

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

**V.I. LENIN**  
**J.V. STALIN**

**LAST LETTERS**  
**AND ARTICLES**  
**&**  
**ON LENIN**

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In this book, we have taken a radically departure from any previous editions of Lenin's *Last Letters and Articles* published. Even hearing the name evokes the famous so-called "Testament" or "Letter to the Congress." The reader will immediately notice the absence of that letter in this collection. This was not an easy decision for the publishers, and it was not something done for political purposes, as some may automatically assume. Indeed, this was originally included in our original conception of the book, which would have then included Stalin's stance on it in "The Trotskyist Opposition Then and Now."

It is the research of Valentin A. Sakharov, who had greater access to more evidence than anyone else previously or presently in his "*Политическое завещание*" Ленина (*The "Political Testament" of Lenin*), who proved conclusively that the evidence surrounding these letters contradicts everything spun in the "official" narrative, that there is no room to conclude that Lenin wrote those letters and significant leads to be suspicions that these letters were forged by Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's wife, and other then

members of the Opposition. We will not go through this claim, for it can be found in the book already mentioned. For English readers, the first six chapters of Grover Furr's *The Fraud of the "Testament of Lenin"* contain much of Sakharov's evidence, indeed they are based upon it. Another version of this evidence can be found in Chapter 11 of Stephen Kotkin's *Stalin: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928*. Sakharov's work has also been used to modify documents where it is conclusive that the versions in Lenin's Collected Works have been altered for previous political purposes.

What is generally considered part one of the "Letter to the Congress" was a letter to Stalin, arbitrarily attached to the other letters by someone with a motivation to do so. It is considered beyond a doubt authentic, and is titled "On the Reorganization of the CC of the RCP(b)" in this collection. This edition has several changes made, however, due to differences between the handwritten and typed versions, the latter used in the version published in 1956 for Nikita Khrushchev's purposes. In fact, the typed has numerous inconsistencies and errors, which have then been translated into English in such a way as to make Lenin seem in favour

of the Opposition, while the original handwritten is very clear.

The second part of this book, Stalin's *On Lenin*, has been altered only with minor editorial changes, preserving its content in full.

**NEPH**

28 October 2022





**V.I. LENIN**

**LAST LETTERS  
AND ARTICLES**



# ON THE REORGANIZATION OF THE CC OF THE RCP(b)

*Letter to J.V. Stalin*

**December 23, 1922**

**STRICTLY SECRET**

I would urge strongly that at this Congress a number of changes be made in our political structure.

I want to tell you of the considerations to which I attach most importance.

At the head of the list I set an increase in the number of Central Committee members to a few dozen or even a hundred. It is my opinion that without this reform our Central Committee would be in great danger if the course of events were not quite favourable for us (and that is something we cannot count on).

Then, I intend to propose that the Congress should on certain conditions invest the decisions of the State Planning Commission with legislative force, meeting, in this respect, the wishes of Comrade Trotsky — to a certain extent and on certain conditions.

As for the first point, i.e., increasing the

number of CC members, I think it must be done in order to raise the prestige of our Central Committee, to do a thorough job of improving our administrative machinery and to prevent conflicts between small sections of the CC from acquiring excessive importance for all the “judges” of the Party.

It seems to me that 50-100 members of the CC of our Party have every right to demand from the working class and can receive from it without excessive exertion of its forces.

This measure would considerably increase the stability of our Party and ease its struggle in the encirclement of hostile states, which, in my opinion, is likely to, and must, become much more acute in the next few years. I think that the stability of our Party would gain a thousandfold by such a measure.

*Lenin*

Taken down by N.A.

# GRANTING LEGISLATIVE FUNCTIONS TO THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

December 27, 1922

This idea was suggested by Comrade Trotsky, it seems, quite a long time ago. I was against it at the time, because I thought that there would then be a fundamental lack of co-ordination in the system of our legislative institutions. But after closer consideration of the matter I find that in substance there is a sound idea in it, namely: the State Planning Commission stands somewhat apart from our legislative institutions, although, as a body of experienced people, experts, representatives of science and technology, it is actually in a better position to form a correct judgement of affairs.

However, we have so far proceeded from the principle that the State Planning Commission must provide the state with critically analysed material and the state institutions must decide state matters. I think that in the present situation, when affairs of state have become unusually complicated, when it is necessary time and again to settle questions

of which some require the expert opinion of the members of the State Planning Commission and some do not, and, what is more, to settle matters which need the expert opinion of the State Planning Commission on some points but not on others — I think that we must now take a step towards extending the competence of the State Planning Commission.

I imagine that step to be such that the decisions of the State Planning Commission could not be rejected by ordinary procedure in Soviet bodies, but would need a special procedure to be reconsidered. For example, the question should be submitted to a session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, prepared for reconsideration according to a special instruction, involving the drawing up, under special rules, of memoranda to examine whether the State Planning Commission decision is subject to reversal. Lastly, special time limits should be set for the reconsideration of State Planning Commission decisions, etc.

In this respect I think we can and must accede to the wishes of Comrade Trotsky, but not in the sense that specifically any one of our political leaders, or the Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, etc., should

be Chairman of the State Planning Commission. I think that personal matters are at present too closely interwoven with the question of principle. I think that the attacks which are now made against the Chairman of the State Planning Commission, Comrade Krzhizhanovsky, and Comrade Pyatakov, his deputy, and which proceed along two lines, so that, on the one hand, we hear charges of extreme leniency, lack of independent judgement and lack of backbone, and, on the other, charges of excessive coarseness, drill-sergeant methods, lack of solid scientific background, etc. — I think these attacks express two sides of the question, exaggerating them to the extreme, and that in actual fact we need a skilful combination in the State Planning Commission of two types of character, of which one may be exemplified by Comrade Pyatakov and the other by Comrade Krzhizhanovsky.

I think that the State Planning Commission must be headed by a man who, on the one hand, has scientific education, namely, either technical or agronomic, with decades of experience in practical work in the field of technology or of agronomics. I think this man must possess not so much the qualities of an administrator as broad experience and

the ability to enlist the services of other men.

Taken down by M.V.



# **THE BEGINNING OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REORGANIZATION PLAN FOR THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC**

**December 29, 1922**

In increasing the number of its members, the CC, I think, must also, and perhaps mainly, devote attention to checking and improving our administrative machinery, which is no good at all. For this we must enlist the services of highly qualified specialists, and the task of supplying those specialists must devolve upon the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

How are we to combine these checking specialists, people with adequate knowledge, and the new members of the CC? This problem must be resolved in practice.

It seems to me that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (as a result of its development and of our perplexity about its development) has led all in all to what we now observe, namely, to an intermediate position

between a special People's Commissariat and a special function of the members of the CC; between an institution that inspects anything and everything and an aggregate of not very numerous but first-class inspectors, who must be well paid (this is especially indispensable in our age when everything must be paid for and inspectors are directly employed by the institutions that pay them better).

If the number of CC members is increased in the appropriate way, and they go through a course of state management year after year with the help of highly qualified specialists and of members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection who are highly authoritative in every branch — then, I think, we shall successfully solve this problem which we have not managed to do for such a long time.

To sum up, 100 members of the CC at the most and not more than 400-500 assistants, members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, engaged in inspecting under their direction.

*Lenin*

Taken down by M. V.

# ON EDUCATION

## *“Pages From a Diary”*

January 2, 1923

The recent publication of the report on literacy among the population of Russia, based on the census of 1920 (*Literacy in Russia*, issued by the Central Statistical Board, Public Education Section, Moscow, 1922), is a very important event.

Below I quote a table from this report on the state of literacy among the population of Russia in 1897 and 1920.

	Literates per thousand males		Literates per thousand females		Literates per thousand population	
	1897	1920	1897	1920	1897	1920
1. European Russia	326	422	136	255	229	330
2. North Caucasus	241	357	56	215	150	281
3. Siberia (Western)	170	307	46	134	108	218
<i>Overall average</i>	318	409	131	244	223	319

At a time when we hold forth on proletarian culture and the relation in which it stands to bourgeois culture, facts and figures reveal that we are in a very bad way even as

far as bourgeois culture is concerned. As might have been expected, it appears that we are still a very long way from attaining universal literacy, and that even compared with Tsarist times (1897) our progress has been far too slow. This should serve as a stern warning and reproach to those who have been soaring in the empyreal heights of "proletarian culture." It shows what a vast amount of urgent spade-work we still have to do to reach the standard of an ordinary West-European civilized country. It also shows what a vast amount of work we have to do today to achieve, on the basis of our proletarian gains, anything like a real cultural standard.

We must not confine ourselves to this incontrovertible but too theoretical proposition. The very next time we revise our quarterly budget we must take this matter up in a practical way as well. In the first place, of course, we shall have to cut down the expenditure of government departments other than the People's Commissariat of Education, and the sums thus released should be assigned for the latter's needs. In a year like the present, when we are relatively well supplied, we must not be chary in increasing the bread ration for schoolteachers.

Generally speaking, it cannot be said that

the work now being done in public education is too narrow. Quite a lot is being done to get the old teachers out of their rut, to attract them to the new problems, to rouse their interest in new methods of education, and in such problems as religion.

But we are not doing the main thing. We are not doing anything — or doing far from enough — to raise the schoolteacher to the level that is absolutely essential if we want any culture at all, proletarian or even bourgeois. We must bear in mind the semi-Asiatic ignorance from which we have not yet extricated ourselves, and from which we cannot extricate ourselves without strenuous effort — although we have every opportunity to do so, because nowhere are the masses of the people so interested in real culture as they are in our country; nowhere are the problems of this culture tackled so thoroughly and consistently as they are in our country; in no other country is state power in the hands of the working class which, in its mass, is fully aware of the deficiencies, I shall not say of its culture, but of its literacy; nowhere is the working class so ready to make, and nowhere is it actually making, such sacrifices to improve its position in this respect as in our country.

Too little, far too little, is still being done by us to adjust our state budget to satisfy, as a first measure, the requirements of elementary public education. Even in our People's Commissariat of Education we all too often find disgracefully inflated staffs in some state publishing establishment, which is contrary to the concept that the state's first concern should not be publishing houses but that there should be people to read, that the number of people able to read is greater, so that book publishing should have a wider political field in future Russia. Owing to the old (and bad) habit, we are still devoting much more time and effort to technical questions, such as the question of book publishing, than to the general political question of literacy among the people.

If we take the Central Vocational Education Board, we are sure that there, too, we shall find far too much that is superfluous and inflated by departmental interests, much that is ill-adjusted to the requirements of broad public education. Far from everything that we find in the Central Vocational Education Board can be justified by the legitimate desire first of all to improve and give a practical slant to the education of our young factory workers. If we examine the staff of

the Central Vocational Education Board carefully we shall find very much that is inflated and is in that respect fictitious and should be done away with. There is still very much in the proletarian and peasant state that can and must be economized for the purpose of promoting literacy among the people; this can be done by closing institutions which are playthings of a semi-aristocratic type, or institutions we can still do without and will be able to do without, and shall have to do without, for a long time to come, considering the state of literacy among the people as revealed by the statistics.

Our schoolteacher should be raised to a standard he has never achieved, and cannot achieve, in bourgeois society. This is a truism and requires no proof. We must strive for this state of affairs by working steadily, methodically and persistently to raise the teacher to a higher cultural level, to train him thoroughly for his really high calling and — mainly, mainly and mainly — to improve his position materially.

We must systematically step up our efforts to organize the schoolteachers so as to transform them from the bulwark of the bourgeois system that they still are in all capitalist countries without exception, into the

bulwark of the Soviet system, in order, through their agency, to divert the peasantry from alliance with the bourgeoisie and to bring them into alliance with the proletariat.

I want briefly to emphasize the special importance in this respect of regular visits to the villages; such visits, it is true, are already being practised and should be regularly promoted. We should not stint money — which we all too often waste on the machinery of state that is almost entirely a product of the past historical epoch — on measures like these visits to the villages.

For the speech I was to have delivered at the Congress of Soviets in December 1922 I collected data on the patronage undertaken by urban workers over villagers. Part of these data was obtained for me by Comrade Khodorovsky, and since I have been unable to deal with this problem and give it publicity through the Congress, I submit the matter to the comrades for discussion now.

Here we have a fundamental political question — the relations between town and country — which is of decisive importance for the whole of our revolution. While the bourgeois state methodically concentrates all its efforts on doping the urban workers, adapting all the literature published at state



expense and at the expense of the Tsarist and bourgeois parties for this purpose, we can and must utilize our political power to make the urban worker an effective vehicle of communist ideas among the rural proletariat.

I said "communist," but I hasten to make a reservation for fear of causing a misunderstanding, or of being taken too literally. Under no circumstances must this be understood to mean that we should immediately propagate purely and strictly communist ideas in the countryside. As long as our countryside lacks the material basis for communism, it will be, I should say, harmful, in fact, I should say, fatal, for communism to do so.

That is a fact. We must start by establishing contacts between town and country without the preconceived aim of implanting communism in the rural districts. It is an aim which cannot be achieved at the present time. It is inopportune, and to set an aim like that at the present time would be harmful, instead of useful, to the cause.

But it is our duty to establish contacts between the urban workers and the rural working people, to establish between them a form of comradeship which can easily be created. This is one of the fundamental tasks of the

working class which holds power. To achieve this we must form a number of associations (Party, trade union and private) of factory workers, which would devote themselves regularly to assisting the villages in their cultural development.

Is it possible to “attach” all the urban groups to all the village groups, so that every working-class group may take advantage regularly of every opportunity, of every occasion to serve the cultural needs of the village group it is “attached” to? Or will it be possible to find other forms of contact? I here confine myself solely to formulating the question in order to draw the comrades’ attention to it, to point out the available experience of Western Siberia (to which Comrade Khodorovsky drew my attention) and to present this gigantic, historic cultural task in all its magnitude.

