commission", the government remained an enemy of the people, an enemy of the revolution. The people felt that unless the resistance of the capitalists was broken, the cause of peace, liberty and the revolution, would inevitably be lost. The impatience and bitterness of the people kept on growing.

VI

It burst out on April 20-21. The movement flared up spontaneously; nobody had cleared the ground for it. The movement was so markedly directed against the government that one regiment even appeared fully armed at the Mariinsky Palace to arrest the ministers. It became perfectly obvious to everybody that the government could not retain power. The Soviets could (and should) have taken over power

without meeting the least resistance from any quarter. Instead, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks supported the collapsing capitalist government, entangled themselves even further in compromises with it and took steps that were even more fatal to the revolution, that tended to lead to its doom.

Revolution enlightens all classes with a rapidity and thoroughness unknown in normal, peaceful times. The capitalists, better organised and more experienced than anybody else in matters of class struggle and politics, learnt their lesson quicker than the others. Realising that the government's position was hopeless, they resorted to a method which for many decades, ever since 1848, has been practised by the capitalists of other countries in order to fool, divide and weaken the workers. This method is known as a "coalition" government, i.e., a joint cabinet formed of members of the bourgeoisie and turncoats from socialism.

In countries where freedom and democracy have long existed side by side with a revolutionary labour movement, in Britain and France, the capitalists have repeatedly and very successfully resorted to this method. When the "Socialist" leaders entered a bourgeois cabinet, they invariably proved to be figureheads, puppets, screens for the capitalists, instruments for deceiving the workers. The "democratic and republican" capitalists of Russia resorted to this very method. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks let themselves be fooled at once, and the "coalition" cabinet, joined by Chernov, Tsereteli and Co., became a fact on May 6.

The simpletons of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties were jubilant and fatuously bathed in the rays of the ministerial glory of their leaders. The capitalists gleefully rubbed their hands at having found helpers against the people in the persons of the "leaders of the Soviets" and at having secured their promise to support "offensive operations at the front", i.e., a resumption of the imperialist predatory war, which had come to a standstill for a while. The capitalists were well aware of the puffed-up impotence of these leaders, they knew that the promises of the bourgeoisie—regarding control over production, and even the orga-

nisation of production, regarding a peace policy, and so forth—would never be fulfilled.

And so it turned out. The second phase in the development of the revolution, May 6 to June 9, or June 18, fully corroborated the expectations of the capitalists as to the ease with which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks could be fooled.

While Peshekhonov and Skobelev were deceiving themselves and the people with florid speeches to the effect that one hundred per cent of the profits of the capitalists would be taken away from them, that their "resistance was broken", and so forth, the capitalists continued to consolidate their position. Nothing, absolutely nothing, was undertaken during this period to curb the capitalists. The ministerial turncoats from socialism proved to be mere talking machines for distracting the attention of the oppressed classes, while the entire apparatus of state administration actually remained in the hands of the bureaucracy (the officialdom) and the bourgeoisie. The notorious Palchinsky, Deputy Minister for Industry, was a typical representative of that apparatus, blocking every measure against the capitalists. While the ministers prated everything remained as of old.

The bourgeoisie used Minister Tsereteli in particular to fight the revolution. He was sent to "pacify" Kronstadt when the local revolutionaries had the audacity to remove an appointed commissar.¹⁵⁰ The bourgeoisie launched in their newspapers an incredibly vociferous, violent and vicious campaign of lies, slander and vituperation against Kronstadt, accusing it of the desire "to secede from Russia", and repeating this and similar absurdities in a thousand ways to intimidate the petty bourgeoisie and the philistines. A most typically stupid and frightened philistine, Tsereteli, was the most "conscientious" of all in swallowing the bait of bourgeois slander; he was the most zealous of all in "smashing up and subduing" Kronstadt, without realising that he was playing the role of a lackey of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. He turned out to be the instrument of the "compromise" arrived at with revolutionary Kronstadt, whereby the commissar for Kronstadt was not simply appointed by the government, but was elected locally and was *confirmed*

by the government. It was on such miserable compromises that the ministers who had deserted socialism for the bourgeoisie wasted their time.

Wherever a bourgeois minister could not appear in defence of the government, before the revolutionary workers or in the Soviets, Skobelev, Tsereteli, Chernov or some other "socialist" Minister appeared (or, to be precise, was sent by the bourgeoisie) and faithfully performed their assignment; he would do his level best to defend the Cabinet, whitewash the capitalists and fool the people by making promise after promise and by advising people to wait, wait and wait.

Minister Chernov particularly was engaged in bargaining with his bourgeois colleagues; down to July, to the new "crisis of power" which began after the movement of July 3-4, to the resignation of the Cadets from the Cabinet, Minister Chernov was continuously engaged in the useful and interesting work, so beneficial to the people, of "persuading" his bourgeois colleagues, exhorting them to agree at least to prohibition of the purchase and sale of land. This prohibition had been most solemnly promised to the peasants at the All-Russia Congress of Peasant Deputies in Petrograd. But the promise remained only a promise. Chernov proved unable to fulfil it either in May or in June, until the revolutionary tide, the spontaneous outbreak of July 3-4, which coincided with the resignation of the Cadets from the Cabinet, made it possible to enact this measure. Even then, however, it proved to be an isolated measure, incapable of promoting to any palpable extent the struggle of the peasants against the landowners for land.

Meanwhile, at the front, the counter-revolutionary, imperialist task of resuming the imperialist, predatory war, a task which Guchkov, so hated by the people, had been unable to accomplish, was being accomplished successfully and brilliantly by the "revolutionary democrat" Kerensky, that new-baked member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. He revelled in his own eloquence, incense was burned to him by the imperialists, who were using him as a pawn, he was flattered and worshipped—all because he served the capitalists faithfully, trying to talk the "revolutionary troops" into agreeing to resume the war being waged in pursuance of

the treaties concluded by Tsar Nicholas II with the capitalists of Britain and France, a war waged so that Russian capitalists might secure Constantinople and Lvov, Erzurum and Trebizond.

So passed the second phase of the Russian revolution—May 6 to June 9. Shielded and defended by the “socialist” Ministers, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie grew in strength, consolidated their position and prepared an offensive both against the external enemy and against the internal enemy, i.e., the revolutionary workers.

VII

On June 9, the revolutionary workers’ party, the Bolsheviks, was preparing for a demonstration in Petrograd to give organised expression to the irresistibly growing popular discontent and indignation. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, entangled in compromises with the bourgeoisie and bound by the imperialist policy of an offensive, were horrified, feeling that they were losing their influence among the masses. A general howl went up against the demonstration, and the counter-revolutionary Cadets joined in this howl, this time together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Under their direction, and as a result of their policy of compromise with the capitalists, the swing of the petty-bourgeois masses to an alliance with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie became quite definite and strikingly obvious. This is the historical significance and class meaning of the crisis of June 9.

The Bolsheviks called off the demonstration, having no wish to lead the workers at that moment into a losing fight against the united Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The latter, however, so as to retain at least a vestige of the people’s confidence, were compelled to call a general demonstration for June 18. The bourgeoisie were beside themselves with rage, rightly discerning in this a swing of the petty-bourgeois democrats towards the proletariat, and they decided to paralyse the action of the democrats by an offensive at the front.

In fact, June 18 was marked by an impressive victory for the slogans of the revolutionary proletariat, the slogans of Bolshevism, among the people of Petrograd. And on June 19 the bourgeoisie and the Bonapartist* Kerensky solemnly announced that the offensive at the front had begun on June 18.

The offensive meant in effect the resumption of the predatory war in the interests of the capitalists and against the will of the vast majority of the working people. That is why the offensive was inevitably accompanied, on the one hand, by a gigantic growth of chauvinism and the transfer of military power (and consequently of state power) to the military gang of Bonapartists, and, on the other, by the use of violence against the masses, the persecution of the internationalists, the abolition of freedom of agitation, and the arrest and shooting of those who were against the war.

Whereas May 6 bound the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the triumphal chariot of the bourgeoisie with a rope, June 19 shackled them, as servants of the capitalists, with a chain.

VIII

Owing to the resumption of the predatory war, the bitterness of the people naturally grew even more rapidly and intensely. July 3-4 witnessed an outburst of their anger which the Bolsheviks attempted to restrain and which, of course, they had to endeavour to make as organised as possible.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, being slaves of the bourgeoisie, shackled by their master, agreed to everything: dispatching reactionary troops to Petrograd, bringing back the death penalty, disarming the workers and

* Bonapartism (from Bonaparte, the name of the two French emperors) is a name applied to a government which endeavours to appear non-partisan by taking advantage of a highly acute struggle between the parties of the capitalists and the workers. Actually serving the capitalists, such a government dupes the workers most of all by promises and petty concessions.

revolutionary troops, arresting and hounding, and closing down newspapers without trial. The power which the bourgeoisie in the government were unable to take entirely, and which the Soviets did not want to take, fell into the hands of the military clique, the Bonapartists, who, of course, were wholly backed by the Cadets and the Black Hundreds, by the landowners and capitalists.

Down the ladder, step by step. Having once set foot on the ladder of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks slid irresistibly downwards, to rock bottom. On February 28, in the Petrograd Soviet, they promised conditional support to the bourgeois government. On May 6 they saved it from collapse and allowed themselves to be made its servants and defenders by agreeing to an offensive. On June 9 they united with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in a campaign of furious rage, lies and slander against the revolutionary proletariat. On June 19 they approved the resumption of the predatory war. On July 3 they consented to the summoning of reactionary troops, which was the beginning of their complete surrender of power to the Bonapartists. Down the ladder, step by step.

This shameful finale of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties was not fortuitous but a consequence of the economic status of the small owners, the petty bourgeoisie, as has been repeatedly borne out by experience in Europe.

IX

Everybody, of course, has seen the small owner bend every effort and strain every nerve to "get on in the world", to become a real master, to rise to the position of a "strong" employer, to the position of a bourgeois. As long as capitalism rules the roost, there is no alternative for the small owner other than becoming a capitalist (and that is possible at best in the case of one small owner out of a hundred), or becoming a ruined man, a semi-proletarian, and ultimately a proletarian. The same is true in politics: the petty-bourgeois democrats, especially their leaders, tend to trail after the

bourgeoisie. The leaders of the petty-bourgeois democrats console their people with promises and assurances about the possibility of reaching agreement with the big capitalists; at best, and for a very brief period, they obtain certain minor concessions from the capitalists for a small upper section of the working people; but on every decisive issue, on every important matter, the petty-bourgeois democrats have always tailed after the bourgeoisie as a feeble appendage to them, as an obedient tool in the hands of the financial magnates. The experience of Britain and France has proved this over and over again.

The experience of the Russian revolution from February to July 1917, when events developed with unusual rapidity, particularly under the influence of the imperialist war and the deep-going crisis brought about by it, has most strikingly and palpably confirmed the old Marxist truth that the position of the petty bourgeoisie is unstable.

The lesson of the Russian revolution is that there can be no escape for the working people from the iron grip of war, famine, and enslavement by the landowners and capitalists unless they completely break with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties and clearly understand the latter's treacherous role, unless they renounce all compromises with the bourgeoisie and resolutely side with the revolutionary workers. Only the revolutionary workers, if supported by the peasant poor, are capable of smashing the resistance of the capitalists and leading the people in gaining land without compensation, complete liberty, victory over famine and the war, and a just and lasting peace.

AFTERWORD

This article was written at the end of July, as is apparent from the text.

The history of the revolution during August has fully corroborated what is said in this article. Then, at the end of August, the Kornilov revolt⁴⁵¹ caused a new turn in the revolution by clearly demonstrating to the whole people that the Cadets, in alliance with the counter-revolutionary gener-

als, were striving to disband the Soviets and restore the monarchy. The near future will show how strong this new turn of the revolution is, and whether it will succeed in putting an end to the fatal policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie.

The article was written
at the end of July, the Afterword
on September 6 (19), 1917

The article was published on
September 12 and 13 (August 30
and 31), 1917, in the newspaper
Rabochy Nos. 8 and 9

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 223-39

Signed: *N.—kov* in No. 8
and *N. Lenin* in No. 9

The *Afterword* was published in
1917 in the pamphlet:

N. Lenin, *Lessons of the Revolution*, Priboi Publishers

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE R.S.D.L.P.

It is possible that these lines will come too late, for events are developing with a rapidity that sometimes makes one's head spin. I am writing this on Wednesday, August 30, and the recipients will read it no earlier than Friday, September 2. Still, on chance, I consider it my duty to write the following.

The Kornilov revolt is a most unexpected (unexpected at such a moment and in such a form) and downright unbelievably sharp turn in events.

Like every sharp turn, it calls for a revision and change of tactics. And as with every revision, we must be extra-cautious not to become unprincipled.

It is my conviction that those who become unprincipled are people who (like Volodarsky) slide into defencism or (like other Bolsheviks) into a *bloc* with the S.R.s., into *supporting* the Provisional Government. Their attitude is absolutely wrong and unprincipled. We shall become defencists *only after* the transfer of power to the proletariat, *after* a peace offer, *after* the secret treaties and ties with the banks have been broken—*only afterwards*. Neither the capture of Riga *nor the capture of Petrograd* will make us defencists. (I should very much like Volodarsky to read this.) Until then we stand for a proletarian revolution, we are against the war, and we are *no* defencists.

Even now we must not support Kerensky's government. This is unprincipled. We may be asked: aren't we going to fight against Kornilov? Of course we must! But this is not the same thing; there is a dividing line here, which is being

stepped over by some Bolsheviks who fall into compromise and allow themselves to be *carried away* by the course of events.

We shall fight, we are fighting against Kornilov, *just as Kerensky's troops do*, but we do not support Kerensky. *On the contrary*, we expose his weakness. There is the difference. It is rather a subtle difference, but it is highly essential and must not be forgotten.

What, then, constitutes our change of tactics after the Kornilov revolt?

We are changing the *form* of our struggle against Kerensky. Without in the least relaxing our hostility towards him, without taking back a single word said against him, without renouncing the task of overthrowing him, we say that we must *take into account* the present situation. We shall not overthrow Kerensky right now. We shall approach the task of fighting against him *in a different way*, namely, we shall point out to the people (who are fighting against Kornilov) Kerensky's *weakness and vacillation*. That has been done in the past *as well*. Now, however, it has become the *all-important* thing and this constitutes the change.

The change, further, is that the *all-important* thing now has become the intensification of our campaign for some kind of "partial demands" to be presented to Kerensky: arrest Milyukov, arm the Petrograd workers, summon the Kronstadt, Vyborg and Helsingfors troops to Petrograd, dissolve the Duma, arrest Rodzyanko, legalise the transfer of the landed estates to the peasants, introduce workers' control over grain and factories, etc., etc. We must present these demands not only to Kerensky, and *not so much* to Kerensky, as to the workers, soldiers and peasants who have been *carried away* by the course of the struggle against Kornilov. We must keep up their *enthusiasm*, encourage them to deal with the generals and officers who have declared for Kornilov, urge *them* to demand the immediate transfer of land to the peasants, suggest to *them* that it is necessary to arrest Rodzyanko and Milyukov, dissolve the Duma, close down *Rech* and other bourgeois papers, and institute investigations against them. The "Left" S.R.s must be especially urged on in this direction.

It would be wrong to think that we have moved *farther* away from the task of the proletariat winning power. No. We have come very close to it, *not directly*, but from the side. *At the moment* we must campaign not so much directly against Kerensky, as *indirectly* against him, namely, by demanding a more and more active, truly revolutionary war against Kornilov. The development of this war alone can lead *us* to power, but we must *speak* of this as little as possible in our propaganda (remembering very well that even tomorrow events may put power into our hands, then we shall not relinquish it). It seems to me that this should be passed on in a letter (not in the papers) to the propagandists, to groups of agitators and propagandists, and to Party members in general. We must relentlessly fight against phrases about the defence of the country, about a united front of revolutionary democrats, about supporting the Provisional Government, etc., etc., since they are just empty *phrases*. We must say: now is the time for *action*; you S.R. and Menshevik gentlemen have long since worn those phrases threadbare. Now is the time for *action*; the war against Kornilov must be conducted in a revolutionary way, by drawing the masses in, by arousing them, by inflaming them (Kerensky is *afraid* of the masses, *afraid* of the people). In the war against the Germans, *action* is required right now; *immediate and unconditional peace must be offered on precise terms*. If this is done, either a speedy peace *can* be attained or the war can be turned into a revolutionary war; if not, all the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries remain lackeys of imperialism.

Lenin

Written on August 30
(September 12), 1917

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Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 285-89

ON COMPROMISES

The term compromise in politics implies the surrender of certain demands, the renunciation of part of one's demands, by agreement with another party.

The usual idea the man in the street has about the Bolsheviks, an idea encouraged by a press which slanders them, is that the Bolsheviks will never agree to a compromise with anybody.

The idea is flattering to us as the party of the revolutionary proletariat, for it proves that even our enemies are compelled to admit our loyalty to the fundamental principles of socialism and revolution. Nevertheless, we must say that this idea is wrong. Engels was right when, in his criticism of the Manifesto of the Blanquist Communists (1873), he ridiculed their declaration: "No compromises!"¹⁵² This, he said, was an empty phrase, for compromises are often unavoidably forced upon a fighting party by circumstances, and it is absurd to refuse once and for all to accept "payments on account".¹⁵³ The task of a truly revolutionary party is not to declare that it is impossible to renounce all compromises, but to be able, *through all compromises*, when they are unavoidable, to remain true to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary purpose, to its task of paving the way for revolution and educating the mass of the people for victory in the revolution.

To agree, for instance, to participate in the Third and Fourth Dumas was a compromise, a temporary renunciation of revolutionary demands. But this was a compromise absolutely forced upon us, for the balance of forces made it im-

possible for us for the time being to conduct a mass revolutionary struggle, and in order to prepare this struggle over a long period we *had* to be able to work even from *inside* such a "pigsty". History has proved that this approach to the question by the Bolsheviks as a party was perfectly correct.

Now the question is not of a forced, but of a voluntary compromise.

Our Party, like any other political party, is striving after political domination *for itself*. Our aim is the dictatorship of the revolutionary proletariat. Six months of revolution have proved very clearly, forcefully and convincingly that this demand is correct and inevitable in the interests of *this particular* revolution, for otherwise the people will never obtain a democratic peace, land for the peasants, or complete freedom (a fully democratic republic). This has been shown and proved by the course of events during the six months of our revolution, by the struggle of the classes and parties and by the development of the crises of April 20-21, June 9-10 and 18-19, July 3-5 and August 27-31.

The Russian revolution is experiencing so abrupt and original a turn that we, as a party, may offer a voluntary compromise—true, not to our direct and main class enemy, the bourgeoisie, but to our nearest adversaries, the "ruling" petty-bourgeois-democratic parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

We may offer a compromise to these parties only by way of exception, and only by virtue of the particular situation, which will obviously last only a very short time. And I think we should do so.

The compromise on our part is our return to the pre-July demand of all power to the Soviets and a government of S.R.s and Mensheviks responsible to the Soviets.

Now, and only now, perhaps *during only a few days* or a week or two, such a government could be set up and consolidated in a perfectly peaceful way. In all probability it could secure the peaceful *advance* of the whole Russian revolution, and provide exceptionally good chances for great strides in the world movement towards peace and the victory of socialism.

In my opinion, the Bolsheviks, who are partisans of world revolution and revolutionary methods, may and should consent to this compromise only for the sake of the revolution's peaceful development—an opportunity that is *extremely* rare in history and *extremely* valuable, an opportunity that only occurs once in a while.

The compromise would amount to the following: the Bolsheviks, without making any claim to participate in the government (which is impossible for the internationalists unless a dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants has been realised), would refrain from demanding the immediate transfer of power to the proletariat and the poor peasants and from employing revolutionary methods of fighting for this demand. A condition that is self-evident and not new to the S.R.s and Mensheviks would be complete freedom of propaganda and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly without further delays or even at an earlier date.

The Mensheviks and S.R.s, being the government bloc, would then agree (assuming that the compromise had been reached) to form a government wholly and exclusively responsible to the Soviets, the latter taking over all power locally as well. This would constitute the "new" condition. I think the Bolsheviks would advance no other conditions, trusting that the revolution would proceed peacefully and party strife in the Soviets would be *peacefully overcome* thanks to really complete freedom of propaganda and to the immediate establishment of a new democracy in the composition of the Soviets (new elections) and in their functioning.

Perhaps this is *already* impossible? Perhaps. But if there is even one chance in a hundred, the attempt at realising this opportunity is still worth while.

What would both "contracting" parties gain by this "compromise", i.e., the Bolsheviks, on the one hand, and the S.R. and Menshevik bloc, on the other? If *neither* side gains anything, then the compromise must be recognised as impossible, and nothing more is to be said. No matter how difficult this compromise may be at present (after July and August, two months equivalent to two decades in "peaceful", somnolent times), I think it stands a small chance of being realised.

This chance has been created by the decision of the S.R.s and Mensheviks not to participate in a government together with the Cadets.

The Bolsheviks would gain the opportunity of quite freely advocating their views and of trying to win influence in the Soviets under a really complete democracy. In words, "everybody" now concedes the Bolsheviks this freedom. In reality, this freedom is *impossible* under a bourgeois government or a government in which the bourgeoisie participate, or under any government, in fact, other than the Soviets. Under a Soviet government, such freedom would be *possible* (we do not say it would be a certainty, but still it would be possible). For the sake of such a possibility at such a difficult time, it would be worth compromising with the present majority in the Soviets. *We* have nothing to fear from real democracy, for reality is on our side, and even the course of development of trends within the S.R. and Menshevik parties, which are hostile to us, proves us right.

The Mensheviks and S.R.s would gain in that they would at once obtain every opportunity to carry out *their* bloc's programme with the support of the obviously overwhelming majority of the people and in that they would secure for themselves the "peaceful" use of their majority in the Soviets.

Of course, there would probably be two voices heard from this bloc, which is heterogeneous both because it is a bloc and because petty-bourgeois democracy is *always* less homogeneous than the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

One voice would say: we cannot follow the same road as the Bolsheviks and the revolutionary proletariat. It will demand too much anyway and will entice the peasant poor by demagogy. It will demand peace and a break with the Allies. That is impossible. We are better off and safer with the bourgeoisie; after all, we have not parted ways with them but only had a temporary *quarrel*, and only over the Kornilov incident. We have quarrelled, but we shall make it up. Moreover, the Bolsheviks are not "ceding" us anything, for their attempts at insurrection are as doomed to defeat as was the Commune of 1871.

The other voice would say: the allusion to the Commune is very superficial and even foolish. For, in the first place, the Bolsheviks have learnt something since 1871; they would not fail to seize the banks, and would not refuse to advance on Versailles. Under such conditions even the Commune might have been victorious. Furthermore, the Commune could not immediately offer the people what the Bolsheviks will be able to offer if they come to power, namely, land to the peasants, an immediate offer of peace, real control over production, an honest peace with the Ukrainians, Finns, etc. The Bolsheviks, to put it bluntly, hold ten times more "trumps" than the Commune did. In the second place, the Commune, after all, means a strenuous civil war, a set-back to peaceful cultural development for a long time to come, an opportunity for all sorts of MacMahons and Kornilovs to operate and plot with greater ease—and such operations are a menace to our whole bourgeois society. Is it wise to risk a Commune?

Now a Commune is inevitable in Russia if we do not take power into our own hands, if things remain in as grave a state as they were between May 6 and August 31. Every revolutionary worker and soldier will inevitably think about the Commune and believe in it; he will inevitably attempt to bring it about, for he will argue: "The people are perishing; war, famine and ruin are spreading. Only the Commune can save us. So let us all perish, let us die, but let us set up the Commune." Such thoughts are inevitable with the workers, and it will not be as easy to crush the Commune now as it was in 1871. The Russian Commune will have allies throughout the world, allies a hundred times stronger than those the Commune had in 1871. . . . Is it wise for us to risk a Commune? I cannot agree, either, that the Bolsheviks virtually cede us nothing by their compromise. For, in all civilised countries, civilised ministers value highly every agreement with the proletariat in war-time, however small. They value it very, very highly. And these are men of action, real ministers. The Bolsheviks are rapidly becoming stronger, in spite of repression, and the weakness of their press. . . . Is it wise for us to risk a Commune?

We have a safe majority; the peasant poor will not wake

up for some time to come; we are safe for our lifetime. I do not believe that in a peasant country the majority will follow the extremists. And against an obvious majority, no insurrection is possible in a really democratic republic. This is what the second voice would say.

There may also be a third voice coming from among the supporters of Martov or Spiridonova, which would say: I am indignant, "comrades", that both of you, speaking about the Commune and its likelihood, unhesitatingly side with its opponents. In one form or another, both of you side with those who suppressed the Commune. I will not undertake to campaign for the Commune and I cannot promise beforehand to fight in its ranks as every Bolshevik will do, but I must say that *if* the Commune does start *in spite of* my efforts, I shall rather help its defenders than its opponents.

The medley of voices in the "bloc" is great and inevitable, for a host of shades is represented among the petty-bourgeois democrats—from the complete bourgeois, perfectly eligible for a post in the government, down to the semi-pau-per who is not yet capable of taking up the proletarian position. Nobody knows what will be the result of this medley of voices at any given moment.

* * *

The above lines were written on Friday, September 1, but due to unforeseen circumstances (under Kerensky, as history will tell, not all Bolsheviks were free to choose their domicile) they did not reach the editorial office that day. After reading Saturday's and today's (Sunday's) papers, I say to myself: perhaps it is already too late to offer a compromise. Perhaps the few days in which a peaceful development was *still* possible have passed *too*. Yes, to all appearances, they have already passed. In one way or another, Kerensky will abandon *both* the S.R. Party and the S.R.s themselves, and will consolidate his position with the aid of the bourgeoisie *without* the S.R.s, and thanks to their inaction. . . . Yes, to all appearances, the days when by chance

the path of peaceful development became possible have *already* passed. All that remains is to send these notes to the editor with the request to have them entitled: "Belated Thoughts". Perhaps even belated thoughts are sometimes not without interest.

Written on September
1-3 (14-16), 1917

Published in *Rabochy Put* No. 3,
September 19 (6), 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

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pp. 305-10

ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF THE REVOLUTION

The key question of every revolution is undoubtedly the question of state power. Which class holds power decides everything. When *Dyelo Naroda*, the paper of the chief governing party in Russia, recently complained (No. 147) that, owing to the controversies over power, both the question of the Constituent Assembly and that of bread are being forgotten, the Socialist-Revolutionaries should have been answered, "Blame yourselves. For it is the wavering and indecision of *your* party that are mostly to blame for 'ministerial leapfrog', the interminable postponements of the Constituent Assembly, and the undermining by the capitalists of the planned and agreed measures of a grain monopoly and of providing the country with bread."

The question of power cannot be evaded or brushed aside, because it is the key question determining *everything* in a revolution's development, and in its foreign and domestic policies. It is an undisputed fact that our revolution has "wasted" six months in wavering over the system of power; it is a fact resulting from the wavering policy of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. In the long run, these parties' wavering policy was determined by the class position of the petty bourgeoisie, by their economic instability in the struggle between capital and labour.

The whole issue at present is whether the petty-bourgeois democrats have learned anything during these great, exceptionally eventful six months. If not, then the revolution is

lost, and only a victorious uprising of the proletariat can save it. If they have learned something, the establishment of a stable, unwavering power must be begun immediately. Only if power is based, obviously and unconditionally, *on a majority* of the population can it be stable during a popular revolution, i.e., a revolution which rouses the people, the majority of the workers and peasants, to action. Up to now state power in Russia has *virtually* remained in the hands of the *bourgeoisie*, who are compelled to make only particular concessions (only to begin withdrawing them the following day), to hand out promises (only to fail to carry them out), to search for all sorts of excuses to cover their domination (only to fool the people by a show of "honest coalition"), etc., etc. In words it claims to be a popular, democratic, revolutionary government, but in deeds it is an anti-popular, undemocratic, counter-revolutionary, bourgeois government. This is the contradiction which has existed so far and which has been a source of the complete instability and inconsistency of power, of that "ministerial leapfrog" in which the S.R.s and Mensheviks have been engaged with such unfortunate (for the people) enthusiasm.

In early June 1917 I told the All-Russia Congress of Soviets¹⁵⁴ that either the Soviets would be dispersed and die an inglorious death, or all power must be transferred to them. The events of July and August very convincingly bore out these words. No matter what lies the lackeys of the bourgeoisie—Potresov, Plekhanov and others, who designate as "broadening the base" of power its virtual transfer to a tiny minority of the people, to the bourgeoisie, the exploiters—may resort to, only the power of the Soviets can be stable, obviously based on a majority of the people.

Only Soviet power could be stable and not be overthrown even in the stormiest moments of the stormiest revolution. Only this power could assure a continuous and broad development of the revolution, a peaceful struggle of parties within the Soviets. Until this power is created, there will inevitably be indecision, instability, vacillation, endless "crises of power", a constant farce of ministerial leapfrog, outbreaks on the Right and on the Left.

The slogan, "Power to the Soviets", however, is very often, if not in most cases, taken quite incorrectly to mean a "Cabinet of the parties of the Soviet majority". We would like to go into more detail on this very false notion.

A "Cabinet of the parties of the Soviet majority" means a change of individual ministers, with the entire old government apparatus left intact—a thoroughly bureaucratic and thoroughly undemocratic apparatus incapable of carrying out serious reforms, such as are contained even in the S.R. and Menshevik programmes.

"Power to the Soviets" means radically reshaping the entire old state apparatus, that bureaucratic apparatus which hampers everything democratic. It means removing this apparatus and substituting for it a new, popular one, i.e., a truly democratic apparatus of Soviets, i.e., the organised and armed majority of the people—the workers, soldiers and peasants. It means allowing the majority of the people initiative and independence not only in the election of deputies, but also in state administration, in effecting reforms and various other changes.

To make this difference clearer and more comprehensible, it is worth recalling a valuable admission made some time ago by the paper of the governing party of the S.R.s, *Dyelo Naroda*. It wrote that *even* in those ministries which were in the hands of socialist Ministers (this was written during the notorious coalition with the Cadets, when some Mensheviks and S.R.s were ministers), the entire administrative apparatus had remained unchanged, and hampered work.

This is quite understandable. The entire history of the bourgeois-parliamentary, and also, to a considerable extent, of the bourgeois-constitutional, countries shows that a change of ministers means very little, for the real work of administration is in the hands of an enormous army of officials. This army, however, is undemocratic through and through, it is connected by thousands and millions of threads with the landowners and the bourgeoisie and is completely dependent on them. This army is surrounded by an atmosphere of bourgeois relations, and breathes nothing but this atmosphere. It is set in its ways, petrified, stagnant, and is powerless to break free of this atmosphere. It can only think, feel,

or act in the old way. This army is bound by servility to rank, by certain privileges of "Civil" Service; the upper ranks of this army are, through the medium of shares and banks, entirely enslaved by finance capital, being to a certain extent its agent and a vehicle of its interests and influence.

It is the greatest delusion, the greatest self-deception, and a deception of the people, to attempt, by means of *this* state apparatus, to carry out such reforms as the abolition of landed estates without compensation, or the grain monopoly, etc. This apparatus *can* serve a republican bourgeoisie, creating a republic in the shape of a "monarchy without a monarch", like the French Third Republic, but it is absolutely incapable of carrying out reforms which would even seriously curtail or limit the rights of capital, the rights of "sacred private property", much less abolish those rights. That is why it always happens, under all sorts of "coalition" Cabinets that include "socialists", that these socialists, even when individuals among them are perfectly honest, in reality turn out to be either a useless ornament of or a screen for the bourgeois government, a sort of lightning conductor to divert the people's indignation from the government, a tool for the government to deceive the people. This was the case with Louis Blanc in 1848, and dozens of times in Britain and France, when socialists participated in Cabinets. This is also the case with the Chernovs and Tseretelis in 1917. So it has been and so it will be as long as the bourgeois system exists and as long as the old bourgeois, bureaucratic state apparatus remains intact.

The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are particularly valuable because they represent a new *type* of state apparatus, which is immeasurably higher, incomparably more democratic. The S.R.s and Mensheviks have done everything, the possible and the impossible, to turn the Soviets (particularly the Petrograd Soviet and the All-Russia Soviet, i.e., the Central Executive Committee) into useless talking shops which, under the guise of "control", merely adopted useless resolutions and suggestions which the government shelved with the most polite and kindly smile. The "fresh breeze" of the Kornilov affair, however, which promised a real storm, was enough for all that was musty

in the Soviet to blow away for a while, and for the initiative of the revolutionary people to begin expressing itself as something majestic, powerful and invincible.

Let all sceptics learn from this example from history. Let those who say: "We have no apparatus to replace the old one, which inevitably gravitates towards the defence of the bourgeoisie," be ashamed of themselves. For this apparatus *exists*. It is the Soviets. Don't be afraid of the people's initiative and independence. Put your faith in their revolutionary organisations, and you will see *in all* realms of state affairs the same strength, majesty and invincibility of the workers and peasants as were displayed in their unity and their fury against Kornilov.

Lack of faith in the people, fear of their initiative and independence, trepidation before their revolutionary energy instead of all-round and unqualified support for it—this is where the S.R. and Menshevik leaders have sinned most of all. This is where we find one of the deepest roots of their indecision, their vacillation, their infinite and infinitely fruitless attempts to pour new wine into the old bottles of the old, bureaucratic state apparatus.

Take the history of the democratisation of the army in the 1917 Russian revolution, the history of the Chernov Ministry, of Palchinsky's "reign", and of Peshekhonov's resignation—you will find what we have said above strikingly borne out at every step. Because there was no full confidence in the elected soldiers' organisations and no absolute observance of the principle of soldiers electing their commanding officers, the Kornilovs, Kaledins and counter-revolutionary officers came to be at the head of the army. This is a fact. Without deliberately closing one's eyes, one cannot fail to see that *after* the Kornilov affair Kerensky's government is *leaving everything as before*, that *in fact it is bringing back the Kornilov affair*. The appointment of Alexeyev, the "peace" with the Klembovskys, Gagarins, Bagratians and other Kornilov men, and leniency in the treatment of Kornilov and Kaledin all very clearly prove that Kerensky is in fact bringing back the Kornilov affair.

There is no middle course. This has been shown by experience. Either all power goes to the Soviets and the army

is made fully democratic, or another Kornilov affair occurs.

And what about the history of the Chernov Ministry? Didn't it prove that every more or less serious step towards actually satisfying the peasants' needs, every step showing confidence in the peasants and in their mass organisations and actions, evoked very great enthusiasm among them? Chernov, however, had to spend almost four months "haggling" with the Cadets and bureaucrats, who by endless delays and intrigues finally forced him to resign without having accomplished anything. For and during these four months the landowners and capitalists "won the game"—they saved the landed estates, delayed the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and even started a number of repressions against the land committees.

There is no middle course. This has been shown by experience. Either all power goes to the Soviets both centrally and locally, and all land is given to the peasants *immediately*, pending the Constituent Assembly's decision, or the landowners and capitalists obstruct every step, restore the landowners' power, drive the peasants into a rage and carry things to an exceedingly violent peasant revolt.

The same thing happened when the capitalists (with the aid of Palchinsky) crushed every more or less serious attempt to supervise production, when the merchants thwarted the grain monopoly and broke up the regulated democratic distribution of grain and other foodstuffs just *begun* by Peshekhonov.

What is now necessary in Russia is not to invent "new reforms", not to make "plans" for "comprehensive" changes. Nothing of the kind. This is how the situation is depicted—deliberately depicted in a false light—by the capitalists, the Potresovs, the Plekhanovs, who shout against "introducing socialism" and against the "dictatorship of the proletariat". The situation in Russia in fact is such that the unprecedented burdens and hardships of the war, the unparalleled and very real danger of economic dislocation and famine have of themselves suggested the way out, have of themselves not only pointed out, but advanced reforms and other changes as absolutely necessary. These changes must be the grain monopoly, control over production and distribution, restric-

tion of the issue of paper money, a fair exchange of grain for manufactured goods, etc.

Everyone recognises measures of this kind and in this direction as inevitable, and in many places they have already been launched from the most diverse sides. *They have already been launched*, but they have been and are being obstructed everywhere by the resistance of the landowners and the capitalists, which is being put up through the Kerensky government (an utterly bourgeois and Bonapartist government *in reality*), through the old bureaucratic state apparatus, and through the direct and indirect pressure of Russian and "Allied" finance capital.

Not so long ago I. Prilezhayev, lamenting the resignation of Peshekhonov and the collapse of the fixed prices and the grain monopoly, wrote in *Dyelo Naroda* (No. 147):

"Courage and resolve are what our governments of all compositions have lacked.... The revolutionary democrats must not wait; they must themselves show initiative, and intervene in the economic chaos in a planned way.... If anywhere, it is here that a firm course and a determined government are necessary."

That goes without saying. Words of gold. The only trouble is that the author forgot that the question of the firm course to take, of courage and resolve, is not a personal matter, but a question of which *class* is capable of manifesting courage and resolve. The only class capable of this is the proletariat. A courageous and resolute government steering a firm course is nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants. I. Prilezhayev unwittingly longs for *this dictatorship*.

What would such a dictatorship mean in practice? It would mean nothing but the fact that the resistance of the Kornilov men would be broken and the democratisation of the army restored and completed. Two days after its creation ninety-nine per cent of the army would be enthusiastic supporters of this dictatorship. This dictatorship would give land to the peasants and full power to the local peasant committees. How can anyone in his right senses doubt that the peasants would support this dictatorship? What Peshekhonov only *promised* ("the resistance of the capitalists has

been broken" was what Peshekhonov actually said in his famous speech before the Congress of Soviets), this dictatorship would put into effect, would translate into reality. At the same time the democratic organisations of food supply, control, etc., that have already begun to form would in no way be eliminated. They would, on the contrary, be supported and developed, and all obstacles in the way of their work would be removed.

Only the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants is capable of smashing the resistance of the capitalists, of displaying truly supreme courage and determination in the exercise of power, and of securing the enthusiastic, selfless and truly heroic support of the masses both in the army and among the peasants.

Power to the Soviets—this is the only way to make further progress gradual, peaceful and smooth, keeping perfect pace with the political awareness and resolve of the majority of the people and with their own experience. Power to the Soviets means the complete transfer of the country's administration and economic control into the hands of the workers and peasants, to whom *nobody* would dare offer resistance and who, through practice, through their own experience, *would soon learn* how to distribute the land, products and grain properly.

Rabochy Put No. 10,
September 27 (14), 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 366-73

THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTION

Russia is a country of the petty bourgeoisie, by far the greater part of the population belonging to this class. Its vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are inevitable, and only when it joins the proletariat is the victory of the revolution, of the cause of peace, freedom, and land for the working people assured easily, peacefully, quickly, and smoothly.

The course of our revolution shows us these vacillations in practice. Let us then not harbour any illusions about the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties; let us stick firmly to the path of our proletarian class. The poverty of the poor peasants, the horrors of the war, the horrors of hunger—all these are showing the masses more and more clearly the correctness of the proletarian path, the need to support the proletarian revolution.

The “peaceful” hopes of the petty bourgeoisie that there might be a “coalition” with the bourgeoisie and agreements with them, that it will be possible to wait “calmly” for the “speedy” convocation of the Constituent Assembly, etc., have been mercilessly, cruelly, implacably destroyed by the course of the revolution. The Kornilov revolt was the last cruel lesson, a lesson on a grand scale, supplementing thousands upon thousands of small lessons in which workers and peasants were deceived by local capitalists and landowners, in which soldiers were deceived by the officers, etc., etc.

Discontent, indignation and wrath are growing in the army, among the peasantry and among the workers. The “coalition”

of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie, promising everything and fulfilling nothing, is irritating the masses, is opening their eyes, is pushing them towards insurrection.

There is a growing Left opposition among the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Spiridonova and others) and among the Mensheviks (Martov and others), and it has already reached forty per cent of the Council and Congress of those parties. And down *below*, among the proletariat and the peasantry, particularly the poorest sections, the *majority* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks belong to the *Lefts*.

The Kornilov revolt is instructive and has proved a good lesson.

It is impossible to know whether the Soviets will be able to go farther than the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and thus ensure a peaceful development of the revolution, or whether they will continue to mark time, thus making a proletarian uprising inevitable.

We cannot know this.

Our business is to help get everything possible done to make sure the "last" chance for a peaceful development of the revolution, to help by the presentation of our programme, by making clear its national character, its absolute accord with the interests and demands of a vast majority of the population.

The following lines are an essay in the presentation of such a programme.

Let us take it more to those down below, to the masses, to the office employees, to the workers, to the peasants, not only to our supporters, but particularly to those who follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, to the non-party elements, to the ignorant. Let us lift them up so that they can pass an independent judgement, make their own decisions, send *their own* delegations to the Conference, to the Soviets, to the government and our work will not have been in vain, *no matter what* the outcome of the Conference. This will then prove useful for the Conference, for the elections to the Constituent Assembly, and for all other political activity in general.

Experience teaches us that the Bolshevik programme and

tactics are correct. So little time passed, so much happened from April 20 to the Kornilov revolt.

The experience of the *masses*, the experience of *oppressed* classes taught them very, very much in that time; the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have completely cut adrift from the masses. This will most certainly be revealed in the discussion of our concrete programme insofar as we are able to bring it to the notice of the masses.

AGREEMENTS WITH THE CAPITALISTS ARE DISASTROUS

1. To leave in power the representatives of the bourgeoisie, even a small number of them, to leave in power such notorious Kornilovites as Generals Alexeyev, Klembovsky, Bagration, Gagarin, and others, or such as have proved their complete powerlessness in face of the bourgeoisie, and their ability of acting Bonaparte-fashion like Kerensky, is, on the one hand, merely opening the door wide to famine and the inevitable economic catastrophe which the capitalists are purposely accelerating and intensifying; on the other hand, it will lead to a military catastrophe, since the army hates the General Staff and cannot enthusiastically participate in the imperialist war. Besides, there is no doubt that Kornilovite generals and officers remaining in power will *deliberately open the front to the Germans*, as they have done in Galicia and Riga. This can be prevented only by the formation of a new government on a new basis, as expounded below. To continue any kind of agreements with the bourgeoisie after all that we have gone through since April 20 would be, on the part of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not only an error but a direct betrayal of the people and of the revolution.

