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# THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKYISM

(1903-February 1917)

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The authors present an array of facts to show the historic importance of the Leninist Party's struggle against Trotskyism during the 1905-07 revolution, the period of reaction, the fresh revolutionary upsurge, the First World War and the February 1917 revolution in Russia.

They show the Bolshevik Party's role in defeating the Trotskyite August bloc, and in exposing Trotsky's schemes in the international labour movement.

There is a critique of Trotskyite views of the theory of imperialism, the prospects before the socialist revolution, and its motive forces.

## БОРЬБА ПАРТИИ БОЛЬШЕВИКОВ ПРОТИВ ТРОЦКИЗМА

*На английском языке*

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## INTRODUCTION

Ever since it originated, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been waging an implacable struggle against opportunism in every form, including Trotskyism, its veiled and worst variety.

V. I. Lenin said that in the imperialist epoch there were two tendencies within the labour movement: the bourgeois, opportunist tendency, and the proletarian, revolutionary tendency, and that "it is in the struggle between these two tendencies that the history of the labour movement will now inevitably develop".<sup>1</sup> With the dawn of the 20th century, the struggle between these two tendencies in the revolutionary labour movement became increasingly acute. When the centre of the world-wide revolutionary movement shifted to Russia, it markedly gained in intensity and acquired not only all-Russia but also great international importance.

Working from the mid-1890s on to develop his doctrine of the revolutionary Marxist Party, a new type of party, Lenin waged a relentless struggle involving principle against the liberal Narodniks, the "legal Marxists", and the followers of Bernstein (who had their counterpart in Russia in the Economists), the agents of the bourgeoisie within the revolutionary working-class movement of Russia and the world.

The establishment of the Bolshevik Party, the revolutionary party of the proletariat of Russia, marked a radical turning point in the development of the labour movement in Russia and throughout the world. The Bolshevik Party was

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 116.



a truly working-class party, a party of socialist revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat which took an implacable stand against opportunism of every stripe.

Ever since Bolshevism became a trend in political thought and a political party, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, pursued a consistent line towards a final break with the opportunists in the labour movement in Russia and abroad. At the same time, they did their best to win over the workers who had been misled and were variously connected with the opportunist groups.

The opportunist leaders of the Second International saw the split which took place at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) as a great danger, because they felt that Left-wing elements in the Social-Democratic parties of the West could very well follow in the footsteps of the Bolsheviks and start a resolute struggle against the opportunists.

It was precisely at this period that a new trend—Centrism—began to crystallise from the bourgeois, opportunist tendency in the labour movement, a trend which purported to work for “unity” between the revolutionaries and the opportunists, but actually aimed at subordinating the former to the latter, so as to secure a victory for the bourgeois, opportunist tendency over the proletarian, revolutionary one. Centrism meant nothing more than the ideology of subordinating proletarian interests to those of the petty bourgeoisie, the ideology of subordinating the revolutionary wing to the opportunist one, within the framework of a single party. Centrism had no social base which differed in any way from that of overt opportunism. Both had the labour aristocracy and the petty bourgeoisie as their common social foothold.

Kautskyism was the main direction of Centrism in the international labour movement. Lenin noted that “Kautskyism is not fortuitous; it is the social product of the contradictions within the Second International, a blend of loyalty to Marxism in word and subordination to opportunism in deed”.<sup>1</sup>

Trotskyism, a variety of Centrism in Russia, took its name from that of Leo Trotsky (Bronstein), who was one of the initiators of Menshevism and the worst enemy of Leninism. Already at the Second Congress of the RSDLP, his attitude

showed him to be a rabid Menshevik<sup>1</sup> who opposed the Leninist revolutionary line on programme and organisational matters. Trotsky took a stand rejecting the dictatorship of the proletariat, backed Yuli Martov's wording of Paragraph One of the RSDLP Rules, and opposed the establishment of a monolithic revolutionary party of the proletariat in Russia, which he did not want to be governed by iron discipline. After the Congress he actively fought against the Bolsheviks on all the cardinal questions of theory and practice in the socialist revolution.

The Trotskyites, being like all Mensheviks agents of the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary labour movement, did everything they could to place it under bourgeois influence. They realised that the growing Bolshevik influence in the revolutionary labour movement could weaken the opportunists' positions and completely isolate them from the mass. That is why they strove to prevent any further intensification of the struggle between the proletarian, revolutionary, and the bourgeois, opportunist tendencies, to prevent any final break between the Bolsheviks and the opportunists, so as to subordinate the Bolsheviks to the opportunists within a single West European type of reformist Social-Democratic party. For that purpose, the Trotskyites covered up their Right-wing opportunist face with a Centrist mask, pretending to be a sort of “non-factional centre”, ostensibly holding an independent, middle-of-the-road position between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Lenin gave Trotsky this characteristic: “Always true to himself—twists, swindles, poses as a Left, *helps* the Right, so long as he can.”<sup>2</sup>

After the Second Congress of the RSDLP, the Trotskyites actively fought the Bolsheviks over a period of many years, all the while remaining a variety of Menshevism donning the garments of “non-factionalism” and taking, whenever their political interests required this, an extreme “Leftist”, “ultra-revolutionary” stand. Lenin called Trotsky and others who kept changing their political stand, the “Tushino turn-

<sup>1</sup> At the election of the central party bodies at the Second Congress of the RSDLP (1903), Lenin and his followers won a majority and accordingly came to be known as Bolsheviks (Russian: *bolshinstvo*—majority), while the opportunist section was left in a minority and were accordingly known as Mensheviks (Russian: *meshinstvo*—minority).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 288.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 312.



coats".<sup>1</sup> He wrote: "The only ground the 'Tushino turn-coats' have for claiming that they stand above groups is that they 'borrow' their ideas from one group one day and from another the next day. Trotsky was an ardent Iskrist in 1901-03. . . . At the end of 1903, Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, i.e., he deserted from the Iskrist to the Economists. He said that 'between the old *Iskra* and the new lies a gulf'. In 1904-05, he deserted the Mensheviks and occupied a vacillating position, now co-operating with Martynov (the Economist), now proclaiming his absurdly Left 'permanent revolution' theory. In 1906-07, he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared that he was in agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

"In the period of disintegration, after long 'non-factional' vacillation, he again went to the Right."<sup>2</sup>

This book is designed to show how the Trotskyites worked hard to inject Centrism into the RSDLP during the first Russian Revolution (1905-07). Although he had ideological and organisational bonds with the Mensheviks, Trotsky kept saying that he was "independent" both of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. In actual fact, he differed with the Bolsheviks on all the theoretical and practical questions. In contrast to Lenin's theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into a socialist revolution, Trotsky brought up his theory of "permanent revolution", which in essence ignored the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution in Russia and denied the revolutionary role of the peasantry as an ally of the proletariat.

In this period, Trotsky opposed Lenin's proposition on the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and the provisional revolutionary government as its political organ. While preaching his reckless "with no tsar, but a workers' government" slogan, Trotsky denied that it was possible to set up a dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia until the workers became a majority of the population. The Trotskyites held that the socialist revolution in Russia could win out only with a proletarian revolution in the West, which meant putting the former off indefinitely.

<sup>1</sup> The name given in the Troublous Times in Rus to fighting men who went over from one camp to another.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 346.

As a leader of the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies, Trotsky followed a conciliatory policy which tended to retard the development of revolutionary initiative among the workers, and slurred over the differences between the Bolshevik and the Menshevik deputies in the Soviet.

As a liquidator in the years of reaction and the fresh revolutionary upswing, Trotsky worked to rally the anti-Bolshevik forces, organising all manner of blocs for the purpose of fighting Bolshevism, while continuing to style himself, without any justification, as a "non-factional" Social-Democrat. At the time, the liquidators, otzovists, Trotskyites, and conciliators in the Bolshevik ranks opposed Lenin and his supporters in a united front. The Vienna *Pravda*, a newspaper financed by Trotsky's bourgeois friends, and other liquidationist organs conducted a slanderous campaign against the Bolsheviks. With the help of Kamenev, Zinoviev and Rykov, the Trotskyites managed to get the January 1910 Plenum of the RSDLP Central Committee to adopt anti-Bolshevik decisions, and to stop the publication of the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary*, under the pretext of disbanding the factions. This step on the part of the Centrists and the conciliators was designed to make the Bolsheviks bend to the will of the opportunist bloc which Trotsky had cobbled together.

To fight against the Trotskyite-liquidationist bloc, the Bolsheviks arranged a bloc based on principle with the pro-Party Mensheviks led by G. V. Plekhanov, who had the support of a section of the workers striving to co-operate with the revolutionary Social-Democrats. This bloc helped the Bolsheviks to win over many workers who had earlier supported the Mensheviks.

This book describes Lenin's resolute struggle against the liquidators, otzovists, Trotskyites and conciliators to get the Party out of the crisis, and to convene the Sixth Party Conference. The Sixth (Prague) Conference of the RSDLP, convened through the efforts of Lenin and his supporters, expelled the liquidators, Trotskyites and their allies from the Party for good, and purged it of opportunist impurities.

The authors of the book show how the Trotskyites stepped up their activity after the Prague Conference. With the help of the opportunists and Centrists from the Second International, Trotsky started a campaign in the liquidators' newspapers and organs of the press of Social-Democratic parties



in West European countries to reverse the Prague Conference decisions. However, he failed to win any support in the local party organisations, which rallied round the Conference decisions. He failed in all his attempts to prevent the implementation of the Conference decisions, under which the Bolsheviks broke completely with the opportunists and the Centrists.

The Trotskyites made yet another attempt to set up a Centrist party. In August 1912, there was a Trotskyite-liquidators' conference which formalised the opportunist August bloc. Soon, however, the bloc began to fall apart under Bolshevik blows and under the stress of internal dissent.

Trotsky then launched, with the help of the opportunists and the Centrists of the Second International, a campaign to "unite" the Bolsheviks in a single party with all the opportunist groups and trends, including the émigré ones, which had no connection with the revolutionary workers' movement in Russia. Despite the help from Kautsky, Vandervelde, Huysmans and other opportunists and Centrists from the Second International, who convened a so-called unity conference in Brussels in July 1914, the Bolsheviks refused to have any sort of reconciliation with the opportunists and the Centrists, thereby showing once again their implacable attitude towards opportunism in every form. The new anti-Bolshevik bloc arranged at the conference, which Lenin called the "Third of July" or "Brussels bloc for rescuing the liquidators", proved to be as short-lived as the August bloc. Thus, the new attempt on the eve of the First World War by the Centrists of Russia and other countries to eliminate the Bolshevik Party and to set up a Centrist party in Russia was a complete fiasco.

The authors of the book give a consistent exposition of the Bolsheviks' many years of struggle against Trotskyism and every form of Centrism in the international arena, and refute slanderous assertions by the falsifiers of history that before the First World War Lenin and the Bolsheviks tended to underestimate the danger of Centrism in the revolutionary labour movement in Russia and other countries, and failed to carry on a resolute struggle against them.<sup>1</sup> The facts

<sup>1</sup> Such slanderous assertions were made in an article by A. Slutsky, entitled "Bolsheviks o germanskoi sotsial-demokratii v period yeyo predvoyoennogo krizisa" (Bolsheviks about German Social-Democracy During

mustered in the book show that the Bolshevik Party gained in strength and developed in relentless struggle against opportunists of every stripe, including the Centrists in the West (led by Kautsky) and the Centrists in Russia (led by Trotsky).

The book describes the struggle of the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, against the Kautskyites in the international arena and against the Trotskyites, who during the First World War took a stand hostile to the Bolsheviks on the basic issues of war, peace and revolution. The Centrists used revolutionary catchwords as a screen behind which they actually supported the social-chauvinists, who were openly helping the bourgeoisie, and called on the workers of all the belligerent countries to defend their own homeland, denying the possibility of the workers' taking joint revolutionary action against the governments fighting in the war.

The "neither victory, nor defeat" slogan put forward by the Trotskyites was in fact a rehash of the social-chauvinist slogan for defence of the bourgeois homeland. That is why Lenin emphasised that those who supported the slogan were willing or unwilling social-chauvinists, enemies of proletarian policy, and supporters of imperialist governments and ruling classes.<sup>1</sup> In their efforts to divert the masses of working people from the revolutionary struggle, the Centrists clamoured for an illusory "just peace" under imperialism.

The Trotskyites, who during the First World War continued to preach their notorious "permanent revolution" theory, acted as rabid antagonists of Lenin's theory of socialist revolution, and denied his conclusion that socialism could initially win out in a few or even one separate country. Exposing the political face of Centrism, which was such a danger to the workers of all countries, Lenin wrote: "The 'Centre' ... consists of people who vacillate between the social-chauvinists and the true internationalists. ... The crux of the matter is that the 'Centre' is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one's own government; it does not preach revolution; it does not carry on a whole-hearted revolutionary struggle; and in order to evade such

its Prewar Crisis), which was published in the magazine *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 6 for 1930.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 279.



a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra-'Marxist'-sounding excuses."<sup>1</sup>

As a result of the Bolsheviks' consistent struggle, the Centrists were exposed in the eyes of the working class as camouflaged social-chauvinists and accomplices of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Their attempts to follow a "middle-of-the-road" line in the revolutionary movement, with the aim of subordinating the revolutionaries to the opportunists, proved to be futile.

It was even more absurd to try to follow such a line in the labour movement after the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February, by which time the leaders of the petty-bourgeois parties had completely discredited themselves in the eyes of the masses of working people as accomplices of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

When it became quite obvious that the Trotskyites would fail to set up a Centrist party in Russia, Trotsky and his closest associates decided to join the Bolshevik Party so as to pursue their Menshevik line inside it. Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party at the Sixth Congress of the RSDLP(B), but did not in fact abandon his Menshevik views. He and his small group of supporters merely suspended their overt fight against the Party. Subsequently, the Trotskyites resumed their fierce attacks on the Party's general line and eventually went over into the camp of the avowed enemies of the Soviet state.

\* \* \*

It is of pressing importance to shed light on the history of the struggle which Lenin's Party carried on against Trotskyism before the revolution and in the subsequent period, because Trotskyism, as an ideological trend, survives in some countries to this very day and continues to harm the working-class and communist movement.

Long before the victory of the socialist revolution, Lenin taught the young revolutionaries to discern Trotskyism as a harmful trend within the working class which tried hard to reconcile revolutionary Bolsheviks and opportunist-liquidators. In his work "Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity" published in May 1914, he wrote that "the old participants in the Marxist movement in Russia

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 76.

know Trotsky very well, and there is no need to discuss him for their benefit. But the younger generation of workers do not know him, and it is therefore necessary to discuss him..."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin held that young Bolshevik workers had to know the political face of Trotsky and his supporters, who were the real enemies of the unity of the working class rallied round the slogans of the Prague Conference, and to understand that they were trying to subordinate the revolutionary labour movement in Russia to the liquidators, whose activities had been resolutely condemned by the Fifth (All-Russia) Conference of the RSDLP in December 1908. Lenin emphasised: "The younger generation of workers should know exactly whom they are dealing with, when individuals come before them with incredibly pretentious claims, unwilling absolutely to reckon with *either* the Party decisions, which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards liquidationism, *or* with the experience of the present-day working-class movement in Russia, which has actually brought about the *unity* of the majority on the basis of full recognition of the aforesaid decisions."<sup>2</sup>

The Party's Central Committee has repeatedly stressed the need to expose Trotskyism as a petty-bourgeois trend which has been an enemy of Leninism ever since it emerged. The January (1925) Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the RCP(B) set this task before the Party: "To continue and develop the Party's work in explaining from top to bottom the anti-Bolshevik character of Trotskyism, beginning from 1903 to the *Lessons of October*, and to authorise the Politbureau to give all propaganda organs (party schools, etc.) due explanation on this score; to introduce into political instruction programmes explanations of the petty-bourgeois character of Trotskyism, etc."<sup>3</sup>

In-depth research to expose Trotskyism is a pressing necessity even today. The resolution of the CPSU Central Committee, "On Measures for Further Developing the Social Sciences and Enhancing Their Role in Communist Construc-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 347.

<sup>3</sup> *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh syezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums), Part II, Moscow, 1954, p. 114.



tion" (August 1967), says that Party historians "have not made sufficiently active efforts in writing generalised fundamental works to show the CPSU's contribution to the theory of socialist and communist construction, its role in the international development of Marxism-Leninism in the 50 years since the October Revolution, and to give a broad picture of the CPSU's struggle against the Mensheviks, Trotskyites, Right-wing opportunists, national-deviationists, and other groups and trends hostile to the Party".<sup>1</sup>

The authors of this book show the struggle of Lenin's Party against Trotskyism from the moment it appeared on the political arena until the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917. The book has been written on the basis of Lenin's works, Party documents, archive material and published sources. In presenting their subject, the authors expose the inventions of bourgeois falsifiers of history like Isaac Deutscher, Heinz Brahm, and Leonard Schapiro, who have tried to substitute Trotskyism for Bolshevism, and to belittle Lenin's role as the founder of the Party and the leader of the October Revolution, and who have echoed Trotsky's view that the Bolshevik Party was victorious in the October Revolution allegedly because it had abandoned its earlier policy and had adopted Trotsky's "permanent revolution" theory, and that it was not the Communist Party led by Lenin, but Trotsky that was the guiding spirit and organiser of the October Revolution.

The authors of the book present a great volume of factual material to show that the struggle conducted by Trotsky and the Trotskyites against Lenin and the Bolshevik Party was not the result of temporary mistakes and aberrations, but a deliberately hostile activity by the agents of the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary movement, that Trotskyism has always been the worst enemy of Leninism, that the entry by Trotsky and his supporters into the Bolshevik Party in August 1917 was nothing but a manoeuvre designed for a definite political purpose. The history of the struggle waged by Trotsky and Trotskyism against Lenin and Leninism before the revolution shows that it was not at all accidental but quite natural that Trotskyism subsequently developed into an openly counter-revolutionary trend, concentrating all its efforts on the fight against the Soviet Union, the Communist Party and the whole international communist movement.

<sup>1</sup> *Kommunist* No. 13, 1967, p. 5.

## CHAPTER I

### EXPOSURE BY V. I. LENIN OF TROTSKY'S OPPORTUNISM IN THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

#### 1. Critique of Trotsky's Menshevik-Reformist Views on Programme and Organisational Questions at the RSDLP's Second Congress

At the turn of the century, the centre of the world revolutionary movement shifted to Russia. By then, the parties of the Second International, stricken with opportunism, had proved themselves completely incapable of giving the working class a lead in the struggle for victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was necessary to create a revolutionary Marxist party capable of providing leadership for the masses, and resolutely and consistently fighting against every form of opportunism.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels had worked out a number of important propositions about a revolutionary proletarian party. In the new historical conditions, Lenin, with these propositions as a basis, further developed the Marxist doctrine of the proletarian party and its role in the revolutionary movement. He emphasised that only a party of social revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat which had openly broken with opportunism could lead the proletariat to victory.

Lenin repeatedly said that struggle against opportunism was a law of internal development of each Marxist party.

He wrote: "No Social-Democratic Party in the world was ever formed—particularly in the period of bourgeois revolutions—without a hard struggle and a number of splits with the bourgeois fellow-travellers of the proletariat. The same is true of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which ever since 1898 has been taking shape, growing, gaining in



strength and becoming tempered, despite all obstacles, in the hard struggle against such fellow-travellers."<sup>1</sup>

The Second Congress of the RSDLP, held in July and August 1903, was a most important stage in the establishment in Russia of a truly revolutionary Marxist party of the working class, a new type of party. The struggle which flared up at the Congress between Lenin and his supporters, on the one hand, and the opportunists, on the other, was a struggle for the triumph of the Leninist, *Iskra*, orientation in the labour movement in Russia.

In his book, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, he subsequently wrote: "That this was the direction in which the Congress had to work was predetermined by the three years' activities of *Iskra* and by the recognition of the latter by the majority of the committees. *Iskra's* programme and trend were to become the programme and trend of the Party; *Iskra's* organisational plans were to be embodied in the Rules of Organisation of the Party."<sup>2</sup>

Discussions at the Second Congress of the RSDLP of Lenin's draft Party Programme, whose adoption by and large decided whether or not Russia was to have a new type of party, drew fierce attacks from opportunists, avowed and camouflaged, and the vacillating elements. Lenin recalled in his "Account of the Second Congress of the RSDLP": "The Programme was discussed and voted on point by point ... and practically two-thirds of the time of the Congress was spent on the programme!"<sup>3</sup>

The opportunists' attacks on Lenin's draft Programme had one main purpose, namely, to expunge its provision about the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Economists Akimov and Martynov, and the Bundist<sup>4</sup> Liber were joined in their attacks against the central point of the Party Programme—the dictatorship of the proletariat—by Trotsky, who then claimed to be a follower of *Iskra*. He did not risk coming out in open protest against inclusion of the dictatorship of the proletariat provision in the Programme, and declared

that this dictatorship would be possible only "when the Social-Democratic Party and the working class ... would be closest to identification. The dictatorship of the proletariat would not be a conspiratorial 'coup' but political domination by an organised working class constituting the majority of the nation."<sup>1</sup>

While speaking out against V. Akimov, Trotsky in fact went well beyond the latter, arguing that the dictatorship of the proletariat could not be a practical proposition until the working class became a majority of the nation, and also until the party and the working class were close to being identical, i.e., when the distinction between the party and the class was erased. This was nothing in fact but a denial of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was no accident that in a pamphlet, Akimov later wrote: "Trotsky expressed his view of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' with which I absolutely agree."<sup>2</sup>

When Russian Marxists set themselves the task of overthrowing the autocracy, they believed that all supreme power in the state should pass into the hands of a legislative assembly consisting of people's representatives. They saw the prospect of the proletariat winning power with the support of millions of toiling peasants. Accordingly, the draft Programme of the RSDLP said that the overthrown autocracy would be replaced by an "autocracy of the people".

At the 21st sitting of the Congress, Akimov asked what the "autocracy of the people" concept meant. In reply, Trotsky distorted the real meaning of this point of the Party Programme when he declared: "Under the autocracy of 'the people' the dictatorship belongs to the bourgeoisie. When the socialists obtain a majority, this will usher in the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>3</sup>

That statement of Trotsky's merely served to confirm his anti-Marxist view of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In addition, he displayed his solidarity with West European opportunists, who ignored the revolutionary role of the peasantry. This attitude was in fact aimed against the revo-

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 546.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> The Bundists were members of the Bund, an opportunist petty-bourgeois Jewish nationalist party. In 1898, the Bund joined the RSDLP and left it at the Second Congress in 1903. The Bund was a vehicle of nationalism and separatism in the labour movement.

<sup>1</sup> *Utoroi syezd RSDRP. Protokoly* (The Second Congress of the RSDLP, Proceedings), Moscow, 1959, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> V. Akimov, *K voprosu o rabotakh II syezda RSDRP* (A Few Points About the Work of the Second Congress of the RSDLP), Geneva, 1904, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *The Second Congress of the RSDLP. Proceedings*, p. 255.



lution as a whole, because it deprived it of its reserves and doomed the proletariat to defeat.

It is no accident, therefore, that present-day bourgeois falsifiers extol Trotsky in every way for his "understanding" of the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The West German historian Heinz Brahm tries very hard to prove that Trotsky's speeches at the Second Congress of the RSDLP allegedly expressed his confidence that the dictatorship of the proletariat would win out in Russia in the near future.<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky's statements about the dictatorship of the proletariat contained the seeds of his "permanent revolution" doctrine, which he worked out in 1905 together with Parvus, and which was based on the opportunist slogan of "with no tsar, but a workers' government", that is, a revolution without the peasants. It is this theory that Trotsky turned into a weapon in his fight against Leninism.

In the bitter disputes over all the clauses of the Programme, Lenin and his supporters safeguarded the Marxist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat and gave a resolute rebuff to Trotsky and other opportunists. Lenin said: "They expressed views which have already been termed opportunism (and quite rightly so). They actually went so far as to 'refute' the theory of impoverishment, to 'dispute' the dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>2</sup> By an overwhelming majority, the Congress adopted Lenin's draft Programme of the RSDLP, which consisted of two parts: a minimum and a maximum programme. It was a document which clearly defined both the ultimate aims and the immediate tasks of Social-Democracy.<sup>3</sup>

The Programme adopted by the Second Congress was a real Marxist programme of the revolutionary proletarian Party. In contrast to the West European Social-Democratic parties, the RSDLP was at the time the world's only working-class party which had the dictatorship of the proletariat

<sup>1</sup> H. Brahm, *Trotskijs Kampf um die Nachfolge Lenins*, Köln, 1964, S. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 490.

<sup>3</sup> Present-day bourgeois fabricators have tried to distort the essence of the first Programme of the RSDLP. Thus, in describing the events connected with the Party's Second Congress, Brahm reduces the whole RSDLP Programme to its minimum programme, dropping such of its planks as the political freedoms, equality for all citizens, separation of church from state, etc. (H. Brahm, op. cit., S. 18).

as a plank in its Programme. "In this Programme," Lenin subsequently wrote, "the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is stated in clear and definite terms, and, moreover, is linked up with the struggle against Bernstein, against opportunism."<sup>1</sup> Inclusion of this demand in the Party Programme marked the triumph for revolutionary Marxism and a victory for Leninism over opportunism in the labour movement in Russia.

The Party Programme adopted by the Second Congress of the RSDLP was the result of much theoretical work by the Russian Marxists. It determined the Party's consistent Marxist policy and promoted the revolutionary education of the proletariat. With it as a guide, the Party successfully fought for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist revolutions in Russia.

By adopting the Programme, the Second Congress of the RSDLP laid a sound foundation for the ideological unity of the Marxist Party. This unity needed to be organisationally consolidated in the Party Rules. Lenin regarded the Rules as the material basis ensuring fulfilment of the Party Programme.<sup>2</sup>

During the discussion of the draft Rules, as in the working out of the Programme of the RSDLP, Lenin and his supporters had to carry on a resolute struggle against unstable, wavering and opportunist elements.

The Party Rules were based on the principle of democratic centralism, the idea of establishing a coherent centralised Party with an iron discipline. Lenin believed that every member of the Party had to be attached to one of the Party organisations. This ensured the education of Party members in the Marxist spirit, and led to a high sense of discipline and real control over the activity of each. In these conditions, the Party becomes a harmonious system of organisations acting under a single plan.

Lenin's wording of the first clause of the Rules said that a member of the RSDLP was one who accepted the Party Programme and supported the Party both by material means and by personal participation in one of its organisations. By contrast, Martov held that it was enough for a Party member to work under the control of one of the Party's organisations.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, pp. 414-15.



He proposed that admission to the Party should be open to all those desirous of joining, without their being bound to be members of one of its organisations or being constrained by the framework of Party discipline. In other words, Martov opposed the principle of democratic centralism, orderly organisation and iron discipline in the Party.

On the face of it, the contradictions over Paragraph One of the Rules had a bearing on Party membership. However, in terms of principle, the two different wordings of the clause on Party membership were a reflection of antithetical views on the role of the proletarian Party, its tasks, organisational principles and composition.

Lenin and his supporters saw the wording of the membership clause as part of the struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. They worked for a Party that was proletarian and was capable of leading the working class to victory. Lenin warned against the danger of cluttering up the Party with various unstable, wavering and opportunist elements. This danger threatened the labour party in any country but was an especially grave one in Russia, then on the eve of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. That is why Lenin wanted a sharp line of demarcation to be drawn between those doing the work and those merely doing the talking. He said: "It would be better if ten who do work should not call themselves Party members ... than that one who only talks should have the right and opportunity to be a Party member."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin's wording flowed from the organisational principles of the new type of Party, and emphasised the great importance of Party membership, containing the requirement that the best men from the working class should be selected for the Party. Lenin told the Congress: "It is our task to safeguard the firmness, consistency, and purity of our Party. We must strive to raise the title and the significance of a Party member higher, higher and still higher."<sup>2</sup> Lenin's requirement concerning careful selection of membership and the exigent standards set for Party members became one of the main organisational principles of the Bolshevik Party.

Martov's wording of Paragraph One of the Rules flung the door wide open to unsteady petty-bourgeois elements

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 503.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504.

which turned it into an amorphous thing, without an organisational framework. In this struggle over the two standpoints on the organisational principles of the RSDLP, Trotsky sided with Martov and other opportunists. Trotsky's denial of the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat led him to opportunism in organisational matters. His speeches in the discussion of Paragraph One of the Rules were an expression of his denial of the Marxist Party's role as the vanguard of the working class.

Trotsky spoke at length about workers and intellectuals, about the class standpoint and the mass movement, but avoided dealing with the substance of the contradictions. He denied that the contradictions on the question of Party membership involved principle, and refused to admit that at the Congress there were two approaches to the role of the Party, in general, and the RSDLP, in particular. Trotsky sharply opposed the motion for a vote in favour of Lenin's wording. He said: "I was not aware that it was possible to exorcise opportunism through the Rules ... Comrade Lenin's formula must be rejected. I repeat: it misses the mark."<sup>1</sup> Trotsky tried very hard to distort Lenin's stand by saying that Lenin wanted to set up something that was not a party but a conspiratorial organisation admitting intellectuals only.<sup>2</sup>

Under the pretext of fighting petty-bourgeois freewheeling, Trotsky tried to smuggle in Martov's wording of the Party membership clause. While paying lip-service to the

<sup>1</sup> *The Second Congress of the RSDLP, Proceedings*, pp. 274, 275.

<sup>2</sup> This charge is being widely used today by the bourgeois falsifiers. Thus, Schapiro equates Lenin's stand and that taken by the Narodnik P. N. Tkachev, who wanted a small group of intellectuals to seize power. In his book, Schapiro analyses Tkachev's doctrine and writes: "The resemblance to bolshevism, such as it was eventually to become, is in some respect very striking, and it is with justice that Tkachev has often been described as the originator of many of Lenin's ideas" (L. Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, London, 1960, Introduction, p. 4).

Brahm accuses Lenin of setting up a conspiratorial organisation in Russia and says that he had fallen under Bernstein's influence and had lost faith in the political unity and independence of the labour movement in Russia. Brahm writes: "Lenin came to the conclusion that if the proletarian revolution was to materialise there was need for an organisation of professional conspirators who would undertake all the effort and burden of preparing the revolution instead of the workers, who were totally absorbed in the struggle for their daily bread" (H. Brahm, op. cit., 8, 20). All these inventions have been refuted by the history of the CPSU and by life itself.



rights of workers, he in fact tried to let into the Party opportunists and those who practised a high-handed anarchism and intellectualist individualism. Trotsky was not working for a party of social revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat, but for a West European type of reformist party.

Lenin emphasised that Trotsky's attempt to make the Party responsible for men who did not work in any of its organisations would result in the activity of Party members being left virtually without control and guidance. This made unity of action impossible. "The Central Committee," Lenin wrote, "will never be able to exercise real control over all who do the work but do not belong to organisations. It is our task to place *actual* control in the hands of the Central Committee."<sup>1</sup>

The urge on the part of Trotsky, Martov and their supporters to declare one and all members of the RSDLP in essence meant a rejection of discipline in the Party. In *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, Lenin stressed that in the debates on Paragraph One of the Rules "the supporters of *bourgeois-intellectual individualism* ... clashed with the supporters of *proletarian organisation and discipline*".<sup>2</sup>

In his efforts to create a Party taking an implacable stand against every form of opportunism, Lenin said in his second speech in the debate on Paragraph One of the Rules that Trotsky's defence of Martov's wording helped opportunist elements to sneak into the Party, whereas it was necessary to keep them out of the Party by every possible means. Lenin added: "To refute this simple and obvious conclusion it has to be proved that there are no such elements; but it has not even occurred to Comrade Trotsky to do that. Nor can that be proved, for everyone knows that such elements exist in plenty, and that they are to be found in the working class too."<sup>3</sup>

Let us recall that in an earlier work, *What Is To Be Done?*, Lenin had worked out a plan for the Party's organisational structure. Under it, the Party was to consist of two sections: a narrow circle of leading workers who were professional revolutionaries, and an extensive network of grass-roots Party organisations surrounded with the sympathy and support of the toiling masses. Lenin said the organisation of

revolutionaries "must perforce not be very extensive and must be as secret as possible."<sup>4</sup> But it was not his idea at all to fence off the working-class Party from the broad masses of working people. He kept emphasising that the revolutionary Marxist Party would be able to play its role of vanguard of the working class and all working people only if it had indissoluble bonds with the masses.

The conspiratorial approach was alien to Lenin, who from the very start of his revolutionary activity had taken a firm stand against efforts to divert the liberation movement to the path of plots and intrigues. Speaking of the tasks in the fight for socialism, he had written as early as 1897, that Social-Democrats "have always thought, and continue to think, that this fight must be waged not by conspirators, but by a revolutionary party based on the working-class movement".<sup>5</sup> He believed that the working-class Party must be surrounded by its other organisations, which should be as massive and diverse as possible. The Party, as the highest form of class organisation, had the task of guiding these organisations.

Addressing the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, Lenin explained the meaning of "political party of the proletariat". He said: "... Whether or not a party is really a political party of the workers does not depend solely upon a membership of workers but also upon the men that lead it, and the content of its actions and its political tactics. Only this latter determines whether we really have before us a political party of the proletariat."<sup>6</sup>

By the time of its Second Congress, the RSDLP had tens of thousands of members and was exerting an ideological influence on hundreds of thousands of workers.<sup>7</sup> By adopting its Programme, it announced itself to be a proletarian class Party whose ultimate aim was to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat and translate into life the basic interests of the working class.

At the Second Congress, the real Marxists, led by Lenin, exposed the opportunist essence of Trotsky's sniping at

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 504.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 502.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Vol. 5, pp. 452-53.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 340-41.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Vol. 31, pp. 257-58.

<sup>7</sup> *Iz istorii sozdaniya partii novogo tipa. Doklad bolshevikov Mezhdunarodnomu sotsialisticheskomu kongressu v 1904 g.* (From the History of Creating a New Type of Party. Bolshevik Report to the International Socialist Congress in 1904), Moscow, 1963, p. 62.



Lenin's wording of Paragraph One of the Rules, sniping which he carried on from behind a screen of revolutionary talk. In his speech, Lenin said that Trotsky had distorted the main idea of his book, *What Is To Be Done?* Dealing with Trotsky's reasoning that in case of any arrests it would be the workers' organisations that would be the first to suffer, leaving the Party with the intellectuals only, Lenin stressed that Trotsky had substituted the class for the Party, which was quite wrong. Lenin said: "The Party must be only the vanguard, the leader of the vast masses of the working class, the whole (or nearly the whole) of which works 'under the control and direction' of the Party organisations, but the whole of which does not and should not belong to a 'party'."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin's wording of Paragraph One of the Rules was supported by S. Gusev, P. Krasikov and others, who showed in their speeches that this wording did not create any insuperable obstacles to joining the Party, and that by their assertions to the contrary, Trotsky, Martov and others were trying to cover up the opportunist essence of the wording they were trying to smuggle in.

Lenin's supporters worked hard and resolutely against Martov's wording, which led to the establishment of a reformist instead of a revolutionary party. They stood for a monolithic, militant, well-organised and disciplined proletarian Party, whereas Martov, Trotsky and the others were intent on continuing with an amorphous and disordered scramble. That is why Martov's formula was supported by all the opportunist elements: the Bundists, Economists, Centrists, and the wavering *Iskra* followers. Rallied together against the Leninists, the opportunists managed to force through Paragraph One of the Rules as formulated by Martov.

Although Lenin's draft of Paragraph One of the Party Rules was not supported by the Congress majority, the revolutionary Social-Democrats continued their persistent struggle against the opportunists on all other basic provisions of the Party Rules, and secured their adoption as worded by Lenin. Martov was subsequently forced to admit: "... the importance of this defeat for Lenin was nullified by the adoption of the other clauses of the Rules."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 502.

<sup>2</sup> L. Martov, *Istoriya Rossiiskoi sotsial-demokratii* (A History of Russian Social-Democracy), Moscow-Petrograd, 1923, p. 76.

The struggle of the revolutionary Social-Democrats, led by Lenin, for the Party Rules was of tremendous importance. At the Second Congress, consistent Marxists upheld the *Iskra* organisational plan, which was the basis for the emergence in Russia of the revolutionary proletarian Party.

The triumph of the *Iskra* principles on programme, tactical and organisational matters had to be consolidated by resolutely doing away with clannishness and electing a leadership capable of giving a consistent revolutionary lead in all Party activities.

The election of the Party's governing centres—the Central Committee and the Central Organ—went on in bitter struggle which led to a final split among the *Iskra* followers. Realising that Lenin's principles of Party organisation were winning out, Martov and his supporters decided to break away from the *Iskra* organisation. The opportunists stubbornly resisted the adoption of Lenin's proposal for the election of two trios—for the Central Committee and for the Editorial Board of the Party's Central Organ—despite the fact that the proposal had been introduced long before the Party's Second Congress, and had been approved by *Iskra*'s other editors: G. Plekhanov, Y. Martov, P. Axelrod, V. Zaslulich and A. Potresov.

Discussion of the election of the Party's central bodies once again demonstrated Trotsky's opportunist attitude. Before the Congress, Trotsky had spoken out in favour of the trio idea, and at the early sittings of the Congress he had come out in defence of the idea of centralism against attacks by the Economist Akimov. However, during the election of the Party's central bodies he doffed his mask and sharply attacked both the idea of centralism and the election of the trios. He joined Martov in doctoring the facts, saying that the trio proposal had been made by Lenin alone, and had not been approved by all the editors. At the 30th sitting of the Congress, Trotsky declared: "Comrade Rusov<sup>1</sup> alleged that I have defended the so-called two-trio idea. That is not true. . . . It has here been said several times that the plan for the election of 'two trios' belongs to the editorial board. That is not true either. It belongs to one of its members."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pseudonym of the Bolshevik B. Knunyants.

<sup>2</sup> *The Second Congress of the RSDLP, Proceedings*, pp. 364-65.



Having failed to discredit the proposal for electing the Party's governing bodies on the basis of the trio principle, the Martovites tried to entrench themselves on the *Iskra* editorial board, so as to seize the political leadership of the Party. In breach of the already approved Rules, they demanded the election of all the six former editors of *Iskra*, four of whom were Martov's supporters. As for Trotsky, he began to insist on the confirmation of the old editorial board. He also came out against the competence of the Congress, declaring that it had "neither the moral nor the political right to recarve the editorial board".<sup>1</sup>

Lenin sharply criticised the statements of those who opposed the election of trios. He traced the origin of the question and proved that Martov and Trotsky had distorted the facts to suit the opportunists: the demand for the election of trios had originated within the editorial board and had not been objected to by any of its members. Lenin recalled: "And on many subsequent occasions, Comrade Martov, together with Comrade Trotsky and others, at a number of private meetings of *Iskra* supporters, advocated this system of electing 'two trios'."<sup>2</sup>

What Lenin said is confirmed by Martov's "Remarks on the Draft 'Programme of the Regular Second Congress of the Russian SDLP' by V. I. Lenin" (July 1903, Geneva).<sup>3</sup> This document, especially the remarks on item 24 of the Congress agenda which Lenin drew up, show that long before the Congress Martov had been aware of Lenin's plan for the election of the two trios for the Party's governing bodies and the procedure for the mutual co-optation of the centres. It also follows from the document that before the Congress Martov had fully shared Lenin's proposal and had taken an active part in the preliminary discussion and working out of the principle for forming the Party's central bodies.

On the strength of Martov's remarks, Lenin made additions in red ink to the commentary on item 24 of his draft, beginning with the words: "Following the approval..."<sup>4</sup> Lenin pointed this out in his speech at the 31st sitting of the Congress. "Several weeks before the Congress," he said, "I

plainly told him [Martov] and another member of the editorial board that at the Congress I would demand the free election of the editorial board. I gave up this plan only because Comrade Martov himself suggested to me the more convenient plan of electing 'two trios'. I thereupon formulated this plan on paper and sent it first of all to Comrade Martov himself, who returned it to me with some corrections—here it is, I have the very copy, with Martov's corrections in red ink. Many of the comrades later saw this plan dozens of times, all the members of the editorial board saw it too, and no one at any time formally protested against it."<sup>1</sup> Lenin added that Martov and his supporters had chosen one of the two trends crystallising in the Party during the Congress, namely, the opportunist one,<sup>2</sup> and that they had taken the path of clannishness, disorganisation and division.

The trio proposal was also supported by A. Stopani, S. Gusev, M. Lyadov, G. Mishenev, P. Krasikov, V. Noskov and N. Bauman, the latter saying that the matter was one of principle and not of personal relationships on the editorial board, as Martov's supporters were trying to suggest in an effort to cover up their anti-Marxist, opportunist views. He went on: "We have been told repeatedly that we here are Party members and should consequently act solely from political considerations, whereas everything has now been reduced to the personal plane, to the question of confidence or lack of confidence in the several editors."<sup>3</sup> Bauman also exposed Trotsky's assertion that the trio-election proposal had come only from Lenin and had not been approved by the other editors. He referred to a talk he had had with Martov, who had told him that the trio project did not belong to Lenin alone but had been approved by himself and another editor.<sup>4</sup>

Speaking on the election of the editorial board, Knunyants showed that Trotsky and the other opportunists had tried to substitute the question of attitude to individuals from the former *Iskra* editorial board for the question of principle. Knunyants said that it was a "purely philistine view of Party affairs" to take such an approach in deciding the question of who was to lead the Party, who was to determine the

<sup>1</sup> *The Second Congress of the RSDLP. Proceedings*, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 507.

<sup>3</sup> *Lenin Miscellany VI*, pp. 64-65 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>4</sup> The text of the additions was first published in full in the Fifth (Russian) Edition of Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 399-400.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 506.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 508.

<sup>3</sup> *The Second Congress of the RSDLP. Proceedings*, p. 367.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



political line.<sup>1</sup> He urged the Congress "not to allow themselves to be misled by the delicately philistine talk about mistrust for those who had not been elected, and to take, in all their elections as in all their acts, the standpoint of the Party's interests, the interests of the common cause. . . . I am surprised that the trio election is being attacked by none other than Comrade Trotsky. Is it not he who passionately defended the adopted agenda at the preliminary meetings? In so doing, he made no mention of such a heretical item on it as the trio election."<sup>2</sup>

B. Knunyants was supported by S. Gusev, who said: "If Trotsky was so indignant today over the proposal of the editorial trio, it is surprising why it had not roused his indignation before, but had, on the contrary, caused him to deliver ardent speeches in its defence."<sup>3</sup>

Knunyants, Bauman, Gusev, Krasikov and Stopani gave concrete examples exposing Trotsky's double-dealing stand on the question of setting up the Party's central bodies. Trotsky's efforts to have the Party leadership handed over to the opportunist elements, and to dilute the revolutionary Social-Democrats in the mass of opportunists were rebuffed by the Congress majority, who supported Lenin's plan for forming the Party's governing bodies. Lenin subsequently recalled that "after a desperately hot debate, the Congress decided not to endorse the old editorial board".<sup>4</sup>

Elected to the *Iskra* editorial board were Lenin, Plekhanov and Martov, the latter refusing to work on the board, thereby once again confirming that the contradictions involved principle. Elected to the Central Committee were G. Krzhizhanovsky, F. Lengnik and V. Noskov. In accordance with the Rules, the Party's highest body was the Party Council, consisting of two representatives of the Central Committee, two representatives of the Central Organ editorial board, and a chairman elected by the Congress. The Second Congress elected G. Plekhanov as Chairman of the Party Council. Lenin was a member of the Party Council from the *Iskra* editorial board.

The voting on the question of the Party's governing bodies consolidated the triumph of Lenin's principles. Since then,

Lenin's supporters, who won a majority in the election to the Party's governing bodies, came to be known as Bolsheviks, and their opponents as Mensheviks. The "bolshinstvo" (majority) represented the consistently revolutionary wing of the Party, and the "menshinstvo" (minority), its opportunist wing.

The split at the Second Congress of the RSDLP, which became quite evident in the election to the governing bodies, was not accidental, but was the result of deep-going contradictions on principle between the truly revolutionary and the opportunist sections of the Congress, contradictions which came to the surface in the discussion of the Party Programme, the principles of its organisation and other matters.<sup>1</sup>

In taking its very first steps, the Bolshevik Party took a consistently revolutionary stand. After the Second Congress the Mensheviks continued their splitting activity. Trotsky's anti-Marxist opportunist statements even before the Second Congress and the Menshevik-reformist views expressed at the Congress marked the inauguration of Trotskyism as a variety of Menshevism. The emergence of Trotskyism was a reflection of the struggle between the revolutionary and the opportunist wing of Social-Democracy which was then spreading in the revolutionary labour movement. Trotskyism was Kautskyism on Russian soil. At the Second Congress of the RSDLP, Trotsky's stand revealed a tendency towards Centrism, the most dangerous variety of opportunism. He tried to follow a middle-of-the-road line between the revolutionaries and the opportunists, ceaselessly vacillating and manoeuvring between them.

For all practical purposes, Trotsky was acting in a common bloc with the opportunists, ranging from Akimov to Martov. He joined them in the effort to deprive the proletarian Party in Russia of its vanguard role, and to turn it into

<sup>1</sup> The fabricators, echoing the Trotskyite-Menshevik inventions, have been trying to explain the split at the Second Congress of the RSDLP as being the result of personal friction between the Party leaders. Schapiro says: "... Very little question of principle is discernible in the incident which actually led to the split" (L. Schapiro, op. cit., p. 52). Brahm ignores the bitter struggle over every point and comes up with even a falser assertion when he says: "As for the Party Programme, there were no differences at the Party Congress among the *Iskra* followers" (H. Brahm, op. cit., S. 18). This is nothing but an attempt to rehabilitate Trotsky and the other opportunists, who opposed the revolutionary Marxists at the Congress.

<sup>1</sup> *The Second Congress of the RSDLP. Proceedings*, pp. 363-64.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 364.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 365.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 32.



an outfit that dragged behind the backward section instead of raising the whole working class to the level of its vanguard. Trotsky veiled his opportunist schemes with "revolutionary" catchwords. Trotsky's stand at the Congress was best characterised by Lenin in these words: "Revolutionary signboard + reformist essence."<sup>1</sup>

In that early period, Trotsky was acting as an opportunist who does not deny various propositions, but tries to whittle them down by means of various "amendments". In his speeches in the debate on the Party Programme, Trotsky did not deny its central point on the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the contrary, he had even "defended" it against the Economist Akimov. But his amendments emptied the Programme of its militant revolutionary content. Trotsky's Centrist tendency was most clearly revealed in his approach to Party membership. Trotsky's criticism of Lenin and his supporters at the Second Congress looked like criticism from the "Left", but was in fact criticism from the "Right" which pushed the Party along the path of reformism.

An analysis of Trotsky's speeches at the Second Party Congress, and his Menshevik attitudes on programme and organisational questions refutes the assertions of the fabricators that during the Second Congress he had been a firm *Iskra* follower and an unconditional supporter of Lenin. Congress speeches by Lenin and other Bolsheviks show that on the fundamental questions of the Party Programme and Rules Trotsky was at one with the other Mensheviks and bitterly fought the Bolsheviks' revolutionary line. These speeches expose the unseemly methods used by Trotsky to spread his opportunist views: manoeuvring between the real Marxists and the opportunists, double-dealing, using "Leftist" camouflage and slander of the consistent revolutionaries.

The exposure by Russian Marxists, led by Lenin, of Trotsky's Menshevik-reformist views on programme and organisational questions was a significant step towards the establishment in Russia of a revolutionary Marxist Party, the Bolshevik Party. It was structured on the ideological and organisational principles worked out by Lenin's *Iskra*, and its leading cadres were professional revolutionaries steeled in struggle.

The appearance of a revolutionary working-class Party

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 49, p. 356.

was of enormous importance for the future of Russia. Since the mid-1890s, the country's working class had been acting as a political force to be reckoned with, and with the establishment of its Party, it was transformed into the leader of all the working people. The Programme of the RSDLP gave expression to the most cherished aspirations of the working class, the peasant masses and the oppressed nationalities. The RSDLP proved to be the only party whose activity was entirely in the interests of the country and the people.

From the outset, the Bolshevik Party took shape as a new type of party, with an implacable stand against opportunism and a revolutionary attitude towards the bourgeoisie, a party of social revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat. The Bolshevik Party was the most revolutionary detachment of the international labour movement. William Z. Foster wrote: "This was, in fact, the seed corn of a new and better International, which the revolutionary course of events eventually was to bring to fruition."<sup>1</sup> By creating the revolutionary Marxist Party, a new type of party, the Second Congress of the RSDLP marked a turning point in the world labour movement.

The triumph of Leninism over opportunism in every form, ranging from Economism to Trotskyism, at the Second Congress of the RSDLP signified the establishment of revolutionary Marxism in the labour movement in Russia. Guided by the new type of party and armed with socialist ideology, it took the path of bold and consistent struggle against tsarism and capitalism, and for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## 2. The Bolshevik Struggle Against Trotsky's Splitting Activity After the Second Congress of the RSDLP

After the Second Congress of the RSDLP, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, began a resolute struggle to implement the Party's Programme and Rules adopted by the Congress, and to prepare the working class for the revolutionary fight against the autocracy.

<sup>1</sup> Foster, William Z., *History of the Three Internationals. The World Socialist and Communist Movements from 1848 to the Present*, New York, 1953, p. 189.



Defeated at the Congress, the Mensheviks strove to torpedo its decisions, to take the Party back to ideological and organisational disarray, and to seduce it to the path of reformism. They covered up their subversive efforts with loud declarations of loyalty to Marxism and a desire to maintain "unity" and "peace" in the Party.

The Bolsheviks made one effort after another through explanation, persuasion and negotiation with the breakaway section to eliminate the grave crisis into which the Party was plunged. Lenin strove to inform Party members in Russia as soon as possible about the course and results of the Second Congress of the RSDLP, so as to show the political meaning and fundamental importance of the post-Congress struggle, to expose the Menshevik leaders' opportunism and disorganising and splitting activity, and to rally all the Party committees round Bolshevik positions. With that end in view, he wanted the Drafting Committee to publish the proceedings of the Congress as soon as possible. On his initiative and with his direct participation, the RSDLP Central Committee had prepared by mid-October 1903 its Announcement on the Regular Second Congress of the RSDLP, which because of resistance on the part of the Mensheviks, notably, Plekhanov, appeared in *Iskra* as late as November 25, 1903, and was only then issued as a separate pamphlet in Russia.

A group of Bolshevik delegates to the Congress, among them Rosalia Zemlyachka, Nikolai Bauman, Alexander Stopani, Dmitry Ulyanov, Sergei Gusev and Bogdan Knunyants, toured the local Party committees.

In a number of his works, written soon after the Second Congress of the RSDLP ("Composition of the Congress", "Martov's Contradictions and Zigzags", "Account of the Second Congress of the RSDLP"), Lenin emphasised that the split at the Congress had been no accident. Analysing the disrupting tactics of the Mensheviks after the Congress, and their propaganda for a boycott of the Party's central bodies, Lenin showed that they were continuing their drive for a split.

From his correspondence with CC agents and Party functionaries, Lenin was always well informed about the state of affairs in the Party organisations throughout Russia, and gave concrete instructions to guide the CC Bureau in Russia in its work. Thus, he warned CC members Georgy Krzhizhanovsky and Vladimir Noskov about the impending arrival

of Menshevik agents in Russia, and wrote on October 5, 1903: "Get ready for the most legal but desperate struggle. We must by all means fill the places on *all* committees without exception with our own people."<sup>1</sup> He urged special attention to Kharkov, Yekaterinoslav, the Don and Gornozavodsky, which at the time were under Menshevik control. In a letter to Krzhizhanovsky on October 20, he wrote: "The Caucasus is beginning to be stirred up—there, too, they need our people's help."<sup>2</sup>

The discussion of the Congress decisions had already shown by the end of 1903 that the overwhelming majority of Party organisations were taking a Leninist stand, and condemned the disrupting activities of the Mensheviks. The Bolshevik platform was supported by 20 Party organisations in Russia, while the Mensheviks managed to secure control over 5 only. This was evidence of strength and maturity among the majority of organisations of the revolutionary Marxist Party.

After the Congress, Trotsky took up an extreme Rightist stand within the Party. In his book, *My Life*, written some 30 years later, he alleged that his connection with Menshevism had been a short one. But the facts inexorably testify to something else. Thus, in September 1903, when the Bolsheviks were trying to heal the incipient split by means of a practical agreement, Trotsky took an active part in a conference of 17 Mensheviks held at Geneva, in violation of the Party Rules and behind the Central Committee's back. Together with Martov, Dan and Axelrod, he became a member of the bureau of a secret anti-Party centre elected at this conference.

It was Trotsky and Martov who drew up a plan for fighting the Bolsheviks which was adopted at the conference and set out in the "Resolutions on the Current Tasks of Inner-Party Struggle Adopted at the 3-day Conference of 17 Supporters of the Second Congress Minority".<sup>3</sup> The resolution formulated the Mensheviks' main aim—it was to "bring home our [Menshevik.—*Authors.*] views to Party members".<sup>4</sup> To achieve this, the Mensheviks were planning to take over the Party's central bodies.

As a leader of the minority, Trotsky visited Brussels,

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 34, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> *Lenin Miscellany* VI, pp. 246-49 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.



Paris and Liège and also went to Switzerland and Germany. He spoke at meetings of Russian Social-Democrats about the Second Congress and gave a distorted picture of it.

Trotsky's report, called "Report of the Siberian Delegates", was a Menshevik view of the results of the Second Congress. It was a part of that underground literature issued by the Mensheviks, about which Lenin wrote in his article "Why I Resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board" as follows: "Underground literature began to be produced; people abroad were flooded with it, it was disseminated among the committees, and is now already beginning in part to return from Russia. The report of the delegate for Siberia,—n's letter on the slogans of the 'opposition', and Martov's *Once More in the Minority*..."<sup>1</sup> Pointing to the Mensheviks' splitting tactics, Lenin said that in these writings the Mensheviks were engaged in seeking "such differences of 'principle' on matters of organisation as entirely preclude collaboration".<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky's "Report of the Siberian Delegates", his articles in *Iskra* and pamphlets written after the Congress slandered Lenin and his organisational plan, accusing him of "petty-bourgeois Jacobinism" and an urge to establish a "personal dictatorship" in the Party.<sup>3</sup> Trotsky tried to create the impression that the struggle at the Congress did not involve principle. His report abounded in contradictions and confusion of political concepts, and was shot through with the spirit of intellectualist individualism. It was another step along the opportunist path.