We are doing almost nothing for the rural districts outside our official budget or outside official channels. True, in our country the nature of the cultural relations between town and village is automatically and inevitably changing. Under capitalism the town introduced political, economic, moral, physical, etc., corruption into the countryside. In our case, towns are automatically beginning

to introduce the very opposite of this into the countryside. But, I repeat, all this is going on automatically, spontaneously, and can be improved (and later increased a hundred-fold) by doing it consciously, methodically and systematically.

We shall begin to advance (and shall then surely advance a hundred times more quickly) only after we have studied the question, after we have formed all sorts of workers' organizations — doing everything to prevent them from becoming bureaucratic — to take up the matter, discuss it and get things done.

# ON CO-OPERATION

January 4-6, 1923

## I

It seems to me that not enough attention is being paid to the co-operative movement in our country. Not everyone understands that now, since the time of the October Revolution and quite apart from NEP (on the contrary, in this connection we must say — because of NEP), our co-operative movement has become one of great significance. There is a lot of fantasy in the dreams of the old co-operators. Often they are ridiculously fantastic. But why are they fantastic? Because people do not understand the fundamental, the rock-bottom significance of the working-class political struggle for the overthrow of the rule of the exploiters. We have overthrown the rule of the exploiters, and much that was fantastic, even romantic, even banal in the dreams of the old co-operators is now becoming unvarnished reality.

Indeed, since political power is in the hands of the working class, since this political power owns all the means of production, the only task, indeed, that remains for us is

to organize the population in co-operative societies. With most of the population organized in co-operatives, the socialism which in the past was legitimately treated with ridicule, scorn and contempt by those who were rightly convinced that it was necessary to wage the class struggle, the struggle for political power, etc., will achieve its aim automatically. But not all comrades realize how vastly, how infinitely important it is now to organize the population of Russia in co-operative societies. By adopting NEP we made a concession to the peasant as a trader, to the principle of private trade; it is precisely for this reason (contrary to what some people think) that the co-operative movement is of such immense importance. All we actually need under NEP is to organize the population of Russia in co-operative societies on a sufficiently large scale, for we have now found that degree of combination of private interest, of private commercial interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the common interests which was formerly the stumbling-block for very many socialists. Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this

proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc. — is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society out of co-operatives, out of co-operatives alone, which we formerly ridiculed as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society? It is still not the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for it.

It is this very circumstance that is underestimated by many of our practical workers. They look down upon our co-operative societies, failing to appreciate their exceptional importance, first, from the standpoint of principle (the means of production are owned by the state), and, second, from the standpoint of transition to the new system by means that are the *simplest, easiest and most acceptable to the peasant*.

But this again is of fundamental importance. It is one thing to draw up fantastic plans for building socialism through all sorts of workers' associations, and quite another to learn to build socialism in practice in such a way that *every* small peasant could take

part in it. That is the very stage we have now reached. And there is no doubt that, having reached it, we are taking too little advantage of it.

We went too far when we introduced NEP, but not because we attached too much importance to the principle of free enterprise and trade — we went too far because we lost sight of the co-operatives, because we now underrate the co-operatives, because we are already beginning to forget the vast importance of the co-operatives from the above two points of view.

I now propose to discuss with the reader what can and must at once be done practically on the basis of this “co-operative” principle. By what means can we, and must we, start at once to develop this “co-operative” principle so that its socialist meaning may be clear to all?

Co-operation must be politically so organized that it will not only generally and always enjoy certain privileges, but that these privileges should be of a purely material nature (a favourable bank-rate, etc.). The co-operatives must be granted state loans that are greater, if only by a little, than the loans we grant to private enterprises, even to heavy industry, etc.

A social system emerges only if it has the financial backing of a definite class. There is no need to mention the hundreds of millions of rubles that the birth of “free” capitalism cost. At present we have to realize that the co-operative system is the social system we must now give more than ordinary assistance, and we must actually give that assistance. But it must be assistance in the real sense of the word, i.e., it will not be enough to interpret it to mean assistance for any kind of co-operative trade; by assistance we must mean aid to co-operative trade in which *really large classes of the population actually take part*. It is certainly a correct form of assistance to give a bonus to peasants who take part in co-operative trade; but the whole point is to verify the nature of this participation, to verify the awareness behind it, and to verify its quality. Strictly speaking, when a co-operator goes to a village and opens a co-operative store, the people take no part in this whatever; but at the same time guided by their own interests they will hasten to try to take part in it.

There is another aspect to this question. From the point of view of the “enlightened” (primarily, literate) European there is not much left for us to do to induce absolutely



everyone to take not a passive, but an active part in co-operative operations. Strictly speaking, there is “*only*” one thing we have left to do and that is to make our people so “enlightened” that they understand all the advantages of everybody participating in the work of the co-operatives, and organize this participation. “*Only*” that. There are now no other devices needed to advance to socialism. But to achieve this “*only*”, there must be a veritable revolution — the entire people must go through a period of cultural development. Therefore, our rule must be: as little philosophizing and as few acrobatics as possible. In this respect NEP is an advance, because it is adjustable to the level of the most ordinary peasant and does not demand anything higher of him. But it will take a whole historical epoch to get the entire population into the work of the co-operatives through NEP. At best we can achieve this in one or two decades. Nevertheless, it will be a distinct historical epoch, and without this historical epoch, without universal literacy, without a proper degree of efficiency, without training the population sufficiently to acquire the habit of book-reading, and without the material basis for this, without a certain sufficiency to safeguard against, say, bad harvests, famine,

etc. — without this we shall not achieve our object. The thing now is to learn to combine the wide revolutionary range of action, the revolutionary enthusiasm which we have displayed, and displayed abundantly, and crowned with complete success — to learn to combine this with (I am almost inclined to say) the ability to be an efficient and capable trader, which is quite enough to be a good co-operator. By ability to be a trader I mean the ability to be a cultured trader. Let those Russians, or peasants, who imagine that since they trade they are good traders, get that well into their heads. This does not follow at all. They do trade, but that is far from being cultured traders. They now trade in an Asiatic manner, but to be a good trader one must trade in the European manner. They are a whole epoch behind in that.

In conclusion: a number of economic, financial and banking privileges must be granted to the co-operatives — this is the way our socialist state must promote the new principle on which the population must be organized. But this is only the general outline of the task; it does not define and depict in detail the entire content of the practical task, i.e., we must find what form of “bonus” to give for joining the co-operatives (and the

terms on which we should give it), the form of bonus by which we shall assist the co-operatives sufficiently, the form of bonus that will produce the civilized co-operator. And given social ownership of the means of production, given the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, the system of civilized co-operators is the system of socialism.

*January 4, 1923*

## II

Whenever I wrote about the New Economic Policy I always quoted the article on state capitalism which I wrote in 1918. This has more than once aroused doubts in the minds of certain young comrades. But their doubts were mainly on abstract political points.

It seemed to them that the term "state capitalism" could not be applied to a system under which the means of production were owned by the working class, a working class that held political power. They did not notice, however, that I used the term "state capitalism," *firstly*, to connect historically our present position with the position adopted in my controversy with the so-called Left Com-

munists; also, I argued at the time that state capitalism would be superior to our existing economy. It was important for me to show the continuity between ordinary state capitalism and the unusual, even very unusual, state capitalism to which I referred in introducing the reader to the New Economic Policy. *Secondly*, the practical purpose was always important to me. And the practical purpose of our New Economic Policy was to lease out concessions. In the prevailing circumstances, concessions in our country would unquestionably have been a pure type of state capitalism. That is how I argued about state capitalism.

But there is another aspect of the matter for which we may need state capitalism, or at least a comparison with it. It is the question of co-operatives.

In the capitalist state, co-operatives are no doubt collective capitalist institutions. Nor is there any doubt that under our present economic conditions, when we combine private capitalist enterprises — but in no other way than on nationalized land and in no other way than under the control of the working-class state — with enterprises of a consistently socialist type (the means of production, the land on which the enterprises are

situated, and the enterprises as a whole belonging to the state), the question arises about a third type of enterprise, the co-operatives, which were not formerly regarded as an independent type differing fundamentally from the others. Under private capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from capitalist enterprises as collective enterprises differ from private enterprises. Under state capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, because they are private enterprises, and, secondly, because they are collective enterprises. Under our present system, co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but do not differ from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, i.e., the working class.

This circumstance is not considered sufficiently when co-operatives are discussed. It is forgotten that owing to the special features of our political system, our co-operatives acquire an altogether exceptional significance. If we exclude concessions, which, incidentally, have not developed on any considerable scale, co-operation under our conditions nearly always coincides fully with so-

cialism.

Let me explain what I mean. Why were the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onwards, fantastic? Because they dreamed of peacefully remodelling contemporary society into socialism without taking account of such fundamental questions as the class struggle, the capture of political power by the working class, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding as entirely fantastic this “co-operative” socialism, and as romantic, and even banal, the dream of transforming class enemies into class collaborators and class war into class peace (so-called class truce) by merely organizing the population in co-operative societies.

Undoubtedly we were right from the point of view of the fundamental task of the present day, for socialism cannot be established without a class struggle for political power in the state.

But see how things have changed now that political power is in the hands of the working class, now that the political power of the exploiters is overthrown and all the means of production (except those which the workers’ state voluntarily abandons on specified terms and for a certain time to the ex-

plotters in the form of concessions) are owned by the working class.

Now we are entitled to say that for us the mere growth of co-operation (with the “slight” exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of socialism, and at the same time we have to admit that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism. The radical modification is this; formerly we placed, and had to place, the main emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning political power, etc. Now the emphasis is changing and shifting to peaceful, organizational, “cultural” work. I should say that emphasis is shifting to educational work, were it not for our international relations, were it not for the fact that we have to fight for our position on a world scale. If we leave that aside, however, and confine ourselves to internal economic relations, the emphasis in our work is certainly shifting to education.

Two main tasks confront us, which constitute the epoch — to reorganize our machinery of state, which is utterly useless, and which we took over in its entirety from the preceding epoch; during the past five years of struggle we did not, and could not, drastically reorganize it. Our second task is educa-

tional work among the peasants. And the economic object of this educational work among the peasants is to organize the latter in co-operative societies. If the whole of the peasantry had been organized in co-operatives, we would by now have been standing with both feet on the soil of socialism. But the organization of the entire peasantry in co-operative societies presupposes a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming mass) that cannot, in fact, be achieved without a cultural revolution.

Our opponents told us repeatedly that we were rash in undertaking to implant socialism in an insufficiently cultured country. But they were misled by our having started from the opposite end to that prescribed by theory (the theory of pedants of all kinds), because in our country the political and social revolution preceded the cultural revolution, that very cultural revolution which nevertheless now confronts us.

This cultural revolution would now suffice to make our country a completely socialist country; but it presents immense difficulties of a purely cultural (for we are illiterate) and material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain development of the



material means of production, must have a certain material base).

*January 6, 1923*

# OUR REVOLUTION

*Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes*

January 16-17, 1923

## I

I have lately been glancing through Sukhanov's notes on the revolution. What strikes one most is the pedantry of all our petty-bourgeois democrats and of all the heroes of the Second International. Apart from the fact that they are all extremely faint-hearted, that when it comes to the minutest deviation from the German model even the best of them fortify themselves with reservations — apart from this characteristic, which is common to all petty-bourgeois democrats and has been abundantly manifested by them throughout the revolution, what strikes one is their slavish imitation of the past.

They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic. They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have even absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statements that in times of rev-

olution the utmost flexibility is demanded, and have even failed to notice, for instance, the statements Marx made in his letters — I think it was in 1856 — expressing the hope of combining a peasant war in Germany, which might create a revolutionary situation, with the working-class movement — they avoid even this plain statement and walk round and about it like a cat around a bowl of hot porridge.

Their conduct betrays them as cowardly reformists who are afraid to deviate from the bourgeoisie, let alone break with it, and at the same time they disguise their cowardice with the wildest rhetoric and braggartry. But what strikes one in all of them even from the purely theoretical point of view is their utter inability to grasp the following Marxist considerations: up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow a definite path of development, and cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain amendments (quite insignificant from the standpoint of the general development of world history).

*First* — the revolution connected with the first imperialist world war. Such a revolution was bound to reveal new features, or varia-

tions, resulting from the war itself, for the world has never seen such a war in such a situation. We find that since the war the bourgeoisie of the wealthiest countries have to this day been unable to restore “normal” bourgeois relations. Yet our reformists — petty bourgeois who make a show of being revolutionaries — believed, and still believe, that normal bourgeois relations are the limit (thus far shalt thou go and no farther). And even their conception of “normal” is extremely stereotyped and narrow.

*Secondly*, they are complete strangers to the idea that while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that because Russia stands on the borderline between the civilized countries and the countries which this war has for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilization — all the Oriental, non-European countries — she could and was, indeed, bound to reveal certain distinguishing features; although these, of course, are in keeping with the general line of world development, they distin-

guish her revolution from those which took place in the West-European countries and introduce certain partial innovations as the revolution moves on to the countries of the East.

Infinitely stereotyped, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain "learned" gentlemen among them put it, the objective economic premises for socialism do not exist in our country. It does not occur to any of them to ask: but what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, influenced by the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that would offer it at least some chance of securing conditions for the further development of civilization that were somewhat unusual?

"The development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible." All the heroes of the Second International, including, of course, Sukhanov, beat the drums about this proposition. They keep harping on this incontrovertible proposition in a thousand different keys, and think that it is the decisive

criterion of our revolution.

But what if the situation, which drew Russia into the imperialist world war that involved every more or less influential West-European country and made her a witness of the eve of the revolutions maturing or partly already begun in the East, gave rise to circumstances that put Russia and her development in a position which enabled us to achieve precisely that combination of a “peasant war” with the working-class movement suggested in 1856 by no less a Marxist than Marx himself as a possible prospect for Prussia?

What if the complete hopelessness of the situation, by stimulating the efforts of the workers and peasants tenfold, offered us the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilization in a different way from that of the West-European countries? Has that altered the general line of development of world history? Has that altered the basic relations between the basic classes of all the countries that are being, or have been, drawn into the general course of world history?