POWER TO THE SOVIETS

2. All power in the country must pass exclusively to the representatives of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies on the basis of a definite programme and under the condition of the government being fully respon-

sible to the Soviets. New elections to the Soviets must be held immediately, both to record the experience of the people during the recent weeks of the revolution, which have been particularly eventful, and to eliminate crying injustices (lack of proportional representation, unequal elections, etc.) which in some cases still remain.

All power locally, wherever there are not yet any democratically elected institutions, and also in the army, must be taken over exclusively by the local Soviets and by commissars and other institutions elected by them, but only those that have been properly elected.

Workers and revolutionary troops, i.e., those who have in practice shown their ability to suppress the Kornilovites, must everywhere be armed, and this must be done with the full support of the state.

PEACE TO THE PEOPLES

3. The Soviet Government must *straight away* offer to *all* the belligerent peoples (i.e., simultaneously both to their governments and to the worker and peasant masses) to conclude an immediate general peace on democratic terms, and also to conclude an immediate armistice (even if only for three months).

The main condition for a democratic peace is the renunciation of annexations (seizures)—not in the incorrect sense that all powers get back what they have lost, but in the only correct sense that *every* nationality without any exception, both in Europe and in the colonies, shall obtain its freedom and the possibility to decide for itself whether it is to form a *separate* state or whether it is to enter into the composition of some other state.

In offering the peace terms, the Soviet Government must itself immediately take steps towards their fulfilment, i.e., it must publish and repudiate the secret treaties by which we have been bound up to the present time, those which were concluded by the tsar and which give Russian capitalists the promise of the pillaging of Turkey, Austria, etc. Then we must immediately satisfy the demands of the Ukrainians and the Finns, ensure them, as well as all other non-Russian

nationalities in Russia, full freedom, including freedom of secession, applying the same *to all* Armenia, undertaking to evacuate that country as well as the Turkish lands occupied by us, etc.

Such peace terms will not meet with the approval of the capitalists, but they will meet with such tremendous sympathy on the part of all the peoples and will cause such a great world-wide outburst of enthusiasm and of general indignation against the continuation of the predatory war that it is extremely probable that we shall at once obtain a truce and a consent to open peace negotiations. For the workers' revolution against the war is irresistibly growing everywhere, and it can be spurred on, not by phrases about peace (with which the workers and peasants have been deceived by *all* the imperialist governments including our own Kerensky government), but by a break with the capitalists and by the offer of peace.

If the least probable thing happens, i.e., if not a single belligerent state accepts even a truce, then as far as we are concerned the war becomes truly forced upon us, it becomes a truly just war of defence. If this is understood by the proletariat and the poor peasantry Russia will become many times stronger even in the military sense, especially after a complete break with the capitalists who are robbing the people; furthermore, under such conditions it would, as far as we are concerned, be a war in league with the oppressed classes of all countries, a war in league with the oppressed peoples of the whole world, not in word, but in deed.

The people must be particularly cautioned against the capitalists' assertion which sometimes influences the petty bourgeoisie and others who are frightened, namely, that the British and other capitalists are capable of doing serious damage to the Russian revolution if we break the present predatory alliance with them. Such an assertion is false through and through, for "Allied financial aid" enriches the bankers and "supports" the Russian workers and peasants in exactly the same way as a rope supports a man who has been hanged. There is plenty of bread, coal, oil and iron in Russia; for these products to be properly distributed it is only necessary for us to rid ourselves of the landowners and capi-

talists who are robbing the people. As to the possibility of the Russian people being threatened with war by their present Allies, it is obviously absurd to assume that the French and Italians could unite their armies with those of the Germans and move them against Russia who offers a just peace. As to Britain, America, and Japan, even if they were to declare war against Russia (which for them is extremely difficult, both because of the extreme unpopularity of such a war among the masses and because of the divergence of material interests of the capitalists of those countries over the partitioning of Asia, especially over the plunder of China), they could not cause Russia one-hundredth part of the damage and misery which the war with Germany, Austria, and Turkey is causing her.

LAND TO THOSE WHO TILL IT

4. The Soviet Government must immediately declare the abolition of private landed estates without compensation and place all these estates under the management of the peasant committees pending the solution of the problem by the Constituent Assembly. These peasant committees are also to take over all the landowners' stock and implements, with the proviso that they be placed primarily at the disposal of the poor peasants for their use free of charge.

Such measures, which have long been demanded by an immense majority of the peasantry, both in the resolutions of congresses and in hundreds of mandates from local peasants (as may be seen, for instance, from a summary of 242 mandates published by *Izvestia Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov*¹⁵⁵), are absolutely and urgently necessary. There must be no further procrastination like that from which the peasantry suffered so much at the time of the "coalition" government.

Any government that hesitates to introduce these measures should be regarded as a government *hostile to the people* that should be overthrown and crushed by an uprising of the workers and peasants. On the other hand, only a government that realises these measures will be a government of all the people.

STRUGGLE AGAINST FAMINE AND ECONOMIC RUIN

5. The Soviet Government must immediately introduce workers' control of production and distribution on a nationwide scale. Experience since May 6 has shown that in the absence of such control all the promises of reforms and attempts to introduce them are powerless, and famine, accompanied by unprecedented catastrophe, is becoming a greater menace to the whole country week by week.

It is necessary to nationalise the banks and the insurance business immediately, and also the most important branches of industry (oil, coal, metallurgy, sugar, etc.), and at the same time, to abolish commercial secrets and to establish unrelaxing supervision by the workers and peasants over the negligible minority of capitalists who wax rich on government contracts and evade accounting and just taxation of their profits and property.

Such measures, which do not deprive either the middle peasants, the Cossacks or the small handicraftsmen of a single kopek, are urgently needed for the struggle against famine and are absolutely just because they distribute the burdens of the war equitably. Only after capitalist plunder has been curbed and the deliberate sabotage of production has been stopped will it be possible to work for an improvement in labour productivity, introduce universal labour conscription and the proper exchange of grain for manufactured goods, and return to the Treasury thousands of millions in paper money now being hoarded by the rich.

Without such measures, the abolition of the landed estates without compensation is also impossible, for the major part of the estates is mortgaged to the banks, so that the interests of the landowners and capitalists are inseparably linked up.

The latest resolution of the Economic Department of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (*Rabochaya Gazeta* No. 152) recognises not only the "harm" caused by the government's measures (like the raising of grain prices for the enrichment of the landowners and kulaks), not only "the fact of the *complete inactivity* on the part of the central organs set up by the government for the regulation of economic life", but

even the "*contravention of the laws*" by this government. This admission on the part of the ruling parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, proves once more the criminal nature of the policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie.

STRUGGLE AGAINST THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION OF THE LANDOWNERS AND CAPITALISTS

6. The Kornilov and Kaledin revolt was supported by the entire class of the landowners and capitalists, with the party of the Cadets ("people's freedom" party) at their head. This has already been fully proved by the facts published in *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee.

However, nothing has been done either to suppress this counter-revolution completely or even to investigate it, and nothing serious can be done without the transfer of power to the Soviets. No commission can conduct a full investigation, or arrest the guilty, etc., unless it holds state power. Only a Soviet government can do this, and must do it. Only a Soviet government can make Russia secure against the otherwise inevitable repetition of "Kornilov" attempts by arresting the Kornilovite generals and the ringleaders of the bourgeois counter-revolution (Guchkov, Milyukov, Ryabushinsky, Maklakov and Co.), by disbanding the counter-revolutionary associations (the State Duma, the officers' unions, etc.), by placing their members under the surveillance of the local Soviets and by disbanding counter-revolutionary armed units.

This government alone can set up a commission to make a full and public investigation of the Kornilov case and all the other cases, even those started by the bourgeoisie; and the party of the Bolsheviks, in its turn, would appeal to the workers to give full co-operation and to submit only to such a commission.

Only a Soviet government could successfully combat such a flagrant injustice as the capitalists' seizure of the largest printing presses and most of the papers with the aid of millions squeezed out of the people. It is necessary to suppress the bourgeois counter-revolutionary papers (*Rech, Russkoye*

Slovo,¹⁵⁶ etc.), to confiscate their printing presses, to declare private advertisements in the papers a state monopoly, to transfer them to the paper published by the Soviets, the paper that tells the peasants the truth. Only in this way can and must the bourgeoisie be deprived of its powerful weapon of lying and slandering, deceiving the people with impunity, misleading the peasantry, and preparing a counter-revolution.

PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTION

7. A possibility very seldom to be met with in the history of revolutions now faces the democracy of Russia, the Soviets and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties—the possibility of convening the Constituent Assembly at the appointed date without further delays, of making the country secure against a military and economic catastrophe, and of ensuring the peaceful development of the revolution.

If the Soviets now take full state power exclusively into their own hands for the purpose of carrying out the programme set forth above, they will not only obtain the support of nine-tenths of the population of Russia, the working class and an overwhelming majority of the peasantry; they will also be assured of the greatest revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the army and the majority of the people, an enthusiasm without which victory over famine and war is impossible.

There could be no question of any resistance to the Soviets if the Soviets themselves did not waver. No class will dare start an uprising against the Soviets, and the landowners and capitalists, taught a lesson by the experience of the Kornilov revolt, will give up their power peacefully and yield to the ultimatum of the Soviets. To overcome the capitalists' resistance to the programme of the Soviets, supervision over the exploiters by workers and peasants and such measures of punishing the recalcitrants as confiscation of their entire property coupled with a short term of arrest will be sufficient.

By seizing full power, the Soviets could still today—and this is probably their last chance—ensure the peaceful development of the revolution, peaceful elections of deputies by

the people, and a peaceful struggle of parties inside the Soviets; they could test the programmes of the various parties in practice and power could pass peacefully from one party to another.

The entire course of development of the revolution, from the movement of April 20 to the Kornilov revolt, shows that there is bound to be the bitterest civil war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat if this opportunity is missed. Inevitable catastrophe will bring this war nearer. It must end, as all data and considerations accessible to human reason go to prove, in the full victory of the working class, in that class, supported by the poor peasantry, carrying out the above programme; it may, however, prove very difficult and bloody, and may cost the lives of tens of thousands of landowners, capitalists, and officers who sympathise with them. The proletariat will not hesitate to make every sacrifice to save the revolution, which is possible only by implementing the programme set forth above. On the other hand, the proletariat would support the Soviets in every way if they were to make use of their last chance to secure a peaceful development of the revolution.

Written in the first half
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Signed: *N.K.*

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 59-68

THE BOLSHEVIKS MUST ASSUME POWER¹⁵⁷

A Letter to the Central Committee and the Petrograd and Moscow Committees of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.)

The Bolsheviks, having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals,¹⁵⁸ can and *must* take state power into their own hands.

They can because the active majority of revolutionary elements in the two chief cities is large enough to carry the people with it, to overcome the opponent's resistance, to smash him, and to gain and retain power. For the Bolsheviks, by immediately proposing a democratic peace, by immediately giving the land to the peasants and by re-establishing the democratic institutions and liberties which have been mangled and shattered by Kerensky, will form a government which *nobody* will be able to overthrow.

The majority of the people are *on our side*. This was proved by the long and painful course of events from May 6 to August 31 and to September 12.¹⁵⁹ The majority gained in the Soviets of the metropolitan cities *resulted* from the people coming over *to our side*. The wavering of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and the increase in the number of internationalists within their ranks prove the same thing.

The Democratic Conference¹⁶⁰ represents *not* a majority of the revolutionary people, but *only the compromising upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie*. We must not be deceived by the election figures; elections prove nothing. Compare the elections to the city councils of Petrograd and Moscow with the elections to the Soviets. Compare the elections in Moscow with the Moscow strike of August 12. Those are objective

facts regarding that majority of revolutionary elements that are leading the people.

The Democratic Conference is deceiving the peasants; it is giving them neither peace nor land.

A Bolshevik government *alone* will satisfy the demands of the peasants.

* * *

Why must the Bolsheviks assume power *at this very moment*?

Because the impending surrender of Petrograd will make our chances a hundred times less favourable.

And it is *not in our power* to prevent the surrender of Petrograd while the army is headed by Kerensky and Co.

Nor can we "wait" for the Constituent Assembly, for by surrendering Petrograd Kerensky and Co. *can* always *frustrate* its convocation. Our Party alone, on taking power, can secure the Constituent Assembly's convocation; it will then accuse the other parties of procrastination and will be able to substantiate its accusations.

A separate peace between the British and German imperialists must and can be prevented, but only by quick action.

The people are tired of the waverings of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. It is only our victory in the metropolitan cities that will carry the peasants with us.

* * *

We are concerned now not with the "day", or "moment" of insurrection in the narrow sense of the word. That will be only decided by the common voice of those who are *in contact* with the workers and soldiers, with *the masses*.

The point is that now, at the Democratic Conference, our Party has virtually *its own congress*, and this congress (whether it wishes to or not) *must* decide the *fate of the revolution*.

The point is to make the *task* clear to the Party. The present task must be an *armed uprising* in Petrograd and Moscow (with its region), the seizing of power and the

overthrow of the government. We must consider *how* to agitate for this without expressly saying as much in the press.

We must remember and weigh Marx's words about insurrection, "*Insurrection is an art*",¹⁶¹ etc.

* * *

It would be naive to wait for a "formal" majority for the Bolsheviks. No revolution ever waits for *that*. Kerensky and Co. are not waiting either, and are preparing to surrender Petrograd. It is the wretched waverings of the Democratic Conference that are bound to exhaust the patience of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow! History will not forgive us if we do not assume power now.

There is no apparatus? There is an apparatus—the Soviets and the democratic organisations. The international situation *right now*, on *the eve* of the conclusion of a separate peace between the British and the Germans, is *in our favour*. To propose peace to the nations right now means *to win*.

By taking power both in Moscow and in Petrograd *at once* (it doesn't matter which comes first, Moscow may possibly begin), we shall win *absolutely and unquestionably*.

N. Lenin

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MARXISM AND INSURRECTION

A Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.)

One of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism resorted to by the dominant "socialist" parties is the opportunist lie that preparation for insurrection, and generally the treatment of insurrection as an art, is "Blanquism".

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, has already earned himself unfortunate fame by accusing Marxism of Blanquism, and when our present-day opportunists cry Blanquism they do not improve on or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein one little bit.

Marxists are accused of Blanquism for treating insurrection as an art! Can there be a more flagrant perversion of the truth, when not a single Marxist will deny that it was Marx who expressed himself on this score in the most definite, precise and categorical manner, referring to insurrection specifically as an *art*, saying that it must be treated as an art, that you must *win* the first success and then proceed from success to success, never ceasing the *offensive* against the enemy, taking advantage of his confusion, etc., etc.?

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a *revolutionary upsurge of the people*. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that *turning-point* in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemy and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for rais-

ing the question of insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*.

Once these conditions exist, however, to refuse to treat insurrection as an *art* is a betrayal of Marxism and a betrayal of the revolution.

To show that it is precisely the present moment that the Party *must* recognise as the one in which the entire course of events has objectively placed *insurrection* on the order of the day and that insurrection must be treated as an art, it will perhaps be best to use the method of comparison and to draw a parallel between July 3-4 and the September days.

On July 3-4 it could have been argued, without violating the truth, that the correct thing to do was to take power, for our enemies would in any case have accused us of insurrection and ruthlessly treated us as rebels. However, to have decided on this account in favour of taking power at that time would have been wrong, because the objective conditions for the victory of the insurrection did not exist.

(1) We still lacked the support of the class which is the vanguard of the revolution.

We still did not have a majority among the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and Moscow. Now we have a majority in both Soviets. It was created *solely* by the history of July and August, by the experience of the "ruthless treatment" meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov revolt.

(2) There was no country-wide revolutionary upsurge at that time. There is now, after the Kornilov revolt; the situation in the provinces and assumption of power by the Soviets in many localities prove this.

(3) At that time there was no *vacillation* on any serious political scale among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillation is enormous. Our main enemy, Allied and world imperialism (for world imperialism is headed by the "Allies"), *has begun to waver* between a war to a victorious finish and a separate peace directed against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having clearly lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, and have rejected a bloc, i.e., a coalition, with the Cadets.

(4) Therefore, an insurrection on July 3-4 would have been a mistake; we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically even though Petrograd was at times in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for Petrograd. There was not at the time that "savageness", or fierce hatred *both of* the Kerenskys *and of* the Tseretelis and Chernovs. Our people had still not been tempered by the experience of the persecution of the Bolsheviks in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks participated.

We could not have retained power politically on July 3-4 because, *before the Kornilov revolt*, the army and the provinces could and would have marched against Petrograd.

Now the picture is entirely different.

We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.

We have the following of the *majority* of the people, because Chernov's resignation, while by no means the only symptom, is the most striking and obvious symptom that the peasants *will not receive land* from the Socialist-Revolutionaries' bloc (or from the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves). And that is the chief reason for the popular character of the revolution.

We are in the advantageous position of a party that knows for certain which way to go at a time when *imperialism as a whole* and the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary bloc as a whole are vacillating in an incredible fashion.

Our victory is assured, for the people are close to desperation, and we are showing the entire people a sure way out; we demonstrated to the entire people during the "Kornilov days" the value of our leadership, and then *proposed* to the politicians of the bloc a compromise, *which they rejected*, although there is no let-up in their vacillations.

It would be a great mistake to think that our offer of a compromise had not *yet* been rejected, and that the Democratic Conference may *still* accept it. The compromise was proposed by a *party* to *parties*; it could not have been proposed in any other way. It was rejected by *parties*. The

Democratic Conference is a *conference*, and nothing more. One thing must not be forgotten, namely, that the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poor, embittered peasants, are not represented in it. It is a conference of a *minority of the people*—this obvious truth must not be forgotten. It would be a big mistake, sheer parliamentary cretinism¹⁶² on our part, if we were to regard the Democratic Conference as a parliament; for even *if it were* to proclaim itself a permanent and sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would nevertheless *decide nothing*. The power of decision lies *outside it* in the working-class quarters of Petrograd and Moscow.

All the objective conditions exist for a successful insurrection. We have the exceptional advantage of a situation in which *only* our victory in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; in which *only* our victory in the insurrection will give the peasants land immediately; a situation in which *only our* victory in the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution—foil it by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace, a peace that will *benefit* the revolution.

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a victorious insurrection, save Petrograd; for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we* shall become “defencists”, we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the *war party par excellence*, and we shall conduct the war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away all the bread and boots from the capitalists. We shall leave them only crusts and dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and footwear to the front.

And then we shall save Petrograd.

The resources, both material and spiritual, for a truly revolutionary war in Russia are still immense; the chances are a hundred to one that the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And to secure an armistice now would in itself mean to win the *whole world*.

* * *

Having recognised the absolute necessity for an insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow in order to

save the revolution and to save Russia from a "separate" partition by the imperialists of both groups, we must first adapt our political tactics at the Conference to the conditions of the growing insurrection; secondly, we must show that it is not only in words that we accept Marx's idea that insurrection must be treated as an art.

At the Conference we must immediately cement the Bolshevik group, without striving after numbers, and without fearing to leave the waverers in the waverers' camp. They are more useful to the cause of the revolution *there* than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

We must draw up a brief declaration from the Bolsheviks, emphasising in no uncertain manner the irrelevance of long speeches and of "speeches" in general, the necessity for immediate action to save the revolution, the absolute necessity for a complete break with the bourgeoisie, for the removal of the present government, in its entirety, for a complete rupture with the Anglo-French imperialists, who are preparing a "separate" partition of Russia, and for the immediate transfer of all power to *revolutionary democrats, headed by the revolutionary proletariat*.

Our declaration must give the briefest and most trenchant formulation of *this* conclusion in connection with the programme proposals of peace for the peoples, land for the peasants, confiscation of scandalous profits, and a check on the scandalous sabotage of production by the capitalists.

The briefer and more trenchant the declaration, the better. Only two other highly important points must be clearly indicated in it, namely, that the people are worn out by the vacillations, that they are fed up with the irresolution of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; and that we are definitely breaking with these *parties* because they have betrayed the revolution.

And another thing. By immediately proposing a peace without annexations, by immediately breaking with the Allied imperialists and with all imperialists, either we shall at once obtain an armistice, or the entire revolutionary proletariat will rally to the defence of the country, and a really just, really revolutionary war will then be waged by revolutionary democrats under the leadership of the proletariat.

Having read this declaration, and having appealed for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing, we must *dispatch* our entire group to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there, the pulse of life is there, there is the source of salvation for our revolution, and there is the motive force of the Democratic Conference.

There, in ardent and impassioned speeches, we must explain our programme and put the alternative: either the Conference adopts it *in its entirety*, or else insurrection. There is no middle course. Delay is impossible. The revolution is dying.

By putting the question in this way, by concentrating our entire group in the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to determine the right moment to start the insurrection*.

In order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *headquarters* of the insurgent detachments, distribute our forces, move the reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress,¹⁶³ arrest the General Staff and the government, and move against the officer cadets and the Savage Division¹⁶⁴ those detachments which would rather die than allow the enemy to approach the strategic points of the city. We must mobilise the armed workers and call them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telegraph and the telephone exchange at once, move *our* insurrection headquarters to the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution *unless insurrection is treated as an art*.

N. Lenin

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FROM A PUBLICIST'S DIARY

The Mistakes of Our Party

Friday, September 22, 1917.

The more one reflects on the meaning of the so-called Democratic Conference, and the more attentively one observes from outside—and it is said that the bystander sees most—the more firmly convinced one becomes that our Party committed a mistake by participating in it. We should have boycotted it. One may ask if there is any use in analysing such a question since the past cannot be remedied. Such an objection to criticising the tactics of yesterday, however, would be clearly unfounded. We have always condemned, and as Marxists we must condemn, the tactics of those who live “from hand to mouth”. Momentary success is not enough for us. In general, plans calculated for a minute or a day are not enough for us. We must constantly test ourselves by a *study* of the chain of political events in their entirety, in their causal connection, in their results. By analysing the errors of yesterday, we learn to avoid errors today and tomorrow.

A new revolution is obviously maturing in the country, a revolution of *other* classes (other than those that carried out the revolution against tsarism). At that time it was a revolution of the proletariat, the peasantry and the bourgeoisie in alliance with Anglo-French finance capital against tsarism.

The revolution now maturing is one of the proletariat and the majority of the peasants, more specifically, of the poor peasants, against the bourgeoisie, against its ally,

Anglo-French finance capital and against its government apparatus headed by the Bonapartist Kerensky.

At the moment we shall not dwell on the facts testifying to the rise of a new revolution, since, judging by the articles in *Rabochy Put*,¹⁶⁵ our Central Organ, the Party has already made clear its views on this point. The new revolutionary upsurge seems to be a phenomenon commonly recognised by the Party. Data on this process of maturing, of course, still have to be summarised, but they must form the subject of other articles.

At the present moment it is more important to call the closest attention to the class differences between the old revolution and the new, to weigh up the political situation and our tasks from the point of view of this basic fact, class relations. At the time of the first revolution the vanguard was formed by the workers and soldiers, i.e., by the proletariat and the advanced sections of the peasantry.

This vanguard *carried along* not only many of the worst vacillating elements of the petty bourgeoisie (remember the indecision of the Mensheviks and Trudoviks on the question of a republic), but also the monarchist party of the Cadets, the liberal bourgeoisie, thereby making it a republican party. Why was such a change possible?

Because economic domination is everything to the bourgeoisie, and the form of political domination is of very little importance; the bourgeoisie can rule just as well under a republic, its domination is even more certain under a republic, in the sense that under a republican political order, no changes in the composition of the government or in the composition and the grouping of the ruling parties affect the bourgeoisie.

Of course, the bourgeoisie stood for and will stand for a monarchy, because the cruder armed protection of capital by monarchist institutions is more obvious and "closer" to all the capitalists and landowners. However, under a strong pressure "from below", the bourgeoisie has always and everywhere "reconciled" itself to a republic, as long as it could maintain its economic domination.

The relation of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, i.e., the *majority* of the people, in respect of the bourgeoisie

and Allied (and world) imperialism is such that it is *impossible* for them to "carry" the bourgeoisie *with them*. Moreover, the upper strata of the *petty* bourgeoisie and the more well-to-do strata of the *democratic* petty bourgeoisie are patently against a new revolution. This fact is so obvious that there is no need to dwell on it here. The Lieberdants, Tseretelis and Chernovs illustrate this most clearly.

The class relations have changed. This is the crux of the matter.

Different classes now stand "on the one and the other side of the barricade".

That is the main thing.

That, and that *alone*, is the *scientific* reason for speaking of a *new* revolution which—arguing purely theoretically, taking the question in the abstract—could be accomplished legally if, for instance, the Constituent Assembly, convoked by the bourgeoisie, produced a majority opposed to the bourgeoisie, if the majority belonged to the parties of the workers and poor peasants.

The objective relations of the classes, their role (economic and political) outside and inside representative institutions of the given type; the rise or decline of the revolution; the relation of extra-parliamentary to parliamentary means of struggle—these are the chief, the basic objective facts which must be considered if the tactics of boycott or participation are to be deduced in a Marxist way and not arbitrarily, according to our "sympathies".

The experience of our revolution clearly demonstrates how to approach the boycott question in a Marxist way.

Why did the boycott of the Bulygin Duma¹⁶⁶ prove correct tactics?

Because it was in accordance with the objective alignment of social forces in their development. It provided the maturing revolution with a slogan for the overthrow of an old order which, to distract the people from the revolution, was convoking a clumsily fabricated compromise institution (the Bulygin Duma) which did not show promise of any earnest "anchoring" in parliamentarism. The extra-parliamentary means of struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry were stronger. These are the elements that went

into shaping the correct tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma, tactics which took account of the objective situation.

Why did the tactics of boycotting the Third Duma prove incorrect?

Because they were based only on the "catchiness" of the boycott slogan and on the revulsion felt towards the brutal reaction of the June Third "pigsty".¹⁶⁷ The objective situation, however, was such that on the one hand the revolution was in a state of collapse and declining fast. For the upsurge of the revolution a parliamentary base (even inside a "pigsty") was of tremendous political importance, since extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation were almost nonexistent or extremely weak. On the other hand, the most openly reactionary nature of the Third Duma did not prevent it from being an organ reflecting real class relations, namely, the Stolypin combination of the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. This new relation of classes was something the country had to get rid of.

These very elements shaped the tactics of participation in the Third Duma that took proper account of the objective situation.

It is sufficient to give thought to these lessons gained from experience and the conditions required by a Marxist approach to the question of boycott or participation, to realise that participation in the Democratic Conference, the Democratic Council or the Pre-parliament would be wrong tactics.

On the one hand, a new revolution is maturing. The war is on the upgrade. The extra-parliamentary means of propaganda, agitation and organisation are tremendous. The "parliamentary" tribune in the given Pre-parliament is insignificant. On the other hand, this Pre-parliament neither reflects nor serves a new relation of classes; for instance, the peasantry is here *more poorly* represented than in the already existing organs (Soviets of Peasants' Deputies). The Pre-parliament is in substance a Bonapartist *fraud*, not only because the filthy gang of the Lieberdants, Tseretelis and Chernovs, together with Kerensky and Co. *have given* this Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma a *fake*, hand-picked composition,

but also more profoundly because the only aim of the Pre-parliament is to trick the masses, to deceive the workers and peasants, to distract them from the new upsurge of the revolution, to dazzle the eyes of the oppressed classes by a new dress for the *old*, long tried-out, bedraggled, threadbare "coalition" with the bourgeoisie (i.e., the bourgeoisie's transformation of Tsereteli and Co. into jesters helping to subordinate the people to imperialism and the imperialist war).

"We are weak now," said the tsar in August 1905 to his feudal landowners. "Our power is wavering. The tide of the workers' and peasants' revolution is rising. We must trick the 'plain man', we must dangle something before his eyes. . . ."

"We are weak now," says the present "tsar", the Bonapartist Kerensky, to the Cadets, the non-party Tit Tityches,¹⁶⁸ Plekhanovs, Breshkovskayas and Co. "Our power is tottering. A wave of workers' and peasants' revolution against the bourgeoisie is rising. We must hoodwink the democrats by dying in new colours that jester's costume which the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik 'leaders of revolutionary democracy', our dear friends the Tseretelis and Chernovs, have been wearing to fool the people since May 6, 1917. We can easily dangle a 'Pre-parliament' before their eyes."

"We are strong now," said the tsar to his feudal landowners in June 1907. "The wave of workers' and peasants' revolution is receding, but we cannot maintain ourselves as of old; deception alone will not suffice. We must have a new policy in the village, we must have a new economic and political bloc with the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, with the bourgeoisie."

It is in this way that the three situations, August 1905, September 1917, and June 1907, may be presented to illustrate most vividly the objective basis for the boycott tactics and its connection with class relations. The oppressed classes are always being deceived by the oppressors, but the meaning of this deception differs at different moments in history. Tactics cannot be based on the bare fact that the oppressors deceive the people; tactics must be shaped after analysing class relations *in their entirety* and the development of both extra-parliamentary and parliamentary struggle.

Participation in the Pre-parliament is *incorrect* tactics that does not correspond to the objective relations of classes, to the objective conditions of the moment.

We should have boycotted the Democratic Conference; we all erred by not doing so, but mistakes are no crime. We shall correct the mistake only if we have a sincere desire to support the revolutionary struggle of the masses, only if we give earnest thought to the objective foundations of our tactics.

We must boycott the Pre-parliament. We must leave it and go to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, to the trade unions, to the masses in general. We must call on *them* to struggle. We must give *them* a correct and clear slogan: disperse the Bonapartist gang of Kerensky and *his* fake Pre-parliament, with this Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, even after the Kornilov revolt, refused to accept our compromise of peacefully transferring the power to the Soviets (in which we *then* had *no* majority); they have again sunk into the morass of filthy and mean bargaining with the Cadets. Down with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries! Struggle against them ruthlessly. Expel them ruthlessly from all revolutionary organisations. No negotiations, no communication with those *friends of the Kishkins*, the friends of the Kornilovite landowners and capitalists.

Saturday, September 23.

Trotsky was for the boycott. Bravo, Comrade Trotsky! Boycottism was defeated in the Bolshevik group at the Democratic Conference.

Long live the boycott!

We cannot and must not under any circumstances reconcile ourselves to participation. A group at one of the conferences is not the highest organ of the party and even the decisions of the highest organs are subject to revision on the basis of experience.

We must at all costs strive to have the boycott question solved both at a plenary meeting of the Executive Committee and at an extraordinary Party congress. The boycott question must now be made the platform for elections to

the Congress and for *all* elections inside the Party. We must draw the *masses* into the discussion of this question. Class-conscious workers must take the matter into their own hands, organise the discussion, and exert pressure on "those at the *top*".

There is not the slightest doubt that at the "top" of our Party there are noticeable vacillations that may become *ruinous*, because the struggle is developing; under certain conditions, at a certain moment, vacillations may *ruin* the cause. We must put all our forces into the struggle, we must uphold the correct line of the party of the revolutionary proletariat before it is too late.

Not all is well with the "parliamentary" leaders of our Party; greater attention must be paid to them, there must be greater workers' supervision over them; the competency of parliamentary groups must be more clearly defined.

Our Party's mistake is obvious. The fighting party of the advanced class need not fear mistakes. What it should fear is persistence in a mistake, refusal to admit and correct a mistake out of a false sense of shame.

Sunday, September 24.

The Congress of Soviets has been postponed till October 20. The tempo of Russian life is such that this almost means postponing it to the Greek Calends.¹⁶⁹ The farce staged by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks after April 20-21 is being repeated for the second time.

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THE CRISIS HAS MATURED

I

The end of September undoubtedly marked a great turning-point in the history of the Russian revolution and, to all appearances, of the world revolution as well.

The world working-class revolution began with the action of individuals, whose boundless courage represented everything honest that remained of that decayed official "socialism" which is in reality social-chauvinism. Liebknecht in Germany, Adler in Austria, MacLean in Britain—these are the best-known names of the isolated heroes who have taken upon themselves the arduous role of forerunners of the world revolution.

The second stage in the historical preparation for this revolution was a widespread mass discontent, expressing itself in the split of the official parties, in illegal publications and in street demonstrations. The protest against the war became stronger, and the number of victims of government persecution increased. The prisons of countries famed for their observance of law and even for their freedom—Germany, France, Italy and Britain—became filled with tens and hundreds of internationalists, opponents of the war and advocates of a working-class revolution.

The third stage has now begun. This stage may be called the eve of revolution. Mass arrests of party leaders in free Italy, and particularly the beginning of *mutinies* in the German army,¹⁷⁰ are indisputable symptoms that a great turning-point is at hand, that we are *on the eve of a world-wide revolution*.

Even before this there were, no doubt, individual cases of mutiny among the troops in Germany, but they were so small, so weak and isolated that it was possible to hush them up—and that was the chief way of checking the *mass contagion* of seditious action. Finally, there developed such a movement in the navy that it was *impossible* to hush it up, despite all the severity of the German regime of military servitude, severity elaborated with amazing minuteness of detail and observed with incredible pedantry.

Doubt is out of the question. We are on the threshold of a world proletarian revolution. And since of all the proletarian internationalists in all countries only we Russian Bolsheviks enjoy a measure of freedom—we have a legal party and a score or so of papers, we have the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals on our side, and we have the support of a *majority* of the people in a time of revolution—to us the saying, "To whom much has been given, of him much shall be required" in all justice can and must be applied.

II

The crucial point of the revolution in Russia has undoubtedly arrived.

In a peasant country, and under a revolutionary, republican government which enjoys the support of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties that only yesterday dominated petty-bourgeois democracy, a *peasant revolt* is developing.

Incredible as this is, it is a fact.

We Bolsheviks are not surprised by this fact. We have always said that the government of the notorious "coalition" with the bourgeoisie is a government that *betrays* democracy and the revolution, that it is a government of *imperialist* slaughter, a government that *protects* the capitalists and landowners *from* the people.

Owing to the deception practised by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, there still exists in Russia, under a republic and in a time of revolution, a government of capitalists and landowners side by side with the Soviets.

This is the bitter and sinister reality. Is it then surprising, in view of the incredible hardship inflicted on the people by prolonging the imperialist war and by its consequences, that a peasant revolt has begun and is spreading in Russia?

Is it then surprising that the enemies of the Bolsheviks, the leaders of the *official* Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the very party that supported the "coalition" all along, the party that until the last few days or weeks had the majority of the people on its side, the party that continues to harry and abuse the "new" Socialist-Revolutionaries, who have realised that the policy of coalition is a betrayal of the interests of the peasants—is it surprising that these leaders of the official Socialist-Revolutionary Party wrote the following in an editorial in their official organ, *Dyelo Naroda* of September 29:

"So far practically nothing has been done to put an end to the relations of bondage that still prevail in the villages of central Russia.... The bill for the regulation of land relations in the countryside, which was introduced in the Provisional Government long ago, and which has even passed through such a purgatory as the Judicial Conference, has got hopelessly stuck in some office.... Are we not right in asserting that our republican government is still a long way from having rid itself of the old habits of the tsarist administration, and that the dead hand of Stolypin is still making itself strongly felt in the methods of the revolutionary ministers?"

This is written by the official Socialist-Revolutionaries! Just think: the supporters of the coalition are *forced* to admit that in a peasant country, after seven months of revolution, "practically nothing has been done to put an end to the bondage" of the peasants, to their enslavement by the landowners! These Socialist-Revolutionaries are *forced* to give the name of *Stolypins* to their colleague, Kerensky, and his gang of ministers.

Could we get more eloquent testimony than this from the camp of our opponents, not only to the effect that the coalition has collapsed and that the official Socialist-Revolutionaries who tolerate Kerensky have become an *anti-popular, anti-peasant and counter-revolutionary party*, but also that the whole Russian revolution has reached a turning-point?

A peasant revolt in a peasant country against the govern-

ment of the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky, the Mensheviks Nikitin and Gvozdyov, and other ministers who represent capital and the interests of the landowners! The crushing of this revolt by *military measures* by a republican government!

In the face of such facts, can one remain a conscientious champion of the proletariat and yet deny that a crisis has matured, that the revolution is passing through an extremely critical moment, that the government's victory over the peasant revolt would now sound the death knell of the revolution, would be the final triumph of the Kornilov revolt?

III

It is obvious that if in a peasant country, after seven months of a democratic republic, matters could come to a peasant revolt, it irrefutably proves that the revolution is suffering nation-wide collapse, that it is experiencing a crisis of unprecedented severity, and that the forces of counter-revolution have gone the *limit*.

That is obvious. In the face of such a fact as a peasant revolt all other political symptoms, even were they to contradict the fact that a nation-wide crisis is maturing, would have no significance whatsoever.

But on the contrary, all the symptoms do indicate that a nation-wide crisis has matured.

Next to the agrarian question, the most important question in Russia's state affairs is the national question, particularly for the petty-bourgeois masses of the population. And at the "Democratic" Conference, which was fixed by Mr. Tsereteli and Co., we find that the "national" curia takes second place for radicalism, yielding only to the trade unions, and *exceeding* the curia of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in the percentage of votes cast *against* the coalition (40 out of 55). The Kerensky government—a government suppressing the peasant revolt—is withdrawing the revolutionary troops from Finland in order to strengthen the reactionary Finnish bourgeoisie. In the Ukraine, the conflicts of the Ukrainians in general, and of

the Ukrainian troops in particular, with the government are becoming more and more frequent.

Furthermore, let us take the army, which in war-time plays an exceptionally big role in all state affairs. We find that the army in Finland and the fleet in the Baltic have completely *parted ways* with the government. We have the testimony of the officer Dubasov, a non-Bolshevik, who speaks in the name of the whole front and declares in a manner more revolutionary than that of any Bolsheviks that the soldiers will not fight any longer.¹⁷¹ We have governmental reports stating that the soldiers are in a state of "agitation" and that it is impossible to guarantee the maintenance of "order" (i.e., participation of these troops in the suppression of the peasant revolt). We have, finally, the voting in Moscow, where fourteen thousand out of seventeen thousand soldiers voted for the Bolsheviks.

This vote in the elections to the district councils in Moscow is in general one of the most striking symptoms of the profound change which has taken place in the mood of the whole nation. It is generally known that Moscow is more petty-bourgeois than Petrograd. It is a fact frequently corroborated and indisputable that the Moscow proletariat has an incomparably greater number of connections with the countryside, that it has greater sympathy for the peasant and is closer to the sentiments of the peasant.

In Moscow the vote cast for the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks nevertheless dropped from 70 per cent in June to 18 per cent. There can be no doubt that the petty bourgeoisie and the people have turned away from the coalition. The Cadets have increased their strength from 17 to 30 per cent, but they remain a minority, a hopeless minority, despite the fact that they have obviously been joined by the "Right" Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the "Right" Mensheviks. *Russkiye Vedomosti*¹⁷² states that the *absolute* number of votes cast for the Cadets fell from 67,000 to 62,000. Only the votes cast for the Bolsheviks increased—from 34,000 to 82,000. They received 47 per cent of the total vote. There can be no shadow of doubt that we, together with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, now have a majority in the Soviets, in the army, and *in the country*.

Among the symptoms that have not only a symptomatic, but also a very real significance is the fact that the armies of railway and postal employees, who are of immense importance from the general economic, political and military point of view, continue to be in sharp conflict with the government,¹⁷³ even the Menshevik defencists are dissatisfied with "their" Minister, Nikitin, and the official Socialist-Revolutionaries call Kerensky and Co. "Stolypins". Is it not clear that if such "support" of the government by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries has any value at all it can be only a negative value?

IV

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V

Yes, the leaders of the Central Executive Committee are pursuing the correct tactics of defending the bourgeoisie and the landowners. And there is not the slightest doubt that if the Bolsheviks allowed themselves to be caught in the trap of constitutional illusions, "faith" in the Congress of Soviets and in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, "waiting" for the Congress of Soviets, and so forth—these Bolsheviks would most certainly be *miserable traitors* to the proletarian cause.

They would be traitors to the cause, for by their conduct they would be betraying the German revolutionary workers who have started a revolt in the navy. To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets and so forth under such circumstances would be a *betrayal of internationalism*, a betrayal of the cause of the world socialist revolution.

For internationalism consists of *deeds* and not phrases, not expressions of solidarity, not resolutions.

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to the *peasants*, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt by a government which *even Dyelo Naroda* compares with the Stolypin government would be to *ruin* the whole revolution, to ruin it for good. An outcry is raised about anarchy and about

the increasing indifference of the people, but what else can the people be but indifferent to the elections, when the peasants have been *driven to revolt* while the so-called "revolutionary democrats" are patiently tolerating its suppression by military force!

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to democracy and to freedom, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt at such a moment would *mean* allowing the elections to the Constituent Assembly to be fixed *in exactly the same way* as the Democratic Conference and the "Pre-parliament" were fixed, only even worse and more crudely.

The crisis has matured. The whole future of the Russian revolution is at stake. The honour of the Bolshevik Party is in question. The whole future of the international workers' revolution for socialism is at stake.

The crisis has matured. . . .

September 29, 1917.

Everything to this point may be published, but what follows is *to be distributed* among the members of the *Central Committee, the Petrograd Committee, the Moscow Committee and the Soviets*.

VI

What, then, is to be done? We must *aussprechen was ist*, "state the facts", admit the truth that there is a tendency, or an opinion, in our Central Committee and among the leaders of our Party which favours *waiting* for the Congress of Soviets, and is *opposed* to taking power immediately, is *opposed* to an immediate insurrection. That tendency, or opinion, must be *overcome*.¹⁷⁴

Otherwise, the Bolsheviks will cover themselves with eternal *shame* and *destroy themselves* as a party.

For to miss such a moment and to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets would be *utter idiocy*, or *sheer treachery*.

It would be sheer treachery to the German workers. Surely we should not wait until their revolution *begins*.

In that case even the Lieberdants would be in favour of "supporting" it. But it *cannot* begin as long as Kerensky, Kishkin and Co. are in power.

It would be sheer treachery to the peasants. To allow the peasant revolt to be suppressed when we control the Soviets of both *capitals* would be to *lose*, and *justly lose*, every ounce of the peasants' confidence. In the eyes of the peasants we would be putting ourselves on a level with the Lieberdants and other scoundrels.

To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets would be utter idiocy, for it would mean losing *weeks* at a time when weeks and even days decide *everything*. It would mean faint-heartedly *renouncing* power, for on November 1-2 it will have become impossible to take power (both politically and technically, since the Cossacks would be mobilised for the day of the insurrection so foolishly "appointed"*).

