STALIN

THE COLLECTED WORKS

VOLUME 6



WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF JOSEF STALIN



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VOLUME SIX

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Pictured above: Josef Stalin attending the funeral of Vladimir Lenin in 1924. Stalin, together with Mikhail Kalinin and Grigory Zinoviev, was one of the speakers. He would also go on to deliver multiple speeches on Lenin's life and death, all included in this volume.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

With the current American and Israeli aggression against Iran, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon for the "Greater Israel" project, we can learn much from this volume of Stalin. In this text, Stalin discusses the death of Lenin, and puts forward the core tenants of Leninism. All aspects of these tenants should be rigorously studied, however, in these times, that of the National Question should be focused on. Stalin explains that "imperialism cannot exist without exploiting colonies and forcibly retaining them within the framework of the "integral whole;" because imperialism can bring nations together only by means of annexations and colonial conquest."

This "Greater Israel" project is nothing but more of the same colonial conquest for America and Israel. Stalin states how socialists should respond to this type of aggression in the imperialist countries, and those in the imperial core at present should take heed.

There must be a "necessity for a stubborn, continuous and determined struggle against the dominant-nation chauvinism of the "Socialists" of the ruling nations (Britain, France, America, Italy, Japan, etc.), who do not want to fight their imperialist governments, who do not want to support the struggle of the oppressed peoples in "their" colonies for emancipation from oppression, for secession." Without this fight in the imperialist countries, such as America, Britain, Israel; those fighting for their survival, emancipation, and self-determination in these countries colonial outposts will suffer from the lack of international solidarity.

—Róisín Dubh, Iskra Books
April, 2026

ORIGINAL PREFACE

The sixth volume of J. V. Stalin's *Works* contains writings and speeches of the year 1924.

This was the first year without V. I. Lenin. The Bolshevik Party and Soviet people continued their creative work of building socialism under Comrade Stalin's leadership. Comrade Stalin rallied the Party around its Central Committee and mobilised it for the struggle to build socialism in the U.S.S.R.

The works of Comrade Stalin included in the present volume played a cardinal part in the ideological defeat of Trotskyism and other anti-Leninist groups, in the defence, substantiation and development of Leninism.

The sixth volume opens with Comrade Stalin's interview with a Rosta[1] correspondent entitled "The Discussion," and with his report to the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs," which are devoted to the exposure of Trotskyism and the struggle for the ideological and organisational unity of the Bolshevik Party.

In his speech at the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets, *On the Death of Lenin*, Comrade Stalin on behalf of the Bolshevik Party made his great vow sacredly to cherish and fulfil Lenin's behests.

The volume includes J. V. Stalin's well-known work *The Foundations of Leninism*, in which he gives a masterly exposition and theoretical substantiation of Leninism.

The "Organisational Report of the Central Committee to the Thir-

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1 **Translator:** Russian Telegraph Agency.

teenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)," "The Results of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)," "Concerning the International Situation," "The Party's Immediate Tasks in the Countryside," and other articles and speeches are devoted to questions of the international situation, the internal life and consolidation of the Party, the alliance of the working class and peasantry, and the education and re-education of the masses in the spirit of socialism.

The volume concludes with *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*, which gives a theoretical summing up of the experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution and substantiates and develops Lenin's teaching on the victory of socialism in one country.

A Letter to Comrade Demyan Bedny is published for the first time in this volume.

Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute
of the C.P., C.P.S.U.(B.)

1924

THE DISCUSSION

Interview With a Rosta Correspondent

January 9, 1924

The discussion which has extensively developed in the R.C.P.(B.) and its press will be conclusively summed up only by the All-Union Party Conference that is to take place in a week's time. But the resolutions that have already been received from local Party organisations leave no room for doubt that the Central Committee's position has the endorsement of over 90 per cent of the entire R.C.P.(B.) membership.

The Party is well aware that our enemies are trying to make use of the discussion in order to spread all manner of fabrications about the supposed disintegration of the R.C.P.(B.), the weakening of Soviet power, etc. Such an appraisal of our discussion is, to say the least, ludicrous. In actual fact the discussions which have repeatedly arisen in our Party have invariably resulted in the elimination of differences. The Party has always emerged from these discussions still stronger and more united. The present discussion has revealed the extremely high degree of political maturity of the working-class masses, who have in their hands the state power in the U.S.S.R. I must say—and anyone acquainted with the discussion can convince himself of this—that complete unanimity of opinion prevails among the overwhelming majority of the Party on all basic political and economic questions. The fundamentals of our foreign and home policy remain inviolable.

The issues which are being so passionately debated at all meetings of Party organisations without exception are essentially the following:

1. Ought our Party to be a united, independently acting organism with a united will; or, on the contrary, should we allow the formation of various factions and groups as contracting parties within the Party?

2. Has the so-called New Economic Policy been justified in the main, or does it need to be reconsidered?

Together with the overwhelming majority of the Party, the Central Committee is of the opinion that the Party must be united, and that the NEP does not require reconsideration. A small opposition group, which includes a couple of well-known names, holds a view different from that of the Party as a whole.

By an exhaustive and, moreover, absolutely open discussion the Party is trying to elucidate all the details of this question. The Party conference will give its authoritative decision on it, and that decision will be binding on all Party members.

I am convinced—Comrade Stalin said in conclusion—that as a result of the discussion the Party will be stronger and more united than ever and will be able to cope still more successfully with the task of directing the life of our vast country in the conditions of the rapid economic and cultural progress that has begun.

Newspaper *Zarya Vostoka*, No. 473,
January 10, 1924

THIRTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE R. C. P.(B.) [1]

JANUARY 16-18, 1924

THIRTEENTH CONFERENCE
OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST
PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS).
BULLETIN. MOSCOW, 1924

1. Report on Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs

January 17

Comrades, it is customary for our speakers at discussion meetings to begin with the history of the question: how the issue of inner-Party democracy arose, who was the first to say "A," who followed by saying "B," and so on. This method, I think, is not suitable for us, for it introduces an

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1 **Original editor:** The Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) took place in Moscow on January 16-18, 1924. There were present 128 delegates with right of voice and vote and 222 with right of voice only. The conference discussed Party affairs, the international situation, and the immediate tasks in economic policy. On J. V. Stalin's report "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs" the conference passed two resolutions: "Party Affairs," and "Results of the Discussion and the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party."

The conference condemned the Trotskyite opposition, declaring it to be a petty-bourgeois deviation from Marxism, and recommended that the Central Committee publish Point 7 of the resolution "On Party Unity" that was adopted by the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) on the proposal of V. I. Lenin. These decisions of the conference were endorsed by the Thirteenth Party Congress and by the Fifth Congress of the Comintern. (For the resolutions of the conference, see *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 535-56.)

element of squabbling and mutual recrimination and leads to no useful results. I think that it will be much better to begin with the question of how the Party reacted to the Political Bureau resolution on democracy[2] that was subsequently confirmed by the C.C. plenum.

I must place on record that this resolution is the only one, I believe, in the whole history of our Party to have received the full—I would say the absolutely unanimous—approval of the entire Party, following a vehement discussion on the question of democracy. Even the opposition organisations and units, whose general attitude has been one of hostility to the Party majority and the C.C., even they, for all their desire to find fault, have not found occasion or grounds for doing so. Usually in their resolutions these organisations and units, while acknowledging the correctness of the basic provisions of the Political Bureau resolution on inner-Party democracy, have attempted to distinguish themselves in some way from the other Party organisations by adding some sort of appendage to it. For example: yes, yours is a very good resolution, but don't offend Trotsky, or: your resolution is quite correct, but you are a little late, it would have been better to have done all this earlier. I shall not go into the question here of who is offending whom. I think that if we look into the matter properly, we may well find that the celebrated remark about Tit Titych fits Trotsky fairly well: "Who would offend you, Tit Titych? You yourself will offend everyone!" (*Laughter.*) But as I have said, I shall not go into this question. I am even prepared to concede that someone really is offending Trotsky. But is that the point? What principles are involved in this question of offence? After all, it is a question of the principles of the resolution, not of who has offended whom. By this I want to say that even units and organisations that are open and sharp in their opposition,

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2 **Original editor:** This refers to the resolution on Party affairs adopted at the joint meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission of the R.C.P.(B.) held on December 5, 1923, and published in *Pravda*, No. 278, December 7, 1923. The plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), which took place on January 14-15, 1924, summed up the discussion in the Party and endorsed the resolution on Party affairs adopted by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission for submission to the Thirteenth Party Conference (see *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 533-40).

even they have not had the hardihood to raise any objections in principle to the resolution of the Political Bureau of the C.C. and Presidium of the Central Control Commission. I record this fact in order to note once more that it would be hard to find in the whole history of our Party another such instance of a resolution which, after the trials and tribulations of a vehement discussion, has met with such unanimous approval, and not only of the majority, but virtually of the entire Party membership.

I draw two conclusions from this. The first is that the resolution of the Political Bureau and C.C.C. fully accords with the needs and requirements of the Party at the present time. The second is that the Party will emerge from this discussion on inner-Party democracy stronger and more united. This conclusion is, one might say, a well-aimed thrust at those of our ill wishers abroad who have long been rubbing their hands in glee over our discussion, in the belief that our Party would be weakened as a result of it, and Soviet power disintegrated.

I shall not dwell on the essence of inner-Party democracy. Its fundamentals have been set forth in the resolution, and the resolution has been discussed from A to Z by the entire Party. Why should I go over the same ground here? I shall only say one thing: evidently there will not be all-embracing, full democracy. What we shall have, evidently, will be democracy within the bounds outlined by the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses. You know very well what these bounds are and I shall not repeat them here. Nor shall I dilate on the point that the principal guarantee that inner-Party democracy becomes part of the flesh and blood of our Party is to strengthen the activity and understanding of the Party masses. This, too, is dealt with fairly extensively in our resolution.

I pass to the subject of how some comrades among us, and some organisations, make a fetish of democracy, regarding it as something absolute, without relation to time or space. What I want to point out is that democracy is not something constant for all times and conditions; for there are times when its implementation is neither possible nor advisable. Two conditions, or two groups of conditions, internal and external, are required to make inner-Party democracy possible. Without them it is vain to speak of democracy.

It is necessary, firstly, that industry should develop, that there should be no deterioration in the material conditions of the working class, that the working class increase numerically, that its cultural standards advance, and that it advance qualitatively as well. It is necessary that the Party, as the vanguard of the working class, should likewise advance, above all qualitatively, and above all through recruitment among the country's proletarian elements. These conditions of an internal nature are absolutely essential if we are to pose the question of genuine, and not merely paper, implementation of inner-Party democracy.

But these conditions alone are not enough. I have already said that there is another group of conditions, of an external nature, and in the absence of these democracy in the Party is impossible. I have in mind certain international conditions that would more or less ensure peace and peaceful development, without which democracy in the Party is inconceivable. In other words, if we are attacked and have to defend the country with arms in hand, there can be no question of democracy, for it will have to be suspended. The Party mobilises, we shall probably have to militarise it, and the question of inner-Party democracy will disappear of itself.

That is why I believe that democracy must be regarded as dependent on conditions, that there must be no fetishism in questions of inner-Party democracy, for its implementation, as you see, depends on the specific conditions of time and place at each given moment.

To obviate undesirable infatuation and unfounded accusations in future, I must also remind you of the obstacles confronting the Party in the exercise of democracy—obstacles which hinder the implementation of democracy even when the two basic favourable conditions outlined above, internal and external, obtain. Comrades, these obstacles exist, they profoundly influence our Party's activities, and I have no right to pass them over in silence. What are these obstacles?

These obstacles, comrades, consist, firstly, in the fact that in the minds of a section of our Party functionaries there still persist survivals of the old, war period, when the Party was militarised. And these survivals engender certain un-Marxist views: that our Party is not an independently acting organism, independent in its ideological and practical

activities, but something in the nature of a system of institutions—lower, intermediate and higher. This absolutely un-Marxist view has nowhere, it is true, been given final form and has nowhere been expressed definitely, but elements of it exist among a section of our Party functionaries and deter them from the consistent implementation of inner-Party democracy. That is why the struggle against such views, the struggle against survivals of the war period, both at the centre and in the localities, is an immediate task of the Party.

The second obstacle to the implementation of democracy in the Party is the pressure of the bureaucratic state apparatus on the Party apparatus, on our Party workers. The pressure of this unwieldy apparatus on our Party workers is not always noticeable, not always does it strike the eye, but it never relaxes for an instant. The ultimate effect of this pressure of the unwieldy bureaucratic state apparatus is that a number of our functionaries, both at the centre and in the localities, often involuntarily and quite unconsciously, deviate from inner-Party democracy, from the line which they believe to be correct, but which they are often unable to carry out completely. You can well visualise it: the bureaucratic state apparatus with not less than a million employees, largely elements alien to the Party, and our Party apparatus with not more than 20,000-30,000 people, who are called upon to bring the state apparatus under the Party's sway and make it a socialist apparatus. What would our state apparatus be worth without the support of the Party? Without the assistance and support of our Party apparatus, it would not be worth much, unfortunately. And every time our Party apparatus extends its feelers into the various branches of the state administration, it is quite often obliged to adapt Party activities there to those of the state apparatus. Concretely: the Party has to carry on work for the political education of the working class, to heighten the latter's political understanding, but at the same time there is the tax in kind to be collected, some campaign or other that has to be carried out; for without these campaigns, without the assistance of the Party, the state apparatus cannot cope with its duties. And here our Party functionaries find themselves between two fires—they must rectify the line of the state apparatus, which still works according to old patterns, and at the same

time they must retain contact with the workers. And often enough they themselves become bureaucratised.

Such is the second obstacle, which is a difficult one to surmount, but which must be surmounted at all costs to facilitate the implementation of inner-Party democracy.

Lastly, there is yet a third obstacle in the way of realising democracy. It is the low cultural level of a number of our organisations, of our units, particularly in the border regions (no offence to them meant), which hampers our Party organisations in fully implementing inner-Party democracy. You know that democracy requires a certain minimum of cultural development on the part of the members of the unit, and of the organisation as a whole; it requires a certain minimum of active members who can be elected and placed in executive posts. And if there is no such minimum of active members in the organisation, if the cultural level of the organisation itself is low, what then? Naturally, in that case we are obliged to deviate from democracy, resorting to appointment of officials and so on.

Such are the obstacles that have confronted us, which will continue to confront us, and which we must overcome if inner-Party democracy is to be implemented sincerely and completely.

I have reminded you of the obstacles that confront us, and of the external and internal conditions without which democracy becomes an empty, demagogic phrase, because some comrades make a fetish, an absolute, of the question of democracy. They believe that democracy is possible always, under all conditions, and that its implementation is prevented only by the "evil" will of the "apparatus men." It is to oppose this idealistic view, a view that is not ours, not Marxist, not Leninist, that I have reminded you, comrades, of the conditions necessary for the implementation of democracy, and of the obstacles confronting us at the present time.

Comrades, I could conclude my report with this, but I consider that it is our duty to sum up the discussion and to draw from this summing-up certain conclusions which may prove of great importance for us. I could divide our whole struggle in the field of the discussion, on the question

of democracy, into three periods.

The first period, when the opposition attacked the C.C., with the accusation that in these past two years, in fact throughout the NEP period, the whole line of the C.C. has been wrong. This was the period prior to the publication of the Political Bureau and C.C.C. Presidium resolution. I shall not deal here with the question of who was right and who wrong. The attacks were violent ones, and as you know, not always warranted. But one thing is clear: this period can be described as one in which the opposition levelled its bitterest attacks on the C.C.

The second period began with the publication of the Political Bureau and C.C.C. resolution, when the opposition was faced with the necessity of advancing something comprehensive and concrete against the C.C. resolution, and when it was found that the opposition had nothing either comprehensive or concrete to offer. That was a period in which the C.C. and the opposition came closest together. To all appearances the whole thing was coming to an end, or could have come to an end, through some reconciliation of the opposition to the C.C. line. I well remember a meeting in Moscow, the centre of the discussion struggle—I believe it was on December 12 in the Hall of Columns—when Preobrazhensky submitted a resolution which for some reason was rejected, but which had little to distinguish it from the C.C. resolution. In fundamentals, and even in certain minor points, it did not differ at all from the C.C. resolution. And at that time it seemed to me that, properly speaking, there was nothing to continue fighting over. We had the C.C. resolution, which satisfied everyone, at least as regards nine-tenths of it; the opposition itself evidently realised this and was prepared to meet us halfway; and with this, perhaps, we would put an end to the disagreements. This was the second, reconciliation period.

But then came the third period. It opened with Trotsky's pronouncement, his appeal to the districts, which, at one stroke, wiped out the reconciliation tendencies and turned everything topsy-turvy. Trotsky's pronouncement opened a period of most violent inner-Party struggle—a struggle which would not have occurred had Trotsky not come out with his letter on the very next day after he had voted for the Political Bureau resolution. You know that this first pronouncement of Trotsky's was fol-

lowed by a second, and the second by a third, with the result that the struggle grew still more acute.

I think, comrades, that in these pronouncements Trotsky committed at least six grave errors. These errors aggravated the inner-Party struggle. I shall proceed to analyse them.

Trotsky's first error lies in the very fact that he came out with an article on the next day after the publication of the C.C. Political Bureau and C.C.C. resolution; with an article which can only be regarded as a platform advanced in opposition to the C.C. resolution. I repeat and emphasise that this article can only be regarded as a new platform, advanced in opposition to the unanimously adopted C.C. resolution. Just think of it, comrades: on a certain date the Political Bureau and the Presidium of the C.C.C. meet and discuss a resolution on inner-Party democracy. The resolution is adopted unanimously, and only a day later, independently of the C.C., disregarding its will and over its head, Trotsky's article is circulated to the districts. It is a new platform and raises anew the issues of the apparatus and the Party, cadres and youth, factions and Party unity, and so on and so forth—a platform immediately seized upon by the entire opposition and advanced as a counterblast to the C.C. resolution. This can only be regarded as opposing oneself to the Central Committee. It means that Trotsky puts himself in open and outright opposition to the entire C.C. The Party was confronted with the question: have we a C.C. as our directing body, or does it no longer exist; is there a C.C. whose unanimous decisions are respected by its members, or is there only a superman standing above the C.C., a superman for whom no laws are valid and who can permit himself to vote for the C.C. resolution today, and to put forward and publish a new platform in opposition to this resolution tomorrow? Comrades, we cannot demand that workers submit to Party discipline if a C.C. member, openly, in the sight of all, ignores the Central Committee and its unanimously adopted decision. We cannot apply two disciplines: one for workers, the other for big-wigs. There must be a single discipline.

Trotsky's error consists in the fact that he has set himself up in opposition to the C.C. and imagines himself to be a superman standing above the C.C., above its laws, above its decisions, thereby providing a certain

section of the Party with a pretext for working to undermine confidence in the C.C.

Some comrades have expressed dissatisfaction that Trotsky's anti-Party action was treated as such in certain *Pravda* articles and in articles by individual members of the C.C. To these comrades I must reply that no party could respect a C.C. which at this difficult time failed to uphold the Party's dignity, when one of its members attempted to put himself above the entire C.C. The C.C. would have committed moral suicide had it passed over this attempt of Trotsky's.

Trotsky's second error is his ambiguous behaviour during the whole period of the discussion. He has grossly ignored the will of the Party, which wants to know what his real position is, and has diplomatically evaded answering the question put point-blank by many organisations: for whom, in the final analysis, does Trotsky stand—for the C.C. or for the opposition? The discussion is not being conducted for evasions but in order that the whole truth may be placed frankly and honestly before the Party, as Ilyich does and as every Bolshevik is obliged to do. We are told that Trotsky is seriously ill. Let us assume he is; but during his illness he has written three articles and four new chapters of the pamphlet which appeared today. Is it not clear that Trotsky could perfectly well write a few lines in reply to the question put to him by various organisations and state whether he is *for* the opposition or *against* the opposition? It need hardly be said that this ignoring of the will of a number of organisations was bound to aggravate the inner-Party struggle.

Trotsky's third error is that in his pronouncements he puts the Party apparatus in opposition to the Party and advances the slogan of combating the "apparatus men." Bolshevism cannot accept such contrasting of the Party to the Party apparatus. What, actually, does our Party apparatus consist of? It consists of the Central Committee, the Regional Committees, the Gubernia Committees, the Uyezd Committees. Are these subordinated to the Party? Of course they are, for to the extent of 90 per cent they are elected by the Party. Those who say that the Gubernia Committees have been appointed are wrong. They are wrong, because, as you know, comrades, our Gubernia Committees are elected, just as the Uyezd Committees and the C.C. are. They are subordinated to the

Party. But once elected, they must direct the work, that is the point. Is Party work conceivable without direction from the Central Committee, after its election by the congress, and from the Gubernia Committee, after its election by the Gubernia conference? Surely, Party work is inconceivable without this. Surely, this is an irresponsible anarcho-Menshevik view which renounces the very principle of direction of Party activities. I am afraid that by contrasting the Party apparatus to the Party, Trotsky, whom, of course, I have no intention of putting on a par with the Mensheviks, impels some of the inexperienced elements in our Party towards the standpoint of anarcho-Menshevik indiscipline and organisational laxity. I am afraid that this error of Trotsky's may expose our entire Party apparatus—the apparatus without which the Party is inconceivable—to attack by the inexperienced members of the Party.

Trotsky's fourth error consists in the fact that he has put the young members of the Party in opposition to its cadres, that he has unwarrantedly accused our cadres of degeneration. Trotsky put our Party on a par with the Social-Democratic Party in Germany. He referred to examples how certain disciples of Marx, veteran Social-Democrats, had degenerated, and from this he concluded that the same danger of degeneration faces our Party cadres. Properly speaking, one might well laugh at the sight of a C.C. member who only yesterday fought Bolshevism hand in hand with the opportunists and Mensheviks, attempting now, in this seventh year of Soviet power, to assert, even if only as an assumption, that our Party cadres, born, trained and steeled in the struggle against Menshevism and opportunism—that these cadres are faced with the prospect of degeneration. I repeat, one might well laugh at this attempt. Since, however, this assertion was made at no ordinary time but during a discussion, and since we are confronted here with a certain contrasting of the Party cadres, who are alleged to be susceptible to degeneration, to the young Party members, who are alleged to be free, or almost free, of such a danger, this assumption, though essentially ridiculous and frivolous, may acquire, and already has acquired, a definite practical significance. That is why I think we must stop to look into it.

It is sometimes said that old people must be respected, for they have lived longer than the young, know more and can give better advice. I must

say, comrades, that this is an absolutely erroneous view. It is not every old person we must respect, and it is not every experience that is of value to us. What matters is the kind of experience. German Social-Democracy has its cadres, very experienced ones too: Scheidemann, Noske, Wels and the rest; men with the greatest experience, men who know all the ins and outs of the struggle. [...] But struggle against what, and against whom? What matters is the kind of experience. In Germany these cadres were trained in the struggle against the revolutionary spirit, not in the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but against it. Their experience is vast; but it is the wrong kind of experience. Comrades, it is the duty of the youth to explode this experience, demolish it and oust these old ones. There, in German Social-Democracy, the youth, being free of the experience of struggle against the revolutionary spirit, is closer to this revolutionary spirit or closer to Marxism, than the old cadres. The latter are burdened with the experience of struggle against the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, they are burdened with the experience of struggle for opportunism, against revolutionism. Such cadres must be routed, and all our sympathies must be with that youth which, I repeat, is free of this experience of struggle against the revolutionary spirit and for that reason can the more easily assimilate the new ways and methods of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, against opportunism. There, in Germany, I can understand the question being put in that way. If Trotsky were speaking of German Social-Democracy and the cadres of such a party, I would be wholeheartedly prepared to endorse his statement. But we are dealing with a different party, the Communist Party, the Bolshevik Party, whose cadres came into being in the struggle against opportunism, gained strength in that struggle, and which matured and captured power in the struggle against imperialism, in the struggle against all the opportunist hangers-on of imperialism. Is it not clear that there is a fundamental difference here? Our cadres matured in the struggle to assert the revolutionary spirit; they carried that struggle through to the end, they came to power in battles against imperialism, and they are now shaking the foundations of world imperialism. How can these cadres—if one approaches the matter honestly, without duplicity—how can these cadres be put on a par with those of German Social-Democracy, which in the past worked hand in glove with Wilhelm against the working class,

and is now working hand in glove with Seeckt; a party which grew up and was formed in the struggle against the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat? How can these cadres, fundamentally different in nature, be put on a par, how can they be confused? Is it so difficult to realise that the gulf between the two is unbridgeable? Is it so difficult to see that Trotsky's gross misrepresentation, his gross confusion, are calculated to undermine the prestige of our revolutionary cadres, the core of our Party? Is it not clear that this misrepresentation could only inflame passions and render the inner-Party struggle more acute?

Trotsky's fifth error is to raise in his letters the argument and slogan that the Party must march in step with the student youth, "our Party's truest barometer." "The youth—the Party's truest barometer—react most sharply of all against Party bureaucracy," he says in his first article. And in order that there be no doubt as to what youth he has in mind, Trotsky adds in his second letter: "Especially sharply, as we have seen, does the student youth react against bureaucracy." If we were to proceed from this proposition, an absolutely incorrect one, theoretically fallacious and practically harmful, we should have to go further and issue the slogan: "More student youth in our Party; open wide the doors of our Party to the student youth."

Hitherto the policy has been to orientate ourselves on the proletarian section of our Party, and we have said: "Open wide the doors of the Party to proletarian elements; our Party must grow by recruiting proletarians." Now Trotsky turns this formula upside down.

The question of intellectuals and workers in our Party is no new one. It was raised as far back as the Second Congress of our Party when it was a question of the formulation of paragraph 1 of the Rules, on Party membership. As you know, Martov demanded at the time that the framework of the Party be expanded to include non-proletarian elements, in opposition to Comrade Lenin, who insisted that the admission of such elements into the Party be strictly limited. Subsequently, at the Third Congress of our Party, the issue arose again, with new force. I recall how sharply, at that congress, Comrade Lenin put the question of workers and intellectuals in our Party. This is what Comrade Lenin said at the time:

> "It has been pointed out that usually splits have been headed by intellectuals. This is a very important point, but it is not decisive. [...] I believe we must take a broader view of the matter. The bringing of workers on to the committees is not only a pedagogical, but also a political task. Workers have class instinct, and given a little political experience they fairly soon develop into staunch Social-Democrats. I would be very much in sympathy with the idea that our committees should contain eight workers to every two intellectuals" (see Vol. VII, p. 282[3]).