If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite “level of culture” is, for it differs in every West-European

country), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?

*January 16, 1923*

## II

You say that civilization is necessary for the building of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first create such prerequisites of civilization in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical sequence of events are impermissible or impossible?

Napoleon, I think, wrote: "*On s'engage et puis... on voit.*" Rendered freely this means: "First engage in a serious battle and then see what happens." Well, we did first engage in a serious battle in October 1917, and then saw such details of development (from the standpoint of world history they were certainly details) as the Brest peace, the New Economic

Policy, and so forth. And now there can be no doubt that in the main we have been victorious.

Our Sukhanovs, not to mention Social-Democrats still farther to the right, never even dream that revolutions could be made otherwise. Our European philistines never even dream that the subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess much vaster populations and a much vaster diversity of social conditions, will undoubtedly display even greater distinctions than the Russian revolution.

It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskian lines was a very useful thing in its day. But it is time, for all that, to abandon the idea that it foresaw all the forms of development of subsequent world history. It would be timely to say that those who think so are simply fools.

*January 17, 1923*



# HOW WE SHOULD REORGANIZE THE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' INSPECTION

*Recommendation to the Twelfth Party  
Congress*

**January 23, 1923**

It is beyond question that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is an enormous difficulty for us, and that so far this difficulty has not been overcome. I think that the comrades who try to overcome the difficulty by denying that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is useful and necessary are wrong. But I do not deny that the problem presented by our state apparatus and the task of improving it is very difficult, that it is far from being solved, and is an extremely urgent one.

With the exception of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, our state apparatus is to a considerable extent a survival of the past and has undergone hardly any serious change. It has only been slightly touched up on the surface, but in all other respects it is a most typical relic of our old state machine. And so, to find a method of really ren-

ovating it, I think we ought to turn for experience to our Civil War.

How did we act in the more critical moments of the Civil War?

We concentrated our best Party forces in the Red Army; we mobilized the best of our workers; we looked for new forces at the deepest roots of our dictatorship.

I am convinced that we must go to the same source to find the means of reorganizing the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I recommend that our Twelfth Party Congress adopt the following plan of reorganization, based on some enlargement of our Central Control Commission.

The Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee of our Party are already revealing a tendency to develop into a kind of supreme Party conference. They take place, on the average, not more than once in two months, while the routine work is conducted, as we know, on behalf of the Central Committee by our Political Bureau, our Organizing Bureau, our Secretariat, and so forth. I think we ought to follow the road we have thus taken to the end and definitely transform the Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee into supreme Party conferences convened once in two months jointly with the Central Control

Commission. The Central Control Commission should be amalgamated with the main body of the reorganized Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on the following lines.

I propose that the Congress should elect 75 to 100 new members to the Central Control Commission. They should be workers and peasants, and should go through the same Party screening as ordinary members of the Central Committee, because they are to enjoy the same rights as the members of the Central Committee.

On the other hand, the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be reduced to three or four hundred persons, specially screened for conscientiousness and knowledge of our state apparatus. They must also undergo a special test as regards their knowledge of the principles of scientific organization of labour in general, and of administrative work, office work, and so forth, in particular.

In my opinion, such an amalgamation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with the Central Control Commission will be beneficial to both these institutions. On the one hand, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will thus obtain such high authority that it will certainly not be inferior to the People's

Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, our Central Committee, together with the Central Control Commission, will definitely take the road of becoming a supreme Party conference, which in fact it has already taken, and along which it should proceed to the end so as to be able to fulfil its functions properly in two respects: in respect to *its own* methodical, expedient and systematic organization and work, and in respect to maintaining contacts with the broad masses through the medium of the best of our workers and peasants.

I foresee an objection that, directly or indirectly, may come from those spheres which make our state apparatus antiquated, i.e., from those who urge that its present utterly impossible, indecently pre-revolutionary form be preserved (incidentally, we now have an opportunity which rarely occurs in history of ascertaining the period necessary for bringing about radical social changes; we now see clearly *what* can be done in five years, and what requires much more time).

The objection I foresee is that the change I propose will lead to nothing but chaos. The members of the Central Control Commission will wander around all the institutions, not knowing where, why or to whom to apply,

causing disorganization everywhere and distracting employees from their routine work, etc., etc.

I think that the malicious source of this objection is so obvious that it does not warrant a reply. It goes without saying that the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and his collegium (and also, in the proper cases, the Secretariat of our Central Committee) will have to put in years of persistent effort to get the Commissariat properly organized, and to get it to function smoothly in conjunction with the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, as well as the whole collegium, can (and should) remain and guide the work of the entire Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, including the work of all the members of the Central Control Commission who will be "placed under his command." The three or four hundred employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection that are to remain, according to my plan, should, on the one hand, perform purely secretarial functions for the other members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and for the supplementary members

of the Central Control Commission; and, on the other hand, they should be highly skilled, specially screened, particularly reliable, and highly paid, so that they may be relieved of their present truly unhappy (to say the least) position of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection officials.

I am sure that the reduction of the staff to the number I have indicated will greatly enhance the efficiency of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection personnel and the quality of all its work, enabling the People's Commissar and the members of the collegium to concentrate their efforts entirely on organizing work and on systematically and steadily improving its efficiency, which is so absolutely essential for our workers' and peasants' government, and for our Soviet system.

On the other hand, I also think that the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should work on partly amalgamating and partly co-ordinating those higher institutions for the organization of labour (the Central Institute of Labour, the Institute for the Scientific Organization of Labour, etc.), of which there are now no fewer than twelve in our Republic. Excessive uniformity and a consequent desire to amalgamate will be harmful. On the contrary,

what is needed here is a reasonable and expedient mean between amalgamating all these institutions and properly delimiting them, allowing for a certain independence for each of them.

Our own Central Committee will undoubtedly gain no less from this reorganization than the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. It will gain because its contacts with the masses will be greater and because the regularity and effectiveness of its work will improve. It will then be possible (and necessary) to institute a stricter and more responsible procedure of preparing for the meetings of the Political Bureau, which should be attended by a definite number of members of the Central Control Commission determined either for a definite period or by some organizational plan.

In distributing work to the members of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, in conjunction with the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, should impose on them the duty either of attending the meetings of the Political Bureau for the purpose of examining all the documents appertaining to matters that come before it in one way or another; or of devoting

their working time to theoretical study, to the study of scientific methods of organizing labour; or of taking a practical part in the work of supervising and improving our machinery of state, from the higher state institutions to the lower local bodies, etc.

I also think that in addition to the political advantages accruing from the fact that the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission will, as a consequence of this reform, be much better informed and better prepared for the meetings of the Political Bureau (all the documents relevant to the business to be discussed at these meetings should be sent to all the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission not later than the day before the meeting of the Political Bureau, except in absolutely urgent cases, for which special methods of informing the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission and of settling these matters must be devised), there will also be the advantage that the influence of purely personal and incidental factors in our Central Committee will diminish, and this will reduce the danger of a split.

Our Central Committee has grown into a strictly centralized and highly authoritative



group, but the conditions under which this group is working are not commensurate with its authority. The reform I recommend should help to remove this defect, and the members of the Central Control Commission, whose duty it will be to attend all meetings of the Political Bureau in a definite number, will have to form a compact group which should not allow anybody's authority without exception to prevent them from putting questions, verifying documents, and, in general, from keeping themselves fully informed of all things and from exercising the strictest control over the proper conduct of affairs.

Of course, in our Soviet Republic, the social order is based on the collaboration of two classes: the workers and peasants, in which the "Nepmen," i.e., the bourgeoisie, are now permitted to participate on certain terms. If serious class disagreements arise between these classes, a split will be inevitable. But the grounds for such a split are not inevitable in our social system, and it is the principal task of our Central Committee and Central Control Commission, as well as of our Party as a whole, to watch very closely over such circumstances as may cause a split, and to forestall them, for in the final analysis the fate of our Republic will depend on

whether the peasant masses will stand by the working class, loyal to their alliance, or whether they will permit the “Nepmen,” i.e., the new bourgeoisie, to drive a wedge between them and the working class, to split them off from the working class. The more clearly we see this alternative, the more clearly all our workers and peasants understand it, the greater are the chances that we shall avoid a split, which would be fatal for the Soviet Republic.

## BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER

March 2, 1923

In the matter of improving our state apparatus, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should not, in my opinion, either strive after quantity or hurry. We have so far been able to devote so little thought and attention to the efficiency of our state apparatus that it would now be quite legitimate if we took special care to secure its thorough organization, and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, i.e., not inferior to the best West-European standards. For a socialist republic this condition is, of course, too modest. But our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with mistrust and scepticism. These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture. For a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start, we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, i.e., bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc. In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are most harm-

ful. Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, in the matter of our state apparatus we should now draw the conclusion from our past experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly.

Our state apparatus is so deplorable, not to say wretched, that we must first think very carefully how to combat its defects, bearing in mind that these defects are rooted in the past, which, although it has been overthrown, has not yet been overcome, has not yet reached the stage of a culture that has receded into the distant past. I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits. We might say that the good in our social system has not been properly studied, understood, and taken to heart; it has been hastily grasped at; it has not been verified or tested, corroborated by experience, and not made durable, etc. Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at such breakneck speed that in a matter of five years we passed from Tsarism to the Soviet system.

It is time we did something about it. We must show sound scepticism for too rapid

progress, for boastfulness, etc. We must give thought to testing the steps forward we proclaim every hour, take every minute and then prove every second that they are flimsy, superficial and misunderstood. The most harmful thing here would be haste. The most harmful thing would be to rely on the assumption that we know at least something, or that we have any considerable number of elements necessary for the building of a really new state apparatus, one really worthy to be called socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, we are ridiculously deficient of such an apparatus, and even of the elements of it, and we must remember that we should not stint time on building it, and that it will take many, many years.

What elements have we for building this apparatus? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for socialism. These elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better apparatus for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required. Nothing will be achieved in this by doing things in a rush, by assault, by vim or vigour, or in general, by any of the best human qualities. Secondly, we have ele-

ments of knowledge, education and training, but they are ridiculously inadequate compared with all other countries.

Here we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

In order to renovate our state apparatus we must at all costs set out, first, to learn, secondly, to learn, and thirdly, to learn, and then see to it that learning shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catchphrase (and we should admit in all frankness that this happens very often with us), that learning shall really become part of our very being, that it shall actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life. In short, we must not make the demands that are made by bourgeois Western Europe, but demands that are fit and proper for a country which has set out to develop into a socialist country.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above are the following: we must make the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a really exemplary institution, an instrument to improve our state apparatus.

In order that it may attain the desired high level, we must follow the rule: "Measure

your cloth seven times before you cut.”

For this purpose, we must utilize the very best of what there is in our social system, and utilize it with the greatest caution, thoughtfulness and knowledge, to build up the new People’s Commissariat.

For this purpose, the best elements that we have in our social system — such as, first, the advanced workers, and, second, the really enlightened elements for whom we can vouch that they will not take the word for the deed, and will not utter a single word that goes against their conscience — should not shrink from admitting any difficulty and should not shrink from any struggle in order to achieve the object they have seriously set themselves.

We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus, but it has been mere bustle, which has proved useless in these five years, or even futile, or even harmful. This bustle created the impression that we were doing something, but in effect it was only clogging up our institutions and our brains.

It is high time things were changed.

We must follow the rule: Better fewer, but better. We must follow the rule: Better get good human material in two or even three

years than work in haste without hope of getting any at all.

I know that it will be hard to keep to this rule and apply it under our conditions. I know that the opposite rule will force its way through a thousand loopholes. I know that enormous resistance will have to be put up, that devilish persistence will be required, that in the first few years at least work in this field will be hellishly hard. Nevertheless, I am convinced that only by such effort shall we be able to achieve our aim; and that only by achieving this aim shall we create a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, socialist, and so on, and so forth.

Many readers probably thought that the figures I quoted by way of illustration in my first article<sup>1</sup> were too small. I am sure that many calculations may be made to prove that they are. But I think that we must put one thing above all such and other calculations, i.e., our desire to obtain really exemplary quality.

I think that the time has at last come when we must work in real earnest to improve our state apparatus and in this there

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<sup>1</sup> See: "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection," p. 39 of this book.



can scarcely be anything more harmful than haste. That is why I would sound a strong warning against inflating the figures. In my opinion, we should, on the contrary, be especially sparing with figures in this matter. Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not at present enjoy the slightest authority. Everybody knows that no other institutions are worse organized than those of our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat. We must have this firmly fixed in our minds if we really want to create within a few years an institution that will, first, be an exemplary institution, secondly, win everybody's absolute confidence, and, thirdly, prove to all and sundry that we have really justified the work of such a highly placed institution as the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, we must immediately and irrevocably reject all general figures for the size of office staffs. We must select employees for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with particular care and only on the basis of the strictest test. Indeed, what is the use of establishing a People's Commissariat which carries on anyhow, which does not enjoy the slightest confi-

dence, and whose word carries scarcely any weight? I think that our main object in launching the work of reconstruction that we now have in mind is to avoid all this.

The workers whom we are enlisting as members of the Central Control Commission must be irreproachable Communists, and I think that a great deal has yet to be done to teach them the methods and objects of their work. Furthermore, there must be a definite number of secretaries to assist in this work, who must be put to a triple test before they are appointed to their posts. Lastly, the officials whom in exceptional cases we shall accept directly as employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must conform to the following requirements:

First, they must be recommended by several Communists.

Second, they must pass a test for knowledge of our state apparatus.

Third, they must pass a test in the fundamentals of the theory of our state apparatus, in the fundamentals of management, office routine, etc.

Fourth, they must work in such close harmony with the members of the Central Control Commission and with their own secretariat that we could vouch for the work of the

whole apparatus.