To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets is idiocy, for the Congress will *give nothing, and can give nothing!*

"Moral" importance? Strange indeed, to talk of the "importance" of resolutions and conversations with the Lieberdants when we know that the Soviets *support* the peasants and that the peasant revolt is *being suppressed!* We would be reducing the *Soviets* to the status of wretched debating parlours. First defeat Kerensky, then call the Congress.

The Bolsheviks are now *guaranteed* the success of the insurrection: (1) we can** (if we do not "wait" for the Soviet Congress) launch a *surprise* attack from three points—from Petrograd, from Moscow and from the Baltic fleet; (2) we have slogans that guarantee us support—down with the government that is suppressing the revolt of the peasants against the landowners! (3) we have a majority *in the country*; (4) the disorganisation among the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries is complete; (5) we are tech-

* To "convene" the Congress of Soviets for October 20 in order to decide upon "taking power"—how does that differ from foolishly "appointing" an insurrection? It is possible to take power now, whereas on October 20-29 you will not be given a chance to.

** What has the Party done to *study* the disposition of the troops, etc.? What has it done to conduct the insurrection as an "art"? Mere talk in the Central Executive Committee, and so on!

nically in a position to take power in Moscow (where the start might even be made, so as to catch the enemy un-awares); (6) we have *thousands* of armed workers and soldiers in Petrograd who could *at once* seize the Winter Palace, the General Staff building, the telephone exchange and the large printing presses. Nothing will be able to drive us out, while agitational work in the *army* will be such as to make it *impossible* to combat this government of peace, of land for the peasants, and so forth.

If we were to attack at once, suddenly, from three points, Petrograd, Moscow and the Baltic fleet, the chances are a hundred to one that we would succeed with smaller sacrifices than on July 3-5, because *the troops will not advance* against a government of peace. Even though Kerensky *already* has "loyal" cavalry, etc., in Petrograd, if we were to attack from two sides, he would be compelled to *surrender* since *we* enjoy the sympathy of the army. If with such chances as we have at present we do not take power, then all talk of transferring the power to the Soviets becomes a *lie*.

To refrain from taking power now, to "wait", to indulge in talk in the Central Executive Committee, to confine ourselves to "fighting for the organ" (of the Soviet), "fighting for the Congress", is *to doom the revolution to failure*.

In view of the fact that the Central Committee has *even left unanswered* the persistent demands I have been making for such a policy ever since the beginning of the Democratic Conference, in view of the fact that the Central Organ is *deleting* from my articles all references to such glaring errors on the part of the Bolsheviks as the shameful decision to participate in the Pre-parliament, the admission of Mensheviks to the Presidium of the Soviet, etc., etc.—I am compelled to regard this as a "subtle" hint at the unwillingness of the Central Committee even to consider this question, a subtle hint that I should keep my mouth shut, and as a proposal for me to retire.

I am compelled to *tender my resignation from the Central Committee*, which I hereby do, reserving for myself freedom to campaign among the *rank and file* of the Party and at the Party Congress.

For it is my profound conviction that if we "wait" for the Congress of Soviets and let the present moment pass, we shall *ruin* the revolution.

N. Lenin

September 29.

P.S. There is a number of facts which serve to prove that *even* the Cossack troops will not go against a government of peace! And how many are there? Where are they? And will not the entire army dispatch units *for our support*?

Sections I-III and V
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TO WORKERS, PEASANTS, AND SOLDIERS!

Comrades! The Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, to which Kerensky belongs, appeals to you in its paper *Dyelo Naroda* (of September 30) "*to be patient*".

The paper asks us "to be patient" and urges that power be left in the hands of Kerensky's government, that power should not pass to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Let Kerensky rely on the landowners, capitalists and kulaks, let the Soviets that have carried through the revolution and vanquished the Kornilovite generals "be patient", we are told. Let them have patience until the Constituent Assembly, which will soon be convened.

Comrades! Look around you, see what is happening in the countryside, see what is happening in the army, and you will realise that the peasants and the soldiers cannot tolerate it any longer. *An uprising of the peasants* from whom the land has hitherto been withheld by fraud is sweeping like a broad river over the whole of Russia. The peasants cannot tolerate it any longer. Kerensky sends *troops* to suppress the peasants and to defend the landowners. Kerensky has again come to an agreement with the Kornilovite generals and officers who stand for the landowners.

Neither the workers in the cities nor the soldiers at the front can tolerate this military suppression of the just struggle of the peasants for the land.

As to what is going on in the army at the front, Dubasov, a non-Party officer, has declared before all of Russia: "The soldiers will not fight any longer." The soldiers are tired

out, the soldiers are barefooted, the soldiers are starving, the soldiers do not want to fight for the interests of the capitalists, they do not want to "*be patient*" when they are treated only to beautiful words about peace, while for months there has been a delay (as Kerensky is delaying it) in the *peace proposal*, the proposal for a just peace without annexations, to be offered to *all* the belligerent peoples.

Comrades! Know that Kerensky is again negotiating with the Kornilovite generals and officers to *lead troops against the Soviets* of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, to *prevent the Soviets from obtaining power*! Kerensky "*will under no circumstances submit*" to the Soviets, *Dyelo Naroda* openly admits.

Go, then, to the barracks, go to the Cossack units, go to the working people and explain the *truth* to them.

If power is in the hands of the Soviets, then not later than October 25 (if the Congress of Soviets opens on October 20) *a just peace will be offered* to all the belligerent peoples. There will be a *workers' and peasants' government* in Russia; it will *immediately*, without losing a single day, *offer a just peace to all the belligerent peoples*. Then the people will learn who wants the unjust war. Then in the Constituent Assembly the people will decide.

If power is in the hands of the Soviets, the *landowners' estates will immediately* be declared the *inalienable property of the whole people*.

This is what Kerensky and his government fight against, relying on the village exploiters, capitalists and landowners!

This is for whom and for whose interests you are asked to "*be patient*".

Are you willing to "*be patient*" in order that Kerensky may use armed force to suppress the peasants who have risen for land?

Are you willing to "*be patient*" in order that the war may be dragged out longer, in order that the *offer of peace* and the annulling of the former tsar's secret treaties with the Russian and Anglo-French capitalists may be postponed?

Comrades, remember that Kerensky deceived the people once when he promised to convene the Constituent Assembly!

On July 8 he solemnly promised to convene it not later than September 17, and he has *deceived the people*. Comrades! Whoever believes in the Kerensky government is a traitor to his brothers, the peasants and soldiers!

No, *not for one more day* are the people willing to suffer postponement. *Not for a single day longer* can we suffer the peasants to be suppressed by armed force, thousands upon thousands to perish in the war, when *a just peace* can and must be *offered* at once.

Down with the government of Kerensky, who is conniving with the Kornilovite landowning generals to suppress the peasants, to fire on the peasants, to drag out the war!

All power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!

Written after September 30
(October 13), 1917

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CAN THE BOLSHEVIKS RETAIN STATE POWER?

FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

The present pamphlet, as is evident from the text, was written at the end of September and was finished on October 1, 1917.

The October 25 Revolution has transferred the question raised in this pamphlet from the sphere of theory to the sphere of practice.

This question must now be answered by deeds, not words. The theoretical arguments advanced against the Bolsheviks taking power were feeble in the extreme. These arguments have been shot to pieces.

The task now is for the advanced class—the proletariat—to prove *in practice* the viability of the workers' and peasants' government. All class-conscious workers, all the active and honest peasants, all working and exploited people, will do everything they can to solve the immense historic question in practice.

To work, everybody to work, the cause of the world socialist revolution must and will triumph.

St. Petersburg, November 9, 1917.

N. Lenin

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On what are all trends agreed, from *Rech* to *Novaya Zhizn* inclusively, from the Kornilovite Cadets to the semi-Bolsheviks, *all*, except the Bolsheviks?

They all agree that the Bolsheviks will either never dare take over full state power alone, or, if they do dare, and do take power, they will not be able to retain it even for the shortest while.

If anybody asserts that the question of the Bolsheviks alone taking over full state power is a totally unfeasible political question, that only a swelled-headed "fanatic" of the worst kind can regard it as feasible, we refute this assertion by quoting the exact statements of the most responsible and most influential political parties and trends of various "hues".

But let me begin with a word or two about the first of the questions mentioned—will the Bolsheviks dare take over full state power alone? I have already had occasion, at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, to answer this question in the affirmative in no uncertain manner by a remark that I shouted from my seat during one of Tsereteli's ministerial speeches.¹⁷⁵ And I have not met in the press, or heard, any statements by Bolsheviks to the effect that we ought not to take power alone. I still maintain that a political party—and the party of the advanced class in particular—would have no right to exist, would be unworthy of the name of party, would be a nonentity in any sense, if it refused to take power when opportunity offers.

We shall now quote statements by the Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and semi-Bolsheviks (I would prefer to say quarter-Bolsheviks) on the question that interests us.

The leading article in *Rech* of September 16:

"Discord and confusion reigned in the Alexandrinsky Theatre, and the socialist press reflects the same picture. Only the views of the Bolsheviks are definite and straightforward. At the Conference, they are the views of the minority. In the Soviets, they represent a constantly growing trend. But in spite of all their verbal pugnacity, their boastful phrases and display of self-confidence, the Bolsheviks, except for a few fanatics, are brave only in words. They would not attempt to take 'full power' on their own accord. Disorganisers and disrupters *par excellence*, they are really cowards who in their heart of hearts are fully aware of both their own intrinsic ignorance and the ephemeral nature of their present suc-

cesses. They know as well as we all do that the first day of their ultimate triumph would also be the first day of their precipitous fall. Irresponsible by their very nature, anarchists in method and practice, they should be regarded only as a trend of political thought, or rather, as one of its aberrations. The best way to get rid of Bolshevism for many a year, to banish it, would be to place the country's fate in the hands of its leaders. And if it were not for the awareness that experiments of this kind are impermissible and fatal, one might in desperation decide on even this heroic measure. Happily, we repeat, these dismal heroes of the day are not by any means actually out to seize full power. Not under any circumstances are they capable of constructive work. Thus, all their definite and straightforward views are confined to the political rostrum, to soap-box oratory. For practical purposes their position cannot be taken into consideration from any point of view. In one respect, however, it has some practical consequence: it unites all other shades of 'socialist thought' opposed to it. . . ."

This is the way the Cadets reason. Here, however, is the view of the biggest, "ruling and governing", party in Russia, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, also expressed in an unsigned, i.e., editorial, leading article in their official organ *Dyelo Naroda* of September 21:

... "If the bourgeoisie refuse, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, to work with the democracy on the basis of the platform that was endorsed by the Conference, then the *coalition must arise from within the Conference itself*. This would be a serious sacrifice on the part of the supporters of the coalition, *but even those campaigning for the idea of a 'pure line' of power will have to agree to it*. We are afraid, however, that agreement may not be reached here. In that case a third and final combination remains, namely: the government *must* be organised by that half of the Conference which *on principle* advocated the idea of a homogeneous government.

"Let us put it definitely: *the Bolsheviks will be obliged to form a Cabinet*. With the greatest energy, they imbued the revolutionary democrats with hatred of the coalition, promising them all sorts of benefits as soon as 'compromise' was abandoned, and attributing to the latter all the country's misfortunes.

"If they were aware of what they were doing by their *agitation*, if they were *not deceiving the people*, it is *their duty* to redeem the promissory notes they have been handing out right and left.

"The question is clear.

"Let them not make futile attempts to hide behind hastily concocted theory that it is impossible for them to take power.

"The democracy will not accept these theories.

"At the same time, the advocates of coalition must guarantee them full support. These are the three combinations, the three ways, open to us—there are no others!" (The italics are those of *Dyelo Naroda*.)

This is the way the Socialist-Revolutionaries reason. And here, finally, is the "position" (if attempts to sit between two stools can be called a position) of the *Novaya Zhizn* "quarter-Bolsheviks", taken from the editorial in *Novaya Zhizn* of September 23.

"If a coalition with Konovalov and Kishkin is formed again, it will mean nothing but a new capitulation by the democracy and the abrogation of the Conference resolution on the formation of a responsible government on the platform of August 14...."

"A homogeneous ministry of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries will be able to feel its responsibility as little as the responsible socialist ministers felt it in the coalition cabinet.... This government would not only be incapable of rallying the 'live forces' of the revolution around itself, but would not even be able to count on any active support from its vanguard—the proletariat."

"But the formation of another type of homogeneous cabinet, a government of the 'proletariat and poor peasants', would be, not a better, but an even worse way out of the situation, in fact it would not be a way out at all, but sheer bankruptcy. True, nobody is advancing such a slogan except in casual, timid and later systematically 'explained away' comments in *Rabochy Put*."

(This glaring untruth is "boldly" written by responsible journalists who have forgotten even the *Dyelo Naroda* editorial of September 21.)

"Formally, the Bolsheviks have now revived the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets'. It was withdrawn after the July days, when the Soviets, represented by the Central Executive Committee, definitely adopted an active anti-Bolshevik policy. Now, however, not only can the 'Soviet line' be regarded as straightened out, but there is every ground to assume that at the proposed Congress of Soviets the Bolsheviks will have a majority. Under such circumstances, the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets', resurrected by the Bolsheviks, is a 'tactical line' for achieving precisely the dictatorship of the proletariat and the 'poor peasants'. True, the Soviets also imply the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies; the Bolshevik slogan therefore implies a power resting on the overwhelmingly greater part of the entire democracy of Russia. In that case, however, the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' loses all independent significance, for it makes the Soviets almost identical in composition to the Pre-parliament set up by the Conference...."

(*Novaya Zhizn*'s assertion is a brazen lie, equivalent to declaring that spurious and fraudulent democracy is "almost identical" to democracy: the Pre-parliament is a *sham* which

passes off the will of the minority of the people, particularly of Kuskova, Berkenheim, Chaikovsky and Co., as the will of the majority. This is the first point. The second point is that at the Conference even the Peasants' Soviets that had been packed by the Avksentyevs and Chaikovskys gave such a high percentage opposed to the coalition that taken together with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, they would have brought about the *absolute collapse of the coalition*. And the third point is that "Power to the Soviets" means that the power of the Peasants' Soviets would embrace mainly the rural districts, and in the rural districts the predominance of the *poor* peasants is assured.)

"If it is one and the same thing, then the Bolshevik slogan should be immediately withdrawn. If, however, 'Power to the Soviets' is only a disguise for the dictatorship of the proletariat, then such a power would mean precisely the failure and collapse of the revolution.

"Does it need proof that the proletariat, isolated not only from the other classes in the country, but also from the real live forces of the democracy, will not be able either technically to lay hold of the state apparatus and set it in motion in an exceptionally complicated situation, or politically to resist all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain?

"The only power that will answer the requirements of the present situation is a really honest coalition within the democracy."

* * *

We apologise to the reader for quoting these lengthy extracts, but they are absolutely necessary. It is necessary to present a precise picture of the positions taken by the different parties hostile to the Bolsheviks. It is necessary to prove in a definite manner the extremely important fact that *all* these parties have admitted that the question of the Bolsheviks taking full state power alone is not only feasible, but also urgent.

Let us now proceed to examine the arguments which convince "everybody", from the Cadets to the *Novaya Zhizn* people, that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power.

The respectable *Rech* advances no arguments whatsoever. It merely pours out upon the Bolsheviks a flood of the

choicest and most irate abuse. The extract we quoted shows, among other things, how utterly wrong it would be to say, "Watch out, comrades, for what the enemy advises must certainly be bad", thinking that *Rech* is "provoking" the Bolsheviks to take power. If, instead of weighing up the general and concrete considerations in a practical way, we allow ourselves to be "persuaded" by the plea that the bourgeoisie are "provoking" us to take power, we shall be fooled by the bourgeoisie, for the latter will of course always maliciously prophesy millions of disasters that will result from the Bolsheviks taking power and will always maliciously shout, "It would be better to get rid of the Bolsheviks at one blow and 'for many a year' by allowing them to take power and then crushing them." These cries are also "provocation", if you will, but from a different angle. The Cadets and the bourgeoisie do not by any means "advise", and have never "advised", us to take power; they are only trying to *frighten* us with the allegedly insoluble problems of government.

No. We must not allow ourselves to be frightened by the screams of the frightened bourgeoisie. We must bear firmly in mind that we have never set ourselves "insoluble" social problems, and as for the *perfectly* soluble problem of taking immediate steps towards socialism, which is the only way out of the exceedingly difficult situation, that will be *solved only* by the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasants. Victory, and lasting victory, is now more than ever, more than anywhere else, assured for the proletariat in Russia if it takes power.

We shall in a purely practical manner discuss the *concrete* circumstances that make a certain moment unfavourable; but we shall not for a moment allow ourselves to be scared by the savage howls of the bourgeoisie; and we shall not forget that the question of the Bolsheviks taking full power is becoming really *urgent*. Our Party will now be threatened with an immeasurably greater danger if we forget this than if we were to admit that taking power is "premature". In this respect, there can be *nothing* "premature" now: there is every chance in a million, except one or two perhaps, in favour of this.

Concerning the irate abuse poured out by *Rech*, we can, and must, say:

*In savage cries of irritation
We hear the voice of approbation,
Not in dulcet sounds of praise.¹⁷⁶*

That the bourgeoisie hate us so passionately is one of the most striking proofs that we are showing the people the *right* ways and means of overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

* * *

This time, by way of rare exception, *Dyelo Naroda* did not deign to honour us with its abuse nor did it advance a ghost of an argument. It merely tried, by indirect hints, to *frighten* us with the prospect that "the Bolsheviks will be obliged to form a cabinet". I can quite believe that while trying to frighten us, the Socialist-Revolutionaries are themselves sincerely scared to death by the phantom of the frightened liberal. I can equally believe that the Socialist-Revolutionaries do succeed in certain exceptionally high and exceptionally rotten institutions, such as the Central Executive Committee and similar "contact" (i.e., contact with the Cadets, in plain language, hobnobbing with the Cadets) commissions, in scaring some Bolsheviks because, first, the atmosphere in all those Central Executives, pre-parliaments, etc., is abominable, putrid to the point of nausea, and harmful for *any* man to breathe for any length of time; and secondly, sincerity is contagious, and a sincerely frightened philistine is capable of converting even an individual revolutionary into a philistine for a time.

But however much we may, "humanly" speaking, understand the sincere fright of a Socialist-Revolutionary who has had the misfortune to be a minister in the company of the Cadets, or who is eligible as a minister in the eyes of the Cadets, we would be committing a political error that might only too easily border on treachery to the proletariat if we allowed ourselves to be scared. Let us have your prac-

tical arguments, gentlemen! Cherish no hope that we shall allow ourselves to be scared by your fright!

* * *

This time we find practical arguments only in *Novaya Zhizn*. On this occasion the paper comes out in the role of counsel for the bourgeoisie, a role that suits it far better than that of counsel for the defence of the Bolsheviks, which so obviously "shocks" this lady with many good points.

The counsel has advanced *six* pleas:

(1) the proletariat is "isolated from the other classes in the country";

(2) it is "isolated from the real live forces of the democracy";

(3) it "will not be able technically to lay hold of the state apparatus";

(4) it "will not be able to set this apparatus in motion";

(5) "the situation is exceptionally complicated";

(6) it "will be incapable of resisting all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain".

Novaya Zhizn formulates the first plea in a ridiculously clumsy fashion, for in capitalist and semi-capitalist society we know of only three classes: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie (which consists mainly of the peasantry), and the proletariat. What sense is there in talking about the proletariat being isolated from the other classes when the point at issue is the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie, revolution against the bourgeoisie?

Evidently, *Novaya Zhizn* wanted to say that the proletariat is isolated from the peasants, for it could not possibly have meant the landowners. It could not, however, say clearly and definitely that the proletariat is now isolated from the peasants, for the utter incorrectness of this assertion would be too obvious.

It is difficult to imagine that in a capitalist country the proletariat should be so little isolated from the petty bourgeoisie—and, mark you, in a revolution *against the bour-*

geoisie—as the proletariat now is in Russia. The latest returns of the voting by “curias” *for* and *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie in Tsereteli’s “Bulygin Duma”, i.e., in the notorious “Democratic” Conference, constitute one of the objective and incontrovertible proofs of this. If we take the Soviets’ curias we get:

	For coalition	Against
Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies	83	192
Soviets of Peasants’ Deputies	102	70
All Soviets	185	262

So, the majority as a whole is on the side of the proletarian slogan: *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie. We have seen above that even the Cadets are obliged to admit the growth of Bolshevik influence in the Soviets. And here we have the Conference convened by *yesterday’s* leaders in the Soviets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who have an assured majority in the central institutions! Obviously, the *actual* degree to which the Bolsheviks predominate in the Soviets is here *understated*.

Both on the question of coalition with the bourgeoisie and on the question of immediately transferring the landed estates to peasant committees, the Bolsheviks already have a *majority* in the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies, a *majority of the people*, a majority of the petty bourgeoisie. *Rabochy Put* No. 19, of September 24 quotes from No. 25 of the organ of the Socialist-Revolutionaries *Znamya Truda*¹⁷⁷ a report on a conference of local Soviets of Peasants’ Deputies held in Petrograd on September 18. At this conference the Executive Committees of four Peasants’ Soviets (Kostroma, Moscow, Samara and Taurida gubernias) voted for an unrestricted coalition. The Executive Committees of *three* gubernias and *two* armies (Vladimir, Ryazan and the Black Sea gubernias) voted in favour of a coalition without the Cadets. The Executive Committees of *twenty-three* gubernias and *four* armies voted against a coalition.

So, the majority of the peasants are against a coalition!
So much for the "isolation of the proletariat".

We should note, by the way, that the supporters of a coalition were three outlying gubernias, Samara, Taurida and the Black Sea, where there is a relatively very large number of rich peasants and big landowners who employ hired labour, and also four industrial gubernias (Vladimir, Ryazan, Kostroma and Moscow) in which the peasant bourgeoisie are also stronger than in the majority of the gubernias in Russia. It would be interesting to collect more detailed figures on this question and to ascertain whether information is available concerning the *poor* peasants in the gubernias where there are larger numbers of "*rich*" peasants.

It is interesting, moreover, that the "non-Russian groups" revealed a considerable predominance of opponents of a coalition, namely, 40 votes against 15. The policy of annexation and open violence pursued by the Bonapartist Kerensky and Co. towards the non-sovereign nations of Russia has borne fruit. Wide sections of the people of the oppressed nations (i.e., including the mass of the petty bourgeoisie) trust the proletariat of Russia more than they do the bourgeoisie, for here history has brought to the fore the struggle for liberation of the oppressed nations against the oppressing nations. The bourgeoisie has despicably betrayed the cause of freedom of the oppressed nations; the proletariat is faithful to the cause of freedom.

At the present time the national and agrarian questions are fundamental questions for the petty-bourgeois sections of the population of Russia. This is indisputable. And on both these questions the proletariat is "*not isolated*"—farther from it than ever. It has the majority of the people behind it. It *alone* is capable of pursuing such a determined, genuinely "revolutionary-democratic" policy on both questions which would immediately ensure the proletarian state power not only the support of the majority of the population, but also a real outburst of revolutionary enthusiasm among the people. This is because, for the first time, the people would not see the ruthless oppression of peasants by landowners and of Ukrainians by Great Russians on the part of the government, as was the case under tsarism, nor the

effort to continue the same policy camouflaged in pompous phrases under the republic, nor nagging, insult, chicanery, procrastination, underhand dealing and evasions (all that with which Kerensky rewards the peasants and the oppressed nations), but would receive warm sympathy proved by deeds, immediate and revolutionary measures against the land-owners, immediate restitution of *full* freedom for Finland, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, for the Moslems, and so on.

The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik gentlemen know this perfectly well, and are therefore dragging in the semi-Cadet bosses of the co-operative societies to help them pursue their *reactionary*-democratic policy *against* the people. That is why they will never dare canvass popular opinion, take a popular referendum, or at least a vote of all the local Soviets, of all the local organisations, concerning definite points of practical policy, for example, whether all the landed estates should at once be handed over to peasant committees, whether certain demands of the Finns or the Ukrainians should be conceded, etc.

Take the question of peace, the crucial issue of today. The proletariat "is isolated from the other classes"... On this issue the proletariat truly represents the *whole* nation, all live and honest people *in all* classes, the vast majority of the petty bourgeoisie; because only the proletariat, on achieving power, will *immediately* offer a just peace to all the belligerent nations, because only the proletariat will dare take genuinely *revolutionary* measures (publication of the secret treaties, and so forth) to achieve the speediest and most just peace possible.

The proletariat is not isolated. The gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn* who are shouting about the proletariat being isolated are only betraying their subjective fear of the bourgeoisie. The objective state of affairs in Russia is undoubtedly such that the proletariat, *precisely at the present time*, is *not* "isolated" from the majority of the petty bourgeoisie. Precisely now, after the sad experience with the "coalition", the proletariat enjoys the sympathy of the *majority* of the people. *This* condition for the retention of power by the Bolsheviks *does exist*.

The second plea is that the proletariat "is isolated from the real live forces of the democracy". What this means is incomprehensible. It is probably "Greek", as the French say in such cases.

The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* would make good ministers. They would be quite suitable as ministers in a Cadet cabinet because all these ministers need is the ability to spout plausible, polished, but utterly meaningless phrases with which to cover up the dirtiest work and which are therefore sure of winning the applause of the imperialists and social-imperialists. The *Novaya Zhizn* writers are sure to earn the applause of the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov and Co. for asserting that the proletariat is isolated from the real live forces of the democracy, because *indirectly* they imply—or will be understood to imply—that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov, Kerensky and Co. are the "live forces of democracy".

This is not true. They are dead forces. The history of the coalition has proved this.

Overawed by the bourgeoisie and by their bourgeois-intellectual environment, the *Novaya Zhizn* people regard as "live" the *Right* wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks like *Uolya Naroda*, *Yedinstvo*, and others who in essentials do not differ from the Cadets. We, however, regard as live only those who are connected with the people and not with the kulaks, only those whom the lessons of the coalition have repelled. The "active live forces" of the petty-bourgeois democracy are represented by the Left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. That this wing has gained strength, particularly since the July counter-revolution, is one of the surest objective signs that the proletariat is *not* isolated.

This has been made even more strikingly evident by the very recent swing to the left of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centrists, as is proved by Chernov's statement on September 24 that his group cannot support the new coalition with Kishkin and Co. This swing to the left of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centre, which up to now had constituted the overwhelming majority of the members of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the leading and dominant party from

the point of view of the number of votes it obtained in the urban and particularly in the rural districts, proves that the statements we quoted from *Dyelo Naroda* that the democracy must, under certain circumstances, "guarantee full support" for a purely Bolshevik government are at any rate not mere empty phrases.

Facts like the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centre to support the new coalition with Kishkin, or the predominance of the *opponents* of the coalition among the *Menshevik-defencists* in the provinces (Jordania in the Caucasus, etc.), are objective proof that a certain section of the *people* which has up to now followed the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries *will support* a purely Bolshevik government.

It is precisely from the *live* forces of the democracy that the proletariat of Russia is now not isolated.

* * *

The third plea, that the proletariat "will not be able technically to lay hold of the state apparatus" is, perhaps, the most common and most frequent. It deserves most attention for this reason, and also because it indicates one of the most *serious* and *difficult* tasks that will confront the victorious proletariat. There is no doubt that these tasks will be very difficult, but if we, who call ourselves socialists, indicate this difficulty only to *shirk* these tasks, in practice the distinction between us and the lackeys of the bourgeoisie will be reduced to nought. The difficulty of the tasks of the proletarian revolution should prompt the proletariat's supporters to make a closer and more definite study of the means of carrying out these tasks.

The state apparatus is primarily the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy. By saying that the proletariat will not be able technically to lay hold of this apparatus, the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* reveal their utter ignorance and their reluctance to take into account either facts or the arguments long ago cited in Bolshevik literature.

All the *Novaya Zhizn* writers regard themselves, if not as Marxists, then at least as being familiar with Marxism,

as educated socialists. But Marx, basing himself on the experience of the Paris Commune, taught that the proletariat *cannot* simply lay hold of the ready-made state machine and use it for its own purposes, that the proletariat must *smash* this machine and substitute a new one for it (I deal with this in greater detail in a pamphlet, the first part of which is now finished and will soon appear under the title *The State and Revolution. A Marxist Theory of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution**). This new type of state machinery was created by the Paris Commune, and the Russian Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are a "state apparatus" of the *same type*. I have indicated this many times since April 4, 1917; it is dealt with in the resolutions of Bolshevik conferences and also in Bolshevik literature. *Novaya Zhizn* could, of course, have expressed its utter disagreement with Marx and with the Bolsheviks, but for a paper that has so often, and so haughtily, scolded the Bolsheviks for their allegedly frivolous attitude to difficult problems to evade this question completely is tantamount to issuing itself a certificate of mental poverty.

The proletariat *cannot* "lay hold of" the "state apparatus" and "set it in motion". But it can *smash* everything that is oppressive, routine, incorrigibly bourgeois in the old state apparatus and substitute its *own*, new apparatus. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are exactly this apparatus.

That *Novaya Zhizn* has completely forgotten about this "state apparatus" can be called nothing but monstrous. Behaving in this way in their theoretical reasoning, the *Novaya Zhizn* people are, in essence, doing in the sphere of political theory what the Cadets are doing in political practice. Because, if the proletariat and the revolutionary democrats *do not* in fact *need* a new state apparatus, then the Soviets lose their *raison d'être*, lose their right to existence, and the Kornilovite Cadets are *right* in trying to reduce the Soviets to nought!

This monstrous theoretical blunder and political blind-

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 381-492.—Ed.

ness on the part of *Novaya Zhizn* is all the more monstrous because even the internationalist Mensheviks (with whom *Novaya Zhizn* formed a bloc during the last City Council elections in Petrograd) have on this question shown some proximity to the Bolsheviks. So, in the declaration of the Soviet majority made by Comrade Martov at the Democratic Conference, we read:

"The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, set up in the first days of the revolution by a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves, constitute the new fabric of the revolutionary state that has replaced the outworn state fabric of the old regime. . . ."

This is a little too flowery; that is to say, rhetoric here covers up lack of clear political thinking. The Soviets have *not yet* replaced the old "fabric", and this old "fabric" is *not* the state fabric of the old regime, but the state fabric of *both* tsarism *and* of the bourgeois republic. But at any rate, Martov here stands head and shoulders above *Novaya Zhizn*.

The Soviets are a new state apparatus which, in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants; and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army, but is very closely bound up with the people. From the military point of view this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces; from the revolutionary point of view, it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly, this apparatus provides a bond with the people, with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble, so easily verifiable and renewable, that nothing even remotely like it existed in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly, this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that its personnel is elected and subject to recall at the people's will without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly, it provides a close contact with the most varied professions, thereby facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most radical reforms without red tape. Fifthly, it provides an organisational form for the vanguard, i.e., for the most class-conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the *oppressed*

classes, the workers and peasants, and so constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, train, educate, and lead *the entire vast mass* of these classes, which has up to now stood completely outside of political life and history. Sixthly, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of the parliamentary system with those of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to vest in the people's elected representatives both legislative *and executive* functions. Compared with the bourgeois parliamentary system, this is an advance in democracy's development which is of world-wide, historic significance.

In 1905, our Soviets existed only in embryo, so to speak, as they lived *altogether* only a few weeks. Clearly, under the conditions of that time, their comprehensive development was out of the question. It is still out of the question in the 1917 Revolution, for a few months is an extremely short period and—this is most important—the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders have *prostituted* the Soviets, have reduced their role to that of a talking-shop, of an accomplice in the compromising policy of the leaders. The Soviets have been rotting and decaying alive under the leadership of the Liebers, Dans, Tseretelis and Chernovs. The Soviets will be able to develop properly, to display their potentialities and capabilities to the full only by taking over *full* state power; for otherwise they have *nothing to do*, otherwise they are either simply embryos (and to remain an embryo too long is fatal), or playthings. "Dual power" means paralysis for the Soviets.

If the creative enthusiasm of the revolutionary classes had not given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would have been a hopeless cause, for the proletariat could certainly not retain power with the old state apparatus, and it is impossible to create a new apparatus immediately. The sad history of the prostitution of the Soviets by the Tseretelis and Chernovs, the history of the "coalition", is also the history of the liberation of the Soviets from petty-bourgeois illusions, of their passage through the "purgatory" of the practical experience of the utter abomination and filth of *all* and *sundry* bourgeois coalitions. Let us

hope that this "purgatory" has steeled rather than weakened the Soviets.

* * *

The chief difficulty facing the proletarian revolution is the establishment on a country-wide scale of the most precise and most conscientious accounting and control, of *workers' control* of the production and distribution of goods.

When the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* argued that in advancing the slogan "workers' control" we were slipping into syndicalism, this argument was an example of the stupid schoolboy method of applying "Marxism" without studying it, just *learning it by rote* in the Struve manner.¹⁷⁸ Syndicalism either repudiates the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, or else relegates it, as it does political power in general, to a back seat. We, however, put it in the forefront. If we simply say in unison with the *Novaya Zhizn* writers: *not workers' control but state control*, it is simply a bourgeois-reformist phrase, it is, in essence, a purely Cadet formula, because the Cadets have no objection to the workers *participating* in "state" control. The Kornilovite Cadets know perfectly well that such participation offers the bourgeoisie the best way of fooling the workers, the most subtle way of politically *bribing* all the Gvozdyovs, Nikitins, Prokopoviches, Tseretelis and the rest of that gang.

When we say: "workers' control", always *juxtaposing* this slogan to dictatorship of the proletariat, always putting it *immediately after* the latter, we thereby explain what kind of state we mean. The state is the organ of *class* domination. Of which class? If of the bourgeoisie, then it is the Cadet-Kornilov-"Kerensky" state which has been "Kornilovising" and "Kerenskyising" the working people of Russia for more than six months. If it is of the proletariat, if we are speaking of a proletarian state, *that is*, of the proletarian dictatorship, then workers' control *can* become the country-wide, all-embracing, omnipresent, most precise and most conscientious *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods.

This is the chief difficulty, the chief task that faces the proletarian, i.e., socialist, revolution. Without the Soviets,

this task would be impracticable, at least in Russia. The Soviets *indicate* to the proletariat the organisational work which *can* solve this historically important problem.

This brings us to another aspect of the question of the state apparatus. In addition to the chiefly "oppressive" apparatus—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy—the modern state possesses an apparatus which has extremely close connections with the banks and syndicates, an apparatus which performs an enormous amount of accounting and registration work, if it may be expressed this way. This apparatus must not, and should not, be smashed. It must be wrested from the control of the capitalists; the capitalists and the wires they pull must be *cut off, lopped off, chopped away from* this apparatus; it must be *subordinated* to the proletarian Soviets; it must be expanded, made more comprehensive, and nation-wide. And this *can* be done by utilising the achievements already made by large-scale capitalism (in the same way as the proletarian revolution can, in general, reach its goal only by utilising these achievements).

Capitalism has created an accounting *apparatus* in the shape of the banks, syndicates, postal service, consumers' societies, and office employees' unions. *Without big banks socialism would be impossible.*

The big banks *are* the "state apparatus" which we *need* to bring about socialism, and which we *take ready-made* from capitalism; our task here is merely to *lop off* what *capitalistically mutilates* this excellent apparatus, to make it *even bigger*, even more democratic, even more comprehensive. Quantity will be transformed into quality. A single State Bank, the biggest of the big, with branches in every rural district, in every factory, will constitute as much as nine-tenths of the *socialist* apparatus. This will be country-wide *book-keeping*, country-wide *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods, this will be, so to speak, something in the nature of the *skeleton* of socialist society.

We can "lay hold of" and "set in motion" this "state apparatus" (which is not fully a state apparatus under capitalism, but which will be so with us, under socialism) at one stroke, by a single decree, because the actual work of

book-keeping, control, registering, accounting and counting is performed by *employees*, the majority of whom themselves lead a proletarian or semi-proletarian existence.

By a single decree of the proletarian government these employees can and must be transferred to the status of state employees, in the same way as the watchdogs of capitalism like Briand and other bourgeois ministers, by a single decree, transfer railwaymen on strike to the status of state employees. We shall need many more state employees of this kind, and more *can* be obtained, because capitalism has simplified the work of accounting and control, has reduced it to a comparatively simple system of *book-keeping*, which any literate person can do.

The conversion of the bank, syndicate, commercial, etc., etc., rank-and-file employees into state employees is quite feasible both technically (thanks to the preliminary work performed for us by capitalism, including finance capitalism) and politically, provided the *Soviets* exercise control and supervision.

As for the higher officials, of whom there are very few, but who gravitate towards the capitalists, they will have to be dealt with in the same way as the capitalists, i.e., "severely". Like the capitalists, they will offer *resistance*. This resistance will have to be *broken*, and if the immortal-naïve Peshekhonov, as early as June 1917, lisped like the infant that he was in state affairs, that "the resistance of the capitalists has been broken", this childish phrase, this childish boast, this childish swagger, *will be converted by the proletariat into reality*.

We can do this, for it is merely a question of breaking the resistance of an insignificant minority of the population, literally a handful of people, over each of whom the employees' unions, the trade unions, the consumers' societies and the Soviets will institute such *supervision* that every Tit Titych will be *surrounded* as the French were at Sedan.¹⁷⁹ We know these Tit Tityches by name: we only have to consult the lists of directors, board members, large shareholders, etc. There are several hundred, at most several thousand of them in the *whole* of Russia, and the proletarian state, with the apparatus of the Soviets, of the employees'

unions, etc., will be able to appoint ten or even a hundred supervisors to each of them, so that instead of "breaking resistance" it may even be possible, by means of *workers' control* (over the capitalists), to make all resistance *impossible*.

The important thing will not be even the confiscation of the capitalists' property, but country-wide, all-embracing workers' control over the capitalists and their possible supporters. Confiscation alone leads nowhere, as it does not contain the element of organisation, of accounting for proper distribution. Instead of confiscation, we could easily impose a *fair* tax (even on the Shingaryov scale, for instance), taking care, of course, to preclude the possibility of anyone evading assessment, concealing the truth, evading the law. And this possibility can be *eliminated only* by the workers' control of the *workers' state*.

Compulsory syndication, i.e., compulsory amalgamation in associations under state control—this is what capitalism has prepared the way for, this is what has been carried out in Germany by the Junkers' state,¹⁸⁰ this is what can be easily carried out in Russia by the Soviets, by the proletarian dictatorship, and this is what will *provide us with a state apparatus* that will be universal, up-to-date, and non-bureaucratic.*

* * *

The fourth plea of the counsels for the bourgeoisie is that the proletariat will not be able "to set the state apparatus in motion". There is nothing new in this plea compared with the preceding one. We could not, of course, either lay hold of or set in motion the old apparatus. The new apparatus, the Soviets, *has already* been set in motion by "a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves". We only have to free it from the *shackles* put on it by the domination of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders. This apparatus *is already* in motion; we only

* For further details of the meaning of compulsory syndication see my pamphlet: *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*.

have to free it from the monstrous, petty-bourgeois impediments preventing it from going full speed ahead.

Two circumstances must be considered here to supplement what has already been said. In the first place, the new means of control have been created *not* by us, but by capitalism in its military-imperialist stage; and in the second place, it is important to introduce more democracy into the *administration* of a proletarian state.

The grain monopoly and bread rationing were introduced not by us, but by the capitalist state in war-time. It had already introduced universal labour conscription within the framework of capitalism, which is war-time penal servitude for the workers. But here too, as in all its history-making activities, the proletariat takes its weapons from capitalism and does not "invent" or "create them out of nothing".

The grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription in the hands of the proletarian state, in the hands of sovereign Soviets, will be the most powerful means of accounting and control, means which, applied to the capitalists, and to *the rich in general*, applied to them by the *workers*, will provide a force unprecedented in history for "setting the state apparatus in motion", for overcoming the resistance of the capitalists, for subordinating them to the proletarian state. These means of control and of *compelling people to work* will be more potent than the laws of the Convention and its guillotine. The guillotine *only* terrorised, only broke *active* resistance. *For us, this is not enough.*

For us, this is not enough. We must not only "terrorise" the capitalists, i.e., make them feel the omnipotence of the proletarian state and give up all idea of actively resisting it. We must also break *passive* resistance, which is undoubtedly more dangerous and harmful. We must not only break resistance of every kind. We must also *compel the capitalists to work* within the framework of the new state organisation. It is not enough to "remove" the capitalists; we must (after removing the undesirable and incorrigible "resisters") employ them *in the service of the new state*. This applies both to the capitalists and to the upper section of the bourgeois intellectuals, office employees, etc.

And we have the means to do this. The means and instruments for this have been placed in our hands by the capitalist state in the war. These means are the grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the fundamental, the first and most important rule the Soviets of Workers' Deputies can and will introduce when they become the ruling power.

Every worker has a work-book. This book does not degrade him, although *at present* it is undoubtedly a document of capitalist wage-slavery, certifying that the workman belongs to some parasite.

The Soviets will introduce work-books *for the rich* and *then* gradually for the whole population (in a peasant country work-books will probably not be needed for a long time for the overwhelming majority of the peasants). The work-book will cease to be the badge of the "common herd", a document of the "lower" orders, a certificate of wage-slavery. It will become a document certifying that in the new society there are no longer any "workmen", nor, on the other hand, are there any longer men *who do not work*.

The rich will be obliged to get a work-book from the workers' or office employees' union with which their occupation is most closely connected, and every week, or other definite fixed period, they will have to get from that union a certificate to the effect that they are performing their work conscientiously; without this they will not be able to receive bread ration cards or provisions in general. The proletarian state will say: we need good organisers of banking and the amalgamation of enterprises (in this matter the capitalists have more experience, and it is easier to work with experienced people), and we need far, far more engineers, agronomists, technicians and scientifically trained specialists of every kind than were needed before. We shall give all these specialists work to which they are accustomed and which they can cope with; in all probability we shall introduce complete wage equality only gradually and shall pay these specialists higher salaries during the transition period. We shall place them, however, under comprehensive workers' control and we shall achieve the complete and absolute operation of the rule "He who does not work, neither

shall he eat." We shall not invent the organisational form of the work, but take it ready-made from capitalism—we shall take over the banks, syndicates, the best factories, experimental stations, academies, and so forth; all that we shall have to do is to borrow the best models furnished by the advanced countries.