That is how the question stood as early as 1905. Ever since, this injunction of Comrade Lenin's has been our guiding principle in building the Party. But now Trotsky proposes, in effect, that we break with the organisational line of Bolshevism.

And, finally, Trotsky's sixth error lies in his proclaiming freedom of groups. Yes, freedom of groups! I recall that already in the subcommission which drew up the draft resolution on democracy we had an argument with Trotsky on groups and factions. Trotsky raised no objection to the prohibition of factions, but vehemently defended the idea of permitting groups within the Party. That view is shared by the opposition. Evidently, these people do not realise that by permitting freedom of groups they open a loophole for the Myasnikov elements, and make it easier for them to mislead the Party and represent factions as groups. Indeed, is there any difference between a group and a faction? Only an outward one. This is how Comrade Lenin defines factionalism, identifying it with groups:

> "Even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism were apparent in the Party, namely, the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate themselves and to establish a group discipline of their own" (see Stenographic Report of the Tenth Congress, R.C.P.(B.), p. 309).

As you see, there is essentially no difference here between factions and groups. And when the opposition set up its own bureau here in Moscow, with Serebryakov as its head; when it began to send out speakers with instructions to address such and such meetings and raise such and such objections; and when, in the course of the struggle, these op-

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3 **Translator:** In this and other references to Lenin's *Works*, Roman numerals indicate volumes of the Third Russian Edition of V. I. Lenin's *Works*.

positionists were compelled to retreat and changed their resolutions by command; this, of course, was evidence of the existence of a group and of group discipline. But we are told that this was not a faction; well, let Preobrazhensky explain what a faction is. Trotsky's pronouncements, his letters and articles on the subject of generations and of factions, are designed to induce the Party to tolerate groups within its midst. This is an attempt to legalise factions, and Trotsky's faction above all.

Trotsky affirms that groups arise because of the bureaucratic regime instituted by the Central Committee, and that if there were no bureaucratic regime, there would be no groups either. This is an un-Marxist approach, comrades. Groups arise, and will continue to arise, because we have in our country the most diverse forms of economy—from embryonic forms of socialism down to medievalism. That in the first place. Then we have the NEP, that is, we have allowed capitalism, the revival of private capital and the revival of the ideas that go with it, and these ideas are penetrating into the Party. That in the second place. And, in the third place, our Party is made up of three component parts: there are workers, peasants and intellectuals in its ranks. These then, if we approach the question in a Marxist way, are the causes why certain elements are drawn from the Party for the formation of groups, which in some cases we must remove by surgical action, and in others dissolve by ideological means, through discussion.

It is not a question of regime here. There would be many more groups under a regime of maximum freedom. So it is not the regime that is to blame, but the conditions in which we live, the conditions that exist in our country, the conditions governing the development of the Party itself.

If we were to allow groups in this situation, under these complex conditions, we would ruin the Party, convert it from the monolithic, united organisation that it is into a union of groups and factions contracting with one another and entering into temporary alliances and agreements. That would not be a party. It would be the collapse of the Party. Never, for a single moment, have the Bolsheviks conceived of the Party as anything but a monolithic organisation, hewed from a single block, possessing a single will and in its work uniting all shades of thought into a single

current of practical activities.

But what Trotsky suggests is profoundly erroneous; it runs counter to Bolshevik organisational principles, and would inevitably lead to the disintegration of the Party, making it lax and soft, converting it from a united party into a federation of groups. Living as we do in a situation of capitalist encirclement, we need not only a united party, not only a solid party, but a veritable party of steel, one capable of withstanding the assault of the enemies of the proletariat, capable of leading the workers to the final battle.

What are the conclusions?

The first conclusion is that we have produced a concrete, clear-cut resolution summing up the present discussion. We have declared: groups and factions cannot be tolerated, the Party must be united, monolithic, the Party must not be put in opposition to the apparatus, there must be no idle talk of our cadres being in danger of degeneration, for they are revolutionary cadres, there must be no searching for cleavages between these revolutionary cadres and the youth, which is marching in step with these cadres and will continue to do so in future.

There are also certain positive conclusions. The first and fundamental one is that henceforth the Party must resolutely orientate itself on, and take as its criterion, the proletarian section of our Party, that it must narrow and reduce, or eliminate altogether, the possibility of entry of non-proletarian elements, and open the doors wider to proletarian elements.

As for groups and factions, I believe that the time has come when we must make public the clause in the unity resolution which on Comrade Lenin's proposal was adopted by the Tenth Congress of our Party and was not intended for publication. Party members have forgotten about this clause. I am afraid not everyone remembers it. This clause, which has hitherto remained secret, should now be published and incorporated in the resolution which we shall adopt on the results of the discussion. With your permission I shall read it. Here is what it says:

> "In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the maximum unanimity, doing away with all factionalism, the congress authorises the Central Committee, in case (cases) of breach of disci-

> pline or of a revival or toleration of factionalism, to apply all Party penalties, up to and including expulsion from the Party and, in regard to members of the Central Committee, to reduce them to the status of candidate members and even, as an extreme measure, to expel them from the Party. A condition for the application of such an extreme measure (to members and candidate members of the C.C. and members of the Control Commission) must be the convocation of a plenum of the Central Committee, to which all candidate members of the Central Committee and all members of the Control Commission shall be invited. If such a general assembly of the most responsible leaders of the Party, by a two-thirds majority, considers it necessary to reduce a member of the Central Committee to the status of a candidate member, or to expel him from the Party, this measure shall be put into effect immediately."

I think that we must incorporate this clause in the resolution on the results of the discussion, and make it public.

Lastly, a question which the opposition keeps raising and to which, apparently, they do not always receive a satisfactory reply. The opposition often asks: Whose sentiments do we, the opposition, express? I believe that the opposition expresses the sentiments of the non-proletarian section of our Party. I believe that the opposition, perhaps unconsciously and involuntarily, serves as the unwitting vehicle of the sentiments of the non-proletarian elements in our Party. I believe that the opposition, in its unrestrained agitation for democracy, which it so often makes into an absolute and a fetish, is unleashing petty-bourgeois elemental forces.

Are you acquainted with the sentiments of such comrades as the students Martynov, Kazaryan and the rest? Have you read Khodorovsky's article in *Pravda* which cites passages from the speeches of these comrades? Here, for instance, is a speech by Martynov (he is a Party member, it appears): "It is our business to make decisions, and the business of the C.C. to carry them out and to indulge less in argument." This refers to a Party unit in a college of the People's Commissariat of Transport. But, comrades, the Party has a total of at least 50,000 units and if each of them is going to regard the C.C. in this way, holding that it is the business of the units to decide, and of the C.C. not to argue, I am afraid that we shall never arrive at any decision. Whence comes this sentiment of the Martynovs? What is there proletarian about it? And the Martynovs, mind you, support the opposition. Is there any difference between Martynov and Trotsky? Only in the fact that Trotsky launched the attack on the

Party apparatus, while Martynov is driving that attack home.

And here is another college student, Kazaryan, who, it appears, is also a Party member. "What have we got," he demands, "a dictatorship of the proletariat or a dictatorship of the Communist Party over the proletariat?" This, comrades, comes not from the Menshevik Martov but from the "Communist" Kazaryan. The difference between Trotsky and Kazaryan is that according to Trotsky our cadres are degenerating, but according to Kazaryan they should be driven out, for in his opinion they have saddled themselves on the proletariat.

I ask: Whose sentiments do the Martynovs and Kazaryans express? Proletarian sentiments? Certainly not. Whose then? The sentiments of the non-proletarian elements in the Party and in the country. And is it an accident that these exponents of non-proletarian sentiments vote for the opposition? No, it is no accident. (*Applause.*)

2. Reply to the Discussion

January 18

I said in my report that I did not wish to touch on the history of the question because that would introduce an element of squabbling, as I put it, and mutual recrimination. But since Preobrazhensky wishes it, since he insists, I am prepared to comply and say a few words on the history of the question of inner-Party democracy.

How did the question of inner-Party democracy arise in the C.C.? It came up for the first time at the C.C. plenum in September, in connection with the conflicts that had developed in the factories and the fact, then brought out by us, that certain Party and trade-union organisations had become isolated from the masses. The C.C. took the view that this was a serious matter, that shortcomings had accumulated in the Party and that a special authoritative commission ought to be set up to look into the matter, study the facts and submit concrete proposals on how to improve the situation in the Party. The same thing applies to the marketing crisis, the price "scissors." The opposition took no part at all in raising those

questions or in electing the commissions on the inner-Party situation and on the "scissors" problem. Where was the opposition at the time? If I am not mistaken, Preobrazhensky was then in the Crimea and Sapronov in Kislovodsk. Trotsky, then in Kislovodsk, was finishing his articles on art and was about to return to Moscow. They had not yet returned when the Central Committee raised this question at its meeting. They came back to find a ready decision and did not intervene with a single word, nor did they raise a single objection to the C.C. plan. The situation in the Party was the subject of a report read by Comrade Dzerzhinsky at a conference of Gubernia Committee secretaries in September. I affirm that neither at the September plenum, nor at the secretaries' conference, did the present members of the opposition so much as hint by a single word at a "severe economic crisis," or a "crisis in the Party," or the "democracy" issue.

So you see that the questions of democracy and of the "scissors" were raised by the Central Committee itself; the initiative was entirely in the hands of the C.C., while the members of the opposition remained silent—they were absent.

That, so to speak, was Act I, the initial stage in the history of the issue.

Act II began with the plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. in October. The opposition, headed by Trotsky, seeing that the question of shortcomings in the Party was in the air, that the C.C. had already taken the matter in hand and had formed commissions, and lest—God forbid—the initiative would remain with the C.C., tried, took as its aim, to wrest the initiative from the C.C. and get astride the hobby-horse of democracy. As you know, it is a spry sort of horse and could be used in an attempt to outride the C.C. And so there appeared the documents on which Preobrazhensky spoke here at such length—the document of the 46[4] and Trotsky's letter. That same Trotsky, who in September, a few days before his factional pronouncement, had been silent at the plenum, at any rate had not objected to the C.C. decisions, two weeks later suddenly discovered that the country and the Party were going to rack and ruin and that he,

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4 **Original editor:** Concerning the document of the 46 members of the opposition, see *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Short Course*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 408-09.

Trotsky, this patriarch of bureaucrats, could not live without democracy.

It was rather amusing for us to hear Trotsky hold forth on the subject of democracy, the same Trotsky who at the Tenth Party Congress had demanded that the trade unions be *shaken up from above.* But we knew that no great difference separates the Trotsky of the Tenth Congress period from the Trotsky of today, for now, as then, he advocates shaking up the Leninist cadres. The only difference is that at the Tenth Congress he wanted to shake up the Leninist cadres from the top, in *the sphere of the trade unions*, whereas now he wants to shake up the same Leninist cadres from the bottom, in *the sphere of the Party.* He needs democracy as a hobby-horse, as a strategic manoeuvre. That's what all the clamour is about.

For, if the opposition really wanted to help matters, to approach the issue in a business-like and comradely way, it should have submitted its statement first of all to the commissions set up by the September plenum, and should have said something like this: "We consider your work unsatisfactory; we demand a report on its results to the Political Bureau, we demand a plenum of the C.C., to which we have new proposals of ours to present," etc. And if the commissions had refused to give them a hearing, or if the Political Bureau had refused to hear their case, if it had ignored the opinion of the opposition, or refused to call a plenum to examine Trotsky's proposals and the opposition proposals generally, then—and only then—would the opposition have been fully justified in coming out openly, over the head of the C.C., with an appeal to the Party membership and in saying to the Party: "The country is facing disaster; economic crisis is developing; the Party is on the road to ruin. We asked the C.C. commissions to go into these questions, but they refused to give us a hearing, we tried to lay the matter before the Political Bureau, but nothing came of that either. We are now forced to appeal to the Party, in order that the Party itself may take things in hand." I do not doubt that the response of the Party would have been: "Yes, these are practical revolutionaries, for they place the essence of the matter above the form."

But did the opposition act like that? Did it attempt, even once, to approach the C.C. commissions with its proposals? Did it ever think of, did it make any attempt at, raising and settling the issues within the C.C.

or the organs of the C.C.? No, the opposition made no such attempt. Evidently, its purpose was not to improve the inner-Party situation, or to help the Party to improve the economic situation, but to anticipate the work of the commissions and plenum of the C.C., to wrest the initiative from the C.C., get astride the hobby-horse of democracy and, while there was still time, raise a hue and cry in an attempt to undermine confidence in the C.C. Clearly, the opposition was in a hurry to concoct "documents" against the C.C., in the shape of Trotsky's letter and the statement of the 46, so that it could circulate them among the Sverdlov University students and to the districts and assert that it, the opposition, was for democracy and for improving the economic situation, while the C.C. was hindering, that assistance was needed against the C.C., and so on.

Such are the facts.

I demand that Preobrazhensky refute these statements of mine. I demand that he refute them, in the press at least. Let Preobrazhensky try to refute the fact that the commissions were set up in September by the C.C. plenum without the opposition, before the opposition took up the issue. Let Preobrazhensky try to refute the fact that neither Trotsky nor the other oppositionists attempted to present their proposals to the commissions. Let Preobrazhensky try to refute the fact that the opposition knew of the existence of these commissions, ignored their work and made no effort to settle the matter within the C.C.

That is why, when Preobrazhensky and Trotsky declared at the October plenum that they wanted to save the Party through democracy, but that the C.C. was blind and saw nothing, the C.C. laughed at them and replied: No, comrades, we, the C.C., are wholeheartedly for democracy, but we do not believe in your democracy, because we feel that your "democracy" is simply a strategic move against the C.C. motivated by your factionalism.

What did the C.C. and C.C.C. plenums decide at the time on inner-Party democracy? This is what they decided:

> "The plenums fully endorse the Political Bureau's timely course of promoting inner-Party democracy and also its proposal to intensify the struggle against extravagance and the corrupting influence of the NEP on some elements in the Party.

> "The plenums instruct the Political Bureau to do everything necessary to expedite the work of the commissions appointed by the Political Bureau and the September plenum: 1) the commission on the 'scissors,' 2) on wages, 3) on the inner-Party situation.
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> "When the necessary measures on these questions have been worked out, the Political Bureau must immediately begin to put them into effect and report to the next plenum of the C.C."

In one of his letters to the C.C. Trotsky wrote that the October plenum was the "supreme expression of the apparatus-bureaucratic line of policy." Is it not clear that this statement of Trotsky's is a slander against the C.C.? Only a man who has completely lost his head and is blinded by factionalism can, after the adoption of the document I have just read, maintain that the October plenum was the supreme expression of bureaucracy.

And what did the C.C. and C.C.C. plenums decide at the time on the "democratic" manoeuvres of Trotsky and the 46? This is what they decided:

> "The plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., attended also by representatives of ten Party organisations, regard Trotsky's pronouncement, made at the present highly important moment for the world revolution and the Party, as a grave political error, especially because his attack on the Political Bureau has, objectively, assumed the character of a factional move which threatens to strike a blow at Party unity and creates a crisis in the Party. The plenums note with regret that, in order to raise the questions touched on by him, Trotsky chose the method of appealing to individual Party members, instead of the only permissible method,—that of first submitting these questions for discussion by the bodies of which Trotsky is a member.
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> "The method chosen by Trotsky served as the signal for the appearance of a factional group (statement of the 46).
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> "The plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., and representatives of ten Party organisations, resolutely condemn the statement of the 46 as a factional and schismatic step; for that is its nature, whatever the intentions of those who signed it. That statement threatens to subject the entire Party in the coming months to an inner-Party struggle and thereby weaken the Party at a supremely important moment for the destinies of the world revolution."

As you see, comrades, these facts completely refute the picture of the situation presented here by Preobrazhensky.

Act III, or the third stage, in the history of the issue was the period following the October plenum. The October plenum had voted to instruct the Political Bureau that it take every measure to ensure harmony in its work. I must state here, comrades, that in the period following the October plenum we took every measure to work in harmony with Trotsky, although I must say that this proved anything but an easy task. We had two private conferences with Trotsky, went into all questions of economic and Party matters and arrived at certain views on which there were no disagreements. As I reported yesterday, a sub-commission of three was set up as a continuation of these private conferences and of these efforts to ensure harmony in the work of the Political Bureau. This subcommission drew up the draft resolution which subsequently became the C.C. and C.C.C. resolution on democracy.

That is how things stood.

It seemed to us that after the unanimous adoption of the resolution there were no further grounds for controversy, no grounds for an inner-Party struggle. And, indeed, this was so until Trotsky's new pronouncement, his appeal to the districts. But Trotsky's pronouncement on the day after the publication of the C.C. resolution, undertaken independently of the C.C. and over its head, upset everything, radically changed the situation, and hurled the Party back into a fresh controversy and a fresh struggle, more acute than before. It is said that the C.C. should have forbidden the publication of Trotsky's article. That is wrong, comrades. It would have been a highly dangerous step for the C.C. to take. Try and prohibit an article of Trotsky's, already made public in the Moscow districts! The Central Committee could not take so rash a step.

That is the history of the issue.

It follows from what has been said that the opposition has been concerned not so much with democracy as with using the idea of democracy to undermine the C.C.; that in the case of the opposition we are dealing not with people who want to help the Party, but with a faction which has been stealthily watching the C.C. in the hope that "it may slip up, or overlook something, and then we'll pounce on it." For it is a faction when one group of Party members tries to trap the central agencies of the Party in order to exploit a crop failure, a depreciation of the chervonets

or any other difficulty confronting the Party, and then to attack the Party unexpectedly, from ambush, and to hit it on the head. Yes, the C.C. was right when in October it said to you, comrades of the opposition, that democracy is one thing and intriguing against the Party quite another; that democracy is one thing and exploiting clamour about democracy against the Party majority quite another.

That, Preobrazhensky, is the history of the issue, about which I did not want to speak here, but which, nevertheless, I have been obliged to recount in deference to your persistent desire.

The opposition has made it a rule to extol Comrade Lenin as the greatest of geniuses. I am afraid that this praise is insincere and that behind it, too, is a crafty stratagem: the clamour about Comrade Lenin's genius is meant to cover up their departure from Lenin, and at the same time to emphasise the weakness of his disciples. Certainly, it is not for us, Comrade Lenin's disciples, to fail to appreciate that Comrade Lenin is the greatest of geniuses, and that men of his calibre are born once in many centuries. But permit me to ask you, Preobrazhensky, why did you differ with this greatest of geniuses on the issue of the Brest Peace? Why did you abandon and refuse to heed this greatest of geniuses at a difficult moment? Where, in which camp, were you then?

And Sapronov, who now insincerely and hypocritically lauds Comrade Lenin, that same Sapronov who had the impudence, at one congress, to call Comrade Lenin an "ignoramus" and "oligarch"! Why did he not support the genius Lenin, say at the Tenth Congress, and why, if he really thinks that Comrade Lenin is the greatest of geniuses, has he invariably appeared in the opposite camp at difficult moments? Does Sapronov know that Comrade Lenin, in submitting to the Tenth Congress the unity resolution, which calls for the expulsion of factionalists from the Party, had in mind Sapronov among others?

Or again: why was Preobrazhensky found to be in the camp of the opponents of the great genius Lenin, not only at the time of the Brest Peace, but subsequently too, in the period of the trade-union discussion? Is all this accidental? Is there not a definite logic in it? (*Preobrazhensky*: "I tried to use my own brains.")

It is very praiseworthy, Preobrazhensky, that you should have wanted to use your own brains. But just look at the result: on the Brest issue you used your own brains, and came a cropper; then in the trade-union discussion you again tried to use your own brains, and again you came a cropper; and now, I do not know whether you are using your own brains or borrowing someone else's, but it appears that you have come a cropper this time too. (*Laughter.*) Nevertheless, I think that if Preobrazhensky were now to use his own brains more, rather than Trotsky's—which resulted in the letter of October 8—he would be closer to us than to Trotsky.

Preobrazhensky has reproached the C.C., asserting that as long as Ilyich stood at our head questions were solved in good time, not belatedly, for Ilyich was able to discern new events in the embryo, and give slogans that anticipated events; whereas now, he claims, with Ilyich absent, the Central Committee has begun to lag behind events. What does Preobrazhensky wish to imply? That Ilyich is superior to his disciples? But does anyone doubt that? Does anyone doubt that, compared with his disciples, Ilyich stands out as a veritable Goliath? If we are to speak of the Party's leader, not a press-publicised leader receiving a heap of congratulatory messages, but its real leader, then there is only one—Comrade Lenin. That is precisely why it has been stressed time and again that in the present circumstances, with Comrade Lenin temporarily absent, we must keep to the line of collective leadership. As for Comrade Lenin's disciples, we might point, for example, to the events connected with the Curzon ultimatum,[5] which were a regular test, an examination, for them. The fact that we emerged from our difficulties then without detriment to our cause undoubtedly shows that Comrade Lenin's disciples had already learned a thing or two from their teacher.

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5 **Original editor:** On May 8, 1923, Lord Curzon, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, sent the Soviet Government an ultimatum containing slanderous charges against the Soviet Government. It demanded the recall of the Soviet plenipotentiary representatives from Persia and Afghanistan, the release of British fishing boats which had been detained for illegal fishing in the northern territorial waters of the U.S.S.R., etc., and threatened a rupture of trade relations if these demands were not conceded within ten days. Curzon's ultimatum created the danger of a new intervention. The Soviet Government rejected the unlawful claims of the British Government, at the same time expressing complete readiness to settle the relations between the two countries in a peaceful way, and took measures to strengthen the country's defensive capacity.

Preobrazhensky is wrong in asserting that our Party did not lag behind events in previous years. He is wrong because this assertion is untrue factually and incorrect theoretically. Several examples can be cited. Take, for instance, the Brest Peace. Were we not late in concluding it? And did it not require such facts as the German offensive and the wholesale flight of our soldiers to make us realise, at last, that we had to have peace? The disintegration of the front, Hoffmann's offensive,[6] his approach to Petrograd, the pressure exerted on us by the peasants—did it not take all these developments to make us realise that the tempo of the world revolution was not as rapid as we would have liked, that our army was not as strong as we had thought, that the peasantry was not as patient as some of us had thought, and that it wanted peace, and would achieve it by force?

Or take the repeal of the surplus-appropriation system. Were we not late in repealing the surplus-appropriation system? Did it not require such developments as Kronstadt and Tambov[7] to make us understand that it was no longer possible to retain the conditions of War Communism? Did not Ilyich himself admit that on this front we had sustained a more serious defeat than any we had suffered at the Denikin or Kolchak fronts?

Was it accidental that in all these instances the Party lagged behind events and acted somewhat belatedly? No, it was not accidental. There was a natural law at work here. Evidently, in so far as it is a matter not of general theoretical predictions, but of direct practical leadership, the ruling party, standing at the helm and involved in the events of the day, cannot immediately perceive and grasp processes taking place below the surface of life. It requires some impulse from outside and a definite degree of development of the new processes for the Party to perceive them and orientate its work accordingly. For that very reason our Party lagged somewhat behind events in the past, and will lag behind them in future

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6 **Original editor:** This refers to the advance on Soviet territory by German troops under the command of General Hoffmann in February 1918 (see J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 39-49 [1953], pp. 32-40 [2025]).

7 **Original editor:** This refers to the counter-revolutionary mutiny in Kronstadt in 1921, and to the kulak revolt in the Tambov Gubernia in 1919-21.

too. But the point here does not at all concern lagging behind, but understanding the significance of events, the significance of new processes, and then skilfully directing them in accordance with the general trend of development. That is how the matter stands if we approach things as Marxists and not as factionalists who go about searching everywhere for culprits.

Preobrazhensky is indignant that representatives of the C.C. speak of Trotsky's deviations from Leninism. He is indignant, but has presented no arguments to the contrary and has made no attempt at all to substantiate his indignation, forgetting that indignation is no argument. Yes, it is true that Trotsky deviates from Leninism on questions of organisation. That has been, and still is, our contention. The articles in *Pravda* entitled "Down With Factionalism," written by Bukharin, are entirely devoted to Trotsky's deviations from Leninism. Why has not Preobrazhensky challenged the basic ideas of these articles? Why has he not tried to support his indignation by arguments, or a semblance of arguments? I said yesterday, and I must repeat it today, that such actions of Trotsky's as setting himself up in opposition to the Central Committee; ignoring the will of a number of organisations that are demanding a clear answer from him; contrasting the Party to the Party apparatus, and the young Party members to the Party cadres; his attempt to orientate the Party on the student youth, and his proclamation of freedom of groups—I say that these actions are incompatible with the organisational principles of Leninism. Why then has Preobrazhensky not tried to refute this statement of mine?

It is said that Trotsky is being baited. Preobrazhensky and Radek have spoken of this. Comrades, I must say that the statements of these comrades about baiting are altogether at variance with the facts. Let me recall two facts so that you may be able to judge for yourselves. First, the incident which occurred at the September plenum of the C.C. when, in reply to the remark by C.C. member Komarov that C.C. members cannot refuse to carry out C.C. decisions, Trotsky jumped up and left the meeting. You will recall that the C.C. plenum sent a "delegation" to Trotsky with the *request* that he return to the meeting. You will recall that Trotsky refused to comply with this request of the plenum, thereby demonstrating that he had not the slightest respect for his Central Committee.

There is also the other fact, that Trotsky definitely refuses to work in the central Soviet bodies, in the Council of Labour and Defence and the Council of People's Commissars, despite the twice-adopted C.C. decision that he at last take up his duties in the Soviet bodies. You know that Trotsky has not as much as moved a finger to carry out this C.C. decision. But, indeed, why should not Trotsky work in the Council of Labour and Defence, or in the Council of People's Commissars? Why should not Trotsky—who is so fond of talking about planning—why should he not have a look into our State Planning Commission? Is it right and proper for a C.C. member to ignore a decision of the C.C.? Do not all these facts show that the talk about baiting is no more than idle gossip, and that if anyone is to be blamed, it is Trotsky himself, for his behaviour can only be regarded as mocking at the C.C.?