Trotsky's report on the Second Congress of the RSDLP also showed that his views kept changing with the situation. In the initial variant of his report, Trotsky had attacked Plekhanov for backing Lenin at the Congress. When Plekhanov turned his face to the Mensheviks, Trotsky's attitude to him underwent a sharp change. The Bolshevik Pyotr Krasikov wrote: "The 'dialectical' Siberian delegate, whom dialectics does not allow to leave unchanged (because everything is 'in flux') even his own writings, which he styles 'human documents' ... has so rewritten his report that the main thesis of his 'document'—Plekhanov—a plaything in

Lenin's hands—which he repeats in diverse variations, has literally disappeared from the new edition of the report. Moreover, he has arrived at the 'antithesis' and drops Plekhanov a series of curtseys. This is very convenient dialectics, indeed!"<sup>4</sup>

For a special edition of the "Report of the Siberian Delegates", Trotsky wrote an afterword, entitled "A Couple of Words in Lieu of a Conclusion". The afterword was aimed against Lenin's letter, "Why I Resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board", which the Mensheviks refused to publish. This criticism of an unpublished document was further evidence of the way Trotsky fought Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Lenin expressed his attitude to such methods in the preface to his pamphlet, *A Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks*, where he said: "My opponents having repeatedly expressed the wish to avail themselves of this letter as a document, I would consider it positively—how shall I put it mildly?—awkward to introduce any changes when reprinting it."<sup>5</sup> In the internal Party struggle, Trotsky kept using methods which the Bolsheviks regarded as dishonest and unacceptable.

Nadezhda Krupskaya reported in a number of her letters to Russia about the Mensheviks' attempts to "throw dirt at the majority and the CC, so as to vindicate themselves". In a letter on December 17, 1903, she wrote that the Mensheviks "would like to conceal a number of documents: some of the minutes of the Congress, the report by the Siberian delegate Trotsky (which was circulated by the minority among the committees), 'Dan's letter' which has been widely circulated abroad..."<sup>6</sup> When Trotsky's report was published in January 1904, she gave it the following assessment: "This is something outrageous. Everything about Plekhanov has been left out." Thus, at the very start of his activity, Trotsky used to change his views depending on the circumstances, and to spearhead his struggle against true revolutionaries.

Trotsky's anti-Party stand, and the methods he used in fighting against the Bolshevik Party, which were reflected in the "Report of the Siberian Delegates", were resisted by the Bolshevik committees. The Tver Committee of the RSDLP

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "Kak rozhдалas partiya bolshevikov" (The Origin of the Bolshevik Party), *Collection*, Leningrad, 1925, p. 484.

<sup>4</sup> *The Origin of the Bolshevik Party*, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 132.

<sup>6</sup> *Lenin Miscellany X*, p. 66 (Russ. ed.)



sent a letter to the editorial board of the Central Organ, exposing Trotsky's splitting activity, and demanding that the board should explain why such an anti-Party pamphlet had been issued on behalf of the Party. They added: "This pamphlet is permeated with disregard for the Congress and abounds in uncomradely methods of polemics, yet such pamphlets are issued with the official masthead of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The editorial board must explain whether this one has been published with their approval, or whether this masthead is a mere fabrication."<sup>1</sup>

In October 1904, the Party Council adopted a decision that Party literature was to be published only with the recommendation of a Party organisation. In his pamphlet, *The Party Council Against the Party*, Vatslav Vorovsky exposed the Mensheviks' anti-Party actions in actually refusing to have the RSDLP printers publish any Bolshevik literature.

Vorovsky showed that the Menshevik demand was incompatible with Paragraph One of the Party Rules, and noted that shortly before, when the Mensheviks had a monopoly in exercising ideological influence on the Party, they had stood for independent Party publications. In this context, he pointed to the publication of Trotsky's pamphlet. Vorovsky went on: "It is not so long ago that Comrade Martov insisted on Comrade Trotsky's right to use the RSDLP masthead on his private edition of the 'Report of the Siberian Delegates'."<sup>2</sup> He argued that the Mensheviks had issued their own publications on behalf of the Party without having any right to do so, and that the Party Council decision was designed to obstruct the "majority" so as to retain "a monopoly of ideological influence on the Party in the hands of their own circle", thereby securing "for themselves the power they have seized."<sup>3</sup>

When reports of Trotsky's splitting activity reached the members of the Siberian Union, whose delegate he had been at the Second Party Congress, they sent *Iskra* a letter sharply criticising his attitude. This letter explains the stand Trotsky had taken at the Second Party Congress. It makes it clear that Trotsky became a delegate to the Second Con-

gress quite by chance. In sending their representatives to the Congress, the Siberians said they "did not so much reckon with how much a given person was prepared to stand up for strictly defined principles, as ... with convenience, or rather with their own weakness".<sup>1</sup> Explaining why the delegates of the Siberian Union had found themselves in the Menshevik ranks, while "all the members of the Siberian Union and the vast majority of members of the Siberian committees, after examination of the campaign which took place at the Congress, resolutely sided with the majority at the time",<sup>2</sup> the letter said that the views of their delegates did not correspond with those of revolutionary Social-Democracy.<sup>3</sup>

The Siberian Union's letter warrants the conclusion that Trotsky's Menshevik-reformist views and the Centrist stand he took at the Second Congress on the basic questions of the Party Programme and Rules were not at all accidental. Trotsky, who sided with the *Iskra* followers, shared the standpoint of the Mensheviks, the opportunist section of the *Iskra* organisation. He used the *Iskra* banner and revolutionary catchwords at the Congress to cover up his own opportunist stand. It was natural therefore, that after the Congress he should continue his splitting, disorganising activity.

The Bolsheviks' attempt to eliminate the incipient split within the Party by negotiating with the Menshevik leaders was futile. On October 6, 1903, Lenin and Plekhanov sent a letter to Martov, the other members of the old editorial board and Trotsky.<sup>4</sup> At the initial stage of the struggle, that was a last effort to avoid a split.

Trotsky sent a copy of the letter to Axelrod, who was living in Zurich, with the following comment: "It is extremely indelicate, to say nothing worse, to address the four of us together—as if we constituted some kind of secret society."<sup>5</sup> Trotsky wrote this after the Mensheviks had actually set up a secret organisation inside the Party, and he had become one of its leaders. This letter of Trotsky's shows that he was not above lying and duplicity even when dealing with his own side. The very tone of the letter, in which the invitation

<sup>1</sup> *The Origin of the Bolshevik Party*, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 370.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 372.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 282-83.

<sup>4</sup> *Lenin Miscellany VI*, pp. 299-301 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.



by the RSDLP Central Organ is called "bureaucratic hypocrisy", showed that it never entered Trotsky's mind that it was possible to work together with the Bolsheviks.

Thus, the six-week talks ended in a refusal by the old editors and Trotsky to work together with the Bolsheviks on the Party's Central Organ. The struggle within the Party became even more acute. The Mensheviks, entrenched in the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad, used it to fight the decisions of the Second Congress of the RSDLP. The majority of the League consisted of intellectuals who were out of touch with Party work in Russia. With their supporters dominating the League, the Menshevik leaders insisted on convening its Second Congress, which was actually illegal. It should be borne in mind that the Party Rules, adopted by the Second Congress of the RSDLP, put the League on the same footing as the local committees in Russia, and restricted its work to promoting the movement in Russia through the Central Committee. Consequently, the convocation of the League Congress was a downright denial of the principle of democratic centralism and refusal to submit to the decisions of the Party Congress.

The League Congress was held at Geneva from October 13 to 18, 1903. Of the 42 members of the League, 18 votes were Bolshevik, 22 Menshevik, and 2 neutralist.<sup>1</sup> In an effort to capitalise on their numerical superiority, the Mensheviks objected to the Bolshevik proposal that the presidium of the Congress should be constituted by groups. They proposed the election of a three-man presidium, regardless of party affiliation, in the hope of getting in their own men. Trotsky took the hypocritical attitude that those attending the Congress were not a "majority" or a "minority", but simply members of the League. He added: "We should not divide our Congress artificially and beforehand."<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky's attitude at the Congress underwent a succession of rapid changes depending on the situation. In the debate on the agenda, the Mensheviks insisted that after Lenin had given the main report Martov should be given time to make

a co-report. Trotsky supported the Menshevik proposal, ostensibly to provide an opportunity for a fuller expression of the two standpoints. But when Lenin said that he would deal in his report with the private sittings of the *Iskra* organisation during the Second Party Congress, which revealed definite groupings of persons and helped to bring out the opposed standpoints, Martov's followers began to object to the proposal. Trotsky, who had earlier proposed that the differences should be brought out into the open, now sharply opposed this.

The League Congress passed three resolutions aimed against Lenin's organisational principles underlying the Party structure. The League Rules adopted by the Congress were also in flagrant contradiction with the powers conferred on it by the Second Congress of the RSDLP.

The Menshevik splitting tactics at the Congress of the League were repulsed by the Bolsheviks. The representative of the CC who attended the Congress proposed that the League Rules should be brought into line with the Party Rules. This proposal was rejected, and he left the Congress. He was followed by all the Bolsheviks. Lenin called the League Congress "the climax of the opposition's campaign against the central bodies".<sup>1</sup>

After the Second Congress of the League, the Mensheviks turned it into a stronghold in their fight against the Party. With Plekhanov's help, the Mensheviks took over the *Iskra* editorial board and the Party Council, and launched an offensive against the CC. Lenin withdrew from the *Iskra* editorial board so as to fortify his positions on the Party CC, and from there to continue the struggle against the opportunists.

In November 1903, Lenin motioned in the CC a draft declaration against Plekhanov's co-opting the old Menshevik editors to the *Iskra* editorial board. Being prevented from addressing the Party through the newspaper, he maintained contact with Party organisations through an exchange of up to 300 letters a month. Lenin carried on an implacable struggle against the splitting, disorganising activities of the Mensheviks and set out as the main task exposure of the Mensheviks' subversive activities in the localities, and consolidation of the Bolshevik committees.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 123.

<sup>1</sup> *Protokoly Utorogo ocherednogo syezda Zagranichnoi Ligi russkoi revolyutsionnoi sotsial-demokratii* (Minutes of the Regular Second Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad), Geneva, 1904, p. 31; Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 555.

<sup>2</sup> I. Lalayants, *U istokov bolshevizma* (At the Origins of Bolshevism), Moscow, 1934, pp. 103-04.



In that period, some members of the CC Bureau in Russia, falling under the influence of the Mensheviks, took up a conciliatory stand, while Noskov prepared a deal with the Mensheviks behind the back of the CC, paving the way for the CC's acceptance of their stand. As a way out of the Party crisis, Lenin proposed a plan for an emergency congress. On December 10, 1903, he sent the CC members in Russia a letter emphasising that "*the only salvation is—a congress. Its watchword: the fight against disrupters*".<sup>1</sup> In subsequent letters addressed to the CC Bureau in Russia Lenin again demanded that the local committees should take resolute steps to prepare for the Party's third congress.<sup>2</sup>

Lenin worked with consistency and determination for the convocation of the Third Congress, first on the Party Council and then in the CC. When in January 1904, the Menshevik-dominated Party Council rejected Lenin's proposal for a congress, he was forced to concentrate all his struggle for the congress in the CC. However, the conciliatory-minded section of the CC, pandering to the Mensheviks, refused to support the idea of a congress. In these conditions, the Bolsheviks were confronted with the task of exposing the Mensheviks' hostile activity and their distortion of the facts of the inner-Party struggle.

In *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, Lenin showed the true meaning of this inner-Party struggle and gave a resolute rebuff to the Mensheviks, while developing and safeguarding the organisational principles of the new type of party. This book gave the local Party organisations clear-cut political orientation, helped them to find their bearings in the situation, and promoted the cohesion of the Party committees on the Leninist platform.

Lenin gave a profound analysis of the work of the Second Party Congress and presented convincing proof that the minority was an opportunist trend within the RSDLP. This was most fully expressed in organisational questions. He stressed that there was evidence of opportunism "in all the Social-Democratic parties in the world, wherever there is a division into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing".<sup>3</sup>

The organisational and tactical differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks were intensified by Trotsky's

splitting policy on matters arising from the attitude to the Russo-Japanese war. With all the social contradictions sharpened and revolution looming in the country, the RSDLP was first faced with the question of the working-class attitude to an imperialist war.

The Bolsheviks opposed the war, and in their proclamations and leaflets and then on the pages of the newspaper *Uperyod* explained that it was imperialist and unjust. They were the only party which called for a defeat of their own government in the imperialist war. The Bolsheviks were consistent in their defence of the proletariat's interests, and worked out the only correct tactical line on the war.

In March 1904, the RSDLP CC published in *Iskra* a leaflet entitled "To the Russian Proletariat", which was written by Lenin a week after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war.<sup>4</sup> It was circulated to the Party committees in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinoslav, Nizhni Novgorod, Odessa, Samara, and Saratov. Some of these committees reprinted it in full, while others used it to issue their own proclamations. The leaflet showed the war to be a plunderous one waged in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

From the outset, Trotsky tried to cover up its imperialist character. In his article, "Our 'Military' Campaign", he criticised a number of Bolshevik committees, including the RSDLP CC, for allegedly taking the wrong view of the character and causes of the war. He said the RSDLP CC proclamation written by Lenin, and the proclamations of the Yekaterinoslav, St. Petersburg, Polesie and Odessa Bolshevik committees were wrong. He said: "The CC finds that the interests of the greedy bourgeoisie, the interests of capital, which is prepared to sell out and ruin the country in its drive for profits, that have caused the criminal war, while the Baltic group has flatly declared that Nicholas was 'forced' to fight Japan by our everyday blood-suckers, manufacturers and other capitalists." Trotsky in fact tried to clear the bourgeoisie of Russia and put the whole blame for the war on Russia's autocracy.

Thus, Trotsky's attitude to the war was identical with that of the liberal bourgeoisie, whose interests his article

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 215-20.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 397.

<sup>4</sup> The leaflet is first published in the fifth (Russian) edition of Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 170-74. (See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, pp. 111-13 in English.)



was in fact defending. He tried to prove that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had the same view of the war and condemned it as anti-national. He covered up his stand with talk about the war being incompatible with the country's economic development.

In his article, "The Fall of Port Arthur", Lenin showed that the most consistent and resolute spokesmen of international Social-Democracy had correctly noted the historically progressive role of the Japanese bourgeoisie. They had openly and unequivocally expressed their sympathy for Japan, which was inflicting defeats on the Russian autocracy. Lenin exposed the Russian Socialists and Trotsky for abandoning the proletarian stand. He said that on the question of the war they had displayed a confusion of thought and had gone to the extent of bandying platitudes about "the unreasonableness of 'speculating' (!) on a victory of the Japanese bourgeoisie and about war being a calamity 'regardless of whether' it ends in the victory or the defeat of the autocracy".<sup>1</sup>

In the autumn of 1904, Trotsky openly sided with the defencists. In his pamphlet, *Our Political Tasks*, he preached peace at any price. Trotsky regarded the peace slogan "not only as a formulation of our attitude to war in principle, but as an aim which we want to achieve at once... Peace at any price." Lenin sharply criticised Trotsky's view of the question of war and peace in his articles "The Fall of Port Arthur" and "European Capital and the Autocracy". He stressed the need to view the question of war in the same context as that of the revolution.

Following the defeat of the autocracy, Russia's liberal bourgeoisie, terrified at the growth of the revolutionary movement, began to clamour for peace. This slogan became an expression of the interests of the European stockbrokers and reactionaries intent on rescuing the shaken autocracy, the mainstay of European reaction. Conclusion of a peace by the autocracy tended to strengthen its positions in the struggle against the revolution. Exposing the demand for peace at any price, Lenin wrote: "We should not demand only peace; for a tsarist peace is no better (and is sometimes worse) than a tsarist war. We should not put forward the slogan of 'peace at any price', but only of peace with the fall of the autocracy, of peace concluded by a liberated nation, by a free

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 53.

Constituent Assembly, i.e., peace not at any price, but solely at the price of overthrowing absolutism."<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky's pamphlet was resolutely rejected by the Party functionaries in the localities. A spokesman of the Yekaterinoslav Committee of the RSDLP in a "Letter to the Editorial Board of the Central Organ" showed up the fundamentally factious character of Trotsky's attacks. The letter said it was Trotsky's aim "to discredit the majority committees at all costs, simply because they were committees of the majority.... Is that not evidence of a desire to pave the way for a split and to find a 'theoretical and moral right' not to submit to a possible decision by a possible Third Congress in the future?"<sup>2</sup> Judging by the facts given in the Yekaterinoslav Committee's letter the answer is yes.

While exposing Trotsky's Menshevik views, the letter showed that with the tacit consent of the editorial board of the Menshevik *Iskra*, Trotsky had come out in open defence of Russia's bourgeoisie. In confirmation, the letter quoted an extract from Trotsky's article which said: "Indeed, Russia, too, was plunged into the war by the capitalists, but not by the Russian capitalists, seeking the markets for their goods in Manchuria and Korea, but by the capitalists of the international stock exchange, among whom the autocracy has to maintain confidence in the unflagging might of tsarist arms on pain of financial bankruptcy."

On June 1, 1904, Trotsky's splitting tactics were exposed in a letter from the Yekaterinoslav Committee to all the RSDLP organisations, entitled "Present-day Party Trends and the Tasks of Revolutionary Social-Democracy". It stressed that Trotsky-type "ideological leaders" of the Mensheviks have gone to the extent of using facts known to be false in their fight against the Party.<sup>3</sup>

The methods Trotsky used in fighting the Bolsheviks were sharply criticised by Mikhail Olmsky in his articles, "Down with Bonapartism!" and "Organ Without Party and Party Without Organ", published in the autumn of 1904.

In the first article, Olmsky emphasised the divisive character of Trotsky's article, "Our 'Military' Campaign". He wrote: "Trotsky has even contrived to make use of the out-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Iskra* No. 68, 1904, supplement.

<sup>3</sup> *The Origin of the Bolshevik Party*, p. 318.



break of the Russo-Japanese war in order to throw dirt at the committees of the former 'majority' which constituted the overwhelming majority in the Party."<sup>1</sup> In his second article, he marshalled facts to show that Trotsky, and the editorial board of the Menshevik *Iskra*, perpetrated a fraud when they accused the Bolshevik committees of giving the wrong explanation of the causes of the Russo-Japanese war. Olminsky wrote: "It turned out that the members of the minority were on the whole giving the same causes of the war as the members of the Party majority had given."<sup>2</sup>

Olminsky made a comparison between Trotsky's article in *Iskra* No. 62 and another in No. 68, and remarked that Trotsky increasingly contradicted himself as he tried to prove the "fault" of the Bolshevik committees. He went on: "Do you think that what Trotsky said in No. 62 was of any importance for Trotsky in No. 68 or in the No. 78 that was to come? I doubt it, because I remember Balalaikin, a character depicted by Saltykov-Shchedrin. This is a curious phenomenon. Balalaikin tells lies for the fun of lying. He tells a lie and forgets it; tells another and forgets it again; the first sentence contradicts the second, the second contradicts the third. That does not worry Balalaikin; he is not interested in the purpose but in the process of lying. And what about the CO editorial board? Surely it could not consist of Balalaikins? No, of course not. However, it has to wage a war against the majority, and all is fair in war."<sup>3</sup>

Party writers correctly understood the divisive essence of Trotsky's articles which abounded in contradictions and downright slander of the Bolshevik committees. These writers showed that Trotsky did not care what means he used in his fight against the Party. He acted in line with the resolution adopted by the 17-Menshevik conference which justified the use of any means to split up the Party.<sup>4</sup>

The facts show that at the time the Right-wing opportunist propositions came from Trotsky, who became the virtual head of the Menshevik opposition. Lenin put this ironic question to Krzhizhanovsky who still believed that peace with the Mensheviks was possible: "Why didn't that good soul Hans make friends here with Trotsky, Dan and Natalya Ivanovna

[Y. M. Alexandrova.—*Authors*.]? What a pity the dear fellow missed such a chance (the last chance) to make a 'sincere', 'happy peace'.... Would it not be wiser to write letters directly to these 'masters'.... We here can clearly see who is doing the *chattering* and who the *bossing* among the Martovites."<sup>1</sup> An indication that Trotsky had become the virtual leader of the Mensheviks is also given in Olminsky's articles, "Down with Bonapartism!" and "Sound Ideas in a Rotten Wrapping".<sup>2</sup>

In his talks, pamphlets and articles, Trotsky openly followed the line for a Party split. After the Second Congress he tried to dictate his will to his former teachers: Martov, Plekhanov, Axelrod and Zasulich. This led to a conflict on the editorial board of the Menshevik *Iskra* in the spring of 1904, as a result of which Trotsky was temporarily forced to leave it.

Referring to this fact, he later tried to prove that that was where his ties with the Mensheviks had come to an end. Actually, however, the conflict was not based on any contradiction of ideas. It was sparked off by Trotsky's article, "Our 'Military' Campaign", to which objections were raised by Plekhanov, without whose knowledge it had been published. Plekhanov demanded that the editorial board should undertake not to publish any of Trotsky's articles. In a letter to Axelrod on April 2, 1904, Martov quotes Plekhanov as follows: "I am unable to be a member of the collegium which systematically accepts articles by a contributor, who in the opinion of one member of the collegium is harmful and depresses *Iskra's* literary level by his writings."<sup>3</sup> Plekhanov put the question this way: either Trotsky stops being a contributor to *Iskra* altogether or Plekhanov withdraws from the editorial board.

A break with Plekhanov could have had far-reaching consequences. After all, he was the only legitimate editor elected by the Second Congress of the RSDLP, and his withdrawal from the editorial board would have given the Bolsheviks an argument for calling the Party's Third Congress. The Mensheviks feared that the Congress would expel them

<sup>1</sup> *The Origin of the Bolshevik Party*, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>4</sup> *Lenin Miscellany VI*, p. 248 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 221. Hans was Krzhizhanovsky's Party name.

<sup>2</sup> *The Origin of the Bolshevik Party*, pp. 213-15, 247.

<sup>3</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, *Pisma* (Letters), Berlin, 1924, p. 102.



from the Party and expose them as splitters in the eyes of the masses. In order to maintain their position in the Party, they submitted to Plekhanov's demand and sacrificed Trotsky.

Axelrod's letters to Plekhanov<sup>1</sup> and two letters from Martov's secretary to Moscow<sup>2</sup> provide fresh confirmation that the conflict was not due to any ideological contradictions between Trotsky and the Mensheviks. In these letters, *Iskra's* Menshevik editorial board voiced satisfaction with Trotsky's articles. The letter to Moscow of April 8, 1904, says: "We are all unanimous in regarding Trotsky's articles as being quite up to the *Iskra* level, and that our newspaper and our leaflets would be altogether unable to do without his collaboration."<sup>3</sup>

Martynov, the leader of the Economists, said in his reminiscences of the Second Congress of the RSDLP that Trotsky had a part to play in his own collaboration with the *Iskra* editorial board. Martynov says that, following his withdrawal from the editorial board of the new *Iskra*, Trotsky went to Berlin where he met Martynov and invited him to join the editorial board of the Menshevik organ.<sup>4</sup> This was the shaping of that "unnatural and intrinsically rotten political alliance of Plekhanov, Martynov and Trotsky"<sup>5</sup> of which Lenin wrote to the Siberian Committee in October 1904.

The Menshevik *Iskra* became the rallying centre for all the opportunist elements. Trotsky did much to help create and consolidate this opportunist bloc which was aimed against Lenin and the Bolshevik Party.

While the Bolsheviks regarded the convocation of the Third Congress as the only means of preserving the Party, the Mensheviks were intent on having a split. This line was most openly pursued by Trotsky in his articles and pamphlet, *Our Political Tasks*, which was issued in the autumn of 1904. He urged the Mensheviks, depending on the situation, either

to split up the Party or to secure the maximum freedom of action for themselves by putting pressure on it.

The publication of Trotsky's pamphlet was announced in the new *Iskra*, which showed that the editorial board fully accepted its content. This was repeatedly emphasised by Lenin.<sup>1</sup> "And Trotsky's pamphlet, please do not forget, was published under the editorship of '*Iskra*'. . . . Trotsky's 'new' views are the views of the editorial board, approved by Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich, Starover, and Martov," Lenin wrote.<sup>2</sup> Trotsky's pamphlet was a specimen of the new *Iskra's* opportunism, and set out the Menshevik paper's "Credo".

That there was a strong streak of opportunism in organisational, tactical and programme questions was evident from the denial in Trotsky's pamphlet of the Party's role as the vanguard of the working class, his open attacks on the RSDLP's organisational principles, and high praise for the spontaneous labour movement. In his pamphlet, Trotsky even went back to Economism, a fact which was especially evident in his criticism of the resolutions adopted by three Urals Party committees—Perm, Ufa and Central Urals—who had come out in support of the Second RSDLP Congress decisions and had fully endorsed Lenin's organisational plan.

Trotsky wrote: "We the so-called 'minority' have not put forward any organisational tasks of our own, and believe that the most urgent of them will be solved by the way, in the process of political struggle." Rejecting Lenin's organisational plan and twisting its basic principles, Trotsky said that "the proletariat will not find itself in these principles". He asserted that it was impossible to predict the ways of social development. His pamphlet showed that he was completely ignoring the laws of social development and the possibilities of scientific prediction.

The full weight of Trotsky's criticism was directed at the requirement that members should abide by the Party Rules, a requirement which he regarded as Lenin's attempt to lasso Party members with the "deadly noose of discipline". Trotsky said the effort to influence the Party members opposing unacceptable decisions by reminders about Party discipline was a "pathetic superstition". In opposition to Lenin's prin-

<sup>1</sup> For instance in his articles, "An Obliging Liberal", "The Zemstvo Campaign and *Iskra's* Plan", "Fine Words Butter No Parsnips" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 486-89, 497-518; Vol. 8, pp. 56-62).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 488-89.

<sup>1</sup> *Perepiska G. V. Plekhanova s P. B. Axelrod* (Correspondence Between G. V. Plekhanov and P. B. Axelrod), Moscow, 1925, pp. 199-200.

<sup>2</sup> Central State Archives of the October Revolution, 102/ДП 00/1904/2392/63, 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 102/ДП 00/1904/2392/63.

<sup>4</sup> A. Martynov, *Uspominaniya iz epokhi II syezda RSDRP* (Reminiscences from the Period of the Second Congress of the RSDLP), Moscow, 1934, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 263.



ciple of Party discipline, Trotsky said "moral bonds" would keep the Social-Democratic Party united.

The essence of Trotsky's Menshevik pamphlet, *Our Political Tasks*, was defence of anarchist freewheeling, defence of a double standard of discipline—one for the proletariat and another for the intelligentsia—and struggle against Lenin's call to the proletariat "to give the intelligentsia a lesson in discipline". Lenin wrote: "As you read such a pamphlet you clearly see that the 'minority' is so false and has told such a heap of lies that it will be incapable of producing anything viable, you feel a growing urge to join battle, for the issue is already there."<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky himself declared that his pamphlet demonstrated "two doctrines, two tactics, two mentalities, with a gulf between them". In this way, Trotsky himself confirmed that his views were diametrically opposed to those of the revolutionary Social-Democrats.

In the autumn of 1904, Trotsky officially withdrew from the Menshevik organisation, while retaining his Menshevik views and ideological and practical ties with Menshevism. This was only a tactical move, and testified to a growth of Centrist tendencies in Trotsky's position. From then on, Trotsky used the mask of "non-factionalism" to cover up his Right-wing opportunist views. Lenin remarked: "Trotsky's 'non-factionalism' is, actually, splitting tactics, in that it shamelessly flouts the will of the majority of the workers."<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky continued to pursue his opportunist line, while pretending to take an independent stand within the Party. This played into the hands of the West European Centrists, who were intent on toning down and wedding contradictory principles. Their aim was to make true revolutionaries pursue opportunist policies.

The Bolsheviks had to carry on a stiff fight against opportunism, not only within the RSDLP, but also in the Second International. An International Socialist Congress met at Amsterdam in the autumn of 1904. The Mensheviks tried to conceal from the West European labour movement the real state of affairs in the RSDLP. Having the Party centres in their hands, they tried to prevent Bolsheviks from attending the Congress. Their report to the International Congress

distorted the origin and causes of the split at the Second Congress of the RSDLP, and threw a wrong light on the state of affairs in the Party.

Despite the efforts of the Menshevik leaders, however, the Congress was attended by the Bolsheviks Pyotr Krasikov and Martyn Lyadov, who presented a report written by Lenin and Lyadov, openly declaring the existence in the Party of two diametrically opposed trends: the reformist and the proletarian. They showed the causes of the split and put the blame for the crisis in the Party where it belonged, tracing the Bolshevik efforts to keep the Party united at the various stages, and describing the attitude taken by the local committees in Russia towards the internal Party struggle.

The report said that most of the Party committees, once they had studied the work of the Congress from the reports of their delegates, expressed firm resolution to abide by all its decisions, and condemned the Mensheviks' disorganising policy. The Bolsheviks made the point that the hard-line opponents of the old *Iskra* confirmed that the contradictions involved principle. Thus, the opportunist Akimov wrote: "The Mensheviks assert that they share all the principles of the Programme and only differ with the organisational principles of Lenin, the chief author of the Programme, but what then is the point of having a Programme if it cannot be used to determine such a fundamental phenomenon in Party life as selection of the organisational principle."<sup>1</sup>

The authors of the report shared the view of a number of local organisations that a Party congress was the only way out of the Party crisis, and that only the convocation of a congress could help to avoid a split, "provided that there are no men in our Party ranks who are themselves intent on having a split".<sup>2</sup> Thus, at the Amsterdam Congress, the Bolsheviks took a consistent stand in defence of Lenin's organisational principles for the new type of Party.

By the summer of 1904 the situation within the Party became much more acute and intensified the need for calling the Third Congress of the RSDLP. A conference of 22 Bolsheviks was called near Geneva in August 1904, on Lenin's initiative, who also directed it. It discussed ways of taking

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 46, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 336.

<sup>1</sup> M. Lyadov, *Doklad bolshevikov Amsterdamskomu mezhdunarodnomu sotsialisticheskomu kongressu (v 1904 g.)* (Bolshevik Report to the Amsterdam International Socialist Congress, 1904), Moscow, 1924, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.



the Party out of the crisis and adopted a concrete programme for working to convene the Third Congress. It approved Lenin's appeal "To the Party", which described the situation within the Party and the causes which had brought it to the crisis. It emphasised that there was need for a congress to find "an honest and reasonable way out" of the Party crisis, to "preserve the forces of the Party and uphold its honour and dignity".<sup>1</sup>

After the conference of the 22, the rank-and-file members of the Party rallied round the Bolsheviks' fundamental line in the struggle against the disorganisers. From September to December 1904, the Bolsheviks held three regional Party conferences, which voiced the will of 13 of the major Party committees for the convocation of the Third Congress, and which elected an all-Russia Party centre—the Bureau of Majority Committees (BMC). Among those elected to it were Lenin, S. Gusev, M. Litvinov, M. Lyadov and P. Rumyantsev. Lyadov later recalled: "We were given final proof that the mass of Party workers in all the industrial centres were behind us."<sup>2</sup>

Parallel to the establishment of the BMC in Russia, a literary centre, consisting of prominent Party publicists, was set up abroad. A publishing establishment was set up in August 1904, under the name of "V. Bonch-Bruyevich and N. Lenin Publishers of Social-Democratic Party Literature". They published a number of Lenin's works, collections of articles by A. Bogdanov and M. Olminsky, documents and other writings, and helped the Bolsheviks to intensify their polemics against the Mensheviks and more actively expose their splitting tactics.

December of that year saw the publication of the first issue of the newspaper *Uperyod*, the Bolshevik Party organ, on whose editorial board were Lenin, V. Vorovsky, M. Olminsky, and A. Lunacharsky, with Nadezhda Krupskaya as the secretary. This newspaper revived the revolutionary traditions of the old *Iskra*, and carried on the Bolsheviks' struggle against the opportunism of the Mensheviks, for the convocation of the Third Congress of the RSDLP, and for the consolidation of the revolutionary proletarian Party.

The establishment of a practical Bolshevik centre in Rus-

sia—the Bureau of Majority Committees—and the Bolshevik Party organ—the newspaper *Uperyod*—testified to a fundamental improvement in the Bolshevik position on the eve of the first Russian revolution. In January 1905, Lenin wrote to Yelena Stasova: "Things are going well with us now. We are through with the trouble-makers at last. We have done with the tactics of retreat. We are attacking now. The committees in Russia are also beginning to break with the disorganisers."<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the entire period of preparation for the revolution of 1905-07, the Bolsheviks fought to preserve and strengthen the revolutionary Marxist party in Russia, and worked steadily and consistently to prepare the proletariat for the forthcoming revolutionary battles. The Mensheviks, including the Trotskyites, split up the unity of the Party and the working-class ranks by their opportunist activity, thereby gravely jeopardising the proletariat's revolutionary struggle.

The Bolsheviks safeguarded the organisational principles of the new type of party in the bitter struggle against opportunism in Russia and abroad. Once the grave crisis in the RSDLP was overcome, the Bolsheviks broke with the opportunists, while retaining and consolidating their influence in the masses. The Party met the 1905-07 revolution well organised, giving a lead to the majority of the Party committees.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 459.

<sup>2</sup> *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 3, 1922, p. 64.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 69-70.



## THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKYISM DURING THE 1905-1907 REVOLUTION

### 1. Lenin's Critique of the Trotskyite Line on the Basic Questions of Party Theory and Tactics in Revolution

The first Russian revolution set in motion all the classes and parties of Russia. It showed them to each other and to the whole world "in their true character and in the true alignment of their interests, their forces, their modes of action, and their immediate and ultimate aims".<sup>1</sup>

The revolution set before the Party the task of giving the working class a political lead, establishing an alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, and bringing together all the revolutionary forces in the struggle against the autocracy. These were "demands of Social-Democracy such as history has never before and nowhere made of a working-class party in an epoch of democratic revolution".<sup>2</sup>

The new tactical and organisational problems brought to the fore by the mounting revolutionary movement insistently urged the earliest convocation of the Party's Third Congress. This was also dictated by the internal situation within the RSDLP, which was virtually split into two parts. Each of these took a different view of the proletariat's tasks in the revolution and of its motive forces. The Mensheviks' splitting tactics were supported by the opportunists of the Second International, who took a common view with them of the way the party should be built.

In their support for the Mensheviks, the West European opportunists went to the extent of trying to interfere directly in the affairs of the RSDLP. On the strength of the Amsterdam Congress decision, which said that only one party in

each country could be a member of the International, the International Socialist Bureau (ISB) got down in January 1905 to the question of eliminating the split in the RSDLP. For that purpose it decided to set up an arbitration commission headed by August Bebel.<sup>1</sup> The Mensheviks supported this decision and nominated Karl Kautsky and Clara Zetkin as their representatives on the commission.

The ISB proposal was rejected by the Bolsheviks, who said that only the regular Third Congress of the RSDLP was empowered to decide on such matters. In an article, "A Brief Outline of the Split in the RSDLP", Lenin said that the main obstacle to unification was the Mensheviks' disorganising tactics, and their refusal to submit to the decisions of the Party's Second Congress. He emphasised that these differences involved principle and drove home the point that they could be overcome only by a regular Party congress.<sup>2</sup> The Bolsheviks gave a resolute rebuff to attempts by the West European Social-Democratic leaders to meddle in Russian affairs.

The Mensheviks and the Bolshevik conciliators in the CC and the Party Council, who supported the former, resorted to all manner of dodges in an effort to put off the convocation of the next Party congress. There were also signs of a conciliatory attitude among some members of the Bureau of Majority Committees, the practical Bolshevik centre in Russia. Thus, in a discussion of Lenin's draft announcement on the establishment of the BMC, Alexander Bogdanov and Sergei Gusev deleted its statement that the Third Congress of the RSDLP was a regular one. This amendment played into the hands of the Mensheviks, who strained to prove that the Congress the Bolsheviks wanted to call was illegal.

In a letter to Bogdanov and Gusev, Lenin came out strongly against "loyalty" to the Menshevik centres, the plea the two men put forward in justification of their amendment. He wanted "to call a congress *against* the central bodies, in which lack of confidence has been expressed, to call this Congress in the name of a *revolutionary* bureau...".<sup>3</sup> When the governing Party centres openly sided with the Mensheviks, Lenin proposed that the Bolsheviks should cut themselves off from the disorganisers and from all those who

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 448.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin *Miscellany* V, pp. 169-70 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 127-31.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.



were actually helping the splitters by taking a conciliatory attitude.

Our Party's enemies have subsequently tried again and again to show Lenin as a splitter. Actually, however, his struggle against the opportunists within the labour movement in Russia and in other countries was a struggle for working-class unity on the basis of principle and was directed against the splitters and opportunists within the Party's ranks. It was Lenin's criticism that enabled the Bureau of Majority Committees to overcome some hesitation and rally the overwhelming majority of Party organisations round it. In March 1905, 21 out of the 28 Party committees came out in favour of convening the Congress.

Its convocation was also hampered by Trotsky's splitting tactics after his return to Russia at the beginning of 1905. With his Centrist stand in the Party, he made several attempts to set up a Centrist group inside the RSDLP. Much later, Trotsky tried to prove, in defiance of the facts, that back in 1905 he had been with the Bolsheviks. This fiction is now being maintained by the falsifiers of history who are trying to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism. As confirmation, they quote an extract from Lenin's reply to Pyotr Krasikov's letter to Nadezhda Krupskaya, informing them of the CC's inactivity and its publication of leaflets written by Trotsky. However, they quote only the part of Lenin's letter which says: "There is nothing wrong in that if the leaflets are fairly good and vetted",<sup>1</sup> deliberately leaving out the following sentence: "I advise the St. Petersburg Committee, too, to print his leaflets vetted, say, by you..."<sup>2</sup> It is quite clear that Lenin was proposing that Trotsky's activity should be placed under the Party's control.

Indeed, in the spring of 1905, Trotsky did collaborate with the RSDLP Central Committee for some time. Among those who were then on the RSDLP Central Committee, whose masthead was printed on Trotsky's leaflets, were the Menshevik R. Golberstadt and the Bolshevik conciliators A. Lyubimov and L. Krasin, who did not oppose the printing of Trotsky's leaflets or his Menshevik line. Trotsky's collaboration with the conciliators provides additional evidence of his attempts to knock together a Centrist group in the Party with their aid.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, pp. 339-40.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 340.

Trotsky's Menshevik views were already revealed in the leaflet, "Peasants, Our Words Are Addressed to You!", which he wrote at the beginning of 1905. At the time, the Bolsheviks were very actively working in the countryside on the strength of the resolution on the peasant question prepared for the Third Congress of the RSDLP, which set the task of supporting any revolutionary acts by the peasants and of organising the rural proletariat into a class party.

Trotsky's leaflet, claiming to explain the agrarian programme of the Social-Democrats, in fact offered the peasants nothing but the convocation of a Constituent Assembly which was to "set up a new order in Russia, enact just laws, and satisfy the people's needs". By distorting the Constituent Assembly slogan, Trotsky spread the illusion that all the workers and peasants needed was to win the franchise, to have their life instantly transformed, without revolutionary struggle, without armed uprising and without the overthrow of the tsar and the landowners. His leaflet ran counter to the Party Programme adopted by the Second Congress of the RSDLP.

Let us recall that in his book, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Lenin explained the resolution of the Party's Third Congress on a provisional revolutionary government, and said: "To establish a new order 'that will really express the will of the people' it is not enough to term a representative assembly a constituent assembly. Such an assembly must have the authority and power to 'constitute'." The Constituent Assembly as presented by Trotsky could be nothing but a catchword.

In April 1905, the Bureau of the RSDLP Central Committee issued Trotsky's leaflet, entitled "More Tsarist Bounties", which spoke of the reactionary substance of the tsar's ukaze of March 30 (April 12) designed to provide greater protection for private land holdings and the ukaze of April 10 (23), "On the Material Responsibility of Peasants for Losses Inflicted on Landowners by Peasant Disorders". While urging peasants to fight against the autocracy and to demand an end to the Russo-Japanese war, Trotsky's leaflet wrongly suggested that Party committees "should set up Social-Democratic peasant circles in all villages".

In view of the questions being sent in from the localities

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 26.



to the Central Committee Bureau on this point, Lenin brought together a mass of facts in his article "Social-Democracy's Attitude Towards the Peasant Movement", and said: "In our opinion *there should be no Social-Democratic peasant committees*. If they are Social-Democratic, that means they are not purely peasant committees; if they are peasant committees, that means they are not purely proletarian, not Social-Democratic committees. . . . Our ideal is purely Social-Democratic committees in all rural districts. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Simultaneously, Trotsky continued to collaborate with the Mensheviks and contributed articles to the new *Iskra*. In the spring of 1905, in violation of the resolution adopted by the Party Council, the Mensheviks published Trotsky's pamphlet, *Before January 9*, at the Party printers' and with the RSDLP's masthead. It set out Trotsky's views of Russia's revolutionary development, the revolution's motive forces and means of struggle. The content of Trotsky's pamphlets, leaflets and handbills shows that in the spring of 1905 his stand had nothing in common with Bolshevik activity.

The pamphlet *Before January 9* consists of two parts. The first was written at the end of 1904 in connection with the Zemstvo campaign and was an explicit statement of Trotsky's Menshevik views; the second was written just after January 9, 1905, and was an expression of his Centrist attitude. The first put forward as the main political slogan the demand for a universal Constituent Assembly, the implication being that it could be called under the autocratic system. This was in fact the attitude taken by the liberal bourgeoisie, which was trying to secure a deal between the tsar and the revolutionary people on the most peaceable terms.

Trotsky held that the peaceful political strike was the main means of fighting for the Constituent Assembly, and that the bourgeoisie and the "revolutionary proletarian mass" were the motive forces. He discounted the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, who were taking "too small a conscious part in the country's political life" and added that democracy "sickened at the awareness of its own impotence". Two months later, in his "Political Letters", Trotsky virtually denied the existence of revolutionary democracy in Russia, declaring that it was "just growing up", while the proletariat was gaining in stature. On this question again, his

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 237-38.

stand completely coincided with that of the liberal bourgeoisie, whose leader, Struve, wrote two days before January 9, 1905, that "Russia does not yet have a revolutionary people".<sup>1</sup> This actually meant ignoring millions upon millions of peasants, whose demands were to be realised in the course of a democratic revolution. Lenin emphasised: "*That* revolution marks the period in the development of society in which the mass of society virtually stands between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and constitutes an immense petty-bourgeois, peasant stratum."<sup>2</sup>

By denying the peasantry's revolutionary potential, the Trotskyites strove to cut off the proletariat from its chief and natural ally, and to foist upon it the liberal bourgeoisie as an ally. This was shady tactics which doomed the proletariat to defeat.

Parvus acted together with Trotsky and wrote a foreword to his pamphlet. Parvus substituted the idea of a "workers' democracy" government for Lenin's idea of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, insisting that "only the workers can carry out a revolution in Russia. Any provisional government will be a government of workers' democracy". Parvus held that the peasants "are capable only of increasing the political anarchy in the country, thereby weakening the government".

Lenin showed that Parvus, like Trotsky, in fact denied the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution and pushed the proletariat onto the path of adventurism, spreading the illusion that it alone, without an ally, could overthrow tsarism. In the struggle against the autocracy and the survivals of serfdom, the interests of the proletariat and the peasantry were identical. This social basis made it inevitable for representatives of the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, i.e., the whole of revolutionary democracy, to join the proletariat in setting up a provisional revolutionary government.

In the second part of his pamphlet, Trotsky threw up a barrage of statements about the political necessity and historical inevitability of a massive uprising, treating it as the task of the few weeks ahead. While not openly opposing the organisational and technical preparation of the uprising, he

<sup>1</sup> *Osvobozhdeniye* (Liberation), January 7, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 283.



was in essence spreading the Menshevik view. The Mensheviks are known to have held that preparations for the uprising could be limited to developing in the people "a burning need for armament and self-armament".

Virtually the same idea was being spread by Trotsky, who wrote: "This idea [of the uprising.—*Authors.*], once it has been accepted by the masses, is in itself capable of concentrating their militant energy, restraining them from sporadic outbursts, on the one hand, and teaching them on the experience of revolutionary outbursts the business of revolutionary cohesion, on the other."

Exposing the opportunist essence of the statements by Trotsky and Parvus, Lenin showed in his plan for the article, "More About the Provisional Government", that Russia did have a revolutionary democracy and that, contrary to Trotsky's statement, it was growing, and that "all legal liberals, provided they were honest,=ready revolutionary democrats."<sup>1</sup> Many years later, in his "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution" he reiterated that the first Russian revolution which set in motion all classes of society produced a revolutionary people which was led by the revolutionary proletariat.<sup>2</sup> Trotsky's denial of a revolutionary democracy was in effect defence of the Menshevik idea of the bourgeoisie's hegemony in the forthcoming revolution.

The proletariat's political hegemony was the decisive condition for overthrowing the autocracy and establishing a real people's power in the form of a provisional revolutionary government. In March 1905, Lenin said in his article, "New Tasks and New Forces", that the proletariat of Russia was in favourable circumstances with respect to temporary allies, conscious friends and unwitting helpers. He urged that Social-Democrats should discard khvostist ideas and preachings about the non-existence of a revolutionary people and provide leadership in the proletariat's struggle. In this article, he formulated for the first time the Bolsheviks' strategic slogan in a bourgeois-democratic revolution: a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

Lenin's idea of the hegemony of the proletariat and its alliance with the peasantry was always the basis of the Bol-

shevik Party's strategy and tactics, which were entrenched in the decisions of the Third Congress of the RSDLP, when it met in London in April 1905. The Mensheviks, who continued their splitting activity, refused to attend the Congress, and met for a conference at Geneva.

The Third Congress of the RSDLP was held against the background of the revolution which had started in Russia. It was the first purely Bolshevik Congress. It armed the Party and the proletariat with Lenin's strategy and tactics designed to advance the revolution. The strategic plan mapped out by the Congress envisaged that at the first stage of the revolution the proletariat was to establish an alliance with the whole peasantry, neutralising the bourgeoisie, offsetting its instability, and fighting for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. At the following stage, the proletariat was to work for the direct development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. On the strength of Lenin's strategic plan, the Bolshevik Party brought up before the masses these main slogans: overthrow of tsarism and establishment of a democratic republic, confiscation of landed estates, and an 8-hour working day.

In accordance with this, the Third Congress worked out the Party's tactical line, recognising the organisation of an armed uprising as the main and most urgent task before the Party and the working class. The Congress said that "the task of organising the proletariat for direct struggle against the autocracy through an armed uprising is one of the most important and urgent tasks before the Party at the present revolutionary moment".<sup>1</sup> All Party organisations were asked to explain to the proletariat not only the political significance but also the organisational side of the forthcoming armed uprising in practical terms.

The Congress determined the class character and the tasks of the provisional revolutionary government which was to arise as a result of the overthrow of tsarism, and which was to constitute a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. It approved Lenin's formula for Paragraph One of the Rules, and elected a single governing Party centre—the RSDLP Central Committee—with Lenin at its head. The Congress sharply condemned the

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 10, p. 369 (this work was included in Lenin's *Collected Works* for the first time).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 251-52.

<sup>1</sup> CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums, Part I, Moscow, 1954, p. 77.



Mensheviks as a "Party's splinter group", and rejected their opportunist views not only on organisational, but also on tactical questions.

The decisions taken by the Mensheviks' Geneva conference showed that there was a great gulf between Bolshevik and Menshevik principles. In contrast to the revolutionary slogans issued by the Bolsheviks, the opportunist propositions adopted by the Menshevik conference led to a folding-up of the revolution and a handover of leadership to the bourgeoisie. The conference showed that the Mensheviks had slid into the bog of conciliation and had become the agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. The state of affairs in the RSDLP was characterised by Lenin in these words: "Two congresses—two parties."<sup>1</sup>

The Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin, was the only Party that succeeded in taking a correct view of the relationship of classes in the revolution, and in working out a strategic plan and tactical line, which the whole course of the revolution justified.

During the first Russian revolution, the Bolsheviks had to carry on a stiff fight against the opportunists, the Trotskyites in particular, who were trying to substitute for Lenin's strategy and tactics in the bourgeois-democratic revolution the Menshevik tactics of "assisting" the liberals, which were in fact "liberal-labour tactics".<sup>2</sup>

The Trotskyite views on strategy and tactics were substantiated by the "permanent revolution" theory, which absorbed all the principal features of the Menshevik concept of revolution camouflaged with revolutionary catchwords. It is this that Trotsky, Parvus and their supporters put forward as a new revolutionary theory and new tactics.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 553.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 251.

<sup>3</sup> The British historian L. Kochan, in his book, *Russia in Revolution 1890-1918*, ignores the facts when he writes that Trotsky's "permanent revolution" doctrine "anticipated with great accuracy the tactics Lenin would follow . . . (although Lenin himself may not have been fully aware of all the details of the theory)" (L. Kochan, *Russia in Revolution 1890-1918*, London, 1966, p. 142).

Bourgeois fabricators keep echoing Trotsky's claim that Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution is nothing but the "permanent revolution" theory, and that Lenin had allegedly said that it was Trotsky who had been right in 1905, and that Trotskyism was a trend in socialist thinking which, far from being hostile to Bolshevism, was in fact most akin to it.

At the highest point of the first Russian revolution, a Centrist group took shape round *Russkaya Gazeta*,<sup>1</sup> which was edited by Trotsky and Parvus, and the Menshevik newspaper, *Nachalo*,<sup>2</sup> which was edited by Martov, Potresov, Dan, Martynov, Iordansky, Trotsky and Parvus. In his "Report on the Unity Congress" in 1906, Lenin noted the existence within Menshevism of a trend which Party members were in the habit of associating with the names of Trotsky and Parvus. Lenin wrote: "True, it is quite possible that there were some 'Parvusites' and 'Trotskyites' among the Mensheviks—I was told that there were about eight of them—but, owing to the removal from the agenda of the question of the provisional revolutionary government, they had no opportunity of making a show."<sup>3</sup> Trotsky and his group set up the "permanent revolution" doctrine in opposition to Lenin's theory of the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into a socialist revolution.

While the Bolshevik Party was readying the working class for an armed uprising, Trotsky and his group came forward with the reckless proposal to decide the question of a socialist revolution at "one blow". Trotsky argued that "the uninterrupted revolution becomes a law of the proletariat's self-preservation as a class", with a "revolutionary continuity" established between its immediate and ultimate aims. Behind these obscure words lay the denial that the Russian revolution was bourgeois, and a confusion of its bourgeois-democratic and its socialist stage.

Lenin regarded the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist revolution as two links in the same chain, strictly differentiating between the first and the second stage of the revolution, and also the tasks before the proletariat and its Party,

No wonder then that H. Brahm writes: "The dictatorship of the proletariat (in Trotsky's specific sense) was established in Russia in 1917, in Yugoslavia in 1944-1945, in China in 1947-1949, i.e., in countries with an embryonic economic development" (H. Brahm, *op. cit.*, S. 31).

That is an attempt to belittle the epoch-making role of Lenin's doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to create the impression that it is suitable only for backward countries and not for advanced countries.

<sup>1</sup> *Russkaya Gazeta* (Russian Newspaper) was published from 1904 to 1906.

<sup>2</sup> *Nachalo* (Beginning), the official organ of the Mensheviks, was published in place of *Iskra*, from November 13 to December 2, 1905.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 323-24.



and the relation of the class forces at these stages. He stressed that "from the democratic revolution we shall at once... begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop half-way."<sup>1</sup>

Establishment of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants is a necessary condition for going over from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution. In his *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Lenin gave convincing evidence to show that victory over tsarism and establishment of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry create the conditions for a proletarian revolution.

Lenin regarded the victory of the bourgeois revolution as a necessary stage in the emancipation struggle without which it was impossible to pass on to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Accordingly, he issued warnings against confusing the tasks of the democratic and the socialist revolution, pointing to the need for fully implementing, in the first place, of the minimum programme, which was in line with the historical tasks of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, adding that it was tantamount to a betrayal of socialism to ignore these.<sup>2</sup>

The Party was split wide open by the Trotskyites' insistence on the opportunist "permanent revolution" doctrine just when the need was to overthrow the autocracy and to carry out democratic reforms. Trotsky's ideas gave the anarchists, Socialist-Revolutionaries and members of other petty-bourgeois parties the pretext to allege that the RSDLP had abandoned Lenin's idea of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

In 1906, Trotsky issued a book, *Results and Prospects*, which set out the grounds for his "permanent revolution" doctrine. From beginning to end it was a denial of Lenin's idea of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Trotsky wrote: "The point is not whether or not we consider it to be admissible in principle, whether 'we do or do not want' such a form of political co-operation. But we consider it unfeasible—in the direct

and immediate sense, at any rate." At the Fifth Congress of the RSDLP, Trotsky reiterated his view that "over here the victory of the revolution is possible only as a revolutionary victory of the proletariat, or is impossible altogether".<sup>4</sup>

It was on the question of a provisional revolutionary government that the "permanent revolution" doctrine most clearly revealed its adventurist character and opportunist substance. In propounding the "with no tsar, but a workers' government" thesis, Trotsky ignored the bourgeois character of the first Russian revolution and blurred the distinction between its democratic and socialist stages. He insisted that it was a fundamental importance to divide the Party Programme into a minimum programme and a maximum programme only if power was in the hands of the bourgeoisie. If it was in the hands of a revolutionary government "with a socialist majority", there is no point at all in making such a distinction within whose framework the proletarian government will never be able to maintain itself.