I know that these requirements are extraordinarily strict, and I am very much afraid that the majority of the “practical” workers in the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection will say that these requirements are impracticable, or will scoff at them. But I ask any of the present chiefs of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection, or anyone associated with that body, whether they can honestly tell me the practical purpose of a People’s Commissariat like the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection. I think this question will help them recover their sense of proportion. Either it is not worth while having another of the numerous reorganizations that we have had of this hopeless affair, the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection, or we must really set to work, by slow, difficult and unusual methods, and by testing these methods over and over again, to create something really exemplary, something that will win the respect of all and sundry for its merits, and not only because of its rank and title.

If we do not arm ourselves with patience, if we do not devote several years to this task, we had better not tackle it at all.

In my opinion we ought to select a minimum number of the higher labour research

institutes, etc., which we have baked so hastily, see whether they are organized properly, and allow them to continue working, but only in a way that conforms to the high standards of modern science and gives us all its benefits. If we do that it will not be utopian to hope that within a few years we shall have an institution that will be able to perform its functions, to work systematically and steadily on improving our state apparatus, an institution backed by the trust of the working class, of the Russian Communist Party, and the whole population of our Republic.

The spade-work for this could be begun at once. If the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection accepted the present plan of reorganization, it could now take preparatory steps and work methodically until the task is completed, without haste, and not hesitating to alter what has already been done.

Any half-hearted solution would be extremely harmful in this matter. A measure for the size of the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection based on any other consideration would, in fact, be based on the old bureaucratic considerations, on old prejudices, on what has already been condemned,

universally ridiculed, etc.

In substance, the matter is as follows:

Either we prove now that we have really learned something about state organization (we ought to have learned something in five years), or we prove that we are not sufficiently mature for it. If the latter is the case, we had better not tackle the task.

I think that with the available human material it will not be immodest to assume that we have learned enough to be able systematically to rebuild at least one People's Commissariat. True, this one People's Commissariat will have to be the model for our entire state apparatus.

We ought at once to announce contest in the compilation of two or more textbooks on the organization of labour in general, and on management in particular. We can take as a basis the book already published by Yerman-sky, although it should be said in parentheses that he obviously sympathizes with Menshevism and is unfit to compile textbooks for the Soviet system. We can also take as a basis the recent book by Kerzhentsev, and some of the other partial textbooks available may be useful too.

We ought to send several qualified and conscientious people to Germany, or to Brit-

ain, to collect literature and to study this question. I mention Britain in case it is found impossible to send people to the USA or Canada.

We ought to appoint a commission to draw up the preliminary programme of examinations for prospective employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; ditto for candidates to the Central Control Commission.

These and similar measures will not, of course, cause any difficulties for the People's Commissar or the collegium of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or for the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.

Simultaneously, a preparatory commission should be appointed to select candidates for membership of the Central Control Commission. I hope that we shall now be able to find more than enough candidates for this post among the experienced workers in all departments, as well as among the students of our Soviet higher schools. It would hardly be right to exclude one or another category beforehand. Probably preference will have to be given to a mixed composition for this institution, which should combine many qualities, and dissimilar merits. Consequently, the task of drawing up the list of candidates will

entail a considerable amount of work. For example, it would be least desirable for the staff of the new People's Commissariat to consist of people of one type, only of officials, say, or for it to exclude people of the propagandist type, or people whose principal quality is sociability or the ability to penetrate into circles that are not altogether customary for officials in this field, etc.

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I think I shall be able to express my idea best if I compare my plan with that of academic institutions. Under the guidance of their Presidium, the members of the Central Control Commission should systematically examine all the papers and documents of the Political Bureau. Moreover, they should divide their time correctly between various jobs in investigating the routine in our institutions, from the very small and privately-owned offices to the highest state institutions. And lastly, their functions should include the study of theory, i.e., the theory of organization of the work they intend to devote themselves to, and practical work under the guidance either of older comrades or of teachers in the higher institutes for the organ-

ization of labour.

I do not think, however, that they will be able to confine themselves to this sort of academic work. In addition, they will have to prepare themselves for work which I would not hesitate to call training to catch, I will not say rogues, but something like that, and working out special ruses to screen their movements, their approach, etc.

If such proposals were made in West-European government institutions they would rouse frightful resentment, a feeling of moral indignation, etc.; but I trust that we have not become so bureaucratic as to be capable of that. NEP has not yet succeeded in gaining such respect as to cause any of us to be shocked at the idea that somebody may be caught. Our Soviet Republic is of such recent construction, and there are such heaps of the old lumber still lying around that it would hardly occur to anyone to be shocked at the idea that we should delve into them by means of ruses, by means of investigations sometimes directed to rather remote sources or in a roundabout way. And even if it did occur to anyone to be shocked by this, we may be sure that such a person would make himself a laughing-stock.

Let us hope that our new Workers' and



Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call *pruderie*, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices.

When I said above that we must study and study hard in institutes for the higher organization of labour, etc., I did not by any means imply "studying" in the schoolroom way, nor did I confine myself to the idea of studying only in the schoolroom way. I hope that not a single genuine revolutionary will suspect me of refusing, in this case, to understand "studies" to include resorting to some semi-humorous trick, cunning device, piece of trickery or something of that sort. I know that in the staid and earnest states of Western Europe such an idea would horrify people and that not a single decent official would even entertain it. I hope, however, that we have not yet become as bureaucratic as all that and that in our midst the discussion of this idea will give rise to nothing more than amusement.

Indeed, why not combine pleasure with utility? Why not resort to some humorous or semi-humorous trick to expose something ri-

diculous, something harmful, something semi-ridiculous, semi-harmful, etc.?

It seems to me that our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will gain a great deal if it undertakes to examine these ideas, and that the list of cases in which our Central Control Commission and its colleagues in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection achieved a few of their most brilliant victories will be enriched by not a few exploits of our future Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and Central Control Commission members in places not quite mentionable in prim and staid textbooks.

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How can a Party institution be amalgamated with a Soviet institution? Is there not something improper in this suggestion?

I do not ask these questions on my own behalf, but on behalf of those I hinted at above when I said that we have bureaucrats in our Party institutions as well as in the Soviet institutions.

But why, indeed, should we not amalgamate the two if this is in the interests of our work? Do we not all see that such an amalgamation has been very beneficial in the case

of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where it was brought about at the very beginning? Does not the Political Bureau discuss from the Party point of view many questions, both minor and important, concerning the "moves" we should make in reply to the "moves" of foreign powers in order to forestall their, say, cunning, if we are not to use a less respectable term? Is not this flexible amalgamation of a Soviet institution with a Party institution a source of great strength in our politics? I think that what has proved its usefulness, what has been definitely adopted in our foreign politics and has become so customary that it no longer calls forth any doubt in this field, will be at least as appropriate (in fact, I think it will be much more appropriate) for our state apparatus as a whole. The functions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cover our state apparatus as a whole, and its activities should affect all and every state institution without exception: local, central, commercial, purely administrative, educational, archive, theatrical, etc. — in short, all without any exception.

Why then should not an institution, whose activities have such wide scope, and which moreover requires such extraordinary flexibility of forms, be permitted to adopt

this peculiar amalgamation of a Party control institution with a Soviet control institution?

I see no obstacles to this. What is more, I think that such an amalgamation is the only guarantee of success in our work. I think that all doubts on this score arise in the dustiest corners of our government offices, and that they deserve to be treated with nothing but ridicule.

\* \* \*

Another doubt: is it expedient to combine educational activities with official activities? I think that it is not only expedient, but necessary. Generally speaking, in spite of our revolutionary attitude towards the West-European form of state, we have allowed ourselves to become infected with a number of its most harmful and ridiculous prejudices; to some extent we have been deliberately infected with them by our dear bureaucrats, who counted on being able again and again to fish in the muddy waters of these prejudices. And they did fish in these muddy waters to so great an extent that only the blind among us failed to see how extensively this fishing was practised.

In all spheres of social, economic and political relationships we are “frightfully” revolutionary. But as regards precedence, the observance of the forms and rites of office management, our “revolutionariness” often gives way to the mustiest routine. On more than one occasion, we have witnessed the very interesting phenomenon of a great leap forward in social life being accompanied by amazing timidity whenever the slightest changes are proposed.

This is natural, for the boldest steps forward were taken in a field which was long reserved for theoretical study, which was promoted mainly, and even almost exclusively, in theory. The Russian, when away from work, found solace from bleak bureaucratic realities in unusually bold theoretical constructions, and that is why in our country these unusually bold theoretical constructions assumed an unusually lopsided character. Theoretical audacity in general constructions went hand in hand with amazing timidity as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine. Some great universal agrarian revolution was worked out with an audacity unexampled in any other country, and at the same time the imagination failed when it came to working out a tenth-rate reform in

office routine; the imagination, or patience, was lacking to apply to this reform the general propositions that produced such brilliant results when applied to general problems.

That is why in our present life reckless audacity goes hand in hand, to an astonishing degree, with timidity of thought even when it comes to very minor changes.

I think that this has happened in all really great revolutions, for really great revolutions grow out of the contradictions between the old, between what is directed towards developing the old, and the very abstract striving for the new, which must be so new as not to contain the tiniest particle of the old.

And the more abrupt the revolution, the longer will many of these contradictions last.

The general feature of our present life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have done our best to raze to the ground the medieval institutions and landed proprietorship, and thus created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary work. It is not easy for us, however, to keep going until the socialist revolution is victorious in more developed countries merely with

the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under NEP, keeps the productivity of labour of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, by and large, reduced the labour productivity of the people to a level considerably below pre-war. The West-European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilize the elements of the Civil War in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all events, hinder its progress towards socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together,

would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

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

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

Thus, at the present time we are con-



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

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following. We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers’ government and to retain our small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority. We have the advantage that the whole world is now passing to a movement that must give rise to a world socialist revolution. But we are labouring under the disadvantage that the imperial-

ists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist development, to rise to her feet. All the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and preventing her from rising. On the other hand, the entire East, with its hundreds of millions of exploited working people, reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into a position where its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European states.

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

camp of Japan and the USA?

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

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

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet Government, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolution-

ary and nationalist East, between the most civilized countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries which, however, comprise the majority, this majority must become civilized. We, too, lack enough civilization to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we do have the political requisites for it. We should adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy, to save ourselves.

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

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

Will not this be a reign of peasant limitations?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible thrift in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our

large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov Power Project, etc.

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

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganized Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high level, in giving it a leadership with Central Committee rights, etc., etc.

And this justification is that only by thoroughly purging our government machine, by reducing to the utmost everything that is not absolutely essential in it, shall we be certain of being able to keep going. Moreover, we shall be able to keep going not on the level of

a small-peasant country, not on the level of universal limitation, but on a level steadily advancing to large-scale machine industry.

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

**J.V. STALIN**

**ON LENIN**





# LENIN AS THE ORGANIZER AND LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

*Written on the Occasion of Lenin's Fiftieth  
Birthday*

**April 23, 1920**

There are two groups of Marxists. Both work under the flag of Marxism and consider themselves “genuinely” Marxist. Nevertheless, they are by no means identical. More, a veritable gulf divides them, for their methods of work are diametrically opposed to each other.

The first group usually confines itself to an outward acceptance, to a ceremonial avowal of Marxism. Being unable or unwilling to grasp the essence of Marxism, being unable or unwilling to put it into practice, it converts the living, revolutionary principles of Marxism into lifeless, meaningless formulas. It does not base its activities on experience, on what practical work teaches, but on quotations from Marx. It does not derive its instructions and directions from an analysis of living reality, but from analogies and his-

torical parallels. Discrepancy between word and deed is the chief malady of this group. Hence the disillusionment and perpetual grudge against fate, which time and again lets it down and makes a “dupe” of it. The name for this group is Menshevism (in Russia), opportunism (in Europe). Comrade Tyszka (Jogiches) described this group very aptly at the London Congress when he said that it does not stand by, but *lies down* on the point of view of Marxism.

The second group, on the contrary, attaches prime importance not to the outward acceptance of Marxism, but to its realization, its application in practice. What this group chiefly concentrates its attention on is determining the ways and means of realizing Marxism that best answer the situation, and changing these ways and means as the situation changes. It does not derive its directions and instructions from historical analogies and parallels, but from a study of surrounding conditions. It does not base its activities on quotations and maxims, but on practical experience, testing every step by experience, learning from its mistakes and teaching others how to build a new life. That, in fact, explains why there is no discrepancy between word and deed in the activities of this group,

and why the teachings of Marx completely retain their living, revolutionary force. To this group may be fully applied Marx's saying that Marxists cannot rest content with interpreting the world, but must go further and change it. The name for this group is Bolshevism, communism.

The organizer and leader of this group is V.I. Lenin.

## I

### **LENIN AS THE ORGANIZER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY**

The formation of the proletarian party in Russia took place under special conditions, differing from those prevailing in the West at the time the workers' party was formed there. Whereas in the West, in France and in Germany, the workers' party emerged from the trade unions at a time when trade unions and parties were legal, when the bourgeois revolution had already taken place, when bourgeois parliaments existed, when the bourgeoisie, having climbed into power, found itself confronted by the proletariat — in Russia, on the contrary, the formation of the proletarian party took place under a most fe-

rocious absolutism, in expectation of a bourgeois-democratic revolution; at a time when, on the one hand, the Party organizations were filled to overflowing with bourgeois “legal Marxists” who were thirsting to utilize the working class for the bourgeois revolution, and when, on the other hand, the Tsarist gendarmerie was robbing the Party’s ranks of its best workers, while the growth of a spontaneous revolutionary movement called for the existence of a staunch, compact and sufficiently secret fighting core of revolutionaries, capable of directing the movement to the overthrow of absolutism.

The task was to separate the sheep from the goats, to dissociate oneself from alien elements, to organize cadres of experienced revolutionaries in the localities, to provide them with a clear programme and firm tactics, and, lastly, to gather these cadres into a single, militant organization of professional revolutionaries, sufficiently secret to withstand the onslaughts of the gendarmes, but at the same time sufficiently connected with the masses to lead them into battle at the required moment.