Preobrazhensky's arguments about democracy are entirely wrong. This is how he puts the question: either we have groups, and in that case there is democracy, or you prohibit groups, and in that case there is no democracy. In his conception, freedom of groups and democracy are inseparably bound up. That is not how we understand democracy. We understand democracy to mean raising the activity and political understanding of the mass of Party members; we understand it to mean the systematic enlistment of the Party membership not only in the discussion of questions, but also in the leadership of the work. Freedom of groups, that is, freedom of factions—they are one and the same thing—represents an evil which threatens to splinter the Party and turn it into a discussion club. You have exposed yourself, Preobrazhensky, by defending freedom of factions. The mass of Party members understand democracy to mean creating conditions that will ensure active participation of the Party members in the leadership of our country, whereas a couple of oppositionist intellectuals understand it to mean that the opposition must be given freedom to form a faction. You stand exposed, Preobrazhensky.

And why are you so frightened by point seven, on Party unity? What is there to be frightened about? Point seven reads: "In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the

maximum unanimity, doing away with all factionalism. [...]" But are you against "strict discipline within the Party and in Soviet work"? Comrades of the opposition, are you against all this? Well, I did not know, comrades, that you were opposed to this. Are you, Sapronov and Preobrazhensky, opposed to securing maximum unanimity and "doing away with factionalism"? Tell us frankly, and perhaps we shall introduce an amendment or two. (*Laughter.*)

Further: "The congress authorises the Central Committee, in case of breach of Party discipline or of a revival of factionalism, to apply Party penalties. [...]" Are you afraid of this too? Can it be that you, Preobrazhensky, Radek, Sapronov, are thinking of violating Party discipline, of reviving factionalism? Well, if that is not your intention, then what are you afraid of? Your panic shows you up, comrades. Evidently, if you are afraid of point seven of the unity resolution, you must be for factionalism, for violating discipline, and against unity. Otherwise, why all the panic? If your conscience is clear, if you are for unity and against factionalism and violation of discipline, then is it not clear that the punishing hand of the Party will not touch you? What is there to fear then? (*Voice*: "But why do you include the point, if there is nothing to fear?")

To *remind* you. (*Laughter, applause. Preobrazhensky*: "You are intimidating the Party.")

We are intimidating the factionalists, not the Party. Do you really think, Preobrazhensky, that the Party and the factionalists are identical? Apparently it is a case of the cap fitting. (*Laughter.*)

Further: "And, in regard to members of the Central Committee, to reduce them to the status of candidate members and even, as an extreme measure, to expel them from the Party. A condition for the application of such an extreme measure to members and candidate members of the C.C. and members of the Central Control Commission must be the convocation of a plenum of the Central Committee."

What is there terrible in that? If you are not factionalists, if you are against freedom of groups, and if you are for unity, then you, comrades of the opposition, should vote for point seven of the Tenth Congress resolution, for it is directed solely against factionalists, solely against those who

violate the Party's unity, its strength and discipline. Is that not clear?

I now pass to Radek. There are people who can master and manage their tongues; these are ordinary people. There are also people who are slaves of their tongues; their tongues manage them. These are peculiar people. And it is to this category of peculiar people that Radek belongs. A man who has a tongue he cannot manage and who is the slave of his own tongue, can never know what and when his tongue is liable to blurt out. If you had been able to hear Radek's speeches at various meetings, you would have been astonished by what he said today. At one discussion meeting Radek asserted that the question of inner-Party democracy was a trivial one, that actually he, Radek, was against democracy, that, at bottom the issue now was not one of democracy, but of what the C.C. intended to do with Trotsky. At another discussion meeting this same Radek declared that democracy within the Party was not a serious matter, but that democracy within the C.C. was a matter of the utmost importance, for in his opinion a Directory had been set up inside the C.C. And today this same Radek tells us in all innocence that inner-Party democracy is as indispensable as air and water, for without democracy, it appears, leadership of the Party is impossible. Which of these three Radeks are we to believe—the first, second or third? And what guarantee is there that Radek, or rather his tongue, will not in the immediate future make new unexpected statements that refute all his previous ones? Can one rely on a man like Radek? Can one, after all this, attach any value to Radek's statement, for instance, about Boguslavsky and Antonov being removed from certain posts out of "factional considerations"?

I have already spoken, comrades, about Boguslavsky. [...] As for Antonov-Ovseyenko, permit me to report the following. Antonov was removed from the Political Department of the Red Army by decision of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee, a decision confirmed by a plenum of the Central Committee. He was removed, first of all, for having issued a circular about a conference of Party units in military colleges and the air fleet, with the international situation, Party affairs, etc., as items on the agenda, without the knowledge and agreement of the C.C., although Antonov knew that the status of the Political Department of the Red Army is that of a department of the C.C. He was removed from

the Political Department, in addition, for having sent to all Party units of the army a circular concerning the forms in which inner-Party democracy was to be applied, doing so against the will of the C.C. and in spite of its warning that the circular must be coordinated with the plans of the C.C. He was removed, lastly, for having sent to the C.C. and C.C.C. a letter, altogether indecent in tone and absolutely impermissible in content, threatening the C.C. and C.C.C. that the "overweening leaders" would be called to account.

Comrades, oppositionists can and should be allowed to hold posts. Heads of C.C. departments can and should be allowed to criticise the Central Committee's activities. But we cannot allow the head of the Political Department of the Red Army, which has the status of a department of the C.C., systematically to refuse to establish working contact with his Central Committee. We cannot allow a responsible official to trample underfoot the elementary rules of decency. Such a comrade cannot be entrusted with the education of the Red Army. That is how matters stand with Antonov.

Finally, I must say a few words on the subject of whose are the sentiments that are expressed in the pronouncements of the comrades of the opposition. I must return to the "incident" of Comrades Kazaryan and Martynov, students at the People's Commissariat of Transport college. This "incident" is evidence that all is not well among a certain section of our students, that what they had of the Party spirit in them has already become rotten, that intrinsically they have already broken with the Party and precisely for that reason willingly vote for the opposition. You will forgive me, comrades, but such people, rotten through and through from the Party standpoint, are not to be found, and could not possibly be found, among those who voted for the C.C. resolution. There are no such people on our side, comrades. There are none in our ranks who would ask: "What have we got, a dictatorship of the proletariat or a dictatorship of the Communist Party over the proletariat?" That is a phrase of Martov and Dan; it is a phrase of the Socialist-Revolutionary *Dni*,[8] and

8 **Original editor:** *Dni* (*Days*)—a daily newspaper of the Socialist-Revolutionary white guard émigrés; published in Berlin from October 1922.

if among you, in your ranks, there are those who take this line, then what is your position worth, comrades of the opposition? Or there is, for instance, the other comrade, Comrade Martynov, who thinks that the C.C. should keep quiet while the Party units decide. He says in effect: You, the C.C., can carry out what we, the units, decide. But we have 50,000 Party units, and if they are going to decide, say, the question of the Curzon ultimatum, then we shall not arrive at a decision in two years. That is indeed anarcho-Menshevism of the first water. These people have lost their heads; from the Party standpoint they are rotten through and through, and if you have them in your faction, then I ask you, what is this faction of yours worth? (*Voice*: "Are they Party members?")

Yes, unfortunately they are, but I am prepared to take every measure to ensure that such people cease to be members of our Party. (*Applause.*) I have said that the opposition voices the sentiments and aspirations of the non-proletarian elements in the Party and outside it. Without being conscious of it, the opposition is unleashing petty-bourgeois elemental forces. Its factional activities bring grist to the mill of the enemies of our Party, to the mill of those who want to weaken, to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat. I said this yesterday and I re-affirm it today.

But perhaps you would like to hear other, fresh witnesses? I can give you that pleasure. Let me cite, for instance, the evidence of S. Ivanovich, a name you have all heard. Who is this S. Ivanovich? He is a Menshevik, a former Party member, of the days when we and the Mensheviks comprised a single party. Later on he disagreed with the Menshevik C.C. and became a Right-wing Menshevik. The Right-wing Mensheviks are a group of Menshevik interventionists, and their immediate object is to overthrow Soviet power, even if with the aid of foreign bayonets. Their organ is *Zarya*[9] and its editor is S. Ivanovich. How does he regard our opposition, this Right-wing Menshevik? What sort of testimonial has he given it? Listen to this:

> "Let us be thankful to the opposition for having so luridly depicted that horrifying moral cesspool that goes by the name of the R.C.P. Let us be thank-

9 **Original editor:** *Zarya* (*Dawn*)—a magazine of the Right-wing Menshevik whiteguard émigrés; published in Berlin from April 1922 to January 1924.

ful to it for having dealt a serious blow, morally and organisationally, to the R.C.P. Let us be thankful to it for its activities, because they help all those who regard the overthrow of Soviet power as the task of the Socialist parties." There you have your testimonial, comrades of the opposition! In conclusion, I would like nevertheless to wish the comrades of the opposition that this kiss of S. Ivanovich will not stick to them too closely. (*Prolonged applause.*)

ON THE DEATH OF LENIN

A Speech Delivered at *the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets* [1]

January 26, 1924

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

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1 **Original editor:** *The Second All-Union Congress of Soviets* was held in Moscow from January 26 to February 2, 1924. At the first sitting, which was devoted to the memory of Lenin, J. V. Stalin delivered a speech in which, in the name of the Bolshevik Party, he took a solemn vow to hold sacred and fulfil the behests of Lenin. In connection with the death of Lenin, the congress adopted an appeal "To Toiling Mankind." To perpetuate the memory of Lenin, the congress adopted a decision to publish Lenin's Works, to change the name of Petrograd to Leningrad, to establish a Day of Mourning, and to erect a mausoleum for Lenin in the Red Square in Moscow, and monuments to him in the capitals of the Union Republics and also in the cities of Leningrad and Tashkent. The congress discussed a report on the activities of the Soviet Government, the budget of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the establishment of a Central Agricultural Bank. On January 31, the congress endorsed the first Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the U.S.S.R. which had been drafted under the guidance of J. V. Stalin. The congress elected a Central Executive Committee—the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. J. V. Stalin was elected to the Soviet of the Union.

DEPARTING FROM US, COMRADE LENIN ENJOINED US TO HOLD HIGH AND GUARD THE PURITY OF THE GREAT TITLE OF MEMBER OF THE PARTY. WE VOW TO YOU, COMRADE LENIN, THAT WE SHALL FULFIL YOUR BEHEST WITH HONOUR!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The third basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat is our Red Army and our Red Navy. More than once did Lenin impress upon us that the respite we had won from the capitalist states might prove a short one. More than once did Lenin point out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. The events connected with Curzon's ultimatum and the crisis in Germany[2] once more confirmed that, as always, Lenin

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2 **Original editor:** This refers to the economic and political crisis in Germany in 1923. A mass revolutionary movement spread over the country, as a result of which workers' governments were set up in Saxony and Thuringia, and an armed uprising broke out in Hamburg. After the suppression of the revolutionary movement in Germany, bourgeois reaction was intensified all over Europe, as well as the danger of a new intervention against the Soviet Republic.

was right. Let us vow then, comrades, that we shall spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy.

Like a huge rock, our country stands out amid an ocean of bourgeois states. Wave after wave dashes against it, threatening to submerge it and wash it away. But the rock stands unshakable. Wherein lies its strength? Not only in the fact that our country rests on an alliance of the workers and peasants, that it embodies a union of free nationalities, that it is protected by the mighty arm of the Red Army and the Red Navy. The strength, the firmness, the solidity of our country is due to the profound sympathy and unfailing support it finds in the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world. The workers and peasants of the whole world want to preserve the Republic of Soviets as an arrow shot by the sure hand of Comrade Lenin into the camp of the enemy, as the pillar of their hopes of deliverance from oppression and exploitation, as a reliable beacon pointing the path to their emancipation. They want to preserve it, and they will not allow the landlords and capitalists to destroy it. Therein lies our strength. Therein lies the strength of the working people of all countries. And therein lies the weakness of the bourgeoisie all over the world.

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

You have seen during the past few days the pilgrimage of scores and hundreds of thousands of working people to Comrade Lenin's bier. Be-

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

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

Pravda, No. 23,
January 30, 1924

LENIN

A Speech Delivered at a Memorial Meeting of the Kremlin Military School

January 28, 1924

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

The Mountain Eagle

I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance, but was by correspondence. But it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*,[1] had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. At that time I did not regard him merely as a leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone un-

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1 **Original editor:** *Iskra* (*Spark*)—the first all-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper, founded by V. I. Lenin in December 1900. It was published abroad and brought secretly into Russia (on the significance and role of *Iskra* see *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Short Course*, Moscow 1952, pp. 55-68).

derstood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues—Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle, and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to 'a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Some time later, when I was already in exile in Siberia—this was at the end of 1903—I received an enthusiastic reply from my friend and a simple, but profoundly expressive letter from Lenin, to whom, it turned out, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly, that every sentence did not so much speak as ring out like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter still further strengthened me in my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.

My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time.

Modesty

I first met Lenin in December 1905 at the Bolshevik conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I had pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then, was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals. [...]

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

Only later did I realise that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make himself conspicuous and not to emphasise his high position, this feature was one of Lenin's strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the simple and ordinary masses of the "rank and file" of humanity.

Force of Logic

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

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

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

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

No Whining

The second time I met Lenin was in 1906 at the Stockholm Congress[2] of our Party. You know that the Bolsheviks were in the minority at this congress and suffered defeat. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of the vanquished. But he was not in the least like those leaders who whine and lose heart after a defeat. On the contrary, defeat transformed Lenin into a spring of compressed energy which inspired his supporters for new battles and for future victory. I said that Lenin was defeated. But what sort of defeat was it? You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress—Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's merciless criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak. I remember that we, the Bolshevik delegates, huddled together in a group, gazing at Lenin and asking his advice. The speeches of some of the delegates betrayed a note of weariness and dejection. I recall that to these speeches Lenin bitingly replied through clenched teeth: "Don't whine, comrades, we are bound to win, for we are right." Hatred of the whining intellectual, faith in our own strength, confidence in victory—that is what Lenin impressed upon us. It was felt that the Bolsheviks' defeat was temporary, that they were bound to win in the very near future.

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

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2 **Original editor:** The Stockholm Party Congress—the Fourth ("Unity") Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.—took place on April 10-25 (April 23-May 8), 1906 (see *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Short Course*, Moscow 1952, pp. 136-39).

No Boasting

At the next congress, held in 1907 in London,[3] the Bolsheviks proved victorious. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of victor. Victory turns the heads of some leaders and makes them haughty and boastful. They begin in most cases to be triumphant, to rest on their laurels. But Lenin did not in the least resemble such leaders. On the contrary, it was precisely after a victory that he became especially vigilant and cautious. I recall that Lenin insistently impressed on the delegates: "The first thing is not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third is to give the enemy the finishing stroke, for he has been beaten, but by no means crushed." He poured withering scorn on those delegates who frivolously asserted: "It is all over with the Mensheviks now." He had no difficulty in showing that the Mensheviks still had roots in the working-class movement, that they had to be fought with skill, and that all overestimation of one's own strength and, especially, all underestimation of the strength of the enemy had to be avoided.

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

Fidelity to Principle

Party leaders cannot but prize the opinion of the majority of their party. A majority is a power with which a leader cannot but reckon. Lenin understood this no less than any other party leader. But Lenin never became a captive of the majority, especially when that majority had no basis of principle. There have been times in the history of our Party when the opinion of the majority or the momentary interests of the Party conflicted with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. On such occa-

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3 **Original editor:** The Fifth (London) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. took place from April 30 to May 19 (May 13 to June 1), 1907 (see J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 47-80 [1953], pp. 39-64 [2024], and *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Short Course*, Moscow 1952, pp. 143-46).

sions Lenin would never hesitate and resolutely took his stand in support of principle as against the majority of the Party. Moreover, he did not fear on such occasions literally to stand alone against all, considering—as he would often say—that "a policy based on principle is the only correct policy."

Particularly characteristic in this respect are the two following facts.

First fact. It was in the period 1909-11, when the Party, smashed by the counter-revolution, was in process of complete disintegration. It was a period of disbelief in the Party, of wholesale desertion from the Party, not only by the intellectuals, but partly even by the workers; a period when the necessity for illegal organisation was being denied, a period of Liquidationism and collapse. Not only the Mensheviks, but even the Bolsheviks then consisted of a number of factions and trends, for the most part severed from the working-class movement. You know that it was just at that period that the idea arose of completely liquidating the illegal organisation and organising the workers into a legal, liberal Stolypin party. Lenin at that time was the only one not to succumb to the widespread epidemic and to hold high the banner of Party principle, assembling the scattered and shattered forces of the Party with astonishing patience and extraordinary persistence, combating each and every anti-Party trend within the working-class movement and defending the Party principle with unusual courage and unparalleled perseverance.

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

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

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

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

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

Faith in the Masses

Theoreticians and leaders of parties, men who are acquainted with the history of nations and who have studied the history of revolutions from beginning to end, are sometimes afflicted by a shameful disease. This disease is called fear of the masses, disbelief in the creative power of the masses. This sometimes gives rise in the leaders to a kind of aristocratic attitude towards the masses, who, although not versed in the history of revolutions, are destined to destroy the old order and build the new. This kind of aristocratic attitude is due to a fear that the elements may break loose, that the masses may "destroy too much"; it is due to a desire to play the part of a mentor who tries to teach the masses from books, but who is averse to learning from the masses.

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

Hence, Lenin's contempt for all who superciliously looked down on the masses and tried to teach them from books. And hence, Lenin's constant precept: learn from the masses, try to comprehend their actions, carefully study the practical experience of the struggle of the masses.

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

The Genius of Revolution

Lenin was born for revolution. He was, in truth, the genius of revolutionary outbreaks and the greatest master of the art of revolutionary leadership. Never did he feel so free and happy as in a time of revolutionary upheavals. I do not mean by this that Lenin approved equally of all revolutionary upheavals, or that he was in favour of revolutionary outbreaks at all times and under all circumstances. Not at all. What I do mean is that never was the genius of Lenin's insight displayed so fully and distinctly as in a time of revolutionary outbreaks. In times of revolution he literally blossomed forth, became a seer, divined the movement of classes and the probable zigzags of the revolution, seeing them as if they lay in the palm of his hand. It was with good reason that it used to be said in our Party circles: "Lenin swims in the tide of revolution like a fish in water."

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

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

First fact. It was in the period just prior to the October Revolution, when millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, impelled by the crisis in the rear and at the front, were demanding peace and liberty; when the generals and the bourgeoisie were working for a military dictatorship for the sake of "war to a finish"; when the whole of so-called "public opinion" and all the so-called "Socialist parties" were hostile to the Bolsheviks and were branding them as "German spies"; when Kerensky was trying—

already with some success—to drive the Bolshevik Party underground; and when the still powerful and disciplined armies of the Austro-German coalition confronted our weary, disintegrating armies, while the West-European "Socialists" lived in blissful alliance with their governments for the sake of "war to complete victory." [...]

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

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

Second fact. It was in the first days of the October Revolution, when the Council of People's Commissars was trying to compel General Dukhonin, the mutinous Commander-in-chief, to terminate hostilities and open negotiations for an armistice with the Germans. I recall that Lenin, Krylenko (the future Commander-in-Chief) and I went to General Staff Headquarters in Petrograd to negotiate with Dukhonin over the direct wire. It was a ghastly moment. Dukhonin and Field Headquarters categorically refused to obey the order of the Council of People's Commissars. The army officers were completely under the sway of Field Headquarters. As for the soldiers, no one could tell what this army of fourteen million would say, subordinated as it was to the so-called army organisations, which were hostile to the Soviet power. In Petrograd itself, as we know, a mutiny of the military cadets was brewing. Furthermore, Kerensky was marching on Petrograd. I recall that after a pause at the direct wire, Lenin's face suddenly shone with an extraordinary light. Clearly he had arrived at a decision. "Let's go to the wireless station," he said, "it will stand us in good stead. We shall issue a special order dismissing General Dukhonin, appoint Comrade Krylenko Commander-in-Chief in his place and appeal to the soldiers over the

heads of the officers, calling upon them to surround the generals, to cease hostilities, to establish contact with the Austro-German soldiers and take the cause of peace into their own hands."

This was "a leap in the dark." But Lenin did not shrink from this "leap"; on the contrary, he made it eagerly, for he knew that the army wanted peace and would win peace, sweeping every obstacle from its path; he knew that this method of establishing peace was bound to have its effect on the Austro-German soldiers and would give full rein to the yearning for peace on every front without exception.

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

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

Pravda, No. 34,
February 12, 1924

ON THE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

Speech at the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) Conference on Work Among the Youth[1]

April 3, 1924

I must first of all say something about the attitude of the Central Committee of the Russian Young Communist League to the Party discussion. It was a mistake for the Central Committee of the League to continue its stubborn silence after the local organisations had stated their views. But it would be wrong to attribute this silence of the League's Central Committee to a policy of neutrality. They were just over-cautious.

Now a few words about the debate. I think that among you there are no disagreements based on principle. I have studied your theses and articles and have failed to find any such disagreements. But there is confusion and a heap of imaginary "irreconcilable" contradictions.

The first contradiction: contrasting the League as a "reserve" to the League as an "instrument" of the Party. What is the League—a reserve

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1 **Original editor:** On April 3, 1924, a conference was held under the auspices of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to discuss work among the youth. There were present the members of the Central Committee of the Party, members and candidate members of the Central Committee of the Russian Young Communist League and representatives from ten of the largest gubernia organisations of the R.Y.C.L. The conference summed up the discussion on the immediate tasks of the Young Communist League that had taken place at the beginning of 1924. Later, the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) discussed the results of the conference and instructed the local Party and Y.C.L. organisations to secure unity and harmony in the work of the R.Y.C.L., and to call upon the leading members of the Y.C.L. to work unanimously to carry out the tasks set by the Party.

or an instrument? Both. This is obvious, and it was stated by the comrades themselves in their speeches. The Young Communist League is a reserve, a reserve of peasants and workers from which the Party augments its ranks. But it is, at the same time, an instrument, an instrument in the hands of the Party, bringing the masses of the youth under its influence. More specifically, it could be said that the League is an instrument of the Party, an auxiliary weapon of the Party, in the sense that the active League membership is an instrument of the Party for influencing the youth not organised in the League. These conceptions do not contradict one another, and cannot be put in contrast to one another.

A second so-called irreconcilable contradiction: some comrades think that the "class policy of the League is determined not by its composition, but by the staunchness of the people who stand at its head." Staunchness is contrasted to composition. This contradiction, too, is imaginary, because the class policy of the R.Y.C.L. is determined by both factors—composition and staunchness of the top leadership. If staunch people are subjected to the influence of a League membership that is alien to them in spirit, all the League members enjoying equal rights, then a membership of this kind cannot but leave its imprint on the League's activity and policy. Why does the Party regulate the composition of its membership? Because it knows that the composition of the membership influences its activities.

Lastly, one more contradiction, similarly imaginary, concerning the role of the League and its work among the peasants. Some take the view that the task of the League is to "consolidate" its influence among the peasants, but not to extend that influence; others, apparently, want to "extend the influence," but do not agree with the need for consolidation. There is an attempt to make this an issue in the discussion. It is clear that to draw a contrast between these two tasks is artificial, for everyone understands quite well that the League must, at one and the same time, consolidate and extend its influence in the countryside. True, in one place in the League Central Committee's theses there is an awkward expression on work among the peasants. But neither Tarkhanov nor the other representatives of the League Central Committee majority have insisted on it, and they are prepared to correct it. That being the case, is it worth while disputing over minor points?

But there is one real, not imaginary, contradiction in the life and work of the Young Communist League about which I should like to say a few words. I have in mind the existence of two tendencies in the League: the worker tendency and the peasant tendency. I have in mind the contradiction between these tendencies, which is making itself felt, and which we cannot afford to ignore. Discussion of this contradiction has been the weakest point in the speeches. All the speakers declared that the League must grow by recruiting workers, but they all stumbled as soon as they turned to the peasantry, to the question of recruiting peasants. Even those who spoke simply and straightforwardly stumbled on this point.

Obviously, two problems confront the R.Y.C.L.: the worker problem and the peasant problem. It is obvious that, since the Y.C.L. is a workers' and peasants' league, these two tendencies, these contradictions within the League, will remain in future too. Some will stress the need to recruit workers, saying nothing about the peasantry; others will stress the need to recruit peasants, underestimating the importance of the proletarian element as the leading element in the League. It is this internal contradiction, inherent in the very nature of the League, that makes the speakers stumble. In their speeches, some drew a parallel between the Party and the Y.C.L., but the fact of the matter is that no such parallel can exist, because our Party is a workers' party, not a workers' and peasants' party, while the Y.C.L. is a workers' and peasants' league. That is why the Y.C.L. cannot be only a workers' league, but must, at one and the same time, be a workers' league and a peasants' league. One thing is clear: with the present structure of the League, internal contradictions and the struggle of tendencies are inevitable in future too.

Those who say that the middle-peasant youth should be recruited into the Party are correct, but we should be careful not to slip into the conception of a workers' and peasants' party, as even some responsible functionaries are prone to do at times. Many have loudly demanded: "You are recruiting workers into the Party, why not recruit peasants on the same scale? Let us bring in a hundred thousand peasants, or two hundred thousand." The Central Committee is opposed to this, for our Party must be a workers' party. The ratio in the Party should be approximately 70 or 80 per cent workers to 20-25 per cent non-workers. The position

is somewhat different with regard to the Y.C.L. The Young Communist League is a voluntary, free organisation of the revolutionary elements of the worker and peasant youth. Without peasants, without the mass of the peasant youth, it will cease to be a workers' and peasants' league. But its work should be so organised that the leading role remains with the proletarian element.

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THE FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM[1]

Lectures Delivered at the Sverdlov University

DEDICATED
TO THE LENIN ENROLMENT
J. STALIN

The foundations of Leninism is a big subject. To exhaust it a whole volume would be required. Indeed, a number of volumes would be required. Naturally, therefore, my lectures cannot be an exhaustive exposition of Leninism; at best they can only offer a concise synopsis of the foundations of Leninism. Nevertheless, I consider it useful to give this synopsis, in order to lay down some basic points of departure necessary for the successful study of Leninism.