Of course, we shall not in the least descend to a utopia, we are not deserting the soil of most sober, practical reason when we say that the entire capitalist class will offer the most stubborn resistance, but this resistance will be broken by the organisation of the entire population in Soviets. Those capitalists who are exceptionally stubborn and recalcitrant will, of course, have to be punished by the confiscation of their whole property and by imprisonment. On the other hand, however, the victory of the proletariat will bring about *an increase* in the number of cases of the kind that I read about in today's *Izvestia* for example:

"On September 26, two engineers came to the Central Council of Factory Committees to report that a group of engineers had decided to form a union of socialist engineers. The union believes that the present time is actually the beginning of the social revolution and places itself at the disposal of the working people, desiring, in defence of the workers' interests, to work in complete unity with the workers' organisations. The representatives of the Central Council of Factory Committees answered that the Council will gladly set up in its organisation an Engineers' Section which will embody in its programme the main theses of the First Conference of Factory Committees on workers' control over production. A joint meeting of delegates of the Central Council of Factory Committees and of the initiative group of socialist engineers will be held within the next few days." (*Izvestia*, September 27, 1917.)

* * *

The proletariat, we are told, will not be able to set the state apparatus in motion.

Since the 1905 revolution, Russia has been governed by 130,000 landowners, who have perpetrated endless violence against 150,000,000 people, heaped unconstrained abuse upon them, and condemned the vast majority to inhuman toil and semi-starvation.

Yet we are told that the 240,000 members of the Bolshevik Party will not be able to govern Russia, govern her in the

interests of the poor and against the rich. These 240,000 are already backed by no less than a million votes of the adult population, for this is precisely the proportion between the number of Party members and the number of votes cast for the Party that has been established by the experience of Europe and the experience of Russia as shown, for example, by the elections to the Petrograd City Council last August. We therefore already have a "state apparatus" of *one million* people devoted to the socialist state for the sake of high ideals and not for the sake of a fat sum received on the 20th of every month.

In addition to that we have a "magic way" to enlarge our state apparatus *tenfold* at once, at one stroke, a way which no capitalist state ever possessed or could possess. This magic way is to draw the working people, to draw the poor, into the daily work of state administration.

To explain how easy it will be to employ this magic way and how faultlessly it will operate, let us take the simplest and most striking example possible.

The state is to forcibly evict a certain family from a flat and move another in. This often happens in the capitalist state, and it will also happen in our proletarian or socialist state.

The capitalist state evicts a working-class family which has lost its breadwinner and cannot pay the rent. The bailiff appears with police, or militia, a whole squad of them. To effect an eviction in a working-class district a whole detachment of Cossacks is required. Why? Because the bailiff and the militiaman refuse to go without a very strong military guard. They know that the scene of an eviction arouses such fury among the neighbours, among thousands and thousands of people who have been driven to the verge of desperation, arouses such hatred towards the capitalists and the capitalist state, that the bailiff and the squad of militiamen run the risk of being torn to pieces at any minute. Large military forces are required, several regiments must be brought into a big city, and the troops must come from some distant, outlying region so that the soldiers will not be familiar with the life of the urban poor, so that the soldiers will not be "infected" with socialism.

The proletarian state has to forcibly move a very poor

family into a rich man's flat. Let us suppose that our squad of workers' militia is fifteen strong; two sailors, two soldiers, two class-conscious workers (of whom, let us suppose, only one is a member of our Party, or a sympathiser), one intellectual, and eight from the poor working people, of whom at least five must be women, domestic servants, unskilled labourers, and so forth. The squad arrives at the rich man's flat, inspects it and finds that it consists of five rooms occupied by two men and two women—"You must squeeze up a bit into two rooms this winter, citizens, and prepare two rooms for two families now living in cellars. Until the time, with the aid of engineers (you are an engineer, aren't you?), we have built good dwellings for everybody, you will have to squeeze up a little. Your telephone will serve ten families. This will save a hundred hours of work wasted on shopping, and so forth. Now in your family there are two unemployed persons who can perform light work: a citizeness fifty-five years of age and a citizen fourteen years of age. They will be on duty for three hours a day supervising the proper distribution of provisions for ten families and keeping the necessary account of this. The student citizen in our squad will now write out this state order in two copies and you will be kind enough to give us a signed declaration that you will faithfully carry it out."

This, in my opinion, can show how the distinction between the old bourgeois and the new socialist state apparatus and state administration could be illustrated.

We are not utopians. We know that an unskilled labourer or a cook cannot immediately get on with the job of state administration. In this we agree with the Cadets, with Breshkovskaya, and with Tsereteli. We differ, however, from these citizens in that we demand an immediate break with the prejudiced view that only the rich, or officials chosen from rich families, are capable of *administering* the state, of performing the ordinary, everyday work of administration. We demand that *training* in the work of state administration be conducted by class-conscious workers and soldiers and that this training be begun at once, i.e., that a *beginning* be made at once in training all the working people, all the poor, for this work.

We know that the Cadets are also willing to teach the people democracy. Cadet ladies are willing to deliver lectures to domestic servants on equal rights for women in accordance with the best English and French sources. And also, at the very next concert-meeting, before an audience of thousands, an exchange of kisses will be arranged on the platform: the Cadet lady lecturer will kiss Breshkovskaya, Breshkovskaya will kiss ex-Minister Tsereteli, and the grateful people will therefore receive an object-lesson in republican equality, liberty and fraternity. . . .

Yes, we agree that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya and Tsereteli are in their own way devoted to democracy and are propagating it among the people. But what is to be done if our conception of democracy is somewhat different from theirs?

In our opinion, to ease the incredible burdens and miseries of the war and also to heal the terrible wounds the war has inflicted on the people, *revolutionary* democracy is needed, *revolutionary* measures of the kind described in the example of the distribution of housing accommodation in the interests of the poor. *Exactly the same* procedure must be adopted in both town and country for the distribution of provisions, clothing, footwear, etc., in respect of the land in the rural districts, and so forth. For the administration of the state in *this* spirit we can *at once set in motion a state* apparatus consisting of ten if not twenty million people, an apparatus such as no capitalist state has ever known. We alone can create such an apparatus, for we are sure of the fullest and devoted sympathy of the vast majority of the population. We alone can create such an apparatus, because we have class-conscious workers disciplined by long capitalist "schooling" (it was not for nothing that we went to learn in the school of capitalism), workers who are *capable* of forming a workers' militia and of *gradually* expanding it (beginning to expand it at once) into a militia *embracing the whole people*. The class-conscious workers must lead, but for the work of administration they can enlist the vast mass of the working and oppressed people.

It goes without saying that this new apparatus is bound to make mistakes in taking its first steps. But did not the

peasants make mistakes when they emerged from serfdom and began to manage their own affairs? Is there any way other than practice by which the people can learn to govern themselves and to avoid mistakes? Is there any way other than by proceeding immediately to genuine self-government by the people? The chief thing now is to abandon the prejudiced bourgeois-intellectualist view that only special officials, who by their very social position are entirely dependent upon capital, can administer the state. The chief thing is to put an end to the state of affairs in which bourgeois officials and "socialist" ministers are trying to govern in the old way, but are incapable of doing so and, after seven months, are faced with a peasant revolt in a peasant country! The chief thing is to imbue the oppressed and working people with confidence in their own strength, to prove to them in practice that they can and must themselves ensure the *proper*, most strictly regulated and organised distribution of bread, all kinds of food, milk, clothing, housing, etc., *in the interests of the poor*. Unless this is done, Russia *cannot* be saved from collapse and ruin. The conscientious, bold, universal move to hand over administrative work to proletarians and semi-proletarians, will, however, rouse such unprecedented revolutionary enthusiasm among the people, will so multiply the people's forces in combating distress, that much that seemed impossible to our narrow, old, bureaucratic forces will become possible for the millions, who will *begin to work for themselves* and not for the capitalists, the gentry, the bureaucrats, and not out of fear of punishment.

* * *

Pertinent to the question of the state apparatus is also the question of centralism raised with unusual vehemence and ineptitude by Comrade Bazarov in *Novaya Zhizn* No. 138, of September 27, in an article entitled: "The Bolsheviks and the Problem of Power".

Comrade Bazarov reasons as follows: "The Soviets are not an apparatus suitable for all spheres of state life", for,

he says, seven months' experience has shown, and "scores and hundreds of documents in the possession of the Economic Department of the St. Petersburg Executive Committee" have confirmed, that the Soviets, although actually enjoying "full power" in many places, "have not been able to achieve anything like satisfactory results in combating economic ruin". What is needed is an apparatus "divided up according to branches of production, with strict centralisation within each branch, and subordinated to one, country-wide centre". "It is a matter", if you please, "not of replacing the old apparatus, but merely of reforming it. . . no matter how much the Bolsheviks may jeer at people with a plan. . ."

All these arguments of Comrade Bazarov's are positively amazing for their helplessness, they echo the arguments of the bourgeoisie and reflect their class point of view.

In fact, to say that the Soviets have anywhere in Russia ever enjoyed "full power" is simply ridiculous (if it is not a repetition of the selfish class lie of the capitalists). Full power means power over all the land, over all the banks, over all the factories; a man who is at all familiar with the facts of history and science on the connection between politics and economics could not have "forgotten" this "trifling" circumstance.

The bourgeoisie's device is to *withhold* power from the Soviets, *sabotage* every important step they take, while at the same time retaining government in their own hands, retaining power over the land, the banks, etc., and then throwing the blame for the ruin upon the Soviets! This is exactly what the whole sad experience of the coalition amounts to.

The Soviets have never had full power, and the measures they have taken could not result in anything but palliatives that added to the confusion.

The effort to prove the necessity for centralism to the Bolsheviks who are centralists by conviction, by their programme and by the entire tactics of their Party, is really like forcing an open door. The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are wasting their time only because they have totally failed to understand the meaning and significance of our jeers at their "country-wide" point of view. And the *Novaya Zhizn* people have failed to understand this because they merely

pay *lip-service* to the doctrine of the class struggle, but do not accept it seriously. Repeating the words about the class struggle they have learned by rote, they are constantly slipping into the "above-class point of view", amusing in theory and reactionary in practice, and are calling this fawning upon the bourgeoisie a "country-wide" plan.

The state, dear people, is a class concept. The state is an organ or instrument of violence exercised by one class against another. So long as it is an instrument of violence exercised by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, the proletariat can have only one slogan: *destruction* of this state. But when the state will be a proletarian state, when it will be an instrument of violence exercised by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, we shall be fully and unreservedly in favour of a strong state power and of centralism.

To put it in more popular language, we do not jeer at "plans", but at Bazarov and Co.'s failure to understand that by repudiating "workers' control", by repudiating the "dictatorship of the proletariat" they *are for* the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. There is no middle course; a middle course is the futile dream of the petty-bourgeois democrat.

Not a single central body, not a single Bolshevik has ever argued against *centralisation* of the Soviets, against their amalgamation. None of us objects to having factory committees in each branch of production, or to their centralisation. Bazarov is *wide of the mark*.

We laugh, have laughed, and will laugh not at "centralism", and not at "plans", but at *reformism*, because, after the experience of the coalition, your reformism is utterly ridiculous. And to say "not replace the apparatus but reform it" means to be a reformist, means to become not a revolutionary but a reformist democrat. Reformism means nothing more than concessions on the part of the ruling class, but *not* its overthrow; it makes concessions, but power remains in *its hands*.

This is precisely what has been tried during six months of the coalition.

This is what we laugh at. Having failed to obtain a thorough grasp of the doctrine of the class struggle, Bazarov allows himself to be caught by the bourgeoisie who sing in

chorus "Just so, just so, we are by no means opposed to reform, we are in favour of the workers participating in country-wide control, we fully agree with that", and good Bazarov *objectively* sings the descant for the capitalists.

This has always been and always will be the case with people who in the thick of intense class struggle want to take up a "middle" position. And it is because the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are incapable of understanding the class struggle that their policy is such a ridiculous and eternal oscillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Get busy on "plans", dear citizens, that is not politics, that is not the class struggle; here you may be of use to the people. You have many economists on your paper. Unite with those engineers and others who are willing to work on problems of regulating production and distribution; devote the centre page of your big "apparatus" (your paper) to a practical study of precise facts on the production and distribution of goods in Russia, on banks, syndicates, etc., etc.—that is how you will be of use to the people; that is how your sitting between two stools will not be particularly harmful; such work on "plans" will earn not the ridicule, but the gratitude of the workers.

When the proletariat is victorious it will do the following, it will set economists, engineers, agronomists, and so forth, to work *under the control* of the workers' organisations on drawing up a "plan", on verifying it, on devising labour-saving methods of centralisation, on devising the simplest, cheapest, most convenient and universal measures and methods of control. For this we shall pay the economists, statisticians and technicians good money... but we shall not give them anything to eat if they do not perform this work conscientiously and entirely *in the interests of the working people*.

We are in favour of centralism and of a "plan", but of the centralism and plan of the *proletarian* state, of proletarian regulation of production and distribution in the interests of the poor, the working people, the exploited, *against* the exploiters. We can agree to only one meaning of the term "country-wide", namely, that which breaks the resistance of

the capitalists, which gives all power to the majority of the people, i.e., the proletarians and semi-proletarians, the workers and the poor peasants.

* * *

The fifth plea is that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power because "the situation is exceptionally complicated" . . .

O wise men! They, perhaps, would be willing to reconcile themselves to revolution if only the "situation" were not "exceptionally complicated".

Such revolutions never occur, and sighs for such a revolution amount to nothing more than the reactionary wails of a bourgeois intellectual. Even if a revolution has started in a situation that seemed to be not very complicated, the development of the revolution itself *always* creates an *exceptionally* complicated situation. A revolution, a real, profound, a "people's" revolution, to use Marx's expression,¹⁸¹ is the incredibly complicated and painful process of the death of the old and birth of the new social order, of the mode of life of tens of millions of people. Revolution is a most intense, furious, desperate class struggle and civil war. Not a single great revolution in history has taken place without civil war. And only a "man in a muffler"¹⁸² can think that civil war is conceivable without an "exceptionally complicated situation".

If the situation were not exceptionally complicated there would be no revolution. If you are afraid of wolves don't go into the forest.

There is nothing to discuss in the fifth plea, because there is no economic, political, or any other meaning whatever in it. It contains only the yearning of people who are distressed and frightened by the revolution. To characterise this yearning I shall take the liberty of mentioning two little things from my personal experience.

I had a conversation with a wealthy engineer shortly before the July days. This engineer had once been a revolutionary, had been in the Social-Democratic movement and even a member of the Bolshevik Party. Now he was full of fear and rage at the turbulent and indomitable workers. "If

they were at least like the German workers," he said (he is an educated man and has been abroad), "of course, I understand that the social revolution is, in general, inevitable, but here, when the workers' level has been so reduced by the war... it is not a revolution, it is an abyss."

He was willing to accept the social revolution if history were to lead to it in the peaceful, calm, smooth and precise manner of a German express train pulling into a station. A sedate conductor would open the carriage door and announce: "Social Revolution Station! *Alle aussteigen!* (All change!)" In that case he would have no objection to changing his position of engineer under the Tit Tityches to that of engineer under the workers' organisations.

That man has seen strikes. He knows what a storm of passion the most ordinary strike arouses even in the most peaceful times. He, of course, understands how many million times more furious this storm must be when the class struggle has aroused *all* the working people of a vast country, when war and exploitation have driven almost to desperation millions of people who for centuries have been tormented by the landowners, for decades have been robbed and downtrodden by the capitalists and the tsar's officials. He understands all this "theoretically", he only pays *lip-service* to this, he is simply terrified by the "exceptionally complicated situation".

After the July days, thanks to the extremely solicitous attention with which the Kerensky government honoured me, I was obliged to go underground. Of course, it was the workers who sheltered people like us. In a small working-class house in a remote working-class suburb of Petrograd, dinner is being served. The hostess puts bread on the table. The host says: "Look what fine bread. 'They' dare not give us bad bread now. And we had almost given up even thinking that we'd ever get good bread in Petrograd again."

I was amazed at this class appraisal of the July days. My thoughts had been revolving around the political significance of those events, weighing the role they played in the general course of events, analysing the situation that caused this zigzag in history and the situation it would create, and how we ought to change our slogans and alter our Party apparatus

to adapt it to the changed situation. As for bread, I, who had not known want, did not give it a thought. I took bread for granted, as a by-product of the writer's work, as it were. The mind approaches the foundation of everything, the class struggle for bread, through political analysis that follows an extremely complicated and devious path.

This member of the oppressed class, however, even though one of the well-paid and quite intelligent workers, takes the bull by the horns with that astonishing simplicity and straightforwardness, with that firm determination and amazing clarity of outlook from which we intellectuals are as remote as the stars in the sky. The whole world is divided into two camps: "us", the working people, and "them", the exploiters. Not a shadow of embarrassment over what had taken place; it was just one of the battles in the long struggle between labour and capital. When you fell trees, chips fly.

"What a painful thing is this 'exceptionally complicated situation' created by the revolution," that's how the bourgeois intellectual thinks and feels.

"We squeezed 'them' a bit; 'they' won't dare to lord it over us as they did before. We'll squeeze again—and chuck them out altogether," that's how the worker thinks and feels.

* * *

The sixth and last plea: the proletariat "will be incapable of resisting all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain".

Don't try to scare us, gentlemen, you won't succeed. We saw these hostile forces and their pressure in Kornilovism (from which the Kerensky regime in no way differs). Everybody saw, and the people remember, how the proletariat and the poor peasants swept away the Kornilov gang, and how pitiful and helpless proved to be the position of the supporters of the bourgeoisie and of the few exceptionally well-to-do local small landowners who were exceptionally "hostile" to the revolution. *Dyelo Naroda* of September 30 urges the workers to "be patient and put up with" Kerensky

(i.e., Kornilov) and the fake Tsereteli-Bulygin Duma until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (being convened under the protection of "military measures" against insurgent peasants!) and, with great gusto, it repeats precisely *Novaya Zhizn's* sixth plea and shouts until it is hoarse: "The Kerensky government will under no circumstances submit" (to the rule of the Soviets, the rule of the workers and peasants, which *Dyelo Naroda*, not wishing to lag behind the pogrom-mongers and anti-Semites, monarchists and Cadets, calls the rule of "Trotsky and Lenin": these are the lengths to which the Socialist-Revolutionaries go!).

But neither *Novaya Zhizn* nor *Dyelo Naroda* can scare the class-conscious workers. "The Kerensky government," you say, "will under no circumstances submit", i.e., it will repeat the Kornilov revolt, to put it more simply, bluntly and clearly. And the gentlemen of *Dyelo Naroda* dare to say that this will be "civil war", that this is a "horrible prospect"!

No, gentlemen, you will not fool the workers. It will not be civil war but a hopeless revolt of a handful of Kornilovites. If they want to "refuse to submit" to the people and at all costs provoke a repetition on a wide scale of what happened to the Kornilov men in Vyborg—if that is what the Socialist-Revolutionaries *want*, if that is what the member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party Kerensky wants, he may drive the people to desperation. But you will not scare the workers and soldiers with this, gentlemen.

What boundless insolence. They faked up a new Bulygin Duma; by means of fraud they recruited a crowd of reactionary co-operators and village kulaks to help them, added to these the capitalists and landowners (the so-called property-owning classes) and with the aid of this gang of Kornilovites they want to *thwart the will of the people*, the will of the workers and peasants.

They have brought affairs in a peasant country to such a pass that peasant revolt is spreading everywhere like a river in flood! Think of it! In a democratic republic in which 80 per cent of the population are peasants, the peasants have been driven to revolt. . . . This same *Dyelo Naroda*, Chernov's newspaper, the organ of the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, which on September 30 has the effrontery to advise the work-

ers and peasants to "be patient", was obliged to admit in a leading article on September 29:

"So far practically nothing has been done to put an end to those relations of *bondage* that still *prevail* in the villages of central Russia."

This same *Dyelo Naroda*, in the same leading article of September 29, says that "the dead hand of Stolypin is still making itself strongly felt" in the methods employed by the "revolutionary ministers"; in other words, putting it more clearly and simply, it brands Kerensky, Nikitin, Kishkin and Co. as *Stolypins*.

The "Stolypins" Kerensky and Co. have driven the peasants to revolt, are now taking "military measures" against the peasants, are trying to soothe the people with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (although Kerensky and Tsereteli have already *deceived* the people once by solemnly proclaiming on July 8 that the Constituent Assembly would be convened on the appointed date, September 17; they then *broke their promise* and postponed the Constituent Assembly even against the advice of the *Menshevik Dan*, postponed the Constituent Assembly not to the end of October as the Menshevik Central Executive Committee of that time wished, but to the end of November). The "Stolypins" Kerensky and Co. are trying to soothe the people with the imminent convocation of the Constituent Assembly, as if the people can believe those who have already lied in this matter, as if the people can believe that the Constituent Assembly will be *properly* convened by a government which has taken *military measures* in remote villages, that is to say, is openly *conniving* at the arbitrary arrest of class-conscious peasants and the *rigging* of the elections.

The government has driven the peasants to revolt and now has the effrontery to say to them: "You must 'be patient', you must wait, trust the government which is pacifying insurgent peasants by 'military measures'!"

To bring matters to such a pitch that hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers perish in the offensive after June 19, the war is being protracted, German sailors have mutinied

and are throwing their officers overboard, to bring matters to such a pitch, all the time uttering phrases about peace but *not offering* a just peace to *all* the belligerents, and yet to have the effrontery to tell the workers and peasants, to tell the dying soldiers, "you must be patient", trust the government of the "Stolypin man" Kerensky, trust the Kornilov generals for another month, perhaps in that month they will send several tens of thousands more soldiers to the slaughter. . . . "You must be patient".

Isn't that shameless?

But you won't fool the soldiers, gentlemen of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky's fellow party members.

The workers and soldiers will not endure the Kerensky government for a single day, for an *extra* hour, for they know that the *Soviet* Government will *immediately* offer all the belligerents a just peace and therefore will *in all probability* achieve an immediate armistice and a speedy peace.

Not for a single day, not for an *extra* hour will the soldiers of our peasant army allow the Kerensky government—the government which is employing *military measures* to suppress the peasant revolt—to remain in power against the will of the Soviets.

No, gentlemen of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky's fellow party members, you won't fool the workers and peasants any more.

* * *

On the question of the pressure by hostile forces which the mortally frightened *Novaya Zhizn* assures us will sweep away the proletarian dictatorship, still another monstrous logical and political mistake is made, which only people who have allowed themselves to be frightened out of their wits can fail to see.

"Pressure by hostile forces will sweep away the proletarian dictatorship," you say. Very well. But you are all economists and educated people, dear fellow-citizens. You all know that to contrast democracy to the bourgeoisie is senseless and a sign of ignorance; it is the same as contrasting pounds

to yards, for there is a democratic bourgeoisie and undemocratic groups of the petty bourgeoisie (capable of raising a Vendée¹⁸³).

"Hostile forces" is merely an empty phrase. The class term is *bourgeoisie* (backed by the landowners).

The bourgeoisie and the landowners, the proletariat, and the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, primarily the peasants—these are the three main "forces" into which Russia, like every capitalist country, is divided. These are the three main "forces" that have long been revealed in every capitalist country (including Russia) not only by scientific economic analysis, but also by the *political experience* of the modern history of *all* countries, by the experience of *all* European revolutions since the eighteenth century, by the experience of the *two* Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917.

So, you threaten the proletariat with the prospect that its rule will be swept away by the pressure of the bourgeoisie? That, and that alone, is what your threat amounts to, it has no other meaning.

Very well. If, for example, the bourgeoisie can sweep away the rule of the workers and poor peasants, then the only alternative is a "coalition", i.e., an alliance, or agreement, between the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie. Nothing else can be contemplated!

But coalition has been tried for about six months and it has led to bankruptcy, and you yourselves, my dear but dense citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*, have *renounced* coalition.

So what do we get?

You have become so muddled, citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*, you have allowed yourselves to be so scared, that you cannot think straight in the extremely simple matter of *counting even up to three, let alone up to five*.

Either all power to the bourgeoisie—the slogan you have long ceased to advocate, and which the bourgeoisie themselves dare not even hint at, for they know that the people overthrew this power with one hitch of the shoulder at the time of the April 20-21 events, and would overthrow it now with thrice that determination and ruthlessness; or power to the petty bourgeoisie, i.e., a coalition (alliance,

agreement) between them and the bourgeoisie, for the petty bourgeoisie do not wish to and *cannot* take power alone and independently, as has been proved by the experience of all revolutions, and as is proved by economics, which explains that in a capitalist country it is possible to stand for capital and it is possible to stand for labour, but it is impossible to stand for long in between. In Russia this coalition has for six months tried scores of ways and failed.

Or, finally, all power to the proletarians and the poor peasants against the bourgeoisie in order to break their resistance. This has not yet been tried, and you, gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn*, are *dissuading* the people from this, you are trying to frighten them with your own fear of the bourgeoisie.

No fourth way can be invented.

If *Novaya Zhizn*, therefore, is afraid of the proletarian dictatorship and rejects it because, as it claims, the proletarian power may be defeated by the bourgeoisie, it is tantamount to its *surreptitiously reverting* to the position of *compromise* with the capitalists! It is as clear as daylight, that whoever is afraid of resistance, whoever does not believe that it is possible to break this resistance, whoever warns the people: "beware of the resistance of the capitalists, you will not be able to cope with it", is *thereby* again calling for compromise with the capitalists.

Novaya Zhizn is hopelessly and pitifully muddled, as are all the petty-bourgeois democrats who now realise that the coalition is bankrupt, dare not defend it openly and, at the same time, protected by the bourgeoisie, fear the transfer of all power to the proletarians and poor peasants.

* * *

To fear the resistance of the capitalists and yet to call oneself a revolutionary, to wish to be regarded as a socialist—isn't that disgraceful? How low must international socialism, corrupted by opportunism, have fallen ideologically if such voices *could* be raised?

We have already seen the strength of the capitalists' resistance; the entire people have seen it, for the capitalists

are more class-conscious than the other classes and at once realised the significance of the Soviets, at once exerted *all their efforts* to the utmost, resorted to everything, went to all lengths, resorted to the most incredible lies and slander, to military plots *in order to frustrate the Soviets*, to reduce them to nought, to prostitute them (with the aid of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), to transform them into talking-shops, to wear down the peasants and workers by months and months of empty talk and playing at revolution.

We *have not yet seen*, however, the strength of resistance of the proletarians and poor peasants, for this strength will become fully apparent only when power is in the hands of the proletariat, when tens of millions of people who have been crushed by want and capitalist slavery see from experience and *feel* that state power has passed into the hands of the oppressed classes, that the state is helping the poor to fight the landowners and capitalists, is *breaking* their resistance. Only then shall we see what untapped forces of resistance to the capitalists are latent among the people; only then will what Engels called "latent socialism"¹⁸⁴ manifest itself. Only then for every *ten thousand* overt and concealed enemies of working-class rule, manifesting themselves actively or by passive resistance, there will arise *a million* new fighters who had been politically dormant, writhing in the torments of poverty and despair, having ceased to believe that they were human, that they had the right to live, that they too could be served by the entire might of the modern centralised state, that contingents of the proletarian militia could, with the fullest confidence, also call upon *them* to take a direct, immediate, daily part in state administration.

The capitalists and landowners, with the kind help of Plekhanov, Breshkovskaya, Tsereteli, Chernov and Co., have done *everything* in their power to *defile* the democratic republic, to defile it by servility to wealth to such a degree that the people are being overcome by apathy, indifference; *it is all the same to them*, because the hungry man cannot see the difference between the republic and the monarchy; the freezing, barefooted, worn-out soldier sacrificing his life for alien interests is not inclined to love the republic.

But when every labourer, every unemployed worker, every cook, every ruined peasant sees, not from the newspapers, but with his own eyes, that the proletarian state is not cringing to wealth but is helping the poor, that this state does not hesitate to adopt revolutionary measures, that it confiscates surplus stocks of provisions from the parasites and distributes them to the hungry, that it forcibly installs the homeless in the houses of the rich, that it compels the rich to pay for milk but does not give them a drop until the children of *all* poor families are sufficiently supplied, that the land is being transferred to the working people and the factories and banks are being placed under the control of the workers, and that immediate and severe punishment is meted out to the millionaires who conceal their wealth—when the poor see and feel this, no capitalist or kulak forces, no forces of world finance capital which manipulates thousands of millions, will vanquish the people's revolution; on the contrary, *the socialist revolution* will triumph all over the world for it is maturing in all countries.

Our revolution will be invincible if it is not afraid of itself, if it transfers all power to the proletariat, for behind us stand the immeasurably larger, more developed, more organised world forces of the proletariat which are temporarily held down by the war but not destroyed; on the contrary, the war has multiplied them.

* * *

How can one be afraid that the Bolshevik government, that is to say, the proletarian government, which is assured of the devoted support of the poor peasants, will be "swept away" by the capitalist gentlemen! What short-sightedness! What disgraceful fear of the people! What hypocrisy! Those who show this fear belong to that "high" (by capitalist standards, but actually *rotten*) "society" which utters the word "justice" without believing in it, from habit, as a trite phrase, attaching no meaning to it.

Here is an example.

Mr. Peshekhonov is a well-known semi-Cadet. A more moderate Trudovik, one of the same mind as the Bresh-

kovskayas and Plekhanovs, will not be found. There has never been a minister more servile to the bourgeoisie. The world has never seen a more ardent advocate of "coalition", of compromise with the capitalists.

Here are the admissions this gentleman was *forced* to make in his speech at the "Democratic" (read: Bulygin) Conference as reported by the defencist *Izvestia*:

"There are two programmes. One is the programme of group claims, class and national claims. This programme is most frankly advocated by the Bolsheviks. It is not easy, however, for the other sections of the democracy to reject this programme. They are the claims of the working people, the claims of the oppressed and underprivileged nationalities. It is not so easy, therefore, for the democracy to break with the Bolsheviks, to reject these class demands, primarily because in essence these demands are just. But this programme, for which we fought before the revolution, for the sake of which we made the revolution, and which we would all unanimously support under other circumstances, constitutes a very grave danger under present conditions. The danger is all the greater now because these demands have to be presented at a time when it is impossible for the state to comply with them. We must first defend the whole—the state, to save it from doom, and there is only one way to do that; not the satisfaction of demands, however just and cogent they may be, but, on the contrary, restriction and sacrifice, which must be contributed from all quarters." (*Izvestia*, September 17.)

Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that as long as the capitalists are in power he is defending *not* the whole, but the selfish interests of Russian and "Allied" imperialist capital. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that the war would cease to be an imperialist, predatory war of annexation only after a rupture with the capitalists, with *their* secret treaties, with *their* annexations (seizure of alien territory), with *their* banking and financial swindles. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that only *after* this would the war become—if the enemy rejected the formal offer of a just peace—a defensive war, a just war. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that the defence potential of a country that has thrown off the yoke of capital, that has given the peasants land and has placed the banks and factories under workers' control, would be *many times* greater than the defence potential of a capitalist country.

The main thing that Mr. Peshekhonov *fails* to understand is that he *surrenders* his entire position, the entire position

of the entire petty-bourgeois democracy when he is forced to admit the justice of Bolshevism, to admit that its demands are the demands of the "*working people*", i.e., of the majority of the people.

This is where our strength lies. This is why our government will be invincible; because even our opponents are forced to admit that the Bolshevik programme is that of the "*working people*" and the "*oppressed nationalities*".

After all, Mr. Peshekhonov is the political friend of the Cadets, of the *Yedinstvo* and *Dyelo Naroda* people, of the Breshkovskayas and Plekhanovs, he is the representative of the kulaks and of the gentlemen whose wives and sisters would come tomorrow to gouge out with their umbrellas the eyes of wounded Bolsheviks if they were to be defeated by Kornilov's or (which is the same thing) Kerensky's troops.

A gentleman like that is *forced* to admit the "*justice*" of the Bolshevik demands.

For him "*justice*" is merely an empty phrase. For the mass of semi-proletarians, however, and for the majority of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie who have been ruined, tortured and worn out by the war, it is not an empty phrase, but a most acute, most burning and immense question of death from starvation, of a crust of bread. That is why *no* policy can be based on a "*coalition*", on a "*compromise*" between the interests of the starving and ruined and the interests of the exploiters. That is why the Bolshevik government is *assured* of the support of the overwhelming majority of *these* people.

Justice is an empty word, say the intellectuals and those rascals who are inclined to proclaim themselves Marxists on the lofty grounds that they have "*contemplated the hind parts*" of economic materialism.

Ideas become a power when they grip the people. And precisely at the present time the Bolsheviks, i.e., the representatives of revolutionary proletarian internationalism, have embodied in their policy the idea that is motivating countless working people all over the world.

Justice alone, the mere anger of the people against exploitation, would never have brought them on to the true path of socialism. But now that, thanks to capitalism, the

material apparatus of the big banks, syndicates, railways, and so forth, has grown, now that the immense experience of the advanced countries has accumulated a stock of engineering marvels, the employment of which is being *hindered* by capitalism, now that the class-conscious workers have built up a party of a quarter of a million members to systematically lay hold of this apparatus and set it in motion with the support of all the working and exploited people—now that these conditions *exist*, no power on earth can prevent the Bolsheviks, *if they do not allow themselves to be scared* and if they succeed in taking power, from retaining it until the triumph of the world socialist revolution.

AFTERWORD

The foregoing lines were already written when the leading article in *Novaya Zhizn* of October 1 produced another gem of stupidity which is all the more dangerous because it professes sympathy with the Bolsheviks and offers most sagacious philistine admonitions "not to allow yourselves to be provoked" (not to allow ourselves to be caught in the trap of screams about provocation, the object of which is to frighten the Bolsheviks and cause them to *refrain* from taking power).

Here is this gem:

"The lessons of movements, like that of July 3-5, on the one hand, and of the Kornilov days, on the other, have shown quite clearly that the democracy, having at its command organs that exercise immense influence among the population, is invincible when it takes a defensive position in civil war, and that it suffers defeat, loses all the middle vacillating groups when it takes the initiative and launches an offensive."

If the Bolsheviks were to yield in any form and in the slightest degree to the philistine stupidity of this argument they would ruin their Party and the revolution.

For the author of this argument, taking it upon himself to talk about civil war (just the subject for a lady with many good points), has distorted *the lessons of history* on this question in an incredibly comical manner.

This is how *these* lessons, the lessons of history on *this* question, were treated by the representative and founder of proletarian revolutionary tactics, Karl Marx: .

"Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other art, and is subject to certain procedural rules which, when neglected, will bring about the downfall of the Party neglecting them. These rules, logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances you have to deal with in such a case, are so plain and simple that the brief experience of 1848 made the Germans fairly well acquainted with them. Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to go the whole way [literally: face the consequences of your game].* Insurrection is an equation with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organisation, discipline and habitual authority [Marx has in mind the most "difficult" case of insurrection: against the "firmly established" old authority, against the army not yet disintegrated by the influence of the revolution and the vacillation of the government]; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, once you have entered upon the insurrectionary career, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattered, prepare the way for new successes, however small, but prepare daily; keep up the moral superiority which the first successful rising has given to you; rally in this way those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary tactics yet known: *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace!*" (*Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany*, German edition, 1907, p. 118.)¹⁸⁵

We have changed all that, the "would-be Marxists" of *Novaya Zhizn* may say about themselves; instead of triple audacity they have two virtues: "We have two, sir: moderation and accuracy."¹⁸⁶ For "us", the experience of world

* Interpolations in square brackets (within passages quoted by Lenin) have been introduced by Lenin unless otherwise indicated.—Ed.

history, the experience of the Great French Revolution, is nothing. The important thing for "us" is the experience of the two movements in 1917, distorted by Molchalin spectacles.

Let us examine this experience without these charming spectacles.

You compare July 3-5 with "civil war", because you believed Alexinsky, Pereverzev and Co. It is typical of the gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn* that they believe *such* people (and do absolutely nothing themselves to *collect information* about July 3-5, although they have the huge apparatus of a big daily newspaper at their disposal).

Let us assume for a moment, however, that July 3-5 was not the rudiment of civil war that was kept within the rudimentary stage by the Bolsheviks, but actual civil war. Let us assume this.

In that case, then, what does this lesson prove?

First, the Bolsheviks did *not* take the offensive, for it is indisputable that on the night of July 3-4, and even on July 4, they would have gained a great deal if they had taken the offensive. Their defensive position was their weakness, if we are to speak of civil war (as *Novaya Zhizn* does, and not of converting a spontaneous outburst into a demonstration of the type of April 20-21, as the *facts* show).

The "lesson" therefore proves that the wise men of *Novaya Zhizn* are *wrong*.

Secondly, if the Bolsheviks did not even set out to start an insurrection on July 3 or 4, if *not a single* Bolshevik *body* even raised such a question, the reason for it lies *beyond* the scope of our controversy with *Novaya Zhizn*. For we are arguing about the *lessons* of "civil war", i.e., of insurrection, and not about the point that obvious lack of a majority to support it restrains the revolutionary party from thinking of insurrection.

Since everybody knows that the Bolsheviks received a majority in the metropolitan Soviets and in the country (over 49 per cent of the Moscow votes) *much later* than July 1917, it again follows that the "lessons" are far, far from what *Novaya Zhizn*, that lady with many good points, would like them to be.

No, no, you had better not meddle with politics, citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*!

If the revolutionary party has no majority in the advanced contingents of the revolutionary classes and in the country, insurrection is out of the question. Moreover, insurrection requires: (1) growth of the revolution on a country-wide scale; (2) the complete moral and political bankruptcy of the old government, for example, the "coalition" government; (3) extreme vacillation in the camp of all middle groups, i.e., those who do *not* fully support the government, although they did fully support it yesterday.

Why did *Novaya Zhizn*, when speaking of the "lessons" of July 3-5, fail even to note this very important lesson? Because a political question was not dealt with by politicians but by a circle of intellectuals who had been terrified by the bourgeoisie.

To proceed. Thirdly, the facts show that it was *after* July 3-4 that the *rot* set in among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, precisely because the Tseretelis had *exposed* themselves by their *July* policy, precisely because the mass of the *people* realised that the Bolsheviks were *their own* front-rank fighters and that the "social-bloc" advocates were traitors. *Even before* the Kornilov revolt this rot was fully revealed by the Petrograd elections on August 20, which resulted in a victory for the Bolsheviks and the rout of the "social-bloc" advocates (*Dyelo Naroda* recently tried to refute this *by concealing* the returns for *all* parties, but this was both self-deception and deception of its readers; according to the figures published in *Dyen* of August 24, covering only the city, the Cadets' share of the total vote increased from 22 to 23 per cent, but the absolute number of votes cast for the Cadets dropped 40 per cent; the Bolsheviks' share of the total vote increased from 20 to 33 per cent, while the absolute number of votes cast for the Bolsheviks dropped only 10 per cent; the share of all "middle groups" dropped from 58 to 44 per cent, but the absolute number of votes cast for them dropped 60 per cent!).

That a rot had set in among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks after the July days and before the Kornilov days is also proved by the growth of the Left wings in both

parties, reaching almost 40 per cent: this is "retribution" for the persecution of the Bolsheviks by the Kerenskys.

In spite of the "loss" of a few hundred members, the proletarian party *gained* enormously from July 3-4, for it was precisely during those stern days that the *people* realised and saw its devotion and the *treachery* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. So, the "lesson" is far, very far from being of the *Novaya Zhizn* sort, it is one entirely different, namely: don't desert the seething masses for the "Molchalins of democracy"; and if you launch an insurrection, go over to the offensive while the enemy forces are scattered, catch the enemy unawares.

Is that not so, gentlemen "would-be Marxists" of *Novaya Zhizn*?

Or does "Marxism" mean *not* basing tactics on an exact appraisal of the *objective* situation but senselessly and uncritically lumping together "civil war" and "a Congress of Soviets and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly"?

But this is simply ridiculous, gentlemen, this is a sheer mockery of Marxism and of logic in general!

If there is *nothing* in the *objective* situation that warrants the intensification of the class struggle to the point of "civil war", why did you speak of "civil war" *in connection* with "a Congress of Soviets and the Constituent Assembly"? (For this is the title of the leading article in *Novaya Zhizn* here under discussion.) In that case you should clearly have told the reader and proved to him that there is *no* ground in the objective situation for civil war and that, therefore, peaceful, constitutionally-legal, juridically and parliamentarily "simple" things like a Congress of Soviets and a Constituent Assembly can and should be the cornerstone of tactics. In that case it is *possible* to hold the opinion that such a congress and such an assembly are really capable of *making decisions*.

If, however, the present objective conditions harbour the inevitability or even only the probability of civil war, if you did not "idly" speak about it, but did so clearly seeing, feeling, sensing the existence of a situation of civil war, how could you make a Congress of Soviets or a Constituent Assembly the cornerstone? This is a sheer mockery of the

starving and tormented people! Do you think the starving will consent to "wait" two months? Or that the ruin, about the increase of which you yourselves write every day, will consent to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets or for the Constituent Assembly? Or that the German offensive, in the absence of serious steps on our part towards peace (i.e., in the absence of a formal offer of a just peace to all belligerents), will consent to "wait" for the Congress of Soviets or for the Constituent Assembly? Or are you in possession of facts which permit you to conclude that the history of the Russian revolution, which from February 28 to September 30 had proceeded with extraordinary turbulence and unprecedented rapidity, will, from October 1 to November 29,¹⁸⁷ proceed at a super-tranquil, peaceful, legally balanced pace that will preclude upheavals, spurts, military defeats and economic crises? Or will the army at the front, concerning which the *non-Bolshevik* officer Dubasov said officially, in the name of the front, "it will not fight", quietly starve and freeze until the "appointed" date? Or will the peasant revolt cease to be a factor of civil war because you call it "anarchy" and "pogrom", or because Kerensky will send "military" forces *against the peasants*? Or is it possible, *conceivable*, that the government can work calmly, honestly, and *without* deception to convene the Constituent Assembly in a *peasant* country when that same government is *suppressing* the peasant revolt?

Don't laugh at the "confusion in the Smolny Institute",¹⁸⁸ gentlemen! There is no less confusion in your own ranks. You answer the formidable questions of civil war with confused phrases and pitiful constitutional illusions. That is why I say that if the Bolsheviks were to give in to these moods they would ruin both their Party and their revolution.

N. Lenin

October 1, 1917.

Written at the end of
September-October 1 (14), 1917

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in the magazine *Prosveshcheniye*
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Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 87-136

**LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE,
THE MOSCOW AND PETROGRAD
COMMITTEES AND THE BOLSHEVIK MEMBERS
OF THE PETROGRAD AND MOSCOW SOVIETS¹⁸⁹**

Dear Comrades,

Events are prescribing our task so clearly for us that procrastination is becoming positively *criminal*.