In his book, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Lenin proved that a victorious bourgeois-democratic revolution in which hegemony belongs to the proletariat should lead not to the winning of power by the bourgeoisie or the establishment of a "government of workers' democracy", but of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants. Lenin added that the character of this government "defines the classes upon which the new 'builders' of the new superstructure can and must rely, the character of the new superstructure (a 'democratic' as distinct from a socialist dictatorship), and how it is to be built (dictatorship, i.e., the forcible suppression of resistance by force and the arming of the revolutionary classes of the people)".<sup>2</sup>

In opposing the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, Trotsky denied that the proletariat had an epoch-making role to play because of its very status. Actually, however, the bourgeois-democratic revolution had in a sense more benefits for the proletariat than for the bourgeoisie, because its victory allowed the prole-

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, pp. 236-37.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 84-85.

<sup>4</sup> *Pyatyi (London) syezd RSDRP. Protokoly* (The Fifth [London] Congress of the RSDLP. Proceedings), Moscow, 1963, p. 401.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 128.



tariat to secure democratic freedoms, consolidate its organisations, acquire experience in leading the masses, and start a struggle for winning political power. Lenin wrote: "The more complete, determined, and consistent the bourgeois revolution, the more assured will the proletariat's struggle be against the bourgeoisie and for socialism."<sup>1</sup> The proletariat's status as a class makes it consistently democratic, impelling it to carry on the revolution to a decisive victory over tsarism, which is nothing but the establishment of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.<sup>2</sup>

Lenin made the point that victory of the revolution and implementation of democratic reforms would meet with desperate resistance from tsarism, the landowners and the big bourgeoisie. Only a dictatorship relying on an armed people was capable of overcoming this resistance, taking the democratic revolution to the end, and paving the way for the proletariat's successful struggle for socialism. However, it would not be a socialist, but a democratic dictatorship which would implement the minimum programme, meeting the interests of the whole people but not affecting the basis of capitalism. Consequently, the overthrow of tsarism, elimination of the remnants of the serf system and implementation of democratic reforms would not make the bourgeois revolution into a socialist one, nor would it carry the democratic revolution beyond the immediate framework of bourgeois socio-economic relations.

As the first Russian revolution developed, many questions were transferred from the sphere of theory to the soil of practice, and this applied above all to the hegemony of the proletariat. The 1905-07 revolution was a bourgeois-democratic one, but almost at once involved the use of proletarian means of struggle. It was a revolution in which the proletariat, led by the Bolshevik Party, assumed hegemony for the first time. This role of the working class in the revolutionary struggle of the masses was most clearly evident in the strikes. "The most important and historically distinctive feature of our strikes," Lenin wrote, "is the fact that proletariat comes forward as the leader. . . ."<sup>3</sup> The strike struggle carried on by the working class was an expression of the vital interests of Russia's working masses.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, pp. 541-542.

The interlacing of economic and political strikes was characteristic of the revolution at its highest peak. The proletariat of Russia proved in practice that it was possible to combine economic and political strikes, and demonstrated the importance of the mass political strike which developed into an armed uprising.

The revolutionary initiative of Russia's working class in 1905-07 created the Soviets as organs of massive struggle for the victory of the revolution and for socialism. The 1905 Soviets were a great historical achievement of the working class and the prototype of the Soviet power. It was Russia's example that first brought out the thesis that "the significance of the proletariat is infinitely greater than its proportion in the total population",<sup>1</sup> a fact which made nonsense of the Trotskyite-Menshevik thesis that no dictatorship of the proletariat could be set up until that class became a majority of the nation.

One of Lenin's tenets was that the vital interests of the peasantry made it a resolute supporter of the proletariat in a democratic revolution, because revolution was the only way of putting an end to the oppression of the autocracy and wiping out the relics of serfdom. The peasantry could implement this task only under the leadership of the proletariat.

In a draft resolution, "On the Tasks of the Proletariat at the Current Stage of the Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution", which Lenin wrote for the Second Congress of the Social-Democracy of the Latvian area, he said: "The proletariat alone is capable of carrying the democratic revolution to the end, provided that, as the only consistently revolutionary class in contemporary society, it leads the mass of peasants in a relentless struggle against the landowners' estates and the serf-owning state."<sup>2</sup> Every major turn of events in the 1905-07 revolution gave practical confirmation of this idea.

With the facts staring him in the face, Trotsky denied the possibility of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. He argued that a "coalition" of the proletariat and the peasantry "implies either that one of the existing bourgeois parties gains control of the peasantry, or that the peasantry sets up a mighty independent party. Neither is possible". In "The Aim of the Proletarian Struggle in Our

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 41, p. 200.



Revolution" (1909), Lenin said that Trotsky's statement about a "coalition" of classes was wrong both in terms of theory and in the light of the experience of the Russian revolution. A coalition of the proletariat and the peasantry did not at all imply either that one of the existing bourgeois parties should gain control of the peasantry, or that the latter should set up an independent party. It was especially hard for the peasantry to submit to party organisation, and the establishment of peasant parties was a drawn-out process.<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky declared that the proletariat and the peasantry could not set up a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship even when the peasantry joined the proletariat. Trotsky added: "Even assuming that it does so, with no more consciousness than it usually displays in adhering to the bourgeois regime." Lenin criticised this opportunist argument and said that the proletariat could not reckon on the peasantry's prejudices and lack of consciousness, as the ruling classes in bourgeois society do, nor assume that in a revolutionary period the peasantry would display no more than its usual level of unconsciousness and passivity.<sup>2</sup>

The Bolsheviks always had a deep faith in the peasantry's revolutionary potential. The resolutions of the Second and the Third Congresses of the RSDLP and of subsequent congresses and conferences were aimed at stimulating initiative among the peasants and involving them in the revolutionary movement under the leadership of the proletariat.

The Bolshevik Party was the only one acting consistently in defence of the interests of the peasant masses. Its agrarian programme provided for the confiscation of landed estates, and church, monastery, crown and government lands, and the nationalisation of all lands, i.e., abolition of private property in land and the transfer of all lands into the ownership of the democratic state. This was a revolutionary programme designed to abolish an autocratic-landowner system, and to establish a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants. The nationalisation of land was not only to wipe out the remnants of serfdom, but also to intensify the class struggle in the countryside, thereby helping to rally the poor around the proletariat, and accelerating the growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 371, 372.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 373-74.

In the course of the revolution, local Bolshevik organisations carried on a vigorous struggle to get the peasantry to side with the proletariat, explaining Bolshevik slogans and setting up revolutionary peasant committees. From the summer of 1905 on, there were set up agrarian groups under the Moscow, Kazan, Nizhni Novgorod, Simbirsk, Saratov, Samara, St. Petersburg, Vladimir, Kostroma, Ivanovo-Voznesensk and other committees in Central Russia, and also under the Minsk, Vilna, Lugansk, Odessa and other committees in Byelorussia, Lithuania, Latvia and the Ukraine.

The revolutionary upswing at the end of 1905 impelled the peasantry towards political organisation. However, the peasants did not set up a political party of their own. The "All-Russia Peasant Union" and the "Labour Group", which arose in the course of the revolution, were only the embryos of a political organisation of the peasantry.

The October strike gave a powerful impetus to the peasants' revolutionary struggle. The peasant movement reached its high watermark in the last three months of 1905, when 1,590 cases of peasant action were reported. The October strike and the December armed uprising were striking evidence of the fact that the forces of the proletariat and the peasantry were allied in the struggle against the autocracy, with the proletariat and its Party playing the leading role.

The experience of the 1905-07 revolution disproved the Trotskyite assertion that there was no revolutionary democracy in Russia, or that it was impossible to have an alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, with the working class in the lead.

The Trotskyites also took a capitulationist line on the prospects of the socialist revolution in Russia. They said it depended entirely on support from the European proletariat, and fully relied on the forecast of the Second International's opportunists. In this connection, Lenin wrote that "what appeals to ... Trotsky is only the *European* models of opportunism, but certainly not the models of European partisanship".<sup>1</sup> This kind of attitude in fact meant a denial of the bourgeois-democratic revolution necessarily growing into a socialist revolution.

While the resolution of the Third Congress of the RSDLP

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 341.



set before the proletariat the task of winning in the struggle for democracy, and making use of the victory to go on to a socialist revolution, Trotsky and his group robbed the working class of its revolutionary initiative, and this destined it to meaningless procrastination.

Lenin's theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into a socialist revolution overthrew the Trotskyite "permanent revolution" doctrine and cut the ground from under the opportunist dogmas of the Russian Mensheviks and the West European reformists.

Trotsky's "permanent revolution" doctrine was the most glaring embodiment of petty-bourgeois revolutionism. Lenin said it was an "absurdly Leftist", anti-Marxist, out-and-out opportunistic, eclectic theory which ignored the objective conditions of social development in Russia.

"From the Bolsheviks," he wrote, "Trotsky's original theory has borrowed their call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle and for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, while from the Mensheviks it has borrowed 'repudiation' of the peasantry's role."<sup>1</sup> Without producing anything new, the "permanent revolution" doctrine repeated the Menshevik ideas, which had already been invalidated in practice by the working-class revolutionary struggle.

Trotsky's "permanent revolution" doctrine was a revision of Lenin's idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in a bourgeois-democratic revolution and its development into a socialist revolution, which meant that it distorted Bolshevism on the fundamental questions of the revolution.

The "permanent revolution" doctrine was basically adventurist, because it induced the proletariat to take the path of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The way this doctrine took shape revealed Trotsky's voluntarist approach to various socio-economic phenomena and to the historical process as a whole. Trotsky denied that there was any continuity between the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic and of the socialist revolution, and tried to substitute subjectivist valuations for the objective process of social development.

The first Russian revolution showed up the flimsiness of Trotskyite propositions on the basic issues of the revolution, and of the tactics Trotsky and his group were trying to impose on the Party.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 419.

## 2. The Party's Struggle Against Trotsky's Opportunist Tactics in the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies

With the 1905-07 revolution at its peak, Soviets of Workers' Deputies emerged in the large industrial centres of Russia. They were a most striking expression of the creative approach of the working class to the revolution.

The St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies was set up when the all-Russia political strike was in full swing. It was the first massive organisation of the St. Petersburg proletariat set up to direct the strike struggle. The Soviet was an elective organ and operated legally.

All the revolutionary measures carried out by the Soviet were initiated by the Bolsheviks, who addressed workers' meetings to explain the meaning and importance of the decisions taken by the Soviet. However, at the early stages, some Bolsheviks tended to underestimate the importance of the Soviet, and wanted it to accept the Party's Programme and to merge with the Party. They believed that if it failed to do so, the Social-Democrats should withdraw from the Soviet and expose it before the masses as being anti-proletarian. In the St. Petersburg Soviet, this view was most fully voiced by Bogdanov and Knunyants (Radin).

This wrong stand on the part of some Bolsheviks helped the Mensheviks to secure control of the Soviet. Thus, there were only 7 Bolsheviks on its 50-man Executive Committee. A Menshevik barrister, G. Khrustalyov-Nosar, was elected Chairman of the Soviet. Among the Menshevik leaders on it were Parvus, Zlydnev and Zborovsky. Trotsky was not a deputy and was merely a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

Martov reported that as soon as Trotsky returned from Finland to Russia he supported the Mensheviks.<sup>1</sup> Together with the Mensheviks, he took a seat on the Executive Committee of the St. Petersburg Soviet and contributed articles to three newspapers: the official organ of the St. Petersburg Soviet—*Izvestia Soveta Rabochikh Deputatov*—and the two Menshevik newspapers—*Nachalo* and *Russkaya Gazeta*—which he edited together with Parvus.

Trotsky's support of the Mensheviks and his occasional

<sup>1</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., p. 145.



support of the Bolsheviks, together with the fact that he was simultaneously writing for the official organ of the St. Petersburg Soviet and the official organ of the Mensheviks, shows that Trotsky was manoeuvring between the revolutionary and opportunist Social-Democrats, and testifies to his urge to act as a kind of independent "centre" reconciling the two sides, but in fact following an opportunist line. Many years later, Trotsky tried to prove that in 1905 there had allegedly been no difference between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, whom he represented in the Soviet and on *Nachalo*. He said the "legend about a struggle between Lenin's and Trotsky's lines in the 1905 revolution was created at a later date", after Lenin's death.

Actually, however, Trotsky's Menshevik views and opportunist tactics in the 1905-07 revolution, especially manifest in the period of his activity in the St. Petersburg Soviet, testify to his Centrist stand. Trotsky's activity in the Soviet was designed to obscure the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and to subordinate the interests of the proletariat to those of the bourgeoisie.

As soon as Lenin heard about the activity of the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and the mistaken attitude to it among some Party members and Party committees, he sent a letter to the editorial board of the Bolshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*, explaining the importance of the Soviet, and shedding a strong clear light on the relationships between the Party and the Soviets.<sup>1</sup> Lenin opposed the erroneous views of some St. Petersburg Bolsheviks which could isolate the Party from the masses, and wrote: "Comrade Radin is wrong in raising the question, in No. 5 of *Novaya Zhizn*. . . : the Soviet of Workers' Deputies or the Party? I think that it is wrong to put the question in this way and that the decision must *certainly* be: *both* the Soviet of Workers' Deputies *and* the Party."<sup>2</sup> In the same article, Lenin gave a clear-cut formulation of the task before the Party representatives, which was to direct the Soviets and guide their activity. He believed that they should enter the Soviet "for the tireless,

steadfast advocacy of the *only* consistent, the only truly proletarian world outlook, *Marxism*".<sup>1</sup>

Lenin flayed the khvostist slogans of the St. Petersburg Soviet, which were identical with those of the liberal bourgeoisie. He pointed to the fact that all the liberal, monarchist bourgeoisie was trying to have power transferred to it "peacefully", without a popular uprising, whereas only an uprising could ensure the victory of the revolution.<sup>2</sup>

Lenin said the Soviets were organs of direct struggle by the masses, organs of uprising, and embryos of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. "The Soviet," he wrote the St. Petersburg workers, "should proclaim itself the provisional revolutionary government of the whole of Russia as early as possible, or should *set up* a provisional revolutionary government (which would amount to the same thing, only in another form)."<sup>3</sup>

Today, those who distort history keep repeating the inventions about the allegedly negative attitude taken by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party to the Soviets, in particular the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies. But these fabricators sing Trotsky's praises.

The Mensheviks played down in every possible way the role of the St. Petersburg Soviet and strove to turn it into an organ of local self-government in an effort to switch the revolutionary struggle to the path of parliamentarism, and to hand over leadership of the movement to the bourgeoisie. The Menshevik attitude to the Soviet was given the fullest expression by Martov, who wrote in a letter to Axelrod that the St. Petersburg Soviet was an embodiment of the Menshevik idea of "revolutionary self-government".<sup>4</sup> In the same letter, he said that the Mensheviks took a negative attitude to the idea of transforming the Soviet into an organ of revolutionary power. He wrote: "The (ideological) influence is so great that 'seizure of power' appears to be almost inevitable if events subsequently take a stormy turn (which is not to say that such a seizure appears to be something alluring; I myself fear that this will be the

<sup>1</sup> The letter was entitled "Our Tasks and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies"; it was written from November 2 to 4, 1905, but was not published. First published in 1940. (See Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 17-29.)

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 9, pp. 186-87.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., p. 146.



turning point of the revolution and one no worse than the Jacobin dictatorship had been)."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin exposed the Menshevik view of the Soviets as "organs of revolutionary self-government", and insisted that there could be no genuine popular self-government under the autocracy, emphasising that "the real organisation of real people's self-government can take place only as the epilogue of a victorious uprising".<sup>2</sup>

The treacherous tactics of Trotsky and the other Mensheviks were revealed during the October political strike, which brought the proletariat of Russia right up to an armed uprising. In order to retain power, the tsarist government issued its October 17 Manifesto. The liberals rejoiced. The Manifesto was approved by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries (SRs).

The Bolshevik Party was the only one to give a true assessment of the October 17 Manifesto and the policy of the autocracy. On October 18, the RSDLP Central Committee issued a message "To the Russian People", explaining that the Manifesto was a ruse designed to disorganise the forces and deceive the people.<sup>3</sup> The Bolsheviks urged the workers and peasants to continue the struggle against the autocracy. On October 25, *Proletary* carried Lenin's article, "The First Victory of the Revolution", which emphasised that the autocracy had been forced to make a concession but that the tsar had not surrendered and was mustering his forces. Lenin called on the workers to start a fresh attack on the autocracy from the positions they had won.

The article also set out a programme for further action, including the establishment of a workers' militia as the only reliable bulwark of the revolution, and the need to get the troops to side fully with the people. He also urged that the basis of the revolution should be enlarged by involving more and more peasants. Lenin emphasised: "The success of the revolution depends on the size of the proletarian and peasant masses that will rise in its defence and for its consummation."<sup>4</sup>

The working class gave unanimous support to the Bolsheviks' call for a continuation of the struggle. On October 18, the numbers involved in the strike in St. Petersburg reached 135,000.<sup>1</sup> That same day, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies adopted a decision "to continue the general strike".<sup>2</sup>

The Menshevik leadership of the St. Petersburg Soviet was forced to reckon with the mood of the revolutionary workers, who followed the Bolsheviks. But they tried very hard to break the strike. As early as October 17, the Mensheviks had raised the question of stopping the strike, and brought it up again and again, until they got through their decision on October 19. While the delegate of the railway strike committee, voicing the opinion of the railway men, proposed that the strike should be continued, Trotsky insisted on a halt. This resulted in the adoption of a compromise proposal motioned by the Federative Committee of the RSDLP "to stop the strike not today, but at noon on October 21, to show our total mistrust of the new 'constitution'".<sup>3</sup> The strike was called off on October 21.

The Federative Committee saw a connection between the end of the October political strike and the task of preparing for an armed uprising; its resolution ended with a call to the workers to "prepare their combat cadres for an even grander and more impressive attack on the tottering monarchy, which could be finally swept away only by a victorious popular uprising". But the resolution of the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies, edited by Trotsky, confined itself to calling for a strike. It said: "The Soviet of Workers' Deputies resolves to stop the general political strike at noon on October 21 so as to resume it, depending on the course of events, at the very first call of the Soviet to continue as vigorously as before the struggle for our demands."<sup>4</sup>

The Soviet's Menshevik leadership, Knunyants wrote later, saw the proposal for a strike after October 17 only as

<sup>1</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> *Userossiiskaya politicheskaya stachka v oktyabre 1905 g.* (The All-Russia Political Strike in October 1905), Part I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1955, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 433.

<sup>1</sup> *Peterburgskkiye bolsheviky v period pervoi russkoi revolyutsii 1905-1907 gg.* (The St. Petersburg Bolsheviks During the First Russian Revolution of 1905-1907), Leningrad, 1950, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> *Izvestia Soveta Rabochikh Deputatov*, October 20, 1905.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. The Federative Committee of the RSDLP was formed in mid-October 1905 from Bolshevik and Menshevik representatives.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



an expression of mistrust for the "paper freedoms", but did not set the aim of striking a death blow at the autocracy.<sup>1</sup>

It was the Bolsheviks who did all the work of preparing the uprising. At the end of October in St. Petersburg, they directed the massive arming of the workers, formation of armed detachments, collection of money for the purchase of firearms, and the making of swords, knives and daggers by the workers themselves. In his "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution" Lenin said: "The proletariat . . . set out to win the eight-hour day by revolutionary action. 'An Eight-Hour Day and Arms!' was the fighting slogan of the St. Petersburg proletariat. That the fate of the revolution could, and would, be decided only by armed struggle was becoming obvious to an ever-increasing mass of workers."<sup>2</sup>

The record of the proceedings of the St. Petersburg Soviet and its Executive Committee, and other material warrant the assertion that the Executive Committee did not have the armed uprising as an item on the agenda of the Soviet a single time. Whenever the Soviet dealt with matters of arming the workers, stocking weapons, and forming armed detachments, this was most frequently due to pressure exerted by the workers' deputies and the Bolsheviks.

The workers' deputies themselves repeatedly raised the question of armaments. Sometimes, they requested the Soviet to appoint commanders for the armed detachments they had set up. On October 26, a meeting of the deputies of the Gorodskoi District, which set up a district HQ for organising armed detachments, resolved to refer the question for consideration by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.<sup>3</sup>

The St. Petersburg Soviet heard reports by deputies on the arming of workers at the Meissner, Siemens and Halske, Semyannikovskiy and other plants for the purpose of beating back the attacks by the Black Hundreds. The Soviet took no decision. On December 1, 1905, *Novaya Zhizn* carried a resolution of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies openly denying the need to organise an uprising. On the question of preparing an uprising it said: "In the recent period, the Executive Committee has been receiv-

ing considerable numbers of proposals of this kind. The Executive Committee has not considered them."<sup>1</sup>

On one occasion, Chairman of the St. Petersburg Soviet Khrustalyov distributed arms for the armed detachments. However only 8 revolvers were made available for every workers' district (of which there were 8 in the city) and 100 rounds for each revolver. Considering that the Nevsky District alone had armed detachments numbering 6,000 workers, it will be clear that the Soviet did not take anything like a serious approach to the task of the uprising. One of the workers' deputies later gave a characteristic assessment of the activity of the St. Petersburg Soviet. Replying to a question about whether the Soviet had called for an armed uprising, he said: "It was not the Soviet that had called on us, but we who had called on it."<sup>2</sup>

The attitude taken by Trotsky and the other Menshevik leaders towards the armed uprising was repeatedly criticised by the Bolshevik members of the Soviet and by the workers' deputies. The Bolshevik Knunyants (B. Radin), a member of the Executive Committee, wrote in his pamphlet: "The question of armament was a matter of constant dissatisfaction both on the part of the Soviet with the Executive Committee, and of the electors with the deputies."<sup>3</sup>

The struggle between the two tactical lines—the revolutionary Bolshevik line and the opportunist Menshevik line—became most acute on December 3, as the Soviet was discussing the question of a general political strike. The Bolsheviks Knunyants and Krasikov came out with the proposal for an immediate start on organising a political strike, which was to be developed into an armed uprising. Their proposal was supported by the workers' deputies of the Vasilyevskiy Ostrov and the Moscow districts and the representative of the Postal and Telegraph Union. The idea of an armed uprising was opposed by the Mensheviks and SRs.

Trotsky, who chaired the sitting, declared that St. Petersburg could not assume the part of initiator of the strike. He was now saying that there was need to prepare a political strike but that, in his opinion, St. Petersburg should act in

<sup>1</sup> B. Radin, *Pervyi Sovet rabochikh deputatov* (The First Soviet of Workers' Deputies), St. Petersburg, 1906, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, October 29, 1905.

<sup>1</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, December 1, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> *Voprosy istorii KPSS* (Questions of CPSU History) No. 1, 1958, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> B. Radin, op. cit., p. 20.



the wake of the provinces.<sup>1</sup> Trotsky's speech showed signs of confusion and fear in face of the mounting events and was a betrayal of the interests of the working class, that of St. Petersburg above all.

The questions on which the Soviet of Workers' Deputies took decisions were first discussed by the Executive Committee. Their relations could be characterised as follows: the Executive Committee made the proposals and the Soviet took the decisions. Because the Executive Committee was predominantly Menshevik, the questions of armament and preparation for the uprising were not submitted for consideration by the Soviet.

Moreover, the general political strike in October 1905 involved in the revolutionary movement all, even the most backward, sections of the working class, and this necessarily had an effect on the composition of the Soviets, the St. Petersburg Soviet in particular, whose importance was, in addition, underestimated by some of the Bolsheviks. In the election to the St. Petersburg Soviet, the established rate of representation was ignored, because each factory, plant and shop wanted to have its own deputy on the Soviet. As a result, workers at the large enterprises, with 65 per cent of the city's workers and constituting the mainstay of the Bolshevik Party, got only about 30 per cent of the seats on the Soviet.<sup>2</sup>

The majority on the Soviet consisted of workers from the small enterprises who entertained the illusion, spread by the Mensheviks, that the revolution could run a peaceful course. In addition, there were representatives of the petty bourgeoisie on the Soviet, for whom the tsar's October 17 Manifesto was a horizon of "revolutionary gains" beyond which they had no desire to go. It was these two groups of deputies, inexperienced in politics, that constituted the soil for the Mensheviks to carry on their opportunist policy in the Soviet.

Demagogy was one of the methods used by the Mensheviks in the Soviet. The Mensheviks covered up their opportunist tactics and conciliatory stand with a fireworks display of

ultrarevolutionary catchwords provided by Trotsky, who became the virtual leader of the Soviet.

While on the St. Petersburg Soviet, Trotsky acted on his idea of a "workers' government" which was at the basis of his "permanent revolution" doctrine. He wrote: "The idea of a workers' government, i.e., the winning of power by a workers' Soviet, although it was not a recognised part of the programme, did flow from the entire status of the Soviet and all its work." Trotsky held that the main means of struggle was the general strike, which should be echoed in the advanced Western countries and should give them the signal for socialist revolution. Trotsky in essence denied the need for organising, preparing and staging an armed uprising. He said: "The general political strike is essentially an uprising."

In a foreword to his pamphlet, *Before January 9*, Trotsky wrote that the stormy strike movement in 1903 had led him to the conclusion that "tsarism will be overthrown by a general strike", and not by an armed uprising. Trotsky said the same thing in a letter to the RSDLP Central Committee on June 14, 1906, arguing that the Mensheviks were right in not dealing with the technical side of the preparation for the uprising and in not arming the working class.

Trotsky later also characterised the general political strike in October 1905 as a spontaneous movement, denying that it was a new revolutionary form of struggle and a means of advancing the masses to an armed uprising.

Trotsky's attitude to the uprising sprang from the Mensheviks' un-Marxist approach to the development of the revolutionary process. Like all Mensheviks, Trotsky saw the uprising as an inevitable stage in a spontaneous tide of events and so insisted that there was no need to take practical measures to organise the uprising, obtain arms and form revolutionary detachments. He declared: "For all the importance of arms, the main strength does not reside in arms, no indeed! It is not the ability of the mass to kill, but its great readiness to die—it is this, we believe, that ultimately ensures victory of the popular uprising."

Of course, "great readiness to die", i.e., selfless loyalty to the revolution, is a necessary condition for victory in an uprising, but in the form in which Trotsky presented it, it had nothing in common with the Bolshevik attitude to the uprising. Trotsky's talk about the uprising was a total denial

<sup>1</sup> *Istoriya Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* (History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), Vol. 2, Moscow, 1966, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Ocherki istorii Leningradskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Essays on the History of the Leningrad Organisation of the CPSU), Part I, Leningrad, 1962, p. 174.



of its organisation. It expresses the Mensheviks' attitude to the working class, which, they believed, was not able to play the role of leader but only the role of victim in a revolution led by the bourgeoisie. It also shows up Trotsky's opportunist tactics in the Soviet and his fear of a popular uprising to overthrow tsarism.

Trotsky's opportunist attitudes were repeatedly revealed during the first Russian revolution. Under a decision of the St. Petersburg RSDLP Committee, the Bolsheviks staged, on October 18, 1905, a demonstration of the city's workers to secure the release of political prisoners. When the thousands of people came up in a body to the building where the Executive Committee of the St. Petersburg Soviet was sitting, the Bolsheviks invited the members of the Executive Committee to head the demonstration. This proposal caught them unawares. After long discussion, the Mensheviks Trotsky and Sverchkov and the Bolshevik Knunyants were appointed to lead the demonstration.<sup>1</sup> However, Trotsky did his best to frustrate the political demonstration organised by the Bolsheviks. After the demonstrators had walked the streets for more than 8 hours and had already reached the prison, Trotsky announced that the government had issued an amnesty for political prisoners and told the demonstrators to go home. Soon after, Knunyants found out that Trotsky's announcement had been a provocation, but it was too late to do anything about it: the demonstration had been broken up.

Thus, full blame for the break-up of the October 18 demonstration falls squarely on Trotsky. His treacherous behaviour prevented the workers of St. Petersburg from releasing the political prisoners.

Soon after, the government began to use force in its fight against the workers. A wave of reprisals swept across Russia. In less than a month after the October 17 Manifesto, almost 4,000 men were killed and more than 10,000 wounded or crippled.<sup>2</sup> That was how the tsar's "freedom" looked in practice.

In that period, the St. Petersburg Bolsheviks intensified their struggle for the revolutionary implementation of the 8-hour working-day slogan, put forward by the Third Con-

gress of the RSDLP. In October and November 1905, the struggle for the 8-hour working day became massive.

On October 29, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies adopted a resolution to introduce the 8-hour working day at all factories and plants through revolutionary action. Knunyants noted that the "only speakers at the sitting were worker-deputies".<sup>1</sup> The workers were so enthusiastic that the Menshevik Executive Committee was forced to support this proposal. Knunyants wrote: "If the Soviet had refused to decree the introduction of the 8-hour working day, its prestige would have taken a plunge. The positive decision was a foregone conclusion."<sup>2</sup>

On October 31, almost all the factories and plants in St. Petersburg went over to the 8-hour working day, without the management's permission. The Bolshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* wrote that this was an event which "must be recorded in the annals not only of the Russian but also of the world-wide labour movement".<sup>3</sup>

The introduction of the 8-hour working day met with stiff resistance from the employers, who began to close down their enterprises. The very first difficulties arising from the fulfilment of the Soviet's decision to put through the 8-hour working day caused the Menshevik leaders to waver. Already on November 6, the Menshevik leadership of the Soviet took its first step to retreat, declaring that "to implement this measure (i.e., to introduce the 8-hour working day) there is unquestionable need for an extensive massive organisation of trade unions among the St. Petersburg workers and workers throughout Russia, in general".<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the government had come to the rescue of the employers by announcing a lockout. About 100,000 workers were sacked. This accelerated the retreat of the Menshevik Executive Committee of the St. Petersburg Soviet. On November 12, after a heated debate, the Soviet adopted a decision to stop the struggle for the 8-hour working day. This resolution, motioned by the Executive Committee, was backed by Trotsky and Khrustalyov.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> B. Radin, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, November 1, 1905.

<sup>4</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, November 8, 1905.

<sup>5</sup> Central State Historical Archives, Leningrad, 857/1/1176, 1905/80

<sup>1</sup> *Izvestia Soveta Rabochikh Deputatov*, October 20, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Vol. 2, p. 100.



The next day, Trotsky proposed that talks should be started with the war ministry and the employers on the terms for re-opening the plants. These acts on the part of the Menshevik-Trotskyite leadership of the St. Petersburg Soviet showed that they were working for a direct deal with the bourgeoisie.

On November 13, Lenin addressed a sitting of the St. Petersburg Soviet. One deputy recalls: "There was a hush in the hall and a general sense of alertness. We felt the real breeze of revolution blow through the hall as if its narrow walls had been moved apart, revealing to our eyes the boundless world of great revolutionary prospects. We breathed the air of the Commune."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin exposed the political meaning of the government's tactics, whose lockout was designed to deliver a blow at the working class. Lenin said that the re-opening of the plants should not be requested but demanded, and that in the event of a refusal, the city's proletarians should be called out in a general strike. His idea was not to succumb to the provocation, but to start intensified preparations for rallying the revolutionary forces, so as to give battle when the time was right for the people and not for the government. Preparation for an uprising required the immediate establishment of connections with workers in other cities and with the railway men's, postal and telegraph, peasant and other unions, and with the army and navy. The resolution motioned by Lenin was adopted unanimously.

However, the Soviet's Menshevik leaders continued negotiations with the employers, and this evoked a sharp protest from the workers. In the Soviet, a group of deputies from the Nevsky Ship-building Yard motioned a resolution urging the workers to continue their fight against the employers.<sup>2</sup> In a resolution, the workers of the Lessner factory expressed their "firm desire to continue the struggle at the first call of the Social-Democratic Labour Party and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies".<sup>3</sup>

The struggle for the 8-hour working day showed how well the Bolshevik slogan met the vital interests of the working class. At the same time, the course of events

confirmed that the struggle for the 8-hour working day demanded further organisation of the proletariat and that it was connected with the successful advance of the revolution.

The programme of preparation for the decisive battle against the autocracy, proposed by Lenin, was not reflected in the activity of the St. Petersburg Soviet through the fault of its Menshevik leadership, who were trying to narrow down the scale of the movement, to confine the Soviet's activity to the framework of local self-government, and to isolate the working class from its allies. That is precisely why the Soviet gave such scant attention to the rise of the peasant movement, and did nothing to win the support of the peasantry.

The attitude of the Menshevik-Trotskyite leaders of the St. Petersburg Soviet to the army was characterised by the decision adopted on October 18, on Trotsky's motion, to pull the troops out of the city.<sup>4</sup> This wrong step made it impossible for the proletariat of the capital to rely on the support of the mass of soldiers in its revolutionary struggle.

Trotsky and other leaders of the Executive Committee took a number of steps to slow down the development of the November strike, which involved even those sections of the workers who had not gone on strike in October. On November 3, with the strike at its height, the Menshevik Executive Committee motioned a capitulationist proposal to stop the strike. The deputies refused to debate it. On November 4, the Mensheviks once again tried to impose on the Soviet a decision to stop the strike, but by a majority of 400 votes against 4 the Soviet decided: the political strike was to continue. On November 5, Trotsky again motioned a proposal to end the strike, and this the Mensheviks managed to put through the Soviet. This was fresh confirmation of the fact that the Mensheviks did not tie in the November strike, or the October strike either, with an armed uprising.

The strike in St. Petersburg ended on November 7. It demonstrated the strength and sound organisation of the proletariat, having forced the government to repeal the death sentence on the sailors who had mutinied in Kronstadt, and to lift martial law in Poland. However, the counter-

<sup>1</sup> M. M. Essen, *Moi vstrechi s Leninym* (My Meetings with Lenin), Moscow, 1966, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, November 15, 1905.

<sup>3</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, November 11, 1905.

<sup>4</sup> *The St. Petersburg Bolsheviks During the First Russian Revolution of 1905-1907*, p. 190.



revolution was mustering its forces for an attack on the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. Its Chairman, Khrustalyov, was arrested on November 26.

A meeting of the Executive Committee, attended by Lenin, which was held the same day at one of the secret flats, adopted a decision, under the pressure of the Bolsheviks, to continue preparations for the uprising. A three-man bureau to replace the arrested chairman was elected by the plenary meeting of the Soviet on November 27. The three were Trotsky, Sverchkov and Zlydnev.

Soon after, the Soviet, on Trotsky's initiative, adopted a resolution to hand over its powers to an enlarged Executive Committee.<sup>1</sup> A member of the Executive Committee, G. Kondratyev, subsequently recalled: "The members of the Executive Committee were daily becoming more and more irresolute and flabby."<sup>2</sup>

The Executive Committee and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies met for their last sitting on December 3. In the course of it, news came about the government's intention to arrest the members of the Soviet. Instead of adjourning immediately, Trotsky continued the debate and virtually handed those attending into the hands of the police.<sup>3</sup> A large number of members of the Soviet and the Executive Committee were arrested. A heavy blow was dealt the proletariat of the capital. As a result, the situation throughout the country was sharply aggravated.

After the arrest of most of the members of the first St. Petersburg Soviet, the workers elected the second Soviet, but it, too, was headed by Mensheviks. It operated until January 2, 1906, when it was also arrested.

Thus, the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies did not become an organ of armed uprising. Trotsky and the other petty-bourgeois leaders, who had made their way into the leadership, prevented the Soviet from becoming a revolutionary headquarters of the St. Petersburg proletariat. The opportunist activity of the Mensheviks in the Soviet resulted in the proletariat of the capital being unable to support the December armed uprising in Moscow.

Trotsky's activity in the St. Petersburg Soviet makes nonsense of the allegations by present-day falsifiers of

<sup>1</sup> *Novaya Zhizn*, November 30, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Leningrad Party Archives, 4000/5/490/856/2 rev.

<sup>3</sup> *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Vol. 2, p. 127.

history that during the first Russian revolution he was on the Bolshevik side. The facts show that Trotsky ignored the class proletarian line, and that his opportunist tactics were designed to reach a compromise with the bourgeoisie and transform the Soviet from an organ of popular revolutionary struggle into an organ of local self-government doing the government's will.

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The first Russian revolution, which set in motion all classes of Russian society, put through the test of action the programme and tactical slogans of all parties, groups and trends. The only party to stand this test was the Bolshevik Party, whose strategy and tactics were proved correct by the whole course of the revolution. Lenin wrote: "The revolution has justified all the basic theoretical propositions of Marxism, all the essential slogans of Social-Democracy. And the revolution has also justified the work done by us Social-Democrats, it has justified our hope and faith in the truly revolutionary spirit of the proletariat."<sup>1</sup>

The experience of the Bolshevik strategy and tactics in action showed that Trotskyite propositions on the basic questions of the revolution were untenable. The experience of the revolution disproved the inventions of Trotsky and Martov about the character of the 1905-07 revolution and proved that their assertions about the backwardness and political immaturity of the proletariat were false. This experience bore out Lenin's idea that the strength of the proletariat lay not only in its numbers, but in its organisation, consciousness and cohesion round its vanguard, the Bolshevik Party, that its strength lay in loyalty to Marxism.

In the revolution of 1905-07 in Russia, the proletariat acted for the first time as leader and organiser of the nationwide struggle for democracy and socialism. Noting the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution, Lenin wrote: "All those victories—or half-victories, quarter-victories, rather—which our revolution won, were achieved entirely and exclusively thanks to the direct revolutionary onset of the proletariat, which was marching at the head of the non-proletarian elements of the working people."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 50.



## THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKY'S CENTRISM IN THE YEARS OF REACTION

### 1. Exposure by Lenin of the Opportunism of the Liquidators, Otzovists, Trotskyites and Conciliators

The experience of the revolution refuted the Trotskyite proposition that in a bourgeois-democratic revolution hegemony inevitably belongs to the bourgeoisie, and proved the correctness of Lenin's doctrine of the hegemony of the proletariat in a bourgeois-democratic revolution, and the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry as a necessary condition for overthrowing tsarism and capitalism.

In 1905-07, the Bolshevik Party learned the art of directing the masses by being in the thick of the revolutionary struggle. It acquired vast experience in political and organisational work in the masses, consolidated and enlarged its ties with them, and enhanced its influence on them. "As the Mensheviks themselves admitted on more than one occasion," Lenin wrote, "the mass of workers followed the Bolshevik lead in all the most important actions of the revolution."<sup>1</sup>

The whole course of the revolution showed that only a revolutionary Marxist Party, a new type of party, can be a real leader, organiser and inspirer of the working class and the working masses, and the only one capable of leading them to victory over the autocracy and capitalism. The experience in leading the masses which the Bolshevik Party acquired in the years before the first Russian revolution and during the revolution stood the Party in good stead during the struggle for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February and the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Once the 1905-07 revolution was crushed, tsarism brought down a hail of reprisals on the revolutionaries. An army and police terror reigned in the country, which was plunged into the dark Stolypin period. "The revolutionaries are being harassed, tortured and exterminated as never before," Lenin wrote. "Efforts are being made to vilify and defame the revolution, to erase it from the memory of the people."<sup>1</sup>

The autocracy delivered its main blow at the working-class Party. Its numerical strength was sharply reduced. Many organisations were destroyed. Thousands of Party members were shot, jailed and sentenced to hard labour and forced settlement. Lenin was forced to emigrate first to Switzerland and then to France.

But however fiercely the tsarist Okhranka raged, it did not succeed in destroying the Party. The Party organisations went deep underground and continued their struggle. In face of all these hardships, Lenin taught the Bolsheviks to muster their forces, strengthen their ties with the masses, and prepare for fresh battles. He had an abiding faith in the revolutionary potential of the working class and was sure that there would be another revolution.

The Bolshevik Party started from the fact that the bourgeois-democratic changes in Russia were not complete, which made another revolution objectively inevitable. Accordingly, the Party's strategic plan remained the same: elimination of the tsarist monarchy, completion of the bourgeois-

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 332.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. 16, p. 151.



democratic revolution, and creation of conditions for its growing into a socialist revolution. However, the Party's tactical line had to be modified. In the years of the revolution, the Party had called on the masses to launch a resolute attack on tsarism, but in the years of reaction it taught the proletariat the art of retreat and preparation of forces for dealing the enemy another blow.

Accordingly, the Party's main task was now to organise and educate the proletariat and the broad masses of working people, and to prepare them for another revolution. The Party skilfully combined legal and illegal work among the masses, making the utmost use of trade unions, co-operatives, workers' clubs and the reactionary State Duma. In order to implement this tactic, it was necessary to preserve and strengthen the illegal proletarian Party. Lenin wrote: "We must preserve and strengthen the illegal Party—just as before the revolution. We must steadily prepare the masses for a new revolutionary crisis—as in the years 1897-1903. We must strengthen to the utmost the Party's ties with the masses, develop and utilise all kinds of workers' organisations for the furtherance of the socialist cause..."<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, under the pressure of reaction, the Bolsheviks fell back in an orderly manner and made successful preparation of their forces for fresh battles. By contrast, the Mensheviks behaved in that period as agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement and liquidators of the political Party of the working class. There was panic among the Mensheviks. They disavowed the revolutionary slogans and argued that there could be no question of another revolution in Russia. Accordingly, they followed a policy of reconciliation with the Black Hundreds Stolypin regime, and urged a fold-up of the underground work and liquidation of the illegal Party.

The Mensheviks' opportunism degenerated into liquidationism. The Menshevik liquidators had two centres: one abroad and one in Russia. The liquidators abroad were grouped round the newspaper *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*,<sup>2</sup> and those in Russia, round the journals *Vozrozhdeniye*, *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*. Among the leaders of the

liquidators were Alexander Potresov, Pavel Axelrod, Felix Dan (Gurvich), Alexander Martynov (Pikker), Yuli Martov (Tsederbaum), N. Cherevanin (F. Lipkin), Noi Zhordania and others.

The liquidators set about openly revising the programme, tactical and organisational principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. They called on the working class to struggle for reform within the framework of the Stolypin regime and demanded the establishment of an open reformist party, or a Stolypin labour party, as Lenin called it. In the spring of 1908, the Mensheviks began to disband the illegal Party organisations in Moscow and St. Petersburg and to replace them with so-called initiative groups, whose main task was to carry on cultural activity and work in co-operatives and clubs on a legal basis. In July 1908, the Mensheviks Alexander Martynov and Boris Goldman issued an open call for the dissolution of the Party's Central Committee and its replacement by an "information bureau". All these facts showed that this was not a matter of minor differences, but of the very existence of the Marxist Party of the working class and the fortunes of the revolution in Russia.

Thus, the liquidators proved to be the most dangerous enemies of revolutionary Social-Democracy. "The liquidators are not only opportunists (like Bernstein and Co.)," Lenin wrote, "they are also trying to build a *separate* party of their own, they have issued the slogan that the RSDLP *does not exist*; they pay no heed *whatever* to the decisions of the RSDLP."<sup>1</sup>

With the help of the liquidators, the bourgeoisie was trying to secure control over the labour movement. In fact, the banner of the liquidators was also that of the liberal bourgeoisie. "The more this banner is 'unfurled'," Lenin wrote, "the clearer does it become to one and all that what we have before us is a dirty liberal rag worn to shreds."<sup>2</sup> A victory of liquidationism in the labour movement would have meant the end of the proletarian Party. If the Party was to advance, it had to fight the liquidators.

The Bolsheviks' struggle against the liquidators was hampered in every way by opportunists from the "Left". This was a group of otzovists which had taken shape within

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> This group was often called the "Golosites".

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 322.



the Bolshevik Duma group in the spring of 1908, and which included, among others, Alexander Bogdanov (Maximov), Grigory Alexinsky, A. Sokolov (Volsky), Anatoly Lunacharsky, Mikhail Pokrovsky and Martyn Lyadov (Mandelstamm). The otzovists refused to consider the actual situation and called for immediate revolutionary action, refusal to work in legal organisations, and recall of the deputies from the State Duma.

The otzovist policy would have isolated the Party from the masses and turned it into a sectarian group. Lenin called the otzovists "liquidators inside out" and added: "Otzovism is *not* Bolshevism, but the worst political travesty of Bolshevism its worst political enemy could invent."<sup>1</sup>

Alexander Bogdanov and other otzovists followed the Mensheviks in trying to revise dialectical materialism, preaching the reactionary philosophy of Machism, which denied the party spirit in philosophical science, and condemned the masses to passivity and inaction. The philosophical concept of the otzovists was also shared by Lev Kamenev, Mikhail Tomsy and Alexei Rykov, who in the years of reaction took a conciliatory attitude. Kamenev insisted that Bogdanov's philosophy was "of a revolutionary-proletarian character". On May 26, 1908, he wrote in the first version of a letter to Bogdanov: "If ... I am confronted with the ultimatum of working together politically, you must approve all the steps taken by us against our philosophical opponents ... of course, in the struggle of these groups I have no other way out but to withdraw from this struggle."<sup>2</sup>

Kamenev held that *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Party's central organ, should carry articles not only by those who accepted dialectical materialism, but also by its opponents. Tomsy was against any philosophy, and declared: "I have never felt nostalgic about philosophy. Those who are going into philosophy want to escape the realities."<sup>3</sup>

The spread of such views could do the Party great harm and produce vacillation in the sphere of the Marxist outlook. The interests of the Party, whose policy rested on

the scientific foundation of dialectical materialism, insistently demanded defence of the Marxist outlook.

The struggle for revolutionary Marxism became the watchword of the day. Lenin's book, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, a model of creative Marxism, was published in May 1909. In it he not only safeguarded but further developed the dialectical and historical materialism of Marx and Engels. Lenin demonstrated the utterly reactionary character of the idealistic philosophy of Machism, substantiated the Party spirit in philosophy, and showed the close connection between philosophy and the revolutionary struggle of the working class. Lenin gave the answers to the most complex questions of the Marxist outlook. His book played an outstanding part in the theoretical equipment of the party cadres.

Lenin's stand in the struggle against opportunism was shared by Vatslav Vorovsky, Kliment Voroshilov, Prokofy Japaridze, Mikhail Kalinin, Valerian Kuibyshev, Grigory Orjonikidze, Grigory Petrovsky, Yakov Sverdlov, Nikolai Semashko, Yelena Stasova, Suren Spandaryan, Joseph Stalin, Stepan Shaumyan and other prominent members of the Bolshevik Party. The Party organisations in Russia were the scene of sharp struggle against the liquidators both on the Right and from the "Left". The Bolsheviks of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Nikolaev, Kharkov, Baku and other cities took an active stand to preserve the illegal proletarian Party.

The Fifth (All-Russia) Conference of the RSDLP, held in Paris in December 1908, became a turning point in the history of the labour movement in Russia. It was attended by representatives from the major Party organisations. The Mensheviks at the conference found themselves isolated. The newspaper *Proletary* remarked that never before at an all-Party conference had Menshevism been "so ideologically miserable and organisationally weak".<sup>4</sup>

At the centre of the conference was Lenin's report, "On the Present Moment and the Party's Tasks". In the resolution on his report, the conference said that the basic economic and political causes of the first Russian revolution continued to operate and that another revolutionary outburst was inevitable. The next revolution would be a bourgeois-demo-

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* No. 9-10, 1932, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> *Protokoly soveshchaniya rasshirennoi redaktsii "Proletariya"* (Minutes of a Conference of the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary*), Moscow, 1934, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> *Proletary*, February 12 (25), 1909.



cratic one, with hegemony belonging to the proletariat, and the peasantry alone its immediate ally. That is why the Party's main task continued to be consolidation of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, and preparation of the masses for storming the autocracy. This required extensive explanation to the masses of the meaning and significance of tsarist policy and all-round study and broad popularisation of the experience gained in the 1905-07 revolution, with the use of the Duma rostrum for revolutionary propaganda and agitation. Thus, the Fifth (All-Russia) Conference of the RSDLP determined the Party's tactical line in the conditions of reaction.

The Mensheviks proved to be incapable of putting forward anything in opposition to the Bolshevik resolutions. They "displayed complete confusion and cowardice of thought on all these questions which were now of such fundamental importance to the Party. They simply had no standpoint on this score",<sup>1</sup> said a communiqué on the Conference.

The Conference sharply condemned liquidationism and dissociated itself from the otzovists. It approved the Central Committee's political line and put upon it the duty to continue "to safeguard the Party's integrity and unity and to struggle against the disorganising tendencies inside it".<sup>2</sup> The Conference documents emphasised that the illegal organisation continued to be the basis of the Party and that it made use of all illegal and every possible legal opportunity for establishing ties with the masses. The Conference called on all Party organisations to carry on a resolute struggle against the liquidators to safeguard and consolidate the illegal proletarian Party as the vanguard of the proletariat and all revolutionary forces.

The Conference decisions enshrined the tactical propositions by which the Party had been guided right up to the February bourgeois-democratic revolution. These decisions served as a basis on which Party organisations restructured their work and fought the opportunists in the years of reaction.

The danger of liquidationism was becoming increasingly clear not only to the Bolsheviks, but also to a section of the

Menshevik supporters, especially workers. At the end of 1908, a process of differentiation began among the Mensheviks. From their midst came groups of pro-Party Mensheviks calling for closer ties with the Bolsheviks in order to preserve the illegal revolutionary Party of the working class.

The group of pro-Party Mensheviks was headed by Georgi Plekhanov, who sharply condemned the liquidators for their efforts to destroy the Party and said that liquidationism led straight into the bog of the most ignominious opportunism. He wrote: "The reward for destroying the *Social-Democratic Party* is not so much hard labour as an order in your button-hole, on your neck or wherever."<sup>3</sup> But having supported the Bolsheviks on organisational matters, Plekhanov did not break with the Mensheviks on the theory and tactics of revolutionary struggle. He wrote: "I mean a *mutual drawing closer together*, and not the Mensheviks' switching to the Bolsheviks' standpoint."<sup>2</sup>

Despite Plekhanov's wavering and instability, Lenin believed that in order to consolidate the illegal Party and rally all the Party elements against the liquidators, the Bolsheviks in the concrete conditions then prevailing must form a bloc with him. This would enable them to wrest the workers still behind him from Menshevik influence. Besides, while strengthening the Bolsheviks' position, the bloc did not affect their organisational and political principles. It was concluded as "an agreement on the basis of the struggle for the Party and the Party principle against liquidationism, without any ideological compromises, without any glossing over of tactical and other differences of opinion *within the limits of the Party line*".<sup>3</sup>

To consolidate the bloc of Bolsheviks and pro-Party Mensheviks and successfully implement the decisions of the Fifth Conference of the RSDLP, there was need to stop the disorganising activity of the otzovists. It was an insistent demand of life itself that the Party should be purged of the loud-mouthed revolutionaries. This task was fulfilled by a conference of the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* which was held in Paris in June 1909. It was directed by

<sup>1</sup> *Userossiiskaya konferentsiya RSDRP v dekabre 1908 g.* (All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP in December 1908), Paris, 1909, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums*, Part I, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Vol. XIX, p. 37 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 101.



Lenin and was, in fact, a plenary meeting of the Bolshevik centre.

The conference issued a resolute condemnation of otzovism and ultimatism, and urged the Bolsheviks to carry on a resolute struggle against these deviations from revolutionary Marxism.<sup>1</sup> The conference expelled from the Bolshevik ranks the leader of the otzovists A. Bogdanov. In carrying out the organisational break with the otzovists, Lenin urged the Bolsheviks to deal patiently with the workers who still had otzovist views, and to help them overcome their mistakes by means of painstaking explanation.

The conference approved the line of establishing closer ties with the pro-Party Mensheviks. It came out against the propaganda of Machist philosophy, which the otzovists were carrying on. Its resolution "On the CO" said: "The representatives of the enlarged editorial board on the CO must take a definite stand for the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels on philosophical questions, if such should arise, in the CO."<sup>2</sup> Tomsy voted against this resolution, while Kamenev and Rykov abstained.

The conference was of importance for the whole Party, because its decisions laid down the basic directions for its activity and dealt a blow at the liquidators and otzovists.

The otzovists tried to frustrate the conference decisions but met with resolute rebuff from local Party organisations. Expelled from the Bolshevik ranks, the otzovists set up a factional school at Capri, and invited workers from Russia to attend. In December 1909, they formalised their anti-Party group abroad, *Uperyod*, which together with the liquidators began attacking the Leninist Party. Exposing the anti-Party activity of the otzovists, Lenin urged the Bolsheviks to take resolute action. In a letter to A. Lyubimov, he wrote: "There is nothing more harmful now than sentimentalising. A complete break and a war, more determined than that against the Mensheviks."<sup>3</sup>

While the Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin, carried on a bitter struggle against the liquidators and the otzovists in order to safeguard the revolutionary proletarian Party, Trotsky's Centrist group came out in defence of the liquidators, preach-

ing the "theory" that revolutionaries and opportunists could live peacefully together in one party. At the February (1964) Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, Secretary of the Central Committee, M. A. Suslov, said: "Trotskyism was a clearly expressed petty-bourgeois deviation. It campaigned under the false banner of a more 'Leftist', more 'revolutionary' direction than Bolshevism. Trotsky and his supporters, who styled themselves as 'true' fighters for world revolution, were in fact fighting against Leninism. Trotsky likewise personified the denial of the Bolshevik Party spirit and cohesion of Party ranks. Factionalism was the 'soul' of Trotskyism."<sup>4</sup>

Trotsky's political activity was always characterised by extremes, adventurism and a lack of established views. Lenin wrote: "Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to worm his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other."<sup>5</sup> Trotsky's double-dealing was most manifest in the years of reaction, when he conducted a fierce fight to liquidate the illegal revolutionary Party of the working class and set up a Centrist petty-bourgeois party. It was then that Lenin called Trotsky a "Judas".

In the years of reaction, Trotskyism was one of the most dangerous species of liquidationism. Its special danger lay in the fact that it always covered up its real essence with "Leftist" talk. Lenin remarked that "Trotsky's particular task is to conceal liquidationism by throwing dust in the eyes of the workers". While claiming to stand "outside the factions" Trotsky in fact acted as an advocate of the liquidators and otzovists "with whom he agrees on nothing theoretically but in everything practically".<sup>6</sup>

Trotsky had the closest political, organisational and personal ties with the liquidators. In a letter to A. Martynov written at the time, F. Dan said that they and Trotsky were "inseparable", personally and politically. He was an active contributor to the liquidationist *Nasha Zarya*, *Uvrozhdenniye* and *Luch*. Among Trotsky's closest associates in the anti-

<sup>1</sup> CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums, Part I, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 402.