Expounding the foundations of Leninism still does not mean expounding the basis of Lenin's world outlook. Lenin's world outlook and the foundations of Leninism are not identical in scope. Lenin was a Marxist, and Marxism is, of course, the basis of his world outlook. But from this it does not at all follow that an exposition of Leninism ought to begin with an exposition of the foundations of Marxism. To expound Leninism means to expound the distinctive and new in the works of Lenin that Lenin contributed to the general treasury of Marxism and that is naturally connected with his name. Only in this sense will I speak in my lectures of the foundations of Leninism.

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1 **Original editor:** J. V. Stalin's lectures, *The Foundations of Leninism*, were published in *Pravda* in April and May 1924. In May 1924, J. V. Stalin's pamphlet *On Lenin and Leninism* appeared, containing his reminiscences on *Lenin* and the lectures *The Foundations of Leninism.* J. V. Stalin's work *The Foundations of Leninism* is included in all the editions of his book *Problems of Leninism.*

And so, what is Leninism?

Some say that Leninism is the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to the situation in Russia. This definition contains a particle of truth, but not the whole truth by any means. Lenin, indeed, applied Marxism to Russian conditions, and applied it in a masterly way. But if Leninism were only the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to Russia it would be a purely national and only a national, a purely Russian and only a Russian, phenomenon. We know, however, that Leninism is not merely a Russian, but an international phenomenon rooted in the whole of international development. That is why I think this definition suffers from one-sidedness.

Others say that Leninism is the revival of the revolutionary elements of Marxism of the forties of the nineteenth century, as distinct from the Marxism of subsequent years, when, it is alleged, it became moderate, non-revolutionary. If we disregard this foolish and vulgar division of the teachings of Marx into two parts, revolutionary and moderate, we must admit that even this totally inadequate and unsatisfactory definition contains a particle of truth. This particle of truth is that Lenin did indeed restore the revolutionary content of Marxism, which had been suppressed by the opportunists of the Second International. Still, that is but a particle of the truth. The whole truth about Leninism is that Leninism not only restored Marxism, but also took a step forward, developing Marxism further under the new conditions of capitalism and of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What, then, in the last analysis, is Leninism?

Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. Marx and Engels pursued their activities in the pre-revolutionary period (we have the proletarian revolution in mind), when developed imperialism did not yet exist, in the period of the proletarians' preparation for revolution, in the period when the proletarian revolution was not yet an immediate practical inevitability. But Lenin, the disciple of Marx and Engels, pursued his activities in the period of developed imperialism, in the period of the unfolding proletarian rev-

olution, when the proletarian revolution had already triumphed in one country, had smashed bourgeois democracy and had ushered in the era of proletarian democracy, the era of the Soviets.

That is why Leninism is the further development of Marxism.

It is usual to point to the exceptionally militant and exceptionally revolutionary character of Leninism. This is quite correct. But this specific feature of Leninism is due to two causes: firstly, to the fact that Leninism emerged from the proletarian revolution, the imprint of which it cannot but bear; secondly, to the fact that it grew and became strong in clashes with the opportunism of the Second International, the fight against which was and remains an essential preliminary condition for a successful fight against capitalism. It must not be forgotten that between Marx and Engels, on the one hand, and Lenin, on the other, there lies a whole period of undivided domination of the opportunism of the Second International, and the ruthless struggle against this opportunism could not but constitute one of the most important tasks of Leninism.

I. The Historical Roots of Leninism

Leninism grew up and took shape under the conditions of imperialism, when the contradictions of capitalism had reached an extreme point, when the proletarian revolution had become an immediate practical question, when the old period of preparation of the working class for revolution had come up and passed over to a new period, that of direct assault on capitalism.

Lenin called imperialism "moribund capitalism." Why? Because imperialism carries the contradictions of capitalism to their last bounds, to the extreme limit, beyond which revolution begins. Of these contradictions, there are three which must be regarded as the most important.

The *first contradiction* is the contradiction between labour and capital. Imperialism is the omnipotence of the monopolist trusts and syndicates, of the banks and the financial oligarchy, in the industrial countries. In the fight against this omnipotence, the customary methods of the working class—trade unions and cooperatives, parliamentary parties

and the parliamentary struggle—have proved to be totally inadequate. Either place yourself at the mercy of capital, eke out a wretched existence as of old and sink lower and lower, or adopt a new weapon—this is the alternative imperialism puts before the vast masses of the proletariat. Imperialism brings the working class to revolution.

The *second contradiction* is the contradiction among the various financial groups and imperialist Powers in their struggle for sources of raw materials, for foreign territory. Imperialism is the export of capital to the sources of raw materials, the frenzied struggle for monopolist possession of these sources, the struggle for a redivision of the already divided world, a struggle waged with particular fury by new financial groups and Powers seeking a "place in the sun" against the old groups and Powers, which cling tenaciously to what they have seized. This frenzied struggle among the various groups of capitalists is notable in that it includes as an inevitable element imperialist wars, wars for the annexation of foreign territories. This circumstance, in its turn, is notable in that it leads to the mutual weakening of the imperialists, to the weakening of the position of capitalism in general, to the acceleration of the advent of the proletarian revolution and to the practical necessity of this revolution.

The *third contradiction* is the contradiction between the handful of ruling, "civilised" nations and the hundreds of millions of the colonial and dependent peoples of the world. Imperialism is the most barefaced exploitation and the most inhuman oppression of hundreds of millions of people inhabiting vast colonies and dependent countries. The purpose of this exploitation and of this oppression is to squeeze out super-profits. But in exploiting these countries imperialism is compelled to build there railways, factories and mills, industrial and commercial centres. The appearance of a class of proletarians, the emergence of a native intelligentsia, the awakening of national consciousness, the growth of the liberation movement—such are the inevitable results of this "policy." The growth of the revolutionary movement in all colonies and dependent countries without exception clearly testifies to this fact. This circumstance is of importance for the proletariat inasmuch as it saps radically the position of capitalism by converting the colonies and dependent countries from reserves of imperialism into reserves of the proletarian revolution.

Such, in general, are the principal contradictions of imperialism which have converted the old, "flourishing" capitalism into moribund capitalism.

The significance of the imperialist war which broke out 10 years ago lies, among other things, in the fact that it gathered all these contradictions into a single knot and threw them on to the scales, thereby accelerating and facilitating the revolutionary battles of the proletariat.

In other words, imperialism was instrumental not only in making the revolution a practical inevitability, but also in creating favourable conditions for a direct assault on the citadels of capitalism.

Such was the international situation which gave birth to Leninism.

Some may say: This is all very well, but what has it to do with Russia, which was not and could not be a classical land of imperialism? What has it to do with Lenin, who worked primarily in Russia and for Russia? Why did Russia, of all countries, become the home of Leninism, the birthplace of the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution?

Because Russia was the focus of all these contradictions of imperialism.

Because Russia, more than any other country, was pregnant with revolution, and she alone, therefore, was in a position to solve those contradictions in a revolutionary way.

To begin with, tsarist Russia was the home of every kind of oppression—capitalist, colonial and militarist—in its most inhuman and barbarous form. Who does not know that in Russia the omnipotence of capital was combined with the despotism of tsarism, the aggressiveness of Russian nationalism with tsarism's role of executioner in regard to the non-Russian peoples, the exploitation of entire regions—Turkey, Persia, China –with the seizure of these regions by tsarism, with wars of conquest? Lenin was right in saying that tsarism was "military-feudal imperialism." Tsarism was the concentration of the worst features of imperialism, raised to a high pitch.

To proceed. Tsarist Russia was a major reserve of Western imperialism, not only in the sense that it gave free entry to foreign capital, which

controlled such basic branches of Russia's national economy as the fuel and metallurgical industries, but also in the sense that it could supply the Western imperialists with millions of soldiers. Remember the Russian army, fourteen million strong, which shed its blood on the imperialist fronts to safeguard the staggering profits of the British and French capitalists.

Further. Tsarism was not only the watchdog of imperialism in the east of Europe, but, in addition, it was the agent of Western imperialism for squeezing out of the population hundreds of millions by way of interest on loans obtained in Paris and London, Berlin and Brussels.

Finally, tsarism was a most faithful ally of Western imperialism in the partition of Turkey, Persia, China, etc. Who does not know that the imperialist war was waged by tsarism in alliance with the imperialists of the Entente, and that Russia was an essential element in that war?

That is why the interests of tsarism and of Western imperialism were interwoven and ultimately became merged in a single skein of imperialist interests.

Could Western imperialism resign itself to the loss of such a powerful support in the East and of such a rich reservoir of manpower and resources as old, tsarist, bourgeois Russia was without exerting all its strength to wage a life-and-death struggle against the revolution in Russia, with the object of defending and preserving tsarism? Of course not.

But from this it follows that whoever wanted to strike at tsarism necessarily raised his hand against imperialism, who ever rose against tsarism had to rise against imperialism as well; for whoever was bent on overthrowing tsarism had to overthrow imperialism too, if he really intended not merely to defeat tsarism, but to make a clean sweep of it. Thus the revolution against tsarism verged on and had to pass into a revolution against imperialism, into a proletarian revolution.

Meanwhile, in Russia a tremendous popular revolution was rising, headed by the most revolutionary proletariat in the world, which possessed such an important ally as the revolutionary peasantry of Russia. Does it need proof that such a revolution could not stop halfway, that in the event of success it was bound to advance further and raise the banner

of revolt against imperialism?

That is why Russia was bound to become the focus of the contradictions of imperialism, not only in the sense that it was in Russia that these contradictions were revealed most plainly, in view of their particularly repulsive and particularly intolerable character, and not only because Russia was a highly important prop of Western imperialism, connecting Western finance capital with the colonies in the East, but also because Russia was the only country in which there existed a real force capable of resolving the contradictions of imperialism in a revolutionary way.

From this it follows, however, that the revolution in Russia could not but become a proletarian revolution, that from its very inception it could not but assume an international character, and that, therefore, it could not but shake the very foundations of world imperialism.

Under these circumstances, could the Russian Communists confine their work within the narrow national bounds of the Russian revolution? Of course not. On the contrary, the whole situation, both internal (the profound revolutionary crisis) and external (the war), impelled them to go beyond these bounds in their work, to transfer the struggle to the international arena, to expose the ulcers of imperialism, to prove that the collapse of capitalism was inevitable, to smash social-chauvinism and social-pacifism, and, finally, to overthrow capitalism in their own country and to forge a new fighting weapon for the proletariat—the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution—in order to facilitate the task of overthrowing capitalism for the proletarians of all countries. Nor could the Russian Communists act otherwise; for only this path offered the chance of producing certain changes in the international situation which could safeguard Russia against the restoration of the bourgeois order.

That is why Russia became the home of Leninism, and why Lenin, the leader of the Russian Communists, became its creator.

The same thing, approximately, "happened" in the case of Russia and Lenin as in the case of Germany and Marx and Engels in the forties of the last century. Germany at that time was pregnant with bourgeois revolution just like Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. Marx wrote at that time in the *Communist Manifesto*:

> "The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilisation, and with a much more developed proletariat than that of England was in the seventeenth, and of France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution."[2]

In other words, the centre of the revolutionary movement was shifting to Germany.

There can hardly be any doubt that it was this very circumstance, noted by Marx in the above-quoted passage, that served as the probable reason why it was precisely Germany that became the birthplace of scientific socialism and why the leaders of the German proletariat, Marx and Engels, became its creators.

The same, only to a still greater degree, must be said of Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. Russia was then on the eve of a bourgeois revolution; she had to accomplish this revolution at a time when conditions in Europe were more advanced, and with a proletariat that was more developed than that of Germany in the forties of the nineteenth century (let alone Britain and France); moreover, all the evidence went to show that this revolution was bound to serve as a ferment and as a prelude to the proletarian revolution.

We cannot regard it as accidental that as early as 1902, when the Russian revolution was still in an embryonic state, Lenin wrote the prophetic words in his pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?* :

> "History has now confronted us (i.e., the Russian Marxists—*J. St.*) with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks that confront the proletariat of any country,"
>
> and that [...] "fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat" (See Vol. IV, p. 382).

In other words, the centre of the revolutionary movement was bound to shift to Russia.

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2 **Original editor:** Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, (*Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow 1951, p. 61).

As we know, the course of the revolution in Russia has more than vindicated Lenin's prediction.

Is it surprising, after all this, that a country which has accomplished such a revolution and possesses such a proletariat should have been the birthplace of the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution? Is it surprising that Lenin, the leader of Russia's proletariat, became also the creator of this theory and tactics and the leader of the international proletariat?

II. Method

I have already said that between Marx and Engels, on the one hand, and Lenin, on the other, there lies a whole period of domination of the opportunism of the Second International. For the sake of exactitude I must add that it is not the formal domination of opportunism I have in mind, but only its actual domination. Formally, the Second International was headed by "faithful" Marxists, by the "orthodox"—Kautsky and others. Actually, however, the main work of the Second International followed the line of opportunism. The opportunists adapted themselves to the bourgeoisie because of their adaptive, petty-bourgeois nature; the "orthodox," in their turn adapted themselves to the opportunists in order to "preserve unity" with them, in the interests of "peace within the party." Thus the link between the policy of the bourgeoisie and the policy of the "orthodox" was closed, and, as a result, opportunism reigned supreme.

This was the period of the relatively peaceful development of capitalism, the pre-war period, so to speak, when the catastrophic contradictions of imperialism had not yet become so glaringly evident, when workers' economic strikes and trade unions were developing more or less "normally," when election campaigns and parliamentary groups yielded "dizzying" successes, when legal forms of struggle were lauded to the skies, and when it was thought that capitalism would be "killed" by legal means—in short, when the parties of the Second International were living in clover and had no inclination to think seriously about revolution, about the dictatorship of the proletariat, about the revolutionary education of the masses.

Instead of an integral revolutionary theory, there were contradictory theoretical postulates and fragments of theory, which were divorced from the actual revolutionary struggle of the masses and had been turned into threadbare dogmas. For the sake of appearances, Marx's theory was mentioned, of course, but only to rob it of its living, revolutionary spirit.

Instead of a revolutionary policy, there was flabby philistinism and sordid political bargaining, parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary scheming. For the sake of appearances, of course, "revolutionary" resolutions and slogans were adopted, but only to be pigeonholed.

Instead of the party being trained and taught correct revolutionary tactics on the basis of its own mistakes, there was a studied evasion of nagging questions, which were glossed over and veiled. For the sake of appearances, of course, there was no objection to talking about nagging questions, but only in order to wind up with some sort of "elastic" resolution.

Such was the physiognomy of the Second International, its method of work, its arsenal.

Meanwhile, a new period of imperialist wars and of revolutionary battles of the proletariat was approaching. The old methods of fighting were proving obviously inadequate and impotent in face of the omnipotence of finance capital.

It became necessary to overhaul the entire activity of the Second International, its entire method of work, and to drive out all philistinism, narrow-mindedness, politicians' tricks, renegacy, social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. It became necessary to examine the entire arsenal of the Second International, to throw out all that was rusty and antiquated, to forge new weapons. Without this preliminary work it was useless embarking upon war against capitalism. Without this work the proletariat ran the risk of finding itself inadequately armed, or even completely unarmed, in the future revolutionary battles.

The honour of bringing about this general overhauling and general cleansing of the Augean stables of the Second International fell to Leninism.

Such were the conditions under which the method of Leninism was born and hammered out.

What are the requirements of this method?

Firstly, the *testing* of the theoretical dogmas of the Second International in the crucible of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, in the crucible of living practice—that is to say, the restoration of the broken unity between theory and practice, the healing of the rift between them; for only in this way can a truly proletarian party armed with revolutionary theory be created.

Secondly, the *testing* of the policy of the parties of the Second International, not by their slogans and resolutions (which cannot be trusted), but by their deeds, by their actions; for only in this way can the confidence of the proletarian masses be won and deserved.

Thirdly, the *reorganisation* of all Party work on new revolutionary lines, with a view to training and preparing the masses for the revolutionary struggle; for only in this way can the masses be prepared for the proletarian revolution.

Fourthly, *self-criticism* within the proletarian parties, their education and training on the basis of their own mistakes; for only in this way can genuine cadres and genuine leaders of the Party be trained.

Such is the basis and substance of the method of Leninism.

How was this method applied in practice?

The opportunists of the Second International have a number of theoretical dogmas to which they always revert as their starting point. Let us take a few of these.

First dogma: concerning the conditions for the seizure of power by the proletariat. The opportunists assert that the proletariat cannot and ought not to take power unless it constitutes a majority in the country. No proofs are brought forward; for there are no proofs, either theoretical or practical, that can bear out this absurd thesis. Let us assume that this is so, Lenin replies to the gentlemen of the Second International; but suppose a historical situation has arisen (a war, an agrarian crisis, etc.) in which the proletariat, constituting a minority of the population, has

an opportunity to rally around itself the vast majority of the labouring masses; why should it not take power then? Why should the proletariat not take advantage of a favourable international and internal situation to pierce the front of capital and hasten the general denouement? Did not Marx say as far back as the fifties of the last century that things could go "splendidly" with the proletarian revolution in Germany were it possible to back it by, so to speak, a "second edition of the Peasants' War"[3]? Is it not a generally known fact that in those days the number of proletarians in Germany was relatively smaller than, for example, in Russia in 1917? Has not the practical experience of the Russian proletarian revolution shown that this favourite dogma of the heroes of the Second International is devoid of all vital significance for the proletariat? Is it not clear that the practical experience of the revolutionary struggle of the masses refutes and smashes this obsolete dogma?

Second dogma: The proletariat cannot retain power if it lacks an adequate number of trained cultural and administrative cadres capable of organising the administration of the country; these cadres must first be trained under capitalist conditions, and only then can power be taken. Let us assume that this is so, replies Lenin; but why not turn it this way: first take power, create favourable conditions for the development of the proletariat, and then proceed with seven-league strides to raise the cultural level of the labouring masses and train numerous cadres of leaders and administrators from among the workers? Has not Russian experience shown that the cadres of leaders recruited from the ranks of the workers develop a hundred times more rapidly and effectually under the rule of the proletariat than under the rule of capital? Is it not clear that the practical experience of the revolutionary struggle of the masses ruthlessly smashes this theoretical dogma of the opportunists too?

Third dogma: The proletariat cannot accept the method of the *political* general strike because it is unsound in theory (see Engels' criticism) and dangerous in practice (it may disturb the normal course of economic life in the country, it may deplete the coffers of the trade unions), and can-

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3 **Original editor:** This refers to the statement by Karl Marx in his letter to Frederick Engels of April 16, 1856 (see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1951, p. 412).

not serve as a substitute for parliamentary forms of struggle, which are the principal form of the class struggle of the proletariat. Very well, reply the Leninists; but, firstly, Engels did not criticise every kind of general strike. He only criticised a certain kind of general strike, namely, the *economic* general strike advocated by the Anarchists[4] *in place of* the political struggle of the proletariat. What has this to do with the method of the *political* general strike? Secondly, where and by whom has it ever been proved that the parliamentary form of struggle is the principal form of struggle of the proletariat? Does not the history of the revolutionary movement show that the parliamentary struggle is only a school for, and an auxiliary in, organising the extra-parliamentary struggle of the proletariat, that under capitalism the fundamental problems of the working-class movement are solved by force, by the direct struggle of the proletarian masses, their general strike, their uprising? Thirdly, who suggested that the method of the political general strike be substituted for the parliamentary struggle? Where and when have the supporters of the *political* general strike sought to substitute extra-parliamentary forms of struggle for parliamentary forms? Fourthly, has not the revolution in Russia shown that the political general strike is a highly important school for the proletarian revolution and an indispensable means of mobilising and organising the vast masses of the proletariat on the eve of storming the citadels of capitalism? Why then the philistine lamentations over the disturbance of the normal course of economic life and over the coffers of the trade unions? Is it not clear that the practical experience of the revolutionary struggle smashes this dogma of the opportunists too?

And so on and so forth.

That is why Lenin said that "revolutionary theory [...] is not a dogma," that it "assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement" (*"Left-Wing" Communism*[5]); for theory must serve practice, for "theory

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4 **Original editor:** This refers to Frederick Engels' article "The Bakuninists at Work" (see F. Engels, "Die Bakunisten an der Arbeit" in *Der Volksstaat*, No. 105, 106, and 107, 1873).

5 **Original editor:** V. I. Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder* (see *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 31, p. 9).

must answer the questions raised by practice" (*What the "Friends of the People" Are*[6]), for it must be tested by practical results.

As to the political slogans and political resolutions of the parties of the Second International, it is sufficient to recall the history of the slogan "war against war" to realise how utterly false and utterly rotten are the political practices of these parties, which use pompous revolutionary slogans and resolutions to cloak their anti-revolutionary deeds. We all remember the pompous demonstration of the Second International at the Basle Congress,[7] at which it threatened the imperialists with all the horrors of insurrection if they should dare to start a war, and with the menacing slogan "war against war." But who does not remember that some time after, on the very eve of the war, the Basle resolution was pigeonholed and the workers were given a new slogan—to exterminate each other for the glory of their capitalist fatherlands? Is it not clear that revolutionary slogans and resolutions are not worth a farthing unless backed by deeds? One need only contrast the Leninist policy of transforming the imperialist war into civil war with the treacherous policy of the Second International during the war to understand the utter baseness of the opportunist politicians and the full grandeur of the method of Leninism.

I cannot refrain from quoting at this point a passage from Lenin's book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, in which Lenin severely castigates an opportunist attempt by the leader of the Second International, K. Kautsky, to judge parties not by their deeds, but by their paper slogans and documents:

> "Kautsky is pursuing a typically petty-bourgeois, philistine policy by pretending [...] that *putting forward a slogan* alters the position. The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion; the bourgeois democrats have always advanced and still advance all sorts of 'slogans' in order to deceive the

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6 **Original editor:** V. I. Lenin, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* (see *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 1, pp. 278-79).

7 **Original editor:** The Basle Congress of the Second International was held on November 24-25, 1912. It was convened in connection with the Balkan War and the impending threat of a world war. Only one question was discussed: the international situation and joint action against war. The congress adopted a manifesto calling upon the workers to utilize their proletarian organization and might to wage a revolutionary struggle against the danger of war, to declare "war against war."

> people. The point is to *test* their sincerity, to compare their words with their *deeds*, not to be satisfied with idealistic or charlatan *phrases*, but to get down to *class reality"* (see Vol. XXIII, p. 377).

There is no need to mention the fear the parties of the Second International have of self-criticism, their habit of concealing their mistakes, of glossing over nagging questions, of covering up their shortcomings by a deceptive show of well-being which blunts living thought and prevents the Party from deriving revolutionary training from its own mistakes—a habit which was ridiculed and pilloried by Lenin. Here is what Lenin wrote about self-criticism in proletarian parties in his pamphlet *"Left-Wing" Communism*:

> "The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it *in practice* fulfils its obligations towards its *class* and the toiling *masses.* Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the circumstances which gave rise to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class*, and then the *masses*" (see Vol. XXV, p. 200).

Some say that the exposure of its own mistakes and self-criticism are dangerous for the Party because they may be used by the enemy against the party of the proletariat. Lenin regarded such objections as trivial and entirely wrong. Here is what he wrote on this subject as far back as 1904, in his pamphlet *One Step Forward*, when our Party was still weak and small:

> "They (i.e., the opponents of the Marxists—*J. St.*) gloat and grimace over our controversies; and, of course, they will try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the defects and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows" (see Vol. VI, p. 161).

Such, in general, are the characteristic features of the method of Leninism.

What is contained in Lenin's method was in the main already contained in the teachings of Marx, which, according to Marx himself, were

"in essence critical and revolutionary."[8] It is precisely this critical and revolutionary spirit that pervades Lenin's method from beginning to end. But it would be wrong to suppose that Lenin's method is merely the restoration of the method of Marx. As a matter of fact, Lenin's method is not only the restoration, but also the concretisation and further development of the critical and revolutionary method of Marx, of his materialist dialectics.

III. Theory

From this theme I take three questions:

a) the importance of theory for the proletarian movement;

b) criticism of the "theory" of spontaneity;

c) the theory of the proletarian revolution.

1. *The importance of theory.* Some think that Leninism is the precedence of practice over theory in the sense that its main point is the translation of the Marxist theses into deeds, their "execution"; as for theory, it is alleged that Leninism is rather unconcerned about it. We know that Plekhanov time and again chaffed Lenin about his "unconcern" for theory, and particularly for philosophy. We also know that theory is not held in great favour by many present-day Leninist practical workers, particularly in view of the immense amount of practical work imposed upon them by the situation. I must declare that this more than odd opinion about Lenin and Leninism is quite wrong and bears no relation whatever to the truth; that the attempt of practical workers to brush theory aside runs counter to the whole spirit of Leninism and is fraught with serious dangers to the work.

   Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Of course, theory becomes purpose-

8 **Original editor:** See Karl Marx, Preface to the Second German Edition of the first volume of *Capital* (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1951, p. 414).

less if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory. But theory can become a tremendous force in the working-class movement if it is built up in indissoluble connection with revolutionary practice; for theory, and theory alone, can give the movement confidence, the power of orientation, and an understanding of the inner relation of surrounding events; for it, and it alone, can help practice to realise not only how and in which direction classes are moving at the present time, but also how and in which direction they will move in the near future. None other than Lenin uttered and repeated scores of times the well-known thesis that:

"*Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement*"[9] (see Vol. IV, p. 380).

Lenin, better than anyone else, understood the great importance of theory, particularly for a party such as ours, in view of the role of vanguard fighter of the international proletariat which has fallen to its lot, and in view of the complicated internal and international situation in which it finds itself. Foreseeing this special role of our Party as far back as 1902, he thought it necessary even then to point out that:

"*The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory*" (see Vol. IV, p. 380).

It scarcely needs proof that now, when Lenin's prediction about the role of our Party has come true, this thesis of Lenin's acquires special force and special importance.