The Mensheviks, the people who “lie down” on the point of view of Marxism, settled the question very simply: inasmuch as

the workers' party in the West had emerged from non-party trade unions fighting for the improvement of the economic conditions of the working class, the same, as far as possible, should happen in Russia; that is, the "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government" in the localities was enough for the time being, no all-Russian militant organization should be created, and later... well, later, if trade unions did not arise by that time, a non-party labour congress should be called and proclaimed as the party.

That this "Marxist" "plan" of the Mensheviks, utopian though it was under Russian conditions, nevertheless entailed extensive agitational work designed to disparage the notion of the Party principle, to destroy the Party cadres, to leave the proletariat without its own party and to surrender the working class to the tender mercies of the liberals — the Mensheviks, and perhaps a good many Bolsheviks too, hardly suspected at the time.

The immense service Lenin rendered the Russian proletariat and its Party was that he exposed the whole danger of the Mensheviks' "plan" of organization at a time when this "plan" was still in embryo, when even its au-

thors perceived its outlines with difficulty, and, having exposed it, opened a furious attack on the laxity of the Mensheviks in matters of organization and concentrated the whole attention of the Party's practical workers on this question. For the very existence of the Party was at stake; it was a matter of life or death for the Party.

To establish an all-Russian political newspaper as a rallying centre of Party forces, to organize staunch Party cadres in the localities as "regular units" of the Party, to organize these cadres into one entity through the medium of the newspaper, and to weld them into an all-Russian militant party with sharply-defined limits, with a clear programme, firm tactics and a single will — such was the plan that Lenin developed in his famous books, *What Is To Be Done?* and *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. The merit of this plan lay in the fact that it fully conformed to Russian realities, and that it generalized in masterly fashion the organizational experience of the best of the practical workers. In the struggle for this plan, the majority of the Russian practical workers resolutely followed Lenin and were not deterred by a possible split. The victory of this plan laid the foundation for that close-

knit and steeled Communist Party which has no equal in the world.

Our comrades (not only the Mensheviks!) often accused Lenin of an excessive inclination towards controversy and splits, of being relentless in his struggle against conciliators, and so on. At one time this was undoubtedly the case. But it will be easily understood that our Party could not have rid itself of internal weakness and diffuseness, that it could not have attained its characteristic vigour and strength if it had not expelled the non-proletarian, opportunist elements from its midst. In the epoch of bourgeois rule, a proletarian party can grow and gain strength only to the extent that it combats the opportunist, anti-revolutionary and anti-party elements in its own midst and within the working class. Lassalle was right when he said: "The party becomes strong by purging itself."

The accusers usually cited the German party, in which "unity" at that time flourished. But, in the first place, not every kind of unity is a sign of strength, and secondly, one has only to glance at the late German party, rent into three parties, to realize the utter falsity and fictitiousness of "unity" between Scheidemann and Noske, on the one hand, and Liebknecht and Luxemburg, on

the other. And who knows whether it would not have been better for the German proletariat if the revolutionary elements of the German party had split away from its anti-revolutionary elements in time?... No, Lenin was a thousand times right in leading the Party along the path of uncompromising struggle against the anti-Party and anti-revolutionary elements. For it was only because of such a policy of organization that our Party was able to create that internal unity and astonishing cohesion which enabled it to emerge unscathed from the July crisis during the Kerensky regime, to bear the brunt of the October uprising, to pass through the crisis of the Brest period unshaken, to organize the victory over the Entente, and, lastly, to acquire that unparalleled flexibility which permits it at any moment to reform its ranks and to concentrate hundreds of thousands of its members on any big task without causing confusion in its midst.

## II

### **LENIN AS THE LEADER OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY**

But the merits of the Russian Communist



Party in the field of organization are only one aspect of the matter. The Party could not have grown and become strong so quickly if the political content of its work, its programme and tactics had not conformed to Russian realities, if its slogans had not fired the masses of the workers and had not impelled the revolutionary movement forward. Let us pass to this aspect of the matter.

The Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905) took place under conditions differing from those that prevailed during the revolutionary upheavals in the West, in France and Germany, for example. Whereas the revolution in the West took place under the conditions of the manufacturing period of capitalism and of an undeveloped class struggle, when the proletariat was weak and numerically small and did not have its own party to formulate its demands, while the bourgeoisie was sufficiently revolutionary to win the confidence of the workers and peasants and to lead them into the struggle against the aristocracy — in Russia, on the other hand, the revolution began (1905) under the conditions of the machine-industry period of capitalism and of a developed class struggle, when the Russian proletariat, relatively numerous and welded together by cap-

italism, had already fought a number of battles with the bourgeoisie, had its own party, which was more united than the bourgeois party, and its own class demands, while the Russian bourgeoisie, which, moreover, subsisting on government contracts, was sufficiently scared by the revolutionary temper of the proletariat to seek an alliance with the government and the landlords against the workers and peasants. The fact that the Russian revolution broke out as a result of the military reverses suffered on the fields of Manchuria only accelerated events without essentially changing the state of affairs.

The situation demanded that the proletariat should take the lead of the revolution, rally the revolutionary peasants around itself and wage a determined fight against tsardom and the bourgeoisie simultaneously, with a view to establishing complete democracy in the country and ensuring its own class interests.

But the Mensheviks, the people who “lie down” on the point of view of Marxism, settled the question in their own fashion: since the Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and since it is the representatives of the bourgeoisie that lead bourgeois revolutions (see the “history” of the French and German

revolutions), the proletariat cannot exercise hegemony in the Russian revolution, the leadership should be left to the Russian bourgeoisie (the very bourgeoisie that was betraying the revolution); the peasantry should also be handed over to the tutelage of the bourgeoisie, while the proletariat should remain an extreme Left opposition.

And that vulgar medley of the tunes of the wretched liberals the Mensheviks passed off as the last word in “genuine” Marxism!...

The immense service Lenin rendered the Russian revolution was that he utterly exposed the futility of the Mensheviks’ historical parallels and the whole danger of the Menshevik “scheme of revolution” which surrendered the cause of the workers to the tender mercies of the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, instead of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; boycott of the Bulygin Duma and armed uprising, instead of participating in the Duma and carrying on organic work within it; the idea of a “Left bloc,” when the Duma was after all convened, and the utilization of the Duma platform for the struggle outside the Duma, instead of a Cadet Ministry and the reactionary “cherishing” of the Duma; the fight

against the Cadet Party as a counter-revolutionary force, instead of forming a “bloc” with it — such was the tactical plan which Lenin developed in his famous pamphlets, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* and *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers’ Party*.

The merit of this plan lay in the fact that it bluntly and resolutely formulated the class demands of the proletariat in the epoch of the *bourgeois-democratic revolution* in Russia, facilitated the transition to the socialist revolution, and contained in embryo the idea of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. The majority of the Russian practical workers resolutely and unswervingly followed Lenin in the struggle for this tactical plan. The victory of this plan laid the foundation for those revolutionary tactics thanks to which our Party is now shaking the foundations of world imperialism.

The subsequent development of events; the four years of imperialist war and the shattering of the whole economic life of the country; the February Revolution and the celebrated dual power; the Provisional Government, which was a hotbed of bourgeois counter-revolution, and the Petrograd Soviet of Deputies, which was the form of the incipient

proletarian dictatorship; the October Revolution and the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly; the abolition of bourgeois parliamentarism and the proclamation of the Republic of Soviets; the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war and the offensive of world imperialism, together with the professed “Marxists,” against the proletarian revolution; and, lastly, the pitiable position of the Mensheviks, who clung to the Constituent Assembly and who were thrown overboard by the proletariat and driven by the waves of revolution to the shores of capitalism — all this only confirmed the correctness of the principles of the revolutionary tactics formulated by Lenin in his *Two Tactics*. A party with such a heritage could sail boldly forward, without fear of submerged rocks.

In our time of proletarian revolution, when every Party slogan and every utterance of a leader is tested in action, the proletariat makes special demands of its leaders. History knows of proletarian leaders who were leaders in times of storm, practical leaders, self-sacrificing and courageous, but who were weak in theory. The names of such leaders are not soon forgotten by the masses. Such, for example, were Lassalle in Germany and Blanqui in France. But the movement as a

whole cannot live on reminiscences alone: it must have a clear goal (a programme) and a firm line (tactics).

There is another type of leader — peacetime leaders, who are strong in theory, but weak in matters of organization and practical work. Such leaders are popular only among an upper layer of the proletariat, and then only up to a certain time. When the epoch of revolution sets in, when practical revolutionary slogans are demanded of the leaders, the theoreticians quit the stage and give way to new men. Such, for example, were Plekhanov in Russia and Kautsky in Germany.

To retain the post of leader of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian party, one must combine strength in theory with experience in the practical organization of the proletarian movement. P. Axelrod, when he was a Marxist, wrote of Lenin that he “happily combines the experience of a good practical worker with a theoretical education and a broad political outlook” (see P. Axelrod’s preface to Lenin’s pamphlet: *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*). What Mr. Axelrod, the ideologist of “civilized” capitalism, would say now about Lenin is not difficult to guess. But we who

know Lenin well and can judge matters objectively have no doubt that Lenin has fully retained this old quality. It is here, incidentally, that one must seek the reason why it is Lenin, and no one else, who is today the leader of the strongest and most steeled proletarian party in the world.

*Pravda*, No. 86, April 23, 1920

Signed: *J. Stalin*

# ON THE DEATH OF LENIN

*Speech Delivered at the Second All-Union  
Congress of Soviets*

**January 26, 1924**

Comrades, we Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of a special stuff. We are those who form the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour of belonging to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party whose founder and leader was Comrade Lenin. It is not given to everyone to be a member of such a party. It is not given to everyone to withstand the stresses and storms that accompany membership in such a party. It is the sons of the working class, the sons of want and struggle, the sons of incredible privation and heroic effort who before all should be members of such a party. That is why the Party of the Leninists, the Party of the Communists, is also called the Party of the working class.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE  
LENIN ENJOINED US TO HOLD HIGH  
AND GUARD THE PURITY OF THE



GREAT TITLE OF MEMBER OF THE PARTY. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL FULFIL YOUR BEHEST WITH HONOUR!

For twenty-five years Comrade Lenin tended our Party and made it into the strongest and most highly steeled workers' party in the world. The blows of Tsarism and its henchmen, the fury of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the armed attacks of Kolchak and Denikin, the armed intervention of Britain and France, the lies and slanders of the hundred-mouthed bourgeois press — all these scorpions constantly chastised our Party for a quarter of a century. But our Party stood firm as a rock, repelling the countless blows of its enemies and leading the working class forward, to victory. In fierce battles our Party forged the unity and solidarity of its ranks. And by unity and solidarity it achieved victory over the enemies of the working class.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO GUARD THE UNITY OF OUR PARTY AS THE APPLE OF OUR EYE. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

Burdensome and intolerable has been the lot of the working class. Painful and grievous have been the sufferings of the labouring people. Slaves and slaveholders, serfs and serf-owners, peasants and landlords, workers and capitalists, oppressed and oppressors — so the world has been built from time immemorial, and so it remains to this day in the vast majority of countries. Scores and indeed hundreds of times in the course of the centuries the labouring people have striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become the masters of their own destiny. But each time, defeated and disgraced, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliation, anger and despair, and lifting up their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the oppressed and downtrodden labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of the workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world now admits it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party.

The greatness of Lenin lies above all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the whole world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is short-lived, that the kingdom of labour can be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven, but on *earth*. He thus fired the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. That explains why Lenin's name has become the name most beloved of the labouring and exploited masses.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO GUARD AND STRENGTHEN THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL SPARE NO EFFORT TO FULFIL THIS BEHEST, TOO, WITH HONOUR!

The dictatorship of the proletariat was established in our country on the basis of an alliance between the workers and peasants. This is the first and fundamental basis of the Republic of Soviets. The workers and peasants could not have vanquished the capital-

ists and landlords without such an alliance. The workers could not have defeated the capitalists without the support of the peasants. The peasants could not have defeated the landlords without the leadership of the workers. This is borne out by the whole history of the civil war in our country. But the struggle to consolidate the Republic of Soviets is by no means at an end — it has only taken on a new form. Before, the alliance of the workers and peasants took the form of a military alliance, because it was directed against Kolchak and Denikin. Now, the alliance of the workers and peasants must assume the form of economic co-operation between town and country, between workers and peasants, because it is directed against the merchant and the kulak, and its aim is the mutual supply by peasants and workers of all they require. You know that nobody worked for this more persistently than Comrade Lenin.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO STRENGTHEN WITH ALL OUR MIGHT THE ALLIANCE OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE, LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FUL-

## FIL WITH HONOUR!

The second basis of the Republic of Soviets is the union of the working people of the different nationalities of our country. Russians and Ukrainians, Bashkirs and Byelorrussians, Georgians and Azerbaijanians, Armenians and Daghestanians, Tatars and Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Turkmenians are all equally interested in strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not only does the dictatorship of the proletariat deliver these peoples from fetters and oppression, but these peoples on their part deliver our Republic of Soviets from the intrigues and assaults of the enemies of the working class by their supreme devotion to the Republic of Soviets and their readiness to make sacrifices for it. That is why Comrade Lenin untiringly urged upon us the necessity of the voluntary union of the peoples of our country, the necessity of their fraternal co-operation within the framework of the Union of Republics.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNION OF REPUBLICS. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT THIS BEHEST, TOO, WE SHALL FULFIL WITH HONOUR!

The third basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat is our Red Army and our Red Navy. More than once did Lenin impress upon us that the respite we had won from the capitalist states might prove a short one. More than once did Lenin point out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. The events connected with Curzon's ultimatum and the crisis in Germany once more confirmed that, as always, Lenin was right. Let us vow then, comrades, that we shall spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy.

Like a huge rock, our country stands out amid an ocean of bourgeois states. Wave after wave dashes against it, threatening to submerge it and wash it away. But the rock stands unshakable. Wherein lies its strength? Not only in the fact that our country rests on an alliance of the workers and peasants, that it embodies a union of free nationalities, that it is protected by the mighty arm of the Red Army and the Red Navy. The strength, the firmness, the solidity of our country is due to the profound sympathy and unfailing support it finds in the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world.