The peasant movement is developing. The government is intensifying its severe repressive measures. Sympathy for us is growing in the army (99 per cent of the soldiers' votes were cast for us in Moscow, the army in Finland and the fleet are against the government, and there is Dubasov's evidence about the front in general).

In Germany the beginning of a revolution is obvious, especially since the sailors were shot. The elections in Moscow—47 per cent Bolsheviks—are a tremendous victory. Together with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries we have an *obvious majority in the country*.

The railway and postal employees are in conflict with the government. Instead of calling the Congress for October 20, the Lieberdants¹⁹⁰ are already talking of calling it at the end of October, etc., etc.

Under such circumstances to "wait" would be a crime.

The Bolsheviks have no right to wait for the Congress of Soviets, they must *take power at once*. By so doing they will save the world revolution (for otherwise there is danger of a deal between the imperialists of all countries, who, after the shootings in Germany, will be more accommodating to each other and *will unite against us*), the Russian revolution (otherwise a wave of real anarchy may become stronger *than we are*) and the lives of hundreds of thousands of people at the front.

Delay is criminal. To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, a disgraceful game of formalities, and a betrayal of the revolution.

If power cannot be achieved without insurrection, we must *resort to insurrection at once*. It may very well be that right now power can be achieved without insurrection, for example, if the Moscow Soviet were to take power at once, immediately, and proclaim itself (together with the Petrograd Soviet) the government. Victory in Moscow is guaranteed, and there is no need to fight. Petrograd can wait. The government cannot do anything to save itself; it will surrender.

For, by seizing power and taking over the banks, the factories and *Russkoye Slovo*, the Moscow Soviet would secure a tremendous basis and tremendous strength, it would be able to campaign throughout Russia and raise the issue thus: we shall propose *peace tomorrow* if the Bonapartist Kerensky surrenders (and if he does not, we shall overthrow him). We shall hand over the *land* to the peasants *at once*, we shall make concessions to the railway and postal employees *at once*, and so on.

It is not necessary to "begin" with Petrograd. If Moscow "begins" without any blood being shed, it will certainly be supported by (1) the army at the front by its sympathy, (2) the peasants everywhere and (3) the fleet and the troops in Finland, which will *proceed to Petrograd*.

Even if Kerensky has a corps or two of mounted troops near Petrograd, he will be obliged to surrender. The Petrograd Soviet can wait and campaign for the Moscow Soviet Government. The slogan is: Power to the Soviets, Land to the Peasants, Peace to the Nations, Bread to the Starving!

Victory is certain, and the chances are ten to one that it will be a bloodless victory.

To wait would be a crime to the revolution.

Greetings, *N. Lenin*

Written on October 1 (14), 1917

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Vol. XIV, Part 2

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 140-41

LETTER TO THE PETROGRAD CITY CONFERENCE

To Be Read in Closed Session

Comrades,

Permit me to call the attention of the Conference to the extreme seriousness of the political situation. I base my opinion on the news in the Saturday morning papers alone. That news, however, compels me to raise the question in this way.

The absolute inaction of the British fleet in general, and also of British submarines during the occupation of Esel by the Germans, coupled with the government's plan to move from Petrograd to Moscow—does not all this prove that the Russian and British imperialists, Kerensky and the Anglo-French capitalists, *have conspired* to surrender Petrograd to the Germans and *thus* stifle the Russian revolution?

I think it does.

Perhaps there was no direct conspiracy, but an agreement reached through some Kornilovites (Maklakov or other Cadets, "non-party" Russian millionaires, etc.), but this does not in any way change the nature of it.

The conclusion is clear.

We must admit that unless the Kerensky government is overthrown by the proletariat and the soldiers in the near future the revolution is ruined. The question of an uprising is on the order of the day.

We must mobilise all forces to convince the workers and soldiers that it is absolutely imperative to wage a last, desperate and decisive fight for the overthrow of the Kerensky government.

We must appeal to the Moscow comrades, persuade them to seize power in Moscow, declare the Kerensky government deposed, and declare the Soviet of Workers' Deputies in Moscow the provisional government of Russia in order to offer immediate peace and save Russia from the conspiracy. Let the Moscow comrades raise the question of the uprising in Moscow immediately.

We must use the opportunity offered by the Congress of the Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies of the Northern Region,¹⁹¹ called for October 8 in Helsingfors, and mobilise all our forces to win the delegates over for the uprising (as they go back through Petrograd).

We must put the request and proposal to the Central Committee of our Party that it hasten the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-parliament and devote all efforts to exposing to the masses Kerensky's conspiracy with the imperialists of other countries and to preparing the uprising so that the right *moment* for it is chosen.

P. S. The resolution of the *soldiers'* section of the Petrograd Soviet against moving the government from Petrograd¹⁹² shows that the soldiers are also becoming *more* convinced of Kerensky's conspiracy. We must gather all forces to support this *correct* conviction and to carry on propaganda among the soldiers.

* * *

I move that the following resolution be adopted:

"The Conference, having discussed the present situation, which is generally admitted to be highly critical, establishes the following facts:

"1. The aggressive operations of the German fleet, accompanied by the very strange inactivity of the British fleet and coupled with the Provisional Government's plan to move from Petrograd to Moscow, arouse a very strong suspicion that the government of Kerensky (or, what is the same thing, the Russian imperialists behind him) have entered into a conspiracy with the Anglo-French imperialists to surrender Petrograd to the Germans and *in this way* to suppress the revolution.

"2. These suspicions are greatly strengthened, and are being confirmed, as far as is possible in such cases, by the following:

"First, the conviction has long been growing and strengthening in the army that it was betrayed by the tsarist generals and is also being betrayed by the generals of Kornilov and Kerensky (particularly in the surrender of Riga);

"Second, the Anglo-French bourgeois press does not conceal its fierce, even frenzied hatred for the Soviets and its readiness to drown them in any quantity of blood;

"Third, Kerensky, the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov and similar politicians are conscious or unconscious tools in the hands of Anglo-French imperialism, as six months' history of the Russian revolution has proved in full;

"Fourth, the vague but persistent rumours of a separate peace between Britain and Germany 'at the expense of Russia' could not have arisen without cause;

"Fifth, all the circumstances of the Kornilov conspiracy, as admitted even by *Dyelo Naroda* and *Izvestia*, papers that on the whole sympathise with Kerensky, have proved that Kerensky was to a very large extent mixed up in the Kornilov affair, that Kerensky was and is the most dangerous Kornilovite; Kerensky, in fact, has shielded such leaders of the Kornilov revolt as Rodzyanko, Klembovsky, Maklakov, and others.

"The Conference, therefore, recognises that all the shouting by Kerensky and the bourgeois papers that support him about the defence of Petrograd is sheer deception and hypocrisy, and the soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet was perfectly right when it sharply condemned the plan to move from Petrograd; furthermore, that Petrograd cannot be defended and the revolution saved unless the tired army is absolutely and urgently convinced of the sincerity of the government and is given bread, clothing and footwear at the cost of revolutionary measures against the capitalists, who hitherto have sabotaged the struggle against economic ruin (as admitted even by the Economic Department of the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary Central Executive Committee).

"The Conference therefore declares that only the overthrow of the Kerensky government with its packed Council of the Republic, and the substitution for it of a workers' and peasants' revolutionary government, can ensure:

"(a) the transfer of the land to the peasants instead of suppressing the peasant uprising;

"(b) the offer of an immediate and just peace so that our entire army will believe that truth exists;

"(c) adoption of the most decisive revolutionary measures against the capitalists in order to provide the army with bread, clothing and footwear and in order to fight against economic ruin.

"The Conference urgently requests the Central Committee to take all measures to lead the inevitable uprising of the workers, soldiers and peasants for the overthrow of the anti-popular, feudal Kerensky government.

"The Conference decides on the immediate dispatch of delegations to Helsingfors, Vyborg, Kronstadt and Revel, to the military units south of Petrograd, and also to Moscow, to carry on propaganda in favour of adopting this resolution and in favour of a swift, general uprising and the overthrow of Kerensky as the steps necessary to open the road to peace, to save Petrograd and the revolution, and to give the land to the peasants and power to the Soviets."

Written on October 7 (20), 1917

First published in 1924

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 145-48

ADVICE OF AN ONLOOKER

I am writing these lines on October 8 and have little hope that they will reach Petrograd comrades by the 9th. It is possible that they will arrive too late, since the Congress of the Northern Soviets has been fixed for October 10. Nevertheless, I shall try to give my "Advice of an Onlooker" in the event that the probable action of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and of the whole "region" will take place soon but has not yet taken place.

It is clear that all power must pass to the Soviets. It should be equally indisputable for every Bolshevik that proletarian revolutionary power (or Bolshevik power—which is now one and the same thing) is assured of the utmost sympathy and unreserved support of all the working and exploited people all over the world in general, in the belligerent countries in particular, and among the Russian peasants especially. There is no need to dwell on these all too well known and long established truths.

What must be dealt with is something that is probably not quite clear to all comrades, namely, that in practice the transfer of power to the Soviets now means armed uprising. This would seem obvious, but not everyone has given or is giving thought to the point. To repudiate armed uprising now would mean to repudiate the key slogan of Bolshevism (All Power to the Soviets) and proletarian revolutionary internationalism in general.

But armed uprising is a *special* form of political struggle, one subject to special laws to which attentive thought must

be given. Karl Marx expressed this truth with remarkable clarity when he wrote that "*insurrection is an art quite as much as war*".

Of the principal rules of this art, Marx noted the following:

(1) *Never play with insurrection, but when beginning it realise firmly that you must go all the way.*

(2) Concentrate a *great superiority of forces* at the decisive point and at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organisation, will destroy the insurgents.

(3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the *offensive*. "The defensive is the death of every armed rising."

(4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.

(5) You must strive for *daily* successes, however small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain "*moral superiority*".

Marx summed up the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed uprising in the words of "Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace*".¹⁹³

Applied to Russia and to October 1917, this means: a simultaneous offensive on Petrograd, as sudden and as rapid as possible, which must without fail be carried out from within and from without, from the working-class quarters and from Finland, from Revel and from Kronstadt, an offensive of the *entire* navy, the concentration of a *gigantic superiority* of forces over the 15,000 or 20,000 (perhaps more) of our "bourgeois guard" (the officers' schools), our "Vendée troops" (part of the Cossacks), etc.

Our *three* main forces—the fleet, the workers, and the army units—must be so combined as to occupy without fail and to hold *at any cost*: (a) the telephone exchange; (b) the telegraph office; (c) the railway stations; (d) and above all, the bridges.

The *most determined* elements (our "shock forces" and *young workers*, as well as the best of the sailors) must be

formed into small detachments to occupy all the more important points and to *take part* everywhere in all important operations, for example:

to encircle and cut off Petrograd; to seize it by a combined attack of the sailors, the workers, and the troops—a task which requires *art and triple audacity*;

to form detachments from the best workers, armed with rifles and bombs, for the purpose of attacking and surrounding the enemy's "centres" (the officers' schools, the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, etc.). Their watchword must be: "*Better die to a man than let the enemy pass!*"

Let us hope that if action is decided on, the leaders will successfully apply the great precepts of Danton and Marx.

The success of both the Russian and the world revolution depends on two or three days' fighting.

Written on October 8 (21), 1917

First published on November 7,
1920 in the newspaper *Pravda*
No. 250
Signed: *An Onlooker*

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 179-81

**LETTER TO THE BOLSHEVIK COMRADES
ATTENDING THE CONGRESS
OF SOVIETS OF THE NORTHERN REGION**

Comrades,

Our revolution is passing through a highly critical period. This crisis coincides with the great crisis—the growth of the world socialist revolution and the struggle waged against it by world imperialism. A gigantic task is being presented to the responsible leaders of our Party, and failure to perform it will involve the danger of a complete collapse of the internationalist proletarian movement. The situation is such that, in truth, delay would be fatal.

Take a glance at the international situation. The growth of a world revolution is beyond dispute. The outburst of indignation on the part of the Czech workers has been suppressed with incredible ferocity, testifying to the government's extreme fright. Italy too has witnessed a mass outbreak in Turin.¹⁹⁴ Most important, however, is the revolt in the German navy. One can imagine the enormous difficulties of a revolution in a country like Germany, especially under present conditions. It cannot be doubted that the revolt in the German navy is indicative of the great crisis—the growth of the world revolution. While our chauvinists, who are advocating Germany's defeat, demand a revolt of the German workers immediately, we Russian revolutionary internationalists know from the experience of 1905-17 that a more impressive sign of the growth of revolution than a revolt among the troops cannot be imagined.

Just think what our position is now in the eyes of the German revolutionaries. They can say to us: We have only

Liebknicht who openly called for a revolution. His voice has been stifled in a convict prison. We have not a single newspaper which openly explains the necessity for a revolution; we have not got freedom of assembly. We have not a single Soviet of Workers' or Soldiers' Deputies. Our voice barely reaches the real, broad mass of people. Yet we made an attempt at revolt, although our chance was only one in a hundred. But you Russian revolutionary internationalists have behind you a half-year of free agitation, you have a score of newspapers, you have a number of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, you have gained the upper hand in the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow, you have on your side the entire Baltic fleet and all the Russian troops in Finland. And still you do not respond to our call for an uprising, you do not overthrow your imperialist, Kerensky, although the chances are a hundred to one that your uprising will be successful.

Yes, we shall be real traitors to the International if, at such a moment and under such favourable conditions, we respond to this call from the German revolutionaries with ... *mere* resolutions.

Add to this, as we all perfectly well know, that the plotting and conspiracy of the international imperialists against the Russian revolution are rapidly growing. International imperialism is coming closer to the idea of stifling the revolution at all costs, stifling it both by military measures and by a peace made at the expense of Russia. It is this that is making the crisis in the world socialist revolution so acute, and is rendering our delay of the uprising particularly dangerous—I would almost say criminal.

Take, further, Russia's internal situation. The petty-bourgeois compromising parties which expressed the naive confidence of the masses in Kerensky and in the imperialists in general, are absolutely bankrupt. Their collapse is complete. The vote cast against coalition by the Soviet curia at the Democratic Conference, the vote cast against coalition by a *majority* of the local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies (in spite of their central Soviet, where Avksentyev and other friends of Kerensky's are installed), the elections in Moscow, where the working-class population has the closest ties with

the peasants, and where *over 49 per cent* voted for the Bolsheviks (and among the soldiers fourteen thousand out of seventeen thousand)—does this not signify that the confidence of the people in Kerensky and in those who are compromising with Kerensky and Co. has completely collapsed? Can one imagine any way in which the people could say more clearly to the Bolsheviks than they did by this vote, "Lead us, we shall follow you"?

And we, who have thus won the majority of the people over to our side, and who have gained the Soviets in both the capital cities—are we to wait? What for? For Kerensky and his Kornilovite generals to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, and thus enter directly or indirectly, openly or secretly, into a conspiracy with *both* Buchanan *and* Wilhelm for the purpose of completely stifling the Russian revolution.

By the Moscow vote and by the re-elections to the Soviets, the people have expressed their confidence in us, but that is not all. There are signs of growing apathy and indifference. That is understandable. It implies not the ebb of the revolution, as the Cadets and their henchmen vociferate, but the ebb of confidence in resolutions and elections. In a revolution, the masses demand action, not words from the leading parties, they demand victories in the struggle, not talk. The moment is approaching when the people may conceive the idea that the Bolsheviks are no better than the others, since they were unable *to act* when the people placed confidence in them....

The peasant revolt is spreading over the whole country. It is perfectly clear that the Cadets and their hangers-on are minimising it in every way and are claiming it to be nothing but "riots" and "anarchy". That lie is being refuted because in the revolt centres the land is beginning to be handed over to the peasants. "Riots" and "anarchy" have never led to such splendid political results! The tremendous strength of the peasant revolt is shown by the fact that the compromisers and the Socialist-Revolutionaries of *Dyelo Naroda*, and *even* Breshko-Breshkovskaya, have begun to talk of transferring the land to the peasants in order to check the movement before it has finally engulfed them.

Are we to wait until the Cossack units of the Kornilovite Kerensky (who was recently exposed as a Kornilovite by the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves) succeed in suppressing this peasant revolt *piecemeal*?

Apparently, many leaders of our Party have failed to note the *specific* meaning of the slogan which we all adopted and which we have repeated endlessly. The slogan is "All Power to the Soviets". There were periods, there were moments during the six months of the revolution, when this slogan did *not* mean insurrection. Perhaps those periods and those moments blinded some of our comrades and led them to forget that now, at least since the middle of September, this slogan for us too has become *equivalent to a call for insurrection*.

There can be no shadow of doubt on this score. *Dyelo Naroda* recently explained this "in a popular way", when it said "Kerensky will under no circumstances submit!" As if he could!

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" is nothing but a call for insurrection. And the blame will be wholly and undoubtedly ours, if we, who for months have been calling upon the people to revolt and repudiate compromise, fail to lead them to revolt on the eve of the revolution's collapse, after the people have expressed their confidence in us.

The Cadets and compromisers are trying to scare us by citing the example of July 3-5, by pointing to the intensified agitation of the Black Hundreds, and so forth. But if any mistake was made on July 3-5, it was that we did not take power. I do not think we made a mistake then, for at that time we were not *yet* in a majority. But now it would be a fatal mistake, worse than a mistake. The spread of Black-Hundred agitation is understandable. It is an aggravation of extremes in an atmosphere of a developing proletarian and peasant revolution. But to use this as an argument *against* an uprising is ridiculous, for the impotence of the Black Hundreds, hirelings of the capitalists, *the impotence of the Black Hundreds in the struggle*, does not even require proof. In the struggle they are not worth considering. In the struggle Kornilov and Kerensky can only rely on the Savage Division and the Cossacks. And now demoralisation has set

in even among the Cossacks; furthermore, the peasants are threatening them with civil war within their Cossack regions.

I am writing these lines on Sunday, October 8. You will read them not earlier than October 10. I have heard from a comrade who passed through here that people travelling on the Warsaw railway say, "Kerensky is bringing Cossacks to Petrograd!" This is quite probable, and it will be entirely our fault if we do not verify it *most carefully* and do not *make a study* of the strength and distribution of *the Kornilovite troops of the second draft*.

Kerensky has again brought Kornilovite troops into the vicinity of Petrograd in order to prevent state power from passing into the hands of the Soviets, in order to prevent this power from proposing an immediate peace, in order to prevent all the land from being immediately handed over to the peasants, in order to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, and himself escape to Moscow! That is the slogan of the insurrection which we must circulate as widely as possible and which will have a tremendous success.

We must not wait for the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which the Central Executive Committee may delay even until November. We must not delay and permit Kerensky to bring up more Kornilovite troops. Finland, the fleet and Revel are represented at the Congress of Soviets. These can together start an immediate movement on Petrograd against the Kornilovite regiments, a movement of the fleet, artillery, machine-guns and two or three army corps, such as have shown, for instance in Vyborg, the intensity of their hatred for the Kornilovite generals, with whom Kerensky is again in collusion.

It would be a great mistake to refuse to seize the opportunity of immediately smashing the Kornilovite regiments of the second draft on the ground that the Baltic fleet, by moving into Petrograd, would allegedly expose the front to the Germans. The Kornilovite slanderers will say this, as they will tell any lie, but it is unworthy of revolutionaries to allow themselves to be intimidated by lies and slanders. Kerensky will surrender Petrograd to the Germans, that is now as clear as daylight. No assertions to the contrary can

destroy our full conviction that this is so, for it follows from the entire course of events and Kerensky's entire policy.

Kerensky and the Kornilovites will surrender Petrograd to the Germans. And it is in order to save Petrograd that Kerensky must be overthrown and power taken by the *Soviets of both capital cities*. These Soviets will immediately propose a peace to all the nations and will thereby fulfil their duty to the German revolutionaries. They will thereby also be taking a decisive step towards frustrating the criminal conspiracies against the Russian revolution, the conspiracies of international imperialism.

Only the immediate movement of troops from Finland, and of the Baltic fleet, Revel and Kronstadt against the Kornilovite forces quartered near Petrograd can save the Russian and the world revolution. Such a movement has a hundred to one chance of leading *within a few days* to the surrender of a part of the Cossack troops, to the utter defeat of the other part, and to the overthrow of Kerensky, for the workers and the soldiers of both capital cities will support such a movement.

In truth, delay would be fatal.

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" is a slogan of insurrection. Whoever uses this slogan without having grasped this and given thought to it will have only himself to blame. And insurrection must be treated as an *art*. I insisted on this during the Democratic Conference and I insist on it now, because *that* is what Marxism teaches us, and it is what is being taught us by the present situation in Russia and in the world generally.

It is not a question of voting, of attracting the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, of additional provincial Soviets, or of a congress of these Soviets. It is a question of insurrection, which *can* and must be decided by Petrograd, Moscow, Helsingfors, Kronstadt, Vyborg and Revel. It is *in the vicinity of Petrograd* and in Petrograd itself that the insurrection can, and must be decided on and effected, as earnestly as possible, with as much preparation as possible, as quickly as possible and as energetically as possible.

The fleet, Kronstadt, Vyborg, and Revel can and must advance on Petrograd; they can and must smash the Kornil-

lovite regiments, rouse both the capital cities, start a mass agitation for a government which will immediately give land to the peasants and immediately make proposals for peace, overthrow Kerensky's government and establish such a government.

Delay would be fatal.

N. Lenin

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LETTER TO COMRADES

Comrades,

We are living in a time that is so critical, events are moving at such incredible speed that a publicist, placed by the will of fate somewhat aside from the mainstream of history, constantly runs the risk either of being late or proving uninformed, especially if some time elapses before his writings appear in print. Although I fully realise this, I must nevertheless address this letter to the Bolsheviks, even at the risk of its not being published at all, for the vacillations against which I deem it my duty to warn in the most decisive manner are of an unprecedented nature and may have a disastrous effect on the Party, the movement of the international proletariat, and the revolution. As for the danger of being too late, I will prevent it by indicating the nature and date of the information I possess.

It was not until Monday morning, October 16, that I saw a comrade who had on the previous day participated in a very important Bolshevik gathering in Petrograd, and who informed me in detail of the discussion. The subject of discussion was that same question of the uprising discussed by the Sunday papers of all political trends. The gathering represented all that is most influential in all branches of Bolshevik work in the capital. Only a most insignificant minority of the gathering, namely, all in all two comrades, took a negative stand. The arguments which those comrades advanced are so weak, they are a manifestation of such an astounding confusion, timidity, and collapse of all the fun-

damental ideas of Bolshevism and proletarian revolutionary internationalism that it is not easy to discover an explanation for such shameful vacillations. The fact, however, remains, and since the revolutionary party has no right to tolerate vacillations on such a serious question, and since this pair of comrades, who have scattered their principles to the winds, might cause some confusion, it is necessary to analyse their arguments, to expose their vacillations, and to show how shameful they are. The following lines are an attempt to do this.

"We have no majority among the people, and without this condition the uprising is hopeless. . . ."

People who can say this are either distorters of the truth or pedants who want an advance guarantee that throughout the whole country the Bolshevik Party has received exactly one-half of the votes plus one, this they want at all events, without taking the least account of the real circumstances of the revolution. History has never given such a guarantee, and is quite unable to give it in any revolution. To make such a demand is jeering at the audience, and is nothing but a cover to hide one's own *flight* from reality.

For reality shows us clearly that it was after the July days that the majority of the people began quickly to go over to the side of the Bolsheviks. This was demonstrated first by the August 20 elections in Petrograd, even before the Kornilov revolt, when the Bolshevik vote rose from 20 to 33 per cent in the city not including the suburbs, and then by the district council elections in Moscow in September, when the Bolshevik vote rose from 11 to 49.3 per cent (one Moscow comrade, whom I saw recently, told me that the correct figure is 51 per cent). This was proved by the new elections to the Soviets. It was proved by the fact that a majority of the peasant Soviets, their "Avksentyev" central Soviet notwithstanding, has expressed itself *against* the coalition. To be against the coalition means *in practice* to follow the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, reports from the front prove more frequently and more definitely that the soldiers are passing *en masse* over to the side of the Bolsheviks with ever greater

determination, in spite of the malicious slanders and attacks by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, officers, deputies, etc., etc.

Last, but not least, the most outstanding fact of present-day Russian life is *the revolt of the peasantry*. This shows objectively, not by words but by deeds, that the people are going over to the side of the Bolsheviks. But the fact remains, notwithstanding the lies of the bourgeois press and its miserable yes-men of the "vacillating" *Novaya Zhizn* crowd, who shout about riots and anarchy. The peasant movement in Tambov Gubernia¹⁹⁵ was an uprising both in the physical and political sense, an uprising that has yielded such splendid political results as, in the first place, agreement to transfer the land to the peasants. It is not for nothing that the Socialist-Revolutionary rabble, including *Dyelo Naroda*, who are frightened by the uprising, now *scream* about the need to transfer the land to the peasants. Here is a *practical* demonstration of the correctness of Bolshevism and of its success. It proved to be impossible to "teach" the Bonapartists and their lackeys in the Pre-parliament otherwise than by an uprising.

This is a fact and facts are stubborn things. And such a factual "argument" *in favour* of an uprising is stronger than thousands of "pessimistic" evasions on the part of confused and frightened politicians.

If the peasant uprising were not an event of nation-wide political import, the Socialist-Revolutionary lackeys from the Pre-parliament would not be shouting about the need to hand over the land to the peasants.

Another splendid political and revolutionary consequence of the peasant uprising, as already noted in *Rabochy Put*, is the delivery of grain to the railway stations in Tambov Gubernia. Here is another "argument" for you, confused gentlemen, an argument in favour of the uprising as the only means to save the country from the famine that is knocking at our door and from a crisis of unheard-of dimensions. While the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik betrayers of the people are grumbling, threatening, writing resolutions, promising to feed the hungry by convening the Constituent Assembly, the people are beginning to solve the

bread problem *Bolshevik-fashion*, by *rebell*ing against the landowners, capitalists, and speculators.

Even the *bourgeois* press, even *Russkaya Volya*, was compelled to admit the wonderful results of *such* a solution (the only real solution) of the bread problem, by publishing information to the effect that the railway stations in Tambov Gubernia were swamped with grain. . . . *And this after the peasants had revolted!*

To doubt now that the majority of the people are following and will follow the Bolsheviks is shameful vacillation and in practice is the abandoning of *all* the principles of proletarian revolutionism, the complete renunciation of Bolshevism.

"We are not strong enough to seize power, and the bourgeoisie is not strong enough to hinder the convening of the Constituent Assembly."

The first part of this argument is a simple paraphrase of the preceding one. It does not gain in strength or power of conviction, when the confusion of its authors and their fear of the bourgeoisie are expressed in terms of pessimism in respect of the workers and optimism in respect of the bourgeoisie. If the officer cadets and the Cossacks say that they will fight against the Bolsheviks to the last drop of blood, this deserves full credence; if, however, the workers and soldiers at hundreds of meetings express full confidence in the Bolsheviks and affirm their readiness to defend the transfer of power to the Soviets, then it is "timely" to recall that voting is one thing and fighting another!

If you argue like that, of course, you "refute" the possibility of an uprising. But, we may ask, in what way does this peculiarly orientated "pessimism" with its peculiar urge differ from a political shift to the side of the bourgeoisie?

Look at the facts. Remember the Bolshevik declarations, repeated thousands of times and now "forgotten" by our pessimists. We have said thousands of times that the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies are a force, that they are the vanguard of the revolution, that they *can* take power. Thousands of times have we upbraided the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries for phrase-mongering about the

"plenipotentiary organs of democracy" accompanied by *fear* to transfer power to the Soviets.

And what has the Kornilov revolt proved? It has proved that the Soviets are a real force.

And now, after this has been proved by experience, by facts, we are expected to repudiate Bolshevism, deny ourselves, and say that we are not strong enough (although the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow and a majority of the provincial Soviets are on the side of the Bolsheviks)! Are these not shameful vacillations? As a matter of fact, our "pessimists" are abandoning the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets", though they *are afraid* to admit it.

How can it be proved that the bourgeoisie are not strong enough to hinder the calling of the Constituent Assembly?

If the Soviets *have not the strength* to overthrow the bourgeoisie, this *means* the latter are strong enough to prevent the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, for there is nobody else to stop them. To trust the promises of Kerensky and Co., to trust the resolutions of the servile Pre-parliament—is this worthy of a member of a proletarian party and a revolutionary?

Not only has the bourgeoisie *strength enough* to hinder the convocation of the Constituent Assembly if the present government is not overthrown, but it can also achieve this result *indirectly*, by surrendering Petrograd to the Germans, laying open the front, increasing lockouts, and sabotaging deliveries of foodstuffs. It has been proved by *facts* that the bourgeoisie have already been partly doing this, which means that they are capable of doing it *to the full extent*, if the workers and soldiers do not overthrow them.

"The Soviets must be a revolver pointed at the head of the government with the demand to convene the Constituent Assembly and stop all Kornilovite plots."

This is how far one of the two sad pessimists has gone.

He had to go that far, for to reject the uprising is *the same as* rejecting the slogan "All Power to the Soviets".

Of course, a slogan is "not sacred"; we all agree to that.

But then why has *no one* raised the question of changing this slogan (in the same way as I raised the question after the July days*)? Why be *afraid* to say it openly, when the Party, since September, has been discussing the question of the uprising, which is now *the only way* to realise the slogan "All Power to the Soviets".

There is no way for our sad pessimists to turn. A renunciation of the uprising is a renunciation of the transfer of power to the Soviets and implies a "transfer" of all hopes and expectations to the kind bourgeoisie, which has "promised" to convoke the Constituent Assembly.

Is it so difficult to understand that once *power* is in the hands of the Soviets, the Constituent Assembly and its success are *guaranteed*? The Bolsheviks have said so thousands of times and *no one* has ever attempted to refute it. Everybody has recognised this "combined type", but to smuggle in a *renunciation* of the transfer of power to the Soviets under cover of the words "combined type", to smuggle it in *secretly* while *fearing* to renounce our slogan openly is a matter for wonder. Is there any parliamentary term to describe it?

Someone has very pointedly retorted to our pessimist: "Is it a revolver with no cartridges?" If so, it means going over directly to the Lieberdians, who have declared the Soviets a "revolver" thousands of times and have deceived the people thousands of times. For *while they were in control* the Soviets proved to be worthless.

If, however, it is to be a revolver "with cartridges", this cannot mean anything but *technical* preparation for an uprising; the cartridges have to be procured, the revolver has to be loaded—and cartridges alone will not be enough.

Either go over to the side of the Lieberdians and *openly* renounce the slogan, "All Power to the Soviets", or start the uprising. There is no middle course.

"The bourgeoisie cannot surrender Petrograd to the Germans, although Rodzyanko wants to, for the fighting is done not by the bourgeoisie, but by our heroic sailors."

* See pp. 316-23 of this book.—Ed.

This argument again reduces itself to the same "optimism" *in respect of the bourgeoisie* which is fatally manifested at every step by those who are pessimistic about the revolutionary forces and capabilities of the proletariat.

The fighting is done by the heroic sailors, *but* this did not prevent *two* admirals from *disappearing* before the capture of Esel!

That is a fact and facts are stubborn things. The facts prove that admirals *are capable* of treachery no less than Kornilov. It is an undisputed fact that Field Headquarters has not been reformed, and that the commanding staff is Kornilovite in composition.

If the Kornilovites (with Kerensky at their head, for he is also a Kornilovite) *want* to surrender Petrograd, they can do it in two or even in three ways.

First, they can, through an act of treachery on the part of the Kornilovite officers, open the northern land front.

Second, they can "agree" on freedom of action for the entire German navy, which is *stronger* than we are; they can agree both with the German and the British imperialists. Moreover, the admirals who have disappeared may have delivered the *plans* to the Germans *as well*.

Third, they can, by means of lockouts, and by sabotaging the delivery of food, bring our troops to *complete* desperation and impotence.

Not a single one of these three ways can be denied. The facts have proved that the bourgeois-Cossack party of Russia has already knocked at all three doors and has tried to force open each of them.

What follows? It follows that we have no right to *wait* until the bourgeoisie strangle the revolution.

Experience has proved that Rodzyanko's wishes are no trifle. Rodzyanko is a man of affairs. Rodzyanko is backed by *capital*. This is beyond dispute. Capital is tremendous strength as long as the proletariat do not have power. *For decades*, Rodzyanko has faithfully and truly carried out the policies of capital.

What follows? It follows that to vacillate on the question of an uprising as the only means to save the revolution means to sink into that cowardly credulity in the bourgeoisie

which is half-Lieberdan, Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik and half "peasant-like" unquestioning credulity, against which the Bolsheviks have been battling most of all.

Either fold your idle arms on your empty chest, wait and swear "faith" in the Constituent Assembly until Rodzyanko and Co. have surrendered Petrograd and strangled the revolution or start an uprising. There is no middle course.

Even the convocation of the Constituent Assembly does not, in itself, change anything, for no "constituting", no voting by any arch-sovereign assembly will have any effect on the famine, or on Wilhelm. Both the convocation and the *success* of the Constituent Assembly depend upon the transfer of power to the Soviets. This old Bolshevik truth is being proved by reality ever more strikingly and ever more *cruelly*.

"We are becoming stronger every day. We can enter the Constituent Assembly as a strong opposition; why should we stake everything?..."

This is the argument of a philistine who has "read" that the Constituent Assembly is being called, and who trustingly acquiesces in the most legal, most loyal, most constitutional course.

It is a pity, however, that *waiting* for the Constituent Assembly does not solve either the question of famine or the question of surrendering Petrograd. This "trifle" is forgotten by the naive or the confused or those who have allowed themselves to be frightened.

The famine will not wait. The peasant uprising did not wait. The war will not wait. The admirals who have disappeared did not wait.

Will the famine agree to wait, because we Bolsheviks *proclaim* faith in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly? Will the admirals who have disappeared agree to wait? Will the Maklakovs and Rodzyankos agree to stop the lockouts and the sabotaging of grain deliveries, or to denounce the secret treaties with the British and the German imperialists?

This is what the arguments of the heroes of "constitutional illusions" and parliamentary cretinism amount to. The

living reality disappears, and what remains is only a *paper* dealing with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; there is nothing left but to hold elections.

And blind people are still wondering why hungry people and soldiers betrayed by generals and admirals are indifferent to the elections! Oh, wiseacres!

"Were the Kornilovites to start again, we would show them! But why should we take risks and start?"

This is extraordinarily convincing and revolutionary. History does not repeat itself, but if we turn our *backs* on it, contemplate the first Kornilov revolt and repeat: "If only the Kornilovites would start"—if we do that, what excellent revolutionary strategy it would be. How much like a waiting game it is! Maybe the Kornilovites will start again at an inopportune time. Isn't this a "weighty" argument? What kind of an earnest foundation for a proletarian policy is this?

And what if the Kornilovites of the second draft will have learned a thing or two? What if they *wait* for the hunger riots to begin, for the front to be broken through, for Petrograd to be surrendered, *before they begin*? What then?

It is proposed that we build the tactics of the proletarian party on the possibility of the Kornilovites' repeating one of their old errors!

Let us forget all that was being and *has been demonstrated* by the Bolsheviks a hundred times, all that the six months' history of our revolution has proved, namely, that there is *no* way out, that there is no objective way out and can be none *except* a dictatorship of the Kornilovites or a dictatorship of the proletariat. Let us forget this, let us renounce all this and wait! Wait for what? Wait for a miracle, for the tempestuous and catastrophic course of events from April 20 to August 29 to be succeeded (due to the prolongation of the war and the spread of famine) by a peaceful, quiet, smooth, legal convocation of the Constituent Assembly and by a fulfilment of its most lawful decisions. Here you have the "Marxist" tactics! Wait, ye hungry!

Kerensky has promised to convene the Constituent Assembly.

"There is really nothing in the international situation that makes it obligatory for us to act immediately, we would be more likely to damage the cause of a socialist revolution in the West, if we were to allow ourselves to be shot..."

This argument is truly magnificent: Scheidemann "himself", Renaudel "himself" would not be able to "manipulate" more cleverly the workers' sympathies for the international socialist revolution!

Just think of it: under devilishly difficult conditions, having but *one* Liebknecht (and he in prison), with no newspapers, with no freedom of assembly, with no Soviets, with *all* classes of the population, including every well-to-do peasant, incredibly hostile to the idea of internationalism, with the imperialist big, middle, and petty bourgeoisie splendidly organised—the Germans, i.e., the German revolutionary internationalists, the German workers dressed in sailors' jackets, started a mutiny in the navy with one chance in a hundred of winning.

But we, with dozens of papers at our disposal, freedom of assembly, a *majority* in the Soviets, we, the best situated proletarian internationalists in the world, should refuse to support the German revolutionaries by our uprising. We ought to reason like the Scheidemanns and Renaudels, that it is most prudent not to revolt, for if we are shot, then the world will lose such excellent, reasonable, ideal internationalists!

Let us prove how reasonable we are. Let us pass a resolution of sympathy with the *German insurrectionists*, and let us renounce the *insurrection* in Russia. This would be genuine, reasonable internationalism. Imagine how fast world internationalism would blossom forth, if the same wise policy were to triumph *everywhere*!

The war has fatigued and tormented the workers of all countries to the utmost. Outbursts are becoming frequent in Italy, Germany and Austria. We *alone* have Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Let us then *keep on waiting*. Let us betray the German internationalists as we are betraying

the Russian peasants, who, not by words but by deeds, by their uprising against the landowners, appeal to us to rise against Kerensky's government. . . .

Let the clouds of the imperialist conspiracy of the capitalists of all countries who are ready to strangle the Russian revolution gather—we shall wait patiently until we are strangled *by the ruble!* Instead of attacking the conspirators and breaking their ranks by a victory of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, let us wait for the Constituent Assembly, where all international plots will be vanquished by *voting*, provided Kerensky and Rodzyanko conscientiously convene the Constituent Assembly. Have we any right to doubt the honesty of Kerensky and Rodzyanko?

"But 'everyone' is against us! We are isolated; the Central Executive Committee, the Menshevik internationalists, the *Novaya Zhizn* people, and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries have been issuing and will continue to issue appeals against us!"

A crushing argument. Up to now we have been mercilessly scourging the vacillators for their vacillations. *By so doing*, we have won the sympathies of the people. *By so doing*, we have won over the Soviets, without which the uprising could not be safe, quick, and sure. Now let us use the Soviets which we have won over in order to *move into the camp of the vacillators*. What a splendid career for Bolshevism!

The whole essence of the policy of the Lieberdants and Chernovs, and also of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, consists in *vacillations*. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshevik internationalists have *tremendous* political importance as an *indication* of the fact that the *masses are moving to the left*. Two such facts as the passing of some 40 per cent of both Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries into the camp of the Left, on the one hand, and the peasant uprising, on the other, are clearly and obviously interconnected.

But it is the very character of this connection that reveals the abysmal spinelessness of those who have now undertaken to whimper over the fact that the Central Executive Committee, which has rotted away, or the vacillating Left Socialist-

Revolutionaries and Co., have come out against us. For *these* vacillations of the petty-bourgeois leaders—the Martovs, Kamkovs, Sukhanovs and Co.—have to be compared to the *uprising* of the peasants. Here is a *realistic* political comparison. With whom shall we go? Should it be with the vacillating handfuls of Petrograd leaders, who have expressed *indirectly* the *leftward swing* of the masses, but who, at *every* political turn, have shamefully whimpered, vacillated, run to ask forgiveness of the Lieberdans, Avksentyevs and Co., *or with those masses that have moved to the left?*

Thus, and only thus, can the question be presented.

Because the peasant uprising has been betrayed by the Martovs, Kamkovs, and Sukhanovs, we, the workers' party of revolutionary internationalists, are asked to betray it, too. This is what the policy of blaming the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshevik internationalists reduces itself to.

But we have said that to help the vacillating, we must stop vacillating ourselves. Have those "nice" Left petty-bourgeois democrats not "vacillated" in favour of the coalition? In the long run we succeeded in making them follow us because we ourselves did not vacillate. Events have shown we are right.

These gentlemen by their vacillations have always held back the revolution. We alone have saved it. Shall we now give up, when the famine is knocking at the gates of Petrograd and Rodzyanko and Co. are preparing to surrender the city?!

"But we have not even firm connections with the railwaymen and the postal employees. Their official representatives are the Plansons. And can we win without the post office and without railways?"

Yes, yes, the Plansons here, the Lieberdans there. What confidence have the *masses* shown them? Have we not always shown that those leaders betrayed the *masses*? Did the masses not turn away from those leaders *towards us*, both at the elections in Moscow and at the elections to the Soviets? Or perhaps the mass of railway and postal employees are not starving! Or do not strike against Kerensky and Co.?

"Did we have connections with these unions before February 28?" one comrade asked a pessimist. The latter replied by pointing out that the two revolutions could not be compared. But this reply only *strengthens* the position of the one who asked the question. For it is the Bolsheviks who have spoken thousands of times about prolonged preparation for the *proletarian* revolution *against the bourgeoisie* (and they have not spoken about it in order to forget their words when the decisive moment is at hand). The political and economic life of the unions of postal and telegraph employees and railwaymen is characterised by the very *separation* of the proletarian elements of the masses from the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois upper layer. It is not absolutely necessary to secure "connections" with one or the other union beforehand; what matters is that only a victory of a proletarian and peasant uprising *can* satisfy the *masses* both of the army of railwaymen and of postal and telegraph employees.

"There is only enough bread in Petrograd for two or three days. Can we give bread to the insurrectionists?"

This is one of a thousand sceptical remarks (the sceptics can *always* "doubt" and cannot be refuted by anything but experience), one of those remarks that put the blame on the wrong shoulders.

It is Rodzyanko and Co., it is the bourgeoisie that are preparing the famine and speculating on strangling the revolution by famine. There is no escaping the famine and *there can be none* except by an uprising of the peasants against the landowners in the countryside and by a victory of the workers over the capitalists in the cities and Petrograd and Moscow. There is *no other way* to get grain from the rich, or to transport it despite their sabotage, or to break the resistance of the corrupt employees and the capitalist profiteers, or to establish strict accounting. The history of the supply organisations and of the food difficulties of the "democracy" with its millions of *complaints* against the sabotage of the capitalists, with its *whimpering* and *supplication* is proof of this.