Perhaps the most striking expression of the great importance which Lenin attached to theory is the fact that none other than Lenin undertook the very serious task of generalising, on the basis of materialist philosophy, the most important achievements of science from the time of Engels down to his own time, as well as of subjecting to comprehensive criticism the anti-materialistic trends among Marxists. Engels said that "materialism must assume a new aspect with

9 My italics.

every new great discovery."[10] It is well known that none other than Lenin accomplished this task for his own time in his remarkable work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.*[11] It is well known that Plekhanov, who loved to chaff Lenin about his "unconcern" for philosophy, did not even dare to make a serious attempt to undertake such a task.

2. *Criticism of the "theory" of spontaneity, or the role of the vanguard in the movement.* The "theory" of spontaneity is a theory of opportunism, a theory of worshipping the spontaneity of the labour movement, a theory which actually repudiates the leading role of the vanguard of the working class, of the party of the working class.

   The theory of worshipping spontaneity is decidedly opposed to the revolutionary character of the working-class movement; it is opposed to the movement taking the line of struggle against the foundations of capitalism; it is in favour of the movement proceeding exclusively along the line of "realisable" demands, of demands "acceptable" to capitalism; it is wholly in favour of the "line of least resistance." The theory of spontaneity is the ideology of trade-unionism.

   The theory of worshipping spontaneity is decidedly opposed to giving the spontaneous movement a politically conscious, planned character. It is opposed to the Party marching at the head of the working class, to the Party raising the masses to the level of political consciousness, to the Party leading the movement; it is in favour of the politically conscious elements of the movement not hindering the movement from taking its own course; it is in favour of the Party only heeding the spontaneous movement and dragging at the tail of it. The theory of spontaneity is the theory of belittling the role of the conscious element in the movement, the ideology of "khvostism," the logical basis of *all* opportunism.

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10 **Original editor:** See Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1951, p. 338).

11 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 14.

In practice this theory, which appeared on the scene even before the first revolution in Russia, led its adherents, the so-called "Economists," to deny the need for an independent workers' party in Russia, to oppose the revolutionary struggle of the working class for the overthrow of tsarism, to preach a purely trade-unionist policy in the movement, and, in general, to surrender the labour movement to the hegemony of the liberal bourgeoisie.

The fight of the old *Iskra* and the brilliant criticism of the theory of "khvostism" in Lenin's pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?* not only smashed so-called "Economism," but also created the theoretical foundations for a truly revolutionary movement of the Russian working class.

Without this fight it would have been quite useless even to think of creating an independent workers' party in Russia and of its playing a leading part in the revolution.

But the theory of worshipping spontaneity is not an exclusively Russian phenomenon. It is extremely widespread—in a somewhat different form, it is true—in all the parties of the Second International, without exception. I have in mind the so-called "productive forces" theory as debased by the leaders of the Second International, which justifies everything and conciliates everybody, which records facts and explains them after everyone has become sick and tired of them, and, having recorded them, rests content. Marx said that the materialist theory could not confine itself to explaining the world, that it must also change it.[12] But Kautsky and Co. are not concerned with this; they prefer to rest content with the first part of Marx's formula.

Here is one of the numerous examples of the application of this "theory." It is said that before the imperialist war the parties of the Second International threaened to declare "war against war" if the imperialists should start a war. It is said that on the very eve of the war

12 **Original editor:** Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* (see Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Appendix). (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1951, p. 367).

these parties pigeon-holed the "war against war" slogan and applied an opposite one, viz., "war for the imperialist fatherland." It is said that as a result of this change of slogans millions of workers were sent to their death. But it would be a mistake to think that there were some people to blame for this, that someone was unfaithful to the working class or betrayed it. Not at all! Everything happened as it should have happened. Firstly, because the International, it seems, is "an instrument of peace," and not of war. Secondly, because, in view of the "level of the productive forces" which then prevailed, nothing else could be done. The "productive forces" are "to blame." That is the precise explanation vouchsafed to "us" by Mr. Kautsky's "theory of the productive forces." And whoever does not believe in that "theory" is not a Marxist. The role of the parties? Their importance for the movement? But what can a party do against so decisive a factor as the "level of the productive forces"? [...]

One could cite a host of similar examples of the falsification of Marxism.

It scarcely needs proof that this spurious "Marxism," designed to hide the nakedness of opportunism, is merely a European variety of the selfsame theory of "khvostism" which Lenin fought even before the first Russian revolution.

It scarcely needs proof that the demolition of this theoretical falsification is a preliminary condition for the creation of truly revolutionary parties in the West.

3. *The theory of the proletarian revolution.* Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution proceeds from three fundamental theses.

First thesis: The domination of finance capital in the advanced capitalist countries; the issue of stocks and bonds as one of the principal operations of finance capital; the export of capital to the sources of raw materials, which is one of the foundations of imperialism; the omnipotence of a financial oligarchy, which is the result of the domination of finance capital—all this reveals the grossly parasitic character of monopolist capitalism, makes the yoke of the capitalist trusts and syndicates a hundred times more burdensome, intensifies the indignation of the working class

with the foundations of capitalism, and brings the masses to the proletarian revolution as their only salvation (see Lenin, *Imperialism*[13]).

Hence the first conclusion: intensification of the revolutionary crisis within the capitalist countries and growth of the elements of an explosion on the internal, proletarian front in the "metropolises."

Second thesis: The increase in the export of capital to the colonies and dependent countries; the expansion of "spheres of influence" and colonial possessions until they cover the whole globe; the transformation of capitalism into a *world system* of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced" countries—all this has, on the one hand, converted the separate national economies and national territories into links in a single chain called world economy, and, on the other hand, split the population of the globe into two camps: a handful of "advanced" capitalist countries which exploit and oppress vast colonies and dependencies, and the huge majority consisting of colonial and dependent countries which are compelled to wage a struggle for liberation from the imperialist yoke (see *Imperialism*).

Hence the second conclusion: intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the colonial countries and growth of the elements of revolt against imperialism on the external, colonial front.

Third thesis: The monopolistic possession of "spheres of influence" and colonies; the uneven development of the capitalist countries, leading to a frenzied struggle for the redivision of the world between the countries which have already seized territories and those claiming their "share"; imperialist wars as the only means of restoring the disturbed "equilibrium"—all this leads to the intensification of the struggle on the third front, the inter-capitalist front, which weakens imperialism and facilitates the union of the first two fronts against imperialism: the front of the revolutionary proletariat and the front of colonial emancipation (see *Imperialism*).

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13 **Original editor:** V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (see *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 22, pp. 173-290).

Hence the third conclusion: that under imperialism wars cannot be averted, and that a coalition between the proletarian revolution in Europe and the colonial revolution in the East in a united world front of revolution against the world front of imperialism is inevitable.

Lenin combines all these conclusions into one general conclusion that *"imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution"*[14] (see Vol. XIX, p. 71).

The very approach to the question of the proletarian revolution, of the character of the revolution, of its scope, of its depth, the scheme of the revolution in general, changes accordingly.

Formerly, the analysis of the pre-requisites for the proletarian revolution was usually approached from the point of view of the economic state of individual countries. Now, this approach is no longer adequate. Now the matter must be approached from the point of view of the economic state of all or the majority of countries, from the point of view of the state of world economy; for individual countries and individual national economies have ceased to be self-sufficient units, have become links in a single chain called world economy; for the old "cultured" capitalism has evolved into imperialism, and imperialism is a world system of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced" countries.

Formerly it was the accepted thing to speak of the existence or absence of objective conditions for the proletarian revolution in individual countries, or, to be more precise, in one or another developed country. Now this point of view is no longer adequate. Now we must speak of the existence of objective conditions for the revolution in the entire system of world imperialist economy as an integral whole; the existence within this system of some countries that are not sufficiently developed industrially cannot serve as an insuperable obstacle to the revolution, *if* the system as a whole or, more correctly, *because* the system as a whole is already ripe for revolution.

Formerly it was the accepted thing to speak of the proletarian revolution in one or another developed country as of a separate and self-

14 My italics.

sufficient entity opposing a separate national front of capital as its antipode. Now, this point of view is no longer adequate. Now we must speak of the world proletarian revolution; for the separate national fronts of capital have become links in a single chain called the world front of imperialism, which must be opposed by a common front of the revolutionary movement in all countries.

Formerly the proletarian revolution was regarded exclusively as the result of the internal development of a given country. Now, this point of view is no longer adequate. Now the proletarian revolution must be regarded primarily as the result of the development of the contradictions within the world system of imperialism, as the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front in one country or another.

Where will the revolution begin? Where, in what country, can the front of capital be pierced first?

Where industry is more developed, where the proletariat constitutes the majority, where there is more culture, where there is more democracy—that was the reply usually given formerly.

No, objects the Leninist theory of revolution, *not necessarily where industry is more developed*, and so forth. The front of capital will be pierced where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front at its weakest link; and it may turn out that the country which has started the revolution, which has made a breach in the front of capital, is less developed in a capitalist sense than other, more developed, countries, which have, however, remained within the framework of capitalism.

In 1917 the chain of the imperialist world front proved to be weaker in Russia than in the other countries. It was there that the chain broke and provided an outlet for the proletarian revolution. Why? Because in Russia a great popular revolution was unfolding, and at its head marched the revolutionary proletariat, which had such an important ally as the vast mass of the peasantry, which was oppressed and exploited by the landlords. Because the revolution there was opposed by such a hideous representative of imperialism as tsarism, which lacked all moral prestige and was deservedly hated by the whole population. The chain proved to be

weaker in Russia, although Russia was less developed in a capitalist sense than, say, France or Germany, Britain or America.

Where will the chain break in the near future? Again, where it is weakest. It is not precluded that the chain may break, say, in India. Why? Because that country has a young, militant, revolutionary proletariat, which has such an ally as the national liberation movement—an undoubtedly powerful and undoubtedly important ally. Because there the revolution is confronted by such a well-known foe as foreign imperialism, which has no moral credit and is deservedly hated by all the oppressed and exploited masses of India.

It is also quite possible that the chain will break in Germany. Why? Because the factors which are operating, say, in India are beginning to operate in Germany as well, but, of course, the enormous difference in the level of development between India and Germany cannot but stamp its imprint on the progress and outcome of a revolution in Germany.

That is why Lenin said:

> "The West-European capitalist countries will consummate their development towards socialism [...] not by the even 'maturing' of socialism in them, but by the exploitation of some countries by others, by the exploitation of the first of the countries to be vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has definitely come into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement" (see Vol. XXVII, pp. 415-16).

Briefly, the chain of the imperialist front must, as a rule, break where the links are weaker and, at all events, not necessarily where capitalism is more developed, where there is such and such a percentage of proletarians and such and such a percentage of peasants, and so on.

That is why in deciding the question of proletarian revolution statistical estimates of the percentage of the proletarian population in a given country lose the exceptional importance so eagerly attached to them by the doctrinaires of the Second International, who have not understood imperialism and who fear revolution like the plague.

To proceed. The heroes of the Second International asserted (and continue to assert) that between the bourgeois-democratic revolution

and the proletarian revolution there is a chasm, or at any rate a Chinese Wall, separating one from the other by a more or less protracted interval of time, during which the bourgeoisie, having come into power, develops capitalism, while the proletariat accumulates strength and prepares for the "decisive struggle" against capitalism. This interval is usually calculated to extend over many decades, if not longer. It scarcely needs proof that this Chinese Wall "theory" is totally devoid of scientific meaning under the conditions of imperialism, that it is and can be only a means of concealing and camouflaging the counter-revolutionary aspirations of the bourgeoisie. It scarcely needs proof that under the conditions of imperialism, fraught as it is with collisions and wars; under the conditions of the "eve of the socialist revolution," when "flourishing" capitalism becomes "moribund" capitalism (*Lenin*) and the revolutionary movement is growing in all countries of the world; when imperialism is allying itself with all reactionary forces without exception down to and including tsarism and serfdom, thus making imperative the coalition of all revolutionary forces, from the proletarian movement of the West to the national liberation movement of the East; when the overthrow of the survivals of the regime of feudal serfdom becomes impossible without a revolutionary struggle against imperialism—it scarcely needs proof that the bourgeois-democratic revolution, in a more or less developed country, must under such circumstances verge upon the proletarian revolution, that the former must pass into the latter. The history of the revolution in Russia has provided palpable proof that this thesis is correct and incontrovertible. It was not without reason that Lenin, as far back as 1905, on the eve of the first Russian revolution, in his pamphlet *Two Tactics* depicted the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution as two links in the same chain, as a single and integral picture of the sweep of the Russian revolution:

> *"The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie.* Such are the tasks of the proletariat, which the new *Iskra*-ists present so narrowly in all their arguments and resolutions about the sweep of the revolution" (see Lenin, Vol. VIII, p. 96).

There is no need to mention other, later works of Lenin's, in which the idea of the bourgeois revolution passing into the proletarian revolution stands out in greater relief than in *Two Tactics* as one of the cornerstones of the Leninist theory of revolution.

Some comrades believe, it seems; that Lenin arrived at this idea only in 1916, that up to that time he had thought that the revolution in Russia would remain within the bourgeois framework, that power, consequently, would pass from the hands of the organ of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry into the hands of the bourgeoisie and not of the proletariat. It is said that this assertion has even penetrated into our Communist press. I must say that this assertion is absolutely wrong, that it is totally at variance with the facts.

I might refer to Lenin's well-known speech at the Third Congress of the Party (1905), in which he defined the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, i.e., the victory of the democratic revolution, not as the "organisation of 'order'" but as the "organisation of war" (see Vol. VII, p. 264).

Further, I might refer to Lenin's well-known articles "On the Provisional Government" (1905),[15] where, outlining the prospects of the unfolding Russian revolution, he assigns to the Party the task of "ensuring that the Russian revolution is not a movement of a few months, but a movement of many years, that it leads, not merely to slight concessions on the part of the powers that be, but to the complete overthrow of those powers"; where, enlarging further on these prospects and linking them with the revolution in Europe, he goes on to say:

> "And if we succeed in doing that, then [...] then the revolutionary conflagration will spread all over Europe; the European worker, languishing under bourgeois reaction, will rise in his turn and will show us 'how it is done'; then the revolutionary wave in Europe will sweep back again into Russia and will convert an epoch of a few revolutionary years into an epoch of several revolutionary decades [...]" (*ibid.*, p. 191).

I might further refer to a well-known article by Lenin published in

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15 **Original editor:** J. V. Stalin refers to the following articles written by V. I. Lenin in 1905: "Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government," from which he cites a passage; "The Revolutionary Democratic-Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry"; and "On the Provisional Revolutionary Government." (see V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 8, pp. 247-63, 264-74, 427-47).

November 1915, in which he writes:

> "The proletariat is fighting, and will fight valiantly, to capture power, for a republic, for the confiscation of the land [...] for the participation of the '*non*-proletarian masses of the people' in liberating *bourgeois* Russia from *military-feudal* 'imperialism' (=tsarism). And the proletariat will *immediately*[16] take advantage of this liberation of bourgeois Russia from tsarism, from the agrarian power of the landlords, not to aid the rich peasants in their struggle against the rural worker, but to bring about the socialist revolution in alliance with the proletarians of Europe" (see Vol. XVIII, p. 318).

Finally, I might refer to the well-known passage in Lenin's pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, where, referring to the above-quoted passage in *Two Tactics*[17] on the sweep of the Russian revolution, he arrives at the following conclusion:

> "Things turned out just as we said they would. The course taken by the revolution confirmed the correctness of our reasoning. *First*, with the 'whole' of the peasantry against the monarchy, against the landlords, against the mediaeval regime (and to that extent the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic), *Then*, with the poor peasantry, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, *against capitalism*, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a *socialist* one. To attempt to raise an artificial Chinese Wall between the first and the second, to separate them by anything else *than* the degree of preparedness of the proletariat and the degree of its unity with the poor peasants, means monstrously to distort Marxism, to vulgarise it, to replace it by liberalism" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 391).

That is sufficient, I think.

Very well, we may be told; but if that is the case, why did Lenin combat the idea of "permanent (uninterrupted) revolution"?

Because Lenin proposed that the revolutionary capacities of the peasantry be "exhausted" and that the fullest use be made of their revolutionary energy for the complete liquidation of tsarism and for the transition to the proletarian revolution, whereas the adherents of "permanent revolution" did not understand the important role of the peasantry in the Russian revolution, underestimated the strength of the revolutionary energy of the peasantry, underestimated the strength and ability of the Rus-

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16 My italics.

17 **Original editor:** See this volume, p. 79.

sian proletariat to lead the peasantry, and thereby hampered the work of emancipating the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeoisie, the work of rallying the peasantry around the proletariat.

Because Lenin proposed that the revolution *be crowned* with the transfer of power to the proletariat, whereas the adherents of "permanent" revolution wanted *to begin* at once with the establishment of the power of the proletariat, failing to realise that in so doing they were closing their eyes to such a "minor detail" as the survivals of serfdom and were leaving out of account so important a force as the Russian peasantry, failing to understand that such a policy could only retard the winning of the peasantry over to the side of the proletariat.

Consequently, Lenin fought the adherents of "permanent" revolution, not over the question of uninterruptedness, for Lenin himself maintained the point of view of uninterrupted revolution, but because they underestimated the role of the peasantry, which is an enormous reserve of the proletariat, because they failed to understand the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat.

The idea of "permanent" revolution should not be regarded as a new idea. It was first advanced by Marx at the end of the forties in his well-known *Address* to the *Communist League* (1850). It is from this document that our "permanentists" took the idea of uninterrupted revolution. It should be noted that in taking it from Marx our "permanentists" altered it somewhat, and in altering it "spoilt" it and made it unfit for practical use. The experienced hand of Lenin was needed to rectify this mistake, to take Marx's idea of uninterrupted revolution in its pure form and make it a cornerstone of his theory of revolution.

Here is what Marx says in his *Address* about uninterrupted (permanent) revolution, after enumerating a number of revolutionary-democratic demands which he calls upon the Communists to win:

> "While the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible, and with the achievement, at most, of the above demands, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power, and the association of proletarians, not only in one country but in all the dominant countries

> of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians of these countries has ceased and that at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians."[18]

In other words:

a) Marx did not at all propose *to begin* the revolution in the Germany of the fifties with the immediate establishment of proletarian power—*contrary* to the plans of our Russian "permanentists."

b) Marx proposed only that the revolution *be crowned* with the establishment of proletarian state power, by hurling, step by step, one section of the bourgeoisie after another from the heights of power, in order, after the attainment of power by the proletariat, to kindle the fire of revolution in every country—and everything that Lenin taught and carried out in the course of our revolution in pursuit of his theory of the proletarian revolution under the conditions of imperialism was *fully in line* with that proposition.

It follows, then, that our Russian "permanentists" have not only underestimated the role of the peasantry in the Russian revolution and the importance of the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat, but have altered (for the worse) Marx's idea of "permanent" revolution and made it unfit for practical use.

That is why Lenin ridiculed the theory of our "permanentists," calling it "original" and "fine," and accusing them of refusing to "think why, for ten whole years, life has passed by this fine theory." (Lenin's article was written in 1915, 10 years after the appearance of the theory of the "permanentists" in Russia. See Vol. XVIII, p. 317.)

That is why Lenin regarded this theory as a semi-Menshevik theory and said that it "borrows from the Bolsheviks their call for a resolute revolutionary struggle by the proletariat and the conquest of political power by the latter, and from the Mensheviks the 'repudiation' of the role of the

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18 **Original editor:** Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The First Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* (see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1951, p. 102).

peasantry." (See Lenin's article "Two Lines of the Revolution," *ibid.*).

This, then, is the position in regard to Lenin's idea of the bourgeois-democratic revolution passing into the proletarian revolution, of utilising the bourgeois revolution for the "immediate" transition to the proletarian revolution.

To proceed. Formerly, the victory of the revolution in one country was considered impossible, on the assumption that it would require the combined action of the proletarians of all or at least of a majority of the advanced countries to achieve victory over the bourgeoisie. Now this point of view no longer fits in with the facts. Now we must proceed from the possibility of such a victory; for the uneven and spasmodic character of the development of the various capitalist countries under the conditions of imperialism, the development within imperialism of catastrophic contradictions leading to inevitable wars, the growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries of the world—all this leads, not only to the possibility, but also to the necessity of the victory of the proletariat in individual countries. The history of the revolution in Russia is direct proof of this. At the same time, however, it must be borne in mind that the overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be successfully accomplished only when certain absolutely necessary conditions exist, in the absence of which there can be even no question of the proletariat taking power.

Here is what Lenin says about these conditions in his pamphlet *"Left-Wing" Communism*:

> "The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: It is not enough for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; it is essential for revolution that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the *'lower classes' do not want* the old way, and when the 'upper classes' *cannot carry on in the old way*—only then can revolution triumph. This truth may be expressed in other words: *revolution is impossible without a nationwide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters*).[19] It follows that for revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand that revolution is necessary and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling

19 My italics.

> classes should be passing through a governmental crisis, which draws even the most backward masses into politics, [...] weakens the government and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly" (see Vol. XXV, p. 222).

But the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and establishment of the power of the proletariat in one country does not yet mean that the complete victory of socialism has been ensured. After consolidating its power and leading the peasantry in its wake the proletariat of the victorious country can and must build a socialist society. But does this mean that it will thereby achieve the complete and final victory of socialism, i.e., does it mean that with the forces of only one country it can finally consolidate socialism and fully guarantee that country against intervention and, consequently, also against restoration? No, it does not. For this the victory of the revolution in at least several countries is needed. Therefore, the development and support of revolution in other countries is an essential task of the victorious revolution. Therefore, the revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means for hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries.

Lenin expressed this thought succinctly when he said that the task of the victorious revolution is to do "the utmost possible in one country ***for*** the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 385).

These, in general, are the characteristic features of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution.

IV. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat

From this theme I take three fundamental questions:

a) the dictatorship of the proletariat as the instrument of the proletarian revolution;

b) the dictatorship of the proletariat as the rule of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie;

c) Soviet power as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

1. *The dictatorship of the proletariat as the instrument of the proletarian revolution.* The question of the proletarian dictatorship is above all a question of the main content of the proletarian revolution. The proletarian revolution, its movement, its sweep and its achievements acquire flesh and blood only through the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the instrument of the proletarian revolution, its organ, its most important mainstay, brought into being for the purpose of, firstly, crushing the resistance of the overthrown exploiters and consolidating the achievements of the proletarian revolution, and, secondly, carrying the proletarian revolution to its completion, carrying the revolution to the complete victory of socialism. The revolution can defeat the bourgeoisie, can overthrow its power, even without the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the revolution will be unable to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, to maintain its victory and to push forward to the final victory of socialism unless, at a certain stage in its development, it creates a special organ in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as its principal mainstay.

   "The fundamental question of every revolution is the question of power." (*Lenin.*) Does this mean that all that is required is to assume power, to seize it? No, it does not. The seizure of power is only the beginning. For many reasons, the bourgeoisie that is overthrown in one country remains for a long time stronger than the proletariat which has overthrown it. Therefore, the whole point is to retain power, to consolidate it, to make it invincible. What is needed to attain this? To attain this it is necessary to carry out at least three main tasks that confront the dictatorship of the proletariat "on the morrow" of victory:

   a) to break the resistance of the landlords and capitalists who have been overthrown and expropriated by the revolution, to liquidate every attempt on their part to restore the power of capital;

   b) to organise construction in such a way as to rally all the working people around the proletariat, and to carry on this work along the lines of preparing for the elimination, the abolition

of classes;

c) to arm the revolution, to organise the army of the revolution for the struggle against foreign enemies, for the struggle against imperialism.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is needed to carry out, to fulfil these tasks.

> "The transition from capitalism to communism," says Lenin, "represents an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this *hope* is converted into *attempts* at restoration. And after their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters –who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it—throw themselves with energy grown tenfold, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of the 'paradise' of which they have been deprived, on behalf of their families, who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom now the 'common herd' is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to 'common' labour [...]). In the train of the capitalist exploiters follow the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, with regard to whom decades of historical experience of all countries testify that they vacillate and hesitate, one day marching behind the proletariat and the next day taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution; that they become panic stricken at the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, grow nervous, rush about, snivel, and run from one camp into the other" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 355).

The bourgeoisie has its grounds for making attempts at restoration, because for a long time after its overthrow it remains stronger than the proletariat which has overthrown it.

> "If the exploiters are defeated in one country only," says Lenin, "and this, of course, is the typical case, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception, they *still* remain *stronger* than the exploited" (*ibid.*, p. 354).

Wherein lies the strength of the overthrown bourgeoisie?

> Firstly, "in the strength of international capital, in the strength and durability of the international connections of the bourgeoisie" (see Vol. XXV, p. 173).
>
> Secondly, in the fact that "for a long time after the revolution the exploiters inevitably retain a number of great practical advantages:

> they still have money (it is impossible to abolish money all at once); some movable property—often fairly considerable; they still have various connections, habits of organisation and management, knowledge of all the 'secrets' (customs, methods, means and possibilities) of management, superior education, close connections with the higher technical personnel (who live and think like the bourgeoisie), incomparably greater experience in the art of war (this is very important), and so on, and so forth" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 354).
>
> Thirdly, "in the *force of habit*, in the strength of *small production*. For, unfortunately, small production is still very, very widespread in the world, and small production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale" [...] for "the abolition of classes means not only driving out the landlords and capitalists—that we accomplished with comparative ease—it also means *abolishing the small commodity producers*, and they *cannot be driven out*, or crushed; we *must live in harmony* with them, they can (and must) be remoulded and re-educated only by very prolonged, slow, cautious organisational work" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 173 and 189).

That is why Lenin says:

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow,"
>
> that "the dictatorship of the proletariat is a stubborn struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society" (*ibid.* , pp. 173 and 190).

It scarcely needs proof that there is not the slightest possibility of carrying out these tasks in a short period, of accomplishing all this in a few years. Therefore, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transition from capitalism to communism, must not be regarded as a fleeting period of "super-revolutionary" acts and decrees, but as an entire historical era, replete with civil wars and external conflicts, with persistent organisational work and economic construction, with advances and retreats, victories and defeats. This historical era is needed not only to create the economic and cultural prerequisites for the complete victory of socialism, but also to enable

the proletariat, firstly, to educate itself and become steeled as a force capable of governing the country, and, secondly, to re-educate and remould the petty-bourgeois strata along such lines as will assure the organisation of socialist production.