<sup>4</sup> M. A. Suslov, *O borbe KPSS za splochnost mezhdunarodnogo kommunisticheskogo dvizheniya* (The CPSU's Struggle for the Cohesion of the International Communist Movement), Moscow, 1964, p. 88.

<sup>5</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, pp. 447-48.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 362.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., Vol. 16, p. 339.



Party newspaper *Pravda*, which he set up, were the Mensheviks Semyon Semkovsky, Adolf Yoffe and M. Skobelev. In all his practical activity, Trotsky was guided by instructions from avowed liquidators. In a letter to Martynov he wrote: "If you happen to be dissatisfied with any specific steps or statements of ours—let us know: we shall deal very carefully with any such indications."<sup>1</sup>

The Trotskyites' ideological, political, tactical and organisational views in the years of reaction virtually differed in no way from those of the liquidators, although they were more thoroughly veiled. At the basis of their ideological-political conception was Trotsky's notorious "permanent revolution" doctrine, which he never abandoned.

In the years of reaction, as during the first Russian revolution, Trotsky denied that a bourgeois-democratic revolution was inevitable or logically necessary in Russia, ignoring the revolutionary role of the peasantry, the proletariat's main ally. In 1909, Lenin wrote: "Trotsky's major mistake is that he ignores the bourgeois character of the revolution and has no clear conception of the transition from this revolution to the socialist revolution."<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky insisted that the 1905-07 revolution had "introduced objective changes of tremendous fundamental importance", forcing the state power to allow constitutional freedoms within certain limits. Like all Mensheviks, he held, consequently, that Russia had already become a bourgeois monarchy, which is why there was little probability of any revolutionary battles there in the near future, so that the debate on the fortunes of the revolution had become meaningless. The Trotskyite *Pravda* insisted that the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, nationalisation of land and other questions "fell entirely within the sphere of theoretical prediction" and were of no practical importance whatsoever. Hence the logical conclusion that the task of the working class was not to prepare for another revolution, but to struggle for reforms and its current interests.

Like all liquidators, Trotsky said that the Stolypin laws had in the main resolved the agrarian question and that it

was impossible to count on the peasantry in a revolution. He wrote that since the proletariat's revolutionary movement "does not meet with any response at all in the countryside", the correct thing to do was not to be tantalised "by the idea of a proletarian-peasant revolutionary bloc, brushing aside the obscure and misleading slogan 'land and freedom' ". To recognise these Trotskyite propositions was tantamount to giving up the idea of revolution. Lenin exposed the emptiness of Trotsky's views on the peasant question and said: "Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal-labour politicians in Russia, who by 'repudiation' of the role of the peasantry understand a refusal to raise up the peasants for the revolution! That is the crux of the matter today."<sup>1</sup> The Trotskyites denied that another revolution was inevitable and demanded a revision of the Party's revolutionary slogans. As the principal tactical slogan they put forward the idea of struggle for "freedom of coalition", i.e., alliances, strikes, assemblies. In his article, "Principles and Prejudices", Trotsky wrote: "For us freedom of coalition is not a minor point of the democratic programme, but the supreme class criterion for the entire programme of political democracy."<sup>2</sup> This was a reformist slogan for winning minor concessions, a slogan isolated from the struggle to overthrow the autocracy. Trotsky insisted that the "freedom of coalition" could well be implemented even under the autocracy. He held that Russia had entered on a parliamentary path and that the Duma was capable of satisfying the workers' vital demands. Accordingly, he urged that the Social-Democratic group should abandon its massive agitation among the workers, concentrating their efforts on "positive" work in the Duma.

The Trotskyite *Pravda* kept saying that the masses could exert an influence on the government's legislative activity through the Duma. Trotsky wrote: "Our parliament ... is none the less an arena of the most concentrated and far from futile struggle between the state authority and the social classes."<sup>3</sup>

The "freedom of coalition" slogan was vigorously opposed by Lenin, who proved that under tsarism it was in fact an instrument used by the bourgeoisie to deceive the masses, because it did not affect the foundations of the

<sup>1</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 451/3/21584/2, 2 rev.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 371.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. 21, p. 420.

<sup>2</sup> *Nasha Zarya* No. 5, 1912, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Zhivoye Dyelo*, March 2, 1912.



exploiting system. He said it was a liquidationist slogan which diverted the masses from revolutionary struggle. Lenin wrote: "Trotsky knows perfectly well that liquidators writing in legal publications *combine* this very slogan of 'freedom of coalition' with the slogan 'down with the underground party, down with the struggle for a republic'..."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the programme and tactical propositions of the Trotskyites in the years of reaction were Menshevik, liquidationist and anti-revolutionary.

The Trotskyite platform had as its theoretical foundation a subjectivist, metaphysical approach to the analysis of concrete reality. The Trotskyites followed the liquidators in trying to revise the fundamental tenets of the Marxist outlook. In his book, *My Life*, Trotsky wrote that back in 1902 he had been keen on books by Bogdanov, "who combined with Marxism the epistemology of Mach and Avenarius". Trotsky's outlook had been strongly influenced by Ferdinand Lassalle and Karl Kautsky.

In 1909, the liquidationist journal *Vozrozhdeniye* carried a letter from Kautsky in which he argued that there was no difference between Marx and Dietzgen, and that since Mach was close to Dietzgen, he was also close to Marx, and consequently, there was no justification for the struggle against Mach.<sup>2</sup> Kautsky asserted that philosophy was the personal business of each Party member. The Trotskyites seized on these anti-Marxist views. They followed Kautsky in opposing the Party spirit in philosophy and denying the connection between philosophy and political struggle. Trotsky kept saying that the struggle against Machism "cannot be mandatory upon the Party".<sup>3</sup> In a letter to one of his supporters on November 21, 1909, the Trotskyite Semkovsky sharply attacked Plekhanov for having linked the fortunes of Marxism with "matter" and "other devilish things".

About the struggle over philosophical questions which had started in the Party, Semkovsky wrote: "It is utterly ridiculous to turn this into a Parteisache [party business.—*Authors.*]"<sup>4</sup> He went on to say that Bogdanov had invited him to write an article about dialectical and metaphysical

materialism for a collection of discussion articles aimed against Lenin's book. On the advice of Trotsky and Parvus, Semkovsky agreed, with the proviso that the introduction should say that the authors "take the standpoint of Kautsky's letter, that philosophical discussions are not a Parteisache, let alone a Fraktionsache [factional business.—*Authors.*]"<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Trotskyites denied the importance of Marxist theory in the labour movement, tried to revise dialectical materialism, preached the reactionary idealistic philosophy of Machism, and substituted eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. In a letter to Alexandra Kollontai in August 1915, Lenin ranked Trotsky among the most noxious Kautskyites, who were embellishing opportunism in various forms and "(in various ways) preach eclecticism instead of revolutionary Marxism".<sup>2</sup>

The liquidators and the Trotskyites directed their main blow at the illegal revolutionary Party of the working class, striving to set up a legal reformist party on the model of the Social-Democratic parties of the West. The Trotskyites concealed their liquidationist views in every possible way and pretended to be Centrists, "nonfactionalists". The ideology of Centrism is one of time-serving and subordination of the proletariat's interests to those of the petty bourgeoisie within the framework of a single party. Lenin flayed Centrism relentlessly for its hypocrisy and unprincipled conciliation, and for paying lip-service to Marxism while actually betraying it.

In an open letter to Boris Suvarin, Lenin wrote: "I consider it my Socialist duty to fight Kautsky and other 'Centre' spokesmen."<sup>3</sup> In 1921, Lenin drew the attention of the fraternal Communist Parties to the menace of Centrism, saying that the Bolsheviks would never have won power, or held it, if they had not carried on a resolute struggle against the opportunists and Centrists 15 years earlier.<sup>4</sup>

Trotskyism was a manifestation of Centrism on Russian soil. At the Fifth (London) Congress of the RSDLP in 1907, Trotsky tried to cobble together a Centrist group, arguing that "the whole of Social-Democracy should accept

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> *Vozrozhdeniye* No. 9-12, 1909, p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, November 16 (29), 1910.

<sup>4</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 280/1/36599/15.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 280/1/36599/16.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, p. 472.



'Centrist' aspirations".<sup>1</sup> He said the Party must be sure to have a "Marxist centre" to act as a "neutraliser" between the Party's Right and Left wings, thereby ensuring unity and discipline.<sup>2</sup> This meant in practice that revolutionary Marxists and opportunists should coexist in one party, and that it should fling its doors wide open to petty-bourgeois and bourgeois elements. The demand for a "Marxist centre" meant turning the revolutionary proletarian Party into one of social reform, an amorphous organisation, consisting of big and small groups, and incapable of taking any action.

The Trotskyites opposed the principle of democratic centralism in the Party, and the subordination of the minority to the majority. "It is not external coercion, but moral bonds that keep the party united," wrote Trotsky, designating Party discipline as "external coercion". The Trotskyites said strict Party discipline was "clannish despotism". According to Trotsky, Party members or separate groups should accept decisions by central organs so long as they considered these decisions to be correct; otherwise these could be ignored, even if they had been taken by a majority of the Party. Lenin said this was aristocratic anarchism, which undermined the Party's unity, turning it into an amorphous mass, incapable of giving a lead in the proletariat's revolutionary struggle.

Trotsky's supporters denied that the illegal Party had a role to play as the proletariat's vanguard in the revolution. The Trotskyite *Pravda* declared that the struggle to restore the illegal Party organisations was a "harmful utopia". Trotsky wrote: "Perhaps, someone will ask: which organisation—the legal or the illegal—is more important? That is a question we refuse to answer altogether, because it is meaningless." Statements of that kind were grist to the mill of the bourgeoisie.

In his efforts to "reconcile" the revolutionaries and the opportunists, Trotsky denied that the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks had class roots, and reduced them to organisational matters, which he believed to be inessential. Lenin said this was an attempt on Trotsky's part to cheat the workers. He added: "In reality, it is by no means the organisational question that is now in the fore-

front, but the question of the entire programme, the entire tactics and the whole character of the Party, or rather a question of two parties—the *Social-Democratic* Labour Party and the *Stolypin* labour party of Potresov, Smirnov, Larin, Levitsky, and their friends."<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky saw the main cause of the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks in the struggle between the various groups of intelligentsia for influence over "a politically immature proletariat". Together with Axelrod and other liquidators, he asserted that the RSDLP was not a party of the working class, but of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, and that the workers' masses would regard the "Social-Democratic Party as being outside their circle". This was falsifying the nature and character of the proletarian Party, "the old liberal and liquidationist tune, which is really the prelude to the repudiation of the Party".<sup>2</sup> In his article "Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity" and in other works, Lenin exposed Trotsky's slanderous declarations and showed that the intelligentsia had predominated in the revolutionary movement only in the 1870s and 1880s, but that from the mid-1890s, especially from the emergence of the RSDLP, the overwhelming majority of those who took part in the revolutionary struggle were workers and peasants. This was reflected in the Party's social make-up.

The roots of the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks lay in the economic content of the Russian revolution, were determined by class relations and involved fundamental principles. Lenin saw the Mensheviks' liquidationism as a sign of bourgeois influence on the proletariat. Accordingly, to safeguard the illegal revolutionary Party and strengthen the unity of the working class, the liquidationists

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 343.

Bourgeois falsifiers of CPSU history still use these Trotskyite inventions in fighting the Party. West German historian W. Markert declared that the Bolshevik Party developed "the other side of classes", i. e., in isolation from the proletariat and the peasantry. Actually, the Bolshevik Party developed as a working-class party from the outset. By its Second Congress, it had already had several tens of thousands of workers in its ranks. By 1905, the number of workers in the Party came to 61.7 per cent. From 1905 to 1916, 68.2 per cent of new members every year were workers and peasants (see *Vserossiiskaya perepis chlenov RKP, 1922 g.* [All-Russia Census of RCP Members, 1922], Part 4, Moscow, 1923, pp. 37, 38).

<sup>1</sup> *The Fifth (London) Congress of the RSDLP. Proceedings*, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> *Borba* No. 7-8, 1914, p. 7.



had to be "cut off" from the Party, there being no question of reconciliation between them, as Trotsky was insisting.

The Trotskyites, fully sharing the liquidators' theoretical, political and organisational views, directed their entire practical activity to the establishment of a legal reformist party. Accordingly, having set up in Vienna, in 1908, Trotsky established close ties with the liquidators, otzovists, Bundists and other opportunists for joint struggle against the Bolsheviks. From October 1908 to May 1912, he published his anti-Party newspaper *Pravda* in Vienna, which was his private venture, and not, Lenin emphasised, an organ of any Party organisation in Russia. It was financed by the liquidators and also had subsidies from opportunists in the leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party.

The Trotskyite *Pravda*, flying the Centrist banner of "non-factionalism", fought Bolshevism and stood up for liquidationism and otzovism.<sup>1</sup> Visual confirmation of this was the slanderous campaign it started against the decisions of the Fifth Conference of the RSDLP, which had condemned liquidationism. The Vienna *Pravda* wrote: "To avoid any misunderstandings, let us say: if the tactical resolutions had been drawn up by the *Pravda* editorial board, it would have formulated them very differently on many points than the last Party Conference did."

The newspaper tried very hard to ruin the bloc between the Bolsheviks and the pro-Party Mensheviks, on the plea that this "combination" did not benefit the Party in any way. Trotsky wrote: "The new combination, at present politically meaningless, does not give us any guarantee of its political stability in the future. In these circumstances it would be very rash indeed to join with it even *Pravda's* fortunes, to say nothing of the Party's own."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. Schapiro insists that in the years of reaction the Trotskyite *Pravda* did not join in the factional struggle, "avoided all sharp polemics", worked for Party unity and stood up for the workers' interests (L. Schapiro, op. cit., p. 115).

Actually, however, the Trotskyite *Pravda*, in league with the liquidators, worked hard to destroy the revolutionary Party. Its ideas were alien to the working class of Russia. When, in September 1910, its editorial board circulated a questionnaire to the factories and plants, it received only 50 replies from the whole of Russia. In this connection, the editorial board bitterly complained: "The comrades in the localities are stirring lazily. Sometimes it takes a pair of pliers to extract every word of response from them."

<sup>2</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, November 16 (29), 1910.

Lenin exposed these statements by Trotsky, which were designed to undermine the Party's unity. In his work, "The State of Affairs in the Party" (December 1910), Lenin pointed out that most workers in Russia fully supported the bloc of Bolsheviks and Plekhanovites, and that this could not be ignored without abandoning the Marxist standpoint. Lenin went on: "When Trotsky declares that the rapprochement between the pro-Party Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks is 'devoid of political content' and 'unstable', he is thereby merely revealing the depths of his own ignorance, he is thereby demonstrating his own complete emptiness."<sup>1</sup>

Having failed to win the support of the workers in Russia, Trotsky began to cast around for allies among the factional groups abroad. The Trotskyites established close ties with the anti-Party *Uperyod* group and gave every support to the otzovist school on Capri. Trotsky was hoping to win over the students of the school and to have them help him recruit supporters for him in Russia. He proposed that the students should be trained in journalism, and invited to contribute to *Pravda*, which was being sent to Russia, "thereby building a bridge between the school and party work".<sup>2</sup>

However, the Trotskyites were deceived in their hopes of using the students in their own interests. Once they had seen through to the essence of otzovism, a section of the students, headed by N. Y. Vilonov, issued a protest against the anti-Party activity of the school management and in November 1909 went to Paris, where they heard lectures by Lenin and by other Bolsheviks.

The Bolsheviks fought consistently against Trotsky's Centrist policy. Lenin exposed the petty-bourgeois nature of Trotskyism and its efforts to substitute reformism for Marxism, and showed up its revisionism on questions of programme, strategy and tactics. Lenin took a resolute stand against the conciliatory attitude shown towards Trotskyism by some, including Grigory Zinoviev, Lev Kamenev, Alexei Rykov, Mikhail Tomskey, Miron Vladimirov, A. Lyubimov, Solomon Lozovsky and Joseph Goldenberg (Meshkovsky).

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 817/1/19248/4, 5.



In the conditions of reaction, the conciliators displayed ideological hesitation, wavered in conducting revolutionary tactics and spread defeatist attitudes. The conciliators supported the Trotskyites and in the name of a fictitious Party "unity" suggested all sorts of compromises with the opportunists, hewing to a "middle-of-the-road" and "golden mean" policy. On November 28, 1908, Kamenev wrote to Bogdanov: "In the 'squabble' which has started I stand in the 'middle-of-the-road' and hope to stay there ... I feel that just as the struggle against conciliation was binding on me in 1904, so conciliation is equally binding just now."<sup>1</sup> In practice, this "middle-of-the-road" line proved to be support for various anti-Party groups abroad who were acting together with the liquidators. The objective result was that the conciliators, together with the Trotskyites, were helping the liquidators to fight the Bolsheviks.

Even before that, at a meeting of the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary*, the conciliators proposed that the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary* should be closed down, and that negotiations should be started with the editorial board of the Trotskyite *Pravda* for the purpose of turning the latter into the CC organ.<sup>2</sup> After the meeting, Kamenev, in secret from the CC, had continued his correspondence with Trotsky to arrange the terms for rendering material, literary and other aid to the Vienna *Pravda*. Kamenev was supported by Zinoviev, who wrote to F. Goloshchyokin in Moscow as follows: "I feel that an agreement with *Pravda* is highly desirable. ... What is to be done just now in the localities? At present, one thing can and must be done: resolutions must be passed on the need to have *Pravda* made the CC organ. It will be well for the Moscow Committee and the districts to do this. And the sooner the better. This will be an excellent means of pressure."<sup>3</sup>

Lenin voiced a resolute protest against the negotiations with the Vienna *Pravda*. On August 18, 1909, he wrote to Lyubimov: "As regards Trotsky, I must say that I shall be most vigorously opposed to helping him. ... Without a settlement of this question by the Executive Committee of

the Bolshevik Centre, no steps to help Trotsky are permissible."<sup>4</sup>

However, the conciliators and the Mensheviks on the Narrow CC had, back in May 1909, confirmed the editorial board of the Vienna *Pravda* as a CC literary group. Goldenberg (Meshkovsky) started negotiations with Trotsky, promising CC assistance to his newspaper. The agreement provided that Dubrovinsky, a representative of the CC, would join the editorial board of the Vienna *Pravda*, while the editorial board remained completely autonomous, retained its own cash account, the CC meeting all the costs of the paper which was to be printed at the *Proletary* printing press in Paris. Accepting the agreement, Trotsky declared that he considered retention "of the newspaper's nonfactional character a necessary condition for its further existence". On June 20, 1909, he informed Dubrovinsky (Inok) about his negotiations with Meshkovsky and the acceptance of the terms of the agreement.<sup>5</sup>

Trotsky strove to have the Vienna *Pravda* recognised as the organ of the RSDLP Central Committee, so as to spread liquidationist ideas among the workers under the banner of an all-Party newspaper. Having read Trotsky's letter to Dubrovinsky, Lenin wrote to Zinoviev on August 24, 1909: "As regards *Pravda*, have you read Trotsky's letter to Inok? If you have, I hope it has convinced you that Trotsky behaves like a despicable careerist and factionalist of the Ryazanov-and-Co. type? He pays lip-service to the Party and behaves worse than any other of the factionalists."<sup>6</sup>

Conciliation was ruinous for the Party, because it was one of the worst species of opportunism. "The conciliators," Lenin wrote, "are not Bolsheviks at all ... they have nothing in common with Bolshevism ... they are simply inconsistent Trotskyites. ..."<sup>7</sup> He urged a resolute struggle against conciliation, which was gravely damaging the effort to build up the Party. The conciliators played an especially harmful role at the January (1910) Plenary Meeting of the RSDLP Central Committee.

<sup>1</sup> *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* No. 9-10, 1932, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of a Conference of the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary*, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 377/10/35708/8, 8 rev.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 398.

<sup>5</sup> K. D. Shalagin, *Borba bolshevikov s trotskizmom* (The Bolsheviks' Struggle Against Trotskyism) (1907-1914), Moscow, 1965, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, pp. 399-400.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, p. 261.



## 2. Lenin's Struggle Against Trotsky's "Unity" Policy at the January (1910) Plenum of the RSDLP Central Committee

At the end of 1909, the Trotskyites, with the support of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov and Goldenberg (Meshkovsky), started a campaign for a plenary meeting of the Central Committee to "reconcile" and "unite" all factions and trends in the RSDLP. Apart from the Trotskyites and the conciliators, calls for a plenum were issued by spokesmen of non-Russian national Social-Democratic organisations and those abroad.

By then, the arrest of a number of Bolshevik members of the Central Committee, together with subversion by the opportunists, had weakened the Central Committee, giving anti-Party elements a clear superiority. It was clear that the relation of forces at the plenary meeting would not be in favour of the Bolsheviks, but they decided to attend anyway, in an effort to make the utmost use of the rostrum it offered to expose the liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites.

The plenary meeting of the RSDLP Central Committee was held in Paris in January 1910. It was the last plenary meeting in the Party's history attended by both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. The voting members included 14 members of the Party CC: 4 Bolsheviks, 4 Mensheviks, 2 Polish Social-Democrats, 2 Bundists, 1 representative of the Latvian Social-Democrats, and 1 representative of the Vperyodists. Not a single pro-Party Menshevik attended. Those attending the plenary meeting from the Bolshevik group—Zinoviev, Kamenev, Dubrovinsky, Goldenberg (Meshkovsky) and Nogin—took a conciliatory attitude and supported Trotsky. Lenin had to carry on a struggle with the opportunists and the conciliators in a very difficult situation. He subsequently wrote to Maxim Gorky "Three weeks of agony, all nerves were on edge, the devil to pay...."<sup>1</sup>

At the plenary meeting, there was a clash between two incompatible views of the Party's role and tasks, and various aspects of Party construction. Lenin was alone in taking a consistent stand on the revolutionary Marxist line. He worked to unite all the Party forces on the basis of Marxist principle, to preserve and consolidate the illegal revolu-

tionary Party of the working class, and to expose and expel the opportunist elements from the Party.

Relying on Trotsky's support, the liquidators strove to isolate the Bolsheviks, undermine their influence in the working class and to create conditions for uniting all the opportunist elements into a legal reformist party. The most belligerent of them called for an open fight against the Bolsheviks, a take-over of the leadership, and expulsion from the Party of Lenin and his supporters. But all things considered, the liquidators dared not have an open break with the Bolsheviks because they realised that their supporters in Russia were much too weak and disorganised to "undertake there and then the mission of forming a new party organisation", as Martov put it.<sup>1</sup>

The liquidators decided to cover up their anti-Party schemes with an adventurist plan proposed by Trotsky and the Bundists. At the plenary meeting, Trotsky acted as a Centrist, desirous of "reconciling" and "uniting" one and all. Ignoring the controversial issues of principle, he strove to force through decisions fully acceptable for the liquidators. Trotsky's plan boiled down to "uniting" all trends in the Party, regardless of their attitude to liquidationism and, while plugging the "unity" line, securing the dissolution of the Bolshevik group and rejecting Lenin's line of fighting on two fronts, so as to assure the opportunists of leading positions within the Party. Trotsky's plan actually became the platform of the opportunists. Thus, a liquidator-Trotskyite bloc, supported by Zinoviev, Kamenev and other conciliators, took shape at the plenary meeting. It was "an unprincipled bloc against Party and principle".<sup>2</sup>

Lenin subjected the liquidationist essence of Trotsky's plan to relentless criticism, pointing out that Trotsky wanted to "unite" in the Party "the given persons, groups and institutions" regardless of their ideological-political line, the content of their work, or their attitude to liquidationism and otzovism, keeping silent about the differences, and doing nothing to expose their roots, their significance and the objective conditions of their origination. Lenin wrote: "The chief thing is to 'reconcile' persons and groups. If they do

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 420.

<sup>1</sup> L. Martov, *Spasiteli ili uprazdniteli?* (Saviours or Abolitionists?), Paris, 1911, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 226.



not agree on carrying out a common policy, that policy must be interpreted in such a way as to be acceptable to all. Live and let live. This is philistine 'conciliation', which inevitably leads to sectarian diplomacy. To 'stop up' the sources of disagreement, to keep silent about them, to 'adjust' 'conflicts' at all costs, to neutralise the conflicting trends—it is to this that the main attention of such 'conciliation' is directed."<sup>1</sup> At the plenary meeting, Lenin stood up for the revolutionary view of Party unity on a principled ideological basis, and on the basis of implacable struggle against every deviation from Marxism.

There was a protracted debate over the resolution on "The State of Affairs in the Party" which had been drafted by Lenin. In face of the fierce resistance of the liquidators and Trotskyites, he succeeded in scoring a victory on principle. The resolution adopted by the plenary meeting said that liquidationism and otzovism were manifestations of the bourgeois influence on the proletariat, although the terms "liquidationism" and "otzovism" were not actually spelled out in the text itself.

There was a debate involving principle over the clause of the resolution dealing with the struggle on two fronts, against the liquidators and the otzovists. "Nothing at the plenum aroused more furious—and often comical—indignation than the idea of a 'fight on two fronts'." Lenin wrote, "The very mention of this infuriated both the Vperyodists and the Mensheviks."<sup>2</sup> In an effort to slur over Lenin's clear-cut formulations, Trotsky motioned the insertion in the draft resolution of this hazy phrase: "Overcoming of both deviations through the extension and deepening of Social-Democratic work." After a long debate, the Mensheviks, who were supported by the Vperyodists, the Bundists and the conciliators, managed to force through Trotsky's proposal. Nevertheless, the plenary meeting recognised the need to struggle against "both deviations", and this was of exceptional importance.

The Party's tactical line for the period of reaction had been set out in the resolutions of the Fifth Conference of the RSDLP. The plenum was to confirm the main decisions of the Conference. Accordingly, the introductory part of Lenin's

draft resolution on "The State of Affairs in the Party" said: "In confirmation of the decisions of December 1908 and in pursuance of them." However, the Mensheviks flatly declared that they refused to vote for the resolution unless these words are deleted. Trotsky supported the liquidators. The resolution was adopted by a majority, without the words "in confirmation...".

Moreover, the Mensheviks managed to insert into the resolution a highly obscure and hazy point one, which said that Social-Democratic tactics had always been fundamentally coherent and always designed to achieve maximum results, and that the proletariat of Russia now had the first opportunity, by organising itself into a massive Social-Democratic Party, to apply this tactical method of international Social-Democracy consciously, systematically and consistently.<sup>1</sup>

Lenin opposed the inclusion of this clause in the resolution. He said: "In my draft of the resolution this point was totally absent and, with the rest of the *Proletary* editorial board, I most emphatically opposed it."<sup>2</sup> Point One of the resolution did not spell out the fundamental principles of Social-Democratic tactics, the immediate aims of the struggle or its methods, or the reasons for which the tactical line of the Social-Democrats remained unchanged. All this, said Lenin, turned Point One into "unnecessary and useless ballast".<sup>3</sup> Besides, the formula—that the conscious proletariat was being given the first opportunity of consciously applying the tactical method of international Social-Democracy—enabled the liquidators to interpret the whole clause as signifying the need to make use of reformist methods borrowed from the Social-Democratic parties of the West.

Immediately after the plenary meeting, the liquidators made use of this clause to argue that the illegal party was unnecessary. Their newspaper, *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, stressed that underground work "has had its day and will never be revived", and that the Russian labour movement had slowly but surely to develop "towards assimilating European forms".

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

<sup>1</sup> *GPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums*, Part I, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.



After a long and stubborn struggle, the resolution on "The State of Affairs in the Party" was passed unanimously. By means of numerous amendments, remarks and addenda, the liquidators and Trotsky had managed to delete many of its important provisions. The resolution rounded off the sharp corners and failed to answer a number of fundamental questions. Lenin gave an all-round critique of the conciliatory errors of this resolution after the plenum in his *Notes of a Publicist*, in which he proved it to be inconsistent, irresolute and amorphous. He traced all the intricacies of the struggle at the plenary meeting, characterising the stand taken by the Bolsheviks and by the Mensheviks on the questions debated, and giving a detailed analysis of the resolutions adopted.<sup>1</sup> Many prominent members of the Party supported Lenin's assessment of the plenum resolutions. On March 2, 1910, Felix Dzerzhinsky wrote to Z. Leder: "I do not like the CC resolution: it is vague—unclear. I do not believe in unifying the Party with Dan's participation. I think that before unification, the Mensheviks should be brought to a split, with the Dans, the now masked liquidators, expelled from a united Party beforehand."<sup>2</sup>

The January (1910) Plenary Meeting of the RSDLP Central Committee considered the question of calling a regular all-Party conference and adopted a decision to that effect. Despite a number of concessions to the liquidators and the Trotskyites, it was in line with the vital needs of the labour movement. Lenin wrote that the Conference would help to "vigorously promote the creation of a broader, more stable and more flexible proletarian basis for the future revolutionary battles".<sup>3</sup>

A sharp struggle developed at the plenary meeting on organisational matters. According to its decision, a collegium of CC members was to be set up in Russia with all the rights of the RSDLP Central Committee, while the activity of the CC Bureau Abroad was confined to publishing and purely technical functions. In this way, the centre of gravity of CC work was being transferred to Russia.

The establishment of a governing centre in Russia was a positive fact, because it brought the leadership closer to the

local Party organisations, helped to unite all the Party forces and made it possible to start active struggle against the anti-Party elements. However, the liquidators were intent on using this decision for their own purposes. By transferring the CC to Russia, they strove to weaken Lenin's influence on Party affairs in Russia, drain the CC Bureau Abroad of its strength, and bring the Russian Bureau within striking distance of the police. According to the pro-Party Menshevik Vasily Fomin, Dan had told Martynov at the plenum: "The reason why we are transferring the CC to Russia is because it will go down. That is just why we must insist on *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* remaining."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin wanted Bolsheviks and pro-Party Mensheviks to constitute the Party central organs, but the bloc of liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites rejected the proposal. On the CC Bureaus in Russia and Abroad the Mensheviks were represented by liquidators.

During the discussion of the membership of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* editorial board, the liquidators, Bundists, and Trotsky strove to "neutralise" the two opposed trends, without giving either an edge over the other, which made it possible to take the "middle-of-the-road" line on every occasion. The Mensheviks proposed Trotsky or a Bundist as a "neutraliser". Lenin wrote: "The Bundist or Trotsky was to play the part of a matchmaker who would undertake to 'unite in wedlock' 'given persons, groups and institutions', irrespective of whether one of the sides had renounced liquidationism or not."<sup>2</sup>

The Menshevik proposal was not passed. Trotsky's nomination was rejected, while that of the Bundist was not voted on at all. On the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Bolsheviks were represented by Lenin and Zinoviev, the Mensheviks, by Martov and Dan, and the Polish Social-Democrats, by Varsky, who was later replaced by Leder.

It was also decided to publish a "Discussion Collection" as a supplement to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, with an editorial board representing all existing trends in the Party, the non-Russian national Social-Democratic organisations, and the Bund.

At the insistence of the liquidators, and with the consent

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, pp. 195-259.

<sup>2</sup> F. E. Dzerzhinsky, *Izbrannye proizvedeniya* (Selected Works), Vol. 1, Moscow, 1967, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 155.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin *Miscellany XXV*, p. 83 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 213.



of Zinoviev, Kamenev and other conciliators, the plenum decided to extend material assistance to Trotsky's *Pravda*. Kamenev was appointed to its editorial board as CC representative. Any changes on the newspaper's editorial board were to be made only with the Central Committee's consent. Nevertheless, the Trotskyites failed to turn the Vienna *Pravda* into the organ of the RSDLP Central Committee, and the question was referred to the next Party conference.<sup>1</sup>

A great deal of harm was done to the Party by the plenum's decision to dissolve the Bolshevik faction, stop the publication of the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary* and hand the money belonging to the Bolsheviks partly to the RSDLP Central Committee and partly to "neutral holders"—the German Social-Democrats, Karl Kautsky, Clara Zetkin and Franz Mehring—for temporary safe-keeping. The latter were to return the money to the CC treasury within two years, provided the Mensheviks fulfilled the decisions of the January Plenum.

Lenin vigorously protested against the closure of *Proletary* and the hand-over of the Bolshevik funds to the "neutral holders". He insisted that the Mensheviks should also stop publishing their *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* and dissolve their factional centre. Under his pressure, the resolution "On Factional Centres" said that "the interests of the Party and of Party unity demand the closure of the newspaper *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* in the near future".<sup>2</sup>

Lenin did not believe that the agreement with the Mensheviks could last. Anticipating the Menshevik failure to fulfil the agreement, the Bolsheviks, on Lenin's initiative, issued a declaration at the plenum saying that in the event the Mensheviks refused to dissolve their factional centre, stop publishing *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, and promote the all-Party centres in Russia and abroad, the Bolsheviks reserved the right to demand the return of their money from the "holders" and the convocation of a plenum of the Party's Central Committee.<sup>3</sup> Lenin's foresight was entirely justified: the Mensheviks failed to fulfil any of the CC plenum decisions.

<sup>1</sup> CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums, Part I, pp. 240-41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 241-43.

Thus, the January (1910) Plenary Meeting of the RSDLP Central Committee adopted a number of decisions which were shot through with the spirit of Centrism and were aimed to undermine Bolshevik influence in the Party. Some of its decisions were designed not only to weaken but virtually to liquidate the Bolshevik Party. The plenum failed to solve—and under the existing relation of forces could not have solved—the main task: real Party unity. In 1911, Lenin said that the plenum's erroneous decisions had drained the Party of its strength for at least a year.<sup>1</sup>

An anti-Party bloc, finally formalised at the August 1912 Conference of liquidators, was in fact formed at the plenum. On the whole, the plenum decisions were in the nature of a compromise. Because of the relation of forces at the plenum, which was unfavourable to the Bolsheviks, Lenin had to make a number of minor concessions. He considered it possible and necessary to do this in order to safeguard the principled line, "provided the line of the Party was not thereby undermined, provided these concessions did not lead to the negation of that line, provided these concessions paved the way for bringing people back from liquidationism and otzovizm to the Party".<sup>2</sup>

In his articles "Towards Unity", "Notes of a Publicist", "The New Faction of Conciliators, or the Virtuous" and others, Lenin gave a truly Marxist assessment of the plenum decisions. In the last named article, he noted that the plenum's merit was "the rejection of the ideas of liquidationism and otzovizm; its mistake was the agreement concluded indiscriminately with persons and groups whose deeds are not in accordance with their promises..."<sup>3</sup>

Kamenev, Zinoviev and other conciliators played a disgraceful role at the plenum, helping Trotsky to force through decisions suitable to the liquidators. Lenin sharply criticised the conciliators for allowing Trotsky to lead them, and for supporting his "unificatory" efforts. A great deal of harm was done to the Party by the conciliationist spirit which prevailed at the plenum. Unity, about which the conciliators had talked so much, was possible only on the basis of Marxist principle, and not of unprincipled arrangements with the liquidators and Trotskyites.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 443.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 16, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 266.



Very soon the conciliation trend collapsed altogether, and with it the decisions of the January (1910) Plenum, which Lenin had called "idiotic", "fatal".<sup>1</sup> He pointed out: "The conciliationist mistake of the Plenary Meeting quite inevitably brought about the failure of its conciliatory decisions."<sup>2</sup> After the January Plenum the struggle within the Party, far from stopping, was in fact further sharpened.

The opportunists were delighted with the plenum's decisions. On February 20, 1910, Axelrod wrote to Potresov: "We have scored a great moral victory."<sup>3</sup> The liquidationist *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* wrote just after the plenum: "After the decisions taken by the CC, the 'war against the liquidators' can be regarded ... as a past stage of development."

The ink of the plenum's decisions on the Vienna *Pravda* was hardly dry, when Trotsky was already inquiring from Kamenev when he could go to Paris for "talks about the size of the subsidy and—what is most important—for its immediate receipt".<sup>4</sup> In his article, "Onto the Party Path", he said the plenum's decisions were a "remarkable fact" and "pure gold of scientific socialism". Trotsky's *Pravda* sang the praises of the plenum's decisions which suited the liquidators, but said nothing at all about its condemnation of liquidationism and otzovism or the struggle against liquidationism in general.

Just after the plenum, the liquidators abroad published a regular issue of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* which set out what was virtually a programme for fighting against the illegal Party. In an "Open Letter" 16 Menshevik liquidators demanded that the Party should switch the centre of its work to the legal organisations, opposed the bloc of Bolsheviks and pro-Party Mensheviks, and called for a disbandment of underground organisations. Articles by Martov, Dan and S. Novich carried by the paper abounded in slanderous attacks against the Bolsheviks and backed up liquidationism.

At the same time, four editors of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*—Axelrod, Dan, Martov and Martynov—issued a separate leaflet with a liquidators' manifesto, under the title of "Let-

ter to Our Comrades". They demanded abolition of the illegal Party and immediate convocation of a liquidators' conference to set up a reformist party. Lenin said the "Letter to Our Comrades" and the whole issue of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* were a "bomb intended to disrupt the Party immediately after the unity plenum".<sup>1</sup>

Thus, after the January Plenum, the Mensheviks came out with a much more open and uninhibited defence of liquidationism than ever before. With the support of the liquidators abroad and the Trotskyites, the Mensheviks set up an opportunist centre in Russia headed by Potresov, Cherevanin, Levitsky, and Maslov, and launched a subversive campaign against the Party's governing organs. In January 1910, the liquidators in Russia began to publish their legal journal *Nasha Zarya*, which openly preached *Uekhi* ideas.<sup>2</sup> Lenin called the journal "Nashi pomoi" (our slops).

Contrary to the plenum's decisions, the Mensheviks did everything to hamper the work of the CC Bureau in Russia. The Mensheviks I. Isuv (Mikhail), P. Bronstein (Yuri) and K. Yermolayev (Roman) declared that they regarded as harmful not only the plenum's decisions but the very existence of the CC. They refused not only to work on the CC, but even to attend a single one of its meetings called for the purpose of co-opting new members.<sup>3</sup> Members of the CC Bureau in Russia, the conciliators Dubrovinsky and Goldenberg (Meshkovsky), and, after their arrest, Nogin and Leiteizen (Lindov), carried on endless negotiations with the liquidators on organising the CC, but never got anywhere.

At the same time, the Mensheviks strove to frustrate the work of the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Party's Central Organ. Martov and Dan did everything to prevent the publication of Lenin's articles in the newspaper. Thus, in editing two of Lenin's articles for its No. 12, there was a fight for "almost every word",<sup>4</sup> wrote Varsky. The struggle on the

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Uekhi* (Milestones)—a collection of articles by Cadet publicists (1909) aimed against Marxism and the 1905-07 revolution. Lenin said it was "an encyclopaedia of liberal renegation ... a whole torrent of slops poured on democracy".

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 162.

<sup>4</sup> R. A. Yermolayeva, "Noviye materialy o borbe V. I. Lenina za ukrepleniye partii" (New Material on V. I. Lenin's Struggle to Consolidate the Party), *Uoprosy istorii KPSS* (Questions of CPSU History) No. 5, 1960, p. 175.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 443.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup> *Sotsial-demokraticheskoye dvizheniye v Rossii* (The Social-Democratic Movement in Russia), Part I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1928, p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 280/1/37789/1.



editorial board of the Central Organ became so acute that in early May 1910, Lenin sent the RSDLP Central Committee a letter demanding Martov's and Dan's replacement by pro-Party Mensheviks.<sup>1</sup>

After the plenum, the Party was also attacked by the Vperyodists. In May 1910, they published a slanderous leaflet entitled "To Comrade Bolsheviks", then broke with *Diskussionny Listok*, and in November 1910, set up their own factional school at Bologna (Italy).

The Trotskyites gave every support to the bloc of liquidators and Vperyodists. The Vienna *Pravda* carried one article after another urging unity with the liquidators in the localities. With the Mensheviks torpedoing all the plenum decisions, Trotsky insisted that a "great step forward" had been made, and kept calling for unity. The Trotskyite *Pravda* defended the statement by the 16 Menshevik liquidators and the manifesto of the four *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* editors. In an article in its No. 12 entitled "Towards Unity—Over Every Obstacle", it declared that it was unable and unwilling to join in the discussion of conflicts, because it was not in possession of the facts. It said Lenin's article, "*Golos* (Voice) of the Liquidators Against the Party", which exposed the anti-Party policy of the *Golos* people, was "extremely sharp". In his article, "One of the Obstacles to Party Unity", Lenin gave a withering critique of the anti-Party stand taken by the Trotskyite *Pravda*, and said that it was bringing grist to the liquidators' mill.

On April 17, 1910, the Vienna Club, consisting mainly of Trotsky's supporters, passed an anti-Party resolution. Pretending to be "nonfactional", they defended the liquidators, accused the Bolsheviks of wrecking the decisions of the January CC Plenum, and called for unity with the liquidators and otzovists. Lenin wrote: "Trotsky's (the Viennese) resolution only differs outwardly from the 'effusions' of Axelrod and Alexinsky. It is drafted very 'cautiously' and lays claim to 'above faction' fairness. But what is its meaning? The 'Bolshevik leaders' are to blame for everything—this is the same 'philosophy of history' as that of Axelrod and Alexinsky."<sup>2</sup> In practice, Trotsky's conciliation was a fraud upon the workers and, said Lenin, "the more dangerous to the

Party the more cunningly, artfully and rhetorically it cloaks itself with professedly pro-Party, professedly anti-factional declamations".<sup>1</sup>

In the struggle against the Bolsheviks after the January Plenum, Trotsky received continued support from his allies Kamenev and Zinoviev. Soon after the plenum, the Second (Bolshevik) Group for the promotion of the RSDLP held a meeting in Paris. A. Grechnev-Chernov, who was there, recalled that in his speech Lenin showed up the unseemly role played by Kamenev and Zinoviev at the January Plenum of the CC. Analysing the plenum's resolutions, Lenin said he doubted that they could be realised.<sup>2</sup>

Kamenev, who gave a report about the plenum, stood up for the conciliators' position and insisted on the fulfilment of all the plenum's decisions without fail. He was in a hurry to go to Vienna for joint work there with Trotsky. Lenin warned Kamenev: "I do not see any possibility of carrying on fruitful work with the liquidators, on the Right and on the Left, especially with Trotsky, but I do not object to your going to Vienna to give you a chance to see for yourself that I am right."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, this was fully borne out by subsequent events.

In his capacity as the CC representative on the editorial board of the Vienna *Pravda*, Kamenev followed a double-dealing policy. He tried to exert pressure on the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat* to have it delay its attack against the Trotskyite *Pravda*. In Kamenev's opinion, the issue of the Vienna *Pravda* devoted to the January Plenum of the RSDLP Central Committee quite explicitly emphasised its determination to work hand in hand with the CC. Actually, however, the articles dealing with the plenum said nothing at all about the struggle against liquidationism. On March 31, 1910, Lenin wrote to Kamenev: "I must say that Trotsky is behaving in a most dastardly manner in *Pravda* No. 10, don't you think?"<sup>4</sup> Kamenev, for his part, assured Lenin that it was necessary and useful for the Bolsheviks to co-operate with Trotsky, and that the latter did not feel at all nostalgic about liquidationism.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> O. Uladimire Ilyiche Lenine. *Vospominaniya. 1900-1922* (About Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Reminiscences. 1900-1922), Moscow, 1963, p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 47, p. 240.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, pp. 191-94.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 209-10.



Kamenev's statements were soon refuted by life itself. In No. 14 of the Trotskyite newspaper, there was a "Letter from *Pravda* to Thinking Workers", which openly stood up for liquidationism. The Bolsheviks exposed the anti-Party activity of the liquidators and otzovists after the plenum, and demanded that the Party should be purged of them. In response, the Trotskyite *Pravda* wrote: "This is a false and, let us add, most harmful standpoint. Its application in practice would mean the Party's total sterilisation and demoralisation." The Trotskyite newspaper did not call for a struggle against the liquidators, but for collaboration with them, arguing that the epoch of illegal organisations was over and that "there should now be reliance only on open, legal forms of class struggle".

To prevent his own exposure as a supporter of overt anti-Party action, Kamenev handed in, on August 13, 1910, his resignation from the editorial board of the Vienna *Pravda*. Trotsky, for his part, desirous of being free of any control by the Central Committee, jumped at Kamenev's resignation and, contrary to the decision of the January Plenum, let him go without the CC's consent. Thus, the course of events itself unmasked Trotsky as "unifier" and "conciliator", who was in fact carrying on anti-Party activity aimed against the Bolsheviks in defence of the enemies of the revolutionary Party of the working class.

After the January Plenum, Trotsky continued his efforts to knock together a bloc of all the anti-Bolshevik forces and established even closer ties with the *Uperyod* anti-Party group. Ignoring the plenum's decisions, he went to the *Uperyod* anti-Party school at Bologna to negotiate on joint struggle against the Bolsheviks. A. V. Lunacharsky later wrote that during his stay there, Trotsky was "extremely loyal to us [i.e., Vperyodists.—*Authors.*]"<sup>1</sup> He made all sorts of advances to the students of the *Uperyod* school in an effort to win them over to his side. In his speeches, he continued to slander the Bolsheviks.<sup>2</sup> However, Trotsky failed. One stu-

dent, T. Krivov, recalled: "At the time, Trotsky arrived with his own platform—unification of all factions, ranging from the liquidators to the so-called *Uperyod* Bolsheviks. Most of the students, especially those from the Urals, opposed this platform and rejected Trotsky's proposal."<sup>3</sup>

While at Bologna, Trotsky made arrangements with the *Uperyod* people to hold a conference aimed against the Bolsheviks. Exposing Trotsky's adventurist policy, Lenin wrote at the beginning of January 1911, as follows: "In defiance of the direct decision of the School Commission appointed by the Plenary Meeting to the effect that no Party lecturer may go to the *Uperyod* factional school, Judas Trotsky did go and discussed a plan for a conference with the *Uperyod* group. This plan has now been published by the *Uperyod* group in a leaflet.

"And it is this Judas who beats his breast and loudly professes his loyalty to the Party, claiming that he did not grovel before the *Uperyod* group and the liquidators.

"Such is Judas Trotsky's blush of shame."<sup>4</sup>

At the end of 1910, with the Party plunged in a state of grave crisis by the liquidators' disorganising activity, the Trotskyites decided to put paid to the decisions of the January Plenum and to make final organisational arrangements for bringing all the anti-Party elements into a single bloc. Without the authority of the Central Committee and in circumvention of it, Trotsky announced the convocation of a Party conference. The Vienna Club met on November 26, 1910, to hear Trotsky's report, which abounded in malicious attacks on the Bolsheviks, their *Rabochaya Gazeta*, and their bloc with the pro-Party Mensheviks. At the same time, Trotsky insistently urged the meeting to work in concert with the liquidators, arguing that the Party could not be developed without the liquidators. He added: "Even allowing that the liquidators should be crushed, this cannot be done because no one is strong enough to do it. . . . Only the liquidators are

<sup>1</sup> A. V. Lunacharsky, *Velikiy perevorot* (The Great Revolution), Petrograd, 1919, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Trotsky told the students that Bolshevism as a political trend would soon leave the stage. In December 1910, he wrote from Bologna to his friends in Vienna: "The fight is going to be a great one—and in it Lenin will be slain" (Central Party Archives of the Institute of

Marxism-Leninism, 280/2/21036). This fact gives further evidence against the bourgeois falsifiers of CPSU history, who allege that Trotsky was not an enemy of the Bolshevik Party or its leader Lenin. Actually, at every stage of its history, Trotsky's attitude was characterised by hatred for Lenin and Leninism and the Bolshevik Party.

<sup>3</sup> *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 3(50), 1926, p. 138.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 45.



now operating on the political stage, which is why they must be cherished, supported and joined."<sup>1</sup>

The resolution adopted by the Vienna Club called for the establishment of a fund for preparing and conducting an "all-Party" conference. In a letter to the Karpinskys, Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote: "What a swindler, you will pardon the expression, this Trotsky is. On November 26, he put through the Vienna Club (consisting mainly of Trotskyites) a resolution against *Rabochaya Gazeta*. The end of the resolution ... also speaks about a conference. Trotsky is now fully backing this gamble."<sup>2</sup>

Immediately after the meeting, the Trotskyites started practical preparations for the conference. On December 25, 1910, they set up a Vienna Committee for calling the conference, on which were the Trotskyite Semkovsky and four liquidators.<sup>3</sup> Trotsky spoke before a number of Menshevik organisations abroad, calling for the establishment of committees for convening the conference, and had talks with the *Golos* followers, the Vperyodists, and the Bundists about participating in the conference. The Trotskyites tried to get the non-Russian national Social-Democratic organisations to attend. They sent the Vienna Club's resolution and a circular letter to Russia demanding the election of delegates to the conference.

The Bolsheviks in Russia and abroad resolutely opposed the Trotskyite gamble. In December 1910, Lenin wrote his "Letter to the Russian Collegium of the Central Committee of the RSDLP" and an article, "The State of Affairs in the Party", in which he gave a devastating critique of the Trotskyites' anti-Party activity. Trotsky's main aim, said Lenin, was "to destroy the central bodies so detested by the liquidators, and with them, the Party as an organisation".<sup>4</sup> He said the Trotskyite action was ideological, party-political and organisational adventurism designed to split the Party. Trotsky rallied all the enemies of Marxism and all those who favoured ideological disintegration, whereas the Party's real unity was possible only on condition of a resolute break with

liquidationism and otzovism. Trotsky was rallying the liquidators and the otzovists, and deceiving the Party and the proletariat. The conference was being prepared apart from the Central Committee and without its permission, which meant a split in the Party.

Lenin declared that the bloc Trotsky was putting together was doomed to fail as an unprincipled association. He urged the Party to act resolutely against the Trotskyite gamble. In his "Letter to the Russian Collegium of the Central Committee of the RSDLP" he set the Party these three main tasks:

"1. Strengthen and support the unification and rallying the Plekhanov's supporters and the Bolsheviks for the defence of Marxism, for a rebuff to ideological confusion, and for the battle against liquidationism and otzovism.

"2. Struggle for a plenary meeting—for a legal solution to the Party crisis.

"3. Struggle against the splitting tactics and the unprincipled adventurism of Trotsky in banding Potresov and Maximov [Bogdanov.—*Authors.*] against Social-Democracy."<sup>1</sup>

These tasks met with warm support from local Party organisations, which flatly rejected the Trotskyites' anti-Party pretensions. Having discussed the Vienna Club's resolution, the RSDLP's Don Committee strongly protested over the convocation of the conference. Its decision said that the Party's main task was to work for the organisational strengthening of Social-Democratic organisations in the localities and restoration of the CC in Russia. It was up to the restored CC to call a conference and, in the event it could not be restored, the conference should be called by the Party's Central Organ.<sup>2</sup>

On behalf of the Don Committee, Prokofy Japaridze, who was then in Rostov-on-Don, wrote an "Open Letter to the Editorial Board of the Vienna *Pravda*", sharply criticising the Trotskyites' anti-Party schemes. He said that the conference the Trotskyites were calling was a criminal act with respect to the Party, because it would lead to a split, which is why it was "in our eyes (and not only in our eyes, but in those of all local organisations and groups) not going

<sup>1</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 29/12/19262/6.6 rev.

<sup>2</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 29/6/37745/1.3 rev.

<sup>3</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, January 13 (26), 1911. Supplement.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 23.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, March 19 (April 2), 1911.



to have any significance and cannot carry any authority". Japaridze advised the Vienna *Pravda* not to start any undertakings it had not been authorised to handle.<sup>2</sup>

On December 20, 1910, the RSDLP's Tsaritsyn Organisation received an invitation from the editorial board of the Vienna *Pravda* to attend the conference under preparation. The Tsaritsyn Bolsheviks replied by writing to the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, saying that Social-Democratic workers regarded as their main task the struggle against otzovism, specifically liquidationism, which "is the most harmful chaff in the Party field". The letter went on: "The *Pravda* men would benefit from the knowledge that the Social-Democratic workers have already outgrown the state in which they could be given lofty instructions from on high. . . . They no longer take anything on trust, and demand proof of the worth of everything they are offered."<sup>3</sup>

In a letter to Leon Tyszka, Felix Dzerzhinsky demanded that the governing board of the Social-Democracy of Poland and Lithuania should withhold all support for the Trotskyite *Pravda* and should expose Trotsky's intrigues on the pages of the Party's Central Organ. He wrote: "It is time these gas-bags were deflated. Their disregard of the ideological struggle against liquidationism, their pretentious posturing about their 'work', which I believe to be the rending of air, are doing the Party a great deal of damage. What is more, their latest resolution, which you have sent me, is downright disrupting."<sup>4</sup>

Trotsky's adventurist enterprise was resolutely condemned by members of the CC Bureau Abroad, the Bolshevik Nikolai Semashko, and the Polish Social-Democrat S. Goldenberg ("Stanislawa"). When the liquidator B. Goldman (Gorev) proposed, on behalf of the Bureau Abroad, the adoption of a resolution welcoming the Vienna Club's decision to call an "all-Party" conference, Semashko wrote an official letter to the CC Bureau Abroad vigorously protesting against

this proposal and calling the Trotskyite decision "an adventurist attempt by a circle abroad".<sup>1</sup> On January 4, 1911, Tyszka wrote to Goldenberg about the Trotskyite resolution saying that it was "not only downright impertinence, but also a disorganising step".<sup>2</sup>

The Vienna Club's resolution was also opposed by the pro-Party Mensheviks. Plekhanov said that it fanned "the flames of division", adding that it was a characteristic specimen of "literature" which "leaves nothing in the heads of readers, except the heavy hangover of intrigue".<sup>3</sup> Trotsky's gamble collapsed under concerted blows by the Bolsheviks and the pro-Party Mensheviks.

The splitting activity of the liquidators and the Trotskyites after the January Plenum showed that they were driving for complete destruction of the revolutionary Party in an effort to divert the labour movement into the channel of liberal bourgeois politics in a struggle for reform. The bloc of liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites had prevented the fulfilment of the decisions taken by the January Plenum and was shamelessly destroying the Party. This was a real conspiracy against the Party.