There is no power on earth apart from the power of a victorious proletarian revolution that would advance from complaints and begging and tears to *revolutionary action*. And the longer the proletarian revolution is delayed, the longer it is put off by events or by the vacillations of the wavering and confused, the more victims it will claim and the more difficult it will be to *organise* the transportation and distribution of food.

"In insurrection delay is fatal" this is our answer to those having the sad "courage" to look at the growing economic ruin, at the approaching famine, and still *dissuade* the workers from the uprising (*that is, persuade them to wait and place confidence in the bourgeoisie for some further time*).

"There is not yet any danger at the front either. Even if the soldiers conclude an armistice themselves, it is still not a calamity."

But the soldiers will not conclude an armistice. For this state power is necessary and that cannot be obtained without an uprising. The soldiers will simply *desert*. Reports from the front tell that. We must not wait because of the risk of aiding collusion between Rodzyanko and Wilhelm and the risk of *complete* economic ruin, with the soldiers deserting in masses, once they (*being already close to desperation*) sink into absolute despair and leave everything to the mercy of fate.

"But if we take power, and obtain neither an armistice nor a democratic peace, the soldiers may not be willing to fight a revolutionary war. What then?"

An argument which brings to mind the saying: one fool can ask ten times more questions than ten wise men can answer.

We have never denied the difficulties of *those in power* during an imperialist war. Nevertheless, we have always *preached* the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. Shall we renounce this, when the moment to act has arrived?

We have always said that the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country creates gigantic changes in the international situation, in the economic life of the country, in the condition of the army and in its mood—shall we now “forget” all this, and allow ourselves to be frightened by the “difficulties” of the revolution?

“As everybody reports, the masses are not in a mood that would drive them into the streets. Among the signs justifying pessimism may be mentioned the greatly increasing circulation of the pogromist and Black-Hundred press.”

When people allow themselves to be frightened by the bourgeoisie, all objects and phenomena naturally appear yellow to them. First, they substitute an impressionist, intellectualist criterion for the Marxist criterion of the movement; they *substitute* subjective impressions of moods for a political analysis of the development of the class struggle and of the course of events in the entire country against the entire international background. They “conveniently” forget, of course, that a firm party line, its unyielding resolve, is *also* a mood-creating factor, particularly at the sharpest revolutionary moments. It is sometimes very “convenient” for people to forget that the responsible leaders, by their vacillations and by their readiness to burn their yesterday’s idols, cause the most unbecoming vacillations in the mood of certain strata of the masses.

Secondly—and this is at present the main thing—in speaking about the mood of the masses, the spineless people forget to add:

that “everybody” reports it as a tense and expectant mood;

that “everybody” agrees that, called upon by the Soviets for the defence of the Soviets, the workers will rise to a man;

that “everybody” agrees that the workers are greatly dissatisfied with the indecision of the centres concerning the “last decisive struggle”, the inevitability of which they clearly recognise;

that “everybody” unanimously characterises the mood of the broadest masses as close to desperation and points to the anarchy developing therefrom;

that "everybody" also recognises that there is among the class-conscious workers a definite unwillingness to go out into the streets *only* for demonstrations, *only* for partial struggles, since a general and not a partial struggle is in the air, while the hopelessness of individual strikes, demonstrations and acts to influence the authorities has been seen and is fully realised.

And so forth.

If we approach this characterisation of the mass mood from the point of view of the entire development of the class and political struggle and of the entire course of events during the six months of our revolution, it will become clear to us how people frightened by the bourgeoisie are distorting the question. Things are not as they were before April 20-21, June 9, July 3, for then it was a matter of *spontaneous excitement* which we, as a party, either failed to comprehend (April 20) or held back and shaped into a peaceful demonstration (June 9 and July 3), for we knew very well at that time that the Soviets were *not yet* ours, that the peasants *still* trusted the Lieberdan-Chernov and not the Bolshevik course (uprising), that consequently we could not have the majority of the people behind us, and that consequently the uprising would be premature.

At that time the majority of the class-conscious workers did *not* raise the question of the last decisive struggle at all; not one of all our Party units would have raised it at that time. As for the unenlightened and very broad masses, there was neither a concerted effort nor the resolve born out of despair; there was only a spontaneous *excitement* with the naive hope of "influencing" Kerensky and the bourgeoisie by "action", by a demonstration pure and simple.

What is needed for an uprising is not this, but, on the one hand, a conscious, firm and unswerving resolve on the part of the class-conscious elements to fight to the end; and on the other, a mood of despair among the broad masses who *feel* that nothing can now be saved by half-measures; that you cannot "influence" anybody; that the hungry will "smash everything, destroy everything, even anarchically", *if* the Bolsheviks are not able to lead them in a decisive battle.

The development of the revolution has in practice brought

both the workers *and* the peasantry to precisely this combination of a tense mood resulting from experience among the class-conscious and a mood of hatred towards those using the lockout weapon and the capitalists that is close to despair among the broadest masses.

We can also understand the "success" on this very soil of the scoundrels of the reactionary press who imitate Bolshevism. The malicious glee of the reactionaries at the approach of a decisive battle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has been observed in all revolutions without exception; it has always been so, and it is absolutely unavoidable. And if you allow yourselves to be frightened by *this* circumstance, then you have to renounce not only the uprising but the proletarian revolution in general. For in a capitalist society this revolution *cannot* mature *without* being accompanied by malicious glee on the part of the reactionaries and by hopes that they would be able to feather their nest in this way.

The class-conscious workers know perfectly well that the Black Hundreds work hand in hand with the bourgeoisie, and that a decisive victory of the workers (in which the petty bourgeoisie do not believe, which the capitalists are afraid of, which the Black Hundreds sometimes wish for out of sheer malice, convinced as they are that the Bolsheviks cannot retain power)—that this victory will completely *crush* the Black Hundreds, that the Bolsheviks *will be able* to retain power firmly and to the greatest advantage of all humanity tortured and tormented by the war.

Indeed, is there anybody in his senses who can doubt that the *Rodzyankos* and *Suvorins* are acting in concert, that the roles have been distributed among them?

Has it not been proved by facts that Kerensky acts on Rodzyanko's orders, while the State Printing Press of the Russian Republic (don't laugh!) prints the Black-Hundred speeches of reactionaries in the "Duma" at the expense of the state? Has not this fact been exposed *even* by the lackeys from *Dyelo Naroda*, who serve "their own mannikin"? Has not the experience of *all* elections proved that the Cadet lists were fully supported by *Novoye Uremya*, which is a venal paper controlled by the "interests" of the tsarist landowners?

Did we not read yesterday that commercial and industrial capitalists (non-partisan capitalists, of course; oh, non-partisan capitalists, to be sure, for the Vikhlayevs and Rakitnikovs, the Gvozdyovs and Nikitins are not in coalition with the Cadets—God forbid—but with *non-partisan* commercial and industrial circles!) have donated the goodly sum of 300,000 rubles to the Cadets?

The whole Black-Hundred press, if we look at things from a class and not a sentimental point of view, is a *branch* of the firm “Ryabushinsky, Milyukov, and Co.”. Capitalists buy, on the one hand, the Milyukovs, Zaslavskys, Potresovs, and so on; on the other, the Black Hundreds.

The *victory of the proletariat* is the only means of putting an end to this most hideous poisoning of the people by the cheap Black-Hundred venom.

Is it any wonder that the crowd, tired out and made wretched by hunger and the prolongation of the war, clutches at the Black-Hundred poison? Can one imagine a capitalist society on the eve of collapse in which the oppressed masses are *not* desperate? Is there any doubt that the desperation of the masses, a large part of whom are still ignorant, *will* express itself in the increased consumption of all sorts of poison?

Those who, in arguing about the mood of the masses, blame the masses for their own personal spinelessness, are in a hopeless position. The masses are divided into those who are consciously biding their time and those who unconsciously are ready to sink into despair; but the masses of the oppressed and the hungry are *not* spineless.

“On the other hand, the Marxist party cannot reduce the question of an uprising to that of a military conspiracy. . . .”

Marxism is an extremely profound and many-sided doctrine. It is, therefore, no wonder that *scraps* of quotations from Marx—especially when the quotations are made *inappropriately*—can always be found among the “arguments” of those who break with Marxism. Military conspiracy is Blanquism, *if* it is organised not by a party of a definite class, *if* its organisers have not analysed the political moment in

general and the international situation in particular, *if* the party has not on its side the sympathy of the majority of the people, as proved by objective facts, *if* the development of revolutionary events has not brought about a practical refutation of the conciliatory illusions of the petty bourgeoisie, *if* the majority of the Soviet-type organs of revolutionary struggle that have been recognised as authoritative or have shown themselves to be such in practice have not been won over, *if* there has not matured a sentiment in the army (if in war-time) against the government that protracts the unjust war against the will of the whole people, *if* the slogans of the uprising (like "All power to the Soviets", "Land to the peasants", or "Immediate offer of a democratic peace to all the belligerent nations, with an immediate abrogation of all secret treaties and secret diplomacy", etc.) have not become widely known and popular, *if* the advanced workers are not sure of the desperate situation of the masses and of the support of the countryside, a support proved by a serious peasant movement or by an uprising against the landowners and the government that defends the landowners, *if* the country's economic situation inspires earnest hopes for a favourable solution of the crisis by peaceable and parliamentary means.

This is probably enough.

In my pamphlet entitled: *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* (I hope it will appear in a day or two), there is a quotation from Marx which really bears upon the question of insurrection and which enumerates the features of insurrection as an "art".*

I am ready to wager that if we were to propose to all those chatterers in Russia who are now shouting against a military conspiracy, to open their mouths and explain the difference between the "art" of an insurrection and a military conspiracy that deserves condemnation, they would either repeat what was quoted above or would cover themselves with shame and would call forth the general ridicule of the workers. Why not try, my dear would-be Marxists! Sing us a song *against* "military conspiracy"!

* See p. 463 of this book.—Ed.

POSTSCRIPT

The above lines had been written when I received, at eight o'clock Tuesday evening, the morning Petrograd papers; there was an article by Mr. V. Bazarov in *Novaya Zhizn*. Mr. V. Bazarov asserts that "a handwritten manifesto was distributed in the city, in which arguments were presented in the name of two eminent Bolsheviks, against immediate action".

If this is true, I beg the comrades, whom this letter cannot reach earlier than Wednesday noon, to *publish it* as quickly as possible.

I did not write it for the press; I wanted to talk to the members of our Party by letter. But we cannot remain silent when the heroes of *Novaya Zhizn*, who do not belong to the Party and who have been ridiculed by it a thousand times for their contemptible spinelessness (they voted for the Bolsheviks the day before yesterday, for the Mensheviks yesterday, and who *almost* united them at the world-famous unity congress)—when such individuals receive a *manifesto* from members of our Party in which they carry on propaganda against an uprising. We must agitate also *in favour of* an uprising. Let the anonymous individuals come right out into the light of day, and let them bear the punishment they deserve for their shameful vacillations, even if it be only the ridicule of all class-conscious workers. I have at my disposal only one hour before I send the present letter to Petrograd, and I therefore can say only a word or two about one of the "methods" of the sad heroes of the brainless *Novaya Zhizn*

trend. Mr. V. Bazarov attempts to polemise against Comrade Ryazanov, who has said, and who is a thousand times correct in saying, that "all those who create in the masses a mood of despair and indifference are preparing an uprising".

The sad hero of a sad cause "rejoins" as follows:

"Have despair and indifference ever conquered?"

O contemptible fools from *Novaya Zhizn*! Do they know *such* examples of uprising in history, in which the masses of the oppressed classes were victorious in a desperate battle without having been reduced to despair by long sufferings and by an extreme sharpening of all sorts of crises, in which those masses had not been seized by indifference towards various lackey-like pre-parliaments, towards idle playing at revolution, towards the Lieberdants' reduction of the Soviets from organs of power and uprising to empty talking-shops?

Or have the contemptible little fools from *Novaya Zhizn* perhaps discovered among the masses an *indifference*—to the question of bread, to the prolongation of the war, to land for the peasants?

Written on October 17 (30), 1917

Published in *Rabochy Put* Nos. 40, 41 and 42, November 1, 2 and 3 (October 19, 20 and 21), 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 195-215

LETTER TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS¹⁹⁶

Comrades,

I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.

With all my might I urge comrades to realise that everything now hangs by a thread; that we are confronted by problems which are not to be solved by conferences or congresses (even congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed people.

The bourgeois onslaught of the Kornilovites and the removal of Verkhovsky show that we must not wait. We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, having first disarmed the officer cadets (defeating them, if they resist), and so on.

We must not wait! We may lose everything!

The value of the immediate seizure of power will be the defence of the *people* (not of the congress, but of the people, the army and the peasants in the first place) from the Kornilovite government, which has driven out Verkhovsky and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.

Who must take power?

That is not important at present. Let the Revolutionary Military Committee¹⁹⁷ do it, or "some other institution" which will declare that it will relinquish power only to the true representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the army (the immediate proposal of peace), the interests of the peasants (the land to be taken immediately and private property abolished), the interests of the starving.

All districts, all regiments, all forces must be mobilised at once and must immediately send their delegations to the Revolutionary Military Committee and to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent demand that under no circumstances should power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night.

History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything.

If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Soviets but on their behalf.

The seizure of power is the business of the uprising; its political purpose will become clear after the seizure.

It would be a disaster, or a sheer formality, to await the wavering vote of October 25. The people have the right and are in duty bound to decide such questions not by a vote, but by force; in critical moments of revolution, the people have the right and are in duty bound to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.

This is proved by the history of all revolutions; and it would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the chance slip, knowing that the *salvation of the revolution*, the offer of peace, the salvation of Petrograd, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants depend upon them.

The government is tottering. It must be *given the death-blow* at all costs.

To delay action is fatal.

Written on October 24
(November 6), 1917

First published in 1924

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 234-35

TO THE CITIZENS OF RUSSIA! 198

The Provisional Government has been deposed. State power has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—the Revolutionary Military Committee, which heads the Petrograd proletariat and the garrison.

The cause for which the people have fought, namely, the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet power—this cause has been secured.

Long live the revolution of workers, soldiers and peasants!

*Revolutionary Military Committee
of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers'
and Soldiers' Deputies*

10 a.m., October 25, 1917.

Rabochy i Soldat No. 8,
October 25 (November 7), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
p. 236

NOTES

- ¹ The first news of the February bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia reached Lenin in Zurich on March 2 (15), 1917.

As soon as he received the telegrams which confirmed the revolutionary developments in Russia and informed of the composition of the bourgeois Provisional Government and the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, Lenin began work on an article for the Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda*—he regarded the press as an important instrument for propaganda and organisation.

The first four of the "Letters from Afar" were written from March 7 to 12 (March 20 to 25); the unfinished fifth letter was written on March 26 (April 8), 1917, on the eve of Lenin's departure from Switzerland to Russia.

The letters were sent to Petrograd, but only the first letter appeared in *Pravda* in March 1917, the others being published only after the October Socialist Revolution. The basic ideas of the fifth letter were developed by Lenin in his "Letters on Tactics" and "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution" (see pp. 62-75 and 80-111 of this book). p. 11

- ² *Octobrists*—members of the Union of October Seventeen, a monarchist party of big capitalists, founded in November 1905. The name of the party expressed its solidarity with the tsar's Manifesto of October 17, 1905 which promised to give the Russian people constitutional liberties.

The activities of the Octobrists were hostile to the people; they upheld the interests of the big bourgeoisie and of the landowners who ran their estates on capitalist lines. The Octobrists gave their full support to the tsar's reactionary domestic and foreign policy.

After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution the Octobrist party actively combated the mounting socialist revolution. The party's leader Guchkov was War Minister in the first Provisional Government.

After the October Socialist Revolution the Octobrists fought against the Soviet government.

Cadets—(abbreviated) members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the chief party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia, founded in 1905.

The Cadets called themselves a party of "people's freedom" but actually sought to strike a deal with the autocracy, to retain tsarism in the form of constitutional monarchy.

During the First World War the Cadet leaders were ideologists of Russian imperialism, supporting the tsarist government's aggressive foreign policy.

After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution the Cadets entered the bourgeois Provisional Government. They fought against the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants, upheld landed proprietorship and tried to make the people continue the imperialist war. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution the Cadets took part in the armed counter-revolutionary struggle against Soviet Russia. (See also pp. 112-24 of this book.) p. 14

- ³ *The Basle Manifesto* on the war was adopted at the emergency International Socialist Congress held in Basle, Switzerland, on November 24-25, 1912. The Manifesto warned the peoples against the mounting danger of world imperialist war, revealed the predatory aims of this war and urged the workers of all countries resolutely to fight for peace. The Manifesto included a clause, formulated by Lenin, from a resolution of the Stuttgart Congress (1907) to the effect that in the event of an imperialist war the socialists should take advantage of the economic and political crisis that would result from the war to hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule and fight for socialist revolution. p. 14

- ⁴ *Commoners*—Russian intellectuals from among the small townfolk, clergy, merchant classes and the peasantry, not members of the gentry. p. 15

- ⁵ *O. C. supporters*—Mensheviks united around their leading centre, the Organising Committee, inaugurated at the August 1912 conference of the liquidators. In the First World War the Organising Committee held a social-chauvinist position, justified tsarist Russia's part in the war and carried on jingoist propaganda. The O.C. functioned up to the election of the Menshevik Central Committee in August 1917.

Mensheviks—Russian opportunist Social-Democrats. At the Second Congress held in 1903 the R.S.D.L.P. split into the revolutionary wing led by Lenin and the opportunist wing headed by Martov. In the elections to the Party central bodies the revolutionary Social-Democrats obtained the majority (the Russian for it is *bolshinstvo*) while the opportunists remained in the minority (the Russian word is *men-shinstvo*) and were called respectively the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

During the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07 the Mensheviks came out against the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution and the alliance of the working class with the peasantry, declaring for a conciliation with the liberal bourgeoisie. After the defeat of the revolution most of them became liquidators. They demanded the liquidation of the illegal revolutionary working-class party and

creation of a legal party that would abandon the revolutionary struggle and adapt its activities to the conditions of the period of reaction. The Menshevik liquidators were expelled from the Party at the Sixth All-Russia Conference held in Prague in 1912.

After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution the Mensheviks entered the bourgeois Provisional Government and supported its policy.

Following the victory of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia they participated in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet state. (See also pp. 112-24 of this book.) p. 16

- ⁶ *Gvozdyov* and *Potresov*—leaders of the Right, liquidationist wing of the Mensheviks, which adopted a social-chauvinist position during the First World War. p. 16

- ⁷ *The Party of Peaceful Renovation*—a constitutional-monarchist organisation of the big bourgeoisie and landowners. It took final shape in 1906. The party united the "Left" Octobrists and the "Right" Cadets, and its programme demands were very close to those of the Octobrists. It sought to safeguard and promote the interests of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie and of the landowners who ran their estates on the capitalist lines. p. 17

- ⁸ Reference is to the *bourgeois Provisional Government* formed on March 2 (15), 1917 by agreement between the Provisional Committee of the Duma and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The government was made up of Prince G. Y. Lvov (Prime Minister and Minister for the Interior), the Cadet leader P. N. Milyukov (Minister of Foreign Affairs), the Octobrist leader A. I. Guchkov (Minister for War and Acting Minister for the Navy) and other representatives of the big bourgeoisie and landowners. It also included A. F. Kerensky, of the Trudovik group, who was appointed Minister for Justice. p. 17

- ⁹ *The Duma*—a representative body convened by the tsarist government as a result of the revolutionary events of 1905. Though formally the legislative assembly, it had no effective power and the elections to it were neither direct, nor equal, nor universal. The electoral rights of the working classes and the non-Russian nationalities were greatly curtailed. The vast section of workers and peasants were denied the right to vote. The First Duma (February to July 1906) and the Second Duma (February to June 1907) were dissolved by the tsarist government. On June 3, 1907 the government made coup d'état and enacted a new electoral law which curtailed the rights of the workers and peasants still more and ensured complete domination of the reactionary bloc of the landowners and big bourgeoisie in the Third (1907-12) and Fourth (1912-17) Dumas. p. 18

- ¹⁰ *The war industries committees* were established in Russia in May 1915 by the imperialist bourgeoisie to help the tsarist government conduct the war. In an attempt to bring the workers under their in-

fluence and foster chauvinist sentiments, the bourgeoisie decided to organise "workers' groups" in these committees so as to create the impression that a "class peace" had been achieved between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The Bolsheviks declared a boycott against the committees and instituted it with the support of the majority of workers.

p. 18

- ¹¹ *The Times*—a daily newspaper founded in London in 1785; chief organ of the conservative English bourgeoisie.

p. 23

- ¹² *The first Provisional Government*, or the Provisional Committee of the Duma, was formed at a private conference of Duma members on February 27 (March 12), 1917, after the Duma Chairman, M. V. Rodzyanko, had received the tsar's decree dissolving the Duma. The Provisional Committee was composed of Octobrists, Progressists, Cadets, the Trudovik A. F. Kerensky and the Menshevik N. S. Chkheidze.

p. 23

- ¹³ *The Council of State*—one of the supreme organs of state power in tsarist Russia. It was established in 1810 as a legislative-advisory body whose members were appointed and confirmed by the tsar. A reactionary institution, it voted down even moderate bills approved by the Duma.

p. 23

- ¹⁴ At the *Prague All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.* held in January 1912 the Bolsheviks formed an independent party, the R.S.D.L.P.(B.). The Conference expelled from the Party the Menshevik liquidators and other opportunist groups.

p. 25

- ¹⁵ This refers to the *Manifesto of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party to All the Citizens of Russia*, issued by the Central Committee and published as a supplement to *Izvestia* No. 1, of February 28 (March 13), 1917. Lenin learned of the Manifesto from an abridged version in the morning edition of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, March 9 (22), 1917.

p. 25

- ¹⁶ *Socialist-Revolutionaries* (S.R.s)—a petty-bourgeois party formed in Russia at the end of 1901 and beginning of 1902. The Socialist-Revolutionaries demanded abolition of private property in land and its transfer to the peasant communes to be disposed of on the basis of equalitarian land tenure. The S.R.s called themselves socialists but their programme was not a socialist one since the mere abolition of private property in land without the transfer of power and the basic means of production—banks, large enterprises and railways—to the working class cannot put an end to capitalist exploitation. The S.R.s slurred over the class distinctions between the proletariat and the peasantry, the class differentiation and contradictions within the peasantry, between the working peasants and the kulaks, and repudiated the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution. Adventurism was a characteristic feature of their policy; they regarded terror as the basic method of struggle against tsarism.

After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution the S.R.s, together with the Mensheviks, were the mainstay of the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government and the leaders of that party

were among the members of the government. The S.R. party refused to support the peasants' demand for the abolition of landed estates; the S.R. Ministers in the Provisional Government sent punitive expeditions against peasants who had seized landed estates.

During the years of the foreign military intervention and civil war the S.R.s fought against the Soviet government. (See also pp. 113-28 of this book.)

Popular Socialists—members of the petty-bourgeois Popular Socialist Labour Party founded in 1906 by Right-wingers of the Socialist-Revolutionary party.

The Popular Socialists stood for a bloc with the Cadets. Lenin said that this party "differs very little from the Cadets, for it deletes from its programme both the republicanism and the demand for all the land". After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution the Popular Socialist Party merged with the Trudoviks and actively supported the bourgeois Provisional Government, in which it was represented. After the October Socialist Revolution the P.S.s participated in counter-revolutionary plots and armed acts against the Soviet government.

p. 26

- ¹⁷ Reference is to the Bolshevik Social-Democrats whose leading body was the Central Committee elected at the Sixth, Prague All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., after the Menshevik liquidators and other opportunist groups were expelled from the Party.

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- ¹⁸ Reference is to the Bolshevik deputies to the Fourth Duma—A. Y. Badayev, M. K. Muranov, Y. I. Petrovsky, F. N. Samoilov and N. R. Shagov. At the Duma sitting on July 26 (August 8), 1914 representatives of all the bourgeois and landowner parliamentary groups approved Russia's entry into the imperialist war, but the Bolshevik group refused to vote war credits and waged revolutionary propaganda among the masses. The Bolshevik deputies were arrested in November 1914, faced a court in February 1915 and were exiled for life to Siberia.

p. 26

- ¹⁹ *Sotsial-Demokrat* (Social-Democrat)—an illegal newspaper, Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P., published from February 1908 to January 1917. The first issue was put out in Russia but further publication was arranged abroad. Lenin edited *Sotsial-Demokrat* from December 1911.

p. 27

- ²⁰ *Trudoviks* (the Trudovik group)—a group in the Duma consisting of peasants and intellectuals of a Narodnik trend. The Trudovik group was formed in April 1906 by peasant deputies to the First Duma and functioned in all the Dumas. The Trudoviks vacillated between the Cadets and the Social-Democrats.

After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution the Trudoviks actively supported the Provisional Government.

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- ²¹ *Nasha Zarya* (Our Dawn)—a legal monthly of the Menshevik liquidators published in St. Petersburg from January 1910 to September 1914.

- Nashe Dyelo* (Our Cause)—a Menshevik monthly published in Petrograd in 1915 in place of *Nasha Zarya* which was closed in October 1914. p. 27
- ²² *Chkhheidze's Duma group*—the Menshevik group in the Fourth Duma led by N. S. Chkhheidze. During the First World War the group's official policy was Centrist, but it actually supported the policy of the Russian social-chauvinists. p. 27
- ²³ Reference is to the agreement concluded on the night following March 1 (14), 1917 between the Duma Provisional Committee and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Petrograd Soviet Executive Committee. The Duma Provisional Committee was authorised to form a Provisional Government of its own choice. p. 28
- ²⁴ *Le Temps*—a daily paper published in Paris from 1861 to 1942. It was the official organ of the French Foreign Ministry. p. 29
- ²⁵ *Neue Zürcher Zeitung und schweizerisches Handelsblatt*—a bourgeois newspaper published in Zurich from 1780. p. 29
- ²⁶ *National-Zeitung*—a bourgeois newspaper published in Berlin from 1848 to 1938; beginning with 1914 appeared under the name *Acht-Uhr Abendsblatt. National-Zeitung*. p. 29
- ²⁷ The foreign press reported the appointment by the Petrograd Soviet of a special body to keep check on the Provisional Government. On the basis of this report, Lenin at first welcomed the organisation of that body, pointing out, however, that only experience would show whether it would live up to expectations. In fact, this Contact Commission, appointed by the conciliatory Executive Committee of the Soviet on March 8 (21), helped the government make the prestige of the Soviet serve as a cover for its counter-revolutionary policy. p. 29
- ²⁸ *Frankfurter Zeitung*—a daily newspaper, organ of big German capitalists, published in Frankfurt am Main from 1856 to 1943. Resumed publication in 1949 under the name *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. p. 34
- ²⁹ *Vossische Zeitung*—a moderate liberal newspaper published in Berlin from 1704 to 1934. p. 34
- ³⁰ *The Zemstvos*—local self-government bodies, dominated by the nobility, set up in the central gubernias of tsarist Russia. Their powers were restricted to purely local economic affairs (hospital organisation and road-building, statistics, insurance, etc.). A large section of the Zemstvo functionaries spoke for the liberal bourgeoisie. Many of the Cadet leaders came from their midst. p. 36
- ³¹ *The Paris Commune*—revolutionary government of the working class set up in Paris as a result of the proletarian revolution of 1871. It was the first attempt in history to establish a proletarian dictatorship. The Commune demolished the old government machine of the bourgeoisie, introduced popular election of all officials and judges, separated the church from the state, and the school from the church,

substituted universal arming of the people for the regular army, and introduced a number of measures to improve the condition of the workers and urban poor.

The Commune lasted from March 18 to May 28, 1871. p. 38

- ³² See Lenin's *The State and Revolution* (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25). p. 39

- ³³ Soon after its formation the Provisional Government appointed the Octobrist M. A. Stakhovich Governor-General of Finland and the Cadet F. I. Rodichev Minister (or Commissar) for the Affairs of Finland.

The Provisional Government's refusal to settle the question of self-determination for Finland "pending convocation of the Constituent Assembly" led to a sharp conflict, which was resolved only after the Great October Socialist Revolution. On December 18 (31), 1917, the Soviet Government granted Finland full independence. p. 46

- ³⁴ *The Grütli-Verein*—a bourgeois reformist organisation founded in Switzerland in 1838. In 1901 the Grütli-Verein affiliated with the Swiss Social-Democratic Party but remained organisationally independent. In the First World War (1914-18) it took up an extreme chauvinist position and was the mainstay of the Right-wing social-chauvinists. In November 1916 the Zurich Congress of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party adopted a decision that the social-chauvinist activities of the Grütli-Verein were incompatible with membership in the Social-Democratic Party. p. 47

- ³⁵ Reference is to *the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland*. The party was strongly influenced by opportunists, who adopted a social-chauvinist position in the First World War. The Right wing broke away from the party in the autumn of 1916 and founded its own organisation. The party majority led by Robert Grimm followed a Centrist, social-pacifist policy; the Left, internationalist, wing withdrew from the party in December 1920, and in 1921 merged with the Swiss Communist Party (now the Swiss Party of Labour) formed in 1919. p. 47

- ³⁶ *The Zimmerwald Left* was formed on Lenin's initiative at the International Socialist Conference in Zimmerwald in September 1915. The group consisted of representatives of eight organisations: the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee, Left Social-Democrats of Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Germany, the Polish Social-Democratic opposition and the Latvian Social-Democrats. Led by Lenin, it waged struggle against the Centrist majority at the Conference. The Zimmerwald Left stated that while remaining in the Zimmerwald association, it would continue to disseminate its own views and conduct independent work on an international scale. It elected a Bureau, which included Lenin, Zinoviev and Radek, and published its own organ, *Vorbote*, in German.

The Bolsheviks, the only ones to take a consistently internationalist position, were the leading force in the Zimmerwald Left. p. 48

- ³⁷ *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* (the Social-Democratic Labour Group)—an organisation of German Centrists (Kautskyans) founded in the spring of

1916 by Reichstag members who had broken away from the Social-Democratic Reichstag group. The Centrists advanced pacifist slogans but actually were in league with the social-chauvinists and fiercely attacked the Internationale group which waged struggle against the imperialist war and the imperialist government of Germany. Arbeitsgemeinschaft became the backbone of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany founded in April 1917. p. 48

- ³⁸ *Freie Jugend*—organ of the Swiss Social-Democratic youth organisation, published in Zurich from 1906 to February 1918. During the First World War (1914-18) it was affiliated with the Zimmerwald Left. p. 48

- ³⁹ *Pravda* (Truth)—a legal Bolshevik daily, published in St. Petersburg. Its first issue appeared on April 22 (May 5), 1912.

Between July and October 1917 *Pravda* was persecuted by the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government and repeatedly had to change its name, coming out as *Listok Pravdy*, *Proletary*, *Rabochy*, *Rabochy Put*. After the October Socialist Revolution, beginning with October 27 (November 9) the paper resumed its old name—*Pravda*. p. 51

- ⁴⁰ This refers to the agrarian reform which P. A. Stolypin, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, began to put into effect in 1906. The law of November 9 (22), 1906, aimed at abolishing communal land tenure, entitled the peasants to withdraw from the commune and to take up private farming. The well-to-do peasants who withdrew from the commune could obtain subsidies through the Peasant Bank to buy land. The Stolypin agrarian reform accelerated the process of differentiation in the countryside, creating, on the one hand, a section of the rich peasants, kulaks, and on the other, impoverishing and ruining the broad masses of the peasantry. Its aim was to create a bulwark for the tsarist regime in the countryside in the person of the kulaks. p. 52

- ⁴¹ *The agrarian programme of the "104"*—the land reform bill signed by 104 peasant deputies and submitted by the Trudovik members to the 13th sitting of the First Duma on May 23 (June 5), 1906. Its purpose was to "establish a system under which all the land, with its deposits and waters, would belong to the entire people and farm-lands would be allowed only to those tilling them by their own labour". Partial compensation was to be paid for the alienated lands. Allotments and small holdings were to remain for some time the property of the owner, but were eventually to become part of the national fund. The agrarian reform was to be implemented by the local peasant committees elected by universal, direct and equal suffrage and by secret ballot. p. 52

- ⁴² *The Fabian Society*—an English reformist organisation founded in 1884. The membership of the Fabian Society consisted chiefly of bourgeois intellectuals—scholars, writers and politicians (Sydney and Beatrice Webb, Ramsay MacDonald, Bernard Shaw and others). They denied the need for the proletariat's class struggle and a socialist

revolution, and maintained that the transition from capitalism to socialism could be brought about by means of minor and gradual reforms.

The British Labour Party was founded in 1900 as the Labour Representation Committee, an association of trade unions, socialist organisations and groups, to have Labour representatives elected to Parliament. In 1906 the Committee assumed the name of the Labour Party, which at first was composed chiefly of workers, but later acquired a strong petty-bourgeois element. The party has always been opportunist in ideology and tactics, and from its very inception its leaders pursued a policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. During the First World War (1914-18) they took a social-chauvinist stand. p. 52

- ⁴³ *The Spartacus group* (the Internationale group)—a revolutionary organisation of German Left-wing Social-Democrats formed at the beginning of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, Julian Marchlewski, Leo Jogiches (Tyszka) and Wilhelm Pieck. First it was called the Internationale group (by the name of the journal published by them). In 1916 it began the illegal publication and circulation of *Political Letters*, which were signed "Spartacus", and in view of this it assumed the name of Spartacus group.

They carried on revolutionary propaganda in the masses, organised anti-war manifestations, directed strikes and exposed the imperialist character of the First World War and the treachery of the opportunist leaders of Social-Democracy. But the Spartacus group made some grave errors on questions of theory and policy. Lenin repeatedly criticised these errors and helped the group to rectify its line.

From April 1917 the Spartacus group was affiliated with the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, but remained organisationally independent. During the November 1918 revolution in Germany they broke with the Independents and formed the Spartacusbund, issuing their own programme on December 14, 1918. At their Constituent Congress, December 30, 1918-January 1, 1919, they set up the Communist Party of Germany. p. 53

- ⁴⁴ *Arbeiterpolitik*—a weekly journal, organ of the Bremen Left Radical group, which in 1919 joined the Communist Party of Germany. It was published in Bremen from 1916 to 1919. *Arbeiterpolitik* waged struggle against social-chauvinism in the German and international working-class movement. p. 53

- ⁴⁵ Published in *Pravda* No. 26, for April 7, 1917, over the signature N. Lenin, this article contains Lenin's famous April Theses.

Lenin read the Theses at two meetings held at the Taurida Palace on April 4 (17), 1917—at a meeting of Bolsheviks and at a joint meeting of Bolshevik and Menshevik delegates to the All-Russia Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. p. 56

- ⁴⁶ *Yedinstvo* (Unity)—a newspaper, organ of the extreme Right group of Menshevik defencists, led by G. V. Plekhanov; it was published in Petrograd from May 1914 to January 1918.

The newspaper called for support of the Provisional Government, for a coalition with the bourgeoisie and carried on a fierce struggle against the Bolsheviks, frequently resorting to methods of the gutter press. p. 59

- ⁴⁷ *Russkaya Volya* (Russian Freedom)—a bourgeois daily founded by the Minister for the Interior A. D. Protopopov and run by the big banks; was published in Petrograd from December 1916 to October 1917. p. 60

- ⁴⁸ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, pp. 21-22, 516-45; Vol. II, Moscow, 1962, pp. 42, 463-64; Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 357. p. 61

- ⁴⁹ See Engels's letter to F. A. Sorge dated November 29, 1886 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*. Moscow, 1955, pp. 469-73). p. 63

- ⁵⁰ Lenin quotes the words of Mephistopheles from Goethe's tragedy *Faust*. Erster Teil, Studierzimmer. p. 65

- ⁵¹ The expression "His Majesty's Opposition" belongs to P. N. Milyukov, the leader of the Cadet Party. In a speech made at a luncheon given by the Lord Mayor of London on June 19 (July 2), 1909, Milyukov said: "So long as there is a legislative chamber in Russia which controls the budget, the Russian Opposition will remain the Opposition of His Majesty, not to His Majesty" (*Rech* No. 167, June 21 [July 4], 1909). p. 68

- ⁵² "No Tsar, but a workers' government"—an anti-Bolshevik slogan put forward in 1905 by Parvus. This slogan became one of the basic postulates of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution—a revolution without the peasantry, which was counterposed to Lenin's theory of the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat in the popular movement. p. 68

- ⁵³ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, pp. 516-45, 478-85. p. 69

- ⁵⁴ Reference is to G. V. Plekhanov's pamphlet *Anarchism and Socialism*, first published in German in Berlin, 1894. p. 70

- ⁵⁵ Reference is to the Mensheviks. p. 77

- ⁵⁶ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 290-96. p. 91

- ⁵⁷ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, pp. 522-23. p. 92

- ⁵⁸ See p. 237 of this book. p. 95

- ⁵⁹ Reference is to the *Second International*, an international association of socialist parties founded in 1889. When the First World War broke out in 1914 the leaders of the Second International betrayed socialism and sided with their imperialist governments, which led to the collapse of the International. p. 98

- ⁶⁰ *Manilovism*—from the name Manilov, a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, whose name has become a synonym for an idle, weak-willed dreamer and gas-bag. p. 98
- ⁶¹ *Minoritaires* or *Longuetists*—the Centrist minority of the French Socialist Party, formed in 1915 and led by Jean Longuet. During the First World War they took a social-pacifist stand. At the congress of the French Socialist Party held in Tours in December 1920, where the Left wing won ascendancy, the Longuetists split, together with the open reformists, away from the party and joined the so-called Two-and-a-Half International, returning after its collapse to the Second International. p. 100
- ⁶² *The Independent Labour Party*—a reformist organisation founded by the leaders of the "new trade unions" in 1893 during the active strike movement and the mounting drive of the British working class for independence from the bourgeois parties. The membership of the I.L.P. consisted of the "new trade unionists" and members of some of the old trade unions, as well as intellectuals and petty bourgeois holding Fabian views. The leaders of the party were James Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. From the day it was founded the party took a bourgeois-reformist stand, devoting its chief attention to parliamentary forms of struggle and parliamentary deals with the Liberal Party.
- On the outbreak of the imperialist war the I.L.P. issued a manifesto against the war, but shortly afterwards adopted a social-chauvinist stand. p. 100
- ⁶³ *The British Socialist Party* was founded in 1911 in Manchester as a result of the amalgamation of the Social-Democratic Party with other socialist groups. The B.S.P. carried on propaganda in the spirit of Marxist ideas, it was "not opportunist and was really independent of the Liberals" (see V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 273). During the First World War a sharp struggle developed in the party between the internationalist trend (William Gallacher, Albert Inkpin, John MacLean, Theodore Rothstein and others) and the social-chauvinist trend headed by Hyndman. The annual conference of the B.S.P. held at Salford in April 1916 condemned the social-chauvinist stand taken by Hyndman and his adherents, and they left the party.
- The British Socialist Party, together with the Communist Unity Group, played a leading role in the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain. At the First (Unity) Congress held in 1920 the overwhelming majority of the B.S.P. local organisations joined the Communist Party. p. 100
- ⁶⁴ *Demain*—a literary, publicist and political monthly founded by the French internationalist writer and journalist Henri Guilbeaux; was published from January 1916 to 1919. p. 102
- ⁶⁵ *The Trade Unionist*—a newspaper, organ of English trade unions, published in London from November 1915 to November 1916. p. 102
- ⁶⁶ *The Socialist Labour Party of America* was founded in 1876 at the

unity congress held in Philadelphia by the amalgamation of the American sections of the First International and other socialist organisations. In the nineties the leadership of the party was assumed by the Left wing, headed by De Leon. During the First World War the S.L.P. leaned towards internationalism. After the October Socialist Revolution in Russia the revolutionary section of the Socialist Labour Party participated in founding the Communist Party of America.
p. 102

- ⁶⁷ *The Socialist Party of America* was formed at the congress in Indianapolis in 1901 as a result of the amalgamation of several socialist groups. During the First World War three trends appeared in the Socialist Party: the social-chauvinists, who supported the government's imperialist policy, the Centrists, who opposed the imperialist war only in words, and the revolutionary minority (Charles Ruthenberg, William Foster, William Haywood and others), who took an internationalist stand and fought against the war.

In 1919 a split occurred in the Socialist Party. The breakaway Left wing took the lead in forming the Communist Party of America, of which it was the core.
p. 102

- ⁶⁸ *The Internationalist*—a weekly, organ of the Left wing of the socialists; it was published by the League of Socialist Propaganda in Boston, U.S.A., early in 1917.
p. 102

- ⁶⁹ *Tribunists*—members of the Social-Democratic Party of Holland, whose mouthpiece was the newspaper *De Tribune*. The Tribunists were not a consistently revolutionary party, but they represented the Left wing of the Dutch labour movement, and during the First World War (1914-18) they adopted, in effect, an internationalist stand.

In 1918 the Tribunists formed the Communist Party of Holland.