> "You will have to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and international conflicts," Marx said to the workers, "not only to change existing conditions, but also to change yourselves and to make yourselves capable of wielding political power" (see K. Marx and F. Engels, *Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 506).

Continuing and developing Marx's idea still further, Lenin wrote:

> "It will be necessary under the dictatorship of the proletariat to re-educate millions of peasants and small proprietors, hundreds of thousands of office employees, officials and bourgeois intellectuals, to subordinate them all to the proletarian state and to proletarian leadership, to overcome their bourgeois habits and traditions," just as we must "—in a protracted struggle waged on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat—re-educate the proletarians themselves, who do not abandon their petty-bourgeois prejudices at one stroke, by a miracle, at the bidding of the Virgin Mary, at the bidding of a slogan, resolution or decree, but only in the course of a long and difficult mass struggle against mass petty-bourgeois influences" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 248 and 247).

2. *The dictatorship of the proletariat as the rule of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie.* From the foregoing it is evident that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a mere change of personalities in the government, a change of the "cabinet," etc., leaving the old economic and political order intact. The Mensheviks and opportunists of all countries, who fear dictatorship like fire and in their fright substitute the concept "conquest of power" for the concept dictatorship, usually reduce the "conquest of power" to a change of the "cabinet," to the accession to power of a new ministry made up of people like Scheidemann and Noske, MacDonald and Henderson. It is hardly necessary to explain that these and similar cabinet changes have nothing in common with the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the conquest of real power by the real proletariat. With the MacDonalds and Scheidemanns in power, while the old bourgeois order is allowed to remain, their so-called governments cannot be anything

else than an apparatus serving the bourgeoisie, a screen to conceal the ulcers of imperialism, a weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary movement of the oppressed and exploited masses. Capital needs such governments as a screen when it finds it inconvenient, unprofitable, difficult to oppress and exploit the masses without the aid of a screen. Of course, the appearance of such governments is a symptom that "over there" (i.e., in the capitalist camp) all is not quiet "at the Shipka Pass"; nevertheless, governments of this kind inevitably remain governments of capital in disguise. The government of a MacDonald or a Scheidemann is as far removed from the conquest of power by the proletariat as the sky from the earth. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not a change of government, but a new state, with new organs of power, both central and local; it is the state of the proletariat, which has arisen on the ruins of the old state, the state of the bourgeoisie.

The dictatorship of the proletariat arises not on the basis of the bourgeois order, but in the process of the breaking up of this order, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in the process of the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists, in the process of the socialisation of the principal instruments and means of production, in the process of violent proletarian revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a revolutionary power based on the use of force against the bourgeoisie.

The state is a machine in the hands of the ruling class for suppressing the resistance of its class enemies. *In this respect* the dictatorship of the proletariat does not differ essentially from the dictatorship of any other class; for the proletarian state is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie. But there is one *substantial* difference. This difference consists in the fact that all hitherto existing class states have been dictatorships of an exploiting minority over the exploited majority, whereas the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the exploited majority over the exploiting minority.

Briefly: *the dictatorship of the proletariat is the rule—unrestricted*

by law and based on force—of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, a rule enjoying the sympathy and support of the labouring and exploited masses. (Lenin, *The State and Revolution.*)

From this follow two main conclusions:

First conclusion: The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be "complete" democracy, democracy for *all*, for the rich as well as for the poor; the dictatorship of the proletariat "must be a state that is democratic *in a new way (for*[20] the proletarians and the non-propertied in general) and dictatorial *in a new way (against*[21] the bourgeoisie)" (see Vol. XXI, p. 393). The talk of Kautsky and Co. about universal equality, about "pure" democracy, about "perfect" democracy, and the like, is a bourgeois disguise of the indubitable fact that equality between the exploited and exploiters is impossible. The theory of "pure" democracy is the theory of the upper stratum of the working class, which has been broken in and is being fed by the imperialist robbers. It was brought into being for the purpose of concealing the ulcers of capitalism, of embellishing imperialism and lending it moral strength in the struggle against the exploited masses. Under capitalism there are no real "liberties" for the exploited, nor can there be, if for no other reason than that the premises, printing plants, paper supplies, etc., indispensable for the enjoyment of "liberties" are the privilege of the exploiters. Under capitalism the exploited masses do not, nor can they ever, really participate in governing the country, if for no other reason than that, even under the most democratic regime, under conditions of capitalism, governments are not set up by the people but by the Rothschilds and Stinneses, the Rockefellers and Morgans. Democracy under capitalism is *capitalist* democracy, the democracy of the exploiting minority, based on the restriction of the rights of the exploited majority and directed against this majority. Only under the proletarian dictatorship are real liberties for

20 My italics.

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the exploited and real participation of the proletarians and peasants in governing the country possible. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, democracy is *proletarian* democracy, the democracy of the exploited majority, based on the restriction of the rights of the exploiting minority and directed against this minority.

Second conclusion: The dictatorship of the proletariat can not arise as the result of the peaceful development of bourgeois society and of bourgeois democracy; it can arise only as the result of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine, the bourgeois army, the bourgeois bureaucratic apparatus, the bourgeois police.

> "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes," say Marx and Engels in a preface to the *Communist Manifesto.* —The task of the proletarian revolution is "[...] no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, *but to smash* it and this is the preliminary condition for every real people's revolution on the continent," says Marx in his letter to Kugelmann in 1871.[22]

Marx's qualifying phrase about the continent gave the opportunists and Mensheviks of all countries a pretext for clamouring that Marx had thus conceded the possibility of the peaceful evolution of bourgeois democracy into a proletarian democracy, at least in certain countries outside the European continent (Britain, America). Marx did in fact concede that possibility, and he had good grounds for conceding it in regard to Britain and America in the seventies of the last century, when monopoly capitalism and imperialism did not yet exist, and when these countries, owing to the particular conditions of their development, had as yet no developed militarism and bureaucracy. That was the situation before the appearance of developed imperialism. But later, after a lapse of thirty or forty years, when the situation in these countries had radically changed, when

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22 **Original editor:** See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 22, and Vol. II, p. 420, Moscow 1951).

imperialism had developed and had embraced all capitalist countries without exception, when militarism and bureaucracy had appeared in Britain and America also, when the particular conditions for peaceful development in Britain and America had disappeared—then the qualification in regard to these countries necessarily could no longer hold good.

> "Today," said Lenin, "in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, this qualification made by Marx is no longer valid. Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon 'liberty' in the sense that they had no militarism and bureaucracy, have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and trample everything underfoot. Today, in Britain and in America, too, 'the preliminary condition for every real people's revolution' is the **smashing**, the **destruction** of the 'ready-made state machinery' (perfected in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, up to the 'European' general imperialist standard)" (see Vol. XXI, p. 395).

In other words, the law of violent proletarian revolution, the law of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine as a preliminary condition for such a revolution, is an inevitable law of the revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries of the world.

Of course, in the remote future, if the proletariat is victorious in the principal capitalist countries, and if the present capitalist encirclement is replaced by a socialist encirclement, a "peaceful" path of development is quite possible for certain capitalist countries, whose capitalists, in view of the "unfavourable" international situation, will consider it expedient "voluntarily" to make substantial concessions to the proletariat. But this supposition applies only to a remote and possible future. With regard to the immediate future, there is no ground whatsoever for this supposition.

Therefore, Lenin is right in saying:

> "The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one*" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 342).

3. *Soviet power as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

> The victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat signifies the suppression of the bourgeoisie, the smashing of the bourgeois state machine, and the substitution of proletarian democracy for bourgeois democracy. That is clear. But by means of what organisations can this colossal work be carried out? The old forms of organisation of the proletariat, which grew up on the basis of bourgeois parliamentarism, are inadequate for this work—of that there can hardly be any doubt. What, then, are the new forms of organisation of the proletariat that are capable of serving as the gravediggers of the bourgeois state machine, that are capable not only of smashing this machine, not only of substituting proletarian democracy for bourgeois democracy, but also of becoming the foundation of the proletarian state power?
>
> This new form of organisation of the proletariat is the Soviets.

Wherein lies the strength of the Soviets as compared with the old forms of organisation?

In that the Soviets are the most *all-embracing* mass organisations of the proletariat, for they and they alone embrace all workers without exception.

In that the Soviets are the *only* mass organisations which unite all the oppressed and exploited, workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors, and in which the vanguard of the masses, the proletariat, can, for this reason, most easily and most completely exercise its political leadership of the mass struggle.

In that the Soviets are the *most powerful organs* of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, of the political actions of the masses, of the uprising of the masses—organs capable of breaking the omnipotence of finance capital and its political appendages.

In that the Soviets are the *immediate* organisations of the masses themselves, i.e., they are *the most democratic* and therefore the most authoritative organisations of the masses, which facilitate to the utmost their participation in the work of building up the new state and in its administration, and which bring into full play the revolutionary energy, initiative and creative abilities of the masses in the struggle for

the destruction of the old order, in the struggle for the new, proletarian order.

Soviet power is the union and constitution of the local Soviets into one common state organisation, into the state organisation of the proletariat as the vanguard of the oppressed and exploited masses and as the ruling class—their union in the Republic of Soviets.

The essence of Soviet power consists in the fact that these most all-embracing and most revolutionary mass organisations of precisely those classes that were oppressed by the capitalists and landlords are now the "*permanent and sole* basis of the whole power of the state, of the whole state apparatus"; that "precisely those masses which even in the most democratic bourgeois republics," while being equal in law, "have in fact been prevented by thousands of tricks and devices from taking part in political life and from enjoying democratic rights and liberties, are now drawn unfailingly into *constant* and, more over, *decisive* participation in the democratic administration of the state"[23] (see Lenin, Vol. XXIV, p. 13).

That is why Soviet power is a *new form* of state organisation different in principle from the old bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary form, a *new type* of state, adapted not to the task of exploiting and oppressing the labouring masses, but to the task of completely emancipating them from all oppression and exploitation, to the tasks facing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin is right in saying that with the appearance of Soviet power "the era of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism has drawn to a close and a new chapter in world history—the era of proletarian dictatorship—has been opened."

Wherein lie the characteristic features of Soviet power?

In that Soviet power is the most all-embracing and most democratic state organisation of all possible state organisations while classes continue to exist; for, being the arena of the bond and collaboration between the

23 All italics mine.

workers and the exploited peasants in their struggle against the exploiters, and basing itself in its work on this bond and on this collaboration, Soviet power is thus the power of the majority of the population over the minority, it is the state of the majority, the expression of its dictatorship.

In that Soviet power is the most internationalist of all state organisations in class society; for, by destroying every kind of national oppression and resting on the collaboration of the labouring masses of the various nationalities, it facilitates the uniting of these masses into a single state union.

In that Soviet power, by its very structure, facilitates the task of leading the oppressed and exploited masses by the vanguard of these masses—by the proletariat, as the most united and most politically conscious core of the Soviets.

"The experience of all revolutions and of all movements of the oppressed classes, the experience of the world socialist movement teaches us," says Lenin, "that the proletariat alone is able to unite and lead the scattered and backward strata of the toiling and exploited population" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 14). The point is that the structure of Soviet power facilitates the practical application of the lessons drawn from this experience.

In that Soviet power, by combining legislative and executive power in a single state organisation and replacing territorial electoral constituencies by industrial units, factories and mills thereby directly links the workers and the labouring masses in general with the apparatus of state administration, teaches them how to govern the country.

In that Soviet power alone is capable of releasing the army from its subordination to bourgeois command and of converting it from the instrument of oppression of the people which it is under the bourgeois order, into an instrument for the liberation of the people from the yoke of the bourgeoisie, both native and foreign.

In that "the Soviet organisation of the state alone is capable of immediately and effectively smashing and finally destroying the old, i.e., the bourgeois, bureaucratic and judicial apparatus" (*ibid.*).

In that the Soviet form of state alone, by drawing the mass organisations of the toilers and exploited into constant and unrestricted participation in state administration, is capable of preparing the ground for the withering away of the state, which is one of the basic elements of the future stateless communist society.

The Republic of Soviets is thus the political form, so long sought and finally discovered, within the framework of which the economic emancipation of the proletariat, the complete victory of socialism, must be accomplished.

The Paris Commune was the embryo of this form; Soviet power is its development and culmination.

That is why Lenin says:

> "The Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution..., but is the *only*[24] form capable of ensuring the most painless transition to socialism" (see Vol. XXII, p. 131).

V. The Peasant Question

From this theme I take four questions:

a) the presentation of the question;

b) the peasantry during the bourgeois-democratic revolution;

c) the peasantry during the proletarian revolution;

d) the peasantry after the consolidation of Soviet power.

1. *The presentation of the question.* Some think that the fundamental thing in Leninism is the peasant question, that the point of departure of Leninism is the question of the peasantry, of its role, its relative importance. This is absolutely wrong. The fundamental question of Leninism, its point of departure, is not the peasant question, but the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the conditions under which it can be achieved, of the conditions under which it can be consolidated. The peasant question, as the question of the

24 My italics.

ally of the proletariat in its struggle for power, is a derivative question.

This circumstance, however, does not in the least deprive the peasant question of the serious and vital importance it unquestionably has for the proletarian revolution. It is known that the serious study of the peasant question in the ranks of Russian Marxists began precisely on the eve of the first revolution (1905), when the question of overthrowing tsarism and of realising the hegemony of the proletariat confronted the Party in all its magnitude, and when the question of the ally of the proletariat in the impending bourgeois revolution became of vital importance. It is also known that the peasant question in Russia assumed a still more urgent character during the proletarian revolution, when the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of achieving and maintaining it, led to the question of allies for the proletariat in the impending proletarian revolution. And this was natural. Those who are marching towards and preparing to assume power cannot but be interested in the question of who are their real allies.

In this sense the peasant question is part of the general question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and as such it is one of the most vital problems of Leninism.

The attitude of indifference and sometimes even of outright aversion displayed by the parties of the Second International towards the peasant question is to be explained not only by the specific conditions of development in the West. It is to be explained primarily by the fact that these parties do not believe in the proletarian dictatorship, that they fear revolution and have no intention of leading the proletariat to power. And those who are afraid of revolution, who do not intend to lead the proletarians to power, cannot be interested in the question of allies for the proletariat in the revolution—to them the question of allies is one of indifference, of no immediate significance. The ironical attitude of the heroes of the Second International towards the peasant question is regarded by them as a sign of good breeding, a sign of "true" Marxism. As a matter of fact, there is not a grain of Marxism in this; for indifference towards

so important a question as the peasant question on the eve of the proletarian revolution is the other side of the coin of repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is an unmistakable sign of downright betrayal of Marxism.

The question is as follows: Are the revolutionary potentialities latent in the peasantry by virtue of certain conditions of its existence *already exhausted*, or not; and if not, *is there any hope, any basis*, for utilising these potentialities *for* the proletarian revolution, for transforming the peasantry, the exploited majority of it, from the reserve of the bourgeoisie which it was during the bourgeois revolutions in the West and still is even now, into a reserve of the proletariat, into its ally?

Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, i.e., it recognises the existence of revolutionary capacities in the ranks of the majority of the peasantry, and the possibility of using these in the interests of the proletarian dictatorship.

The history of the three revolutions in Russia fully corroborates the conclusions of Leninism on this score.

Hence the practical conclusion that the toiling masses of the peasantry must be supported in their struggle against bondage and exploitation, in their struggle for deliverance from oppression and poverty. This does not mean, of course, that the proletariat must support *every* peasant movement. What we have in mind here is support for a movement or struggle of the peasantry which, directly or indirectly, facilitates the emancipation movement of the proletariat, which, in one way or another, brings grist to the mill of the proletarian revolution, and which helps to transform the peasantry into a reserve and ally of the working class.

2. *The peasantry during the bourgeois-democratic revolution.* This period extends from the first Russian revolution (1905) to the second revolution (February 1917), inclusive. The characteristic feature of this period is the emancipation of the peasantry from the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie, the peasantry's *desertion* of the Cadets, its *turn* towards the proletariat, towards the Bolshevik Party. The history of this period is the history of the struggle between the Cadets

(the liberal bourgeoisie) and the Bolsheviks (the proletariat) for the peasantry. The outcome of this struggle was decided by the Duma period; for the period of the four Dumas served as an object lesson to the peasantry, and this lesson brought home to the peasantry the fact that they would receive neither land nor liberty at the hands of the Cadets, that the tsar was wholly in favour of the landlords and that the Cadets were supporting the tsar, that the only force they could rely on for assistance was the urban workers, the proletariat. The imperialist war merely confirmed the lessons of the Duma period and consummated the peasantry's desertion of the bourgeoisie, consummated the isolation of the liberal bourgeoisie; for the years of the war revealed the utter futility, the utter deceptiveness of all hopes of obtaining peace from the tsar and his bourgeois allies. Without the object lessons of the Duma period, the hegemony of the proletariat would have been impossible.

That is how the alliance between the workers and the peasants in the bourgeois-democratic revolution took shape. That is how the hegemony (leadership) of the proletariat in the common struggle for the overthrow of tsarism took shape—the hegemony which led to the February Revolution of 1917.

The bourgeois revolutions in the West (Britain, France, Germany, Austria) took, as is well known, a different road. There, hegemony in the revolution belonged not to the proletariat, which by reason of its weakness did not and could not represent an independent political force, but to the liberal bourgeoisie. There the peasantry obtained its emancipation from feudal regimes, not at the hands of the proletariat, which was numerically weak and unorganised, but at the hands of the bourgeoisie. There the peasantry marched against the old order side by side with the liberal bourgeoisie. There the peasantry acted as the reserve of the bourgeoisie. There the revolution, in consequence of this, led to an enormous increase in the political weight of the bourgeoisie.

In Russia, on the contrary, the bourgeois revolution produced quite opposite results. The revolution in Russia led not to the strength-

ening, but to the weakening of the bourgeoisie as a political force, not to an increase in its political reserves, but to the loss of its main reserve, to the loss of the peasantry. The bourgeois revolution in Russia brought to the forefront not the liberal bourgeoisie but the revolutionary proletariat, rallying around the latter the millions of the peasantry.

Incidentally, this explains why the bourgeois revolution in Russia passed into a proletarian revolution in a comparatively short space of time. The hegemony of the proletariat was the embryo of, and the transitional stage to, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

How is this peculiar phenomenon of the Russian revolution, which has no precedent in the history of the bourgeois revolutions of the West, to be explained? Whence this peculiarity?

It is to be explained by the fact that the bourgeois revolution unfolded in Russia under more advanced conditions of class struggle than in the West; that the Russian proletariat had at that time already become an independent political force, whereas the liberal bourgeoisie, frightened by the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, lost all semblance of revolutionary spirit (especially after the lessons of 1905) and turned towards an alliance with the tsar and the landlords against the revolution, against the workers and peasants.

We should bear in mind the following circumstances, which determined the peculiar character of the Russian bourgeois revolution.

a) The unprecedented concentration of Russian industry on the eve of the revolution. It is known, for instance, that in Russia 54 per cent of all the workers were employed in enterprises employing over 500 workers each, whereas in so highly developed a country as the United States of America no more than 33 per cent of all the workers were employed in such enterprises. It scarcely needs proof that this circumstance alone, in view of the existence of a revolutionary party like the Party of the Bolsheviks, transformed the working class of Russia into an immense force in the political life of the country.

b) The hideous forms of exploitation in the factories, coupled

with the intolerable police regime of the tsarist henchmen—a circumstance which transformed every important strike of the workers into an imposing political action and steeled the working class as a force that was revolutionary to the end.

c) The political flabbiness of the Russian bourgeoisie, which after the Revolution of 1905 turned into servility to tsarism and downright counter-revolution—a fact to be explained not only by the revolutionary spirit of the Russian proletariat, which flung the Russian bourgeoisie into the embrace of tsarism, but also by the direct dependence of this bourgeoisie upon government contracts.

d) The existence in the countryside of the most hideous and most intolerable survivals of serfdom, coupled with the unlimited power of the landlords—a circumstance which threw the peasantry into the embrace of the revolution.

e) Tsarism, which stifled everything that was alive, and whose tyranny aggravated the oppression of the capitalist and the landlord—a circumstance which united the struggle of the workers and peasants into a single torrent of revolution.

f) The imperialist war, which fused all these contradictions in the political life of Russia into a profound revolutionary crisis, and which lent the revolution tremendous striking force.

To whom could the peasantry turn under these circumstances? From whom could it seek support against the unlimited power of the landlords, against the tyranny of the tsar against the devastating war which was ruining it? From the liberal bourgeoisie? But it was an enemy, as the long years of experience of all four Dumas had proved. From the Socialist-Revolutionaries? The Socialist-Revolutionaries were "better" than the Cadets, of course, and their programme was "suitable," almost a peasant programme; but what could the Socialist-Revolutionaries offer, considering that they thought of relying only on the peasants and were weak in the towns from which the enemy primarily drew its forces? Where was the new force which would stop at nothing either in town or country,

which would boldly march in the front ranks to fight the tsar and the landlords, which would help the peasantry to extricate itself from bondage, from land hunger, from oppression, from war? Was there such a force in Russia at all? Yes, there was. It was the Russian proletariat, which had shown its strength, its ability to fight to the end, its boldness and revolutionary spirit, as far back as 1905.

At any rate, there was no other such force; nor could any other be found anywhere.

That is why the peasantry, when it turned its back on the Cadets and attached itself to the Socialist-Revolutionaries, at the same time came to realise the necessity of submitting to the leadership of such a courageous leader of the revolution as the Russian proletariat.

Such were the circumstances which determined the peculiar character of the Russian bourgeois revolution.

3. *The peasantry during the proletarian revolution.* This period extends from the February Revolution of 1917 to the October Revolution of 1917. This period is comparatively short, eight months in all; but from the point of view of the political enlightenment and revolutionary training of the masses these eight months can safely be put on a par with whole decades of ordinary constitutional development, for they were eight months of *revolution.* The characteristic feature of this period was the further revolutionisation of the peasantry, its disillusionment with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the peasantry's *desertion* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, its new *turn* towards a *direct rally* around the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary force, capable of leading the country to peace. The history of this period is the history of the struggle between the Socialist-Revolutionaries (petty-bourgeois democracy) and the Bolsheviks (proletarian democracy) for the peasantry, to win over the majority of the peasantry. The outcome of this struggle was decided by the coalition period, the Kerensky period, the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks to confiscate the landlords' land, the fight of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the

Mensheviks to continue the war, the June offensive at the front, the introduction of capital punishment for soldiers, the Kornilov revolt.

Whereas before, in the preceding period, the basic question of the revolution had been the overthrow of the tsar and of the power of the landlords, now, in the period following the February Revolution, when there was no longer any tsar, and when the interminable war had exhausted the economy of the country and utterly ruined the peasantry, the question of liquidating the war became the main problem of the revolution. The centre of gravity had manifestly shifted from purely internal questions to the main question—the war. "End the war," "Let's get out of the war"—such was the general outcry of the war-weary nation and primarily of the peasantry.

But in order to get out of the war it was necessary to overthrow the Provisional Government, it was necessary to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie, it was necessary to overthrow the power of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, for they, and they alone, were dragging out the war to a "victorious finish." Practically, there was no way of getting out of the war except by overthrowing the bourgeoisie.

This was a new revolution, a proletarian revolution, for it ousted from power the last group of the imperialist bourgeoisie, its extreme Left wing, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and the Mensheviks, in order to set up a new, proletarian power, the power of the Soviets, in order to put in power the party of the revolutionary proletariat, the Bolshevik Party, the party of the revolutionary struggle against the imperialist war and for a democratic peace. The majority of the peasantry supported the struggle of the workers for peace, for the power of the Soviets.

There was no other way out for the peasantry. Nor could there be any other way out.

Thus, the Kerensky period was a great object lesson for the toiling masses of the peasantry; for it showed clearly that with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks in power the country would

not extricate itself from the war, and the peasants would never get either land or liberty; that the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries differed from the Cadets only in their honeyed phrases and false promises, while they actually pursued the same imperialist, Cadet policy; that the only power that could lead the country on to the proper road was the power of the Soviets. The further prolongation of the war merely confirmed the truth of this lesson, spurred on the revolution, and drove millions of peasants and soldiers to *rally directly* around the proletarian revolution. The isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks became an incontrovertible fact. Without the object lessons of the coalition period the dictatorship of the proletariat would have been impossible.

Such were the circumstances which facilitated the process of the bourgeois revolution passing into the proletarian revolution.

That is how the dictatorship of the proletariat took shape in Russia.

4. *The peasantry after the consolidation of Soviet power.* Whereas before, in the first period of the revolution, the main objective was the overthrow of tsarism, and later, after the February Revolution, the primary objective was to get out of the imperialist war by overthrowing the bourgeoisie, now, after the liquidation of the civil war and the consolidation of Soviet power, questions of economic construction came to the forefront. Strengthen and develop the nationalised industry; for this purpose link up industry with peasant economy through state-regulated trade; replace the surplus-appropriation system by the tax in kind so as, later on, by gradually lowering the tax in kind, to reduce matters to the exchange of products of industry for the products of peasant farming; revive trade and develop the co-operatives, drawing into them the vast masses of the peasantry—this is how Lenin outlined the immediate tasks of economic construction on the way to building the foundations of socialist economy.

   It is said that this task may prove beyond the strength of a peasant country like Russia. Some sceptics even say that it is simply utopian, impossible; for the peasantry is a peasantry—it consists of small pro-

ducers, and therefore cannot be of use in organising the foundations of socialist production.

But the sceptics are mistaken; for they fail to take into account certain circumstances which in the present case are of decisive significance. Let us examine the most important of these:

Firstly. The peasantry in the Soviet Union must not be confused with the peasantry in the West. A peasantry that has been schooled in three revolutions, that fought against the tsar and the power of the bourgeoisie side by side with the proletariat and under the leadership of the proletariat, a peasantry that has received land and peace at the hands of the proletarian revolution and by reason of this has become the reserve of the proletariat—such a peasantry cannot but be different from a peasantry which during the bourgeois revolution fought under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie, which received land at the hands of that bourgeoisie, and in view of this became the reserve of the bourgeoisie. It scarcely needs proof that the Soviet peasantry, which has learnt to appreciate its political friendship and political collaboration with the proletariat and which owes its freedom to this friendship and collaboration, cannot but represent exceptionally favourable material for economic collaboration with the proletariat.