The situation was complicated by the fact that the Party virtually had no efficient governing centre. The Mensheviks' treacherous behaviour had prevented the calling of the CC Bureau in Russia, while the liquidators and conciliators had a majority on the Bureau Abroad. In a letter to Rykov, in February 1911, Lenin wrote: "By *captivating* them, by handing them over *into the hands* of the liquidators, the 1.10 Plenum put a brake on the work of the centres *for a year*."<sup>4</sup> The struggle for the Party spirit, in face of stubborn resistance by the liquidators, was being carried on only by the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat* on whose editorial board Lenin played the leading part.

The Bolsheviks could not be held responsible for the anti-Party activity of the liquidators and the otzovists who were being encouraged by Trotsky. Lenin saw a way out of the grave crisis through which the Party was going in the con-

<sup>1</sup> P. A. Japaridze, *Izbranniye statyi, rechi i pisma. 1905-1918* (Selected Articles, Speeches and Letters), Moscow, 1958, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Partiya bolshevikov v gody novogo revolyutsionnogo pod'yema (1910-1914 gody). Dokumenty i materialy* (The Bolshevik Party During the Fresh Revolutionary Upsurge, 1910-1914. Documents and Materials), Moscow, 1962, p. 337.

<sup>4</sup> F. E. Dzerzhinsky, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 241.

<sup>1</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 17/1/931/1 rev.

<sup>2</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 17/1/935/36 rev.

<sup>3</sup> G. V. Plekhanov, *op. cit.*, vol. XIX, p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 48, p. 16.



# LENIN'S PARTY IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKYISM DURING THE FRESH REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE. COLLAPSE OF THE TROTSKYITES' "UNITY" GAMBLE

## 1. Historic Significance of the Decisions of the RSDLP's Prague Conference on Purging the Party of Opportunists

Reaction was rampant in Russia for more than three years. But it was unable to stamp out the people's urge for liberation from tsarism and capitalism. By the middle of 1910 came the first signs of a new revolutionary upturn. In the summer and autumn of that year, the country was swept by a tide of strikes and demonstrations, while the peasants intensified their struggle against the landowners. "The 'revival', of which everyone is talking," Lenin wrote, "is a symptom of a fresh upsurge of the revolution."<sup>1</sup>

The Party had to give a lead to the mounting revolutionary movement. This called, above all, for an end to the grave crisis which the RSDLP was going through as a result of the policies of the liquidators, Trotskyites and other opportunists. There was need to call an all-Party conference, restore the Party's central governing organs, defeat the opportunists, purge the Party of them, and consolidate the unity of Party ranks.

The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, worked with inexhaustible energy to consolidate the Party, which had been weakened by the opportunists in the years of reaction. Lenin wrote: "Only Bolshevism, which is alien to waverings either to the left or to the right, can bring the Party out on to the high road."<sup>2</sup>

Despite police harassment and the disorganising activity of the opportunists, the local Party organisations worked steadily among the masses of the working people to strengthen

vocation abroad of a new plenary meeting of the CC, which the Bolsheviks believed would create efficient governing organs for the Party, which would in turn bring together all the true Party forces and would prepare an all-Russia Party conference. "The struggle for the plenary meeting," Lenin wrote, "is a struggle for a legal way out, a struggle for the Party. The fight of the *Golos* group against the plenary meeting is a fight against a Party way out of the crisis, is a fight against legality."<sup>1</sup>

On December 5, 1910, the Bolsheviks sent in an application to the RSDLP CC Bureau Abroad in which they demanded, in accordance with the decisions of the January Plenum, immediate convocation of a CC plenum. In January 1911, Lenin sent a letter to the Central Committee, pointing out that since the agreement concluded at the January Plenum had been torpedoed by the liquidators, the Bolsheviks considered themselves free to fight the anti-Party elements.<sup>2</sup> Exposing the conspiracy against the Party, Lenin declared: "The formalistic game of 'inviting' the Golosists and Trotskyites on to the central bodies is finally reducing to impotence the already weakened pro-Party elements. Divesting ourselves of responsibility for this game, we shall, while keeping aloof from it, pursue our pro-Party policy of rapprochement with the Plekhanovites and ruthless struggle against the bloc."<sup>3</sup>

The course of events showed that the liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites were the Party's bitterest enemies, and that no sort of unity with them was possible. Lenin saw the purging of the Party of these anti-Party elements as the important task ahead. He called on all those who cherished the Party's interests to close their ranks, to "rally the scattered forces, and go into battle for an RSDLP Party purged of those who spread bourgeois influence among the proletariat."<sup>4</sup> This task was to be fulfilled by the conference the decision on whose convocation was taken by the January (1910) Plenum of the RSDLP Central Committee.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 16, p. 365.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 366-67.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 216.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, p. 244.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 36, p. 184.



the bloc of Bolsheviks and pro-Party Mensheviks, which was based on principle, and resolutely fought against all the anti-Party elements. All over the country, the Party forces were in the process of consolidation.

In those years, the Bolshevik press played a very important role in the Party's cohesion. The first issue of the illegal Bolshevik newspaper, *Rabochaya Gazeta*, appeared in Paris on October 30 (November 12), 1910. Lenin was its editor and guiding spirit. Among those who worked on it were Nadezhda Krupskaya, Sofia Gopner, Prokofy Japaridze, Nikolai Semashko and Stepan Shaumyan. *Rabochaya Gazeta* did a great deal to strengthen the Party's unity and to expose the liquidators, the otzovists and the Trotskyites. It was very popular among the workers, with a circulation reaching 6,000 copies. In 1910-12, *Rabochaya Gazeta* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* were delivered to 356 addresses at 125 points in Russia.<sup>1</sup>

On the pages of the Vienna *Pravda*, Trotsky started a campaign against *Rabochaya Gazeta*, urging the workers to boycott this Party press organ. The Trotskyites were especially indignant over the fact that *Rabochaya Gazeta* had as its "main slogan internal Party struggle on two fronts".<sup>2</sup> In December 1910, Lenin wrote his article "On the State of Affairs in the Party", exposing Trotsky's hostile sallies against *Rabochaya Gazeta*, which had become a militant assistant of the Party organisations in their efforts to unite the Party.

December 1910 saw the appearance of the legal Bolshevik journal *Mysl* in Moscow, and at the end of 1911, of the journal *Prosveshcheniye* in St. Petersburg. A major event was the publication of the legal newspaper *Zvezda*, whose first issue appeared in St. Petersburg on December 16, 1910. Among those who worked on it were Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich, Nikolai Poletayev, Mikhail Olminsky, K. Yermeyev, Suren Spandaryan, Joseph Stalin, Maxim Gorky and Demyan Bedny. Under Lenin's guidance, the newspaper *Zvezda*, and the journals *Mysl* and *Prosveshcheniye* became propagandists of the RSDLP's revolutionary programme and tactics, and played an important role in the political educa-

tion of the working class. They helped to spread revolutionary theory and revolutionary slogans, consolidate the ties between the local Party organisations and the Bolshevik centre abroad, expose the anti-Party activity of the liquidators and the Trotskyites, and promote the unity of the Party ranks.

Lenin believed that the most important condition for enhancing the Party's combat efficiency was the training of staunch, theoretically well-grounded revolutionaries from among the working class, capable of giving a lead in massive revolutionary action and fighting the opportunists. The solution of this task was largely promoted by the all-Party school organised by the Bolsheviks at Longjumeau near Paris. Students at the school consisted of representatives of Party organisations from Russia's proletarian centres, and were not only Bolsheviks, but also pro-Party Mensheviks, and representatives of the Polish Social-Democrats, etc.<sup>1</sup>

At the school, Lenin gave 56 lectures, a report on the present situation and the state of affairs in the Party. Lenin's lectures were profoundly scientific and were closely tied in with the practice of revolutionary struggle in Russia. Those who graduated from the school carried on a successful struggle to unite the Party organisations in Russia and to prepare an all-Party conference.

The all-Party conference was to bring together all the true Party forces, and to purge the Party of opportunists. In February 1910, Lenin wrote that the conference should be called "first of all, immediately and at all costs".<sup>2</sup> There was need for a plenary meeting of the Party's CC to decide on the work of the Party centres, to cut short the splitting activity of the liquidators and the Trotskyites and pass a decision to convene an all-Party conference. As early as December 5, 1910, the Bolsheviks had demanded a plenary meeting abroad. But this legitimate demand was rejected by the liquidators and the Trotskyites.

Making use of their majority on the CC Bureau Abroad and sabotaging the work of the CC Bureau in Russia, the liquidators and their allies did everything to break up the Party organisations. The Bolsheviks exposed the opportunist character of the activity carried on by the Bureau Abroad

<sup>1</sup> *Rabochii klass i rabocheye dvizheniye v Rossii 1861-1917* (The Working Class and the Labour Movement in Russia, 1861-1917), Moscow, 1966, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> *Revolutsiya i RKP(B) v materialakh i dokumentakh* (The Revolution and the RCP(B) in Materials and Documents), Vol. 5, Moscow, 1924, p. 304.

<sup>1</sup> *Istorichesky Arkhiv* (Historical Archives) No. 5, 1962, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 155.



and broke with this anti-Party establishment. On May 14(27), 1911, N. A. Semashko, representing the Bolsheviks, made an official announcement of his withdrawal from that body.

Because the CC Bureau in Russia was virtually non-existent, while the Bureau Abroad ignored the Bolsheviks' demands for an immediate convocation of a CC plenum, the Bolsheviks, together with the Polish Social-Democrats, took urgent steps to call a plenipotentiary meeting of RSDLP Central Committee members to decide on the convocation of a Party conference.

On May 14(27), 1911, Lenin sent, on behalf of five members of the CC, to all CC members who were then abroad, a letter inviting them to attend the meeting.<sup>1</sup> It was held in Paris from May 28 (June 10) to June 4 (17), 1911. It was directed by Lenin, who gave a "Report on the State of Affairs in the Party".<sup>2</sup> The convocation of an all-Party conference was the central question at the meeting. Because it was impossible to call a CC plenum right away, the meeting took the initiative to call the Sixth All-Russia Party Conference. The decision taken on this question said that the convocation of an all-Party conference was now made urgent by the imminent elections to the Fourth Duma, the revival of the labour movement, and the state of affairs in the Party.<sup>3</sup> An Organising Commission Abroad was set up to carry out the preparatory work for calling the conference, and a Technical Commission Abroad to cater to the needs of the Party press and to provide transport facilities.

The Organising Commission Abroad got representatives of local Party organisations in Russia to take part in preparing the conference, with the task of setting up a Russian collegium as soon as possible. Lenin believed that the centre for preparing the conference should be in Russia and should be duly independent.

The conciliators attending the meeting proposed that the representatives of the Trotskyite *Pravda*, the *Üperiyod* group, the Bund and other groups abroad should be invited to work on the Organising Commission Abroad. Lenin strongly objected to this proposal, saying that these groups were "ca-

pable only of acting *against* the Party, only of *slowing down* its work, only of helping the independent legalist labour party or the otzovists".<sup>4</sup>

The June Meeting of CC members played a great part in uniting all the Party forces for the struggle against the liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites, and in preparing an all-Party conference. The decisions of the June Meeting were unanimously supported by the Party organisations in Russia and the Bolsheviks living abroad.

But they were met with hostility by the liquidators, otzovists and Trotskyites. Martov and Dan withdrew from the *Sotsial-Demokrat* editorial board, announcing their refusal to work together with the Bolsheviks. After their withdrawal, there was not a single central Party establishment on which the Bolsheviks were working together with the liquidators. In November 1911, the conciliator Leder, representing the Polish Social-Democrats, left the editorial board of the Central Organ. From then on, the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat* became fully Bolshevik.

In view of the decisions taken by the June Meeting of CC members, Trotsky launched another slanderous campaign. The Trotskyite *Pravda* called these decisions "Bona-partism", "usurpation", "seizure of power", "split", etc. The paper wrote that it held the Bolsheviks' internal Party policy to be "deeply mistaken". On June 17, 1911, the Trotskyite Vienna Club passed a resolution recognising the opportunist CC Bureau Abroad as the only all-Party establishment, and promising it "full moral sympathy and assistance".<sup>2</sup> In addition, the editorial board of the Trotskyite *Pravda* gave financial assistance to the CC Bureau Abroad and urged that an organising committee should be set up at once to convene an "all-Party" conference without the Bolsheviks.

On August 20-23, 1911, the liquidators and the Trotskyites convened a meeting at Bern which they called their "meeting under the CC Bureau Abroad". It was Dan and Trotsky who set the tone at the meeting, which adopted an appeal, "To All Party Members", aimed against the decisions of the June Meeting and urging that an organising committee should be set up in Russia to convene a liquidationist conference. However, the Party organisations in Rus-

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin Miscellany XXV*, p. 80 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, pp. 233-37.

<sup>3</sup> *CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums*, Part I, p. 248.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> *Listok "Golosa Sotsial-Demokrata"*, June 25, 1911.



sia turned their backs on the opportunists, and the latter failed to set up an organising committee.

The Trotskyites were backed by only a small section of the conciliators abroad, who had no support among Party organisations in Russia. After the June Meeting, the conciliators abroad (among them Miron Vladimirov, Solomon Lozovsky and A. Lyubimov) formed a group of so-called pro-Party Bolsheviks. They set out their platform in a special leaflet, entitled "To All Members of the RSDLP", in which they accused the Bolsheviks of splitting the Party and urged that a conference should be convened at all costs on the basis of unity of all trends in the Party, i.e., virtually on the basis of the Trotskyite plan for "uniting" one and all. The "pro-Party Bolshevik" group subsequently began to publish their own newspaper *Za Partiyu* abroad, and together with the Plekhanovites, another, called *Yedinstvo*, in Russia.

In his work, "The New Faction of Conciliators, or the Virtuous", published in October 1911 in the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*, Lenin subjected the platform of the Paris conciliators to obliterating criticism, demonstrating that there was no difference between the conciliators and the Trotskyites, because neither had anything in common with the Bolsheviks. "In every single proposition," Lenin noted, "the alleged Bolsheviks (who in reality are *inconsistent* Trotskyites) echo Trotsky's mistakes."<sup>1</sup> Lenin stressed the menace of conciliationism and called on the Bolsheviks to rally all their forces in the struggle for an early conference.

Because the Bolsheviks appointed to the Organising Commission Abroad were unable to arrive from Russia, the conciliators took over the Organising Commission and the Technical Commission Abroad, and did everything to hamper preparations for a Party conference. Under the pretext of "rallying together" all factions, they demanded a break-up of the bloc of Bolsheviks and pro-Party Mensheviks. They went to the extent of refusing to issue any money to the Bolsheviks for Party work, including the publication of *Sotsial-Demokrat*. Osip Pyatnitsky, who was then in charge of the transport of literature from abroad to Russia, wrote: "Leva [Vladimirov.—*Authors.*], member of the Technical Commission, demanded that I should not dispatch *Sotsial-Demokrat* to Russia, while proposing that I should send

*Informatsionny Byulleten* which the Technical Commission Abroad had started to publish. . . . When he realised that I was not going to stop to dispatch *Sotsial-Demokrat* to Russia, he told me that the Technical Commission was stopping the issue of money for transport."<sup>1</sup>

The conciliators' efforts to frustrate the work of the Bolsheviks in preparing the conference failed. Just after the June Meeting, Grigory Orjonikidze (Sergo), I. Shvarts (Semyon) and B. Breslav (Zakhar) were sent to Russia as authorised agents to establish a Russian Organising Commission. Wherever they came, Party organisations were reestablished, Party work was started and preparations for the conference carried on.

The Trotskyites tried to prevent the establishment of a Russian Organising Commission. They spread all sorts of inventions about it, in an effort to get local Party workers to think that the Bolsheviks were trying to convene a factional conference, that they were denying the use of all legal work, and looking down on workers in the legal organisations.

The Trotskyites tried to persuade the pro-Party Mensheviks to give up their work in the Russian Organising Commission and to take part in preparing a liquidationist conference which they presented as an "all-Party" one. To carry on their disorganising tactics, the Trotskyites recruited all the elements who were most hostile to Bolshevism. In a report on the work of the Russian Organising Commission, Orjonikidze noted: "Trotsky set on us everyone he could find."<sup>2</sup> The Trotskyites' provocative activity met with resolute rebuff from the Party organisations. Thus, Trotsky's agent tried to persuade members of the RSDLP's Baku Organisation not to take part in setting up the Russian Organising Commission, but got a flat refusal. In September 1911, Stepan Shaumyan wrote to Nadezhda Krupskaya: "I learned today that one Pravdist [Trotskyite.—*Authors.*] from the second Organising Committee has arrived. Of course, he will leave empty-handed."<sup>3</sup> Trotskyite agents were also sent packing from Kiev, Rostov, Yekaterinoslav and other towns.

<sup>1</sup> O. Pyatnitsky, *Zapiski bolshevik* (A Bolshevik's Notes), Moscow, 1956, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> G. K. Orjonikidze, *Statyi i rechi* (Articles and Speeches), Part I, Moscow, 1956, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> S. Shaumyan, *Pisma* (Letters). 1896-1918, Armenian Gosizdat Publishers, 1959, p. 164.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 259.



A meeting of the Russian Organising Commission opened at Baku on September 29, 1911. It was attended by representatives from the Baku, Tiflis, Yekaterinburg, Kiev and Yekaterinoslav organisations of the RSDLP. Among those who attended were Stepan Shaumyan and Suren Spandaryan. Grigory Orjonikidze, the authorised agent of the Organising Commission Abroad, attended as a non-voting member.

The meeting constituted itself as a Russian Organising Commission for convening a Party conference, and adopted a message to all local Party organisations, urging them to "promote in every way the cause of the Party's revival, immediately to elect delegates to the Party conference, and resume Social-Democratic work in the localities".<sup>1</sup> The meeting decided that the Russian Organising Commission would undertake all the preparations for convening the conference, with the Organising and Technical Commissions Abroad subordinate to the Russian Organising Commission and not taking any steps without its knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

The Bolsheviks and the pro-Party Mensheviks worked together to establish the Russian Organising Commission. It is a characteristic fact that Plekhanov no longer took part in the work. The burden of his Menshevik mistakes had prevented him, at the crucial moment, from making a final organisational break with the liquidators. In a letter to Maxim Gorky, Lenin wrote: "Plekhanov is hedging, he always acts that way—it's like a disease—before things break."<sup>3</sup> The decisions of the Russian Organising Commission were whole-heartedly approved by Party organisations in Russia. Election of delegates to the Party conference was started all over the country.

The establishment of a highly authoritative Party centre in Russia was a most important event in the life of the RSDLP. It put an end to the "unification" crisis in the Party. Lenin wrote: "The banner has been raised, workers' circles all over Russia are being drawn to it, and no counter-revolutionary attack can possibly haul it down."<sup>4</sup> However, a vast amount of organisational work had to be done before the conference

<sup>1</sup> CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums, Part I, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 185.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 349.

was actually convened, in face of persecution by the tsarist Okhranka and attacks by the liquidators, Trotskyites, conciliators and other opportunists.

The Trotskyites opposed the decisions of the Russian Organising Commission, insisting on the unification of all factions and groups within a single party. The Trotskyite *Pravda* No. 22, appearing a month after the Commission was set up, totally ignored its decisions. But it carried material in defence of the Vperyodists and liquidators. In this context, Lenin wrote: "As far as Trotsky is concerned, the Russian Organising Commission does not exist.... To him the Russian Party centre, formed by the overwhelming majority of the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, means nothing. Or, perhaps it is the other way round, comrades? Perhaps Trotsky, with his small group abroad, is just nothing so far as the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia are concerned?"<sup>1</sup>

While the Party organisations in Russia were making preparations for the all-Party conference, the Trotskyites again started to make noises in their newspaper over the "freedom of coalition" slogan, in an effort to convince the workers that this was their main class demand at the moment. Lenin wrote that Trotsky was in fact covering up the opportunism of the otzovists and liquidators. The conciliators from the Organising Commission Abroad started fierce attacks on the Russian Organising Commission, accusing it of "factionalism", of ignoring the non-Russian national organisations, of failing to carry out the instructions of the Organising Commission Abroad, and of being too hasty in convening the conference. Exposing the anti-Party activity of the conciliators, Orjonikidze wrote to the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat* that the Russian Organising Commission would be sure to "convene an all-Party conference, despite the efforts of its antagonists. Meanwhile, the Organising Commission and the Technical Commission Abroad, after all they have just done, can of course be regarded as dead as far as the organisations in Russia are concerned."<sup>2</sup>

Being unwilling to be held responsible for the anti-Party activity of the conciliators, the Bolsheviks withdrew from the Organising Commission and the Technical Commission

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> G. K. Orjonikidze, op. cit., p. 32.



Abroad in November 1911. These fell apart under the blows of the Bolsheviks, and were followed by the self-dissolution of the liquidationist CC Bureau Abroad. The unprincipled "unification" policy of the Trotskyites and the conciliators was a complete fiasco. Lenin pointed out that conciliationism "within a year and a half . . . suffered *complete collapse*. It failed to 'reconcile' anyone; it did not create anything anywhere; it vacillated helplessly from side to side, and for that it fully deserved the bouquets of *Golos*".<sup>1</sup> The Party did not follow the Trotskyites and the conciliators. It followed Lenin and the Bolsheviks in closing its ranks on the basis of the revolutionary principles of Marxism. The Trotskyites and the conciliators remained, as they had always been, a handful of intriguers in foreign countries, out of touch with the realities in Russia, and having nothing in common with the revolutionary Party of the working class.

The establishment of the Russian Organising Commission and active work by the Party organisations in Russia helped to consolidate the Bolshevik forces abroad. A meeting of Bolshevik groups abroad was held in Paris from December 27 to 30, 1911. It opened with a speech of greetings by Lenin, who also gave a report on the state of affairs in the Party. He gave a profound analysis of the Party's struggle against the opportunists after the CC January Plenum, and showed that the liquidators were setting up a new party, disorganising the work of Party organisations, and undermining the unity of the working class, thereby helping the bourgeoisie. Lenin put the straightforward question of expelling the liquidators from the Party. He said: "We stand on the soil of two parties. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

His report sharply criticised the Trotskyites, conciliators and otzovists, who were helping the liquidators to cheat the workers. To isolate these anti-Party groups, he emphasised, was a most important task before the Bolsheviks, the Party's only revolutionary force. When A. Popov (Antonov) declared that the Bolshevik organisation was "neither a faction, nor a party" and proposed that it should be called an "alliance of revolutionary Social-Democrats" or the "Party's Left wing", Lenin replied: "Antonov's proposal is Trotskyism. There are no revolutionary Social-Democrats other than

the Bolsheviks."<sup>1</sup> The meeting recognised that the Party consisted of the Bolsheviks and a section of the pro-Party Mensheviks who were with them.

The meeting passed Lenin's resolution welcoming the decisions of the Russian Organising Commission, and favouring participation in the forthcoming all-Russia Party conference. It elected a committee of the RSDLP organisation abroad which included Inessa Armand, Nadezhda Krupskaya, Nikolai Semashko and Mikhail Vladimirsky.

The Bolshevik effort to unite the Party organisations in Russia, their consistent and uncompromising struggle against the liquidators, Trotskyites, otzovists and conciliators resulted in the calling of the Sixth (Prague) All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP, which was held in January 1912. It was attended by delegates from all the major proletarian centres in Russia, representing Party organisations in 37 cities.<sup>2</sup> The Conference had full right to constitute itself as a "general Party Conference of the RSDLP which is the supreme Party authority".<sup>3</sup>

Plekhanov, who had been invited to attend, refused under the pretext that not all the Party organisations were represented. Maxim Gorky, who was invited to the Conference, could not come, because he was unwell, and sent the Conference a warm letter of greetings.<sup>4</sup>

A group of delegates addressed letters to the non-Russian national Social-Democratic organisations, to the editorial board of the Trotskyite *Pravda*, to the *Uperyod* group and others, inviting them to attend the Conference. However, contrary to the intentions of the rank-and-file members, the governing centres of the non-Russian national Social-Democratic organisations refused to send their representatives to Prague.

In this connection, the resolution on "The Absence of Delegates from the Non-Russian National Centres from the General Party Conference" noted that all the responsibility for this fell on their centres. The Conference authorised the RSDLP Central Committee to work for the establishment

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> *Usereossiiskaya konferentsiya Rossiiskoi sotsial-demokraticheskoi rabochei partii 1912 goda* (All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP, 1912), Paris, 1912, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 454.

<sup>4</sup> A. M. Gorky, *Sochineniya* (Works), Vol. 29, pp. 222-23.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin *Miscellany XXV*, p. 109 (Russ. ed.).



of normal relations with the national organisations, and expressed the confidence that, despite every obstacle, "worker Social-Democrats of all the nationalities of Russia will work in harmony and fight shoulder to shoulder for the cause of the proletariat and against all the enemies of the working class".<sup>1</sup> This fact best of all exposed the Trotskyite allegation that the Bolsheviks had "excommunicated" the non-Russian national Social-Democratic organisations from the Party.

The Paris conciliators, Vperyodists and Trotskyites also refused to attend the Conference, thereby demonstrating their unwillingness to work together with the representatives of the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, and exposing their true face as enemies of the revolutionary Party.

The Conference, which was equal in significance to a Party congress, worked in an atmosphere of businesslike, comradely discussion of the cardinal questions facing the Bolsheviks in that period. Lenin directed all the proceedings of the Conference and gave reports on the most important items of the agenda. He also drafted all the main resolutions.

In his report, "The Tasks of the Party in the Present Situation", Lenin gave an assessment of the current situation and the Party's tactics in the conditions of a fresh revolutionary upsurge. The resolution adopted on the report called on the Party organisations to continue consolidating the illegal Party, uniting the working class, strengthening the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry and supporting the revolutionary movement of the masses "under the banner of full implementation of the Party slogans".<sup>2</sup>

A major task before the Prague Conference was to restore and consolidate the illegal Marxist Party, purge it of opportunists, and set up a Central Committee, the Party's combat HQ. After the Conference Lenin wrote to Maxim Gorky: "We have finally succeeded—in spite of the liquidationist scoundrels—in reviving the Party and its Central Committee."<sup>3</sup>

The Prague Conference summed up the Bolsheviks' many years of struggle against the opportunists, and for the establishment of the Leninist Party, a new type of party. The

Conference noted that the liquidators grouped round the legal publications of *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, had long since severed their ideological and organisational ties with the RSDLP and were building up a new legal party; it declared that "by its conduct the *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni* group has definitely placed itself outside the Party".<sup>1</sup>

The Conference devoted much attention to the state of Party work abroad. It subjected to sharp criticism the anti-Party activity of the Trotskyites, conciliators, Vperyodists and Bundists, who had broken away from the RSDLP, conducting subversive activity against it and helping the liquidators to set up a reformist party.

Lenin called for resolute struggle against the anti-Party groups and exposure of the Trotskyites. At the Conference he said: "What is Trotsky, the head of the conciliators? This man... has been conducting on the sly and smuggling into the midst of the Russian workers liquidationism in the guise of illegal Party literature. This had to be exposed. It was also necessary to indicate those who were playing into his hands, wittingly or unwittingly. There is now a life-and-death struggle, and this is not the time to whimper or complain."<sup>2</sup> Speakers at the Conference emphasised that the Trotskyites had long since placed themselves outside the Party by their actions in support of liquidationism.

The Conference reversed the mistaken decision of the January (1910) Plenary Meeting of the RSDLP Central Committee on the agreement with the editorial board of the Trotskyite *Pravda*. The Conference called on all true Party elements abroad to unite, and urged them to carry on a relentless struggle against all the Party's enemies and those who were helping them. It recognised the need to have a single Party organisation abroad, working under the control and guidance of the Central Committee. The Conference confirmed the Committee of the RSDLP Organisations Abroad as the only Social-Democratic organisation of Russia abroad. Those groups abroad which "failed to submit to the centre of Social-Democratic work in Russia, i.e., the CC, and who disrupted things by establishing special relations with

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 468.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 23.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, p. 481.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Vol. 2, pp. 361-62.



Russia in circumvention of the CC, may not make use of the RSDLP's name",<sup>1</sup> said the resolution "On the Party Organisation Abroad". This meant, in fact, that the Trotskyites, Golosists, Vperyodists, conciliators, Bundists and other opportunist groups hostile to Bolshevism were placed outside the ranks of the RSDLP.

Thus the Prague Conference purged the Party of the opportunist scum. This meant the complete triumph of Lenin's line for a break with the opportunists. Even when together with the Mensheviks in the ranks of the RSDLP, the Bolsheviks had virtually always constituted an independent Party, with its own platform, its own revolutionary tactics, and its own Bolshevik centre, headed by Lenin. Lenin pointed out: "Between 1903 and 1912, there were periods of several years in which we were formally united with the Mensheviks in a single Social-Democratic Party, but we *never stopped* our ideological and political struggle against them as opportunists and vehicles of bourgeois influence on the proletariat."<sup>2</sup>

The victory of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat would have been impossible without purging the Party of opportunists and consolidating the unity of its ranks. In 1920, with the benefit of the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia and Hungary, Lenin wrote: "Victory in the proletarian revolution *cannot* be achieved, and that revolution *cannot* be safeguarded, while there are reformists and Mensheviks in one's ranks. That is obvious in principle. . . . That is a decisive consideration."<sup>3</sup>

The expulsion of the opportunists from the ranks of the revolutionary Party was of enormous international importance. It set before all the revolutionary elements in the Second International parties an example of principled struggle for unity of the proletariat's revolutionary Party and against the agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. Lenin held that it was a law for every Marxist Party to expel reformist leaders and replace them with truly revolutionary leaders. He wrote: "The question of replacing experienced reformist or 'Centrist' leaders by novices is

not a particular question, of concern to a single country in special circumstances. It is a general question which arises in every proletarian revolution."<sup>1</sup>

But in breaking organisationally with the opportunists, the Bolsheviks never ignored the workers who followed the former. Lenin demanded that concrete facts should be used to explain to such workers the harmfulness of opportunist policies, and that they should be addressed over the heads of the leaders of the anti-Party groups. He said: "The policy which has been and is being pursued by Bolshevism and which it will pursue to the end despite all obstacles is to appeal to the Russian workers who are connected with *Uperyod* and *Pravda*, over the heads of these groups and against them."<sup>2</sup>

Having taken the decision to expel the opportunists from the Party, the Prague Conference formed the Party's central bodies which the liquidators had destroyed. It elected a Central Committee headed by Lenin. It set up a CC Bureau in Russia for practical guidance of the work at home. The Conference also confirmed the editorial board of the Party's Central Organ, the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*. It recognised *Rabochaya Gazeta* as an official organ of the Party's Central Committee.

Under the leadership of the newly elected Central Committee, the Conference united all the illegal Party organisations actually operating in Russia. In the conditions of the fresh revolutionary upswing, this helped to enhance the Party's authority and leading role in the labour movement. A communiqué on the Conference said: "All the viable elements, all those who want to serve the cause of the working-class's emancipation are once again rallying round the glorious banner of the RSDLP. All the wavering elements, everyone who is weak in spirit has gone to the other side of the barricades. The Party is advancing and will overcome all the obstacles thrown up in its way."<sup>3</sup>

The Prague Conference decisions consolidated the triumph of the revolutionary principles of Leninism in building the proletarian Party, exerting a great influence on the further struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and setting all the revolutionary elements of the socialist parties of

<sup>1</sup> CPSU in the Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenums, Part 1, p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 383-84.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP, 1912, pp. 11-12.



Western Europe an example of courage and steadfast behaviour.

The material of the Prague Conference was published by the RSDLP(B) Central Committee and was sent to Russia as soon as it was over. CC members and delegates to the Conference travelled to the localities to explain the Conference decisions and to carry out organisational work.

All over the country, Party organisations welcomed and approved the decisions of the Prague Conference. A St. Petersburg worker, Y. Onufriyev, who had been a delegate to the Conference, later recalled: "Wherever I happened to give an account of the Prague Conference, which was led and inspired by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the workers always gave warm support to the Party decisions taken in Prague, and asked many questions about the details of the Conference. Of course, at every meeting the workers asked about Lenin."<sup>1</sup>

In the course of February, March and the first half of April 1912, the Prague Conference decisions were approved by the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Tiflis, Baku, Kiev, Yekaterinoslav, Kharkov, Poltava, Yenakiyevo, Odessa, Nikolayev, Rostov, Samara, Saratov, Riga, Yekaterinburg and other RSDLP(B) organisations. The Conference line of breaking with the opportunists was supported by the Bolsheviks abroad. Inessa Armand wrote in a report on the work of the Committee of the RSDLP Organisations Abroad that the Bolsheviks there "to a man support the Conference, its resolutions and the Party centres it elected".<sup>2</sup>

The liquidators and the Trotskyites expelled from the Party took up arms against the Prague Conference decisions. They spread all sorts of inventions about it being "illegal" and "factional". In February 1912, Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote to Samara that Trotsky "had already started a desperate squabble" over the Conference and that it was being "helpfully reprinted in a separate leaflet by *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Y. Onufriyev, *Ustreichi s Leninym (Vospominaniya delegata Prazhskoi partiinoi konferentsii)* (Meetings with Lenin. Reminiscences by a Party Delegate to the Prague Party Conference), Moscow, 1966, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Istorichesky Arkhiv* No. 2, 1961, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> *Lenin i Samara. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Lenin and Samara. Collection of Documents and Materials), Kuibyshev, 1966, p. 466.

The Trotskyite *Pravda* tried to persuade its readers that the Prague Conference had been unrepresentative, with a biased selection of participants who were all of one mind with Lenin. The editorial board of the Trotskyite newspaper waxed indignant over the fact that invitations had not been sent to representatives of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* and other liquidationist groups. Trotsky published an article, entitled "Raid on the Party", in which he held forth about a "usurpation of power" by the Bolsheviks, declaring that the Prague Conference had been "illegal" and "unauthorised", and that it would have no marked influence on the work of the Party organisations in Russia.<sup>1</sup>

In their efforts to discredit the Prague Conference decisions, the Trotskyites spread rumours casting doubt on the actual existence of Party organisations in St. Petersburg, Nikolayev, Yekaterinoslav, Kazan, Tiflis and other cities which had sent delegates to the Conference. These inventions were at once exposed by the Bolsheviks, who gave the Trotskyites a fitting rebuff. On February 2 (15), 1912, Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote that the Nikolayev organisation "has already adopted a resolution on adhering to the Conference decisions, despite the agitation conducted by the Trotskyites who arrived there during the Conference".<sup>2</sup>

When the Moscow Bolsheviks heard of the rumours being spread by the Trotskyites to the effect that they had been represented at the Conference not by a Bolshevik, but by a member of the nationalistic PPS party, they at once wrote a letter to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, branding it as a shameful lie from start to finish.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These Trotskyite assertions are even today being rehearsed by bourgeois falsifiers of CPSU history. Thus, W. Scharndorff, bemoaning the expulsion of the Trotskyites from the Party, repeats their inventions about the Prague Conference having been called by the Bolsheviks illegally, in violation of the Party Rules, in circumvention of the CC, and without the right to expel the Mensheviks and the Trotskyites from the Party (W. Scharndorff, *Die Geschichte der KPdSU*, München, 1961). Actually, however, the Conference had been called under the decisions of the January (1910) CC Plenum and the June Meeting of members of the RSDLP Central Committee, so that there can be no question of any violation of the Party Rules. The major Party organisations were represented at the Conference. It was prepared together by the Bolsheviks and the pro-Party Mensheviks, who were represented at the Conference.

<sup>2</sup> *Proletarskaya Revoliutsiya* No. 1, 1941, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, June 4 (17), 1912. Supplement.



The Trotskyites also tried to denigrate the Tiflis delegate G. Orjonikidze, by insisting that he had been nominated by a handful of men, and that the RSDLP organisation in Tiflis was non-existent. The Tiflis Bolsheviks cited concrete facts to show that these assertions were absurd.<sup>1</sup> In spreading slander about the Bolsheviks of the Transcaucasia, the Trotskyite *Pravda* insisted that the liquidationist Caucasian Regional Committee was the only representative of the proletariat in the area. Actually, however, it was a group of Menshevik-liquidator intellectuals who had no foothold in the working class or the Party organisations of the Caucasus. In his report at the Prague Conference, Suren Spandaryan said that "the Regional Committee is not conducting any illegal work, while its legal work boils down to a disgraceful rejection of the proletarian line and tactics. ... Its claims to speak on behalf of the Caucasian proletariat are ridiculous."<sup>2</sup>

The Trotskyites started their campaign of slander against the Bolsheviks in order to present them as "factionalists", to prove that the liquidators expelled from the Party were the "only valuable component part of the RSDLP". Trotsky even went so far as to demand that the Bolsheviks should attend the liquidationist conference to explain why the liquidators had been expelled from the Party. Waxing indignant, Trotsky inquired: "Who has authorised you to exercise supreme control over all the other trends in the Party? Who has given you the key to the Party's gate, like the conqueror who is given the key to the vanquished city? Who has given you the right to admit some and expel others?"

Trotsky came out as a bitter enemy of the Prague Conference and plunged into feverish activity in an effort to complete the organisation of the bloc of all anti-Party forces, as a Stolypin labour party. However, this "unificatory" gamble by the Trotskyites was likewise doomed to failure.

## 2. The Rout by the Bolsheviks of the Trotskyite August Bloc. The Bolshevik Triumph Over Opportunism and Centrism in the Revolutionary Labour Movement of Russia

The liquidators were terrified by the successes of the Bolsheviks and tried to discredit the Prague Conference at any cost. On Trotsky's initiative, they decided to call their own conference, to counter-balance the Bolshevik Conference, and to present it as an "all-Party" conference.

In January 1912, the Bund, with Trotsky's approval, held a meeting of a number of opportunist groups in one of the border towns of Russia. It set up an Organising Committee for convening an "all-Party" conference, which was to be attended by representatives of "all party groups and organisations, regardless of their affiliation with this or that trend".<sup>1</sup> This meant that the conference was to unite all opportunist groups, big and small, within one party.

The Trotskyite *Pravda* at once sent its representative to the Organising Committee. Trotsky conducted a loud campaign for convening the conference, attacking everyone who opposed liquidators' invitation. He wrote: "The liquidators are nothing but a faction of our old RSDLP. ... No one has the right ... to block their way."<sup>2</sup> Trotsky received 5,000 marks from the board of the German Social-Democratic Party to organise the liquidationist conference.

Trotsky spurred on his liquidator friends with calling the conference, even striving to designate it as a "party congress". Shortly before the conference, Dan wrote to Martynov: "Trotsky has virtually made this promise to 'his own men': 'We shall outdo' Lenin, and I am informing you in strictest secrecy that about two months ago Trotsky wrote me (and asked me not to tell anyone) that he is toying with the 'idea' that in view of Lenin's conference, etc., etc.—our conference should, perhaps, best declare itself to be ... a party congress."

Trotsky rebuked the liquidators for being weak and idle, and threatened to switch to "another combination". Actually, however, Trotsky's stand on all the political and

<sup>1</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, June 4 (17), 1912. Supplement.

<sup>2</sup> S. Spandaryan, *Statyi, pisma i dokumenty* (Articles, Letters and Documents), Moscow, 1958, p. 276.

<sup>1</sup> *Listok OK po sozyvu obshchepartiinoi konferentsii* (OC Leaflet on Convening an All-Party Conference), May 20 (June 2), 1912.

<sup>2</sup> *Byulleten venskoi "Pravdy"* (Vienna *Pravda* Bulletin), June 15 (28), 1912.



internal Party questions was completely identical with that of the liquidators, a fact the latter admitted themselves. Martynov wrote to Trotsky: "You do not allow any compromise in the organisational dispute. Here you will not agree ... to throw out of the Party even a single liquidator ... and on the vital political questions you will not by any means make a concession of a certain minimal platform in the interests of 'unity of action' ... What you are writing in *Vorwärts* can be signed by any liquidator ... It looks as though we now have in the Party on all key current questions two irreconcilable tactics, with you and us defending one of these, and Lenin the other."<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky kept saying that the spirit of factional struggle was alien to the liquidators' conference which was being prepared. That was an attempt to cover up with the "Party spirit" the true aims of the liquidators and to deceive the working class of Russia. In January 1912, Dan sent Martynov resolutions from a number of liquidators' meetings in Russia, which testified to their striving to set up legal political workers' clubs in place of the illegal Party organisations, and to set up a Central Initiative Group, which would then be transformed into a liquidationist CC.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the liquidators, whose plans Trotsky so rabidly defended, were not at all preparing to unite all Social-Democrats, but to proclaim a legal, reformist party. Lenin qualified the opportunist bloc Trotsky was putting together in the following words: "The basis of this bloc is obvious: the liquidators enjoy full freedom to pursue their line in *Zhivoye Dyelo* and *Nasha Zarya* 'as before', while Trotsky, operating abroad, screens them with r-r-revolutionary phrases, which cost him nothing and do not bind them in any way."<sup>3</sup>

The Organising Committee (OC), which the Trotskyites had set up with such a fanfare, was dragging out a miserable existence. The Polish Social-Democrats, and even the "pro-Party Bolsheviks" had refused to take part in it. Plekhanov, who had been repeatedly invited to take part in its work, declared that the liquidators were calling a constituent conference to set up a new party, and also declined

the invitation. As a result, the only people on the Organising Committee were the liquidators, the Vperyodists, the Trotskyites, and the representatives of the Bund and the Central Committee of the Social-Democracy of the Latvian area, the latter constituting the only real force among all these groups. But it should be borne in mind that the local Party organisations in Latvia did not support the liquidationist line of the Central Committee of the Social-Democracy of the Latvian area. Orjonikidze told the Prague Conference that with the Latvians, the centre was one thing, and the workers, something else again. The other organisations represented on the Organising Committee had no support at all in the labour movement in Russia.

In spite of all this, Lenin said that it was not right to take a thoughtless attitude to the anti-Party sallies of the liquidators or to shrug them off. In early April, 1912, he wrote Orjonikidze, Spandaryan and Yelena Stasova, who were members of the RSDLP(B) CC Bureau in Russia: "We must fight stubbornly, seriously and systematically. There must be a round tour and explanation everywhere of the liquidators' deception."<sup>1</sup> RSDLP(B) CC members attending the Prague Conference had carried out much work in explaining its decisions among the local Party organisations. As a result, not a single organisation in Russia sent its representatives to the liquidationist Organising Committee.

As a result of the Bolsheviks' explanatory work, Trotsky's agents, whom he sent to Party organisations in Russia, were everywhere given a rebuff. In early April 1912, the Trotskyite Adolf Yoffe tried to persuade the Kiev organisation to take part in the liquidationist conference. The Kiev Committee rejected the Trotskyite importunities, declaring that it would not promote the split in the Party. In a letter to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, its members said: "Just recently we had a visit from a 'Pravda' man [agent of the Trotskyite *Pravda*.—*Authors*.] who is travelling all over the place in an effort to secure, wherever possible, a resolution in favour of the Bundist-liquidationist conference. He was given a good drubbing in Kiev, where the organisation is well informed."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 1 (60), 1927, pp. 162-64.

<sup>2</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 341/2/21227/1-4.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 24.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Bolsheviki Ukrainy v period mezhdru pervoi i vtoroi burzhuazno-demokraticeskimi revolyutsiyami v Rossii (iyun 1907 g.-fevral 1917 g.)*.



Nor did Yoffe have any more success with the Odessa organisation of the RSDLP in obtaining a mandate for the Organising Committee. The liquidators' agents N. Berdichevsky and A. Paikes had as little result in the Donets Basin and Yekaterinoslav. The Kharkov organisation resolutely refused to support the Trotskyites. Having failed to secure support in the Samara organisation, the Trotskyite agents tried to get individual workers to attend the conference but failed too. A Samara police report said: "Workers of the Levensen printing works, Kairovich and Mikhail (last name unknown), had been invited to go to the Social-Democratic conference which was held in Austria, but refused."<sup>1</sup>

The Bolsheviks of Tsaritsyn flatly refused to take part in the liquidationist conference. The Polesie organisation rejected all of the Trotskyite importunities, declaring that joint work was possible only on the basis of recognition of the CC elected by the Prague Conference.<sup>2</sup> The liquidator B. Goldman (Gorev), who came to St. Petersburg on the eve of the August Conference, reported to Trotsky that he "found complete absence of any allies of ours", and that only the liquidators could attend the conference.<sup>3</sup>

All these facts testified to the Trotskyites' political bankruptcy, and their complete estrangement from the labour movement in Russia. The Organising Committee's agents failed to recruit anyone, with the exception of representatives of some liquidators' "initiative groups". Having failed to drum up support among the Party organisations of Russia, the liquidationist Organising Committee was doomed to remain inactive. Instead of a representative all-Russia conference, it managed to get together an assembly of men most of whom were out of touch with Party work in Russia.

The liquidators' conference was held in Vienna from August 25 to 28, 1912. Of the 29 delegates, with 30 mandates (18 voting and 12 non-voting mandates), almost all

were émigrés. The organisations in Russia were represented only by delegates from the liquidators' groups in Sevastopol, Krasnoyarsk and the Seamen's Trade Union of the Black Sea merchant fleet. Many delegates at the conference had fictitious mandates, because no one had elected them. Trotsky is known to have told his agents to obtain mandates in every possible way. That is why Trotskyites frequently got together two or three persons in a place, and got them to elect delegates to the conference. Among those who had such a mandate was Martov, who represented a Moscow "initiative group" which was unknown to anyone.

It later turned out that the Sevastopol liquidators' group was represented by a provocateur. A top secret report submitted by the police department to the Minister of the Interior in September 1912 said that the Sevastopol delegate was an agent of the police and represented a non-existent organisation.<sup>1</sup> In order to increase the number of delegates, 4 members from the Polish Socialist Party (PPS "levitsa"), which was not affiliated with the RSDLP, were invited to attend as non-voting delegates. Because of this poor representation, the liquidators' August Conference was constituted, contrary to Trotsky's proposal, not as an all-Party conference, but only as a "conference of RSDLP organisations".

The reporters on the main questions—Trotsky, Martov and Liber—made a stand for liquidationist views in different ways, though with equal stubbornness. At the very beginning of the conference, during the discussion of the Organising Committee's report, the liquidators' reporter declared that the Committee had had no intention at all of reviving the old RSDLP, because it was non-existent, and that the conference should be regarded as a constituent one. This was the best proof that Trotsky's talk about "unity", "co-operation", and "non-factionalism" was only a screen for the liquidators' real aims.

The conference avoided any discussion of acute political questions, but went out of its way to blow up the question of the election campaign to the Fourth Duma. Of 16 sittings, 5 were devoted to working out the standing orders, the agenda, the reports by three members of the Organising Committee and their discussion, one to constituting

*Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Ukrainian Bolsheviks Between the First and the Second Bourgeois-Democratic Revolutions in Russia, June 1907-February 1917. Collection of Documents and Materials). Kiev, 1960, p. 412.

<sup>1</sup> *Ocherki istorii Kuibyshevskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Essays of the History of the Kuibyshev CPSU Organisation), Kuibyshev, 1960, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Rabochaya Gazeta*, August 12, 1912.

<sup>3</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 250.

<sup>1</sup> Central State Archives of the October Revolution, DP OO/1911/5/90.



the conference, 5 to hearing reports on the election campaign, and the remaining 5 to discussing all the other questions.<sup>1</sup>

The conference failed to give an assessment of the political situation in the country and refused to discuss the agrarian question. Basok (Melenevsky), representing the Ukrainian Spilka (Union), declared that the question of land was leaving the stage and that it was not a part of the Social-Democrats' tasks to agitate among the peasants.

The conference also virtually abandoned the demand for a democratic republic. In a report on this question, Trotsky manoeuvred in every way, referring to the fact that in Austria, the Social-Democrats were not demanding a republic, that the British Socialists were calling only for the elimination of the House of Lords, while the German Social-Democrats had issued the slogan: "Down with Wilhelm's Personal Policy". He was trying to suggest that the democratic-republic slogan could be very well done without. Trotsky was followed by the Bundist Liber, who declared that the republic slogan was meaningless, and that it should be replaced by a demand for universal suffrage. The Bundist Movich went even farther, insisting that revolutionary slogans were being put forward only by demagogues waving a "red rag" at the government. Trotsky made a feeble attempt at calling for caution, because "an excess of political practiciness" could easily harm the cause, but he did not in essence object to what the speakers said.

Having buried the democratic-republic slogan, the conference put forward as its main demand the reformist slogan of "freedom of coalition".<sup>2</sup>

Meeting the Bund's demands, the conference accepted the reactionary nationalistic slogan of cultural-national autonomy, which clashed with the workers' class solidarity and proletarian internationalism.<sup>3</sup>

The draft election platform, put together by Trotsky, Martov, Liber and Braun, was explicitly liquidationist. Its main demands were: universal suffrage, "freedom of coalition", and review of agrarian legislation of the Third

Duma. The revolutionary slogans of the RSDLP Programme were discarded. There was not a word about preparing the masses for another revolution. One delegate proposed that the words "a general onslaught on tsarism" in the resolution should be replaced by the word "uprising", but Martov flatly objected, arguing that "with us the word 'uprising' has been compromised".

The conference resolution, "On the Organisational Forms of Party Building", was also liquidationist. The conference rejected the principle of building an illegal party and came out for an "open party". Trotsky told the conference that the illegal party was a thing of the past, and that it belonged to the epoch of "complete social illegality". Now "the propertied classes can already organise themselves legally, and this new legal sociality of the propertied classes gives rise to the need for proletarian legal sociality". But Trotsky did not even consider the possibility of such a "proletarian legal sociality", i.e., the Party existing in tsarist conditions. The resolution adopted by the conference urged Party organisations "to adapt themselves to the new forms and methods of the open labour movement".<sup>4</sup> Lenin subjected this resolution to scathing criticism in his article "The Illegal Party and Legal Work".

A bloc of anti-Party forces, known as the August bloc, took shape at the conference. It elected an Organising Committee as a governing centre. The conference sent a letter to the Second International, slandering the decisions of the Prague Conference, urging the opportunist leaders to intervene in "Russian affairs", and expressing readiness to accept mediation by the International Socialist Bureau "in restoring organisational unity with other sections of the RSDLP".<sup>5</sup> This was a fresh attempt on the part of the liquidators to fall back on the Second International in their fight against the revolutionary Marxist Party in Russia.

On the whole, the results of the August Conference were lamentable. It was conceived as a "unifying" conference, but did not unite anyone, except the liquidators, and even their unity was purely nominal. As for the factional liquidators' periodicals (the Trotskyite *Pravda* and *Golos Sotsial-*

<sup>1</sup> *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 1(60), 1927, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Izveshcheniye o konferentsii organizatsii RSDRP* (Communiqué on the Conference of RSDLP Organisations), Vienna, 1912, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.



*Demokrata*), they did not pass under the control of the Organising Committee even nominally. Within the bloc there was constant bickering between the participants. Hardly had it originated, when the August bloc began to fall apart. The representative of the *Uperyod* group walked out before the conference was over. The Latvian Social-Democrats objected to the liquidationist declarations at the conference. From the outset, the Polish Social-Democrats refused to take part in the proposed bloc. Nor were the sponsors of the bloc supported by Plekhanov, who declared that the conference was not representative of the organisations in Russia, that its results were pathetic, and that its resolutions "reeked of diplomacy ten versts away".<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the August bloc, which Trotsky had knocked together, was based on an unprincipled alliance of anti-Party forces for the purpose of fighting Bolshevism. It was an attempt to set up a Centrist, petty-bourgeois party in Russia, entailing a betrayal of the programme and organisational principles of Marxism.<sup>2</sup> The Trotskyite August bloc, isolated from the labour movement, was doomed to failure.

Back in May 1912, during the preparations for the liquidators' conference, Lenin said that the bloc, Trotsky was trying to set up, was destined to go down in scandalous failure because it was based on "an unprincipled approach, on hypocrisy and hollow phrases".<sup>3</sup> The basic reason why the August bloc was doomed to fail was that it had no mass support in the labour movement in Russia and did not enjoy any backing from the Party organisations. The August Conference decisions were not accepted by a single Party organisation in Russia.

<sup>1</sup> G. V. Plekhanov, op. cit., Vol. XIX, p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> Present-day bourgeois fabricators allege that the August bloc was set up by the Trotskyites to keep the Party united in face of the Bolsheviks' splitting politics. Brahm writes that Lenin was wrong in classing Trotsky among the liquidators, because the latter had always worked for Party unity. He adds: "Once again Trotsky tried, with the help of the so-called August bloc ... to preserve Party unity (H. Brahm, op. cit., S. 45-46).

However, the facts show that Trotsky fully shared the liquidators' programme and tactical propositions, and was a sworn enemy of the Bolshevik Party, although he did cover up his views with Centrist slogans. The August bloc, which he set up, was designed not to preserve Party unity, but to rally all the opportunists in fighting the Party.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 24.

However, this did not mean that the bloc was not a danger for the revolutionary labour movement. The liquidators exercised a definite influence on the intelligentsia, the urban artisans, and the politically inexperienced workers who had but recently come from the countryside and were yet to be schooled in the proletarian class struggle. Moreover, the August bloc was being given active support by the leaders of the Second International. That is why Lenin called on the Bolsheviks to put up a resolute struggle against the August bloc. A resolution, "The Attitude to Liquidationism, and Unity", adopted by the Cracow meeting of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, stated that the August 1912 Conference had proved to be a liquidationist one, and that after it the liquidators' organs *Nasha Zarya* and *Luch* had redoubled their preaching of liquidationist ideas. The resolution went on to say: "Hence one of the Party's tasks is still to wage a determined struggle against the liquidationist group of *Nasha Zarya* and *Luch*, and to make clear to the mass of the workers the great harm of the liquidators' propaganda."<sup>1</sup>

The fresh revolutionary upswing continued steadily to mount. The Lena shootings in April 1912 gave a further impetus to the strike movement of the working class, peasant disturbances, and discontent in the army and the navy. Lenin noted that a fresh breeze had begun to blow, "there is an urge for revolution".<sup>2</sup>

The revolutionary movement was unfolding under the Bolshevik Party's slogans: "Down with the tsarist monarchy!", "Long live the democratic republic!", "8-hour working day!", "Confiscation of all landed estates!", "Long live socialism!" The Party was carrying into the labour movement a militant spirit and organisation, rallying all the revolutionary forces in the country for the fight against tsarism. To succeed in its revolutionary tasks, it had to rout the August bloc and to isolate the opportunists from the working class in their efforts to divert the revolutionary movement to the reformist path and to subordinate the proletariat to the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie.