De Tribune—a newspaper founded in 1907 by the Left wing of the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Holland. In 1909, after the expulsion of the Leftists, who formed the Social-Democratic Party of Holland, the paper became the organ of this party; from 1918 it was the organ of the Communist Party of Holland and appeared under this name until 1940.
p. 102

- ⁷⁰ *The Party of the Young or the Left*—the name given by Lenin to the Left trend in Swedish Social-Democracy. During the First World War the Left took an internationalist stand and aligned themselves with the Zimmerwald Left. In May 1917 they formed the Left Social-Democratic Party of Sweden. The revolutionary wing of the party formed the Communist Party of Sweden in 1921.
p. 102

- ⁷¹ *Tesnyaki*—the revolutionary Social-Democratic Labour Party of Bulgaria, founded in 1903, after the split in the Social-Democratic Party. The founder and leader of the party was D. Blagoev and subsequently its leaders were Blagoev's disciples G. Dimitrov, V. Kolarov and others. In 1914-18 the Tesnyaki came out against the imperialist war. In 1919 they joined the Communist International and founded

- the Communist Party of Bulgaria, which was later reorganised into the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists). p. 102
- ⁷² *Regional Executive* and *Chief Executive*—executive bodies of the Social-Democrats of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. p. 102
- ⁷³ Reference is to the International Socialist Conference held in Zimmerwald from September 5 to 8, 1915. p. 104
- ⁷⁴ Reference is to the newspaper *Volksstimme*, organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, published in Chemnitz from January 1891 to February 1933.
Die Glocke—a fortnightly journal published in Munich and subsequently in Berlin from 1915 to 1925 by the social-chauvinist Parvus (A. L. Gelfand), member of the German Social-Democratic Party. p. 104
- ⁷⁵ Reference is to the appeal "To the Peoples Suffering Ruination and Death", adopted at the Second International Conference held in Kienthal (Switzerland) in 1916.
 V. I. Lenin regarded the decisions of the Kienthal Conference as a step forward in uniting the internationalists for the struggle against the imperialist war. p. 104
- ⁷⁶ *Die Jugendinternationale* (Youth International)—organ of the International Union of Socialist Youth Organisations associated with the Zimmerwald Left; was published in Zurich from September 1915 to May 1918. p. 105
- ⁷⁷ *Rabochaya Gazeta* (Workers' Newspaper)—a Menshevik daily, published in Petrograd from March to November 1917. p. 107
- ⁷⁸ On April 7 (20), 1917; the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, by a majority of 21 votes against 14, adopted a decision in favour of supporting the so-called Liberty Loan, issued by the Provisional Government to finance the imperialist war. The Bolshevik members of the Executive Committee opposed this loan, declaring that its support was tantamount to voting the war credits. They moved a resolution containing a detailed statement of their position. p. 107
- ⁷⁹ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 9-30, and F. Engels "Preface to *Internationales aus dem Volksstaat* (1871-1875)". p. 108
- ⁸⁰ This was quoted by Marx and Engels in their *German Ideology* as an expression from Heine. p. 110
- ⁸¹ The coalition Provisional Government was formed as a result of the crisis caused by a Note Milyukov, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, had sent to the Allied governments on April 18 (May 1), 1917. It confirmed the Provisional Government's readiness to honour all the treaties the tsarist government had concluded with the Allied imperialist powers—Britain and France. Owing to spontaneous demonstrations of protest, which on April 20 and 21 (May 3 and 4)

turned into a powerful movement of the workers and soldiers (see pp. 138-40, 143-45 and 149-54), the Provisional Government, to create the semblance of a change in policy, accepted the resignation of Foreign Minister Milyukov and War Minister Guchkov and asked the Petrograd Soviet to consent to the formation of a coalition government.

Despite its decision of March 1 (14) forbidding members of the Soviet to join the Provisional Government, the Executive Committee, at an emergency meeting held late on May 1 (14), accepted the proposal of the Provisional Government.

Following the negotiations, agreement was reached on May 5 (18) on the distribution of posts in the new government. The cabinet was to consist of five socialist ministers and ten capitalist ministers. (See also pp. 100-68, 175-77, 181-85, 278-80.) p. 112

- ⁸² *The Kornilov events*—a counter-revolutionary revolt of the bourgeoisie and the landowners in August 1917 headed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the tsarist general Kornilov. The plotters planned to take Petrograd, smash the Bolshevik Party, disperse the Soviets and set up a military dictatorship with a view to restoring the monarchy. Kerensky, the head of the Provisional Government, took part in the plot, but when the revolt started and he realised that he would be swept away together with Kornilov, he parted company with him and declared the general a rebel.

The revolt, which broke out on August 25 (September 7), 1917, was crushed by the workers and peasants led by the Bolshevik Party. Under the pressure of the masses, the Provisional Government was forced to order the arrest and prosecution of Kornilov and his accomplices on charges of organising the revolt. (See also pp. 362-64.) p. 112

- ⁸³ See Note 78. p. 119

- ⁸⁴ *The Mansion* of the Mariinsky Theatre ballerina Kshesinskaya in Petrograd; during the February revolution it was seized by the Armoured Division and placed by it at the disposal of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the Bolsheviks.

The Modern Circus—a building in Petrograd in which mass meetings were held in 1917. p. 125

- ⁸⁵ *Rech* (Speech)—a daily, central organ of the Cadet Party, published from February 1906 to October 26, 1917. p. 127

- ⁸⁶ *Dyelo Naroda* (People's Cause)—a daily newspaper, organ of the Centrist group of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, published in Petrograd from March 1917 to July 1918 and from October 1918 to March 1919. p. 127

- ⁸⁷ *The Allies meaning the Entente*.

The Entente—a bloc of imperialist powers—Britain, France and Russia—formed in 1907 and directed against the Triple Alliance—Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. It derived its name from *Entente Cordiale*, the agreement concluded between Great Britain

and France in 1904. During the First World War the U.S.A., Japan and other countries joined the Entente. p. 129

- ⁸⁸ Lenin used the word *Narodniks* to mean the three petty-bourgeois parties of a Narodnik trend: the Trudoviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Popular Socialists. p. 138

- ⁸⁹ *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life)—a daily newspaper, published in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918. It was founded on the initiative of a group of Menshevik internationalists, and writers. p. 141

- ⁹⁰ Reference is to the adventurist tactics of a small group of members of the St. Petersburg Party Committee (Bagdatyev and others), who, during the demonstration in April 1917, put forward the slogan of immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government in opposition to the policy of peaceful development of the revolution then pursued by the Party. The group was censured by the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks). p. 150

- ⁹¹ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 429-39. p. 165

- ⁹² *Izvestia* (News) of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—a daily, published from February 28 (March 13), 1917.

After the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets at which the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was elected, the newspaper became the organ of the C.E.C. and from August 1 (14), 1917 it appeared under the name of *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee and the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and from September 29 (October 12), of *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Throughout this time the newspaper was controlled by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

After the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets the composition of the editorial board was changed and the newspaper became the official organ of the Soviet government. From January 26, 1938 to this day it has been published as *Izvestia* of the Soviets of Deputies of the Working People. p. 172

- ⁹³ Lenin refers to the fact that representatives from the "socialist" parties of Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Popular Socialists entered the coalition Provisional Government, formed on May 5 (18), 1917. p. 186

- ⁹⁴ *The Declaration* referred to was issued on May 6 (19), 1917 by the first coalition Provisional Government. Paragraph 3 of this document read: "The Provisional Government will fight the economic dislocation with steadfast determination by systematically developing state and public control of production, transport, trade and the distribution of products, and will, where necessary, resort also to the organisation of production." p. 192

- ⁹⁵ See Clausewitz, *On War*, Vol. I. p. 194

- ⁹⁶ *l'Humanité*—a daily founded by Jean Jaurès in 1904 as the organ of the French Socialist Party. During the First World War (1914-18) it was controlled by the extreme Right wing of the party and followed a social-chauvinist line. In 1918-20 the paper came out against the imperialist policy of the French Government, which had sent its armed forces against the Soviet Republic. In December 1920, after the split in the French Socialist Party and the formation of the Communist Party of France, the newspaper became the latter's central organ. p. 198
- ⁹⁷ At the beginning of the First World War Germany occupied Belgium in violation of that country's neutrality in order to use her territory as a bridgehead for striking a decisive blow at France. The occupation continued till Germany's defeat in 1918. The occupation undermined the Belgian economy and disorganised the country's industry. p. 200
- ⁹⁸ *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Freedom)—a daily published by the Petrograd Regional Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party from March to October 1917. p. 202
- ⁹⁹ *The Third Republic in France*—a bourgeois republic in France established as a result of the revolution in September 1870. It existed till July 1940. p. 203
- ¹⁰⁰ *Dyen* (Day)—a bourgeois liberal daily, published in St. Petersburg from 1912 to October 1917. Among its contributors were Menshevik liquidators, who assumed complete control of the paper after the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution. p. 205
- ¹⁰¹ Reference is to the Constitutional-Democratic Party (see Note 2). p. 206
- ¹⁰² *The Civil List*—the part of the budget revenue in constitutional monarchies appropriated for the personal needs of the sovereign and the maintenance of his court. p. 207
- ¹⁰³ See Note 18. p. 215
- ¹⁰⁴ *The First All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies* was held in Petrograd from May 4 to 28 (May 17 to June 10), 1917. The chief organisers of the Congress were the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who greatly influenced the election of delegates in the localities and commanded a considerable majority at the Congress.
- A sharp struggle developed at the Congress between the Bolsheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries for the peasant masses, especially over the agrarian question, the main issue of the agenda. Lenin proposed in his speech and the resolution moved in the name of the Bolshevik delegates that the land should be recognised the property of the whole people and the landed estates should be immediately transferred to the peasants without compensation and without waiting for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

Lenin's speech made a deep impression on the peasant delegates.

However, the Socialist-Revolutionary leaders succeeded in having their resolutions accepted.

The decisions adopted by the Congress defended the interests of the rural bourgeoisie, the kulaks.

Lenin's speech at the Congress and those of the Bolsheviks were of great significance for the political education of the peasants. Lenin's speech on the agrarian question was issued as a pamphlet and was widely disseminated in the countryside and in the army. It played a major part in winning the working peasants over to the side of the Bolsheviks.

p. 221

¹⁰⁵ *The crown lands*—lands belonging to the tsarist family. p. 221

¹⁰⁶ *Soldatskaya Pravda* (Soldiers' Truth)—a Bolshevik daily, published in Petrograd from April 15 (28), 1917 to March 1918. p. 223

¹⁰⁷ *The Chief Land Committee* was set up by the Provisional Government in April 1917. The Committee was to prepare material for an agrarian reform.

Land committees were formed in the localities.

The formation of the Chief and local land committees was a political manoeuvre on the part of the Provisional Government designed to drag out the settlement of the land question for as long as possible.

p. 224

¹⁰⁸ Peasants moved from their households to other agricultural areas or towns in search of seasonal work. p. 238

¹⁰⁹ On May 17 (30), 1917 the Kronstadt Soviet passed a resolution abolishing the office of Government Commissar and vesting all power in the Kronstadt Soviet.

The bourgeois, S. R. and Menshevik press raised a hue and cry against the men of Kronstadt, declaring that Russia was on the verge of collapse and anarchy, that Kronstadt was seceding, and so on.

A delegation was sent first by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (Chkheidze, Gots and others) and then by the Provisional Government (Ministers Skobelev and Tsereteli) to settle the Kronstadt incident. The latter succeeded in getting a compromise decision passed through the Kronstadt Soviet, according to which the Commissar was to be elected by the Soviet and endorsed by the Provisional Government. In addition, a general political resolution was adopted by the Kronstadt Soviet in which it declared that it recognised the authority of the Provisional Government but that this "recognition does not, of course, exclude criticism and the desire that revolutionary democracy should create a new organisation of central authority by vesting all power in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies". The resolution ended with a strong protest against attempts to ascribe to the Kronstadt Bolsheviks "the intention of separating Kronstadt from Russia".

p. 243

¹¹⁰ *The Erfurt Programme*—the programme of the German Social-Democratic Party adopted at the congress in Erfurt in October 1891. The Erfurt Programme was a step forward in comparison with the Gotha

Programme (1875); it was based on the Marxist doctrine of the inevitable doom of the capitalist mode of production and its replacement by the socialist mode. It stressed the need for the working class to carry on a political struggle, pointed out the party's leading role in that struggle, and so on. The Erfurt Programme, however, contained serious concessions to opportunism. The chief defect of the Erfurt Programme, its cowardly concession to opportunism, was that it bypassed the dictatorship of the proletariat in silence. p. 244

¹¹¹ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 429-39. p. 245

¹¹² Reference is to the replies of the French and British governments to the declaration of the Provisional Government of March 27 (April 9), 1917, published in the newspapers on May 28 (June 10). Both notes expressed the hope that Russia would continue the war "to a victorious end". p. 247

¹¹³ *Novoye Uremya* (New Times)—a daily newspaper, published in St. Petersburg from 1868 to October 1917 by different parties; repeatedly changed its political trend. From 1905 it was the organ of the Black Hundreds. p. 252

¹¹⁴ *Birzheviye Uedomosti* (Stock-Exchange Recorder)—a bourgeois newspaper founded in 1880 for commercial purposes and published to October 1917. Its abbreviated name *Birzhevka* became a generic term for the unscrupulous and venal bourgeois press. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution it conducted a hounding campaign against the Bolshevik Party and V. I. Lenin. p. 252

¹¹⁵ *The First All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies* was held in Petrograd from June 3 to 24 (June 16 to July 7), 1917.

The majority was made up of the bloc of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Lenin spoke on the attitude to the Provisional Government and the war. The Mensheviks and S.R.s in their speeches and resolutions urged support for the Provisional Government, and called for the tightening up of discipline in the army and the launching of an offensive at the front. They strongly objected to all power being vested in the Soviets. Tsereteli declared that there was no political party in Russia that could take over all power. In reply to this Lenin declared in the name of the Bolsheviks that there was such a party, and in his speech from the rostrum said that the Bolshevik Party was ready "to take full power at any moment".

The Bolsheviks exposed the imperialist character of the Provisional Government's policy and the conciliatory tactics of the Mensheviks and S.R.s and demanded that all power be transferred to the Soviets. The resolutions of the S.R. and Menshevik majority declared in favour of the Provisional Government and its preparations for an offensive at the front and against the transfer of power to the Soviets. The Congress elected the Central Executive Commit-

tee, which was predominantly made up of the S.R.s and Mensheviks and functioned to the Second Congress of the Soviets.

Appreciating the significance of the Congress Lenin wrote that it showed the withdrawal of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders from the revolution "clearer than ever". (See p. 278 of this book.) p. 263

- ¹¹⁶ Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 469. p. 266

- ¹¹⁷ Reference is to the resolutions of the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) held in Petrograd from April 24 to 29 (May 7-12), 1917. p. 267

- ¹¹⁸ Reference is to the First All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies held from May 4 to 28 (May 17-June 10), 1917 (see Note 104), which passed a resolution on the future political system in Russia. p. 269

- ¹¹⁹ Lenin refers to Bazarov's article "What Is Next?" dealing with the question of how to end the war. The article was published in the newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* No. 40, on June 4 (17), 1917. Bazarov campaigned for the continuation of a separate war under the pretence of saving the revolution. p. 270

- ¹²⁰ Lenin refers to the issue by the British Government of a passport to Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the British Independent Party, who was invited to Russia by the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The trip did not take place because the British Seamen's Union refused to man the ship on which MacDonald was to sail. p. 271

- ¹²¹ *The Manifesto of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies "To the Peoples of the World"* was adopted on March 14 (27), 1917 by the S.R. and Menshevik majority of the Soviet under pressure from the revolutionary people who insisted on ending the war, and published in *Pravda* and *Izvestia* of the Petrograd Soviet on the next day.

The Manifesto contained solemn phrases about peace and called up on the peoples of the belligerent countries to take "concerted decisive action in favour of peace". It did not, however, expose the predatory nature of the war, did not propose any practical measures for the attainment of peace, and thus, essentially, justified the continuation of the imperialist war by the bourgeois Provisional Government. p. 271

- ¹²² In June 1917 Italy occupied Albania and proclaimed her an independent state under Italy's virtual protectorate.

In Greece a coup d'état was carried out under pressure from Britain and France. By launching an economic blockade that caused a terrible famine and by the occupation of a number of Greek provinces by Anglo-French troops, the Allies forced King Constantine to abdicate, and put Venizelos, their adherent, in power. Greece was dragged into the war on the side of the Entente, contrary to the will of the vast majority of her population.

During the war, Persia (Iran) was occupied by British and Russian troops. Early in 1917 the north of the country was occupied by Russian and the south by British troops.

The diplomats of the Provisional Government supported all these imperialist acts of violence. p. 272

- ¹²³ Reference is to the declaration which the bureau of the Bolshevik group and the bureau of the united internationalist Social-Democrats made at the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets. They demanded that the Congress primarily discuss the question of the offensive at the front being prepared by the Provisional Government. p. 272

- ¹²⁴ Reference is to the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets banning the demonstration fixed by the Bolshevik Central Committee for June 10 (23), 1917.

Early in June tension grew in Petrograd. The continuation of the war by the Provisional Government, preparations for an offensive at the front, and food shortages, all caused discontent and indignation among the workers and soldiers.

To ward off provocation and unnecessary loss of lives, a joint meeting of the Central and Petrograd Committees, the Military Organisation and district delegates from the workers and delegates from troop units, held on June 8 (21), carried Lenin's motion to hold a peaceful demonstration on June 10 (23).

The Bolshevik Central Committee's decision to hold a demonstration found a ready response in the masses and alarmed the government, as well as the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who decided to foil the demonstration. On the evening of June 9 (22), the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, led by them, passed a resolution banning all street demonstrations for three days.

On a motion by Lenin, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, not wishing to go against the Congress decision, resolved late on June 9 to call off the demonstration. Members of the Central and Petrograd Committees and Party workers were sent to factories and barracks to dissuade the workers and soldiers from demonstrating. As a result of their explanatory work, the workers and soldiers agreed that it would be unwise to hold the demonstration at that time. Two days later the S.R. and Menshevik leadership of the Congress of Soviets passed a decision that a demonstration should be held on June 18 (July 1)—the day when the Russian troops were to take the offensive—as proof of the people's confidence in the Provisional Government.

Under Lenin's personal leadership, the Central and Petrograd Committees took steps to make the demonstration reflect the true sentiments of the people. On June 18 (July 1) some 500,000 Petrograd workers and soldiers went into the streets to take part in the demonstration. Most of the demonstrators carried Bolshevik revolutionary slogans.

Lenin gave an appraisal of the June demonstration in the articles "The Eighteenth of June" and "Three Crises". (See pp. 293-95 and 307-11). p. 281

- ¹²⁵ *Black Hundreds*—monarchist gangs formed by the tsarist police to fight the revolutionary movement. They assassinated revolutionaries, attacked progressive intellectuals and organised anti-Jewish pogroms. p. 281
- ¹²⁶ Reference is to the speech made by the Menshevik Tsereteli, member of the Provisional Government, on June 11 (24), 1917, at the joint meeting of the Presidium of the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Executive Committee of the Congress of Peasants' Deputies, and the bureaus of all the Congress parties. The meeting was arranged by the S.R. and Menshevik leaders who wanted to use their majority at the meeting to strike a blow at the Bolshevik Party. In his speech, held in a hysterical key, Tsereteli said that the demonstration the Bolsheviks had scheduled for June 10 (23) was "a conspiracy to overthrow the government and seize power". The whole speech was slanderous and counter-revolutionary. The Bolsheviks left the meeting in protest against the slanders spread by Tsereteli and other S.R. and Menshevik leaders. Lenin, who had opposed the meeting, did not attend. p. 281
- ¹²⁷ Reference is to *Vorwärts*, the central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, published from 1876 to 1933. p. 285
- ¹²⁸ See Note 51. p. 303
- ¹²⁹ *Listok Pravdy*—the name under which the legal Bolshevik daily newspaper *Pravda* appeared on July 6 (19), 1917. In the early hours of July 5 (18) the *Pravda's* premises had been wrecked by the military cadets and Cossacks. p. 307
- ¹³⁰ Reference is to the mass protest demonstrations that took place in Petrograd on July 3-4 (16-17), 1917. They were held in opposition to the Provisional Government which had ordered the troops to launch an obviously hopeless offensive. When it ended in failure, soldiers, sailors and workers took to the streets. The demonstration threatened to develop into an insurrection against the Provisional Government.
- The Bolshevik Party was then against armed action because it considered that a revolutionary crisis had not yet matured in the country. The Central Committee meeting held at 4 p.m., on July 3 (16), resolved to refrain from action. A similar resolution was adopted by the Bolsheviks' Second Petrograd City Conference, which took place at the same time. Conference delegates went to the city factories and districts to restrain the masses from action. But it was too late, action had already begun and could not be stopped.
- In view of the mood of the masses, the Central Committee, meeting in joint session with the Petrograd Committee and the Military Organisation, resolved late on the evening of July 3 (16) to join in the demonstration in order to lend it a peaceful and organised character.
- Over 500,000 people took part in the demonstration of July 4 (17).

They carried Bolshevik slogans—"All Power to the Soviets" and others. They demanded that the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets take power into its hands. But the S.R. and Menshevik leaders refused to do so. With the knowledge and consent of the Menshevik and S.R. Central Executive Committee, the Provisional Government sent military cadets and Cossacks to break up the peaceful demonstration. The troops opened fire.

A meeting of the Central and Petrograd Committees, held late on July 4 under Lenin's guidance, adopted a decision on stopping the demonstration in an organised way. The Mensheviks and S.R.s to all intents and purposes aided and abetted the counter-revolutionary butchery. They joined the bourgeoisie in its attacks on the Bolshevik Party. *Pravda*, *Soldatskaya Pravda* and other Bolshevik papers were closed down by the Provisional Government and the Trud printing shop was wrecked. The workers were disarmed and arrests, house searches and riots were begun.

After the July events power in the country was fully taken over by the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government. The Soviets became an impotent appendage to it. p. 307

- ¹³¹ *Menshevik internationalists*—a small group in the Menshevik Party, who adopted an inconsistently internationalist stand during the First World War. p. 309

- ¹³² The theses "The Political Situation" written by Lenin on July 10 (23), 1917 defined the new tactical line of the Bolshevik Party in the changed political situation following the shooting of the demonstration of workers and soldiers on July 4 (17) and the transfer of all power to the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government. The theses were discussed at a meeting of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) with representatives from the Petrograd Party Committee, the Military Organisation under the Bolshevik C. C., the Moscow Regional Bureau, the Moscow Party Committee and the Moscow Regional Committee, held on July 13-14 (26-27), 1917. p. 312

- ¹³³ After the events of July 3-5, all power was taken over by the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government. (See pp. 307-11) p. 312

- ¹³⁴ See Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1962, p. 319). p. 319

- ¹³⁵ *Military cadets*—pupils of military officers' schools in tsarist Russia. p. 319

- ¹³⁶ *Zhivoye Slovo* (Living Word)—a daily rag of Black-Hundred leaning, published in Petrograd from 1916 to October 1917. It carried on a vicious smear campaign against the Bolsheviks. p. 320

- ¹³⁷ See Note 104. p. 329

- ¹³⁸ *Uolya Naroda* (People's Will)—a daily newspaper, organ of the Right wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; was published in Petrograd from April 29, 1917. It was closed down in November 1917. It later

reappeared under other names, and was finally suppressed in February 1918. p. 330

- ¹³⁹ Lenin is referring to the Frankfurt Parliament, a national assembly, which was convened in Germany after the March revolution and went into session in May 1848. Its main object was to put an end to political disunity and work out an all-German constitution. But owing to the cowardice and vacillation of the liberal majority of the National Assembly and the irresolution and inconsistency of the petty-bourgeois Left wing, the assembly did not take supreme power into its hands and failed to adopt a resolute stand on the main issues of the 1848-49 German revolution. In June 1849 it was dissolved. p. 331

- ¹⁴⁰ *Convention*—a supreme legislative assembly in France established during the French bourgeois revolution of the end of the 18th century. It existed from September 20, 1792 to October 26, 1795. p. 331

- ¹⁴¹ Reference is to Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, pp. 243-44). p. 332

- ¹⁴² See Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, p. 336). p. 333

- ¹⁴³ See Frederick Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Moscow, 1956. p. 334

- ¹⁴⁴ *Pontius Pilate*—Roman procurator of Judea (26-36 A. D.). According to the Gospel he delivered Jesus to be crucified while washing his hands to show that it was not he but the Jewish priests who wanted his death. p. 337

- ¹⁴⁵ *Canossa*—a castle in Northern Italy. In 1077 the German Emperor Henry IV, after his defeat in a war against Pope Gregory VII, had to do penance by standing for three days, clad in sack-cloth, in front of the castle gates and begging to be admitted to the presence of Pope Gregory VII, in order to have his excommunication lifted and to be reinstated as emperor. Hence the expression "to go to Canossa". p. 340

- ¹⁴⁶ Reference is to the *State Conference* planned by the Provisional Government to rally the counter-revolutionary forces and crush the revolution. Afraid of Petrograd's revolutionary workers, the bourgeoisie decided to convene the conference in Moscow.

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party called on the Party organisations to expose the conference as an organ of the bourgeoisie's conspiracy against the revolution, as well as the role of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported its convocation and concealed its true nature.

The conference was held in Moscow on August 12-15 (25-28), 1917. It was attended by representatives of the landowners and the bourgeoisie, generals, officers, former members of the Duma, Cadet leaders and Menshevik and S.R. delegates from the Soviets and some trade union organisations. Generals Kornilov and Kaledin, and others

advanced a programme for crushing the revolution. They demanded the abolition of the Soviets and public organisations in the army, the reintroduction of capital punishment at the front, and the continuation of the war to a victorious end.

The Bolshevik Central Committee urged the workers, soldiers and peasants to join in a protest action against the conference. The strike organised by decision of the Moscow Party Committee on August 12 (25) involved over 400,000 people. Protest meetings and strikes also took place in several other cities. p. 340

- ¹⁴⁷ Lenin refers to the coalition Provisional Government formed on July 24 (August 6), 1917. It included A. F. Kerensky, Premier and War and Naval Minister (S.R.); N. V. Nekrasov, Deputy Premier and Minister for Finance (Cadet); N. D. Avksentyev, Minister for the Interior (S.R.), and others. The cabinet was made up of Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Popular Socialists and non-party people who were close to the Cadets. The government was controlled by the Cadets. p. 342

- ¹⁴⁸ The declaration issued by the Provisional Government on July 8 (21), 1917 contained a number of demagogic promises which the Provisional Government hoped would pacify the masses after the July events. The government promised to hold elections to the Constituent Assembly on the appointed date, September 17 (30), guarantee the early introduction of local—urban and Zemstvo—self-government and promised to abolish the social estates, to take steps to combat the economic dislocation, and to draft legislation on the eight-hour day, labour protection and social insurance, to draft a land reform and to submit it for consideration to the Constituent Assembly. However, not a single one of these promises was kept. p. 342

- ¹⁴⁹ On July 12 (25) the Provisional Government introduced capital punishment at the front. The divisional "military revolutionary tribunals" that were set up passed sentences which became effective immediately and were executed without delay. p. 347

- ¹⁵⁰ See Note 109. p. 355

- ¹⁵¹ See Note 82. p. 360

- ¹⁵² See Friedrich Engels, "Flüchtlingsliteratur. II. Programm der blanquistischen Kommune-Flüchtlinge" (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, Berlin, 1962, S. 528-35). p. 365

- ¹⁵³ See Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 553. p. 365

- ¹⁵⁴ See Note 115. p. 373

- ¹⁵⁵ Reference is to the Peasants' Mandate on Land drafted on the basis of 242 local peasants' mandates by the editors of *Izvestia Userossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov*.

Izvestia Userossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov (News of the All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies)—a daily, the official

organ of the All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, published in Petrograd from May 9 (22) to December 1917. It expressed the views of the Right wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. p. 385

- ¹⁵⁶ *Russkoye Slovo* (Russian Word)—a daily published in Moscow from 1895 to November 1917. Ostensibly independent, it adopted a moderately liberal attitude in the interests of the Russian bourgeoisie. In 1917 the paper supported the bourgeois Provisional Government and bitterly attacked Lenin and the Bolshevik Party.

In November 1917 it was closed down for publishing slanderous anti-Soviet reports. p. 388

- ¹⁵⁷ The letters "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power" and "Marxism and Insurrection" were discussed by the Central Committee on September 15 (28), 1917, when it was decided to call a meeting shortly to discuss tactics. Kamenev, opposing the Party's course towards a socialist revolution, moved a resolution aimed against Lenin's proposals to organise an armed uprising. The Central Committee rejected Kamenev's motion. p. 390

- ¹⁵⁸ Reference is to Petrograd and Moscow. p. 390

- ¹⁵⁹ On May 6 the composition of the first coalition Provisional Government was announced. See Note 81.

On August 31 the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies passed a Bolshevik resolution calling for the establishment of a Soviet government.

September 12—the date set by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, both dominated by Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, for the convocation of a Democratic Conference. p. 390

- ¹⁶⁰ *The All-Russia Democratic Conference* was called by the Central Executive Committee, dominated by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, to decide on the question of state power. It was first set for September 12 (25), and later postponed and held on September 14-22 (September 27-October 5), in Petrograd. The Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders did their utmost to reduce the number of workers' and peasants' delegates and increase that of the delegates of various petty-bourgeois and bourgeois organisations, thereby securing a majority. The Bolsheviks attended the conference in order to expose the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The Democratic Conference adopted a resolution on the establishment of a Pre-parliament (Provisional Council of the Republic). According to the Provisional Government's ordinance, the Pre-parliament was to be a consultative body under the government.

Lenin criticised the Bolshevik tactics with regard to the Democratic Conference: he categorically demanded that the Bolsheviks should withdraw from the Pre-parliament and concentrate on preparing for the insurrection. The Central Committee discussed Lenin's propos-

al and despite the resistance of Kamenev, Rykov and other capitulators adopted a resolution that the Bolsheviks should withdraw from the Pre-parliament. On October 7 (20), the opening day of the Pre-parliament, the Bolsheviks read out a declaration and walked out. p. 390

¹⁶¹ See Engels's *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*. p. 392

¹⁶² These words refer to the opportunists, who considered the parliamentary system all-powerful and parliamentary action the main and only form of political struggle in all conditions. p. 396

¹⁶³ *The Alexandrinsky Theatre* in Petrograd was the place where the Democratic Conference was convened.

The Peter and Paul Fortress in Petrograd served as a state prison for political opponents of the tsarist regime. It had a large arsenal and was an important strategic point. p. 398

¹⁶⁴ *The Savage Division* was formed during the First World War of 1914-18 from volunteer mountaineers of the Caucasus. General Kornilov attempted to use it as a shock force in his assault on revolutionary Petrograd. p. 398

¹⁶⁵ *Rabochy Put* (The Workers' Path)—the Central Organ of the Bolshevik Party, published daily from September to October 26 (November 8), 1917 in place of the newspaper *Pravda*, which was closed down by the Provisional Government. On October 27 (November 9) *Pravda* resumed publication under its original name. p. 400

¹⁶⁶ *The Bulygin Duma*—a consultative "representative body" which the tsarist government promised to convene in 1905. The draft law on the institution of a consultative Duma and the election law were worked out by a commission under the chairmanship of the Minister for the Interior Bulygin and published on August 6 (19), 1905. The Bolsheviks organised an active boycott of the Bulygin Duma. The government failed to convene the Duma: it was swept away by the general political strike in October 1905. p. 401

¹⁶⁷ Reference is to the *Third Duma* convened after the June 3 coup d'état. On June 3 (16), 1907 the tsar issued a manifesto dissolving the Second Duma and amending the electoral law. The new law considerably increased the representation of the landowners and the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, greatly reducing the already small number of seats for the workers and peasants. This act was a gross violation of the Manifesto of October 17, 1905 and the Fundamental Law of 1906, which made all government decrees subject to Duma approval. The Third Duma elected under the new law was a Black-Hundred and Octobrist Duma. p. 402

¹⁶⁸ *Tit Titych*—a rich merchant from Ostrovsky's comedy *Shouldering Another's Troubles*. Lenin applies this name to capitalist tycoons. p. 403

- ¹⁶⁹ *Calends*—first of the month in the Roman calendar. The Greeks had no calends, hence to postpone to *the Greek Calends* means to postpone till Doomsday. p. 405
- ¹⁷⁰ The reference is to the revolutionary action by German sailors in August 1917. The action was headed by a revolutionary sailors' organisation that had 4,000 members late in July 1917. Their leaders were seamen Max Reichpietsch and Albin Köbis. The revolutionary actions in the German fleet were cruelly suppressed. Reichpietsch and Köbis were shot and other active participants were sentenced to long terms of hard labour. p. 406
- ¹⁷¹ The reference is to the statement made by the officer Dubasov at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on September 21 (October 4), 1917. He had just returned from the front and declared: "Whatever you may say here, the soldiers will not fight". p. 410
- ¹⁷² *Russskiye Uedomosti* (Russian Recorder)—a daily, published in Moscow from 1863 to 1918, expressing the views of moderate liberal intellectuals. From 1905 the paper was an organ of the Right wing of the Cadet Party. p. 410
- ¹⁷³ Lenin refers to the all-Russia strike of railwaymen for higher wages. It started on the night of September 23 (October 6), 1917 and ended on the night of September 26 (October 9), 1917, when the Provisional Government satisfied some of the railwaymen's demands. p. 411
- ¹⁷⁴ The reference is to the attitude adopted by Kamenev, Zinoviev, Trotsky and their followers. Kamenev and Zinoviev opposed Lenin's plan for an armed uprising, declaring that the working class of Russia was unable to carry out a socialist revolution. They slid down to the Menshevik position in favour of a bourgeois republic. Trotsky insisted on a postponement of the uprising until the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which would mean frustrating the insurrection because it would give the Provisional Government the opportunity to concentrate its forces by the opening day of the Congress and crush the uprising. p. 412
- ¹⁷⁵ See p. 266 of this book. p. 420
- ¹⁷⁶ Lenin is quoting from Nekrasov's poem "Blessed Is the Gentle Poet". p. 425
- ¹⁷⁷ *Znamya Truda* (The Banner of Labour)—a daily, the organ of the Petrograd Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; was published from August 1917 to July 1918. p. 427
- ¹⁷⁸ *Struvism*—a liberal bourgeois distortion of Marxism, named after P. B. Struve, the chief representative of "legal" Marxism in Russia. "Legal" Marxism arose as a socio-political trend among the liberal bourgeois intelligentsia of Russia in the 1890s. "Legal" Marxists led by Struve tried to make use of Marxism in the interests of the bourgeoisie. Lenin pointed out that Struvism took from Marxism what

was acceptable to the liberal bourgeoisie and cast aside the living soul of Marxism, its revolutionary doctrine of the inevitable doom of capitalism, of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. p. 435

179 For *Tit Titych* see Note 168.

Sedan—town in France where the French army was routed by the Prussians in the Franco-Prussian War, on September 1-2, 1870. More than 100,000 French soldiers, together with Emperor Napoleon III, were taken prisoner. p. 437

180 *Junkers*—landowning nobility in Prussia. p. 438

181 See Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1955, p. 318. p. 449

182 Reference is to Chekhov's *The Man in a Muffler*, portraying a limited philistine who is afraid of every innovation. p. 449

183 *Vendée*—a province in France, which was a hotbed of counter-revolution during the French bourgeois revolution of the end of the 18th century. The backward peasants of the Vendée, who were strongly influenced by the Catholic clergy, were a tool in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries in their fight against revolutionary France. p. 455

184 See Engels's letter to F. A. Sorge of February 22, 1888. p. 457

185 See Frederick Engels, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*. p. 463

186 "*Moderation and accuracy*"—philistine virtues of Molchalin, a character from Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe*. p. 463

187 Reference is to the following: *February 28 (March 13)*—date of the February bourgeois-democratic revolution; *September 30 (October 13)*—first tentative date set by the Provisional Government for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; *November 28 (December 11), 1917*—date of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. p. 467

188 A quotation from N. Sukhanov's article "Another Thunderbolt" published in the newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*.

From August 1917, Smolny Institute was the Headquarters of the Bolshevik groups of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. In October it became the seat of the Revolutionary Military Committee. p. 467

189 This letter was discussed by the Petrograd Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., under the chairmanship of M. I. Kalinin, on October 5 (18), 1917. Volodarsky and Lashevich opposed Lenin's proposal for an armed uprising. Lashevich said that the pace of developments should not be forced, and that it was necessary to wait for the congress of Soviets. They were rebuffed by Kalinin, Rahja, Lasis, and

others. The majority declared in favour of the armed insurrection proposed in Lenin's letter.

The letter was also discussed by a meeting of leading Party functionaries in the Moscow Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.). On October 7 (20), the Moscow Committee adopted a resolution on launching an immediate struggle for power. On October 10 (23), a city conference of Moscow Bolsheviks took a resolution declaring that only the overthrow of Kerensky's government and its replacement by a government of workers and peasants would make it possible to implement the following revolutionary measures: transfer the land to the peasants, offer a just peace to the nations and wage a resolute struggle against the economic dislocation. The conference authorised the Moscow Committee to take steps "to bring the revolutionary forces into a state of combat readiness". p. 468

- ¹⁹⁰ *Lieberdans*—an ironical nickname which stuck to the Mensheviks Lieber and Dan and their followers after the publication of Demyan Bedny's topical satire, entitled "Lieberdan", in the Bolshevik newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*. p. 468

- ¹⁹¹ *The Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region* was initially intended to take place in Helsingfors on October 8 (21), 1917. On October 5 (18) the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) decided to hold a congress in Petrograd on October 10 (23). It opened on October 11 (24) and closed on October 13 (26). The Menshevik group walked out when the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, dominated by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, adopted a decision to the effect that the Congress was not a plenipotentiary regional congress but a private conference of individual Soviets.

Lenin attached great importance to the Congress. On October 8 (21) he wrote his "Letter to the Bolshevik Comrades Attending the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region" (see pp. 477-83 of this book), which was discussed by the Bolshevik group of the Congress on the morning of October 11 (24). In its resolution on the current political situation, the Congress stressed that only an immediate transfer of all power to the Soviets in Petrograd and in all provinces could save the country and the revolution. The Congress adopted an appeal to the peasants, calling on them to support the proletariat in its struggle for power. p. 471

- ¹⁹² A resolution of the soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet dated September 6 (19), 1917 voiced a vigorous protest against the planned removal of the Provisional Government from Petrograd to Moscow. It said that if the Provisional Government was unable to defend Petrograd, its duty was either to conclude peace or make way to another government. p. 471

- ¹⁹³ See Frederick Engels, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*. (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 377.) p. 475

- ¹⁹⁴ Reference is to the large anti-war manifestations in Turin, Italy, in August 1917. Demonstrations against the food shortage broke out on August 21. The workers' strike begun on the following day turned into a general strike. Barricades were erected. The movement assumed a political, anti-war character. On August 23 Turin's suburbs were in the hands of the insurgents. The government moved army units against them and imposed martial law. The general strike was called off on August 27. p. 477
- ¹⁹⁵ The peasant movement in Tambov Gubernia in September 1917 assumed wide proportions; the peasants seized landed estates, destroyed and burned landowners' mansions and confiscated grain stocks. The Commander of the Moscow Military District sent military units to Tambov Gubernia to crush the peasant uprising and imposed martial law, but the peasants' revolutionary struggle for land continued to grow. p. 486
- ¹⁹⁶ The letter was written on the night of October 24 (November 6). That same night Lenin secretly arrived at Smolny and took over the leadership of the uprising. p. 505
- ¹⁹⁷ *The Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet* was set up on October 12 (25), 1917, on instructions of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party. Its members were drawn from the Central Committee, the Petrograd Committee, the Petrograd Soviet, factory committees, trade unions and military organisations. Under the leadership of the Central Committee and in close contact with the Bolshevik Military Organisation it took charge of the formation of Red Guard detachments and the arming of the workers. Its main task was to prepare the armed uprising in accordance with the Central Committee directives. Its leading core, the Revolutionary Military Centre, was formed by the C.C. on October 16 (29), 1917 and received daily directions from Lenin. p. 505
- ¹⁹⁸ The appeal was written by Lenin on behalf of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. p. 507

NAME INDEX

A

Adler, Friedrich (1879-1960)—Austrian Social-Democrat, a theoretician of so-called Austrian Marxism, which used Marxist phraseology to conceal its departure from the revolutionary essence of Marxism, the class struggle of the proletariat.

On October 21, 1916, he assassinated Count Stürgkh, the Austrian Prime Minister—103, 211-12, 285

Adler, Victor (1852-1918)—organiser and leader of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War adopted a Centrist stand, preached "class peace" and opposed the revolutionary actions of the working class—100

Alexeyev, Mikhail Uasilyevich (1857-1918)—tsarist general, monarchist and counter-revolutionary. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Supreme Commander-in-Chief and subsequently Chief of Staff of the

Supreme Commander-in-Chief Kerensky—376, 382

Alexinsky, Grigory Alexeyevich (b. 1879)—Social-Democrat at the beginning of his political career. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist position, contributed to a number of bourgeois newspapers. In 1917 joined Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo* group and took up a counter-revolutionary stand. In July 1917, jointly with the military intelligence service, forged documents slandering Lenin and the Bolsheviks—335, 339, 340, 464

Avilov, B. U. (1874-1938)—Russian Social-Democrat, journalist and statistician. In 1917 withdrew from the Bolshevik Party, contributed to the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*; subsequently joined the internationalist Social-Democrats—257-58

Avksentyev, Nikolai Dmitriyevich (1878-1943)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, member of its Central Committee;

adopted a social-chauvinist stand during the First World War. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Chairman of the Executive Committee of the All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies; Minister for the Interior in the second coalition Provisional Government headed by Kerensky; subsequently, Chairman of the counter-revolutionary Provisional Council of the Russian Republic (Pre-parliament)—342, 345, 423, 478, 485

Axelrod, Pavel Borisovich (1850-1928)—Menshevik leader. During the First World War adopted a Centrist stand; after the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, supported the bourgeois Provisional Government—48, 100

B

Bagration, Dmitry Petrovich, Prince (b. 1863)—tsarist general. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution commanded the Caucasian Savage Division, participated actively in the Kornilov revolt—376, 382

Bazarov, V. (Rudnev, Vladimir Alexandrovich) (1874-1939)—took part in the Social-Democratic movement as of 1896. In 1917 became an internationalist Menshevik, one of the editors of the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*; opposed the October Socialist Revolution—270, 445, 446-48

Bebel, August (1840-1913)—prominent figure in the German Social-Democratic Party and international working-class movement—116, 215

Berger, Victor Louis (1860-1929)—one of the organisers of the American Socialist Party. During the First World War held a pacifist position—99

Berkenheim, Alexander Moiseyevich (1880-1932)—Socialist-Revolutionary. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Chairman of the Moscow Food Supply Committee—423

Bernstein, Eduard (1850-1932)—leader of the extreme opportunist wing of the German Social-Democratic Party and the Second International, theoretician of revisionism and reformism. He declared that the main task of the working-class movement was to wage the struggle for reforms aimed at improving the economic condition of the workers under capitalism, and advanced the opportunist slogan "The aim is nothing, the movement everything". During the First World War adopted a Centrist stand and used internationalist phrases to cover up his social-chauvinism—393

Bethmann-Hollweg, Theobald (1856-1921)—German reactionary statesman; in 1909-17, as Reichschancellor of Germany, pursued a policy of suppressing the working-class movement and played an active role in unleashing the First World War. In July 1917 resigned and retired from politics—129, 169

Bissolati, Leonida (1857-1920)—one of the founders of the Italian Socialist Party and a leader of its extreme Right, reformist wing. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand, advocated Italy's participation in the war on the side of the Entente; in 1916-18 minister without portfolio—99

Blanc, Louis (1811-1882)—French petty-bourgeois socialist; did not regard the class contradictions under capitalism as irreconcilable, opposed the proletarian revolution and advocated conciliation with the bourgeoisie.