Engels said that "the conquest of political power by the Socialist Party has become a matter of the not too distant future," that "in order to conquer political power this party must first go from the towns to the country, must become a power in the countryside." (See Engels, *The Peasant Question*, 1922 ed.[25]). He wrote this in the nineties of the last century, having in mind the Western peasantry. Does it need proof that the Russian Communists, after accomplishing an enormous amount of work in this field in the course of three revolutions, have already succeeded in gaining in the countryside an influence and backing the like of which our Western comrades

25 **Original editor:** See Frederick Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1951, p. 382).

dare not even dream of? How can it be denied that this circumstance must decidedly facilitate the organisation of economic collaboration between the working class and the peasantry of Russia?

The sceptics maintain that the small peasants are a factor that is incompatible with socialist construction. But listen to what Engels says about the small peasants of the West:

> "We are decidedly on the side of the small peasant; we shall do everything at all permissible to make his lot more bearable, to facilitate his transition to the co-operative should he decide to do so, and even to make it possible for him to remain on his small holding for a protracted length of time to think the matter over, should he still be unable to bring himself to this decision. We do this not only because we consider the small peasant who does his own work as virtually belonging to us, but also in the direct interest of the Party. The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from being actually hurled down into the proletariat, whom we can win to our side while they are still peasants, the more quickly and easily the social transformation will be accomplished. It will serve us nought to wait with this transformation until capitalist production has developed everywhere to its utmost consequences, until the last small handicraftsman and the last small peasant have fallen victim to capitalist large-scale production. The material sacrifice to be made for this purpose in the interest of the peasants and to be defrayed out of public funds can, from the point of view of capitalist economy, be viewed only as money thrown away, but it is nevertheless an excellent investment because it will effect a perhaps tenfold saving in the cost of the social reorganisation in general. In this sense we can, therefore, afford to deal very liberally with the peasants" (*ibid.*).

That is what Engels said, having in mind the Western peasantry. But is it not clear that what Engels said can nowhere be realised so easily and so completely as in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat? Is it not clear that only in Soviet Russia is it possible at once and to the fullest extent for "the small peasant who does his own work" to come over to our side, for the "material sacrifice" necessary for this to be made, and for the necessary "liberality towards the peasants" to be displayed? Is it not clear that these and similar measures for the benefit of the peasantry are already being carried out in Russia? How can it be denied that this circumstance, in its turn, must facilitate and advance the work of economic construc-

tion in the land of the Soviets?

Secondly. Agriculture in Russia must not be confused with agriculture in the West. There, agriculture is developing along the ordinary lines of capitalism, under conditions of profound differentiation among the peasantry, with large landed estates and private capitalist latifundia at one extreme and pauperism, destitution and wage slavery at the other. Owing to this, disintegration and decay are quite natural there. Not so in Russia. Here agriculture cannot develop along such a path, if for no other reason than that the existence of Soviet power and the nationalisation of the principal instruments and means of production preclude such a development. In Russia the development of agriculture must proceed along a different path, along the path of organising millions of small and middle peasants in co-operatives, along the path of developing in the countryside a mass co-operative movement supported by the state by means of preferential credits. Lenin rightly pointed out in his articles on co-operation that the development of agriculture in our country must proceed along a new path, along the path of drawing the majority of the peasants into socialist construction through the co-operatives, along the path of gradually introducing into agriculture the principles of collectivism, first in the sphere of marketing and later in the sphere of production of agricultural products.

Of extreme interest in this respect are several new phenomena observed in the countryside in connection with the work of the agricultural co-operatives. It is well known that new, large organisations have sprung up within the Selskosoyuz,[26] in different branches of agriculture, such as production of flax, potatoes, butter, etc., which have a great future before them. Of these, the Flax Centre, for instance, unites a whole network of peasant flax growers' associations. The Flax Centre supplies the peasants with seeds and implements; then it buys all the flax produced by these peasants, disposes of it on the market on a large scale, guarantees the peasants a share in the

26 **Original editor:** *Selskosoyuz*—the All-Russian Union of Rural Co-operatives—existed from August 1921 to June 1929.

profits, and in this way links peasant economy with state industry through the Selskosoyuz. What shall we call this form of organisation of production? In my opinion, it is the domestic system of large-scale state-socialist production in the sphere of agriculture. In speaking of the domestic system of state-socialist production I do so by analogy with the domestic system under capitalism, let us say, in the textile industry, where the handicraftsmen received their raw material and tools from the capitalist and turned over to him the entire product of their labour, thus being in fact semi-wage earners working in their own homes. This is one of numerous indices showing the path along which our agriculture must develop. There is no need to mention here similar indices in other branches of agriculture.

It scarcely needs proof that the vast majority of the peasantry will eagerly take this new path of development, rejecting the path of private capitalist latifundia and wage slavery, the path of destitution and ruin.

Here is what Lenin says about the path of development of our agriculture:

> "State power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc. —is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society? This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 392).

Further on, speaking of the necessity of giving financial and other assistance to the co-operatives, as a "new principle of organising the population" and a new "social system" under the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin continues:

> "Every social system arises only with the financial assistance of a definite class. There is no need to mention the hundreds and hundreds of millions of rubles that the birth of 'free' capitalism cost. Now

> we must realise, and apply in our practical work, the fact that the social system which we must now give more than usual assistance is the co-operative system. But it must be assisted in the real sense of the word, i.e., it will not be enough to interpret assistance to mean assistance for any kind of co-operative trade; by assistance we must mean assistance for co-operative trade in which *really large masses of the population really take part"* (*ibid.*, p. 393).

What do all these facts prove?

That the sceptics are wrong.

That Leninism is right in regarding the masses of labouring peasants as the reserve of the proletariat.

That the proletariat in power can and must use this reserve in order to link industry with agriculture, to advance socialist construction, and to provide for the dictatorship of the proletariat that necessary foundation without which the transition to socialist economy is impossible.

VI. The National Question

From this theme I take two main questions:

a) the presentation of the question;

b) the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolution.

1. *The presentation of the question.* During the last two decades the national question has undergone a number of very important changes. The national question in the period of the Second International and the national question in the period of Leninism are far from being the same thing. They differ profoundly from each other, not only in their scope, but also in their intrinsic character.

   Formerly, the national question was usually confined to a narrow circle of questions, concerning, primarily, "civilised" nationalities. The Irish, the Hungarians, the Poles, the Finns, the Serbs, and several other European nationalities—that was the circle of unequal peoples in whose destinies the leaders of the Second International were interested. The scores and hundreds of millions of Asian

and African peoples who are suffering national oppression in its most savage and cruel form usually remained outside of their field of vision. They hesitated to put white and black, "civilised" and "uncivilised" on the same plane. Two or three meaningless, lukewarm resolutions, which carefully evaded the question of the liberation of the colonies—that was all the leaders of the Second International could boast of. Now we can say that this duplicity and half-heartedness in dealing with the national question has been brought to an end. Leninism laid bare this crying incongruity, broke down the wall between whites and blacks, between Europeans and Asiatics, between the "civilised" and "uncivilised" slaves of imperialism, and thus linked the national question with the question of the colonies. The national question was thereby transformed from a particular and internal state problem into a general and international problem, into a world problem of the liberation of the oppressed peoples in the dependent countries and colonies from the yoke of imperialism.

Formerly, the principle of self-determination of nations was usually misinterpreted, and not infrequently it was narrowed down to the idea of the right of nations to autonomy. Certain leaders of the Second International even went so far as to turn the right to self-determination into the right to cultural autonomy, i.e., the right of oppressed nations to have their own cultural institutions, leaving all political power in the hands of the ruling nation. As a consequence, the idea of self-determination stood in danger of being transformed from an instrument for combating annexations into an instrument for justifying them. Now we can say that this confusion has been cleared up. Leninism broadened the conception of self-determination, interpreting it as the right of the oppressed peoples of the dependent countries and colonies to complete secession, as the right of nations to independent existence as states. This precluded the possibility of justifying annexations by interpreting the right to self-determination as the right to autonomy. Thus, the principle of self-determination itself was transformed from an instrument for deceiving the masses, which it undoubtedly was in the

hands of the social-chauvinists during the imperialist war, into an instrument for exposing all imperialist aspirations and chauvinist machinations, into an instrument for the political education of the masses in the spirit of internationalism.

Formerly, the question of the oppressed nations was usually regarded as purely a juridical question. Solemn proclamations about "national equality of rights," innumerable declarations about the "equality of nations"—that was the stock in trade of the parties of the Second International, which glossed over the fact that "equality of nations" under imperialism, where one group of nations (a minority) lives by exploiting another group of nations, is sheer mockery of the oppressed nations. Now we can say that this bourgeois-juridical point of view on the national question has been exposed. Leninism brought the national question down from the lofty heights of high-sounding declarations to solid ground, and declared that pronouncements about the "equality of nations" not backed by the direct support of the proletarian parties for the liberation struggle of the oppressed nations are meaningless and false. In this way the question of the oppressed nations became one of supporting the oppressed nations, of rendering real and continuous assistance to them in their struggle against imperialism for real equality of nations, for their independent existence as states.

Formerly, the national question was regarded from a reformist point of view, as an independent question having no connection with the general question of the power of capital, of the overthrow of imperialism, of the proletarian revolution. It was tacitly assumed that the victory of the proletariat in Europe was possible without a direct alliance with the liberation movement in the colonies, that the national-colonial question could be solved on the quiet, "of its own accord," off the highway of the proletarian revolution, without a revolutionary struggle against imperialism. Now we can say that this anti-revolutionary point of view has been exposed. Leninism has proved, and the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia have confirmed, that the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution, and

that the road to victory of the revolution in the West lies through the revolutionary alliance with the liberation movement of the colonies and dependent countries against imperialism. The national question is a part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The question is as follows: Are the revolutionary potentialities latent in the revolutionary liberation movement of the oppressed countries *already exhausted*, or not; and if not, is there any hope, any basis, for utilising these potentialities for the proletarian revolution, for transforming the dependent and colonial countries from a reserve of the imperialist bourgeoisie into a reserve of the revolutionary proletariat, into an ally of the latter?

Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, i.e., it recognises the existence of revolutionary capacities in the national liberation movement of the oppressed countries, and the possibility of using these for overthrowing the common enemy, for overthrowing imperialism. The mechanics of the development of imperialism, the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia wholly confirm the conclusions of Leninism on this score.

Hence the necessity for the proletariat of the "dominant" nations to support—resolutely and actively to support—the national liberation movement of the oppressed and dependent peoples.

This does not mean, of course, that the proletariat must support *every* national movement, everywhere and always, in every individual concrete case. It means that support must be given to such national movements as tend to weaken, to overthrow imperialism, and not to strengthen and preserve it. Cases occur when the national movements in certain oppressed countries come into conflict with the interests of the development of the proletarian movement. In such cases support is, of course, entirely out of the question. The question of the rights of nations is not an isolated, self-sufficient question; it is a part of the general problem of the proletarian revolution, subordinate to the whole, and must be considered from the point of view of the whole. In the forties of the last century Marx sup-

ported the national movement of the Poles and the Hungarians and was opposed to the national movement of the Czechs and the South Slavs. Why? Because the Czechs and the South Slavs were then "reactionary nations," "Russian outposts" in Europe, outposts of absolutism; whereas the Poles and the Hungarians were "revolutionary nations," fighting against absolutism. Because support of the national movement of the Czechs and the South Slavs was at that time equivalent to indirect support for tsarism, the most dangerous enemy of the revolutionary movement in Europe.

> "The various demands of democracy," writes Lenin, "including self-determination, are not an absolute, but a *small part* of the general democratic (now: general socialist) *world* movement. In individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole; if so, it must be rejected" (See Vol. XIX, pp. 257-58).

This is the position in regard to the question of particular national movements, of the possible reactionary character of these movements—if, of course, they are appraised not from the formal point of view, not from the point of view of abstract rights, but concretely, from the point of view of the interests of the revolutionary movement.

The same must be said of the revolutionary character of national movements in general. The unquestionably revolutionary character of the vast majority of national movements is as relative and peculiar as is the possible reactionary character of certain particular national movements. The revolutionary character of a national movement under the conditions of imperialist oppression does not necessarily presuppose the existence of proletarian elements in the movement, the existence of a revolutionary or a republican programme of the movement, the existence of a democratic basis of the movement. The struggle that the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of Afghanistan is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the monarchist views of the Emir and his associates, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism; whereas the struggle waged by such "desperate" democrats and "socialists," "revolutionaries" and republicans as, for example, Kerensky and Tsereteli, Renaudel and Scheidemann, Chernov and Dan, Henderson and

Clynes, during the imperialist war was a *reactionary* struggle, for its result was the embellishment, the strengthening, the victory, of imperialism. For the same reasons, the struggle that the Egyptian merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a *revolutionary* struggle, despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois title of the leaders of the Egyptian national movement, despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism; whereas the struggle that the British "Labour" government is waging to preserve Egypt's dependent position is for the same reasons a *reactionary* struggle, despite the proletarian origin and the proletarian title of the members of that government, despite the fact that they are "for" socialism. There is no need to mention the national movement in other, larger, colonial and dependent countries, such as India and China, every step of which along the road to liberation, even if it runs counter to the demands of formal democracy, is a steam-hammer blow at imperialism, i.e., is undoubtedly a *revolutionary* step.

Lenin was right in saying that the national movement of the oppressed countries should be appraised not from the point of view of formal democracy, but from the point of view of the actual results, as shown by the general balance sheet of the struggle against imperialism, that is to say, "not in isolation, but on a world scale" (see Vol. XIX, p. 257).

2. *The liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolution.* In solving the national question Leninism proceeds from the following theses:

    a) The world is divided into two camps: the camp of a handful of civilised nations, which possess finance capital and exploit the vast majority of the population of the globe; and the camp of the oppressed and exploited peoples in the colonies and dependent countries, which constitute that majority;

    b) The colonies and dependent countries, oppressed and exploited by finance capital, constitute a vast reserve and a very important source of strength for imperialism;

c) The revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples in the dependent and colonial countries against imperialism is the only road that leads to their emancipation from oppression and exploitation;

d) The most important colonial and dependent countries have already taken the path of the national liberation movement, which cannot but lead to the crisis of world capitalism;

e) The interests of the proletarian movement in the developed countries and of the national liberation movement in the colonies call for the union of these two forms of the revolutionary movement into a common front against the common enemy, against imperialism;

f) The victory of the working class in the developed countries and the liberation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism are impossible without the formation and consolidation of a common revolutionary front;

g) The formation of a common revolutionary front is impossible unless the proletariat of the oppressor nations renders direct and determined support to the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against the imperialism of its "own country," for "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (*Engels*);

h) This support implies the upholding, defence and implementation of the slogan of the right of nations to secession, to independent existence as states;

i) Unless this slogan is implemented, the union and collaboration of nations within a single world economic system, which is the material basis for the victory of world socialism, cannot be brought about;

j) This union can only be voluntary, arising on the basis of mutual confidence and fraternal relations among peoples.

Hence the two sides, the two tendencies in the national question: the tendency towards political emancipation from the shackles of imperial-

ism and towards the formation of an independent national state—a tendency which arose as a consequence of imperialist oppression and colonial exploitation; and the tendency towards closer economic relations among nations, which arose as a result of the formation of a world market and a world economic system.

> "Developing capitalism," says Lenin, "knows two historical tendencies in the national question. First: the awakening of national life and national movements, struggle against all national oppression, creation of national states. Second: development and acceleration of all kinds of intercourse between nations, breakdown of national barriers, creation of the international unity of capital, of economic life in general, of politics, science, etc.
>
> "Both tendencies are a world-wide law of capitalism. The first predominates at the beginning of its development, the second characterises mature capitalism that is moving towards its transformation into socialist society" (see Vol. XVII, pp. 139-40).

For imperialism these two tendencies represent irreconcilable contradictions; because imperialism cannot exist without exploiting colonies and forcibly retaining them within the framework of the "integral whole"; because imperialism can bring nations together only by means of annexations and colonial conquest, without which imperialism is, generally speaking, inconceivable.

For communism, on the contrary, these tendencies are but two sides of a single cause—the cause of the emancipation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism; because communism knows that the union of peoples in a single world economic system is possible only on the basis of mutual confidence and voluntary agreement, and that the road to the formation of a voluntary union of peoples lies through the separation of the colonies from the "integral" imperialist "whole," through the transformation of the colonies into independent states.

Hence the necessity for a stubborn, continuous and determined struggle against the dominant-nation chauvinism of the "Socialists" of the ruling nations (Britain, France, America, Italy, Japan, etc.), who do not want to fight their imperialist governments, who do not want to support the struggle of the oppressed peoples in "their" colonies for emancipation from oppression, for secession.

Without such a struggle the education of the working class of the rul-

ing nations in the spirit of true internationalism, in the spirit of closer relations with the toiling masses of the dependent countries and colonies, in the spirit of real preparation for the proletarian revolution, is inconceivable. The revolution would not have been victorious in Russia, and Kolchak and Denikin would not have been crushed, had not the Russian proletariat enjoyed the sympathy and support of the oppressed peoples of the former Russian Empire. But to win the sympathy and support of these peoples it had first of all to break the fetters of Russian imperialism and free these peoples from the yoke of national oppression.

Without this it would have been impossible to consolidate Soviet power, to implant real internationalism and to create that remarkable organisation for the collaboration of peoples which is called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and which is the living prototype of the future union of peoples in a single world economic system.

Hence the necessity of fighting against the national isolationism, narrowness and aloofness of the Socialists in the oppressed countries, who do not want to rise above their national parochialism and who do not understand the connection between the liberation movement in their own countries and the proletarian movement in the ruling countries.

Without such a struggle it is inconceivable that the proletariat of the oppressed nations can maintain an independent policy and its class solidarity with the proletariat of the ruling countries in the fight for the overthrow of the common enemy, in the fight for the overthrow of imperialism.

Without such a struggle, internationalism would be impossible.

Such is the way in which the toiling masses of the dominant and the oppressed nations must be educated in the spirit of revolutionary internationalism.

Here is what Lenin says about this twofold task of communism in educating the workers in the spirit of internationalism:

> "Can such education [...] be *concretely identical* in great, oppressing nations and in small, oppressed nations, in annexing nations and in annexed nations?
>
> "Obviously not. The way to the one goal—to complete equality, to the closest relations and the subsequent *amalgamation of all* nations—obviously pro-

> ceeds here by different routes in each concrete case; in the same way, let us say, as the route to a point in the middle of a given page lies towards the left from one edge and towards the right from the opposite edge. If a Social-Democrat belonging to a great, oppressing, annexing nation, while advocating the amalgamation of nations in general, were to forget even for one moment that 'his' Nicholas II, 'his' Wilhelm, George, Poincaré, etc., *also stands for amalgamation* with small nations (by means of annexations)—Nicholas II being for 'amalgamation' with Galicia, Wilhelm II for 'amalgamation' with Belgium, etc. —such a Social-Democrat would be a ridiculous doctrinaire in theory and an abettor of imperialism in practice.
>
> "The weight of emphasis in the internationalist education of the workers in the oppressing countries must necessarily consist in their advocating and upholding freedom of secession for oppressed countries. Without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every Social-Democrat of an oppressing nation who *fails* to conduct such propaganda as an imperialist and a scoundrel. This is an absolute demand, even if the *chance* of secession being possible and 'feasible' before the introduction of socialism be only one in a thousand. [...]
>
> "On the other hand, a Social-Democrat belonging to a small nation must emphasise in his agitation the *second* word of our general formula: 'voluntary *union*' of nations, He may, without violating his duties as an internationalist, be in favour of *either* the political independence of his nation *or* its inclusion in a neighbouring state X, Y, Z, etc. But in all cases he must fight *against* small-nation narrow-mindedness, isolationism and aloofness, he must fight for the recognition of the whole and the general, for the subordination of the interests of the particular to the interests of the general.
>
> "People who have not gone thoroughly into the question think there is a 'contradiction' in Social-Democrats of oppressing nations insisting on 'freedom of *secession*,' while Social-Democrats of oppressed nations insist on 'freedom of *union*.' However, a little reflection will show that there is not, and cannot be, any *other* road leading from the *given* situation to internationalism and the amalgamation of nations, any other road to this goal" (see Vol. XIX, pp. 261-62).

VII. Strategy and Tactics

From this theme I take six questions:

a) strategy and tactics as the science of leadership in the class struggle of the proletariat;

b) stages of the revolution, and strategy;

c) the flow and ebb of the movement, and tactics;

d) strategic leadership;

e) tactical leadership;

f) reformism and revolutionism.

1. *Strategy and tactics as the science of leadership in the class struggle of the proletariat.* The period of the domination of the Second International was mainly a period of the formation and training of the proletarian political armies under conditions of more or less peaceful development. It was the period of parliamentarism as the predominant form of the class struggle. Questions of great class conflicts, of preparing the proletariat for revolutionary clashes, of the means of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat, did not seem to be on the order of the day at that time. The task was confined to utilising all means of legal development for the purpose of forming and training the proletarian armies, to utilising parliamentarism in conformity with the conditions under which the status of the proletariat remained, and, as it seemed, had to remain, that of an opposition. It scarcely needs proof that in such a period and with such a conception of the tasks of the proletariat there could be neither an integral strategy nor any elaborated tactics. There were fragmentary and detached ideas about tactics and strategy, but no tactics or strategy as such.

   The mortal sin of the Second International was not that it pursued at that time the tactics of utilising parliamentary forms of struggle, but that it overestimated the importance of these forms, that it considered them virtually the only forms; and that when the period of open revolutionary battles set in and the question of extra-parliamentary forms of struggle came to the fore, the parties of the Second International turned their backs on these new tasks, refused to shoulder them.

   Only in the subsequent period, the period of direct action by the proletariat, the period of proletarian revolution, when the question of overthrowing the bourgeoisie became a question of immediate practical action; when the question of the reserves of the proletariat

(strategy) became one of the most burning questions; when all forms of struggle and of organisation, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary (tactics), had quite clearly manifested themselves—only in this period could an integral strategy and elaborated tactics for the struggle of the proletariat be worked out. It was precisely in this period that Lenin brought out into the light of day the brilliant ideas of Marx and Engels on tactics and strategy that had been suppressed by the opportunists of the Second International. But Lenin did not confine himself to restoring particular tactical propositions of Marx and Engels. He developed them further and supplemented them with new ideas and propositions, combining them all into a system of rules and guiding principles for the leadership of the class struggle of the proletariat. Lenin's pamphlets, such as *What Is To Be Done?, Two Tactics, Imperialism, The State and Revolution, The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, *"Left Wing" Communism*, undoubtedly constitute priceless contributions to the general treasury of Marxism, to its revolutionary arsenal. The strategy and tactics of Leninism constitute the science of leadership in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

2. *Stages of the revolution, and strategy.* Strategy is the determination of the direction of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposition of the revolutionary forces (main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan throughout the given stage of the revolution.

   Our revolution had already passed through two stages, and after the October Revolution it entered a third one. Our strategy changed accordingly.

   First stage. 1903 to February 1917. Objective: to overthrow tsarism and completely wipe out the survivals of mediaevalism. The main force of the revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: the peasantry. Direction of the main blow: the isolation of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which was striving to win over the peasantry and liquidate the revolution by a *compromise* with tsarism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the working class with

the peasantry. "The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie" (see Lenin, Vol. VIII, p. 96).

Second stage. March 1917 to October 1917. Objective: to overthrow imperialism in Russia and to withdraw from the imperialist war. The main force of the revolution: the proletariat. Immediate reserves: the poor peasantry. The proletariat of neighbouring countries as probable reserves. The protracted war and the crisis of imperialism as a favourable factor. Direction of the main blow: isolation of the petty-bourgeois democrats (Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), who were striving to win over the toiling masses of the peasantry and to put an end to the revolution by a *compromise* with imperialism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the proletariat with the poor peasantry. "The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie" (*ibid.*).

Third stage. Began after the October Revolution. Objective: to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, using it as a base for the defeat of imperialism in all countries. The revolution spreads beyond the confines of one country; the epoch of world revolution has begun. The main forces of the revolution: the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, and the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all countries. Main reserves: the semi-proletarian and small-peasant masses in the developed countries, and the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries. Direction of the main blow: isolation of the petty-bourgeois democrats, and isolation of the parties of the Second International, which constitute the main support of the policy of *compromise* with imperialism. Plan for the disposition of forces: alliance of the proletarian revolution with the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries.

Strategy deals with the main forces of the revolution and their re-

serves. It changes with the passing of the revolution from one stage to another, but remains basically unchanged throughout a given stage.

3. *The flow and ebb of the movement, and tactics.* Tactics are the determination of the line of conduct of the proletariat in the comparatively short period of the flow or ebb of the movement, of the rise or decline of the revolution, the fight to carry out this line by means of replacing old forms of struggle and organisation by new ones, old slogans by new ones, by combining these forms, etc. While the object of strategy is to win the war against tsarism, let us say, or against the bourgeoisie, to carry through the struggle against tsarism or against the bourgeoisie to its end, tactics pursue less important objects, for their aim is not the winning of the war as a whole, but the winning of some particular engagements or some particular battles, the carrying through successfully of some particular campaigns or actions corresponding to the concrete circumstances in the given period of rise or decline of the revolution. Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinate to it and serving it.

   Tactics change according to flow and ebb. While the strategic plan remained unchanged during the first stage of the revolution (1903 to February 1917), tactics changed several times during that period. In the period from 1903 to 1905 the Party pursued offensive tactics, for the tide of the revolution was rising, the movement was on the upgrade, and tactics had to proceed from this fact. Accordingly, the forms of struggle were revolutionary, corresponding to the requirements of the rising tide of the revolution. Local political strikes, political demonstrations, the general political strike, boycott of the Duma, uprising, revolutionary fighting slogans—such were the successive forms of struggle during that period. These changes in the forms of struggle were accompanied by corresponding changes in the forms of organisation. Factory committees, revolutionary peasant committees, strike committees, Soviets of workers' deputies, a workers' party operating more or less openly—such were the forms of organisation during that period.