The workers and peasants of the whole world want to preserve the Republic of Soviets as an arrow shot by the sure hand of Comrade Lenin into the camp of the enemy, as the pillar of their hopes of deliverance from oppression and exploitation, as a reliable beacon pointing the path to their emancipation. They want to preserve it, and they will not allow the landlords and capitalists to destroy it. Therein lies our strength. Therein lies the strength of the working people of all countries. And therein lies the weakness of the bourgeoisie all over the world.

Lenin never regarded the Republic of Soviets as an end in itself. He always looked on it as an essential link for strengthening the revolutionary movement in the countries of the West and the East, an essential link for facilitating the victory of the working people of the whole world over capitalism. Lenin knew that this was the only right conception, both from the international standpoint and from the standpoint of preserving the Republic of Soviets itself. Lenin knew that this alone could fire the hearts of the working people of the whole world with determination to fight the decisive battles for their emancipation. That is why, on the very morrow of the establishment of the dictatorship

of the proletariat, he, the greatest of the geniuses who have led the proletariat, laid the foundation of the workers' International. That is why he never tired of extending and strengthening the union of the working people of the whole world — the Communist International.

You have seen during the past few days the pilgrimage of scores and hundreds of thousands of working people to Comrade Lenin's bier. Before long you will see the pilgrimage of representatives of millions of working people to Comrade Lenin's tomb. You need not doubt that the representatives of millions will be followed by representatives of scores and hundreds of millions from all parts of the earth, who will come to testify that Lenin was the leader not only of the Russian proletariat, not only of the European workers, not only of the colonial East, but of all the working people of the globe.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL NOT SPARE OUR LIVES TO STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNION OF THE WORKING



PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD —  
THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL!

*Pravda*, No. 23, January 30, 1924

# LENIN

## *Speech Delivered at a Memorial Meeting of the Kremlin Military School*

**January 28, 1924**

Comrades, I am told that you have arranged a Lenin memorial meeting here this evening and that I have been invited as one of the speakers. I do not think there is any need for me to deliver a set speech on Lenin's activities. It would be better, I think, to confine myself to a few facts to bring out certain of Lenin's characteristics as a man and a leader. There may, perhaps, be no inherent connection between these facts, but that is not of vital importance as far as gaining a general idea of Lenin is concerned. At any rate, I am unable on this occasion to do more than what I have just promised.

### **THE MOUNTAIN EAGLE**

I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance, but was by correspondence. But it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my

work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*, had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. At that time I did not regard him merely as a leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues — Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle, and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Some time later, when I was already in exile in Siberia — this was at the end of 1903 — I received an enthusiastic reply from my friend and a simple, but profoundly expressive letter from Lenin, to whom, it turned

out, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly, that every sentence did not so much speak as ring out like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter still further strengthened me in my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time.

## MODESTY

I first met Lenin in December 1905 at the Bolshevik conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I had pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then,

was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals...

It is accepted as the usual thing for a ‘great man’ to come late to meetings so that the assembly may await his appearance with bated breath; and then, just before the “great man” enters, the warning whisper goes up: “Hush!... Silence!... He’s coming.” This ritual did not seem to me superfluous, because it creates an impression, inspires respect. What, then, was my disappointment to learn that Lenin had arrived at the conference before the delegates, had settled himself somewhere in a corner, and was unassumingly carrying on a conversation, a most ordinary conversation with the most ordinary delegates at the conference. I will not conceal from you that at that time this seemed to me to be something of a violation of certain essential rules.

Only later did I realize that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make himself conspicuous and not to emphasize his high position, this feature was one of Lenin’s strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the simple and ordinary masses of the

“rank and file” of humanity.

## FORCE OF LOGIC

The two speeches Lenin delivered at this conference were remarkable: one was on the current situation and the other on the agrarian question. Unfortunately, they have not been preserved. They were inspired, and they roused the whole conference to a pitch of stormy enthusiasm. The extraordinary power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of argument, the brief and easily understood sentences, the absence of affectation, of dizzying gestures and theatrical phrases aiming at effect — all this made Lenin’s speeches a favourable contrast to the speeches of the usual “parliamentary” orators.

But what captivated me at the time was not this aspect of Lenin’s speeches. I was captivated by that irresistible force of logic in them which, although somewhat terse, gained a firm hold on his audience, gradually electrified it, and then, as one might say, completely overpowered it. I remember that many of the delegates said: “The logic of Lenin’s speeches is like a mighty tentacle which twines all round you and holds you as

in a vice and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away: you must either surrender or resign yourself to utter defeat.”

I think that this characteristic of Lenin's speeches was the strongest feature of his art as an orator.

## NO WHINING

The second time I met Lenin was in 1906 at the Stockholm Congress of our Party. You know that the Bolsheviks were in the minority at this congress and suffered defeat. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of the vanquished. But he was not in the least like those leaders who whine and lose heart after a defeat. On the contrary, defeat transformed Lenin into a spring of compressed energy which inspired his supporters for new battles and for future victory. I said that Lenin was defeated. But what sort of defeat was it? You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress — Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's merciless criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak. I remember that we, the Bolshevik delegates, huddled together in a

group, gazing at Lenin and asking his advice. The speeches of some of the delegates betrayed a note of weariness and dejection. I recall that to these speeches Lenin bitingly replied through clenched teeth: "Don't whine, comrades, we are bound to win, for we are right." Hatred of the whining intellectual, faith in our own strength, confidence in victory — that is what Lenin impressed upon us. It was felt that the Bolsheviks' defeat was temporary, that they were bound to win in the very near future.

"No whining over defeat" — this was the feature of Lenin's activities that helped him to rally around himself an army faithful to the end and confident in its strength.

## NO BOASTING

At the next congress, held in 1907 in London, the Bolsheviks proved victorious. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of victor. Victory turns the heads of some leaders and makes them haughty and boastful. They begin in most cases to be triumphant, to rest on their laurels. But Lenin did not in the least resemble such leaders. On the contrary, it was precisely after a victory that he became especially vigilant and cautious. I re-



call that Lenin insistently impressed on the delegates: "The first thing is not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third is to give the enemy the finishing stroke, for he has been beaten, but by no means crushed." He poured withering scorn on those delegates who frivolously asserted: "It is all over with the Mensheviks now." He had no difficulty in showing that the Mensheviks still had roots in the working-class movement, that they had to be fought with skill, and that all overestimation of one's own strength and, especially, all underestimation of the strength of the enemy had to be avoided.

"No boasting in victory" — this was the feature of Lenin's character that helped him soberly to weigh the strength of the enemy and to insure the Party against possible surprises.

## **FIDELITY TO PRINCIPLE**

Party leaders cannot but prize the opinion of the majority of their party. A majority is a power with which a leader cannot but reckon. Lenin understood this no less than any other party leader. But Lenin never be-

came a captive of the majority, especially when that majority had no basis of principle. There have been times in the history of our Party when the opinion of the majority or the momentary interests of the Party conflicted with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. On such occasions Lenin would never hesitate and resolutely took his stand in support of principle as against the majority of the Party. Moreover, he did not fear on such occasions literally to stand alone against all, considering — as he would often say — that “a policy based on principle is the only correct policy.”

Particularly characteristic in this respect are the two following facts.

*First fact.* It was in the period 1909-11, when the Party, smashed by the counter-revolution, was in process of complete disintegration. It was a period of disbelief in the Party, of wholesale desertion from the Party, not only by the intellectuals, but partly even by the workers; a period when the necessity for illegal organization was being denied, a period of Liquidationism and collapse. Not only the Mensheviks, but even the Bolsheviks then consisted of a number of factions and trends, for the most part severed from the working-class movement. You know that

it was just at that period that the idea arose of completely liquidating the illegal organization and organizing the workers into a legal, liberal Stolypin party. Lenin at that time was the only one not to succumb to the widespread epidemic and to hold high the banner of Party principle, assembling the scattered and shattered forces of the Party with astonishing patience and extraordinary persistence, combatting each and every anti-Party trend within the working-class movement and defending the Party principle with unusual courage and unparalleled perseverance.

We know that in this fight for the Party principle, Lenin later proved the victor.

*Second fact.* It was in the period 1914-17, when the imperialist war was in full swing, and when all, or nearly all, the Social-Democratic and Socialist parties had succumbed to the general patriotic frenzy and had placed themselves at the service of the imperialism of their respective countries. It was a period when the Second International had hauled down its colours to capitalism, when even people like Plekhanov, Kautsky, Guesde and the rest were unable to withstand the tide of chauvinism. Lenin at that time was the only one, or almost the only one, to wage a determined struggle against social-chauvinism

and social-pacifism, to denounce the treachery of the Guesdes and Kautskys, and to stigmatize the half-heartedness of the betwixt and between “revolutionaries.” Lenin knew that he was backed by only an insignificant minority, but to him this was not of decisive moment, for he knew that the only correct policy with a future before it was the policy of consistent internationalism, that a policy based on principle is the only correct policy.

We know that in this fight for a new International, too, Lenin proved the victor.

“A policy based on principle is the only correct policy” — this was the formula by means of which Lenin took new “impregnable” positions by assault and won over the best elements of the proletariat to revolutionary Marxism.

## FAITH IN THE MASSES

Theoreticians and leaders of parties, men who are acquainted with the history of nations and who have studied the history of revolutions from beginning to end, are sometimes afflicted by a shameful disease. This disease is called fear of the masses, disbelief in the creative power of the masses. This sometimes gives rise in the leaders to a kind

of aristocratic attitude towards the masses, who, although not versed in the history of revolutions, are destined to destroy the old order and build the new. This kind of aristocratic attitude is due to a fear that the elements may break loose, that the masses may “destroy too much”; it is due to a desire to play the part of a mentor who tries to teach the masses from books, but who is averse to learning from the masses.

Lenin was the very antithesis of such leaders. I do not know of any other revolutionary who had so profound a faith in the creative power of the proletariat and in the revolutionary efficacy of its class instinct as Lenin. I do not know of any other revolutionary who could scourge the smug critics of the “chaos of revolution” and the “riot of unauthorized actions of the masses” so ruthlessly as Lenin. I recall that when in the course of a conversation one comrade said that “the revolution should be followed by the normal order of things,” Lenin sarcastically remarked: “It is a pity that people who want to be revolutionaries forget that the most normal order of things in history is the revolutionary order of things.”

Hence, Lenin’s contempt for all who superciliously looked down on the masses and

tried to teach them from books. And hence, Lenin's constant precept: learn from the masses, try to comprehend their actions, carefully study the practical experience of the struggle of the masses.

Faith in the creative power of the masses — this was the feature of Lenin's activities which enabled him to comprehend the spontaneous process and to direct its movement into the channel of the proletarian revolution.

## **THE GENIUS OF REVOLUTION**

Lenin was born for revolution. He was, in truth, the genius of revolutionary outbreaks and the greatest master of the art of revolutionary leadership. Never did he feel so free and happy as in a time of revolutionary upheavals. I do not mean by this that Lenin approved equally of all revolutionary upheavals, or that he was in favour of revolutionary outbreaks at all times and under all circumstances. Not at all. What I do mean is that never was the genius of Lenin's insight displayed so fully and distinctly as in a time of revolutionary outbreaks. In times of revolution he literally blossomed forth, became a seer, divined the movement of classes and the

probable zigzags of the revolution, seeing them as if they lay in the palm of his hand. It was with good reason that it used to be said in our Party circles: "Lenin swims in the tide of revolution like a fish in water."

Hence the "amazing" *clarity* of Lenin's tactical slogans and the "breath-taking" *boldness* of his revolutionary plans.

I recall two facts which are particularly characteristic of this feature of Lenin.

*First fact.* It was in the period just prior to the October Revolution, when millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, impelled by the crisis in the rear and at the front, were demanding peace and liberty; when the generals and the bourgeoisie were working for a military dictatorship for the sake of "war to a finish"; when the whole of so-called "public opinion" and all the so-called "Socialist parties" were hostile to the Bolsheviks and were branding them as "German spies"; when Kerensky was trying — already with some success — to drive the Bolshevik Party underground; and when the still powerful and disciplined armies of the Austro-German coalition confronted our weary, disintegrating armies, while the West-European "Socialists" lived in blissful alliance with their governments for the sake of "war to complete vic-

tory.”...

What did starting an uprising at such a moment mean? Starting an uprising in such a situation meant staking everything. But Lenin did not fear the risk, for he knew, he saw with his prophetic eye, that an uprising was inevitable, that it would win; that an uprising in Russia would pave the way for ending the imperialist war, that it would rouse the war-weary masses of the West, that it would transform the imperialist war into a civil war; that the uprising would usher in a Republic of Soviets, and that the Republic of Soviets would serve as a bulwark for the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

We know that Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with unparalleled exactness.

*Second fact.* It was in the first days of the October Revolution, when the Council of People's Commissars was trying to compel General Dukhonin, the mutinous commander-in-chief, to terminate hostilities and open negotiations for an armistice with the Germans. I recall that Lenin, Krylenko (the future commander-in-chief) and I went to General Staff Headquarters in Petrograd to negotiate with Dukhonin over the direct wire. It was a ghastly moment. Dukhonin



and Field Headquarters categorically refused to obey the order of the Council of People's Commissars. The army officers were completely under the sway of Field Headquarters. As for the soldiers, no one could tell what this army of fourteen million would say, subordinated as it was to the so-called army organizations, which were hostile to the Soviet power. In Petrograd itself, as we know, a mutiny of the military cadets was brewing. Furthermore, Kerensky was marching on Petrograd. I recall that after a pause at the direct wire, Lenin's face suddenly shone with an extraordinary light. Clearly he had arrived at a decision. "Let's go to the wireless station," he said, "it will stand us in good stead. We shall issue a special order dismissing General Dukhonin, appoint Comrade Krylenko commander-in-chief in his place and appeal to the soldiers over the heads of the officers, calling upon them to surround the generals, to cease hostilities, to establish contact with the Austro-German soldiers and take the cause of peace into their own hands."