In the winter of 1910, the liquidators and the Trotskyites had started in St. Petersburg what they called a petition

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 464.



campaign which was essentially a call for the workers to submit petitions to the Black Hundreds Duma, demanding "freedom of coalition". The Bolsheviks strongly opposed this campaign, trying to explain to the workers that petitioning the Duma would merely produce constitutional illusions in the masses and divert them from the revolutionary struggle. In its resolution "On the 'Petition Campaign'", the Prague Conference had said that this campaign was doing harm to the labour movement. The "freedom of coalition" slogan, in isolation from the aggregate of political demands made by the working class, meant in fact a "liberal fight for the 'renovation' of the June Third regime by partial improvements".<sup>1</sup>

Although the petition campaign was not supported by the working class and ended in complete failure, the liquidators and the Trotskyites again and again tried to foist on the proletariat the "freedom of coalition" slogan, arguing that it was its primary demand. Trotsky went so far as to say that the workers' demand for "freedom of coalition" was at the root of the Lena events and the revolutionary upswing as a whole.

This was ridiculed by Lenin, who wrote: "Nothing could be more false than the liberal invention, which Trotsky repeats in the Vienna *Pravda* after the liquidators, that 'the struggle for freedom of coalition is the basis of both the Lena tragedy and the powerful response to it in the country'. Freedom of coalition was neither the specific nor the principal demand in the Lena strike. It was not lack of the freedom of coalition that the Lena shootings revealed, but lack of freedom from provocation, lack of rights in general, lack of freedom from wholesale tyranny."<sup>2</sup>

The Party explained to the workers that the Trotskyite assertion that it was possible to secure democratic freedoms was nothing but a fraud upon the masses. Lenin repeatedly emphasised that under the autocracy it was ridiculous and stupid to demand "freedom of coalition" of Nicholas Romanoff and the Black Hundreds Duma, and that only liberal windbags could centre the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses on this slogan. Lenin pointed out: "It is necessary to strike at the centre, to attack the source of

evil, to destroy the whole system, the whole regime, of the Russia of the tsar and the Black Hundreds."<sup>1</sup>

The liquidators and the Trotskyites tried to stop the strike movement from growing throughout the country. The liquidators' newspaper *Luch* insisted that the frequent use of strikes could dull them as a socio-political weapon, and that it was not right to overdo the "strike gamble". Lenin wrote to Maxim Gorky in December 1912: "The liquidators are now carrying on an attack *against* revolutionary strikes! They've sunk to that."<sup>2</sup>

The Trotskyites took a wrong view of the situation in the country and denied the revolutionary potential of the proletariat and the toiling peasantry, insisting that any revolution in Russia was possible only in connection with a European war or a revolutionary victory in Germany. Trotsky wrote as early as 1911 in an article, "The Situation in the Country and Our Tasks", as follows: "Should we expect that within the next year or two the masses will once again be hurled on the way of general strikes and uprisings? No, we do not think so... Of course, if a European war involving tsarism broke out soon, or if an open proletarian revolution broke out in Germany, we, too, would be drawn into the European vortex."

Thus, according to Trotsky, if there was no hope of an early revolution, there was need to struggle for the immediate aim, for "freedom of coalition", without being carried away by the "strike gamble". If the revolution in Russia depended on a European war or a revolution in Germany, the natural conclusion was that the workers in Russia should either wait for a war or a German revolution. These were opportunist, capitulationist propositions which destined the working class to a passive wait-and-see attitude and a folding-up of their revolutionary struggle.

A different assessment of the situation in the country was given by the Bolshevik Party. In his articles "The Revolutionary Upswing", "The Slogans of the All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP in January 1912 and the May Day Movement", "The Liquidators Oppose Revolutionary Mass Strikes", "Can the Slogan 'Freedom of Coalition' Serve as a Basis for the Working-Class Movement Today?", "May

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 479.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, pp. 103-04.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 68.



Day Action by the Revolutionary Proletariat" and others, Lenin exposed the opportunist propositions of the liquidators and the Trotskyites and gave a scientific analysis of the situation in the country, giving the Party a Marxist view of the revolutionary prospects in Russia.

Having made a deep analysis of the revolutionary movement going forward in the country, Lenin drew this conclusion in June 1913: "A nation-wide political crisis is in evidence in Russia, a crisis which affects the very *foundation* of the state system and not just parts of it, which affects the *foundation* of the edifice and not an outbuilding, not merely one of its storeys."<sup>1</sup>

Only a revolution, not partial reform as suggested by the liquidators and the Trotskyites, would solve the pressing social and political problems facing the country. In these circumstances, it was the task of the proletariat's revolutionary Party to do everything to help prepare the revolution's political army and to build up the revolutionary onslaught of the masses.

With the revolutionary movement on the rise, the Bolshevik organisations, following Lenin's instructions, conducted an active struggle for the masses, rallying them round the RSDLP(B) revolutionary platform and exposing the harm of reformist illusions being spread by the sponsors of the August bloc. A great part in this struggle was played by the legal Bolshevik daily *Pravda*, which Lenin established on April 22 (May 5), 1912.

The liquidators right away started a campaign against *Pravda*. One of the men who took part in setting up the paper, Nikolai Poletayev, wrote in his reminiscences that "there was a gnashing of teeth among the liquidators and the Mensheviks, and a fighting campaign was started against the proposed paper" as soon as there was an announcement in the newspaper *Zvezda* about *Pravda's* forthcoming publication.<sup>2</sup>

At factories and plants, in clubs and trade unions, the liquidators organised legal meetings in an effort to prove that they alone, and not the Bolsheviks had the right to publish a workers' newspaper.

Trotsky launched a slanderous campaign against *Pravda*

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> *Pravda*, May 5, 1925.

from abroad, and even demanded that the paper be given another name, because his own rag was being published in Vienna under the same name. The *Pravda* editorial board resolutely rebuffed Trotsky's importunities.

The Trotskyites did everything to spread the story that Lenin's *Pravda* was not financed by workers' collections, but by some "dark source". Lenin was highly indignant over Trotsky's slander and wrote: "This intriguer and liquidator goes on lying, right and left."<sup>1</sup> He advised the *Pravda* editorial board to reply in their "Mailbag" as follows: "*To Trotsky* (Vienna). You are wasting your time sending us disruptive and slanderous letters. They will not be replied to."<sup>2</sup>

To offset the effect created by the Bolshevik *Pravda*, the liquidators began to publish, in September 1912, their legal daily *Luch*, among whose permanent contributors was Trotsky. The liquidationist *Luch* was allegedly published by "Marxists of various trends", but in fact its only contributors were the liquidators and the Trotskyites. Having failed to frustrate the publication of the Bolshevik *Pravda*, the Trotskyites started a campaign to merge it with the liquidationist *Luch* and subordinate it to the control of the trade unions, whose governing bodies at the time still had many liquidators. By uniting *Luch* and *Pravda*, the liquidators and the Trotskyites hoped to transform *Pravda* into a liquidators' organ. Exposing Trotsky's liquidationist designs, Lenin repeatedly pointed out that there could be no question of any unity between the Bolshevik *Pravda* and the opportunist *Luch*.

Under Lenin's direction, *Pravda* became the actual organ of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, which exercised constant control and direction of the paper's work. On its board were experienced Party workers and journalists, and many articles were edited by Lenin personally. The policy-making articles which determined the paper's face were those written by Lenin, over 280 of them from 1912 to 1914.<sup>3</sup> *Pravda* played an outstanding role in the ideological and organisational consolidation of the Bolshevik Party, in

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> V. T. Loginov, *Lenin i "Pravda" 1912-1914 godov* (Lenin and *Pravda* in 1912-1914), Moscow, 1962, p. 236.



winning the masses over to the Bolshevik side, and in routing the anti-Party August bloc.

Lenin urged the *Pravda* editorial board to conduct an irreconcilable struggle against the liquidators, Trotskyites and other opportunist groups, and consistently to implement the Prague Conference decisions on the final break with the opportunists. He took a resolute stand against the mistaken view of some editors who held that as a "popular" organ, *Pravda* should not engage in polemics with the liquidators. Lenin wrote: "*Pravda* has in practice the position of leader. That position must be defended honourably. It should say clearly, calmly and firmly: against the liquidators."<sup>1</sup>

The struggle against the liquidators, Trotskyites and other opportunists was being promoted by Lenin's letters to the *Pravda* editorial board, the paper's reorganisation in the spring of 1913 under a decision of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee's Cracow Meeting with Party workers, and its staffing with experienced Party cadres.

*Pravda's* boundless loyalty to the working people's interests, and its relentless struggle against the opportunists helped the Bolshevik Party to rally, on *Pravda's* platform, four-fifths of the conscious proletariat of Russia. That was a great triumph for Bolshevism. *Pravda's* influence was so great and incontestable that even the adversaries of the Bolsheviks had to recognise it. Trotsky declared in 1914: "There is no doubt that the majority of Russian workers, especially in St. Petersburg, are now grouped round *Pravda's* banner..."<sup>2</sup> This meant a virtual admission of defeat by the organiser of the anti-Party August bloc.

The Bolshevik Party scored a convincing victory over the August bloc at the elections to the Fourth Duma from the workers' curia in November 1912. The Bolshevik organisations carried on their election campaign under the Prague Conference resolution, and the "Election Platform of the RSDLP", which Lenin had written.

The Bolshevik Party was trying to win seats in the Duma to make use of its rostrum for spreading socialist ideas, for exposing the anti-popular tsarist policy. "in other words in order to prepare an army of class-conscious fighters for

a new Russian revolution".<sup>1</sup> The Bolshevik election platform called on the working masses to struggle for the overthrow of the autocracy, the establishment of a democratic republic, an 8-hour working day, and confiscation of all landed estates. The Trotskyite-liquidator bloc campaigned on the basis of its own platform, which had been adopted by the August Conference.

Thus, in the elections to the Duma there was a clash between two platforms: the revolutionary, Leninist platform, and the reformist, liquidationist one. Lenin emphasised that the two were diametrically opposed, and wrote: "The Social-Democratic Party wants to use the elections in order again to drive home to the masses the idea of the need for revolution, and the fact of the revolutionary upswing which has begun.... The liquidators are using the elections to the Fourth Duma to preach constitutional reforms and *weaken* the idea of revolution."<sup>2</sup>

The returns in the Fourth Duma elections showed that the vast majority of the working class supported the Bolshevik Party's policy. This was convincing proof that the Bolshevik election platform had been right, and that the liquidator-Trotskyite slogans were a complete failure. In the six major industrial gubernias, Bolshevik workers were elected deputies from the workers' curia. The gubernias which returned Bolsheviks had over a million workers, and those which returned Mensheviks only about 136,000, two figures which clearly showed whom the proletariat of Russia was following.

As the revolutionary struggle grew, the problem of the political unity of the working class became an acute one. During the election campaign and after it, the opportunists, led by Trotsky, made demagogic use of the unity slogan, again and again accusing the Bolsheviks of engineering a split. Trotsky continued to plug his "unity over every obstacle" slogan, an attempt to cash in on an idea popular among the workers, and an effort to mislead the masses and detach them from the Bolshevik Party. The Trotskyites read the unity slogan as meaning elimination of the revolutionary Party, and "unity" between the revolutionaries and the opportunists through a bloc arranged "from above", behind the back of the working class.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> *Borba* No. 7-8, 1914, p. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 510.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, p. 385.



In his articles, "Unity", "Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity" and others, Lenin showed that the working class was truly in need of unity, because that was its main weapon in the fight against the exploiters. But working-class unity meant above all the unity of its vanguard, of its political Party, based on acceptance of revolutionary theory, programme, tactics and organisation. "Unity is a great thing and a great slogan," Lenin wrote. "But what the workers' cause needs is the *unity of Marxists*, not unity between Marxists, and opponents and distorters of Marxism."<sup>1</sup>

The working class could be united only through acceptance of the illegal Party and revolutionary theory. The Cracow Meeting of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee with Party workers recognised as the only correct slogan the slogan of unity from below, starting from factory committees and district groups, to enable the workers themselves to see "whether the recognition of the illegal organisation and readiness to back the revolutionary struggle of the masses and revolutionary tactics are really put into effect".<sup>2</sup> Relying on the unity-from-below slogan, the Bolshevik Party rallied the working class in the struggle against the autocracy.

The facts which Lenin mustered against the Trotskyite declarations about the Bolsheviks' splitting the working class added up to irrefutable proof that the vast majority of the working class was rallied round the Bolshevik Party. Thus, Bolshevik deputies from the workers' curia constituted 47 per cent in the Second Duma, 50 per cent in the Third Duma, and 67 per cent in the Fourth Duma. In 1912 and 1913, funds for the Bolshevik *Pravda* were collected by 2,801 workers' groups, and for the liquidators' *Luch* by only 750. Lenin drew this conclusion: "Where the *majority* of the class-conscious workers have rallied around precise and definite decisions, there we shall find *unity* of opinion and action, there we shall find the Party spirit, and the Party."<sup>3</sup>

Lenin cited irrefutable facts to show that the Bolsheviks alone were working for the unity of the working class, and

that the liquidators and Trotsky, who "dissociated themselves from the 'underground' as well as from the organised workers, are the worst splitters".<sup>1</sup>

During the revolutionary upswing period, the Bolsheviks relied on Lenin's principles to combine illegal and legal activity and started active work in the legal organisations of the working class—the trade unions, co-operative societies, cultural and educational clubs, and insurance societies—transforming them into the Party's strongholds and driving out the liquidators.

The liquidators believed that legal organisations were their impregnable fortress, and slandered the Bolsheviks by asserting that they refused to work in these organisations. "There is nothing more erroneous than the view that the pro-Party Social-Democrats repudiate 'legal' activity," Lenin noted. "The very opposite is the truth, since *in this activity too* they are stronger than the liquidators."<sup>2</sup> The Poronin Meeting of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee with Party workers in September 1913, which passed a special resolution on "Work in Legal Associations", called on all Party organisations to intensify their work in the legal organisations of the working class and "to strive to convert every one of them into a stronghold of the Social-Democratic Party".<sup>3</sup>

The Bolsheviks' activity in the trade unions offers a visual example of their struggle for the legal organisations. The liquidators and Trotskyites spread the idea of "neutral" trade unions, independent of the Party, which in practice meant their subordination to bourgeois influence. The Bolsheviks resolutely opposed this "neutrality" theory, declaring that the trade unions should take the class standpoint and operate under the Party's leadership.

When the workers saw for themselves that the liquidators were hampering their struggle against the autocracy, they began to expel the liquidators from the trade union leadership and to elect representatives of the Bolshevik Party. From 1912 to 1914, the Bolsheviks won a preponderant majority in almost all the trade unions across the country.

This, together with the predominance of *Pravda* men in

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 18, p. 465.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 20, p. 334.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 544.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 19, p. 426.



other legal organisations, and the cash contributions to the Bolshevik press fund, all spoke of the enormous growth in the Bolshevik Party's influence on the workers' masses, and of a complete fiasco for the liquidators and Trotskyites. The liquidator F. Bulkin wrote in the journal *Nasha Zarya* as follows: "We liquidators assumed in vain that the workers' mass was with us... As before, Bolshevism proved to be its mouthpiece and ideologist... Directed by the Bolsheviks, it rejected all the liquidators... up for election to all the governing bodies. One legal position after another passed from the liquidators to the Bolsheviks... Step by step Bolshevism was ousting the Mensheviks from what appeared to be their entrenched positions."<sup>1</sup>

The growing revolutionary upswing in the country and the Bolshevik victory in the labour movement brought the anti-Party August bloc to the point of collapse. When the crunch came, the liquidators' "HQ" was shown to have no army. The reformist programme was rejected by the workers' masses. Realising that for all practical purposes the August bloc was not exerting any influence on the labour movement in Russia, Trotsky announced, in 1913, his withdrawal from the editorial board of *Luch* and *Nasha Zarya*, and in February 1914 started the publication of a "non-factional" journal which he called *Borba*. In his article, "The Break-up of the 'August' Bloc", Lenin wrote: "The famous uniters even failed to unite themselves and we got two 'August' trends, the Luchist trend (*Nasha Zarya* and *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*) and the Trotskyist trend (*Borba*)."<sup>2</sup>

The final blow was dealt the August bloc by the Latvian Bolsheviks, who had been fighting the liquidationist leadership of the Social-Democracy of the Latvian area for several years. Local Party organisations demanded that the SDLA Central Committee withdraw from the August bloc and call the Fourth Congress of the SDLA. The Menshevik CC of the SDLA tried to prevent the convocation of the congress. The local Party organisations then announced that they would convene the congress whatever the CC thought. The SDLA leadership was forced to start preparations for the congress.

Lenin gave the Latvian Bolsheviks a great deal of assistance in preparing for the congress. In May 1913, he wrote the "Draft Platform for the Fourth Congress of Social-Democrats of the Latvian Area", formulating the basic tasks of the Social-Democrats of the Latvian area in their struggle against the liquidators. At the end of 1913, Lenin met leading workers of the SDLA, J. German, J. Gipslis and J. Berzins-Ziemelis in Berlin and Paris, and discussed the forthcoming congress with them.<sup>1</sup>

The Fourth Congress of Latvian Social-Democrats was held in Brussels in January 1914. It was attended by Lenin, who helped the Latvian Bolsheviks to lay down the correct tactical line, and to draft the resolutions, and gave a report at the congress on the attitude of the SDLA to the RSDLP and the Social-Democratic group in the Duma. Lenin's participation in the congress was of great importance for consolidating the Latvian Bolsheviks at the congress itself and after it.

The congress declared liquidationism to be a bourgeois trend and adopted a decision to withdraw from the August bloc. This was a great victory for the Latvian Bolsheviks. Lenin put a high value on the work of the Fourth SDLA Congress, remarking that the Latvians had dealt a "death blow at the liquidationist August bloc".<sup>2</sup> With the withdrawal of the Latvian Social-Democrats, the August bloc fell apart in March 1914. That was the end of the Trotskyites' "unificatory" venture. They failed to set up an opportunist, Centrist party in Russia.

Having suffered a crushing defeat, Trotsky did not stop his fight against the Bolshevik Party or break with the liquidators. As he was withdrawing from the editorial board of the liquidationist journal *Nasha Zarya*, Trotsky wrote in February 1913: "I hope there is no need to explain that my withdrawal from *N.Z.* is not a break with liquidationism..."<sup>3</sup>

On February 25, 1913, in a letter addressed to Nikolai Chkhcheidze, Trotsky urged the Menshevik deputies of the Fourth Duma to oppose Lenin's slogan for unity from below, to issue a Menshevik manifesto, calling for nothing less

<sup>1</sup> *Nasha Zarya* No. 6, 1914, pp. 45, 47.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 159.

<sup>1</sup> O. Lenine, *Vospominaniya revolyutsionerov Latvii* (About Lenin. Reminiscences by Latvian Revolutionaries), Riga, 1959, pp. 35, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 360.

<sup>3</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 274.



than the destruction of "the very foundations of Leninism".<sup>1</sup> The Trotskyite journal *Borba* continued to stand up for the liquidationist platform of the August bloc, which was in ruin. In formulating his journal's "credo", Trotsky wrote that its editorial board was acting on the "principal ideas formulated in August 1912".<sup>2</sup> In his article, "Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity", Lenin showed that behind Trotsky's pompous talk about "non-factionalism" and "unity" were liquidationist views and attempts to mislead the workers.

Yakov Sverdlov also spoke of the liquidationist character of Trotsky's journal. On June 29, 1914, he wrote to Klavdia Novgorodtseva-Sverdlova: "*Borba* is Trotsky's organ, where the Vperyodists and AN(Kostrov)<sup>3</sup> have taken shelter. Their whole stand... can yield nothing distinct from the liquidat(ors)."<sup>4</sup> The Trotskyite empty talk was exposed by the Bolsheviks and overthrown by the very logic of the revolutionary struggle. Without any support or influence in the masses, *Borba* folded up in June 1914.

Thus, during the fresh revolutionary upswing, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, did a great deal of work in rallying and consolidating the Party, routing the opportunists on the Right and on the "Left", and in keeping clean the Marxist revolutionary banner. In face of fierce persecution, and working in great secrecy, the Bolsheviks succeeded in this period in holding an all-Party conference and two enlarged meetings of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee with Party workers. The Party Central Committee operated all the time, and the local Party organisations gained considerably in strength and stature. The Party issued printings, which were very large for that period, of legal and illegal newspapers, journals, leaflets and handbills, spreading the revolutionary ideas among the masses, and rallying them round the Bolshevik Party. The Bolsheviks skillfully combined legal and illegal work among the working people.

Armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, the Bolshevik Party was transformed into a powerful political force. It succeeded

ed in rallying round the slogans issued by the Prague Conference the vast majority of the working class, and became the vanguard of the country's revolutionary forces. "This was no easy task—to be in the vanguard, marching at the head of one's people," the Secretary-General of the CPSU Central Committee, L. I. Brezhnev, told the Ninth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. "This called for unflinching loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, to the working-class cause, the cause of the working people, for keen sight and clear-cut orientation, steadfastness of principle and simultaneous flexibility of tactics, persistence and a cool head, to be able to overcome all the difficulties and sharp turns of history."<sup>1</sup> Fostered by Lenin, the Bolshevik Party had all the qualities required to head the masses in the revolutionary upswing, and to lead them to another revolution.

### 3. Exposure by Lenin of Trotsky's Anti-Bolshevik Intrigues in the International Arena

Lenin never regarded the struggle against opportunism inside the RSDLP in isolation from the struggle against opportunism in the international arena. In his early work, *What Is To Be Done?* he wrote: "The English Fabians, the French Ministerialists, the German Bernsteinians, and the Russian Critics—all belong to the same family, all extol each other, learn from each other, and together take up arms against 'dogmatic' Marxism."<sup>2</sup>

Lenin carried on a relentless struggle against international opportunism from the earliest days of his revolutionary activity. He closely followed the development of the international labour movement and expressed concern over the growth of opportunist tendencies in it. In his numerous articles and letters, and speeches in the International Socialist Bureau, on which he represented the RSDLP, Lenin exposed the treacherous role of the opportunist leaders, who, as Clara Zetkin put it, "wanted to transform Social-

<sup>1</sup> J. V. Stalin, *Trotskyism or Leninism?*, Moscow, 1924, Annex, pp. 29-32 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Borba* No. 1, 1914, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> The liquidator Noi Zhordania.

<sup>4</sup> Y. M. Sverdlov, *Izbranniye proizvedeniya* (Selected Works), Vol. 1, Moscow, 1957, pp. 281-82.

<sup>1</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Rech na IX syezde Vengerskoi sotsialisticheskoi rabochei partii* (Speech at the 9th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), *Pravda*, November 30, 1966.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 352-53.



Democracy into a tame lap-dog of the national-social, or social-liberal stripe, a lap-dog which danced on its hind legs before any bourgeois riff-raff".<sup>1</sup>

Lenin saw the danger of Centrism long before the First World War. He rejected the policy of peaceful coexistence with the opportunists and Centrists, and favoured unremitting struggle against them until a complete organisational break.

In the years of reaction and the fresh revolutionary upsurge, Kautsky and the other leaders of the Second International gave every support to the liquidators and the Trotskyites in their fight against the Bolshevik Party. Having slid into the bog of opportunism, Kautsky preached reformist ideas, insisting that Social-Democracy must avoid anything which could "throw the bourgeoisie and its adherents into a state of violent socialistophobic dementia".<sup>2</sup> He preached the peaceful living together of the opportunists and the revolutionaries in the same party, and did not fight revisionism, which was eroding German Social-Democracy. With the help of the Trotskyites, Kautsky tried to foist on the RSDLP the worst opportunist traditions of German Social-Democracy. He denied the possibility of another revolution in Russia, and allowed only economic forms of working-class struggle.

The Kautskyites and the Trotskyites were united on a common ideological foundation—paying lip-service to Marxism while actually fighting it. Trotsky regarded Kautsky as a spiritual leader of the proletariat, and referred to his authority on every possible occasion. The Trotskyite *Pravda* extolled "European experience", calling for a mechanical application on Russian soil of the brand of opportunist tactics and inner-party relations obtaining in European Social-Democracy.

It was no accident that the opportunists of the Second International gave Trotsky and his supporters every attention and considerable material assistance for their anti-Party work. The German Social-Democrats and other parties of the Second International gave the Trotskyites and the liquidators wide access to the pages of their newspapers and

journals. With the support of Kautsky and the other Centrists, Trotsky conducted a systematic campaign of slander against the Bolsheviks in the periodicals of the Social-Democratic parties of the Second International.

On August 28, 1910, on the day the Copenhagen Congress of the Second International opened, the newspaper *Vorwärts* carried an anonymous article, entitled "The Social-Democracy of Russia", with the subtitle "From our Russian Correspondent". Its author was Trotsky. He gave a distorted picture of the state of affairs in the RSDLP and made malicious attacks against the Party central organs. On September 2, 1910, on Lenin's proposal, the RSDLP sent a resolute protest to the Central Committee of the German Social-Democratic Party, pointing out that Trotsky's article was damaging to the Social-Democratic movement in Russia, and "is an unprecedented breach of international solidarity and brotherhood with respect to Russian Social-Democracy".<sup>1</sup> Lenin followed this up with an article, "How Certain Social-Democrats Inform the International About the State of Affairs in the RSDLP", which *Sotsial-Demokrat* carried in September 1910.

The leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party ignored the protests of the revolutionaries in Russia. In September 1910, their theoretical journal, *Die Neue Zeit*, published Trotsky's article, "Tendencies in the Development of Social-Democracy in Russia", followed by Martov's article, "Prussian Discussion and Russian Experience". Both gave a distorted view of the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, the prospects for the Russian revolution, and the internal Party struggle in the RSDLP.

In reply to Trotsky and Martov, Lenin wrote a long article for the same journal, but its editors Kautsky and Wurm refused to print it. On September 24 (October 7), 1910, Lenin wrote to the Polish Social-Democrat, J. Marchlewski: "What a pity that even Kautsky and Wurm do not see how disgusting and mean such articles as those of Martov and Trotsky are. . . . It is really a downright scandal that Martov and Trotsky lie with impunity and write scurrilous lampoons in the guise of 'scientific' articles!"<sup>2</sup>

Following *Die Neue Zeit*'s refusal to publish Lenin's article

<sup>1</sup> *Slavniye bolshevichki* (Outstanding Bolshevik Women), Moscow, 1958, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> K. Kautsky, *Der Weg zur Macht* (The Way to Power), Berlin, 1910, S. 56.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 47, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 424.



against Martov and Trotsky, he wrote a separate article against Trotsky and sent it to Kautsky.<sup>1</sup> We do not know what happened to this article. The slanderous inventions by Trotsky and Martov against the RSDLP were exposed by Lenin in his article, "The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia", which was published in May 1911.

Lenin flatly rejected the assertions by Trotsky and Martov that the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks sprang from rivalry among Marxist intellectuals over influence on a "politically immature proletariat", and demonstrated that the roots of the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks lay in the economic content of the Russian revolution. The article exposed Trotsky's and Martov's inventions about the backwardness and immaturity of the proletariat of Russia. Lenin said that the proletariat alone could be leader of the revolution, that it alone "won for itself the hegemony in the struggle for freedom and democracy as a pre-condition of the struggle for socialism. It won for all the oppressed and exploited classes of Russia the ability to wage a revolutionary mass struggle, without which nothing of importance in the progress of mankind has been achieved anywhere in the world".<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky tried to spread his Centrist ideas not only in Russia but in other countries as well. Encouraged by Kautsky, he tried to "unite" the Tesnyaki Party and the Shiroki Socialists in Bulgaria.<sup>3</sup>

The Tesnyaki Party, led by Blagoyev, consisted of revolutionary elements, and in spite of some weaknesses (insufficient political flexibility and mobility, denial of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry, and other points), was following the way of the Russian Bolsheviks, fighting against opportunism, and for the preservation of the independent Marxist Party and for the proletarian internationalism. The Shiroki Socialists were a rallying centre for all the anti-Marxist elements. They had no support from the workers, because they were in essence a bourgeois party, "of the most vulgar calibre", as D. Blagoyev put it.<sup>4</sup>

The revolutionary activity of the Tesnyaki and their ties with the Bolsheviks won them the hatred of the Trotskyites and the opportunists of the Second International. In the summer of 1910, on assignment from the liquidationist RSDLP CC Bureau Abroad, Trotsky attended a congress of the Tesnyaki<sup>1</sup> in an effort to get them to abandon their revolutionary programme and tactics and to unite with the Shiroki Socialists. After the congress, in the autumn of 1910, he published an article in the Austrian Social-Democratic journal, *Der Kampf*, which distorted the history of the labour movement in Bulgaria, slandered the Tesnyaki Party and tried to intimidate them with all sorts of reprisals by the Second International.

On October 31, 1910, Blagoyev wrote this about Trotsky to the *Sotsial-Demokrat* editorial board: "He has even threatened us with an international court for having mentioned in our Party organ, *Rabotnichesky Vestnik*, that he 'would be brought up before a Party court for incorrect reports in the German press about affairs in the Russian Party'. In general, he is very angry with us just now, and we expect him to make all sorts of trouble."<sup>2</sup>

In January 1911, Blagoyev wrote an article to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, entitled "Socialism in the Balkans",<sup>3</sup> exposing Trotsky's slander of the Bulgarian labour movement, and declaring that his "unificatory" efforts played into the hands of the bourgeoisie, and could do irreparable harm to the labour movement. Thus, the Bulgarian Tesnyaki rebuffed all of Trotsky's importunities and remained loyal to the revolutionary banner.

After the Party's Prague Conference, Trotsky started another campaign of slander and invention against the Bolsheviks. His reckless anti-Party activities were given active support by the opportunist leaders of the Second International.

A meeting of anti-Party groups of Golosists, Vperyodists, Trotskyites, Plekhanov Mensheviks and conciliators was held in Paris on March 12, 1912. They charged that the

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 19, p. 437.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 387.

<sup>3</sup> *Istoriya Bolgarskoi kommunisticheskoi partii* (History of the Bulgarian Communist Party), Moscow, 1960, pp. 101-02.

<sup>4</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, January 13 (26), 1911.

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin i mezhdunarodnoye rabocheye dvizheniye. Vospominaniya* (Lenin and the International Workers' Movement. Reminiscences), Vol. I, Moscow, 1934, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 28/3p/36471.

<sup>3</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, January 13 (26), 1911.



Bolsheviks had "usurped" power in the Party, and passed a "resolution" against the decisions of the Prague Conference, urging local Party organisations not to recognise the Party's central organs it had elected. The text of the "resolution" was sent to the International Socialist Bureau, whose secretary Camille Huysmans circulated it to all the Socialist parties of Western Europe and sent a copy to Lenin.

Upon receiving this, Lenin wrote to Huysmans that the anti-Party groups, which had adopted this "resolution", did not represent anyone in Russia and had no influence at all in the country. He wrote: "It is just as difficult to carry out anything real in Russia as it is easy to vote for abusive resolutions in Paris. And, of course, Paris, Vienna, etc., do not possess the right to speak in the name of Russia."<sup>1</sup>

On behalf of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, Lenin sent the International Socialist Bureau an official report exposing the slanderous character of the Paris "resolution", shedding a true light on the state of affairs in the Party, stating that the Prague Conference had united an absolute majority of Party organisations operating in Russia and had assumed the functions of the Party's supreme organ. He went on to inform the ISB about the expulsion of the liquidators from the Party and declared that the RSDLP(B) was not in any way responsible for the behaviour of any anti-Party groups abroad, so that the ISB would have to maintain all its relations with the Party only through the Central Committee elected at the Prague Conference.<sup>2</sup> On Lenin's demand, the report was circulated to all the Socialist parties for publication in the press. In spite of this, the press of the German Social-Democratic Party continued to publish Trotsky's slanderous articles.

On March 26, 1912, the German Social-Democratic *Vorwärts* published an anonymous article entitled "From Russian Party Life", which abounded in slander about the Prague Conference. On March 28, Lenin wrote to Orjonikidze, Spandaryan and Yelena Stasova: "In *Vorwärts* of March 26, there was a furious and malicious article against the Conference, from the editorial board. Clearly this is Trotsky. There is a great battle over the Conference..."<sup>3</sup> Lenin exposed Trotsky's slander in his article, "Anonymous Writer

in *Vorwärts* and the State of Affairs in the RSDLP", which he sent to the editorial board of the newspaper. However, the opportunist board refused to publish it. Whereupon *Sotsial-Demokrat* issued the article in a separate pamphlet and sent it to 600 addresses in Germany, including the editorial boards of Social-Democratic newspapers, libraries and local Party organisations.<sup>1</sup> The article analysed the Prague Conference decisions and described the actual state of the RSDLP.

Lenin insisted that the Bolsheviks should arrange an information service for socialists abroad to tell them about the state of affairs in the labour movement in Russia, to expose the slanderous statements by the Trotskyites and the liquidators in the foreign press, and resolutely oppose any interference by opportunist leaders of the Second International in the internal affairs of the RSDLP. Lenin himself set an example in this respect. He wrote articles, gave talks to foreign workers, and made a point of informing the ISB about developments in the Party, not letting a single anti-Party attack by the liquidators and the Trotskyites to go unanswered.

The press of the German Social-Democrats, which had taken a hostile attitude to the Prague Conference decisions, gave extensive coverage to the documents of the liquidators' August Conference. The leadership of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany helped Trotsky to publish the materials of the conference, and gave him the use of the *Vorwärts* printing press free of charge.<sup>2</sup> On September 28, 1912, the German Social-Democratic newspaper *Leipziger Volkszeitung* published an anonymous article about the liquidators' August Conference, which misled the German Social-Democrats and distorted the true character of the Trotskyite bloc which had taken shape at the conference.

On Lenin's demand, the same paper published, on October 9, 1912, an article he wrote on behalf of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, showing the Bolshevik Party's leading role in the labour movement and exposing the anti-Party essence of the August bloc. "We consider it necessary to point out," Lenin wrote, "that the said conference was

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, pp. 503-05.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 29.

<sup>1</sup> *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 8 (43), 1925, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 451/1/21387, 21388.



actually in no sense a conference of Russian Party organisations."<sup>1</sup> He proved that Russia's working-class centres had been altogether unrepresented at the liquidators' conference, while the striving of the groups abroad, which had attempted to speak on behalf of the RSDLP, was an effort to mislead the German Social-Democrats. Lenin went on: "We protest against this most resolutely, pointing out that the liquidators' anonymous information will continue to mislead the German comrades until they demand that the 'informants' should come out publicly under their own names and with proof in their hands."<sup>2</sup>

The leaders of the Second International also gave assistance and support to the August bloc during the election campaign to the Fourth Duma. Kautsky saw the main task of the election campaign in getting together "all the warring socialist brothers".<sup>3</sup> Kautsky interfered in the RSDLP's affairs in a high-handed manner and fell back on his prestige in an effort to make the Bolsheviks abandon the Prague Conference decisions and "fraternise" with the liquidators.

On Trotsky's initiative, the Board of the German Social-Democratic Party tried to convene, in September 1912, in Berlin, a meeting of 11 opportunist "centres" and "groups" abroad, with the declared principal aim of achieving the "unity" of Social-Democracy in Russia, and allocating 80,000 marks which the Board had earmarked for the election campaign. Lenin said this was an ultra-stupid venture by Trotsky.<sup>4</sup>

Lenin categorically objected to the convocation of the meeting, and sent a letter to the Board on behalf of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee. Being quite sure that they would not publish the letter, *Sotsial-Demokrat* issued, in September 1912, Lenin's pamphlet in German, entitled *The Present Situation in the RSDLP*, which was circulated to the regional and district centres of the German Social-Democratic Party, the editorial boards of Social-Democratic newspapers, and delegates to the Party's Congress in Chemnitz which was just in session. Lenin re-emphasised

that none of the "centres" and "groups" abroad, striving to call a "unificatory" meeting with the aid of the Board of the German Social-Democratic Party, had any connection with the labour movement, and that no conferences and meetings "can transform the liquidationist *nothing* in the Russian working-class movement into a something".<sup>1</sup>

Lenin warned the Board that the money it was going to give the liquidators would be used by the latter to set up a liquidationist newspaper and found a new party hostile to the RSDLP(B). As a result of Lenin's vigorous protest, the meeting of opportunist groups abroad was called off. However, most of the money was handed over to the August bloc.

Lenin urged the Bolsheviks to carry on an unremitting struggle against the opportunists and Centrists in the German Social-Democratic Party, who were helping the Trotskyites in their anti-Party business. He levelled sharp criticism at Kamenev, who wanted the attacks against the opportunists softened, to prevent their "taking offence" and "being antagonised". Replying to Kamenev, Lenin wrote: "It is inevitable for us to war against the Germans, and we have started to do so with (a) Anonymous + (b) Chemnitz. . . .<sup>2</sup> The war is on, and here you are being naive: you say they will be angry and offended. I don't understand you!"<sup>3</sup>

Following the collapse of the meeting of opportunist "centres" abroad, the leaders of the Second International continued to interfere in the RSDLP's internal affairs. In December 1913, a regular session of the ISB examined the question of "Russian affairs", discussing it haphazardly, without any preliminary preparation. The liquidators attending the session jumped at every opportunity to attack the Bolshevik Party. Karl Kautsky was the reporter on "Russian affairs", and declared that there was no viable Social-Democratic Party in Russia, while the old Social-Democracy was dead. It followed from his statement that since the old party in Russia was dead, there was need to

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, April 21, 1963.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Luch*, October 2, 1912.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 48, p. 79.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to Lenin's "Anonymous Writer in *Vorwärts* and the State of Affairs in the RSDLP", and *The Present Situation in the RSDLP*.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 48, p. 121.



set up another one, according to the image and likeness of the Socialist parties of the Second International.

Maxim Litvinov, representing the Bolshevik Party, issued a categorical protest, emphasising that there was a revolutionary Social-Democratic Party in Russia, enjoying the support of the working class, and that the Bolsheviks would not accept any unification with the opportunists.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the International Socialist Bureau adopted a decision authorising the Executive Committee to call a conference of Social-Democrats in Russia for an "exchange of opinion" on the existing differences. Lenin assessed this decision and Kautsky's report at the ISB session in his articles "The Question of Bureau Decisions", "A Good Resolution and a Bad Speech" and "Kautsky's Unpardonable Error".

Lenin protested vigorously against Kautsky's slanderous assertions. In a letter to Inessa Armand, he said Kautsky's speech had been "shameless, insolent, monstrous, ignorant".<sup>2</sup> He would not even consider the idea of the ISB interfering in the purely internal affairs of the revolutionary Party of the proletariat in Russia. Lenin called on the workers of Russia to express their attitude to this interference by the opportunists of the Second International, emphasising that the ISB should hear the true voice of the workers of Russia, instead of the whispers of the liquidators.

In January 1914, Lenin met in Brussels with Emile Vandervelde, Chairman of the ISB. According to I. Popov, in his talk with Vandervelde on the question of "unity" with the liquidators, Lenin said: "We are not going to seek, propose or discuss any compromise deals. . . . We shall not make any ideological concessions."<sup>3</sup> He told Vandervelde that each side should openly set forth its views and be prepared to answer for them before the working class.

On January 31, 1914, Lenin sent Huysmans his "Report to the International Socialist Bureau", reiterating that the Bolshevik Party had broken organisationally with the liquidators, Trotskyites and other opportunists, and was not willing to have any sort of "unification" or "conciliation" with them. "Since we have in two years united the over-

whelming majority of Social-Democratic workers' groups in Russia," Lenin noted, "we claim recognition for our method of organisation. We cannot depart from that method."<sup>4</sup>

The ISB decision to call a meeting on "Russian affairs" put fresh life into the liquidators and the Trotskyites. They launched a real campaign against the Bolshevik Party. On January 13, 1914, Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote to V. Kaspárov: "The International Bureau's intervention has revived all sorts of corpses. Those who had long since abandoned all work, like the conciliators & Co., are now beginning to stir, and intend, with the Bureau's assistance, to decide on the Party's future."<sup>5</sup>

The liquidationist press started a campaign of preparation for the meeting. Already on December 15, 1913, the liquidators' organ *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* carried an article, entitled "Looking Forward to the International", demanding a tactical and organisational platform within whose framework every "trend" could freely conduct its own line in a single party. The paper wrote: "This platform should assure the non-Leninists of full possibility to propagandise and conduct within the framework of a single Social-Democratic Party the struggle for the open existence of Social-Democracy."<sup>6</sup> In January 1914, Martov had an article in the journal *Nasha Zarya*, entitled "The International's Intervention and Social-Democratic Unity", which virtually demanded recognition for the August bloc platform, and flatly stated that "there can be no agreement on the basis of a recognition of 1905".<sup>7</sup> This meant that the Bolsheviks had to give up their revolutionary programme and tactics, and switch to reformist positions. This liquidationist standpoint was given full backing by the Trotskyite *Borba*, which called for vigorous use of the Second International's "unificatory" initiative.

The liquidators and the Trotskyites pinned great hopes on Vandervelde's trip to St. Petersburg in May and June, 1914. Pretending to make an impartial on-the-spot study to see whom the working class of Russia was following, Vandervelde was in fact hoping to "unite" the Bolsheviks and

<sup>1</sup> *Proletarskaya Pravda*, December 8 (21), 1913.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 48, p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> *Vospominaniya o Vladimire Ilyiche Lenine* (Reminiscences About Vladimir Ilyich Lenin), Vol. 3, Moscow, 1961, p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> *Istorichesky Arkhiv* No. 1, 1957, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* (New Workers' Paper), December 15, 1913.

<sup>7</sup> *Nasha Zarya* No. 1, 1914, p. 34.



the liquidators. Behind the backs of the Bolsheviks, he made a deal with the liquidators about their unconditional recognition of the International Socialist Bureau as the supreme arbiter in the affairs of the Social-Democrats of Russia. Martov told Vandervelde in so many words that the liquidators were prepared to accept in advance the "unification platform" the ISB would map out.<sup>1</sup>

However, Vandervelde did not succeed on his trip. On Lenin's proposal, the Bolshevik deputies invited Vandervelde to meet *Pravda's* editorial board, and produced concrete facts to show whom the working class of Russia followed. Grigory Petrovsky, Bolshevik deputy to the Fourth Duma, told Vandervelde that the Russian labour movement should be studied "not from the whispers of people abroad" and that the next congress of the International should not deal with "conciliation", but with the substance of the matter, and that it would be impossible to unite the Bolsheviks with the "intellectualist general staffs without armies". Having made a study of the structure of the legal workers' organisations, the activity of the Duma deputies and the work of the editorial boards of the newspapers, Vandervelde was forced to admit that the majority of the working class of Russia was behind the Bolsheviks.

Lenin exposed the liquidationist and Trotskyite campaign, under the sponsorship of the ISB's Centrist leadership, against the Bolshevik Party, and called on the Party organisations to give a fitting rebuff to the Russian and international opportunists. In January 1914, he wrote to Inessa Armand: "It looks as if we are again witnessing another tide of idiotic conciliationism, which the ISB is sure to want to use to stage a farce in the spirit of the January 1910 Plenum. Well, we are now steady on our feet, and shall expose this riff-raff."<sup>2</sup>

However, the Second International still enjoyed high prestige, and the workers could well misunderstand any refusal to take part in the meeting. On instructions from the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, the ISB resolution was discussed in the Party organisations. The material of the discussion was published in *Pravda*.

On December 17, 1913, the CC published in *Proletarskaya*

*Pravda* a "Resolution on the Socialist Bureau's Decision"<sup>1</sup> signed by a "group of organised Marxists", who gave a clear-cut formulation of the differences between the Bolsheviks and the liquidators, and also stated the terms on which unity could be possible. The resolution, which had been written by Lenin, emphasised that only representatives of workers' organisations existing in Russia, and not circles abroad, should take part in the meeting.

Lenin prepared a CC report for the meeting, worked out instructions for the CC delegation, and briefed all the members of the delegation in detail. In his letters to Inessa Armand he explained the tactics the delegation should adopt at the meeting, and the documents it should use in the polemics.

The idea that international opportunists, no matter who they are, have no right to impose their decisions on the Bolshevik Party, runs like a red thread through everything that Lenin wrote. In one letter to Inessa Armand he said: "NB. We are an *autonomous* party. Bear this well in mind. No one has the right to impose another's will on us, and this goes for the International Socialist Bureau, as well. Any threats will be *empty phrases*."<sup>2</sup> Lenin tirelessly explained that the Bolsheviks should attend the meeting being called by the ISB only for the purpose of exposing the opportunist character of the August bloc.

The RSDLP(B) Central Committee sent a delegation consisting of Inessa Armand, Mikhail Vladimirovsky and I. Popov. Lenin did not go to the meeting. Y. Ganetsky wrote later: "I remember trying to persuade him to attend the conference himself: his prestige was very important, and could influence the Mensheviks by making them change their tactics. But he laughed at my naivete. He said: 'If the Mensheviks have decided to follow us, why call a conference? All they want to do is to attack me in front of the International. That is a satisfaction I am not going to let them have. Besides, I hate to waste the time, it is better to get on with the job than do a lot of talking.'"<sup>3</sup>

The meeting opened in Brussels on July 3 (16), 1914, and continued for three days. The report of the RSDLP(B)

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, pp. 308-09.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 48, p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> *Vospominaniya o Vladimire Ilyiche Lenine* (Reminiscences About Vladimir Ilyich Lenin), Vol. 1, Moscow, 1956, p. 534.

<sup>1</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 48, p. 253.



Central Committee, written by Lenin, was read out by Inessa Armand.

It gave a clear-cut analysis of the state of affairs within Social-Democracy in Russia. Characterising the differences between the Bolsheviks and the liquidators, Lenin wrote: "This is not disagreement over a question of organisation, of *how* the party should be built, but disagreement concerning the very *existence* of the party. Here, conciliation, agreement and compromise are totally out of the question."<sup>1</sup> The report contained 14 points of unification, and emphasised that "unity will be possible only when the liquidators are ready, once and for all, to abandon their entire tactics and cease to be liquidators".<sup>2</sup>

As soon as the meeting opened, the Bolsheviks faced a united front of West European and Russian opportunists. Under the pretext of "uniting" the Bolsheviks and the opportunist groups, the Second International leaders in essence tried to liquidate the Bolshevik Party. In a letter to the RSDLP(B) Central Committee's Bureau in Russia, Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote: "Martov demanded equality for all the groups attending the meeting. There was no examination at all of the question who had the majority. All had been decided in advance by agreement with Axelrod, Trotsky, Rosa & Co."<sup>3</sup>

Kautsky, Vandervelde and the other Centrists from the ISB leadership tried very hard to impose their terms for unity on the Bolsheviks. The representatives of international Centrism were given unconditional support by Plekhanov, Martov and Axelrod. Trotsky tried to prove, as he had always done, that he was outside the contending factions, but in fact gave full support for the Second International Centrists and liquidators.

At the meeting, Latvian Social-Democrats gave consistent support to the Bolshevik delegation. This angered Trotsky, and when the Bund representative accused the Latvian Social-Democrats of supporting the 14 points of unification proposed by the Bolsheviks, and said that they would have to bear responsibility for the "split", Trotsky declared:

"That is absolutely correct."<sup>1</sup> Working behind the scenes, he organised all the attacks against the Bolsheviks, but to cover up his real stand he refused to speak at the meeting, although he was twice invited to do so. Together with all the opportunists, Trotsky voted for the ISB resolution.

The ISB resolution adopted in December 1913, it will be recalled, had provided only for an exchange of opinion at the meeting. However, the organisers of the meeting called for a vote on Kautsky's resolution, insisting that there were no substantial obstacles in Russia for the establishment of unity among the Social-Democrats. The resolution said: "Today, revolutionary Marxism does not in any sense demand a division, but will, on the contrary, develop much better within the entrails of a united Party."<sup>2</sup> This was a virtual attempt to nullify the decisions of the Prague Conference of the RSDLP about purging the Party of the opportunists.

The Bolshevik delegation courageously and steadfastly beat back all the opportunist attacks. The Bolsheviks flatly refused to vote for Kautsky's resolution, despite open threats and insults, and stood four-square behind the ideas set out in Lenin's report on behalf of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee. The Latvian Social-Democrats joined the Bolsheviks in voting against the resolution.

The resolution was passed by the votes of the liquidators, Trotskyites, Plekhanovites and other opportunists. Lenin noted that during the Brussels "unificatory" meeting, the so-called July Third bloc was set up in place of the August bloc, which had fallen apart, i.e., "the alliance concluded in Brussels, on 3.7.1914, between the Organising Committee, Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Alexinsky, Plekhanov, the Bundists, the Caucasians, the Lithuanians, the Left wing, the Polish opposition and so on".<sup>3</sup>

The participants in the July Third bloc decided to issue an appeal "To All Workers of Russia" written by Plekhanov, Martov and Trotsky. It repeated the main ideas of

<sup>1</sup> S. S. Shaumyan, "V. I. Lenin i Brusselskoye 'obyedinitelnoye' soveshchaniye", *Istoriya SSSR* ("Lenin and the Brussels 'Unificatory' Meeting", *History of the USSR*) No. 2, 1966, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> I. M. Krivoguz, *Utoroi International, 1889-1914* (The Second International, 1889-1914), Moscow, 1964, p. 458.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 115.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 499.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 515.

<sup>3</sup> *Istoricheskoye Arkhiv* No. 6, 1958, p. 28.



the Kautsky resolution, which the ISB had adopted. The July Third (Brussels) bloc was unable to do anything at all. Like the August bloc, the new one was out of touch with the labour movement in Russia, it turned out to be a fiction and soon fell apart.

The Bolsheviks refused to submit to the Brussels meeting decisions and have any sort of compromise with the opportunists, once again showing the way to fight for the purity of Marxist theory and for the unity of Party ranks. In extremely difficult conditions, on the eve of the imperialist war, the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, saved the Party from opportunist degeneration and safeguarded its revolutionary programme and tactics, demonstrating to the international proletariat unbending steadfastness, surpassing loyalty to principle, and an implacable stand against the enemies of Marxism.

The Bolshevik Party regarded the struggle against opportunists of every stripe, and defence of revolutionary Marxism as its most important international duty. In October 1914, Lenin wrote: "Our task now is the unconditional and open struggle against international opportunism and those who screen it. . . . This is an international task. It devolves on us, there is no one else. We must not retreat from it."<sup>1</sup> The Bolshevik Party's consistently revolutionary policy won for it ever greater prestige with the international proletariat.

Having beaten back all the attacks of the international opportunists and the Centrists, and having defeated their agents within the labour movement in Russia—the liquidators and the Trotskyites—the Party, headed by Lenin, steadily guided the working masses of Russia along the revolutionary path. Its policy was in line with the vital interests of the working class and all the working people.

## CHAPTER V

### THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKYISM DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

#### 1. The Bolshevik Party's Tactics During the First World War. Lenin's Critique of Trotsky's Tactical Slogans

During the First World War, the Bolshevik Party continued actively to prepare the proletariat of Russia for fresh battles against the autocracy. Having provided the answers for the fundamental issues of the proletariat's class struggle, which appeared in a new light in wartime, the Party headed the massive struggle against the war, tsarism and capitalism. The Bolsheviks safeguarded their strategic and tactical line in stubborn struggle against social-chauvinism, Centrism and "Left-wing" sectarianism.

The war was a test for the theoretical views and practical activity of all Social-Democratic parties and their leaders. Attitude to the war became the touchstone for rating Social-Democrats as revolutionaries or as opportunists.

The revolutionary trend within the Social-Democracy of Russia and other countries was led by the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin.

During the war, in most Social-Democratic parties of the Second International, and in Russia the Mensheviks and the SRs, took an open stand in defence of imperialism. The Second International collapsed. The opportunism of peacetime developed into social-chauvinism, an open and direct ally of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Lenin gave the following wartime differentiation of forces within Social-Democracy in Russia and other countries: the chauvinists ("social-patriots"), their friends and defenders (Centrists.—*Authors.*), and the anti-chauvinists (consistent revolutionaries-internationalists.—*Authors.*)<sup>1</sup> In his

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 162.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, pp. 187-88.



numerous writings in the period, he gave a deep-going analysis of the social roots and political essence of social chauvinism, showing why the Second International had collapsed, why it had abandoned the class struggle, and had openly allied itself with the imperialist bourgeoisie. Social chauvinism, said Lenin, was not an accidental phenomenon. Its roots lay in the specific features of the imperialist epoch which enables the bourgeoisie to draw on its plunder and exploitation of colonial and dependent peoples for throwing sopas to the upper section of the working class.

In the West, the social-chauvinist leaders were Bissola, Vandervelde, Guesde, Sembat, Scheidemann and others, and in Russia, Axelrod, Plekhanov, Levitsky, Potresov, and others. The social-chauvinists campaigned under the "defend your country" slogan, urging the working class to collaborate with their own bourgeoisie. Thus, Plekhanov insisted that in wartime the policy of the working class and the bourgeoisie should be determined by "concerted collaboration whenever it comes to defending the country against external attacks".<sup>1</sup>

The Bolsheviks branded the social-chauvinists as the worst traitors to the working class, and called for relentless struggle against them. The Centrists, who were latent social chauvinists, were an especial danger to the working class. In that period, as in the earlier one, K. Kautsky continued to be the leader of Centrism in the international arena. In Russia, the Centrist trend was headed by Trotsky and Martov.

In wartime, Centrism was a reflection of the wavering of the petty bourgeoisie between social-chauvinism and petty-bourgeois pacifism, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. While the social-chauvinists took an open stand in defence of the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, the Centrists followed the same policy, but covered it up with "Leftist" talk. They did yeoman service to the bourgeois cause, trying to divert the masses from the revolutionary struggle, and to deceive them with illusory demands for a "just peace" and "universal disarmament". The Centrists did not want a socialist revolution against their "own" governments, and naturally issued no calls for one, nor did they carry on any revolutionary work among the masses,

<sup>1</sup> G. V. Plekhanov, op. cit., Vol. XX, p. 13.

confining themselves to loud pseudo-revolutionary sermons. The Trotskyites also tried to foist upon the working class the Russia Centrist views in opposition to the Bolshevik Party's revolutionary line.