During the 1848 revolution entered the Provisional Government and pursued a policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie helping it to divert the workers from the revolutionary struggle. In 1871 was among the opponents of the Paris Commune—30, 32, 35, 68, 90, 279, 289, 291-92

Blanqui, Louis Auguste (1805-1871)—prominent French revolutionary and utopian communist, participated in uprisings and revolutions in Paris between 1830 and 1870 and headed several secret revolutionary societies. He spent over thirty-six years in prison. Preaching the seizure of power by a small group of revolutionary conspirators, he failed to appreciate the decisive role of the organisation of the masses for the revolutionary struggle. Although Marx and Lenin highly valued Blanqui's services to the cause of revolution, they sharply criticised him for his mistakes and

the fallacy of his conspiratory tactics—69, 78, 154, 165, 365, 393, 501

Bourderon, Albert (b. 1858)—French socialist, a Left-wing leader in the syndicalist movement. Took part in the Zimmerwald Conference, where he adopted a Centrist stand—102, 104

Branting, Karl Hjalmar (1860-1925)—one of the opportunist leaders of the Social-Democratic Party of Sweden and of the Second International. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand; in 1917 entered Eden's coalition Liberal-Socialist government, supported the military intervention against Soviet Russia—99

Breshko-Breshkovskaya, Yekaterina Konstantinovna (*Grand-mother*) (1844-1934)—one of the organisers and leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, belonged to its extreme Right wing. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution vigorously supported the bourgeois Provisional Government, advocated continuation of the imperialist war to "the victorious end"—403, 430, 444, 457-59, 460, 472, 479

Briand, Aristide (1862-1932)—French statesman and diplomat; a one-time member of the Socialist Party's Left wing. He was elected to Parliament in 1902 and became a reactionary bourgeois politician who openly evinced hostility to the working class; Prime Minister of France in 1913, 1915-17, and 1921-22—437

Buchanan, George William (1854-1924)—British diplomat; as British ambassador to Russia (1910-18) helped reactionary circles in their struggle against the revolution. In August 1917 supported the Kornilov counter-revolutionary revolt—17, 479

Bulygin, Alexander Georgievich (1851-1919)—big landowner and statesman in tsarist Russia, Minister for the Interior from January 1905. From February 1905, on the tsar's instructions directed the drafting of a Bill to convene a consultative Duma with a view to weakening the rising revolutionary tide. The Bulygin Duma, however, was not convened; it was swept away by the 1905 revolution—401-02, 404, 427, 452, 459

C

Carleson, Carl Natanel (1865-1929)—Swedish Left Social-Democrat. During the First World War adopted an internationalist stand. In 1916-17 edited the newspaper *Politiken*, organ of the Left opposition in the Social-Democratic Party of Sweden—102

Cavaignac, Louis Eugène (1802-1857)—French general, reactionary politician; War Minister from May 1848, following his election to the Constituent Assembly. From June 1848 headed the military dictatorship in France, cruelly suppressed the June uprising of the Paris workers—285, 289, 290-92, 312, 319, 321

Chaikovsky, Nikolai Vasilyevich

(1850-1926)—Narodnik; subsequently a Socialist-Revolutionary, Popular Socialist. During the First World War held a social-chauvinist stand. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, member of the C.C. of the United Labour Popular Socialist Party and of the Executive Committees of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies—423

Charles I, Hapsburg (1887-1922)—Emperor of Austria-Hungary (1916-18); abdicated following the outbreak of a revolution in Austria—155

Cherevanin, N. (Lipkin, Fyodor Andreyevich) (1868-1938)—Menshevik leader. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand. In 1917 one of the editors of *Rabochaya Gazeta*, central organ of the Mensheviks, and member of the Menshevik C.C.—126-28

Chernov, Viktor Mikhailovich (1876-1952)—one of the leaders and theoreticians of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. During the First World War held the social-chauvinist position concealing his views under cover of Left phrasology. From May to July 1917 Minister for Agriculture in the bourgeois Provisional Government, pursued a policy of severe repressive measures against the peasants who seized landed estates—124, 147, 175-77, 179, 183, 192, 228, 254, 259-61, 280, 285, 291, 299, 300, 304, 312, 313, 320, 321, 329, 340, 342-43, 348, 354, 356, 375-77, 395,

- 401-03, 430, 434, 452, 457, 494, 499
- Chkheidze, Nikolai Semyonovich* (1864-1926)—Menshevik leader. During the First World War held a Centrist stand. During the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution member of the Provisional Committee of the Duma, a defencist; Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the first convocation; actively supported the bourgeois Provisional Government—13, 14, 19, 20, 23, 25-30, 34-36, 48-50, 58-59, 65, 68, 71, 73, 78-79, 85, 87, 98, 100-01, 107, 134, 138, 147, 148
- Chkhenkeli, Akaky Ivanovich* (1874-1959)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik. During the First World War, a social-chauvinist. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution was representative of the bourgeois Provisional Government in Transcaucasia—13, 19
- Clausewitz, Karl* (1780-1831)—Prussian general, prominent bourgeois military strategist—194, 197

Content, Julian—editor-in-chief of the Paris weekly *Libertaire*. Early in March 1917 he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine for the publication and distribution of the proclamation "*Imposons la paix!*"—131

D

Dan (Gurvich), Fyodor Ivanovich (1871-1947)—Menshevik leader, social-chauvinist during

the First World War. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and of the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the first convocation; supported the bourgeois Provisional Government—320, 342, 434, 453

Danton, Georges Jacques (1759-1794)—leader of the French bourgeois revolution of the end of the 18th century, a lawyer by profession. A talented speaker, he enjoyed great popularity with the masses. In the critical days of August-September 1792, when the interventionist armies were rapidly marching on Paris, Danton displayed great energy, initiative and determination and mobilised the people for the defence of revolutionary France—463, 475, 476

David, Eduard (1863-1930)—one of the Right-wing leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party, revisionist; co-founder of the journal *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, organ of the German opportunists. During the First World War a social-chauvinist—14, 52, 53, 101, 131

Debs, Eugene Victor (1855-1926)—prominent figure in the American labour movement, one of the organisers of the Social-Democratic Party of America, on the basis of which the Socialist Party of America was formed in 1900-01. During the First World War he held an internationalist stand, condemned the treachery of social-chauvinists and conducted propaganda

against the U.S. entry in the war—215

Deutsch, Lev Grigoryevich (1855-1941)—was active in the Narodnik and later in the Social-Democratic movements. During the First World War, a social-chauvinist. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, he and Plekhanov edited *Yedinstvo*, the newspaper of the Right-wing Menshevik defencists—155

Dubasov—non-Party officer of the army in the field—410, 416, 467, 468

E

Engels, Frederick (1820-1895)—39, 61, 63, 69, 91, 107, 109, 165, 244-45, 266, 320, 334, 365, 457

G

Gagarin, A. U., Prince—general of the tsarist army. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution commanded a brigade of the Caucasian Savage Division, took an active part in the Kornilov revolt—376, 382

Gapon, Georgi Apollonovich (1870-1906)—priest. On January 9, 1905, instigated the march of St. Petersburg workers to hand a petition to the tsar—142

Goldenberg, Iosif Petrovich (1873-1922)—Russian Social-Democrat. During the First World War aligned himself with the defencists, the followers of Plekhanov—59, 61

Gorter, Herman (1864-1927)—Dutch Social-Democrat, pub-

licist, one of the founders of the newspaper *De Tribune*, organ of the Left wing of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Holland, in 1907. During the First World War an internationalist, supporter of the Zimmerwald Left—102

Greulich, Herman (1842-1925)—one of the founders of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland, leader of its Right wing. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand, fought against the Zimmerwald Left—105

Grimm, Robert (1881-1958)—one of the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland. During the First World War held a Centrist stand; Chairman of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences and of the International Socialist Commission—23, 48, 100, 105

Guchkov, Alexander Ivanovich (1862-1936)—big capitalist, organiser and leader of the Octobrist Party. During the First World War Chairman of the Central War Industries Committee and member of the Special Committee for Defence. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Minister for the Army and Navy in the first bourgeois Provisional Government; participated in the organisation of the Kornilov revolt in August 1917—12, 13, 16, 17, 20-25, 26-28, 30, 32, 34-36, 40-42, 45, 48-50, 66, 68, 71, 80, 85-88, 114, 118, 138-40, 144, 146, 148, 156, 166, 255, 284, 356, 387, 403

Guesde, Jules (1845-1922)—one of the organisers and leaders

of the French socialist movement and the Second International. Following the outbreak of the First World War took a social-chauvinist stand and entered the French bourgeois government—52, 99
Guilbeaux, Henri (1885-1938)—French socialist journalist. During the First World War adopted a Centrist stand, published the journal *Demain*; favoured the restoring of international contacts; took part in the Kienthal Conference in 1916—102

Gvozdyov, Kuzma Antonovich (b. 1883)—Menshevik liquidator. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand, Chairman of the workers' group in the Central War Industries Committee. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, Deputy Minister and later Minister for Labour in the bourgeois Provisional Government—13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 22, 26, 435, 501

H

Haase, Hugo (1863-1919)—one of the opportunist leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War held a Centrist stand; in April 1917 a co-founder of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany—48, 53, 100-01

Hanecki (Fürstenberg), Jakob (1879-1937)—prominent figure in the Polish and Russian revolutionary movement, joined the R.S.D.L.P. in 1896. During the First World War

adhered to the Zimmerwald Left, was repeatedly arrested and exiled. In 1917 a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee Bureau Abroad—102

Hartstein.—See *Levi, Paul*.

Heilmann, Ernst (1881-1940)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat, publicist; from 1907 to 1917 editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Volksstimme*, which, during the First World War was the organ of the extreme Right, social-chauvinist wing of the German Social-Democratic Party; also contributed to the social-chauvinist magazine *Die Glocke*—104

Henderson, Arthur (1863-1935)—one of the leaders of the British Labour Party and trade union movement. During the First World War held a social-chauvinist position, entered Asquith's coalition government and then Lloyd George's war cabinet. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution came to Russia to agitate for the continuation of the war—256, 260-62

Hillquit, Morris (1869-1933)—American socialist, lawyer. At first adhered to Marxism but later deviated towards reformism and opportunism—100

Höglund, Carl Zeth Konstantin (1884-1956)—leader of the Left wing of the Social-Democratic and also of the youth socialist movement in Sweden. During the First World War held an internationalist stand; joined the Zimmerwald Left at the Zimmerwald Socialist Conference. In 1916 was imprisoned for anti-war propagand-

da; between 1917 and 1924 a leader of the Communist Party of Sweden—102

Huysmans, Camille (1871-1968)—one of the veteran leaders of the Belgian working-class movement; Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International from 1904 to 1919. During the First World War held a Centrist stand; de facto head of the I.S.B.—104, 253

Hyndman, Henry Mayers (1842-1921)—British socialist; one of the reformist leaders of the British Socialist Party, from which he withdrew in 1916 after the Salford party conference had condemned his social-chauvinist attitude towards the imperialist war—99

J

Jordania, Noi Nikolayevich (1870-1953)—Russian Social-Democrat, leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks; adopted a social-chauvinist stand during the First World War. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Chairman of the Tiflis Soviet of Workers' Deputies—431

K

Kaledin, Alexei Maximovich (1861-1918)—tsarist general, ataman of the Don Cossacks; at the Moscow State Conference in August 1917 advanced a broad programme for crushing the revolution;

took an active part in the Kornilov revolt—376, 387

Kamenev (Rosenfeld), Lev Borisovich (1883-1936)—joined the R.S.D.L.P. in 1901. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution came out against the Party's Leninist line towards socialist revolution. In October 1917 published in the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* together with Zinoviev a statement declaring their disagreement with the C.C. resolution on the armed uprising, which amounted to the divulgence of the Party's secret decision and a betrayal of the revolution.

After the October Socialist Revolution held responsible posts in the Party and the government; expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—70-74, 320

Kamkov (Kats), B.D. (1885-1938)—Socialist-Revolutionary, one of the organisers and leaders of the Party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries—255, 495

Kautsky, Karl (1854-1938)—leader of the German Social-Democratic Party and the Second International; originally a Marxist, later a renegade, an ideologist of Centrism (Kautskyism), the most dangerous and harmful variety of opportunism—39, 48, 53, 59, 68, 77, 91-93, 100-01, 103-05, 108, 112

Kerensky, Alexander Fyodorovich (1881-1970)—Socialist-Revolutionary. During the First World War an ardent defencist, leader of the Trudoviks in the Fourth Duma. After the February 1917 bour-

- geois-democratic revolution Minister for Justice, Minister for the Army and Navy, then Prime Minister in the bourgeois Provisional Government and Supreme Commander-in-Chief—13, 14, 17, 19, 23, 25, 26, 28-30, 35, 49, 81, 85, 97, 127-28, 260-61, 279, 291, 312, 340-43, 345, 352-53, 356, 358, 363, 370, 376, 382, 391-92, 395, 400, 403, 404, 408-09, 411, 413-14, 416-18, 428-30, 435, 450-54, 466, 469-73, 478-83, 488, 494-95, 499, 500, 506
- Kishkin, Nikolai Mikhailovich* (1864-1930)—one of the leaders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party; Minister for State Security in the last bourgeois Provisional Government; was appointed "dictator" of Petrograd on the eve of the October Socialist Revolution—404, 413, 422, 430-31, 453
- Klembovsky, Vladimir Napoleonicovich* (1860-1921)—tsarist general, Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Front from May 1917; took an active part in the Kornilov revolt—376, 382, 472
- Kononov, Alexander Ivanovich* (b. 1875)—big textile manufacturer in Russia. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution was Minister for Trade and Industry and then Deputy Prime Minister in the bourgeois Provisional Government—139, 179, 192, 207-09, 280, 422
- Kornilov, Lavr Georgievich* (1870-1918)—tsarist general, monarchist; Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army in July-August 1917. In August 1917 he directed a counter-revolutionary revolt. After its suppression he was arrested but escaped and fled to the Don, where he was one of the organisers and then Commander of the white-guard "Volunteer Army"—112, 341, 360, 362-64, 368-69, 375-77, 378, 380-83, 387-89, 394-95, 404, 409, 416-18, 420, 432, 435, 451-52, 454, 462, 470, 472, 479-83, 488, 490, 492, 505
- Kuskova, Yekaterina Dmitriyevna* (1869-1958)—Russian public figure and publicist; called upon the workers to renounce revolutionary struggle and to accept the political leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie—423
- Kutler Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1859-1924)—prominent figure in the Constitutional-Democratic Party, one of the authors of the party's agrarian programme. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Kutler, being closely connected with banking and industrial circles, was on various committees of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, representing in them the interests of industrialists of the South of Russia—190, 250

L

- Lazzari, Constantino* (1857-1927)—was active in the Italian socialist movement. During the First World War a Centrist, one of the leaders of the Maximalist (Centrist) trend in the Socialist Party—102
- Ledebour, Georg* (1850-1947)—German Social-Democrat. During the First World War advocated the restoration of

- international contacts. Attended the Zimmerwald Conference, adhered to the Zimmerwald Right. In 1916, after the split in the German Social-Democratic Party, joined the Social-Democratic Labour group in the Reichstag, which in 1917 made up the core of the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, that gave support to the avowed chauvinists—100-01
- Legien, Karl* (1861-1920)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat, a trade union leader, revisionist. During the First World War held an extreme social-chauvinist stand—52, 101
- Levi (Hartstein), Paul* (1883-1930)—German Social-Democrat, lawyer; participant in the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915, member of the Swiss group in the Zimmerwald Left and of the Spartacus League—105
- Lieber (Goldman), Mikhail Isaakovich* (1880-1937)—one of the Bund leaders, a social-chauvinist during the First World War. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the first convocation; sided with the Mensheviks, was in favour of a coalition government—434
- Liebknecht, Karl* (1871-1919)—outstanding leader of the German and international working-class movement, a Left-wing leader of the German Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War opposed the idea of supporting "one's own" government in the predatory war. On December 2, 1914 he was the only Reichstag deputy to vote against war credits. One of the organisers and leaders of the Internationale group, which later began to call itself the Spartacus group. In 1916 he was sentenced to penal servitude for his anti-war propaganda. A founder-member of the Communist Party of Germany; was assassinated by the counter-revolutionaries in 1919—53, 101, 107, 122, 129, 130-31, 211-12, 216, 271, 284-85, 478, 493
- Lindhagen, Carl* (1860-1946)—Swedish politician, first a Liberal and from 1909 a Social-Democrat. During the First World War adopted an internationalist stand. In 1917 took part in organising the Left Social-Democratic Party of Sweden, which joined the Communist International in 1919—102
- Longuet, Jean* (1876-1938)—member of the French Socialist Party and the Second International, publicist. During the First World War headed the Centrist, pacifist minority in the French Socialist Party—48, 59, 100, 112
- Loriot, Ferdinand* (1870-1930)—French socialist. During the First World War held an internationalist stand, adhered to the Zimmerwald Left at the Kienthal Conference—102
- Louis Blanc*.—See *Blanc, Louis*.
- Luxemburg, Rosa* (1871-1919)—outstanding figure in the international working-class

movement, one of the leaders of the Left wing in the Second International.

During the First World War held an internationalist stand; one of the founders of the Internationale group, which subsequently assumed the name of Spartacus group; took an active part in the Inaugural Congress of the Communist Party of Germany; was assassinated by counter-revolutionaries in 1919—61, 101-02

Izov, Georgi Yevgenyevich, Prince (1861-1925)—big landowner, Zemstvo leader, member of the Constitutional-Democratic Party. During the First World War Chairman of the All-Russia Zemstvo Union and then Chairman of the United Association of Zemstvos and Towns, an organisation of the imperialist bourgeoisie and landowners. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, from March to July, Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for the Interior in the bourgeois Provisional Government; one of the initiators of the bloody reprisals against the workers and soldiers of Petrograd in July 1917—13, 17, 20-21, 24, 32, 49, 56, 66, 68, 80, 83, 93, 146, 163, 254, 278, 280, 324-26

Lyakhov, Vladimir Platonovich (1869-1919)—colonel in the tsarist army; became known for his role in suppressing the national revolutionary movement in the Caucasus and in Iran. During the First World War Governor-General of the Turkish Black Sea Coast zone—207-08, 268

Lysis (Letailleur), Eugène—French bourgeois economist, author of a number of works on finance and politics—198

M

MacDonald, James Ramsay (1866-1937)—British politician, one of the founders and leaders of the Independent Labour Party and the Labour Party; pursued an opportunist policy, advocated the theory of class collaboration and the gradual growing of capitalism into socialism. At the beginning of the First World War adopted a pacifist stand, later gave open support to the imperialist bourgeoisie—48, 59, 100, 271

MacLean, John (1879-1923)—prominent figure in the British labour movement, teacher. On the eve of the First World War joined the Left wing of the British Socialist Party and became one of its leaders in Scotland. During the war he held an internationalist stand, carried on revolutionary anti-war propaganda, organised and led mass demonstrations and strikes, especially at armaments plants, for which he was persecuted by the British Government. In April 1916 elected to the leadership of the British Socialist Party. Retired from political activity towards the end of his life—102, 131, 271, 406

MacMahon, Patrice (1808-1893)—statesman and Marshal of France, monarchist; as Commander of the counter-revolutionary Versailles Army dealt summarily with the heroic

- defenders of the Paris Commune in 1871—369
- Maklakov, Vasily Alexeyevich* (b. 1870)—Right-wing Constitutional Democrat, landowner, lawyer who conducted many political trials. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution, from July 1917, ambassador of the bourgeois Provisional Government in Paris—268, 279, 387, 470, 472, 491
- Markov, Nikolai Yevgenyevich* (b. 1876)—big landowner, reactionary politician in tsarist Russia, one of the leaders of Black-Hundred pogromist organisations—236-37
- Martov, L. (Tsederbaum, Yuli Osipovich)* (1873-1923)—one of the Menshevik leaders. During the First World War held a Centrist position. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution headed the group of Menshevik internationalists—48, 100, 106, 255, 337, 370, 381, 433, 495
- Marx, Karl* (1818-1883)—39, 40, 44, 61, 63, 69, 92, 107-10, 266, 333, 392, 393, 397, 432, 449, 462-63, 475-76, 501-02
- Merrheim, Alphonse* (1881-1925)—French trade union leader. At the beginning of the First World War one of the leaders of the Left wing in the French syndicalist movement, which opposed social-chauvinism and the imperialist war; took part in the Zimmerwald Conference, adhering to the Zimmerwald Right. At the end of 1916 adopted a Centrist, pacifist stand, and early in 1918 sided with the avowed social-chauvinists and reformists—102, 104
- Mikhail Romanov*. See *Romanov, Mikhail*.
- Milyukov, Pavel Nikolayevich* (1859-1943)—ideologist of the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, historian and publicist; one of the founders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Chairman of its C.C. and editor of the newspaper *Rech*, the central organ of the party; deputy to the Third and Fourth Dumas. In 1917 Foreign Minister in the first bourgeois Provisional Government; pursued a policy of continuing the imperialist war to "the victorious end"—11-13, 16, 17, 19-25, 27, 35, 36, 40-42, 45, 48-50, 71, 87, 88, 106, 118, 126-28, 138-42, 144, 147-48, 152, 156, 167, 186, 197, 206-07, 255, 268-69, 272, 279-80, 284, 310, 335, 342, 363, 387, 403, 501
- Modigliani, Vittorio Emmanuele* (1872-1947)—veteran member of the Italian Socialist Party, reformist. During the First World War held a Centrist stand. Attended the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, opposed the Zimmerwald Left—100
- Müller, Gustav* (1860-1921)—Swiss Right Social-Democrat, officer. During the First World War took a social-chauvinist stand, fought against the Zimmerwald movement—105
- Münzenberg, Wilhelm* (1889-1940)—was active in the working-class movement in Switzerland and Germany, leader of the Swiss Social-Democratic Youth organisation (1914-17) and editor of its organ *Freie Jugend*; in 1915-19 Secretary of the Socialist

Youth International and editor of its organ *Jugendinternationale*. During the First World War held an internationalist stand—105

N

Napoleon I (Bonaparte) (1769-1821)—Emperor of France from 1804 to 1814 and in 1815—164, 188, 358

Napoleon III (Louis Bonaparte) (1808-1873)—Emperor of France from 1852 to 1870, nephew of Napoleon I—164, 188, 358

Nekrasov, Nikolai Vissarionovich (b. 1879)—Constitutional-Democrat; in 1917 Minister for Communications, Minister without portfolio, and Minister for Finance in the bourgeois Provisional Government—342

Nepenin, A. I. (1871-1917)—Vice-Admiral of the tsarist fleet. In July 1916 appointed Commander of the Baltic fleet. On March 4, 1917 killed by insurgent sailors—40

Nerman, Ture (b. 1886)—Swedish Left Social-Democrat, poet and writer. During the First World War held an internationalist stand, adhered to the Zimmerwald Left. In 1916-18 the first editor of the newspaper *Politiken*, organ of the Left opposition in the Social-Democratic Party of Sweden—102

Nicholas I Romanov (1796-1855)—Emperor of Russia (1825-55)—86, 87

Nicholas II Romanov (1868-1918)—the last Emperor of Russia (1894-1917); was overthrown in February 1917 by the bourgeois-democratic revolu-

tion—15, 16, 40, 41, 49, 64, 80, 87, 115, 131, 136, 144, 156, 183, 186, 205, 207, 210, 212, 240, 267, 302, 329, 350, 357

Nikitin, A. M. (b. 1876)—Menshevik, lawyer by profession; after July 1917 Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Minister for the Interior in the last bourgeois Provisional Government—409, 411, 435, 453, 501

P

Palchinsky, Pyotr Ioakimovich (d. 1930)—engineer, organiser of the Produgol trust, was closely connected with banking circles. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry in the bourgeois Provisional Government, organised acts of sabotage by industrialists after the establishment of Soviet power, fought against democratic organisations—355, 376-77

Pannekoek, Anton (1873-1960)—Dutch Social-Democrat. During the First World War an internationalist, took part in the publication of the journal *Vorbote*, the theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left—39, 102

Pereverzev, Pavel Nikolayevich—lawyer, Trudovik, close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Minister for Justice in the first coalition bourgeois Provisional Government. In July 1917 published documents slandering Lenin and the Bolsheviks which had been forged by Alexinsky and the

- military intelligence service—339, 464
- Peshekhonov, Alexei Vasilyevich* (1867-1933)—bourgeois public figure and publicist, one of the leaders of the petty-bourgeois Party of Popular Socialists from 1906. In 1917 Minister for Food in the bourgeois Provisional Government—175-76, 254, 355, 376-79, 437, 458-60
- Pflüger, Paul Bernhardt* (b. 1865)—Swiss Right Social-Democrat, social-chauvinist during the First World War—105
- Planson, A. A.*—Popular Socialist, lawyer. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution one of the leaders of the All-Russia Executive Committee of the Railwaymen's Trade Union, controlled by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—495
- Platten, Friedrich (Fritz)* (1883-1942)—Swiss Left Social-Democrat, later Communist. During the First World War an internationalist, attended the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, adhered to the Zimmerwald Left. In April 1917 helped organise Lenin's return from Switzerland to Russia—106
- Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich* (1856-1918)—leader of the Russian and international working-class movement, the first propagandist of Marxism in Russia. During the First World War held a social-chauvinist stand. On his return to Russia following the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution headed the extreme Right *Yedinstvo* group of Menshevik defencists; he opposed the Bolsheviks and the socialist revolution, considering Russia unprepared for a transition to socialism.
- Lenin highly valued Plekhanov's philosophical works and his rôle in disseminating Marxism in Russia but sharply criticised him for his departures from Marxism and serious mistakes in his political activities—14, 20, 22, 27, 49, 53, 59-61, 69, 70, 77, 91-93, 97, 99, 101, 105, 108, 122, 125-28, 129-31, 148, 155, 170-71, 255, 262, 284, 296, 310, 373, 377, 403, 430, 457, 459-60, 472
- Poincaré, Raymond* (1860-1934)—French bourgeois politician and statesman, lawyer. President of France from 1913 to 1920; for his active support of the preparations for the First World War he became known as "Poincaré-la guerre"—254
- Poloutsev, P. A.* (b. 1874)—general, commander of the troops of the Petrograd Military Area in the summer of 1917. In July 1917 directed the shooting of a peaceful demonstration in Petrograd and the raid on *Pravda's* premises—339
- Potresov, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1869-1934)—Menshevik leader, social-chauvinist during the First World War. In 1917 edited the newspaper *Dyen* which conducted a vicious slander campaign against the Bolsheviks—13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 22, 49, 97, 101, 102, 373, 377, 501
- Pressemane, Adrien* (1879-1929)—French socialist, a Centrist during the First World War—48, 100

Prilezhayev, I. A.—Socialist-Revolutionary, contributed to the S.R. newspaper *Dyelo Naroda*; from December 1917 member of the Socialist-Revolutionary C.C.—378

Prokopovich, Sergei Nikolayevich (1871-1955)—bourgeois economist and publicist, Minister for Food in the bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917—435

R

Radek, Karl (1885-1939)—from the beginning of the century took part in the Social-Democratic movement in Galicia, Poland and Germany. During the First World War held an internationalist stand, but leaned towards Centrism; adopted an erroneous position on the question of the right of nations to self-determination. In 1917 joined the Bolshevik Party. After the October Socialist Revolution held responsible posts in the Party and the government. Expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—102, 105

Rakitnikov, N. I. (b. 1864)—*Narodnik*, later Socialist-Revolutionary; journalist. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Deputy Minister for Agriculture—320, 501

Rasputin (Novykh), Grigory Yefimovich (1872-1916)—adventurist who enjoyed great influence at the court of Nicholas II—12, 24, 138, 212

Rayev, P.—an editor of the Paris weekly *Libertaire*, Russian by birth. Early in March 1917 was sentenced to one year's imprisonment and a fine

of 1,000 fr. for the publication and distribution of the proclamation "*Imposons la paix!*"—131

Renaudel, Pierre (1871-1935)—a reformist leader of the French Socialist Party; M.P. in 1914-19, and 1924; during the First World War held a social-chauvinist stand—52, 99, 493

Rodichev, Fyodor Izmailovich (b. 1856)—landowner, one of the leaders of the Cadet Party, member of its Central Committee. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Commissar for the Affairs of Finland in the bourgeois Provisional Government—46

Rodzyanko, Mikhail Vladimirovich (1859-1924)—big landowner, a leader of the Octobrist Party, monarchist. During the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution organised a counter-revolutionary centre known as the Provisional Committee of the Duma, and then the Private Council of Duma members. One of the leaders of the Kornilov revolt—22, 363, 472, 489-91, 494-97, 500

Roland-Holst, Henriette (1869-1952)—Dutch Left Socialist, writer; engaged in organising women's unions, adhered to the Left wing of the Social-Democratic Party of Holland. At the beginning of the First World War adopted a Centrist stand, later joined the internationalists; participated in the publication of the journal *Vorbote*, the theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left—102

Romanov, Mikhail (1878-1918)—grand duke, brother of

- Nicholas II, the last Emperor of Russia—19
- Romanovs*—dynasty of Russian tsars and emperors ruling from 1613 to 1917—12, 13, 17, 19, 21, 23, 30, 80, 114, 227, 236
- Rühle, Otto* (b. 1874)—German Left Social-Democrat, publicist and educator. During the First World War held an internationalist stand; voted against war credits in the Reichstag—101
- Ryabushinsky, Pavel Pavlovich* (b. 1871)—big Moscow banker and industrialist, one of the leaders of the counter-revolution. In August 1917 he threatened to stifle the revolution "with the bony hand of famine"; was an inspirer and organiser of the Kornilov revolt—387, 501
- Ryazanov (Goldendach), David Borisovich* (1870-1938)—joined the Social-Democratic movement in the nineties. During the First World War held a Centrist stand, contributed to Menshevik newspapers. At the Sixth Congress (1917) he was admitted to membership of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.). After the October Socialist Revolution worked in the trade unions; from 1921 Director of the Marx-Engels Institute. Expelled from the C.P.S.U.(B.) in February 1931 for supporting the counter-revolutionary activities of the Mensheviks—504
- Party, one of the leaders of its Combat Organisation. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Deputy Minister for War and then military governor-general of Petrograd—342
- Scheidemann, Philipp* (1865-1939)—one of the leaders of the extreme Right, opportunist wing in the German Social-Democratic Party—14, 52-53, 99, 101, 105, 122, 129, 170-71, 256, 262
- Schmid, Jacques* (b. 1882)—Swiss Social-Democrat. During the First World War opposed social-chauvinism but early in 1917 adopted a Centrist, pacifist position, then sided with the Right wing of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party and became a determined opponent of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat—48
- Schneider, Friedrich* (b. 1886)—Swiss Social-Democrat, publicist. During the First World War held a Centrist, pacifist position—48
- Sembat, Marcel* (1862-1922)—one of the reformist leaders of the French Socialist Party, journalist; social-chauvinist during the First World War. From August 1914 to September 1917 Minister for Public Works in the imperialist "Government of National Defence" of France. Attended the Conference of Socialists of the Entente Countries convened in London in February 1915 to unite them on a social-chauvinist platform—52, 99

S

- Savinkov, Boris Viktorovich* (1879-1925)—prominent figure in the Socialist-Revolutionary

- Serrati, Giacinto Menotti* (1872-1926)—leader of the Italian working-class movement and one of the leaders of the Italian Socialist Party; together with Lazzari headed its Centrist wing. During the First World War an internationalist; from 1915 to 1923 director of the newspaper *Avanti!*, central organ of the Socialist Party; participant of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences—102
- Shingaryov, Andrei Ivanovich* (1869-1918)—member of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Zemstvo leader. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Finance in the first and second bourgeois Provisional Governments respectively—13, 148, 172-74, 179, 192, 225, 227, 230, 279, 280, 438
- Shulgin, Vasily Vitalyevich* (b. 1878)—Russian landowner, monarchist and nationalist. In 1917 actively supported the bourgeois Provisional Government—209
- Skobelev, Matvei Ivanovich* (1885-1939)—Menshevik, joined the Social-Democratic movement in 1903. During the First World War took a Centrist stand. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution was Vice Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, later Vice Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the first convocation; from May to August 1917 Minister for Labour in the bourgeois Provisional Government—29-31, 35, 36, 48-50, 98, 138, 176, 186, 208-10, 243-45, 252, 254, 260-61, 280, 355-56
- Smilga, Ivar Tenisovich* (1892-1938)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1907. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution a member of the Kronstadt Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), Chairman of the Regional Executive Committee of the Army, Navy and Workers of Finland. After the October Socialist Revolution held responsible posts. Subsequently expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—224, 228
- Snowden, Philip* (1864-1937)—British politician; in 1903-06 and 1917-20 Chairman of the Independent Labour Party, in which he adhered to the Right wing. During the First World War adopted a Centrist stand, advocated a coalition with the bourgeoisie—48, 100
- Spiridonova, Maria Alexandrovna* (1884-1941)—a leader of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution took part in organising the Left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries; after the Party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries was formed in November 1917, she was elected to its Central Committee—370, 381
- Stauning, Thorwald August Marinus* (1873-1942)—Danish statesman, one of the Right-wing leaders of the Danish Social-Democratic Party and the Second International, publicist. During the First World War held a social-chauvinist, pro-German stand.

- In 1916-20 Minister without portfolio in the Danish bourgeois government—99, 102
- Steklov, Yuri Mikhailovich* (1873-1941)—professional revolutionary, joined the Social-Democratic movement in 1893. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution adopted a "revolutionary defencist" stand; subsequently sided with the Bolsheviks—58, 65, 68, 71, 73, 78, 79, 85, 87, 98, 138
- Stolypin, Pyotr Arkadyevich* (1862-1911)—Russian statesman, big landowner. In 1906-11 Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for the Interior. Associated with his name is the period known as the Stolypin reaction of 1907-10, during which executions and other drastic measures were used to suppress the revolutionary movement. Stolypin implemented an agrarian reform aimed at making the kulaks a bulwark of the tsarist autocracy in the countryside. However, his attempts to prop up the autocracy by means of reforms introduced from above in the interests of the bourgeoisie and landowners proved unsuccessful—17, 41, 52, 80, 402, 408, 411, 453-54
- Ström, Fredrik* (1880-1948)—Swiss Left Social-Democrat, writer and publicist; an internationalist during the First World War—102
- Struve, Pyotr Berngardovich* (1870-1944)—bourgeois economist and publicist, a leader of the Constitutional-Democratic Party. In the 1890s leading exponent of "legal

Marxism"; proposed to "revise" and "amend" Marx's economic and philosophical doctrines with a view to adapting Marxism and the labour movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie; one of the ideologists of Russian imperialism—280, 435

Sukhanov, N. (Gimmer, Nikolai Nikolayevich) (b. 1882)—economist and publicist of a petty-bourgeois orientation, Menshevik. During the First World War claimed to hold an internationalist stand. In 1917 was elected to the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet; contributed to the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*; actively supported the bourgeois Provisional Government—495

Suvorin, Alexander Sergeevich (1834-1912)—reactionary journalist and publisher of the venal bourgeois newspaper *Novoye Uremya*. In 1917 the newspaper was published and edited by Suvorin's sons, M. A. Suvorin and B. A. Suvorin—500

T

- Teodorovich, Ivan Adolfovich* (1875-1940)—Russian Social-Democrat, joined the revolutionary movement in 1895. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. a Bolshevik, in 1905-07 member of the St. Petersburg Party Committee; subsequently, up to 1917, carried on Party work in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Smolensk and Siberia—86
- Tereshchenko, Mikhail Ivanovich* (b. 1888)—big Russian sugar manufacturer, millionaire.

- After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution was Minister for Finance and then Minister for Foreign Affairs in the bourgeois Provisional Government, pursued an imperialist policy of continuing the war to "the victorious end"—189, 186, 192, 206-09, 254-55, 268, 273, 279-80, 342
- Thomas, Albert* (1878-1932)—French politician, social-reformist. During the First World War held a social-chauvinist stand, entered the bourgeois government of France as Minister for Armaments. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution came to Russia to carry on propaganda in favour of continuing the war—256, 260-61
- Torniainen, Edvard*—Finnish Social-Democrat, journalist—158
- Trèves, Claudio* (1868-1938)—one of the reformist leaders of the Italian Socialist Party, a Centrist during the First World War—49, 100
- Trier, Gerson* (b. 1851)—Danish Social-Democrat; as a Left-wing leader of the Danish Social-Democratic Party fought against the conciliatory policy of the party's reformist leaders. During the First World War held an internationalist stand. In September 1916 opposed the party congress decision authorising party members to join the bourgeois government of Denmark, and withdrew from the party in protest against its adoption—102
- Troelstra, Pieter Jelles* (1860-1930)—leader of the Dutch labour movement, Right-wing socialist. A founder (1894) and leader of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Holland. During the First World War held a pro-German social-chauvinist stand—99
- Trotsky (Bronstein), Lev Davidovich* (1879-1940)—joined the R.S.D.L.P. in 1897, a Menshevik. During the First World War held a Centrist position. Returned from emigration after the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution; at the Sixth Party Congress in 1917 was admitted to membership of the Bolshevik Party, but did not accept the Bolshevik views and waged an overt and covert struggle against the Party's Leninist policy.
- After the October Socialist Revolution held a number of key posts. Expelled from the Party in 1927 for his anti-Party activities and deported in 1929 from the U.S.S.R., deprived of Soviet citizenship in 1932—106, 404, 452
- Tsereteli, Irakli Georgievich* (1882-1959)—Menshevik leader, a Centrist during the First World War. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, a defencist. In May 1917 joined the bourgeois Provisional Government as Minister for Posts and Telegraphs; after the July 1917 events Minister for the Interior, one of the inspirers of the hounding campaign against the Bolsheviks—56, 58, 65, 68, 71, 73, 78, 79, 85, 87, 98, 100, 101, 107, 124, 134, 147, 148, 175-

77, 179, 183, 186, 192, 243-45, 252, 254, 259-61, 279-82, 285, 289, 291, 299, 300, 304, 313, 320-21, 330, 340, 342, 343, 354-56, 375, 395, 401-04, 409, 420, 427, 434-35, 443, 444, 452-53, 457, 465

Turati, Filippo (1857-1932)—leader of the Italian working-class movement, one of the organisers of the Italian Socialist Party (1892) and leader of its Right, reformist wing. During the First World War a Centrist—48, 59, 100, 104

Ture Nerman.—See *Nerman, Ture*.

Tyszka, Jan (*Jogiches, Léon*) (1867-1919)—leader of the Polish and German working-class movement. One of the founders of the Social-Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, member of the party's Executive. During the First World War took part in the work of the German Social-Democrats, was one of the organisers of the Spartacus League; held an internationalist stand—102

V

Vandervelde, Emile (1866-1938)—one of the extreme opportunist leaders of the Belgian Workers' Party, Chairman of the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand, was a member of the bourgeois government. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 came to Russia to agitate for the continuation of the imperialist war—104, 255, 260

Verkhovskiy, A. I. (1886-1941)—lieutenant-colonel in the tsarist army, commanded the troops of the Moscow Military Area in 1917; after the suppression of the Kornilov revolt became Major-General, War Minister in the last bourgeois Provisional Government. On October 19 (November 1), 1917, he resigned in protest against the rejection by the Pre-parliament of his draft for the demobilisation of a considerable part of the army and other measures—505

Vikhlayev, P. A. (1869-1928)—statistician and agronomist, member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; Deputy Minister for Agriculture in the bourgeois Provisional Government—501

Vodovozov, V. V. (1864-1933)—publicist of a liberal-Narodnik trend; in 1917 he was on the editorial board of the historical journal *Byloye* and contributed to the liberal bourgeois newspaper *Dyen*—205-07

Voinov, Ivan Avksentyevich (1884-1917)—Bolshevik, member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1909, contributor to and correspondent of *Zvezda* and *Pravda*. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution worked in the *Trud* printshop, where *Pravda* was printed, and wrote correspondences for the newspaper. On July 6 (19), 1917, he was killed by the Cossacks and military cadets in Shpalernaya Street (now Voinov Street) while distributing the newspaper *Listok Pravdy*—321, 326, 339

Volodarsky, V. (Goldstein, Moisei Markovich) (1891-1918)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917. During the First World War adopted an internationalist stand. In 1917 was member of the Petrograd Party Committee and the Presidium of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and of the Central Executive Committee of the first convocation—362

W

Wijnkoop, David (1877-1941)—Dutch Left Social-Democrat, subsequently a Communist. During the First World War adopted an internationalist stand, contributed to the magazine *Vorbote*, the theoretical organ of the Zimmerwald Left. As a leader of the Communist Party of Holland, he held an ultra-Left, sectarian stand—102

Wilhelm II (Hohenzollern) (1859-1941)—King of Prussia and Emperor of Germany (1888-1918)—15, 49, 106, 119, 120, 129-30, 136, 139, 144, 155-56, 169, 184, 254, 276, 479, 491, 497

Williams, T. Russel—British socialist, member of the Independent Labour Party of Britain. During the First World War took an antimilitarist stand, criticised the policy pursued by the leaders of the Second International—102

Z

Zarudny, Alexander Sergeyevich (1863-1934)—lawyer; after the

February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution joined the Party of Popular Socialists; was Minister for Justice in the bourgeois Provisional Government (July-August 1917)—344

Zaslavsky, David Iosifovich (1880-1965)—prominent journalist and writer; joined the revolutionary movement in 1900. During the First World War adopted a social-chauvinist stand. In 1917-18 came out against the Bolsheviks—501

Zasulich, Vera Ivanovna (1849-1919)—prominent figure in the Narodnik and later in the Social-Democratic movement in Russia. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. a Menshevik leader; during the First World War held a social-chauvinist stand—49, 155

Zinoviev (Radomyslsky), Grigory Yevseyevich (1883-1936)—joined the R.S.D.L.P. in 1901; an internationalist during the First World War. He vacillated when the October Socialist Revolution was being prepared and carried out, and opposed the armed uprising. By the publication, in the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*, of a statement declaring their disagreement with the C.C. resolution on the armed uprising Kamenev and Zinoviev divulged the Party's secret plans. After the October Socialist Revolution he held a number of key posts in the Party and the government. Expelled from the Party for his factional activity—62, 105, 130

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