This was "a leap in the dark." But Lenin did not shrink from this "leap"; on the contrary, he made it eagerly, for he knew that the army wanted peace and would win peace,

sweeping every obstacle from its path; he knew that this method of establishing peace was bound to have its effect on the Austro-German soldiers and would give full rein to the yearning for peace on every front without exception.

We know that here, too, Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with the utmost exactness.

The insight of genius, the ability rapidly to grasp and define the inner meaning of impending events — this was the quality of Lenin which enabled him to lay down the correct strategy and a clear line of conduct at turning points of the revolutionary movement.

*Pravda*, No. 34, February 12, 1924

# INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST AMERICAN LABOUR DELEGATION

*(Excerpt)*

September 9, 1927

## QUESTIONS PUT BY THE DELEGATION AND COMRADE STALIN'S ANSWERS

*FIRST QUESTION: What new principles have Lenin and the Communist Party added in practice to Marxism? Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in "creative revolution" whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of the development of economic forces?*

*ANSWER:* I think that Lenin "added" no "new principles" to Marxism, nor did he abolish any of the "old" principles of Marxism. Lenin was, and remains, the most loyal and consistent pupil of Marx and Engels, and he wholly and completely based himself on the principles of Marxism.

But Lenin did not merely carry out the teaching of Marx and Engels. He was at the

same time the continuer of that teaching.

What does that mean?

It means that he developed further the teaching of Marx and Engels in conformity with the new conditions of development, with the new phase of capitalism, with imperialism. It means that in developing further the teaching of Marx in the new conditions of the class struggle, Lenin contributed something new to the general treasury of Marxism as compared with what was created by Marx and Engels, with what could be created in the pre-imperialist period of capitalism; at the same time Lenin's new contribution to the treasury of Marxism is wholly and completely based on the principles laid down by Marx and Engels.

It is in this sense that we speak of Leninism as Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

Here are a few questions to which Lenin contributed something new, developing further the teaching of Marx.

Firstly, the question of monopoly capitalism, of imperialism as the new phase of capitalism.

In *Capital*, Marx and Engels analysed the foundations of capitalism. But Marx and Engels lived in the period of the domination of

pre-monopoly capitalism, in the period of the smooth evolution of capitalism and its “peaceful” expansion over the whole world.

That old phase of capitalism came to a close towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, when Marx and Engels were already dead. It is understandable that Marx and Engels could only guess at the new conditions for the development of capitalism that arose as a result of the new phase of capitalism which succeeded the old phase, as a result of the imperialist, monopoly phase of development, when the smooth evolution of capitalism was succeeded by spasmodic, cataclysmic development of capitalism, when the unevenness of development and the contradictions of capitalism became particularly pronounced, and when the struggle for markets and fields of capital export, in the circumstances of the extreme unevenness of development, made periodical imperialist wars for periodic redivisions of the world and of spheres of influence inevitable.

The service Lenin rendered here, and consequently, his new contribution, was that, on the basis of the fundamental principles in *Capital*, he made a substantiated Marxist analysis of imperialism as the last phase of

capitalism, and exposed its ulcers and the conditions of its inevitable doom. That analysis formed the basis for Lenin's thesis that under the conditions of imperialism the victory of socialism is possible in individual capitalist countries, taken separately.

Secondly, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The fundamental idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the political rule of the proletariat and as a method of overthrowing the power of capital by the use of force was advanced by Marx and Engels.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was that:

a) he discovered the Soviet system as the best state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, utilizing for this the experience of the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolution;

b) he elucidated the formula of the dictatorship of the proletariat from the angle of the problem of the allies of the proletariat, defining the dictatorship of the proletariat as a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, as the leader, and the exploited masses of the non-proletarian classes (the peasantry, etc.), as the led;

c) he laid particular emphasis on the fact

that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the highest type of democracy in class society, the form of *proletarian* democracy, which expresses the interests of the majority (the exploited), in contrast to *capitalist* democracy, which expresses the interests of the minority (the exploiters).

Thirdly, the question of the forms and methods of successfully building socialism in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, in a country surrounded by capitalist states.

Marx and Engels regarded the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a more or less prolonged one, full of revolutionary clashes and civil wars, in the course of which the proletariat, being in power, would take the economic, political, cultural and organizational measures necessary for creating, in the place of the old, capitalist society, a new, socialist society, a society without classes and without a state. Lenin wholly and completely based himself on these fundamental principles of Marx and Engels.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was that:

a) he proved that a complete socialist society can be built in the land of the dictator-

ship of the proletariat surrounded by imperialist states, provided the country is not strangled by the military intervention of the surrounding capitalist states;

b) he traced the concrete lines of economic policy (the “New Economic Policy”) by which the proletariat, having possession of the economic key positions (industry, land, transport, banks, etc.), links up socialized industry with agriculture (“the link between industry and peasant economy”) and thus leads the whole national economy towards socialism;

c) he traced the concrete ways of gradually guiding and drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the channel of socialist construction through the co-operatives, which in the hands of the proletarian dictatorship are a most powerful instrument for the transformation of small peasant economy and for the re-education of the main mass of the peasantry in the spirit of socialism.

Fourthly, the question of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, in every popular revolution, both in the revolution against Tsarism and in the revolution against capitalism.

Marx and Engels provided the main out-



lines of the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat. Lenin's new contribution in this field was that he further developed and expanded those outlines into a harmonious system of the hegemony of the proletariat, into a harmonious system of leadership of the working masses in town and country by the proletariat not only in the overthrow of Tsarism and capitalism, but also in the building of socialism under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We know that, thanks to Lenin and his Party, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat was applied in a masterly way in Russia. This, incidentally, explains why the revolution in Russia brought the proletariat into power.

In the past, things usually took the following course: during the revolution the workers fought at the barricades, it was they who shed their blood and overthrew the old order, but power fell into the hands of the bourgeois, who then oppressed and exploited the workers. That was the case in England and France. That was the case in Germany. Here, in Russia, however, things took a different turn. In Russia the workers were not merely the shock force of the revolution. While being the shock force of the revolution, the Russian proletariat at the same time

strove for hegemony, for political leadership of all the exploited masses of town and country, rallying them around itself, wresting them from the bourgeoisie and politically isolating the bourgeoisie. And while being the leader of the exploited masses, the Russian proletariat fought to take power into its own hands and to utilize it in its own interests, against the bourgeoisie, against capitalism. This, in fact, explains why each powerful outbreak of the revolution in Russia, in October 1905 as well as in February 1917, brought on to the scene Soviets of Workers' Deputies as the embryo of the new apparatus of power whose function is to suppress the bourgeoisie — as against the bourgeois parliament, the old apparatus of power, whose function is to suppress the proletariat.

Twice the bourgeoisie in Russia tried to restore the bourgeois parliament and put an end to the Soviets: in September 1917, at the time of the pre-parliament, before the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, and in January 1918, at the time of the Constituent Assembly, after the seizure of power by the proletariat; and on both occasions it suffered defeat. Why? Because the bourgeoisie was already politically isolated, because the vast masses of the working people regarded the

proletariat as the sole leader of the revolution, and because the Soviets had already been tried and tested by the masses as their own workers' government, to exchange which for a bourgeois parliament would have meant suicide for the proletariat. It is not surprising, therefore, that bourgeois parliamentarism did not take root in Russia. That is why the revolution in Russia led to the rule of the proletariat.

Such were the results of the application of Lenin's system of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution.

Fifthly, the national and colonial question.

Analysing in their time the events in Ireland, India, China, the Central European countries, Poland and Hungary, Marx and Engels provided the basic, initial ideas on the national and colonial question. Lenin in his works based himself on those ideas.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was:

a) he unified those ideas in one harmonious system of views on national and colonial revolutions in the era of imperialism;

b) he linked the national and colonial question with the question of overthrowing imperialism;

c) he declared the national and colonial question to be a component part of the general question of international proletarian revolution.

Lastly, the question of the party of the proletariat.

Marx and Engels provided the main outlines on the party as the advanced detachment of the proletariat, without which (the party) the proletariat cannot achieve its emancipation, either in the sense of capturing power, or in the sense of transforming capitalist society.

Lenin's new contribution in this field was that he developed those outlines further in conformity with the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism and showed that:

a) the party is the highest form of class organization of the proletariat as compared with other forms of proletarian organization (trade unions, co-operatives, state organization) whose work it is the Party's function to generalize and direct;

b) the dictatorship of the proletariat can be implemented only through the party, as the guiding force of the dictatorship;

c) the dictatorship of the proletariat can be complete only if it is led by one party, the

Communist Party, which does not and must not share the leadership with other parties;

d) unless there is iron discipline in the party, the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat in regard to suppressing the exploiters and transforming class society into socialist society cannot be accomplished.

That, in the main, is the new contribution made by Lenin in his works, giving concrete form to Marx's teaching and developing it further in conformity with the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism.

That is why we say that Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

It is clear from this that Leninism cannot be separated from Marxism; still less can it be counterposed to Marxism.

The question submitted by the delegation goes on to say:

“Would it be correct to say that Lenin believed in ‘creative revolution’ whereas Marx was more inclined to wait for the culmination of the development of economic forces?”

I think it would be quite incorrect to say that. I think that every popular revolution, if it really is a popular revolution, is a creative revolution, for it breaks up the old order and

creates a new one.

Of course, there is nothing creative in the “revolutions” — if they may be so called — that sometimes take place in certain backward countries, in the form of toy-like “risings” of one tribe against another. But Marxists never regarded such toy-like “risings” as revolutions. It is obviously not a question of such “risings,” but of a mass, popular revolution in which the oppressed classes rise up against the oppressing classes. Such a revolution cannot but be creative. Marx and Lenin upheld precisely such a revolution, and only such a revolution. It goes without saying that such a revolution cannot arise under all conditions, that it can take place only under definite favourable conditions of an economic and political nature.

*Pravda*, No. 210, September 15, 1927

# TALK WITH THE GERMAN AUTHOR EMIL LUDWIG

(*Excerpt*)

**December 13, 1931**

*Ludwig*: I am extremely obliged to you for having found it possible to receive me. For over twenty years I have been studying the lives and deeds of outstanding historical personages. I believe I am a good judge of people, but on the other hand I know nothing about social-economic conditions.

*Stalin*: You are being modest.

*Ludwig*: No, that is really so, and for that very reason I shall put questions that may seem strange to you. Today, here in the Kremlin, I saw some relics of Peter the Great and the first question I should like to ask you is this: Do you think a parallel can be drawn between yourself and Peter the Great? Do you consider yourself a continuer of the work of Peter the Great?

*Stalin*: In no way whatever. Historical parallels are always risky. There is no sense in this one.

*Ludwig*: But after all, Peter the Great did

a great deal to develop his country, to bring western culture to Russia.

*Stalin:* Yes, of course, Peter the Great did much to elevate the landlord class and develop the nascent merchant class. He did very much indeed to create and consolidate the national state of the landlords and merchants. It must be said also that the elevation of the landlord class, the assistance to the nascent merchant class and the consolidation of the national state of these classes took place at the cost of the peasant serfs, who were bled white.

As for myself, I am just a pupil of Lenin's, and the aim of my life is to be a worthy pupil of his.

The task to which I have devoted my life is the elevation of a different class — the working class. That task is not the consolidation of some “national” state, but of a socialist state, and that means an international state; and everything that strengthens that state helps to strengthen the entire international working class. If every step I take in my endeavour to elevate the working class and strengthen the socialist state of this class were not directed towards strengthening and improving the position of the working class, I should consider my life purposeless.



So you see your parallel does not fit.

As regards Lenin and Peter the Great, the latter was but a drop in the sea, whereas Lenin was a whole ocean.

*Ludwig*: Marxism denies that the individual plays an outstanding role in history. Do you not see a contradiction between the materialist conception of history and the fact that, after all, you admit the outstanding role played by historical personages?

*Stalin*: No, there is no contradiction here. Marxism does not at all deny the role played by outstanding individuals or that history is made by people. In Marx's *The Poverty of Philosophy* and in other works of his you will find it stated that it is people who make history. But, of course, people do not make history according to the promptings of their imagination or as some fancy strikes them. Every new generation encounters definite conditions already existing, ready-made when that generation was born. And great people are worth anything at all only to the extent that they are able correctly to understand these conditions, to understand how to change them. If they fail to understand these conditions and want to alter them according to the promptings of their imagination, they will land themselves in the situation of Don

Quixote. Thus it is precisely Marx's view that people must not be counterposed to conditions. It is people who make history, but they do so only to the extent that they correctly understand the conditions that they have found ready-made, and only to the extent that they understand how to change those conditions. That, at least, is how we Russian Bolsheviks understand Marx. And we have been studying Marx for a good many years.

*Ludwig:* Some thirty years ago, when I was at the university, many German professors who considered themselves adherents of the materialist conception of history taught us that Marxism denies the role of heroes, the role of heroic personalities in history.

*Stalin:* They were vulgarizers of Marxism. Marxism has never denied the role of heroes. On the contrary, it admits that they play a considerable role, but with the reservations I have just made...

*Ludwig:* Lenin passed many years in exile abroad. You had occasion to be abroad for only a very short time. Do you consider that this has handicapped you? Who do you believe were of greater benefit to the revolution — those revolutionaries who lived in exile abroad and thus had the opportunity of

making a thorough study of Europe, but on the other hand were cut off from direct contact with the people; or those revolutionaries who carried on their work here, knew the moods of the people, but on the other hand knew little of Europe?

*Stalin:* Lenin must be excluded from this comparison. Very few of those who remained in Russia were as intimately connected with the actual state of affairs there and with the labour movement within the country as Lenin was, although he was a long time abroad. Whenever I went to see him abroad — in 1906, 1907, 1912 and 1913 — I saw piles of letters he had received from practical Party workers in Russia, and he was always better informed than those who stayed in Russia. He always considered his stay abroad to be a burden to him.