In that period, Trotsky, based in Paris, continued his struggle against the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Lenin.<sup>1</sup> The Trotskyite platform was opposed to the Bolshevik one on all the basic issues of war, peace and revolution. During the war, Menshevik-Trotskyite views were spread by the newspapers *Golos* and *Nashe Slovo*, which replaced it, both published in Paris. Lenin wrote: "In Paris, the newspaper *Nashe Slovo* (the former *Golos*) was launched, with the participation mainly of Martov and Trotsky, who wanted to combine a platonic defence of internationalism with an absolute demand for unity with *Nasha Zarya*, the OC or the Chkheidze group."<sup>2</sup> These newspapers carried articles and statements of social-chauvinist and Centrist leaders, among them Vandervelde, Kautsky, Plekhanov, Axelrod and Aleksinsky. Among those who were members of the editorial board and active contributors to *Nashe Slovo* were A. Martynov, I. Asanov, Y. Larin, I. Ber, M. Vladimirov, V. Antonov-Ovseyenko, D. Ryazanov, A. Lunacharsky, M. Pokrovsky, A. Lozovsky, K. Zalevsky and D. Manuilsky.

The Trotskyites acted as rabid enemies of Lenin's doctrine of imperialism and socialist revolution, spreading Kautskyite ideas of "ultra-imperialism" and the "permanent revolution" doctrine, which the Bolsheviks had exposed back in the 1905-07 period. The Trotskyites tried to oppose the Bolshevik slogans—"Turn the imperialist war into a civil war", and "Defeat for your own government"—by putting forward the Menshevik slogans—"Peace at any price", and "Neither victory nor defeat"—which ignored the class interests of the proletariat, subordinated them to those of the bourgeoisie, and led to abandonment of the revolution. Behind the

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Deutscher, a Trotskyite and a falsifier of CPSU history, has tried to prove that during the war Lenin and Trotsky had no differences of principle, but merely a difference of view, and Trotsky was even prepared to break with the Mensheviks and go over to the Bolsheviks' side (Isaac Deutscher, *Trotsky. Le prophète armé [1879-1921]*, t. I, p. 295). The facts of history testify to the very opposite. During the war, as before, Trotsky was a sworn enemy of Bolshevism. In the newspaper *Nashe Slovo*, he himself admitted that he was carrying on an ideological struggle against the Leninists (see *Nashe Slovo*, November 25, 1915).

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 337.



façade of "internationalism", they continued to work for "unification" between opportunists and revolutionaries within one party. At the back of this demand lurked the hope of all opportunists to do away with the Bolshevik Party.

In order to rally the masses round the revolutionary slogans and to rouse them for the struggle against the autocracy and capitalism, the Bolshevik Party had to rout social-chauvinism and Centrism. In his articles, "What Next?", "The Collapse of Platonic Internationalism", "The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War", "On the Two Lines in the Revolution", "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe", "The Peace Programme", "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", and many others, Lenin exposed the anti-Marxist character of the Trotskyite platform and showed its petty-bourgeois substance and harmfulness for the proletariat's class struggle. On the pages of *Sotsial-Demokrat* and other periodicals, the Bolsheviks exposed the Centrist character of the Trotskyite propositions. In fierce struggle against the social-chauvinists and the Centrists, the Bolshevik Party worked out, by the very early stages of the world war, the only correct revolutionary tactics designed to overthrow the autocracy and bring victory for the socialist revolution.

The First World War was a war of aggrandisement started by the imperialists of all countries. It was caused by the irreconcilable economic and political contradictions of imperialism. It demonstrated that imperialism, as an economic and political system, is basically unworkable, and can exist only by producing incredible calamities and suffering for masses of people.

The law of capitalism's uneven economic and political development at its monopoly stage leads to a change in the relation of economic, military and political forces between various states and groups of states. The spheres of influence, earlier divided between monopoly alliances and states, run into a contradiction with a new relation of forces. There arises a conflict whose solution the imperialist bourgeoisie seeks only through war.

In his writings during the First World War, Lenin exposed not only the economic, but also the political causes of the war and its character. He said the war was a continuation of the policy of the imperialist bourgeoisie, that it was a war "of slave-owners quarrelling over their chattels and

eager to consolidate and perpetuate slavery".<sup>1</sup> The bourgeoisie of the belligerent countries strove to neutralise the revolutionary energy of the working class, to dull the edge of the more dangerous class contradictions, and to bring chauvinism and nationalism to the fore.

Lenin's conclusions on the origins and character of the First World War were the ideological foundation for working out the Bolshevik Party's tactics, which provided a revolutionary way out of the imperialist war, and preparation for overthrowing the autocracy and the rule of the bourgeoisie. The main requirements, which Lenin set forth in working out the Party's tactics, were: "(1) Bringing forward a formulated appraisal of the moment and the tactics to be used ... all this on behalf of an organisation; (2) advancing a militant slogan for the current moment; (3) linking up these two points with *action* by the proletarian masses and their class-conscious vanguard."<sup>2</sup>

The first few documents which determined the Bolshevik Party's attitude to the war were Lenin's works, "The Tasks of Revolutionary Social-Democracy in the European War", and the RSDLP(B) CC Manifesto, "The War and Russian Social-Democracy", written on the basis of the former. The CC Manifesto contained a class analysis of the world war as the basis for a clear-cut formulation of the Bolsheviks' principal tactical slogan: conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war as "the only correct proletarian slogan... dictated by all the conditions of an imperialist war between highly developed bourgeois countries".<sup>3</sup> Closely allied with this slogan was that of working for the defeat of "one's own" government in the imperialist war, which Lenin put forward in opposition to the social-chauvinist "defend your country" slogan.

The Manifesto showed why the Second International had collapsed, gave an assessment of its social-chauvinist essence, and set the task of organising another, proletarian Third International. The Manifesto pointed out that apart from avowed social-chauvinists blocking the establishment of another revolutionary International there were wavering elements who were inclined to justify the betrayal of the Second International leaders and were trying to restore it.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 436.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.



The Manifesto played an outstanding part in the history of Social-Democracy not only in Russia, but in other countries as well. It gave the Left-wing internationalist forces a clear-cut orientation in the complex conditions of the imperialist war. It was smuggled into Russia, and became the basis for the activity of Bolshevik organisations. Thanks to the internationalist activity of the Bolshevik Party, the overwhelming majority of the workers in Russia did not succumb to nationalism and chauvinism. The Manifesto was also widely circulated abroad. It was sent as an official document of the RSDLP(B) CC to the International Socialist Bureau and also to some German, British, French, Swedish and Swiss socialist newspapers.

The next stage in the elaboration of Bolshevik tactics was the decisions adopted by a conference of the RSDLP(B) sections abroad, which was held in Bern from February 27 to March 4, 1915. By then some Party members abroad had been affected with pacifist, even defencist ideas. Thus, some RSDLP(B) sections in Montpellier, France, came out with such slogans as "Down with the war" and "Long live peace!"<sup>1</sup> The Baugy group, which included Nikolai Bukharin, Nikolai Krylenko, Y. Rozmirovich, G. Pyatakov and Yevgeniya Bosh, came forward in opposition to the Leninist slogans of "transforming the imperialist war into a civil war" and working for "the defeat of one's own government", with the Trotskyite slogan for peace, and urged a policy of conciliation with the Centrists.<sup>2</sup> The Baugy group demanded permission to publish their own periodical independent of the Party CC, invitation for Trotsky to collaborate with Bolshevik publications, and establishment of friendly contacts with the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board. All this made urgent the need for a Party conference of the RSDLP(B) sections abroad, it being impossible to call an all-Party conference in the conditions of wartime.

The Bern Conference was convened on Lenin's initiative and had the importance of an all-Party conference. It was attended by representatives of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, of the newspaper *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Social-Democratic Women's Organisation, and the RSDLP(B)

sections abroad, including those in Paris, Zürich, Bern, Lausanne, Geneva, and London, and of the Baugy group.<sup>1</sup>

The question of war and the Party's tasks was the main one before the conference. A report on the subject was given by Lenin. In the resolutions adopted on the report, the conference defined the Bolshevik Party's tasks and tactics in the conditions of the imperialist war. These decisions were the basis for the activity of Bolshevik organisations in Russia and abroad.

Lenin believed that the decisions of the Bern conference "will prove of use to all Social-Democrats who are earnestly seeking the way towards live work from the present-day welter of opinions which boil down to an acknowledgement of internationalism in word, and an urge to come to terms at any cost with social-chauvinism in deed".<sup>2</sup>

The Trotskyites joined the social-chauvinists in attacking the Bolshevik Party's tactical line as worked out in Lenin's articles and the Bern Conference decisions. As in the earlier period, Kautsky was their spiritual mentor.

It will be recalled that Kautsky took the wrong view of the origins and character of the First World War, arguing that "until now imperialist contradictions have been incapable of directly causing wars".<sup>3</sup> He insisted that the outbreak of war had been accidental: the governments, terrified by mutual threats, had started the war unintentionally. Kautsky tried to justify the chauvinists in every way, declaring that everyone had the right and the duty to defend one's country.

The Trotskyites fully shared Kautsky's opportunist views on the origins and aim of the war. Trotsky admitted that the war was an imperialist one, but declared that its outbreak had been a spontaneous explosion with which the imperialist governments had nothing to do, that the "war has no definite, politically defined aim" and that it had become "a war of attrition for all the belligerents".<sup>4</sup> This abstract, scholastic approach to the character of the war tended to ignore its class, imperialist essence.

<sup>1</sup> Named after Baugy, a suburb of Lausanne. The group was not an independent unit confirmed by the CC, but was part of the Lausanne section.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> See K. Kautsky, *Nationalstaat, Imperialistischer Staat und Staatenbund*, Nürnberg, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> *Golos*, November 28, 1914.

<sup>1</sup> *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* No. 5 (40), 1925, pp. 167-70.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.



The opportunist, Kautskyite views of the character and origins of the war became the basis for the tactical slogans of the Trotskyites, who from the very first day of the war came out against the Bolshevik slogans. In early November 1914, Lenin gave a lecture in Zürich on "The War and Social-Democracy". Trotsky, who took part in the debate that followed, declared that by and large he agreed with the speaker's stand. In actual fact, his speech was in defence of the Centrist "programme for peace".

Trotsky argued that the war tended to paralyse the revolutionary potential of the working class, and ruled out the organisation of revolutionary action. In face of the combined might of the government power, Social-Democracy was powerless, which is why, Trotsky said, the proletariat should first of all secure peace, a halt to the war between the German and the French proletariat, and then think about a revolution.<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky accused Lenin of disrespect for Kautsky, and demanded a "more fitting tone" in polemics with him. Behind this demand was a virtual attempt to stand up for the West European Centrists, with whom the Trotskyites had common cause. The views propounded by Trotsky destined the proletariat to remain passive, to bow to the spontaneous course of events, and diverted it from the revolutionary struggle. These Trotskyite propositions were resolutely opposed by the Bolsheviks.

The Bolshevik Party's central tactical slogan for "turning the imperialist war into a civil war" gave a correct definition of the motive forces of the revolution, the ways leading to it, and the ways and means of the revolutionary struggle in the conditions of wartime. It sprang from the character of the war and the inevitability of the revolutionary crisis which it produced.

Drawing on the experience of the war, Lenin wrote: "From the standpoint of progress, from the standpoint of the progressive class, the imperialist bourgeois war, the war of highly developed capitalism, can, *objectively*, be opposed only with a war *against* the bourgeoisie, i.e., primarily civil war for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; for *unless* such a war is waged, serious progress is *impossible*."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin Miscellany XIV*, p. 139 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Lenin, Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 316.

Defining the means of revolutionary struggle which led to the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war, Lenin pointed out a number of factors. He believed that the first steps which could be taken in that direction were: "(1) an absolute refusal to vote for war credits, and resignation from bourgeois governments; (2) a complete break with the policy of a class truce (*bloc national*, *Burgfrieden*); (3) formation of an underground organisation wherever the governments and the bourgeoisie abolish constitutional liberties by introducing martial law; (4) support for fraternisation between soldiers of the belligerent nations, in the trenches and on battlefields in general; (5) support for every kind of revolutionary mass action by the proletariat in general."<sup>1</sup> The deepening economic crisis and the spread of revolutionary attitudes among the masses warranted the conclusion that the working class, the army masses, and the peasantry of Russia were advancing towards a point at which they would start a civil war against their exploiters.

Implementation of the principal slogan of the Bolshevik Party called for concrete revolutionary action by the masses, and knowledge of how to organise them for the struggle against the autocracy. It was up to the revolutionary Social-Democrats to promote the policy of defeat of one's own government, because "the *conversion* of a war between governments into a civil war is, on the one hand, facilitated by military reverses ('defeats') of governments; on the other hand, one *cannot* actually strive for such a conversion without thereby facilitating defeat".<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky opposed the Bolshevik Party's Leninist tactics in a number of his articles, such as "The War Crisis and Political Prospects" and "Programme for Peace", and in his speeches declared that "civil war is a factional formula of the Bolsheviks, which they want to impose on others".<sup>3</sup> Trotsky held that the struggle against the war had its natural expression in the demands for peace at any price, the struggle for peace spontaneously impelled the proletariat to action against war and towards revolution. That is

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism 351/10/27506/2.



why the Social-Democrats should demand: peace without annexations and indemnities, self-determination of nations, and, finally, when the proletariat's international forces were ripe, a United States of Europe without monarchies, standing armies or secret diplomacy. He regarded his "programme for peace" as applying to the whole of Europe. He said it was an expression of the fact that the national state had outlived itself as a framework for the development of the productive forces and as a basis for the proletariat's class struggle. Trotsky's "programme for peace" was Menshevik and opportunist. It was no accident that Martov wrote in a letter to Axelrod that on the *Golos* editorial board he had managed to rescue the peace slogan "with great support from Trotsky".<sup>1</sup>

The Trotskyite "programme for peace" was criticised by *Sotsial-Demokrat* in the light of the proletariat's class struggle. Lenin remarked that the Bolshevik Party was not opposed to peace, that the Bolsheviks stood for peace, and took account of the urge of the masses for a just and democratic peace. He wrote: "An end to wars, peace among the nations, the cessation of pillaging and violence—such is our ideal, but only bourgeois sophists can seduce the masses with this ideal, if the latter is divorced from a direct and immediate call for revolutionary action."<sup>2</sup>

The task was to direct the peace movement into the channel of the proletarian, instead of the pacifist struggle, and to connect it with the proletariat's struggle for power. In view of the stratified class basis of the peace movement, the Party was right in believing that the peace slogan could not be a slogan in the proletariat's class struggle. In the conditions of wartime, the peace slogan was "absurd and mistaken (especially after the betrayal by almost all the leaders up to and including Guesde, Plekhanov, Vandervelde, Kautsky). In practice it would mean petty-bourgeois moaning. But we must remain revolutionaries in war conditions too. And must preach the class struggle among the troops also."<sup>3</sup>

In his articles, "The State of Affairs in Russian Social-Democracy", "Socialism and War", "The Peace Programme" and others, Lenin showed the class content of the peace

slogan, which gave no indication of how to fight against the war or which way the proletariat had to advance towards winning power. *Sotsial-Demokrat* wrote: "Have a look at the 'peace-at-any-price' slogan from the standpoint of the power grouping in the present war. Couldn't this slogan become the most reactionary one, to be defended by Izvolsky and Bethmann-Hollweg?"<sup>4</sup>

The war, which did not yield any tangible results for either group of powers, intensified the suffering and plight of the masses. The working people began insistently to demand peace. The governments of the belligerent countries were terrified at the advance of the revolution. The bourgeoisie strove to use the massive urge for peace to promote its own ends. Pointing out this tendency towards peace in some circles of the bourgeoisie in the belligerent countries, Lenin wrote that representatives of advanced capital "are shedding tears over the war and incessantly voicing a wish for peace".<sup>2</sup>

In these conditions, the social-chauvinists and the Centrists, speculating on the working people's feelings, also began to talk about peace. Conferences of socialists from neutral countries meeting in Copenhagen, socialists from the Entente countries in London, and the German, Austrian and Hungarian Social-Democratic parties in Vienna, issued calls to the governments to promote the establishment of peace. Trotsky regarded this sham urge for peace among the social-chauvinists and the Centrists of various countries as a platform for united "international" action. He claimed that all the "Leftists" were rallied under the banner of peace, while the Leninist *Sotsial-Demokrat* was in total isolation, its attitude being "the ultimate of sectarian blindness".<sup>3</sup> These statements fully revealed Trotsky's chauvinist face, for, as Lenin put it, to avoid remaining in isolation, he was "predestined to hang on to the coat-tails of Kautsky and Bernstein".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, December 5, 1914. Izvolsky was a Russian statesman and diplomat. During the First World War, he was ambassador to Paris and played an active part in preparing and starting the war. Bethmann-Hollweg was German Reichschancellor during the First World War. His policy was to suppress the labour movement, and he had played an active part in starting the war.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, October 13, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 285.

<sup>1</sup> Y. O. Martov and P. B. Axelrod, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 310.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 293.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 172.



Thus, the social-pacifist "programme for peace" proclaimed by the Trotskyites was a refuge for patent social-chauvinists, mealy-mouthed Centrists, and the governments of the belligerent states. In practice, it was designed to preserve imperialism, because it spread in the working class the illusory hope that the ruling classes would put an end to the war of their own accord.

Assessing the attitude of the opportunists, who backed the "programme for peace", Lenin wrote: "He who accepts the class struggle cannot fail to accept civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions inevitable, continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. That has been confirmed by every great revolution. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, is to fall into extreme opportunism and renounce the socialist revolution."<sup>1</sup>

The Trotskyites' Right-wing opportunism was even more glaring in their attitude to the Bolshevik "defeat one's own government" slogan. Trotsky wrote that "no revolutionary party can regard defeats even as an indirect ally".<sup>2</sup> In opposition to the Bolsheviks, the Trotskyites backed up the Menshevik slogan of "neither victory nor defeat". They held this slogan to be necessary for the proletariat in implementing the "programme for peace". Trotsky declared that defeats tended to disorganise the "ruling reaction", but they tended even more to "disorganise the whole of social life, its working class above all".<sup>3</sup>

Taking a one-sided view of the experience in the Russo-Japanese war, Trotsky declared that Russia's defeat in the world war would strengthen Germany and Austria, as it had strengthened Japanese imperialism in 1904-05. But what he absolutely ignored was the fact that Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese war had accelerated the revolutionary explosion in 1905.

Trotsky deliberately falsified the Bolshevik "defeat one's own government" slogan. He alleged that the Bolsheviks considered it possible to apply this slogan to Russia, which was why its realisation would promote the strengthening of Prussian militarism. This was slander of the Bolshevik

Party. *Sotsial-Demokrat* brushed it aside and wrote: "This would have been so, if we had not demanded of all the socialist parties that they fight the governments of their own countries, if we had not proclaimed the slogan of 'turning the imperialist war into a civil one' for all countries where there was anything like a developed labour movement."<sup>4</sup>

The Trotskyites joined the overt social-chauvinists in accusing the Bolsheviks of lacking patriotism. In his article, "On the National Pride of the Great Russians", which appeared in *Sotsial-Demokrat* in December 1914, Lenin debunked these inventions. The working class and its Party loved their country and were proud of it. They would do everything to make Russia free and mighty. The Bolshevik Party's patriotism did not consist in supporting the "defend your country" policy of the Purishkeviches and the Guchkovs, but in destroying the oppression of the landowners and the bourgeoisie, establishing the power of the toiling people and creating a real motherland for the working people.

The Bolshevik Party worked insistently and systematically to explain to the working masses that the call for the defeat of one's own government in the imperialist war meant a continuation of the revolutionary struggle, and that defeats in wars tended to weaken tsarism, thereby facilitating its overthrow and promoting the victory of the revolution.

The Bolsheviks resolutely opposed the Trotskyite "neither victory nor defeat" slogan. In his article entitled "The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War", Lenin wrote that Trotsky and his supporters "have adopted the viewpoint on the war held by governments and the bourgeoisie, i.e., that they cringe to the 'political methodology of social-patriotism', to use Trotsky's pretentious language".<sup>5</sup>

The Trotskyite "neither victory nor defeat" slogan was designed to substitute intergovernmental relations for class relations. It meant that the old order, including the Russian autocracy, was to remain intact. This was an open call for "peace" with the bourgeoisie, and an abandonment of the proletariat's class struggle. Lenin wrote: "Whoever is in favour of the slogan of 'neither victory nor defeat' is con-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. 23, pp. 78-79.

<sup>2</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, March 14, 1916.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., September 1, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, February 12, 1915.

<sup>5</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 276.



sciously or unconsciously a chauvinist; at best he is a conciliatory petty bourgeois but in any case he is an *enemy* to proletarian policy, a partisan of the existing governments, of the present-day ruling classes."<sup>1</sup>

During the First World War, Trotsky loudly claimed that his stand was internationalist, thus trying to prove that he favoured the unity of proletarian action and unity of international forces. Actually, however, he stood only for the unity of the Centrists and social-chauvinists.

At the time, an objective criterion of true internationalism was recognition of unity of action by the revolutionary forces, which were united on the basis of recognition that the war was an imperialist one, that a revolutionary crisis was inevitable, and were preparing the proletariat for direct revolutionary action. This unity was ensured by Lenin's tactics of "converting the imperialist war into a civil war" and "defeat of one's own government". Any other "unity" in practice abandoned the soil of class struggle and took the proletariat towards collaboration with the bourgeoisie, instead of a struggle to prepare revolution.

"Today, following 1914," Lenin emphasised, "unity of the proletarian struggle for the socialist revolution demands that the workers' parties separate themselves completely from the parties of the opportunists."<sup>2</sup> Real internationalism was determined above all by unfailing advance towards the socialist revolution. This advance could be a success only provided there was complete separation of the revolutionary internationalists from the social-chauvinists and the Centrists.

Trotsky took a different view of internationalism. On behalf of the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board, he kept saying that the truly internationalist trend had as its slogan a struggle for peace and an end to the war. He was deliberately silent about the fact that it was not the internationalists but the social-chauvinists, the Centrists and the governments of the belligerent powers that were united by that slogan.

Ignoring the class content of social-chauvinism and its bonds with the imperialist bourgeoisie, Trotsky waved the internationalist flag, while preaching peaceful coexistence between real internationalists, and social-chauvinists and

Centrists. Thus, he urged the cohesion "of all internationalists, regardless of their factional origin or differing shades of internationalism".<sup>1</sup> He insisted that "the connection of all factions of the revolutionary internationalists was much higher than the purely factional, politically reactionary connection".<sup>2</sup>

In practice, this Trotskyite formula, which proclaimed the "unity" of one and all, was a convenient screen for fighting the revolutionary elements, the Bolsheviks above all. Lenin exposed Trotsky's demagogy, remarking that he who did not take trouble to sort out the class content of social-chauvinism and nationalism "is consequently quite incapable of drawing an 'ideological line' between himself and social-chauvinism, no matter how vehemently he may assert that he is ready to do so".<sup>3</sup> The cohesion of the revolutionary forces of international Social-Democracy was possible only through relentless exposure of social-chauvinism and Centrism. "Our job now is a merciless war on chauvinism,"<sup>4</sup> Lenin declared.

Whereas the Bolshevik Party was carrying on an uncompromising struggle against the opportunists, rallying the revolutionary forces of international Social-Democracy, the Trotskyites flew the flag of "internationalism" while preaching the "unity" of all social-chauvinists and Centrists. In this context, the Trotskyite newspaper *Nashe Slovo* took a characteristic stand during the London Conference of the Entente countries' socialist parties, which was held in February 1915. The conference debased the great words "socialism" and "internationalism" and actually followed in the wake of the bourgeoisie of the belligerent countries.

The delegates—social-chauvinists from Britain, France, and Belgium, and Russian Mensheviks and SRs—came out in support of their governments for war until final victory over Germany. Estimating the results of the London Conference, Lenin wrote that the bourgeois governments got the main thing, "the British and French socialists having been won over to the side of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie".<sup>5</sup>

Shortly before the conference, Trotsky and Martov sent the Bolsheviks, on behalf of the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board,

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>1</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, July 4, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, December 12, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 171.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 178.



a letter offering an arrangement for a joint stand at the conference against social-chauvinism. Similar letters were also sent to the liquidationist OC and the Bund.

Lenin expressed doubt about the possibility of maintaining business-like contacts with the *Nashe Slovo* people. He wrote to Alexander Shlyapnikov: "Hopes of an agreement with them are not great, because Axelrod, it is said, is in Paris—and Axelrod ... is a social-chauvinist."<sup>1</sup> However, in the interests of the cause, the Bolsheviks decided to accept the proposal.

On February 9, 1915, the RSDLP(B) Central Committee sent the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board a draft declaration, written by Lenin, which was to be read out at the London Conference.<sup>2</sup> It set out a programme for struggle by the revolutionary Social-Democrats against the imperialist war, and contained a call for the organisation of massive revolutionary action. However, the Trotskyites rejected the Bolshevik declaration. Writing to A. Shlyapnikov about this, Nadezhda Krupskaya said that the resolution had been discussed by the *Nashe Slovo* people, who had, as a result, worked out their own resolution.<sup>3</sup> The Trotskyite draft declaration distorted the basic propositions of the Bolshevik draft, and said nothing at all about the betrayal of the German Social-Democratic leaders, or about the need to stage massive revolutionary action.<sup>4</sup>

*Nashe Slovo* said the patently social-chauvinist London Conference was a stage "towards the re-establishment of the International" under a slogan for peace which "could unite all conscious proletarians and not simply minority groups".<sup>5</sup>

The Bolshevik Party organisations in Russia and abroad branded the conference of the Entente countries' socialists as a chauvinistic one. The Bolshevik section in London declared in a resolution that it was "unable to welcome the present conference".

Only one man spoke the truth about the war at the London Conference. It was Maxim Litvinov, representing the Bolsheviks, who was attending the conference on Lenin's

instructions for the purpose of making public the anti-war declaration issued by the RSDLP(B) Central Committee. However, the social-chauvinists did not even allow him to complete his speech. Litvinov handed the text of the declaration to the presidium and left the conference. The Bolshevik declaration was subsequently circulated among the socialist organisations of many countries and among workers' newspapers in the USA, Britain and Holland.

While fighting social-chauvinism and Centrism, and exposing Trotsky's "unification" platform, the Bolsheviks carried on painstaking work in rallying the Left-wing forces in the international labour movement. Lenin wrote to Alexandra Kollontai in August 1915: "It would be devilishly important to have a joint international statement by the Left Marxists!"<sup>1</sup>

The International Socialist Conference at Zimmerwald in September 1915 was an important stage in the struggle to unite the Left-wing internationalists. Thanks to the important preparatory work carried out under Lenin's direction, the Left-wing internationalists came out at the conference as a united group. On every item of the agenda, the Leftists had their own platform. They worked out a draft resolution on the attitude to the war and the tasks of international Social-Democracy, and also an anti-war manifesto. Although the Leftists were in a minority (8 out of 38 delegates) their unanimity and cohesion and spirited defence of their views left a great impression on the wavering participants of the conference.

The Zimmerwald Left was opposed by the Right wing, consisting mainly of the Centrist-minded delegates, led by Ledebour. It was supported by a small group of delegates, led by Grimm and Trotsky, who hid behind revolutionary catchwords, while supporting the Right wing of the conference on all the essential questions. Trotsky, together with the Centrists, strove to isolate the Leftists. He tried to present the Bolsheviks as sectarians, constituting an extremist organisation isolated from the international labour movement.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 26, pp. 128-29.

<sup>3</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 17/1/IV/1614/3.

<sup>4</sup> *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Vol. 2, p. 598.

<sup>5</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, February 13, 1915.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Present-day bourgeois fabricators try to build up Trotsky as a fighter for the new, Third International, arguing that his stand at the Zimmerwald Conference was not different from that of Lenin's. Isaac Deutscher insists that although Trotsky took a somewhat less categorical stand on this question, his attitude was in the main the same as that



The conference was the scene of an acute struggle over the draft resolution tabled by the Zimmerwald Left defining the attitude to the world war and the tasks of international Social-Democracy. The draft urged the need to recognise the imperialist character of the war, and to transform it into a civil war, to work for the defeat of "one's own" government, a break with social-chauvinism, and establishment of the Third International. Most of the Centrist-minded delegates declared that they were not authorised to discuss these matters, and that their task did not go beyond issuing a general protest against the war.

In order to put paid to the Zimmerwald Left draft resolution, the Right-wing delegates, on Grimm's proposal, put off its discussion indefinitely. Trotsky said he agreed with the resolution of the Left-wingers, and voted for its discussion, but did not express his agreement with the substance of the resolution. He declared that the masses were not prepared for a revolutionary struggle against the war, that the resolution did not contain the slogan for peace, and that it was premature to demand a condemnation of the social-chauvinists, because the masses themselves were affected with chauvinism.<sup>1</sup>

During the discussion of the next item of the agenda—a manifesto against the war—Trotsky's Centrist attitude was completely exposed. Three drafts—that of the Zimmerwald Left, of the Ledebour group, and Trotsky's—were submitted for discussion.

The draft submitted by the Left-wing Zimmerwaldists stated that imperialism had created objective conditions for revolution, while the war was bringing it to a head, which was why the Social-Democratic parties regarded it as their duty to organise the proletariat's revolutionary action under the slogan of civil war and defeat of "one's own" government. It was impossible to organise revolutionary action by the working class without ideological

of Lenin's (I. Deutscher, *Trotsky. Le prophète armé (1879-1921)*, t. I, p. 316).

But the facts show that Trotsky flatly objected to Lenin's demand for an organisational break with the opportunists, and did not want the organisation of the Third International, but a restoration of the old, Second International, in which the opportunists and the Centrists would remain dominant.

<sup>1</sup> Y. G. Temkin, *Zimmerwald—Quinthal*, Moscow, 1967, p. 62 (Russ. ed.); *Nashe Slovo*, October 6, 1915.

exposure of the social-chauvinists and organisational separation from them. The Leftists were intending to start organising anti-government demonstrations, economic and political strikes, and anti-war manifestations.

However, many of these fundamental propositions were not supported by the commission, which was working on the final draft of the manifesto. Trotsky, Grimm, Ledebour, Merrheim, Modigliani, Rakovsky and other Centrists were doing everything they could to keep the Leftists' proposals out of the draft. After long debate, the commission worked out a compromise draft manifesto which the conference adopted unanimously. Some of the manifesto provisions were inconsistent and vague. Nevertheless, because of Lenin's principled stand, the Centrists failed to strip the manifesto of all its revolutionary content. Lenin remarked that the document contained "a number of fundamental ideas of revolutionary Marxism".<sup>1</sup>

The manifesto gave a correct definition of the imperialist character of the war, but failed to say that imperialism had already created objective conditions for socialist revolution in a number of countries. This deprived the working class of clear prospects for struggle. The manifesto said that the "defend your country" slogan was a capitalist lie, but it failed to say that the vehicles of this lie were the social-chauvinists and the Centrists. The manifesto criticised the Social-Democratic parties for taking the "defend your country" attitude and voting for war credits, participating in the bourgeois governments, and preaching "civic peace". But the manifesto did not explain these disgraceful facts in any way. While calling for a struggle for peace, freedom and the sacred aims of socialism, it failed to indicate the revolutionary ways and means required by this struggle.

For all its shortcomings, Lenin believed the Bolsheviks were right in signing the manifesto. He asked: "Was our Central Committee right in signing this manifesto, with all its inconsistency and timidity? We think it was."<sup>2</sup> Explaining the need for signing the manifesto, Lenin said that it took a definite step forward in the struggle against opportunism and towards a break with it, and that it would have

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.



been sectarianism and "poor war tactics to refuse to adhere to the mounting international protest movement against social-chauvinism".<sup>1</sup>

The Zimmerwald Left, refusing to be bound by the inconsistent section of the manifesto, issued a special declaration reserving the right of criticising its shortcomings, for the purpose of further rallying the international forces.

The international socialist conference at Zimmerwald was of great importance in the revolutionary Marxists' struggle against the war and social-chauvinism. It showed that the Bolshevik Party's ideas were exerting a great influence on the best men in the socialist parties of Western Europe.

At Zimmerwald, the Leftist group took shape organisationally and elected its governing organ, a bureau headed by Lenin. It then became the nucleus of an internationalist movement in all countries. Although there was no complete unanimity of views within the Zimmerwald Left, it left its mark on the international socialist movement, and in fact became the embryo of the Third International.

Soon after the Zimmerwald Conference, Trotsky began to spread the rumour that he was virtually the only consistent internationalist at the conference, and that it had owed its success entirely to him. He equated the Liquidationist *Izvestia Organizatsionnogo Komiteta* and the Bolshevik *Sotsial-Demokrat*, alleging that they were not the "only sources of international thinking of its kind".<sup>2</sup> In his reports on the conference, Trotsky distorted the facts, and poured dirt on the Left-wing Zimmerwald group.<sup>3</sup>

Trotsky arrogantly ridiculed the Left-wing elements, directed by Lenin, calling them an "extremist trend" isolated from the international forces, and issued a demagogic call for the struggle "on two fronts"—against the Rightists and the "disorganising sectarianism of the extremists".<sup>4</sup> His statements about the struggle "on two fronts" were designed to present him as an extreme "Leftist", so as to cover up his ties with the Right-wing opportunists. In

actual fact, Trotsky had no intention at all of carrying on the struggle against the Rightists, because he was a secret ally of the social-chauvinists. He conducted a campaign of slander only against the Bolsheviks and the Left-wing Zimmerwaldists.

The Bolsheviks resolutely opposed Trotsky's inventions over Zimmerwald. Discussions of the results of the conference were held in the RSDLP(B) organisations abroad and at internationalist clubs set up on Bolshevik initiative, which approved the stand of the Bolshevik delegation. Reports on the results of the Zimmerwald Conference were given by Lenin at Lausanne, Geneva and Zürich.

There was an acute ideological struggle in the largest internationalist club at Paris. At its meeting on November 13, 1915, it adopted, in face of Trotsky's resistance, a resolution on the Zimmerwald Conference, saying that it adhered to the "Left-wing section of the conference".<sup>1</sup> It voiced solidarity with the tactical slogans of the Bolsheviks, and rejected the Trotskyite propositions. Even those members of the club who had earlier supported Trotsky voted for a message of greetings to the Zimmerwald Left. Having failed, Trotsky wrote a letter to the board of the Paris Internationalist Club, reiterating his disagreement with the stand taken by the Leninist delegation at Zimmerwald, and announcing his resignation from the club.<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky worked hard to recruit supporters in Russia, making use of the newspaper *Nashe Slovo*. However, its possibilities were very limited. It was out of touch with the revolutionary labour movement in Russia, being a mouthpiece of the Menshevik émigrés. The newspaper repeatedly complained that it had no ties with Russia, but still hoped to find an audience among the proletariat in Russia. However, the hopes of the Trotskyites were not justified. The newspaper failed, after all, to find any support among the workers of Russia. Lenin said that little groups abroad, like those of the liquidators, Trotsky and the SRs, represented the opportunist intelligentsia and "among the working class in Russia they never had

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, November 24, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 351/11/27368.

<sup>4</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, November 25, 1915.

<sup>1</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 351/12/29454.

<sup>2</sup> A. S. Shapovalov. *U borbe za sotsializm* (In the Struggle for Socialism), Moscow, 1934, p. 803.



anything, and have nothing. You cannot trust them in the slightest".<sup>1</sup>

Even at the beginning of the war, Trotsky had actively campaigned in support of the Mensheviks' chauvinist policy in the Duma. In the teeth of the facts, he insisted that on the question of war, the Menshevik group in the Duma "adopted a stand which no internationalist would have to repudiate".<sup>2</sup>

The *Sotsial-Demokrat's* exposure of the defencist attitude taken by the Menshevik group in the Duma was qualified by Trotsky as criminal persecution. By his "Leftist" talk he was in fact helping the social-chauvinists of Russia to conduct a Rightist policy. Emphasising this, Lenin wrote that "Chkheidze and Co. ... 'play' at Leftism with the help of Trotsky!! I don't think they will succeed in deceiving the class-conscious Pravdists".<sup>3</sup>

In that period, Trotsky continued to preach the idea of "uniting" in one party the Bolsheviks and all opportunists expelled from the RSDLP by the Party's Prague Conference. In March 1915, the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board came out with a proposal for a conference abroad of internationalist Social-Democrats in Russia to work out a joint programme on the war and social-chauvinism. The editorial board sent its proposals to the RSDLP(B) CC, the liquidationist OC, the Bund and the RSDLP(B) sections abroad. Consequently, the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board listed among the "internationalists" the liquidationist OC and the Bund, which were following a chauvinist line.

On March 23, 1915, Lenin wrote, on behalf of the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, to the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board as follows: "Before replying to your practical proposal, we consider it necessary to clarify with frankness certain preliminary questions, so as to know whether we are at one in the main issue."<sup>4</sup> He asked the editorial board to reply to a number of fundamental questions. What the RSDLP(B) CC was interested in above all was the editorial board's attitude to the system of "representation of the notorious 'trends' abroad", i.e., the big and small Menshevik groups,

which were isolated from the labour movement in Russia, but claimed representation on a par with the Party.

Emphasising that the Bund and the liquidationist Organising Committee were conducting a social-chauvinist policy, Lenin asked: "We would like to know what grounds you have to number the Bund among the internationalists.... We again ask you: what facts do you possess to consider that the Organising Committee adheres to an internationalist stand?"<sup>1</sup> The Bolsheviks, he stressed, were working to unite the internationalists, and would want their numbers to increase, but "we must not, however, go in for self-deception; we cannot count among the internationalists people and organisations whose internationalism exists only on paper".<sup>2</sup>

Lenin also asked the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board to express its attitude on the question of restoring the International on the basis of a mutual "amnesty".<sup>3</sup> He stated that no concessions to or agreements with the Centrists were admissible. A necessary condition of internationalism was a complete break with the Kautskyites and a resolute struggle against them.

Not unexpectedly, the *Nashe Slovo* editorial board, in its reply to the RSDLP(B) Central Committee, came out in defence of the OC and the Bund, declaring that they were abiding by the principles of revolutionary internationalism and that they had "proved this both by their activity in Russia and by their definite statements before the International".<sup>4</sup> On the question of restoring the Second International on the principles of a mutual "amnesty", the editorial board agreed with the social-chauvinists and Centrists, saying that it had

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 166, 167.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Kautsky, Adler and other Centrists insisted that the collapse of the Second International was "temporary", and that it was "a peacetime instrument" unfit for the conditions of wartime. They held that after the war it would be restored in its old form, and that all that was needed was to put an end to mutual attacks and accusations, and to amnesty each other. In his work, *Socialism and War*, and a number of others, Lenin exposed the idea of a "mutual amnesty", and resolutely opposed any attempt to restore the Second International.

At the very start of the war, Lenin put forward, as the most important tactical slogan of revolutionary Social-Democracy, a demand for a complete break with the bankrupt Second International, and the establishment of a new, truly revolutionary Third International (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 323-25).

<sup>4</sup> *Lenin Miscellany XVII*, p. 205 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, July 11, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 205.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Vol. 21, p. 165.



no intention of making an issue of the matter, and that at the present time it saw no need for an organisational division from the opportunist trends.<sup>1</sup> Earlier, the newspaper had published A. Lunacharsky's discussion article entitled "On Unity", in which all the acute questions were circumvented and which recommended that the conference doors should be flung wide open to "all Social-Democrats in general".<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky's proposal for the convocation of a conference had far-reaching aims. While pretending to work for the unity of the internationalists, the Trotskyites were trying once again to call a "unificatory" conference, to "reconcile" the Bolsheviks with the opportunists, and, in the event of their refusal, to accuse the Bolsheviks of being splitters.

Lenin wrote: "Not a bad intrigue: inviting us ('in the eyes of all') to join them in attending a common conference of Russians, and using our refusal against us!"<sup>3</sup> Trotsky's "unificatory" gamble, which the Bolsheviks exposed, failed once again. The Trotskyites failed to call any conference.

Having failed over the conference, Trotsky tried to get through his proposal to "unify" the St. Petersburg Bolshevik Committee, the liquidationist Initiative Group and the "Mezhraiontsy" into a single organisation, because, he insisted, they had "outlived themselves" as separate organisations.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Trotsky tried to set up something like the dissolved August and Brussels blocs in a refurbished form, so as to lay the foundation for a Centrist party in Russia which would be free "from the sins of Leninism and Menshevism", as he put it. For that purpose, he tried to use the Mezhrainiontsy, a Centrist group which wavered between the internationalists and the defencists. They declared their acceptance of the Bolshevik slogans for "turning the imperialist war into a civil one" and working for the "defeat of one's own government". But they also said that a civil war was possible only as simultaneous "action by the proletariat of all countries against their governments".<sup>5</sup> In practice this meant nothing but a rehash of the Trotskyite idea that a revolution could not win out in one separate country.

Of especial danger was the Mezhrainiontsy slogan for strug-

gle to set up "one RSDLP" through a "reconciliation" and "unification" of the various political trends and factional groupings, that is, "unification" on the basis of the Trotskyite platform. The newspaper *Uperyod* wrote that the "Mezhraiontsy" based their activity on the "organisational unity of all revolutionary Social-Democrats", "resolutely condemning any attempt to bring about a split".<sup>1</sup> But everyone knows that in Russia there were no other revolutionary Social-Democrats except the Bolsheviks. It was clear, therefore, that what the paper called for was "unification" of the Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks.

The Bolsheviks countered the Trotskyite propositions for unity with the Mensheviks and other wavering elements by consistently employing the revolutionary tactics of bringing together, rallying and uniting the revolutionary, internationalist forces.

"Conciliationism and unificationism," Lenin wrote, "is the most harmful thing for the workers' party in Russia—not just idiocy, but the *destruction* of the Party."<sup>2</sup> The Trotskyite idea of "unifying" revolutionaries and opportunists in one party, which the Mezhrainiontsy were spreading, met with resolute resistance from the Bolshevik organisations in Russia. Guided by Lenin's precepts, they worked to consolidate the united front of revolutionary workers on the basis of unity from below. The Bolsheviks tirelessly exposed social-chauvinism and conciliationism, and united the Left-wing internationalist forces, wresting from the Mensheviks and the conciliators the more healthy elements, mainly from among the workers.

The Trotskyite attempts at "unification" were a complete fiasco. *Sotsial-Demokrat* remarked that "Trotskyism, conciliationism turns out to be a round zero. It simply has no place in the living practical labour movement in Russia".<sup>3</sup> The proletariat of Russia was closing its ranks under the slogans of the Bolsheviks, the only consistent revolutionary Party, which had won the working people's great trust. By the summer of 1916 the editorial board of the Trotskyite newspaper *Nashe Slovo*, isolated from the labour movement in Russia and deprived of support from its few advocates

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin Miscellany XVII*, p. 206 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, March 7, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> *Lenin, Collected Works*, Fifth (Russian) Edition, Vol. 49, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, July 24, 1915.

<sup>5</sup> *Uperyod*, April 23, 1915.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Lenin, Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, November 20, 1915.



abroad, began to fall apart. Martov withdrew from the editorial board in March 1916.

This was followed with criticism of some of Trotsky's statements by some of those who worked for the newspaper (Lozovsky, Lunacharsky, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Manuilsky, etc.). But their criticism was inconsistent and haphazard. Thus, for instance, Manuilsky wrote an article, entitled "In Search of Russian Internationalism", admitting that the core of the internationalist revolutionary forces in Russia was the "workers' circles which before the war were grouped round the Social-Democratic newspaper *Pravda*", but adding that Bolshevism "is as yet not internationalism in itself", that it needed to be europeanised, and "to be rid of the influence of the narrow national mentality".<sup>1</sup> This was in effect a call on the Bolsheviks to conclude a "peace" with the opportunists.

Remarking on *Nashe Slovo*'s vacillation and inconsistency, Lenin wrote: "It was only 'under pressure' (of our criticism and the criticism of the facts) that *Nashe Slovo* supporters retreated from position to position; but they *have not yet said* the decisive word."<sup>2</sup> In September 1916, the newspaper was closed down, justifying Lenin's prediction of July 1915, when he wrote that *Nashe Slovo*'s "demise (political or 'physical', it does not matter very much) is now only a matter of time".<sup>3</sup>

Finding himself in total political isolation, Trotsky began to manoeuvre, criticising social-chauvinism and condemning pacifist slogans. Making use of Bolshevik arguments, he urged an organisational break with the social-chauvinists and the Centrists, in all spheres of activity, criticising the peace slogan, insisting on the "need to support the revolutionary stirrings of the mass and the call for action",<sup>4</sup> and throwing out various hints to the effect that he no longer had any differences of principle with the Bolsheviks. But that was only a tactical move. By issuing these statements, Trotsky was paving the way for his entry into the Bolshevik Party, in order to carry on the fight against it from inside.

<sup>1</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, April 1, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 283.

<sup>4</sup> Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 2,5/692/2 rev.

The Bolshevik Party exposed the Trotskyite propositions, and worked steadily and persistently to implement Lenin's tactical slogans. In the difficult conditions of wartime, the Bolsheviks carried on active agitation in the masses to transform the imperialist war into a civil war. The Bolshevik Party set the revolutionary elements of international Social-Democracy an example in courage and loyalty to socialism, showing them how to prepare the masses for revolution. The class-conscious section of the proletariat of Russia followed the Bolsheviks, carrying with it the broad section of the working people. The Bolshevik Party's tactics were embodied in the revolutionary action taken by the working class, the soldiers and the peasants. Correctly anticipating the advent of fresh revolutionary battles, Lenin worked during the war further to develop the Marxist theory of the socialist revolution, enriching it with new conclusions, and the doctrine of the possibility of socialism winning out initially in one, separate country.

## 2. Exposure by Lenin of Trotsky's Reckless Stand on the Prospects for the Development of the Socialist Revolution

During the First World War, Lenin not only worked out the proletariat's revolutionary tactics in the class struggle, but also gave a deep scientific analysis of the epoch of imperialism, and substantiated the prospects for the socialist revolution in the new historical conditions.

Analysis of the imperialist epoch was such a pressing and politically vibrant need that it was tackled by representatives of all the political trends. However, no bourgeois scholar or petty-bourgeois theorist was able to produce a scientifically based analysis of the imperialist stage of capitalism, let alone drawing the correct political conclusions. It was Lenin who in a series of works, notably, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, gave a scientific analysis of the epoch of imperialism.

Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution flowed from his analysis of the imperialist epoch. He emphasised that that was the only base on which "can we correctly evolve our tactics".<sup>1</sup> Failure to understand the character of the epoch

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 145.



led to gross distortions and errors in the theory and tactics of the proletariat's class struggle.

In 1915, Lenin showed that in its development the capitalist formation had gone through a number of epochs. The first of these covered the period from the French bourgeois revolution to the Franco-Prussian war. That was the epoch of bourgeois-democratic revolutions, the period in which the bourgeoisie rose and established its domination. The second epoch extended from the establishment of full domination by the bourgeoisie to the beginning of its decline and its transition to reactionary finance capital. That was also a period in which the working class mustered its forces and organised. Lenin drew this conclusion: "The third epoch, which has just set in, places the bourgeoisie in the same 'position' as that in which the feudal lords found themselves during the first epoch. This is the epoch of imperialism and imperialist upheavals, as well as of upheavals stemming from the nature of imperialism."<sup>1</sup>

In the epoch of imperialism, capitalism acquired new features and characteristics. In contrast to the pre-monopoly stage of capitalism, the imperialist epoch in economic life was marked by the domination of monopolies and finance capital. The vast socialisation of production, the concentration of the productive forces in the hands of a few monopoly alliances brought about an unprecedented sharpening of all contradictions. The principal contradiction of capitalism—the contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist form of appropriation—became especially acute. In the sphere of class struggle, it took the form of an intensified antagonism between the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie, and this inevitably led to revolution. At the same time, monopoly associations promoted the creation of the material conditions for a transition to socialism. On the strength of all this, Lenin said that imperialism was moribund capitalism, and the eve of the socialist revolution.

Thus, Lenin showed that in the imperialist epoch objective conditions ripened for the victory of the socialist revolution. Lenin's conclusion that "imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat"<sup>2</sup> was a stunning blow at the

opportunist theories, which denied that the socialist revolution was a law-governed development, and opened up encouraging prospects before the revolutionary-liberation movement. Lenin gave a scientific substantiation to the proposition that the imperialist epoch was being followed by a new epoch, the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism.

In contrast to Lenin, whose assessment of imperialism brought to the fore its contradictions, Trotsky held that for imperialism the "centralising tendency in the modern economy was the principal one".<sup>1</sup> Trotsky regarded this "centralising tendency" as a progressive tendency in the economic development of imperialism, expressed in the development of the productive forces, which would go beyond the fettering framework of the nation and the state, and would result in the "national great power" being substituted by an "imperialist Weltmacht"<sup>2</sup>, i.e., a world power.

Thus, Trotsky ignored the deep-going internal contradictions of the imperialist epoch, denying its monopoly stage and arguing that the development of imperialism would ultimately lead to the formation of a world imperialist power. In this way, he opposed Lenin's principal conclusion that imperialism was the final stage of capitalism, a capitalism that was stagnating and moribund, paving the way for the proletariat's social revolution.

This conclusion of Trotsky's was an echo of the Kautskyite theory of "ultra-imperialism". Kautsky had insisted that in the epoch of imperialism universal centralist, unifying tendencies were becoming more and more pronounced and could ultimately lead to the establishment of a world-wide alliance of the strongest powers. Kautsky held that the establishment of such an alliance would create favourable conditions for the working-class struggle for socialism. From this he drew the conclusion that the working class should follow a policy designed to encourage capitalism.<sup>3</sup> In accordance with Kautsky, Trotsky wrote that the "imperialist trust" would be a great stride forward because it would create a solid "material base for the labour movement".<sup>4</sup>

Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism" doctrine was subjected by Lenin to withering criticism. Lenin said that what it circum-

<sup>1</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, February 3, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> *Golos*, November 20, 1914.

<sup>3</sup> K. Kautsky, op. cit., S. 78.

<sup>4</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, February 4, 1916.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 22, p. 194.



vented and obscured was the deepest and most fundamental contradictions of imperialism, thereby making it more attractive and resulting in an abandonment of revolutionary struggle and preservation of capitalist domination. Lenin said Trotsky and Kautsky took the same view of the imperialist epoch, because they refused to recognise deep-going internal contradictions of imperialism.<sup>1</sup>

Being the eve of the socialist revolution, the imperialist epoch was the start of the successive change of two epochs in world history: the epoch of bourgeois domination and the epoch of socialism. It was a transition epoch and was so called, Lenin emphasised, because "it encompasses the sum total of variegated phenomena and wars, typical and untypical, big and small, some peculiar to advanced countries, others to backward countries".<sup>2</sup> That is why the contradictions inherent in imperialism had their roots deep in the pre-monopoly stage of capitalism. Consequently, it was not right to view the relations of monopoly capitalism in a "pure form", because they were interwoven with various survivals of the past. The existence of such contradictions proved that imperialism could not be classified as pure capitalism. There was a diversity of contradictions in the imperialist epoch, behind which lay definite political antagonisms and social trends.

Trotsky unified the concept of imperialist epoch, viewing it in the light of "pure capitalism". He reduced the complexity and diversity of phenomena and contradictions to the abstract idea of centralism. Trotsky denied that there was any continuity or connection between the imperialist epoch and earlier epochs, and ignored the active role of the transitional phenomena and antagonisms inherited from the past. He asserted that the all-penetrating tendencies of capitalism worked to eliminate the pre-capitalist structures, and that the elements and phenomena of past epochs disappeared under the force of capital. Thus, he declared, the economic foundation which gave a foothold to the petty bourgeoisie had disappeared, and that capitalism "was making short work of the intermediate classes".<sup>3</sup>

That sort of unsubstantiated assertion, without any economic analysis, was not only incorrect, but politically harm-

ful. Trotsky used it as an argument to deny the revolutionary role of the peasantry, and of the anti-imperialist, democratic movement of colonial and dependent peoples.

In analysing the epoch of imperialism, Lenin examined the features and characteristics not only of capitalism in general, but of Russian capitalism as well. He emphasised that at its monopoly stage of development capitalism in Russia retained many features of feudal-serf-owning relations. The specific character of its economic development consisted in its backward agriculture. At the same time it was "the most advanced industrial and finance capitalism".<sup>4</sup> The interlacing of the feudal-serf-owning survivals in the economy of Russia, of the military bureaucratic apparatus, and of monopoly capitalism gave its economic and political contradictions an especially sharp edge. Russia became the focal point of the most acute contradictions of the world imperialist system.

Trotsky distorted the economic essence of Russian capitalism, its features and characteristics, denying that it had independent internal sources of development, which he derived from the protectionist policy of the Russian autocracy. He absolutised one of the characteristics of imperialism in Russia—its dependence on European finance capital—and argued that imperialism in Russia had no roots of its own, and that its capitalist industry had arisen "under the direct and immediate pressure of European capital". By depriving the imperialism of Russia of its own economic basis, and accentuating the country's economic backwardness, Trotsky was denying the existence of material conditions for revolution in Russia, and held that it had no prospect for development without assistance from outside.

Subsequent events confirmed Lenin's profoundly correct analysis of the imperialist epoch as the highest and final stage of capitalist development, characterised by all-round preparation of objective conditions for socialist revolution. The plight and suffering of the masses were brought to a pitch by the imperialist war, which made them realise the need for a revolutionary way out of the crisis produced by monopoly capitalism. In this context, the Bolshevik Party was faced with the task of preparing the proletariat for winning political power. This it could not have done without

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 36-37.

<sup>3</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, October 17, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 442.



exposing and instantly breaking with social-chauvinism, on the one hand, and on the other, with the so-called Centre, a trend, which stood for "unity with the social-chauvinists and for the preservation or correction of the bankrupt Second International, and which vacillates between social-chauvinism and the internationalist revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the achievement of a socialist system".<sup>1</sup>

The basic propositions of Lenin's theory of socialist revolution were polished to a high state of perfection in sharp polemics with the social-chauvinists, Centrists and other ideological opponents of the Bolshevik Party. In this connection, Lenin's critique of Trotsky's "permanent revolution" doctrine was of fundamental importance.

During the First World War, the "permanent revolution" doctrine was not modified in any substantial way. It was still based on a negation of the possibility of the socialist revolution winning out initially in one country, an ignoring of the bourgeois-democratic stage of the Russian revolution, a denial of the proletariat's hegemony in the revolutionary struggle, and an underestimation of the revolutionary role of democratic, national liberation movements.

In Russia, Trotsky saw no force capable of carrying out a revolution. He insisted that "the Russian revolution cannot be 'brought to completion' either through the proletariat's co-operation with the liberal bourgeoisie, or its alliance with the revolutionary peasantry".<sup>2</sup> According to Trotsky's theory, a revolution in Russia could merely serve as an external impetus for a socialist revolution in the West, which was then to ensure the victory of socialism in Russia. Trotsky wrote that during the First World War he continued to hold these views and to develop them, and that he saw "no reason to abandon these forecasts, the lion's share of which belonged to Parvus".<sup>3</sup>

Thus, during the First World War, Trotsky admitted that on the basic questions of the revolution, its prospects and motive forces he was at one with Parvus and not with Lenin.

After the October Revolution, Trotsky falsified the facts in a deliberate attempt to minimise his part in the ideological

struggle against the Bolshevik Party during the First World War. Admitting that he had "set himself up in opposition to Lenin" on tactical and organisational questions, and that Lenin had been right on these points, he tried to prove that the "permanent revolution" doctrine was "immeasurably closer to the historical line of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party". The same argument is now being used by present-day bourgeois falsifiers of CPSU history. Thus, L. Schapiro writes that Lenin had condemned Trotsky's "semi-anarchist" views, as set out in his "permanent revolution" doctrine, only out of tactical and not out of principled considerations, that there had been no fundamental differences between the "permanent revolution" doctrine and Lenin's theory of socialist revolution, and that the whole struggle had centred on personal prestige.

In 1915, the revolutionary attitudes in the working class and the broad masses of working people began to develop into active manifestations against the war. The masses were gradually moving to the Left and their revolutionary activity increased. That was the first sign of the looming revolutionary crisis.

The change in the situation demanded that the Party should analyse the conditions, prospects and motive forces of the revolution. Lenin proved that the uneven economic and political development of individual countries in the imperialist epoch led to an aggravation of contradictions within the whole capitalist system. Capitalist development became spasmodic and conflicting. Thus, on the eve of the First World War, unevenness of development had led to an extreme sharpening of the contradictions between the imperialist powers. The war intensified the plight and suffering of the masses, and this led to a sharpening of capitalist contradictions—that between labour and capital, and between the metropolitan countries and the colonies. Thus, all the contradictions of imperialism—economic, class, political and national—were aggravated.

The aggravation of the contradictions of capitalism due to its uneven development makes the working class and the oppressed peoples of a definite group of countries, or even of one country, seek a way out in revolution. Such knots of contradictions become weak links in the imperialist system. "The workers' revolution," Lenin said, "develops unevenly in different countries, since the conditions of political

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 470.

<sup>2</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, February 14, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



life differ. In one country the proletariat is too weak and in another it is stronger."<sup>1</sup>

The uneven development of capitalism sharpens the contradictions between the imperialist states, hampering their joint action against the proletariat starting a revolution. Lenin spearheaded this conclusion of his against the social-chauvinists and Centrists, who asserted that in the imperialist epoch there was a reduction of the uneven development of capitalism and a dulling of its contradictions.

Trotsky followed the Kautskyites in trying to refute Lenin's proposition that the operation of the law of uneven economic and political development of capitalism in the imperialist epoch could have a decisive influence on the possibility of victory for the socialist revolution in a few or even one separate country, and on its prospects. He denied the working of the law of uneven development under capitalism, declaring that the principal tendency of imperialism was the need to "structure a united world economy, regardless of national frameworks or state-customs barriers".<sup>2</sup>

That is why, Trotsky insisted, it was the task of the proletariat to make use of the centralising tendencies of imperialism, and not its fits and starts. Trotsky reduced the uneven development of capitalism to a discrepancy between the levels of economic development of various countries, insisting that in the imperialist epoch these levels tended largely to be evened out. The whole point, Trotsky wrote, is that "this unevenness is in itself highly uneven". The economic levels of Britain, Austria, Germany or France were not the same, but compared with Africa and Asia, these highly developed European countries had the same conditions for revolution.

Replying to those who denied that the law of uneven development of capitalism was the crucial condition for the victory of the socialist revolution initially in one separate country, Lenin said it was a politically harmful conclusion to insist "that the rule of finance capital *lessens* the unevenness and contradictions inherent in the world economy, whereas in reality it *increases* them".<sup>3</sup>

However, revolution did not come about only as a result of the uneven development of capitalism, and intensification

of its contradictions or maturity of the material conditions. Lenin showed that the revolution also required the proper political conditions, such as the arrangement of class forces, which would give the revolutionary class an opportunity to carry on successful action, that is, there was need for a revolutionary situation.

In his article, "The Collapse of the Second International", Lenin noted that the existence of a revolutionary situation had three main characteristics: "(1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the 'upper classes', a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for the 'lower classes not to want' to live in the old way; it is also necessary that the 'upper classes should be unable' to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in 'peace time', but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis *and* by the 'upper classes' themselves into independent historical action."

At the same time, Lenin emphasised that a revolutionary situation did not in itself always lead to a revolution. For a revolution to come about it was necessary that to these objective changes there was added a subjective one, namely, the ability of the revolutionary class to take mass action, which should be strong enough to break or at least to cripple the old government, which would not give up power, unless it was overthrown.<sup>2</sup>

The degree of maturity of the subjective conditions for revolution was determined by the level of political awareness and organisation of the working class, the extent to which Marxist ideas had penetrated into the masses of the working people, and the ability of the proletarian Party, at the right moment, to direct the revolutionary action of the masses to the overthrow of the existing regime. During the war years,

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, February 3, 1916.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 272.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, pp. 213-14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.



the Bolshevik Party devoted primary attention to preparing the subjective conditions for the victory of the revolution. Because the objective conditions for the socialist revolution were mature, there was an insistent need to educate the revolutionary forces, to form the political army of the revolution, and to have the Marxist Party ideologically and organisationally united. Lenin's doctrine of the unity of objective and subjective conditions for the revolution was aimed against Right-wing and "Left-wing" opportunism.

The Trotskyites did not have any scientific approach to determine the objective and subjective conditions of the revolution or of their correct correlation and interaction. Trotsky held that the war had taken the peoples into an impasse, thereby creating the conditions for revolution, "forcibly taking the proletariat onto the way of a socialist revolution".<sup>1</sup> He said the war, which was an explosion of elemental forces, should have awakened the elemental will of the masses, giving it impetus and direction. Trotsky said that the highest manifestation of the revolutionary spirit was the expression of the elemental factor in the masses. He ignored the painstaking day-to-day work among the masses, their education and organisation, and did not believe it was necessary to form a political army for the revolution. Trotsky reduced the Party's role to taking passive stock of events and simply adapting itself to the elemental process of development.

Lenin had always opposed the notion that the objective conditions for revolution were connected with wars or flowed from wars. He said that they were built in to the system of imperialism itself, and that a revolutionary situation was not produced only or mainly by war, but by the outstanding economic and political problems, and the relationship between classes. The subjective conditions for revolution ripened in the course of the class struggle, which was an objective process. The class struggle produced political awareness among the proletariat and convinced it of the need to have a proletarian party. The proletarian party, which brought organisation and purpose to the proletariat's class struggle, was the most important subjective factor of the revolution.

Lenin's doctrine of objective and subjective factors in the victory of a socialist revolution has retained its importance

<sup>1</sup> *Golos*, November 20, 1914.

to this day, when the proletariat of the capitalist countries has to solve the burning questions of conditions, ways and methods of revolutionary struggle. This doctrine demands of Communists in all countries that they should take a sober account of the objective conditions, and cautions them against any attempt at engaging in the anarchist "game of revolution".

Under imperialism, the law of uneven economic and political development variously sharpens the contradictions of capitalism and results in a ripening of the revolutionary conditions in different countries at different times. It is impossible for the socialist revolution to win out simultaneously in all or in most developed capitalist countries. "Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin formulated this conclusion in his article, "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe", in August 1915, which shed a new light on the fundamental questions of the revolutionary movement. It opened up revolutionary prospects for the working class and the working people of every country, developing their revolutionary initiative in their struggle against their own national bourgeoisie, convincing them of the need to take action at home, and reassuring them of the possibility of revolutionary victory.

Trotsky opposed this conclusion of Lenin's. He identified imperialism with the drive towards centralisation, unification and the rupture of the framework of nationally restricted economies, and the organisation of a world-wide economy, insisting that, as the productive forces destroyed the framework of the national states, they also destroyed them as a "basis for social revolution". From this it followed that the proletariat in each separate country was not to develop its own tactics, depending on the tasks of the class struggle within the national context. Trotsky said such tactics ran counter to the fundamental tendencies of world development and were, therefore, doomed to defeat.

In Trotsky's opinion, the working class of each country had to abandon so-called national obligations and concentrate its efforts on the drive to win state power in the only real form which was being prepared by the entire epoch of imperialism—"in the form of a political dictatorship in all

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 342.



the civilised countries of the capitalist world". Trotsky asserted that the mass revolutionary movement could develop successfully and triumph only as an all-European movement, for while it remained isolated within the national boundaries, it was doomed to inevitable failure. That is why it was quite hopeless for the proletariat to wage a struggle for its dictatorship in any one separate country, because it could establish its dictatorship only throughout the whole of Europe, i.e., in the form of a European United States.<sup>1</sup>

Lenin gave an all-round substantiation of the impossibility of implementing the United States of Europe slogan under capitalism. He said this slogan merged with socialism and acquired political meaning only under socialism. It was politically correct also from the standpoint of the need to overthrow the three reactionary monarchies of Europe—that of Russia, of Germany and of Austria-Hungary. But in view of the uneven development of separate countries, it was impossible to implement the slogan in practice. "From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the 'advanced' and 'civilised' colonial powers," Lenin wrote, "a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary."<sup>2</sup> Also this slogan "may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of socialism in a single country is impossible, and it may also create misconceptions as to the relations of such a country to the others".<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, each of the great powers strove to unite a number of smaller states under its own domination. Britain was trying to set up two united states on the territory of Europe: an alliance of Belgium, Alsace-Lorraine and Luxemburg and an alliance of southern Slav states. The former was to act as a shield against Germany and allied France, and the latter, against Germany and allied Russia.

With the support of the social-chauvinists, the German imperialists argued that Germany's productive forces had outgrown its state boundaries, and that history was dictating the need for the establishment of a Central European States. The ultra-chauvinists backed up the slogan of a United States of Europe under German hegemony. Russia also strove to set up an alliance of states ranged against Germany and

Britain. Thus, the great powers were using the United States of Europe slogan for their own reactionary ends.

In his article, "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution" (1916), Lenin said it was not simply possible but in fact inevitable that the socialist revolution should win out in several countries or in one separate country. He pointed out: "The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in different countries. . . . From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois."<sup>1</sup>

In the context of the discussion of the United States of Europe slogan, great importance attached to the question of the attitude the country of victorious socialist revolution was to take to the states where the revolution had not yet won out. During the First World War, Lenin gave an all-round substantiation of the need to defend the country where the dictatorship of the proletariat had won out. He regarded defence of the socialist country as a necessary condition for preserving the gains of the proletariat in the one country that had sparked off the process of world socialist revolution.

Lenin believed that the proletariat of the country where the socialist revolution had won out should above all expropriate the capitalists and organise socialist production, helping the oppressed classes of other countries in their struggle against the capitalists, and even giving them armed support in case of necessity.<sup>2</sup>

Depending on the concrete historical conditions, the working class which had established its dictatorship was to consolidate it and organise socialist construction, which it could do only if it had peaceful relations with the capitalist world. Any war gamble designed to spur the proletariat of other countries to immediate and simultaneous action would mean a loss of the initial gains. Later, criticising those who thought that the revolution should explode simultaneously in all countries, Lenin wrote: "To wait until the working classes carry out a revolution on an international scale means that everyone will remain suspended in mid-air. This is senseless."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, February 4, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 340.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 342.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 342-43.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 372.



Trotsky fell back on his notorious "permanent revolution" doctrine, insisting that one country was unable to withstand the united strength of the capitalist states. That is why, even if the socialist revolution started in that country, its proletariat was immediately to take action against the capitalist countries so as to spark off a revolutionary war there. He insisted that it was the task of the proletariat to create "a higher Fatherland of the revolution—a Republic of Europe, on the basis of which alone the proletariat would be able to revolutionise the whole world". Later, during the Brest-Litovsk peace talks, Trotsky applied these theoretical postulates in practice, thereby exposing the adventurist substance of his concept of the way the socialist revolution was to take. The victory of the Great October Revolution in 1917 started the development of the world-wide socialist revolution, covering a whole epoch and embracing diverse social movements.

Trotsky's conclusion that the socialist revolution could not initially win out in a few countries or in one, separate country was based on an incorrect appraisal of the epoch of imperialism, and the ways of development of the socialist revolution, expressing a denial of the revolutionary potential of the working class and peasantry of Russia, and an overestimation of the strength of world imperialism.

The proposition that the conditions for socialist revolution would ripen at different times meant that different countries would start their transition from capitalism to socialism at different times. The most favourable conditions for breaking the solid chain of imperialist domination were taking shape in tsarist Russia. However, to take the path of socialist revolution the working class and peasantry of Russia had to do away with the monarchy, win political freedoms and eliminate the survivals of feudalism and serfdom. Russia was faced with a bourgeois-democratic revolution, without which she was unable to go the way of socialist change.

Lenin regarded the historical process as a coherent whole, with a succession of stages following one another in strict uniformity and ruling out any subjectivism or arbitrary action. He said that for every stage of historical development the proletariat must have a definite tactic of class struggle. The Bolshevik Party relentlessly fought those who tried to introduce subjectivism and arbitrariness into the concept of the revolutionary process. The facts show that Trotsky artificially separated the stages of revolutionary development,

ignored some and confused others, and stood for subjectivism and arbitrariness in interpreting the revolutionary process, which led to anarchism and adventurism in policy. This was best shown in his denial of the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia.

The events of 1915 and 1916 in Russia indicated that the country was entering a phase of revolutionary crisis. *Sotsial-Demokrat* gave a reminder that from January 9, 1905 on, the working class of Russia had been rapidly awakening, and that "we shall see the same thunderous awakening after the war of 1914-15".<sup>1</sup>

In view of the looming revolution, Lenin further developed his earlier theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into a socialist revolution, applied to the conditions of the world war. He set out his new ideas in several articles, among them, "The Defeat of Russia and the Revolutionary Crisis", "Several Theses. *Proposed by the Editors*", "On the Two Lines in the Revolution". In the last mentioned article, he sharply criticised the refurbished propositions of Trotsky's "permanent revolution" doctrine. He showed that Russia was still faced with a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It was impossible to go on to a socialist revolution without solving the tasks of the first stage. The two revolutions were two stages of a continuous revolutionary process. "Not a constituent assembly," Lenin wrote, "but the overthrow of the monarchy, a republic, the confiscation of the landed estates, and an eight-hour day will, as hitherto, be the slogans of the Social-Democratic proletariat, the slogans of our Party."<sup>2</sup>

Analysing the conditions for the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into a socialist revolution, Lenin noted the new factors, as compared with the 1905-07 revolution. At that earlier period, the Russian revolution could have set an example for the West European proletarians "in order to kindle the proletarian revolution in the West", but now a socialist revolution in the West "has acquired an urgency that puts it on a level with the first part",<sup>3</sup> i.e., with a bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, which is why it was the common task of the proletariat of Russia and of West European countries to strengthen their international solidar-

<sup>1</sup> *Sotsial-Demokrat*, February 1, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 381.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 379.



ity in the fight to overthrow the reactionary governments and establish socialism. During the First World War, the relation of class forces in Russia was such that it created favourable conditions for a bourgeois-democratic revolution rapidly growing into a socialist one. The existence in the country of a conscious and organised proletariat, leading a revolutionary peasantry and being guided by a Marxist-Leninist party, opened up fresh prospects involving a reconstruction of the country on socialist lines.

The situation in Russia was unique because there the tasks of a bourgeois-democratic and a socialist revolution were very close together and were even interwoven. But that did not mean that it was possible to bypass the stage of a bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia.

Subsequent development of revolutionary events showed that the bourgeois-democratic revolution solved the main question, the question of power—the autocracy was overthrown. The victory of the working class and the peasantry over tsarism and the landowners ensured the necessary democratic freedoms and created the conditions for further development of the struggle for socialism.

Trotsky denied that the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia was an objective uniformity. He declared that the period of the Stolypin reforms had once and for all destroyed any economic basis for the democratic sections, which is why the development of the Russian revolution could not be made dependent on internal forces, the peasantry in particular. He wrote: "No national bourgeois revolution is possible in Russia, because of the absence of bourgeois democracy."<sup>1</sup> It followed from this that the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in Russia had to be subordinated to the tasks of the European proletariat, and the revolution in Russia made dependent on the proletarian struggle throughout the capitalist world. Thus, Trotsky held that Russia was on the very threshold of a socialist revolution which was to take place simultaneously with a revolution in the West.

Lenin sharply criticised Trotsky's assessment of the motive forces of the revolution, that was coming to a head in Russia. He showed that the Mensheviks were either trying to evade the solution of the task of arranging the class forces, or substituting "Left-wing" talk for it. "This task," Lenin wrote,

<sup>1</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, October 17, 1915.

"is being wrongly tackled in *Nashe Slovo* by Trotsky, who is repeating his 'original' 1905 theory and refuses to give some thought to the reason why, in the course of ten years, life has been bypassing this splendid theory."<sup>1</sup> Because the revolution was a bourgeois-democratic one, Lenin defined the forces which had a stake in solving its tasks, and which would be capable of solving them.

In his writings during the First World War, Lenin gave further evidence to show that the hegemony of the proletariat was the decisive force for a victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and its development into a socialist revolution. The proletariat rallied its allies, directed and guided them, cementing the alliance with its political awareness and organisation. Lenin wrote: "The proletariat are fighting, and will fight valiantly, to win power, for a republic, for the confiscation of the land, *i.e.*, to win over the peasantry, make full use of their revolutionary powers, and get the 'non-proletarian masses of the people' to take part in liberating bourgeois Russia from military-feudal 'imperialism' (tsarism)."<sup>2</sup> At the first stage of the revolution, the whole peasantry went along in alliance with the proletariat, and at the second, its poorest sections, the semi-proletarian masses.

Trotsky denied the idea of the proletariat's hegemony in the revolution. In his view, the proletariat found itself isolated from all the democratic forces, including the peasantry. He insisted that the proletariat was to go it alone, without any allies, and that "throughout its history reliance on others has inevitably been the proletariat's worst illusion."<sup>3</sup> Trotsky's denial of the proletariat's hegemony in the revolution and his underestimation of the peasantry's revolutionary role exposed the Menshevik character of his assessment of the motive forces of the revolution.

Lenin had always assigned a revolutionary role to the peasantry as an ally to the proletariat. He said it was impossible to overthrow the monarchy and the feudal landowners in Russia "unless the proletariat is supported by the peasantry."<sup>4</sup> The war deepened the differentiation within the peasant masses, intensified their plight and suffering, and

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 420.

<sup>3</sup> *Nashe Slovo*, October 17, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 402.



that was why there was a much stronger tendency for the drawing together of the interests of the peasantry and those of the proletariat. This went to create favourable possibilities for an alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry in a bourgeois-democratic revolution, and with the poor peasantry in a socialist revolution. On this assumption, Lenin safeguarded and developed the most important principle of the theory of socialist revolution—the alliance of the working class and the peasantry—and exposed Trotsky's reckless attempts to undermine this alliance, to isolate the proletariat from the other classes, thereby dooming the revolution to defeat.

In that period, the national-colonial question acquired enormous importance. This was due to the part the democratic movements had to play in the epoch of imperialism, and their connection with the proletariat's struggle for socialism. On this question, the Bolshevik Party had to fight against the "Leftist" catchwords of the "imperialist economists" within its ranks, and against Trotsky, outside the Party.

At the Bern Conference of the RSDLP sections abroad, Nikolai Bukharin came out against the Party's programme demand, that of the right of nations to self-determination, including secession. This demand was also rejected in the joint theses of Bukharin, Pyatakov and Yevgeniya Bosh, "On the Slogan of the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", drawn up in the autumn of 1915. Similar views of the right-of-nations-to-self-determination slogan were set out by Trotsky in his article, "The Nation and the Economy", published in *Nashe Slovo*.

Lenin argued that one of the principal conditions of the proletariat's winning state power was the merging of the revolutionary movement of the working class in the metropolitan countries with the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries. In his works of this period, he substantiated the possibility of and the need for an alliance between the proletariat of the metropolitan countries and the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries. The peoples of the colonial and dependent countries needed this alliance to secure democratic changes, and the working class of the capitalist countries, to weaken the whole system of imperialism and win out in a socialist revolution.<sup>1</sup>

Lenin examined the national-colonial question in the light

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 67.

of the class struggle, and the general and specific tasks of the revolutionary-liberation movement, and arrived at the conclusion that in the imperialist epoch the movement of the oppressed peoples merged with the general tide of the struggle against imperialism, and that it was necessary to support and develop the most revolutionary sides of the national liberation movement. He gave convincing proof to show that the national-colonial question was a part of the general question of socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that this should be taken into account by the peoples of the colonies and the dependent countries in their liberation struggle.

The Bolshevik Party regarded the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries as an ally of the proletariat, but Trotsky said they had no revolutionary role to play. He said that because in the imperialist epoch the national state had become a drag on the development of the productive forces, the right of nations to self-determination no longer corresponded to the new conditions either. It was obsolete, he said, because "it has its origins in the epoch of revolutionary struggle of national bourgeois democracy".

Trotsky declared that the right of nations to self-determination had to be subordinated not to the task of the proletariat's class struggle, but to ensuring the systematic growth of "man's power over nature". If imperialism created the conditions for integrating states into a United States of Europe, this would give room for the development of the productive forces and lead to the elimination of national states. If that did not happen, it was not only hopeless, but harmful to raise the question of the self-determination of nations. Accordingly, Trotsky held that the proletariat should not raise the question of self-determination of nations outside the context of a European revolution, outside a United States of Europe.

This standpoint has much in common with that of the "imperialist economists". The Bukharin, Pyatakov and Bosh group, like Trotsky, started from a definition of "pure imperialism". Both asserted that at the imperialist stage, capitalism reached the height of its development and finally suppressed the commodity economy. In the epoch of imperialism, small national states with pre-capitalist economic structures, Bukharin wrote later, were totally swallowed up by large state entities, the whole economy becoming an "abso-



lutely single enterprise of a certain group of the world bourgeoisie". From this it followed, as in Trotsky's reasoning, that to demand the implementation of the right of nations to self-determination was to run into contradictions with the natural historical process of development.

Assessing Trotsky's attitude to national liberation movements, Lenin remarked that Trotsky paid lip-service to self-determination, "but in his case, too, it is an empty phrase, for he does not demand freedom of secession for nations oppressed by the 'fatherland' of the socialist of the given nationality".<sup>1</sup> Trotsky failed to answer the main question, which was of crucial importance for the Social-Democrat's practical activity; it was the question of "one's attitude to the nation that is oppressed by 'one's own' nation".<sup>2</sup> This was circumventing the question of the great intensification of national oppression and exploitation under imperialist states, including Russia. Thus, by refusing to accept the self-determination of nations, Trotsky was objectively giving support to "Russian social-imperialism".<sup>3</sup>

The Bolshevik Party believed that the peoples of colonial and dependent countries would have to stand up arms in hand for their right to national independence, against encroachments of imperialist states. In such cases, it was the duty of revolutionary Social-Democrats to "assist their uprising—or revolutionary war, in the event of one—against the imperialist powers that oppress them".<sup>4</sup> This would be a just, revolutionary war, undermining the foundation of imperialist domination.

In opposition to this, Trotsky cast doubt on the possibility of the oppressed peoples waging just, revolutionary wars against imperialism. He said that such wars were possible only at first sight, when the question was raised in the abstract, without any account being taken of concrete reality. Under the prevailing world relationships and the all-powerful groupings of imperialist powers, no colony or oppressed nation could wage a liberation war without relying on another imperialist power, or being a pawn in its hands. That is why "national" wars fought by backward peoples can no longer have any independent significance". In this

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 359.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

case, Trotsky's "Leftist" phraseology made it impossible for the working class to take a scientific, revolutionary approach to the solution of the national-colonial question.

The historical experience of the revolutionary struggle carried on by the peoples of Russia and other countries of the world has confirmed the viability of Lenin's theory on the questions of war, peace and revolution, and has refuted the views of his ideological opponents once and for all. Lenin's critique of Trotskyite views on the fundamental questions of the theory of socialist revolution tore off Trotsky's pseudo-socialist mask, revealing him as a supporter of social-chauvinism, and a proponent of Centrist policy in the labour movement in Russia.

Lenin's theory of socialist revolution was a major contribution to scientific communism. It armed the Party and the working class ideologically in their struggle against the rule of the bourgeoisie.

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By early 1917, an immediate revolutionary situation had taken shape in Russia. Of all the belligerent powers, Russia was going through the greatest economic and political upheavals. The autocracy found itself in total political isolation. The countrywide crisis was expressed in the fact that the "upper classes" were no longer capable of running the country, and were losing what they still had of their political influence, while the "lower sections" no longer wanted to live the old way, and were actively coming out against tsarism and the horrors and calamities of the war.

Under the blows struck by the masses, who were led by the Bolshevik Party, the tsarist monarchy was swept away in February 1917. The February bourgeois-democratic revolution was the start of the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war. The overthrow of tsarism completed the first, bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution, and created the most important social-political conditions for its transition to the second, socialist stage. However, this transition was complicated by the unique political situation in the country, which was expressed in the establishment of dual power. [Alongside the Provisional Government—a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—was established a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants as represented by the Soviets.] S



In the new historical situation, the Bolshevik Party was faced with the task of working out the proletariat's correct, strategic and tactical line in the revolution, and determining the attitude to the Soviets, the Provisional Government and the continuing imperialist war. It was Lenin who solved this task in his "Letters from Afar", his April Theses and the decisions of the Seventh (April) Conference of the RSDLP(B).

In his "Letters from Afar", Lenin gave a profound Marxist analysis of the bourgeois-democratic revolution which had taken place in Russia, showing its unique characteristics, giving an assessment of its motive forces, and answering the most intricate questions of Party theory and tactics.

Lenin's main conclusion was that the first stage of the revolution was over, and that it was necessary to go on to its second stage—the socialist revolution—which was to win power for the working class and the poor peasantry. On the strength of this, Lenin also worked out the Party's tactical positions, which he formulated in a telegram to Bolsheviks on their way to Russia in early March 1917. He wrote: "Our tactics: no trust in and no support of the new government; Kerensky is especially suspect; arming of the proletariat is the only guarantee; immediate elections to the Petrograd City Council; no rapprochement with other parties."<sup>1</sup> Lenin's strategic line and tactical propositions, approved by the Seventh (April) Party Conference, became a course followed by the whole Bolshevik Party.

In that period, Trotsky once again opposed the Bolshevik Party's political line. He gave his assessment of the February revolution and its motive forces in a number of articles, entitled "March Letters", which were published in the USA in the newspaper *Novyi Mir*.<sup>2</sup> Trotsky later asserted that his

"March Letters" were in principle quite in accord with Lenin's analysis of the revolution as given in his "Letters from Afar".<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Trotskyites widely circulated the idea that Trotsky's "March Letters" had "anticipated" Lenin's "Letters from Afar" which became the basis of his April Theses.

These assertions amounted to nothing but deliberate and malicious falsification of the ideological struggle against Trotskyism. Actually, the "March Letters" were based on the "permanent revolution" doctrine. In these letters, Trotsky once again brought out the anti-Bolshevik "with no tsar, but a workers' government" slogan which meant a revolution without the peasantry.

Lenin resolutely denied having anything to do with Trotsky's slogan. In his "Letters on Tactics", he made a point of emphasising that his theses were aimed against Trotsky, who was trying to ignore the growing of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one. Lenin said Trotsky's "with no tsar, but a workers' government" slogan was playing at "seizure of power", "Blanquist adventurism".<sup>2</sup> In his summing-up speech on the present situation at the Petrograd City Conference of the RSDLP(B), on April 14 (27), 1917, Lenin said: "Trotskyism: 'No tsar, but a workers' government.' This is wrong. A petty bourgeoisie exists, and it cannot be dismissed. But it is in two parts. The poorer of the two is with the working class."<sup>3</sup>

The propositions which Trotsky set out in his "March Letters" were fundamentally different from Lenin's propositions. Trotsky insisted that the proletariat's task was to take power right away and set up a workers' government which,

In January 1917, Trotsky joined the *Novyi Mir* publishers and began to write for the paper. He at once joined the group of Rightists, with whom he fought the Bolsheviks and all those who supported Zimmerwald. Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote to V. M. Kasparov that the first thing Trotsky did in *Novyi Mir* was to separate himself from the Zimmerwald Left.

On February 17, 1917, Lenin informed Alexandra Kollontai that Trotsky was organising a bloc of Rightists against the Leftists in *Novyi Mir*, and added: "What a swine this Trotsky is—Left phrases, and a bloc with the Right against the Zimmerwald Left!! He ought to be exposed. . . ." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 285.)

<sup>1</sup> *Leninizm ili trotskizm?* (Leninism or Trotskyism?), Moscow, 1925, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> At the end of 1916, following the closure of *Nashe Slovo*, Trotsky went to the United States. At the time, there was in New York a publishing enterprise called *Novyi Mir* (New World), which had been set up by Russian socialist émigrés, who published a newspaper of the same name. On its editorial board were representatives of various trends, including social-chauvinists, Centrists and Leftists, who supported Zimmerwald. *Novyi Mir*'s ideological leader was S. Ingeman, a Menshevik and a rabid chauvinist. In the autumn of 1916, a small group of Bolsheviks was formed on the editorial board, and it began a vigorous struggle against the Rightists and for the removal of S. Ingeman from the leadership.



he said, was simultaneously to tackle democratic and socialist tasks. Because of its political isolation and the country's economic backwardness, the proletariat of Russia would be able to solve these tasks only by pooling its forces with those of the West European proletariat. Trotsky continued to insist that a workers' government in Russia could stay in power only in the event of direct state support from the West European working class. Therefore, the workers' government did not have the task to ally itself with the reactionary and chauvinist-minded peasantry but "to establish ties with the European proletariat". Thus, Trotsky discounted the peasantry, placing it in the camp of counter-revolution. In practice this meant depriving the proletariat of its allies, and denying its hegemony in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In his "March Letters", Trotsky once again came out against Lenin's conclusion that it was possible for the socialist revolution initially to win out in one, separate country. Trotsky held that the proletariat of Russia would be unable to stay in power unless there was a revolution in the European countries. Otherwise, the imperialists would join forces in stamping out the Russian revolution. That is why if there were any delay over a revolution in the West it would be the task of the proletariat of Russia to carry the revolution forcibly to other countries. He wrote: "We shall entrust the Russian revolutionary army with the mission of carrying the revolution to the territory of another state."

Trotsky's idea of giving the revolution in other countries "a push" by means of war was a reckless gamble which had nothing in common with Marxism. Trotsky ignored the basic Marxist tenet that the revolution could not be staged without taking account of the objective and subjective factors in this or that country, and that the revolution could neither be accelerated or made to order, that it could not be precipitated from outside. In June 1918, Lenin said: "There are people who believe that revolution can break out in a foreign country to order, by agreement. These people are either mad or they are provocateurs."<sup>1</sup>

The February revolution and the further development of the class struggle in Russia provided practical evidence of the political bankruptcy of Trotsky's "permanent revolution"

idea. The Bolshevik Party exposed Trotsky's adventurist propositions, and closed its ranks on the basis of the revolutionary platform worked out by Lenin. This platform formulated, on the strength of a profound scientific analysis of the objective processes of historical development and the relationship of the class forces in the country, a course for the Party to follow in working for the victory of the socialist revolution.

In his April Theses Lenin wrote: "The specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that the country is *passing* from the first stage of the revolution—which, owing to insufficient class-consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—to its *second* stage, which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants."<sup>1</sup> This conclusion not only determined the need for transition to the socialist stage of the revolution, but indicated with the utmost clarity the revolutionary forces which were to carry out this historical transition. The conclusion flowed organically from Lenin's doctrine that it was possible for socialism to win out initially in one, separate country. Lenin tirelessly explained that Russia had all the objective and subjective conditions for the proletariat's winning political power in alliance with the poor peasantry.

Lenin pointed out that only the Bolshevik Party could become the organiser and leader of the socialist revolution, because it had a knowledge of the laws of social development and relied in its day-to-day activity on creative Marxism. To be equal to this epoch-making task, he urged the Party tirelessly to consolidate its unity, to strengthen its ties with the masses, and to carry on a resolute struggle against the opportunists and petty-bourgeois conciliators, who were serving the bourgeoisie.

After the February revolution, the Party was faced with the acute problem of consolidating its ranks, because here and there the Bolsheviks were working with the Mensheviks in the same organisations. The Mensheviks asserted that the collapse of tsarism had eliminated all the differences between them and the Bolsheviks, so that in the interests of labour unity it was necessary to set up common Social-Democratic organisations everywhere. This idea was accepted

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 480.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. 24, p. 22.



by some Bolsheviks, but life soon dispelled these illusions. In these common organisations, the Mensheviks continued their old opportunist policy, remaining enemies of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In view of the preparation for the imminent socialist revolution, having the Mensheviks in the same Party meant disorganising the working class and weakening its forces. This would have done the cause of the revolution irreparable harm.

After the victory of the February revolution, Lenin kept emphasising that the Bolshevik Party had to maintain complete political independence and be chary of any "unificatory" adventures. He wrote to Anatoly Lunacharsky in March 1917: "Independence and separateness of our Party, *no rapprochement with other parties*, are indispensable conditions for me. Without this one cannot help the proletariat to move through the *democratic* revolution to the *commune*, and I would not serve any other ends."<sup>1</sup>

Under Lenin's leadership, the Bolshevik organisations overcame these "unificatory" attitudes. They closed their ranks and carried out a vast amount of theoretical and practical work, defeating opportunists of every stripe and uniting round them the proletariat and the poor peasantry of Russia, whom they led in the assault on capitalism in October 1917. The victorious October Revolution, which ushered in the epoch of the universal revolutionary rejuvenation of the world—the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism—was a model of implementation of Lenin's theory of socialist revolution.

## CONCLUSION

As early as the tsarist period, the Bolshevik Party, a new type of party, set an example of principled struggle against opportunists of every stripe, including the Trotskyites. The Party gained in strength and stature by expelling from its ranks the opportunists in January 1912 and exposing them as agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. In resolute and uncompromising struggle against the opportunists and the Centrists, it maintained itself as an independent Party and nullified their attempts to set up a Centrist, essentially a Trotskyite, party.

As soon as the First World War broke out, Lenin's Party took a consistent stand for proletarian internationalism and an uncompromising attitude to "one's own" social-chauvinists and Centrists, conducted a selfless struggle to transform the imperialist war into a war against the oppressors, and led the workers and peasants of Russia to victory over tsarism and capitalism.

After the victory of the February revolution, Lenin, in his letters and telegrams to Russia, insistently stressed the need for the Bolshevik Party to continue maintaining its independence. It was a most important task for the Bolsheviks to keep off any "unificatory" schemes with the opportunists and Centrists, working systematically to consolidate the new type of party, which was fundamentally different from the opportunist parties of the Second International. On March 17, 1917, Lenin wrote to Alexandra Kollontai: "In my opinion, the main thing now is not to let oneself get entangled in stupid 'unification' attempts with the social-patriots (or, what is still more dangerous, with the wobblers like the Organis-

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 302.



ing Committee, Trotsky and Co.) and to continue the work of our Party in a consistently *internationalist* spirit."<sup>1</sup>

The heavy defeat inflicted by the Bolshevik Party on Centrism before the First World War, and the Bolsheviks' consistent struggle against Centrism in Russia and abroad during the war, showed that this was a trend without any influence in the labour movement of Russia, and that the leadership in the revolutionary struggle of the masses during the February revolution had gone forward without any participation by the Centrists. Thus, Centrism was faced with ideological and political bankruptcy, and all of Trotsky's efforts to revive it after the February revolution came to nothing.

Upon his return to Russia from abroad, Trotsky continued to preach Centrist ideas, in the hope of "unifying" the revolutionary Bolsheviks with the opportunists under the sponsorship of Trotskyism, and securing control of the revolutionary labour movement in the country. Trotsky headed the "Mezhraiontsy" group, set up in St. Petersburg in 1913. This was a Centrist organisation which included Trotskyites, Plekhanov Mensheviks, and a section of the former Bolshevik-conciliators. Trotsky had hoped to make the group a nucleus round which a future Centrist Social-Democratic party would take shape. But his groundless hopes were overthrown by the course of historical development.

While the Bolshevik Party confidently prepared the masses for the struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution, the Menshevik opportunists and their allies increasingly exposed themselves as out-and-out counter-revolutionaries. Acting on Lenin's instructions, the Bolsheviks exposed the betrayal of the petty-bourgeois party leaders, and strove consistently to eliminate the "unificatory" tendencies which were in evidence in some local Party organisations. Of crucial importance in overcoming the "unificatory" attitudes were Lenin's April Theses and the decisions of the Seventh (April) Conference of the RSDLP(B), which started the process of intensive disintegration of the unified Party organisations.

In the circumstances, the Trotskyites naturally realised that it was pointless to preach "unification" between the Bolsheviks and the opportunists, because there was no question

not only of "unification", but even of any drawing together of the revolutionaries and the opportunists. Accordingly, Trotsky and a handful of his supporters decided to join the Bolshevik Party, which had the masses behind it, and to which the working class and the poor peasantry had entrusted their country's future. At the Sixth Congress of the RSDLP(B), the Mezhraiontsy group, which declared its acceptance of the Bolshevik line and announced a break with the Menshevik-defencists, was admitted to the Bolshevik Party.

Subsequent events showed that some of the "Mezhraiontsy" did in fact break with their Centrist past, but the entry into the Bolshevik Party of Trotsky and the group of his close associates did not mean that they had gone over to Bolshevik positions. Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party in order to continue his fight against Leninism from inside, and to try to impose his Menshevik line on the Party, and take over the Party leadership. This is seen from a record of Trotsky's speeches, which Lenin made at the "Mezhraiontsy" conference on May 10, 1917.

Something like ten weeks before the Sixth Congress of the RSDLP(B), Trotsky had warned his supporters about the danger of "automatic" entry into the Bolshevik Party, declaring that the unification of Social-Democrat internationalists required "*the preparation of a broad Party congress*".<sup>1</sup> Trotsky emphasised that such unification should take place: "not through automatic entry—but through an All-Russia Congress prepared both by the Bolsheviks and us and organisations in the localities and the Menshevik-internationalists."<sup>2</sup>

Trotsky's desire to eliminate the Bolshevik Party by uniting it with the "Mezhraiontsy", the Menshevik-internationalists and other groups is also seen from his statement that it was not desirable for the Party to retain its name of Bolshevik. Trotsky, as Lenin's notes show, declared: "It is undesirable to keep the old factional name."

Trotsky's real attitude to Bolshevism is also seen from his assertions that the "Bolsheviks had become de-Bolshevised" and that "I cannot call myself a Bolshevik", adding that "we cannot be required to accept Bolshevism".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lenin Miscellany IV*, p. 302 (Russ. ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 301-02.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 298.



Throughout the subsequent decade in which Trotsky was a member of the Bolshevik Party, there is evidence that he remained a rabid enemy of Leninism and that "non-Bolshevism" had always been a part of his make-up.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that in the whole period Trotsky actively fought Leninism, and finally exposed himself as an avowed enemy of the Communist Party and the Soviet power. Characterising Trotsky's long struggle against Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, R. Palme Dutt, a prominent leader of the labour and communist movement, and a founding member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, remarked that he was a "political leader... with a venomous, almost pathological hatred of the basic principles of Lenin and Bolshevism, and the Communist Party, resulting in a long record of slander and disruption".<sup>2</sup>

While the Party was preparing the armed uprising in October 1917, Trotsky, who had just joined the Bolshevik Party, did not dare to come out openly against these preparations but in fact took an anti-Leninist stand, trying in every way to put off the uprising, proposing that it should be timed for the opening of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and trying to make the offensive contingent on whether the Provisional Government took open action, following a take-over decision by the Congress of Soviets.

As Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, Trotsky repeatedly made such statements in public, including his speeches on October 18 and 24, 1917. The idea of waiting for the Congress of Soviets gave the bourgeoisie an opportunity to improve its organisation and concentrate its forces, while depriving the revolutionary detachments of the important advantage to be got from the element of surprise. Lenin resolutely protested against putting off the uprising until the opening of the Congress of Soviets. "To miss such a moment and to 'wait' for the Congress of Soviets," Lenin wrote, "would be utter idiocy, or sheer treachery."<sup>3</sup>

Soon after the Great October Revolution, Trotsky, joined by Bukharin and other "Left Communists", came out against Lenin on the question of concluding the peace treaty at Brest-Litovsk. Although there again he tried to create the im-

pression that he was following a "middle" course between Lenin and the "Left Communists" by putting forward his "neither war, nor peace" slogan, his attitude was in fact no different from the calls issued by the "Left Communists" for an immediate "revolutionary war" against a well-armed enemy, German imperialism. Trotsky was sure that the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia could be maintained only in the event of a victorious world-wide socialist revolution, which had to be "propelled" through a war with world imperialism. The line taken by Trotsky and the "Left Communists" to frustrate the Brest-Litovsk peace was a complete fiasco. Lenin's line on the question of war and peace won out at the Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the Party, which met in March 1918.

In subsequent years, until their expulsion from the Party in 1927, Trotsky and his supporters waged a bitter fight against the Leninist general line, setting up anti-Party groups, and demanding freedom of factions and groups in the Party. They produced their own platforms, aimed at preventing socialist construction in the USSR and restoring the capitalist order. Within a relatively short period, the Trotskyites imposed on the Party a number of discussions: one on the trade unions (1920-21), another on the basic questions of Party construction and economic policy (1923), and one on the character of the October revolution (1924). In 1926-27, the Party inflicted an ideological and organisational defeat on the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition bloc, which was resisting the practical implementation of the programme for socialist construction in the USSR worked out by Lenin.

By asserting that it was impossible to build socialism in the USSR unless it was preceded by a victory of the proletarian revolution in the West, the Trotskyites spread doubt about the strength of the working class of the USSR, and tried to deprive the Party and the Soviet people of revolutionary prospects. The theses of the CPSU Central Committee, "Fiftieth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution", say: "Using the screen of 'Left' ultra-revolutionary phraseology, they (the Trotskyites) tried to impose an adventurist policy of artificially 'pushing' the revolution in other countries and dooming the building of socialism to failure in our country. They demanded the adoption of anti-democratic, militarised methods of leadership of the masses within the country, rejected the Leninist principle

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 595.

<sup>2</sup> R. Palme Dutt, *The Internationale*, London, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1964, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 82.



of democratic centralism, insisted on 'freedom' for factional struggles in the Party and, on this road, slid into anti-Sovietism."<sup>1</sup>

The Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, which was a landmark in the struggle to consolidate the Party's unity, declared that the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition had not only violated Party discipline, but had also gone outside the framework of Soviet legality, going over from factionalism to the establishment of an anti-Soviet Trotskyite party. The congress expelled the leaders of the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc from the Party. Membership of the Trotskyite opposition and the propaganda of its views were declared to be incompatible with membership of the Bolshevik Party.

Emphasising the importance for socialist construction of the defeat inflicted by the Party on the Trotskyite and other anti-Leninist opposition groups, Secretary-General of the CPSU Central Committee L. I. Brezhnev in his report *Fifty Years of Great Achievements of Socialism* declared: "As the Party solved these tasks it waged a relentless struggle against the Trotskyites, Right opportunists and other oppositional groups, whose views mirrored the pressure of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois sections. The oppositionists, repudiating the possibility of building socialism first only in our country and not believing in the strength of the working class and in the stability of its alliance with the peasantry, tried to lead the Party away from the Leninist road. But it routed the opposition ideologically and politically, retained the purity of Marxism-Leninism, the Leninist general line and consolidated the unity of its ranks."<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \*

After the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, the Trotskyites continued to fight the Party and the Soviet Government. In 1929, Trotsky was deported for his anti-Soviet activity.

Abroad, Trotsky remained the bitterest enemy of Leninism, the Communist Party and the Soviet state. He worked hard to split the international communist movement, trying to set up or enlarge factions of his supporters in the Com-

<sup>1</sup> *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, Moscow, 1967, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> L. I. Brezhnev, *Fifty Years of Great Achievements of Socialism*, Moscow, 1967, p. 92.

munist Parties, setting them the task of breaking up these parties from within. A conference of Trotskyite groups from 11 countries in 1938 announced the establishment of an international association of Trotskyites called the Fourth International, in opposition to the Third, Communist International. Trotsky pinned great hopes on this outfit, and flatly declared: "Within the next 10 years, the programme of the Fourth International will win over millions."<sup>1</sup> However, his hopes were not justified: 30 years have gone by, but the small Trotskyite groups, consisting of renegades from the international communist movement and anti-communist-minded petty-bourgeois intellectuals are dragging out a miserable existence.

In his anti-Soviet activity abroad, Trotsky once again joined up with his old confederate, Karl Kautsky. For many years they wore the mask of conciliation and "Leftist" phrasemongering, while promoting the bourgeois, opportunist tendency in the labour movement and fighting against Bolshevism and against Left-wing elements in the Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe. During Trotsky's ten-year membership of the Soviet Communist Party, the two of them, outwardly on the opposite sides of the barricades, continued, one openly and the other secretly, to conduct hostile activity against the Communist Party and the Soviet power.

Now, frothing with hatred for the Soviet socialist state, they issued calls for the forcible overthrow of its government. Like Trotsky, who said socialist construction in the USSR was a "Thermidorian coup" or "Bonapartism", Kautsky said in one of his books published in 1930, that Bolshevism "had degenerated into Bonapartism", and that the armed overthrow of the Soviet Government "should be supported by all socialists". It was a logical finale for Kautsky and Trotsky, the leaders of Centristism, to end up in the camp of the enemies of Marxism and engage in open anti-Soviet activity.

Trotsky pinned great hopes on the overthrow of the Soviet system by means of a war against the USSR which was being prepared by the imperialist powers in the 1930s. He insisted that the coming war would inevitably end in the Soviet Union's defeat and the collapse of the socialist system.

<sup>1</sup> H. P. Mikeshin, "Trotskizm na vooruzhenii imperialisticheskoi propagandy" (Trotskyism as an Instrument of Imperialist Propaganda), *Voprosy istorii KPSS* (Questions of CPSU History) No. 12, 1965, p. 50.



because the proletarian revolution had not yet won out in the West European countries. In 1936, he wrote: "Can we expect that the Soviet Union will come out of the coming great war without defeat? To this frankly posed question we will answer as frankly. If the war should remain only a war, the defeat of the Soviet Union would be inevitable. In a technical, economic and military sense imperialism is incomparably more strong. If it is not paralysed by revolution in the West, imperialism will sweep away the regime which issued from the October revolution."<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky tried to substantiate the inevitability of the Soviet Union's defeat in the coming war on the strength of his old notorious "permanent revolution" doctrine. On the basis of this bankrupt theory, Trotsky strove to mislead readers inexperienced in politics and get them to accept the idea that the "Soviet Union's inevitable defeat" would be nothing but a "short episode" which was to be followed by a "victory of the proletariat" throughout Europe.

Even before the victory of the Great October Revolution, Trotsky used the "permanent revolution" doctrine to cover up his fight against Lenin's theory of socialist revolution and the conclusion that socialism could win out initially in a few countries, or even in one, separate country, and when the dictatorship of the proletariat was established in Russia, he used his doctrine in an attempt to sabotage socialist construction in the USSR, and to restore capitalism in the country. But when socialism had been built in the Soviet Union, Trotsky once again resorted to his theory in an effort to justify the need to destroy the world's first workers' and peasants' state.

There was no longer any doubt in anyone's mind that the "permanent revolution" doctrine was not the fruit of some kind of mistake or "misapprehension" on Trotsky's part. It has always been a demagogic weapon wielded by the Trotskyites in their fight against Leninism, the Soviet state and the international communist movement.

\* \* \*

The struggle against Kautskyism and Trotskyism was of great importance not only for the further strengthening of the Bolshevik Party, but also of the entire international communist and labour movement. The Bolsheviks' final break

with the opportunists and the Centrists was an example followed by Left-wing elements in Social-Democratic parties abroad, who set up the Communist Parties which joined in the Third, Communist International in 1919.

Lenin believed it was necessary to acquaint the fraternal parties with the Bolshevik Party's experience, and emphasised the historic importance of the struggle of the Bolsheviks in Russia against Centrism. In a speech at the Third Congress of the Communist International, he stressed: "We in Russia have already had adequate political experience in the struggle against the Centrists. As long as fifteen years ago, we were waging a struggle against our opportunists and Centrists, and also against the Mensheviks, and we were victorious not only over the Mensheviks, but also over the semi-anarchists.

"If we had not done this, we would not have been able to retain power in our hands for three and a half years, or even for three and a half weeks, and we would not have been able to convene communist congresses here."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin made a special point in drawing attention of the fraternal Communist Parties to the need to fight against Centrism and gave the delegates to the Third Congress of the Comintern a reminder that the two earlier congresses had been held under the "Down with the Centrists!" slogan. It will be recalled that the Second Congress of the Comintern had adopted "21 conditions" for entry into the Communist International, which closed access to Centrist-led organisations. Thanks to the resolute and principled struggle against Centrism, the revolutionary-minded Social-Democrats of Germany, France and several other countries decided to accept the "21 conditions", and this helped to establish Communist Parties in these countries.

When the Trotskyites and other anti-Party groups stepped up their attacks on the Bolshevik Party's Leninist general line, the Communists of all countries took a resolute stand against these hostile attacks, which were doing a great deal of harm to socialist construction in the USSR and the international communist movement. They regarded the struggle against the Trotskyites as their own affair, clearly realising that a victory for Trotskyism could do irreparable damage not only to the Communists of Russia but of all countries.

Emphasising the great importance of the ideological and

<sup>1</sup> R. Palme Dutt, op. cit., p. 247.

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 472.



political defeat inflicted by the Bolshevik Party on the Trotskyites, William Z. Foster, an outstanding leader of the international communist and labour movement, wrote: "Even more vital than the British general strike, the Austrian uprising, or the revolutionary battles in China—during the period between the fifth and sixth Comintern congresses was the struggle that was developing in Russia against the dangerous opposition movement led by Leon Trotsky. In this fight not only was the fate of the Revolution in Russia at stake, but also that of the world Communist movement. A victory for the Trotsky forces would have been a decisive success for world reaction."<sup>1</sup>

In the 1920s and the 1930s, the international communist and labour movement dealt Trotskyism a crushing blow from which it never recovered. However, the leaders of the Trotskyite groups in some countries are now trying to retain the role of a "fifth column" in the international communist and labour movement. They have been infiltrating the Parties and mass organisations of the working people, where they act as provocateurs and as actual accomplices of the imperialists, spreading all sorts of inventions about the policy of the Communist Parties, and hostility and mistrust for the Soviet Union. Rodney Arismendi, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uruguay, put it very well when he said that today the Trotskyites were the debris of an old shipwreck, the flotsam and jetsam which is littering the waves of the world socialist revolution.<sup>2</sup>

The ideologists of anti-communism, who do not shun the use of any means in their fight against the socialist camp and the world communist and labour movement, have accepted Trotskyism as their weapon and hope that this bankrupt trend may be rehabilitated.

The propaganda of anti-communism had been intensified in this direction when the CPSU started to criticise the personality cult. The ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie were hoping to earn political capital on this event by making an attempt to rehabilitate Trotskyism and in every possible way to denigrate the history of the Leninist Party's struggle

<sup>1</sup> William Z. Foster, *History of the Three Internationals. The World Socialist and Communist Movements from 1848 to the Present*, New York, 1957, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> *Anti-Communism—a Weapon of Imperialist Reaction*, Moscow, 1967, p. 241, (Russ. ed.).

against it. But all these attempts on the part of the anti-communists have failed, because the CPSU's criticism of the personality cult did not and does not mean any rehabilitation of Trotskyism or of other anti-Leninist trends and groups. The defeat inflicted by the CPSU on the Trotskyites, the Right-wing opportunists, the national-deviationists and other groupings hostile to Leninism, is a historical service rendered by the Party to the Soviet people and the world communist and labour movement.

This was fully explained by A. N. Kosygin, member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, at a press conference given at the Diplomatic Press Association in Paris in December 1966. A UPI correspondent asked Kosygin: "Don't you think that Trotsky deserves to be rehabilitated and cleared of the charges levelled against him in the Stalin epoch?" Replying to this spokesman of the anti-communist press, Kosygin said: "If the author of this note is very much interested in what Trotskyism is and in what damage it has done to the communist movement, a special lecture could be arranged on this question. Our Party, which has conducted a successful struggle against Trotskyism, has always condemned Trotskyism and continues to condemn it. That is how things stood in the past, and that is how they stand today."<sup>1</sup>

Having crushed Trotskyism ideologically and politically, the Bolshevik Party set an example of steadfastness and refusal to compromise in the struggle for the purity of Marxism-Leninism, demonstrating its indestructible unity and cohesion round the Leninist banner. The historical experience of the CPSU's struggle against Trotskyism is a part not only of its own experience, but of the other fraternal Communist Parties and of the entire international communist and labour movement. All-round study of the experience of the Leninist Party, including its experience in the struggle against Trotskyism in the pre-revolutionary period, will help to expose Trotsky's present-day followers, who are busy in a number of countries and are conducting subversive activity in the international labour movement. It will also be of great help in exposing the bourgeois falsification of the history of the CPSU's struggle against Trotskyism.

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, December 5, 1966.



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