There are many more comrades in our Party and its leadership who remained in Russia, who did not go abroad, than there are former exiles, and they, of course, were able to be of greater benefit to the revolution than those who were in exile abroad. Actually few former exiles are left in our Party. They may add up to about one or two hundred out of the two million members of the Party. Of the seventy members of the Central

Committee scarcely more than three or four lived in exile abroad.

As far as knowledge of Europe, a study of Europe, is concerned, those who wished to make such a study had, of course, more opportunities of doing so while living there. In that respect those of us who did not live long abroad lost something. But living abroad is not at all a decisive factor in making a study of European economics, technique, the cadres of the labour movement and literature of every description, whether belles lettres or scientific. Other things being equal, it is of course easier to study Europe on the spot. But the disadvantage of those who have not lived in Europe is not of much importance. On the contrary, I know many comrades who were abroad twenty years, lived somewhere in Charlottenburg or in the Latin Quarter, spent years in cafés drinking beer, and who yet did not manage to acquire a knowledge of Europe and failed to understand it.

*Bolshevik* No. 8, 1932

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY  
COMRADE J. STALIN AT A  
MEETING OF VOTERS OF THE  
STALIN ELECTORAL AREA,  
MOSCOW**

*Speech made in the Grand Theatre*

**December 11, 1937**

*Chairman:* Comrade Stalin, our candidate, has the floor.

*(Comrade Stalin's appearance in the rostrum is greeted by a stormy ovation lasting several minutes. The whole audience rises to greet Comrade Stalin. Constant cries from the audience: "Hurrah for the great Stalin!" "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin, the author of the Soviet Constitution, the most democratic in the world!" "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin, the leader of the oppressed all over the world!")*

*Stalin:* Comrades, to tell you the truth, I had no intention of making a speech. But I was dragged, so to speak, to this meeting. "Make a good speech," they said. What shall I talk about, exactly what sort of speech? Everything that had to be said before the elections has already been said and said again

in the speeches of our leading comrades, Kallin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich and many other responsible comrades. What can be added to these speeches?

What is needed, they say, are explanations of certain questions connected with the election campaign. What explanations, on what questions? Everything that had to be explained has been explained and explained again in the well-known appeals of the Bolshevik Party, the Young Communist League, the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, the Osoaviakhim and the Committee of Physical Culture. What can be added to these explanations?

Of course, one could make a light sort of speech about everything and nothing. (*Amusement.*) Perhaps such a speech would amuse the audience. They say that there are some great hands at such speeches not only over there, in the capitalist countries, but here too, in the Soviet country. (*Laughter and applause.*) But, firstly, I am no great hand at such speeches. Secondly, is it worth while indulging in amusing things just now when all of us Bolsheviks are, as they say, "up to our necks" in work? I think not.

Clearly, you cannot make a good speech under such circumstances.

However, since I have taken the floor, I will have, of course, to say at least something one way or another. (*Loud applause.*)

First of all, I would like to express my thanks (*applause*) to the electors for the confidence they have shown in me. (*Applause.*)

I have been nominated as candidate, and the Election Commission of the Stalin Area of the Soviet capital has registered my candidature. This, comrades, is an expression of great confidence. Permit me to convey my profound Bolshevik gratitude for this confidence that you have shown in the Bolshevik Party of which I am a member, and in me personally as a representative of that Party. (*Loud applause.*)

I know what confidence means. It naturally lays upon me new and additional duties and, consequently, new and additional responsibilities. Well, it is not customary among us Bolsheviks to refuse responsibilities. I accept them willingly. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

For my part, I would like to assure you, comrades, that you may safely rely on Comrade Stalin. (*Loud and sustained cheers. A voice: "And we all stand for Comrade Stalin!"*) You may take it for granted that Comrade Stalin will be able to discharge his duty to the

people (*applause*), to the working class (*applause*), to the peasantry (*applause*) and to the intelligentsia. (*Applause.*)

Further, comrades, I would like to congratulate you on the occasion of the forthcoming national holiday, the day of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union. (*Loud applause.*) The forthcoming elections are not merely elections, comrades, they are really a national holiday of our workers, our peasants and our intelligentsia. (*Loud applause.*) Never in the history of the world have there been such really free and really democratic elections — never! History knows no other example like it. (*Applause.*) The point is not that our elections will be universal, equal, secret and direct, although that fact in itself is of great importance. The point is that our universal elections will be carried out as the freest elections and the most democratic of any country in the world.

Universal elections exist and are held in some capitalist countries, too, so-called democratic countries. But in what atmosphere are elections held there? In an atmosphere of class conflicts, in an atmosphere of class enmity, in an atmosphere of pressure brought to bear on the electors by the capitalists, landlords, bankers and other capitalist



sharks. Such elections, even if they are universal, equal, secret and direct, cannot be called altogether free and altogether democratic elections.

Here, in our country, on the contrary, elections are held in an entirely different atmosphere. Here there are no capitalists and no landlords and, consequently, no pressure is exerted by propertied classes on non-propertied classes. Here elections are held in an atmosphere of collaboration between the workers, the peasants and the intelligentsia, in an atmosphere of mutual confidence between them, in an atmosphere, I would say, of mutual friendship; because there are no capitalists in our country, no landlords, no exploitation and nobody, in fact, to bring pressure to bear on people in order to distort their will.

That is why our elections are the only really free and really democratic elections in the whole world. (*Loud applause.*)

Such free and really democratic elections could arise only on the basis of the triumph of the socialist system, only on the basis of the fact that in our country socialism is not merely being built, but has already become part of life, of the daily life of the people. Some ten years ago the question might still

be debated whether socialism could be built in our country or not. Today this is no longer a debatable question. Today it is a matter of facts, a matter of real life, a matter of habits that permeate the whole life of the people. Our mills and factories are being run without capitalists. The work is directed by men and women of the people. That is what we call socialism in practice. In our fields the tillers of the land work without landlords and without kulaks. The work is directed by men and women of the people. That is what we call socialism in daily life, that is what we call a free, socialist life.

It is on this basis that our new, really free and really democratic elections have arisen, elections which have no precedent in the history of mankind.

How then, after this, can one refrain from congratulating you on the occasion of the day of national celebration, the day of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union! (*Loud, general cheers.*)

Further, comrades, I would like to give you some advice, the advice of a candidate to his electors. If you take capitalist countries, you will find that peculiar, I would say, rather strange relations exist there between deputies and voters. As long as the elections

are in progress, the deputies flirt with the electors, fawn on them, swear fidelity and make heaps of promises of every kind. It would appear that the deputies are completely dependent on the electors. As soon as the elections are over, and the candidates have become deputies, relations undergo a radical change. Instead of the deputies being dependent on the electors, they become entirely independent. For four or five years, that is, until the next elections, the deputy feels quite free, independent of the people, of his electors. He may pass from one camp to another, he may turn from the right road to the wrong road, he may even become entangled in machinations of a not altogether desirable character, he may turn as many somersaults as he likes — he is independent.

Can such relations be regarded as normal? By no means, comrades. This circumstance was taken into consideration by our Constitution and it made it a law that electors have the right to recall their deputies before the expiration of their term of office if they begin to play monkey tricks, if they turn off the road, or if they forget that they are dependent on the people, on the electors.

This is a wonderful law, comrades. A deputy should know that he is the servant of

the people, their emissary in the Supreme Soviet, and he must follow the line laid down in the mandate given him by the people. If he turns off the road, the electors are entitled to demand new elections, and as to the deputy who turned off the road, they have the right to blackball him. (*Laughter and applause.*) This is a wonderful law. My advice, the advice of a candidate to his electors, is that they remember this electors' right, the right to recall deputies before the expiration of their term of office, that they keep an eye on their deputies, control them and, if they should take it into their heads to turn off the right road, get rid of them and demand new elections. The government is obliged to appoint new elections. My advice is to remember this law and to take advantage of it should need arise.

And, lastly, one more piece of advice from a candidate to his electors. What in general must one demand of one's deputies, selecting from all possible demands the most elementary?

The electors, the people, must demand that their deputies should remain equal to their tasks, that in their work they should not sink to the level of political philistines, that in their posts they should remain political fig-

ures of the Lenin type, that as public figures they should be as clear and definite as Lenin was (*applause*), that they should be as fearless in battle and as merciless towards the enemies of the people as Lenin was (*applause*), that they should be free from all panic, from any semblance of panic, when things begin to get complicated and some danger or other looms on the horizon, that they should be as free from all semblance of panic as Lenin was (*applause*), that they should be as wise and deliberate in deciding complex problems requiring a comprehensive orientation and a comprehensive weighing of all pros and cons as Lenin was (*applause*), that they should be as upright and honest as Lenin was (*applause*), that they should love their people as Lenin did. (*Applause.*)

Can we say that all the candidates are public figures precisely of this kind? I would not say so. There are all sorts of people in the world, there are all sorts of public figures in the world. There are people of whom you cannot say what they are, whether they are good or bad, courageous or timid, for the people heart and soul or for the enemies of the people. There are such people and there are such public figures. They are also to be found among us, the Bolsheviks. You know

yourselves, comrades — there are black sheep in every family. (Laughter and applause.) Of people of this indefinite type, people who resemble political philistines rather than political figures, people of this vague, amorphous type, the great Russian writer, Gogol, rather aptly said: “Vague sort of people, says he, neither one thing nor the other, you can’t make head or tail of them, they are neither Bogdan in town nor Seliphan in the country.” (Laughter and applause.) There are also some rather apt popular sayings about such indefinite people and public figures: “A middling sort of man — neither fish nor flesh” (general laughter and applause), neither a candle for god nor a poker for the devil.” (General laughter and applause.)

I cannot say with absolute certainty that among the candidates (I beg their pardon, of course) and among our public figures there are not people who more than anything resemble political philistines, who in character and make-up resemble people of the type referred to in the popular saying: “Neither a candle for god nor a poker for the devil.” (Laughter and applause.)

I would like you, comrades, to exercise systematic influence on your deputies, to im-

press upon them that they must constantly keep before them the great image of the great Lenin and imitate Lenin in all things. (Applause.)

The functions of the electors do not end with the elections. They continue during the whole term of the given Supreme Soviet. I have already mentioned the law which empowers the electors to recall their deputies before the expiration of their term of office if they should turn off the right road. Hence it is the duty and right of the electors to keep their deputies constantly under their control and to impress upon them that they must under no circumstances sink to the level of political philistines, impress upon their deputies that they must be like the great Lenin. (Applause.)

Such, comrades, is my second piece of advice to you, the advice of a candidate to his electors, (*Loud and sustained applause and cheers. All rise and turn towards the government box, to which Comrade Stalin proceeds from the platform. Voices: "Hurrah for the great Stalin!" "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin!" "Long live Comrade Stalin!" "Long live the first of the Leninists, candidate for the Soviet of the Union, Comrade Stalin!"*)

*Pravda*, No. 340, December 12, 1937



# SPEECH DELIVERED AT A RECEPTION IN THE KREMLIN TO HIGHER EDUCATIONAL WORKERS

May 17, 1938

Comrades, permit me to propose a toast to science and its progress, and to the health of the men of science.

To the progress of science, of that science which will not permit its old and recognized leaders smugly to invest themselves in the robe of high priests and monopolists of science; which understands the meaning, significance and omnipotence of an alliance between the old scientists and the young scientists; which voluntarily and willingly throws open every door of science to the young forces of our country, and affords them the opportunity of scaling the peaks of science, and which recognizes that the future belongs to the young scientists. (*Applause.*)

To the progress of science, of that science whose devotees, while understanding the power and significance of the established scientific traditions and ably utilizing them in the interests of science, are nevertheless not

willing to be slaves of these traditions; the science which has the courage and determination to smash the old traditions, standards and views when they become antiquated and begin to act as a fetter on progress, and which is able to create new traditions, new standards and new views. (*Applause.*)

In the course of its development science has known not a few courageous men who were able to break down the old and create the new, despite all obstacles, despite everything. Such scientists as Galileo, Darwin — and many others — are widely known. I should like to dwell on one of these eminent men of science, one who at the same time was the greatest man of modern times. I am referring to Lenin, our teacher, our tutor. (*Applause.*) Remember 1917. A scientific analysis of the social development of Russia and of the international situation brought Lenin to the conclusion that the only way out of the situation lay in the victory of socialism in Russia. This conclusion came as a complete surprise to many men of science of the day. Plekhanov, an outstanding man of science, spoke of Lenin with contempt and declared that he was “raving.” Other men of science, no less well-known, declared that “Lenin had gone mad,” and that he ought to be put away

in a safe place. Scientists of all kinds set up a howl that Lenin was destroying science. But Lenin was not afraid to go against the current, against the force of routine. And Lenin won. (*Applause.*)

Here you have an example of a man of science who boldly fought an antiquated science and laid the road for a new science.

But sometimes it is not well-known men of science who lay the new roads for science and technology, but men entirely unknown in the scientific world, plain, practical men, innovators in their field. Here, sitting at this table, are Comrades Stakhanov and Papanin. They are unknown in the scientific world, they have no scientific degrees, but are just practical men in their field. But who does not know that in their practical work in industry Stakhanov and the Stakhanovites have upset the existing standards, which were established by well-known scientists and technologists, have shown that they were antiquated, and have introduced new standards which conform to the requirements of real science and technology? Who does not know that in their practical work on the drifting icefloe Papanin and the Papaninites upset the old conception of the Arctic, in passing, as it were, without any special effort, showed that

it was antiquated, and established a new conception which conforms to the demands of real science? Who can deny that Stakhanov and Papanin are innovators in science, men of our advanced science.

There you see what “miracles” are still performed in science.

I have been speaking of science. But there are all kinds of science.

The science of which I have been speaking is advanced science.

To the progress of our advanced science!

To the men of advanced science!

To Lenin and Leninism!

To Stakhanov and the Stakhanovites!

To Papanin and the Papaninites! (*Applause.*)

*Pravda*, No. 136, May 19, 1938