   In the period from 1907 to 1912 the Party was compelled to resort

to tactics of retreat; for we then experienced a decline in the revolutionary movement, the ebb of the revolution, and tactics necessarily had to take this fact into consideration. The forms of struggle, as well as the forms of organisation, changed accordingly: instead of the boycott of the Duma—participation in the Duma; instead of open revolutionary actions outside the Duma—actions and work in the Duma; instead of general political strikes—partial economic strikes, or simply a lull in activities. Of course, the Party had to go underground during that period, while the revolutionary mass organisations were replaced by cultural, educational, co-operative, insurance and other legal organisations.

The same must be said of the second and third stages of the revolution, during which tactics changed dozens of times, whereas the strategic plans remained unchanged.

Tactics deal with the forms of struggle and the forms of organisation of the proletariat, with their changes and combinations. During a given stage of the revolution tactics may change several times, depending on the flow or ebb, the rise or decline, of the revolution.

4. *Strategic leadership.* The reserves of the revolution can be:

direct: a) the peasantry and in general the intermediate strata of the population within the country; b) the proletariat of neighbouring countries; c) the revolutionary movement in the colonies and dependent countries; d) the conquests and gains of the dictatorship of the proletariat—part of which the proletariat may give up temporarily, while retaining superiority of forces, in order to buy off a powerful enemy and gain a respite; and

indirect: a) the contradictions and conflicts among the non-proletarian classes within the country, which can be utilised by the proletariat to weaken the enemy and to strengthen its own reserves; b) contradictions, conflicts and wars (the imperialist war, for instance) among the bourgeois states hostile to the proletarian state, which can be utilised by the proletariat in its offensive or in manoeuvring in the event of a forced retreat.

There is no need to speak at length about the reserves of the first

category, as their significance is clear to everyone. As for the reserves of the second-category, whose significance is not always clear, it must be said that sometimes they are of prime importance for the progress of the revolution. One can hardly deny the enormous importance, for example, of the conflict between the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Socialist-Revolutionaries) and the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie (the Cadets) during and after the first revolution, which undoubtedly played its part in freeing the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeoisie. Still less reason is there for denying the colossal importance of the fact that the principal groups of imperialists were engaged in a deadly war during the period of the October Revolution, when the imperialists, engrossed in war among themselves, were unable to concentrate their forces against the young Soviet power, and the proletariat, for this very reason, was able to get down to the work of organising its forces and consolidating its power, and to prepare the rout of Kolchak and Denikin. It must be presumed that now, when the contradictions among the imperialist groups are becoming more and more profound, and when a new war among them is becoming inevitable, reserves of this description will assume ever greater importance for the proletariat.

The task of strategic leadership is to make proper use of all these reserves for the achievement of the main object of the revolution at the given stage of its development.

What does making proper use of reserves mean?

It means fulfilling certain necessary conditions, of which the following must be regarded as the principal ones:

Firstly. The concentration of the main forces of the revolution at the enemy's most vulnerable spot at the decisive moment, when the revolution has already become ripe, when the offensive is going full-steam ahead, when insurrection is knocking at the door, and when bringing the reserves up to the vanguard is the decisive condition of success. The Party's strategy during the period from April to October 1917 can be taken as an example of this manner of utilising

reserves. Undoubtedly, the enemy's most vulnerable spot at that time was the war. Undoubtedly, it was on this question, as the fundamental one, that the Party rallied the broadest masses of the population around the proletarian vanguard. The Party's strategy during that period was, while training the vanguard for street action by means of manifestations and demonstrations, to bring the reserves up to the vanguard through the medium of the Soviets in the rear and the soldiers' committees at the front. The outcome of the revolution has shown that the reserves were properly utilised.

Here is what Lenin, paraphrasing the well-known theses of Marx and Engels on insurrection, says about this condition of the strategic utilisation of the forces of the revolution:

"1. Never *play* with insurrection, but when beginning it firmly realise that you must *go to the end.*

"2. Concentrate a great *superiority of forces* at the decisive point, at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organisation, will destroy the insurgents.

"3. Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the *offensive.* 'The defensive is the death of every armed rising.'

"4. You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.

"5. You must strive for *daily* successes, even if small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain the 'moral ascendancy'" (see Vol. XXI, pp. 319-20).

Secondly. The selection of the moment for the decisive blow, of the moment for starting the insurrection, so timed as to coincide with the moment when the crisis has reached its climax, when it is already the case that the vanguard is prepared to fight to the end, the reserves are prepared to support the vanguard, and maximum consternation reigns in the ranks of the enemy.

> The decisive battle, says Lenin, may be deemed to have fully matured *if* "(1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength"; *if* "(2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeois democrats as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy"; *if* "(3) among the proletariat a mass sentiment in favour of supporting the most determined, supremely bold, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has arisen and begun vigorously to grow. Then revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated above [...] and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured" (see Vol. XXV, p. 229).

The manner in which the October uprising was carried out may be taken as a model of such strategy.

Failure to observe this condition leads to a dangerous error called "loss of tempo," when the Party lags behind the movement or runs far ahead of it, courting the danger of failure. An example of such "loss of tempo," of how the moment for an uprising should not be chosen, may be seen in the attempt made by a section of our comrades to begin the uprising by arresting the Democratic Conference in September 1917, when wavering was still apparent in the Soviets, when the armies at the front were still at the crossroads, when the reserves had not yet been brought up to the vanguard.

Thirdly. Undeviating pursuit of the course adopted, no matter what difficulties and complications are encountered on the road towards the goal; this is necessary in order that the vanguard may not lose sight of the main goal of the struggle and that the masses may not stray from the road while marching towards that goal and striving to rally around the vanguard. Failure to observe this condition leads to a grave error, well known to sailors as "losing one's bearings." As an example of this "losing one's bearings" we may take the erroneous conduct of our Party when, immediately after the Democratic Conference, it adopted a resolution to participate

in the Pre-parliament. For the moment the Party, as it were, forgot that the Pre-parliament was an attempt of the bourgeoisie to switch the country from the path of the Soviets to the path of bourgeois parliamentarism, that the Party's participation in such a body might result in mixing everything up and confusing the workers and peasants, who were waging a revolutionary struggle under the slogan: "All power to the Soviets." This mistake was rectified by the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-parliament.

Fourthly. Manoeuvring the reserves with a view to effecting a proper retreat when the enemy is strong, when retreat is inevitable, when to accept battle forced upon us by the enemy is obviously disadvantageous, when, with the given relation of forces, retreat becomes the only way to escape a blow against the vanguard and to retain the reserves for the latter.

> "The revolutionary parties," says Lenin, "must complete their education. They have learnt to attack. Now they have to realise that this knowledge must be supplemented with the knowledge how to retreat properly. They have to realise—and the revolutionary class is taught to realise it by its own bitter experience—that victory is impossible unless they have learnt both how to attack and how to retreat properly" (see Vol. XXV, p. 177).

The object of this strategy is to gain time, to disrupt the enemy, and to accumulate forces in order later to assume the offensive.

The signing of the Brest Peace may be taken as a model of this strategy; for it enabled the Party to gain time, to take advantage of the conflicts in the camp of the imperialists, to disrupt the forces of the enemy, to retain the support of the peasantry, and to accumulate forces in preparation for the offensive against Kolchak and Denikin.

> "In concluding a separate peace," said Lenin at that time, "we free ourselves as much *as is possible at the present moment* from both warring imperialist groups, we take advantage of their mutual enmity and warfare, which hinder them from making a deal against us, and for a certain period have our hands free to advance and to consolidate the socialist revolution" (see Vol. XXII, p. 198).
>
> "Now even the biggest fool," said Lenin three years after the Brest Peace, "can see that the 'Brest Peace' was a concession that strengthened us and broke up the forces of international imperialism" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 7).

Such are the principal conditions which ensure correct strategic leadership.

5. *Tactical leadership.* Tactical leadership is a part of strategic leadership, subordinated to the tasks and the requirements of the latter. The task of tactical leadership is to master all forms of struggle and organisation of the proletariat and to ensure that they are used properly so as to achieve, with the given relation of forces, the maximum results necessary to prepare for strategic success.

   What is meant by making proper use of the forms of struggle and organisation of the proletariat?

   It means fulfilling certain necessary conditions, of which the following must be regarded as the principal ones:

   Firstly. To put in the forefront precisely those forms of struggle and organisation which are best suited to the conditions prevailing during the flow or ebb of the movement at a given moment, and which therefore can facilitate and ensure the bringing of the masses to the revolutionary positions, the bringing of the millions to the revolutionary front, and their disposition at the revolutionary front.

   The point here is not that the vanguard should realise the impossibility of preserving the old regime and the inevitability of its overthrow. The point is that the masses, the millions, should understand this inevitability and display their readiness to support the vanguard. But the masses can understand this only from their own experience. The task is to enable the vast masses to realise from their own experience the inevitability of the overthrow of the old regime, to promote such methods of struggle and forms of organisation as will make it easier for the masses to realise from experience the correctness of the revolutionary slogans.

   The vanguard would have become detached from the working class, and the working class would have lost contact with the masses, if the Party had not decided at the time to participate in the Duma, if it had not decided to concentrate its forces on work in the Duma and to develop a struggle on the basis of this work, in order to make it easier for the masses to realise from their own experience the futility of

the Duma, the falsity of the promises of the Cadets, the impossibility of compromise with tsarism, and the inevitability of an alliance between the peasantry and the working class. Had the masses not gained their experience during the period of the Duma, the exposure of the Cadets and the hegemony of the proletariat would have been impossible.

The danger of the "Otzovist" tactics was that they threatened to detach the vanguard from the millions of its reserves.

The Party would have become detached from the working class, and the working class would have lost its influence among the broad masses of the peasants and soldiers, if the proletariat had followed the "Left" Communists, who called for an uprising in April 1917, when the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries had not yet exposed themselves as advocates of war and imperialism, when the masses had not yet realised from their own experience the falsity of the speeches of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries about peace, land and freedom. Had the masses not gained this experience during the Kerensky period, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries would not have been isolated and the dictatorship of the proletariat would have been impossible. Therefore, the tactics of "patiently explaining" the mistakes of the petty-bourgeois parties and of open struggle in the Soviets were the only correct tactics.

The danger of the tactics of the "Left" Communists was that they threatened to transform the Party from the leader of the proletarian revolution into a handful of futile conspirators with no ground to stand on.

> "Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone," says Lenin. "To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it [...] would be not merely folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of the working people and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fun-

> damental law of all great revolutions, now confirmed with astonishing force and vividness not only in Russia but also in Germany. Not only the uncultured, often illiterate masses of Russia, but the highly cultured, entirely literate masses of Germany had to realise through their own painful experience the absolute impotence and spinelessness, the absolute helplessness and servility to the bourgeoisie, the utter vileness, of the government of the knights of the Second International, the absolute inevitability of a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia, Kapp and Co. in Germany) as the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to turn resolutely towards communism" (see Vol. XXV, p. 228).

Secondly. To locate at any given moment the particular link in the chain of processes which, if grasped, will enable us to keep hold of the whole chain and to prepare the conditions for achieving strategic success.

The point here is to single out from all the tasks confronting the Party the particular immediate task, the fulfilment of which constitutes the central point, and the accomplishment of which ensures the successful fulfilment of the other immediate tasks.

The importance of this thesis may be illustrated by two examples, one of which could be taken from the remote past (the period of the formation of the Party) and the other from the immediate present (the period of the NEP).

In the period of the formation of the Party, when the innumerable circles and organisations had not yet been linked together, when amateurishness and the parochial outlook of the circles were corroding the Party from top to bottom, when ideological confusion was the characteristic feature of the internal life of the Party, the main link and the main task in the chain of links and in the chain of tasks then confronting the Party proved to be the establishment of an all-Russian illegal newspaper (*Iskra*). Why? Because, under the conditions then prevailing, only by means of an all-Russian illegal newspaper was it possible to create a solid core of the Party capable of uniting the innumerable circles and organisations into one whole, to prepare the conditions for ideological and tactical unity, and thus to build the foundations for the formation of a real party.

During the period of transition from war to economic construction, when industry was vegetating in the grip of disruption and agriculture was suffering from a shortage of urban manufactured goods, when the establishment of a bond between state industry and peasant economy became the fundamental condition for successful socialist construction—in that period it turned out that the main link in the chain of processes, the main task among a number of tasks, was to develop trade. Why? Because under the conditions of the NEP the bond between industry and peasant economy cannot be established except through trade; because under the conditions of the NEP production without sale is fatal for industry; because industry can be expanded only by the expansion of sales as a result of developing trade; because only after we have consolidated our position in the sphere of trade, only after we have secured control of trade, only after we have secured this link can there be any hope of linking industry with the peasant market and successfully fulfilling the other immediate tasks in order to create the conditions for building the foundations of socialist economy.

> "It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general," says Lenin. "One must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which one must grasp with all one's might in order to keep hold of the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link." [...]
>
> "At the present time [...] this link is the revival of internal *trade* under proper state regulation (direction). Trade—that is the 'link' in the historical chain of events, in the transitional forms of our socialist construction in 1921-22, '*which we must grasp with all our might*'[...]" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 82).

Such are the principal conditions which ensure correct tactical leadership.

6. *Reformism and revolutionism.* What is the difference between revolutionary tactics and reformist tactics?

Some think that Leninism is opposed to reforms, opposed to compromises and agreements in general. This is absolutely wrong. Bolsheviks know as well as anybody else that in a certain sense "every little helps," that under certain conditions reforms in general, and

compromises and agreements in particular, are necessary and useful.

> "To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie," says Lenin, "a war which is a hundred times more difficult, protracted and complicated than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states, and to refuse beforehand to manoeuvre, to utilise the conflict of interests (even though temporary) among one's enemies, to reject agreements and compromises with possible (even though temporary, unstable, vacillating and conditional) allies—is not this ridiculous in the extreme? Is it not as though, when making a difficult ascent of an unexplored and hitherto inaccessible mountain, we were to refuse beforehand ever to move in zigzags, ever to retrace our steps, ever to abandon the course once selected and to try others?" (see Vol. XXV, p. 210).

Obviously, therefore, it is not a matter of reforms or of compromises and agreements, but of the use people make of reforms and agreements.

To a reformist, reforms are everything, while revolutionary work is something incidental, something just to talk about, mere eyewash. That is why, with reformist tactics under the conditions of bourgeois rule, reforms are inevitably transformed into an instrument for strengthening that rule, an instrument for disintegrating the revolution.

To a revolutionary, on the contrary, the main thing is revolutionary work and not reforms; to him reforms are a by-product of the revolution. That is why, with revolutionary tactics under the conditions of bourgeois rule, reforms are naturally transformed into an instrument for disintegrating that rule, into an instrument for strengthening the revolution, into a strongpoint for the further development of the revolutionary movement.

The revolutionary will accept a reform in order to use it as an aid in combining legal work with illegal work and to intensify, under its cover, the illegal work for the revolutionary preparation of the masses for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

That is the essence of making revolutionary use of reforms and agreements under the conditions of imperialism.

The reformist, on the contrary, will accept reforms in order to renounce all illegal work, to thwart the preparation of the masses for the revolution and to rest in the shade of "bestowed" reforms.

That is the essence of reformist tactics.

Such is the position in regard to reforms and agreements under the conditions of imperialism.

The situation changes somewhat, however, after the overthrow of imperialism, under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Under certain conditions, in a certain situation, the proletarian power may find itself compelled temporarily to leave the path of the revolutionary reconstruction of the existing order of things and to take the path of its gradual transformation, the "reformist path," as Lenin says in his well-known article "The Importance of Gold,"[27] the path of flanking movements, of reforms and concessions to the non-proletarian classes—in order to disintegrate these classes, to give the revolution a respite, to recuperate one's forces and prepare the conditions for a new offensive. It cannot be denied that in a sense this is a "reformist" path. But it must be borne in mind that there is a fundamental distinction here, which consists in the fact that in this case the reform emanates from the proletarian power, it strengthens the proletarian power, it procures for it a necessary respite, and its purpose is to disintegrate, not the revolution, but the non-proletarian classes.

Under such conditions a reform is thus transformed into its opposite.

The proletarian power is able to adopt such a policy because, and only because, the sweep of the revolution in the preceding period was great enough and therefore provided a sufficiently wide expanse within which to retreat, substituting for offensive tactics the tactics of temporary retreat, the tactics of flanking movements.

Thus, while formerly, under bourgeois rule, reforms were a by-product of revolution, now, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the source of reforms is the revolutionary gains of the proletariat, the reserves accumulated in the hands of the proletariat

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27 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, "The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism" (*Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 85-92).

and consisting of these gains.

> "Only Marxism," says Lenin, "has precisely and correctly defined the relation of reforms to revolution. However, Marx was able to see this relation only from one aspect, namely, under the conditions preceding the first to any extent permanent and lasting victory of the proletariat, if only in a single country. Under those conditions, the basis of the proper relation was: reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. [...] After the victory of the proletariat, if only in a single country, something new enters into the relation between reforms and revolution. In principle, it is the same as before, but a change in form takes place, which Marx himself could not foresee, but which can be appreciated only on the basis of the philosophy and politics of Marxism. [...] After the victory (while still remaining a 'by-product' on an international scale) they (i.e., reforms—*J. St.*) are, in addition, for the country in which victory has been achieved, a necessary and legitimate respite in those cases when, after the utmost exertion of effort, it becomes obvious that sufficient strength is lacking for the revolutionary accomplishment of this or that transition. Victory creates such a 'reserve of strength' that it is possible to hold out even in a forced retreat, to hold out both materially and morally" (see Vol. XXVII, pp. 84-85).

VIII. The Party

In the pre-revolutionary period, the period of more or less peaceful development, when the parties of the Second International were the predominant force in the working-class movement and parliamentary forms of struggle were regarded as the principal forms –under these conditions the Party neither had nor could have had that great and decisive importance which it acquired afterwards, under conditions of open revolutionary clashes. Defending the Second International against attacks made upon it, Kautsky says that the parties of the Second International are an instrument of peace and not of war, and that for this very reason they were powerless to take any important steps during the war, during the period of revolutionary action by the proletariat. That is quite true. But what does it mean? It means that the parties of the Second International are unfit for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, that they are not militant parties of the proletariat, leading the workers to power, but election machines adapted for parliamentary elections and parliamentary

struggle. This, in fact, explains why, in the days when the opportunists of the Second International were in the ascendancy, it was not the party but its parliamentary group that was the chief political organisation of the proletariat. It is well known that the party at that time was really an appendage and subsidiary of the parliamentary group. It scarcely needs proof that under such circumstances and with such a party at the helm there could be no question of preparing the proletariat for revolution.

But matters have changed radically with the dawn of the new period. The new period is one of open class collisions, of revolutionary action by the proletariat, of proletarian revolution, a period when forces are being directly mustered for the overthrow of imperialism and the seizure of power by the proletariat. In this period the proletariat is confronted with new tasks, the tasks of reorganising all party work on new, revolutionary lines; of educating the workers in the spirit of revolutionary struggle for power; of preparing and moving up reserves; of establishing an alliance with the proletarians of neighbouring countries; of establishing firm ties with the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries, etc., etc. To think that these new tasks can be performed by the old Social-Democratic Parties, brought up as they were in the peaceful conditions of parliamentarism, is to doom oneself to hopeless despair, to inevitable defeat. If, with such tasks to shoulder, the proletariat remained under the leadership of the old parties, it would be completely unarmed. It scarcely needs proof that the proletariat could not consent to such a state of affairs.

Hence the necessity for a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, one bold enough to lead the proletarians in the struggle for power, sufficiently experienced to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal.

Without such a party it is useless even to think of overthrowing imperialism, of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This new party is the party of Leninism.

What are the specific features of this new party?

1. *The Party as the advanced detachment of the working class.* The Party

must be, first of all, the *advanced* detachment of the working class. The Party must absorb all the best elements of the working class, their experience, their revolutionary spirit, their selfless devotion to the cause of the proletariat. But in order that it may really be the advanced detachment, the Party must be armed with revolutionary theory, with a knowledge of the laws of the movement, with a knowledge of the laws of revolution. Without this it will be incapable of directing the struggle of the proletariat, of leading the proletariat. The Party cannot be a real party if it limits itself to registering what the masses of the working class feel and think, if it drags at the tail of the spontaneous movement, if it is unable to overcome the inertia and political indifference of the spontaneous movement, if it is unable to rise above the momentary interests of the proletariat, if it is unable to raise the masses to the level of understanding the class interests of the proletariat. The Party must stand at the head of the working class; it must see farther than the working class, it must lead the proletariat, and not drag at the tail of the spontaneous movement. The parties of the Second International, which preach "khvostism," are vehicles of bourgeois policy, which condemns the proletariat to the role of a tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Only a party which adopts the standpoint of the advanced detachment of the proletariat and is able to raise the masses to the level of understanding the class interests of the proletariat –only such a party can divert the working class from the path of trade-unionism and convert it into an independent political force.

The Party is the political leader of the working class.

I have already spoken of the difficulties of the struggle of the working class, of the complicated conditions of the struggle, of strategy and tactics, of reserves and manoeuvring, of attack and retreat. These conditions are no less complicated, if not more so, than the conditions of war. Who can see clearly in these conditions, who can give correct guidance to the proletarian millions? No army at war can dispense with an experienced General Staff if it does not want to be doomed to defeat. Is it not clear that the proletariat can still less dispense with such a General Staff if it does not want to allow itself

to be devoured by its mortal enemies? But where is this General Staff? Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat can serve as this General Staff. The working class without a revolutionary party is an army without a General Staff.

The Party is the General Staff of the proletariat.

But the Party cannot be only an *advanced* detachment. It must at the same time be a detachment of the *class*, part of the class, closely bound up with it by all the fibres of its being. The distinction between the advanced detachment and the rest of the working class, between Party members and non-Party people, cannot disappear until classes disappear; it will exist as long as the ranks of the proletariat continue to be replenished with former members of other classes, as long as the working class as a whole is not in a position to rise to the level of the advanced detachment. But the Party would cease to be a party if this distinction developed into a gap, if the Party turned in on itself and became divorced from the non-Party masses. The Party cannot lead the class if it is not connected with the non-Party masses, if there is no bond between the Party and the non-Party masses, if these masses do not accept its leadership, if the Party enjoys no moral and political credit among the masses.

Recently two hundred thousand new members from the ranks of the workers were admitted into our Party. The remarkable thing about this is the fact that these people did not merely join the Party themselves, but were rather sent there by all the rest of the non-Party workers, who took an active part in the admission of the new members, and without whose approval no new member was accepted. This fact shows that the broad masses of non-Party workers regard our Party as *their* Party, as a Party *near* and *dear* to them, in whose expansion and consolidation they are vitally interested and to whose leadership they voluntarily entrust their destiny. It scarcely needs proof that without these intangible moral threads which connect the Party with the non-Party masses, the Party could not have become the decisive force of its class.

The Party is an inseparable part of the working class.

> "We," says Lenin, "are the Party of a class, and therefore *almost the whole class* (and in times of war, in the period of civil war, the whole class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to our Party as closely as possible. But it would be Manilovism and 'khvostism' to think that at any time under capitalism almost the whole class, or the whole class, would be able to rise to the level of consciousness and activity of its advanced detachment, of its Social-Democratic Party. No sensible Social-Democrat has ever yet doubted that under capitalism even the trade union organisations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped strata) are unable to embrace almost the whole, or the whole, working class. To forget the distinction between the advanced detachment and the whole of the masses which gravitate towards it, to forget the constant duty of the advanced detachment to *raise* ever wider strata to this advanced level, means merely to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks" (See Vol. VI, pp. 205-06).

2. *The Party as the organised detachment of the working class.* The Party is not only the *advanced* detachment of the working class. If it desires really to direct the struggle of the class it must at the same time be the *organised* detachment of its class. The Party's tasks under the conditions of capitalism are immense and extremely varied. The Party must direct the struggle of the proletariat under the exceptionally difficult conditions of internal and external development; it must lead the proletariat in the offensive when the situation calls for an offensive; it must lead the proletariat so as to escape the blow of a powerful enemy when the situation calls for retreat; it must imbue the millions of unorganised non-Party workers with the spirit of discipline and system in the struggle, with the spirit of organisation and endurance. But the Party can fulfil these tasks only if it is itself the embodiment of discipline and organisation, if it is itself the *organised* detachment of the proletariat. Without these conditions there can be no question of the Party really leading the vast masses of the proletariat.

   The Party is the organised detachment of the working class.

   The conception of the Party as an organised whole is embodied in Lenin's well-known formulation of the first paragraph of our Party Rules, in which the Party is regarded as the *sum total* of its organ-

isations, and the Party member as a member of one of the organisations of the Party. The Mensheviks, who objected to this formulation as early as 1903, proposed to substitute for it a "system" of self-enrolment in the Party, a "system" of conferring the "title" of Party member upon every "professor" and "high-school student," upon every "sympathiser" and "striker" who supported the Party in one way or another, but who did not join and did not want to join any one of the Party organisations. It scarcely needs proof that had this singular "system" become entrenched in our Party it would inevitably have led to our Party becoming inundated with professors and high-school students and to its degeneration into a loose, amorphous, disorganised "formation," lost in a sea of "sympathisers," that would have obliterated the dividing line between the Party and the class and would have upset the Party's task of raising the unorganised masses to the level of the advanced detachment. Needless to say, under such an opportunist "system" our Party would have been unable to fulfil the role of the organising core of the working class in the course of our revolution.

> "From the point of view of Comrade Martov," says Lenin, "the border line of the Party remains quite indefinite, for 'every striker' may 'proclaim himself a Party member.' What is the use of this vagueness? A wide extension of the 'title.' Its harm is that it introduces a *disorganising* idea, the confusing of class and Party" (see Vol. VI, p. 211).

But the Party is not merely the *sum total* of Party organisations. The Party is at the same time a single *system* of these organisations, their formal union into a single whole, with higher and lower leading bodies, with subordination of the minority to the majority, with practical decisions binding on all members of the Party. Without these conditions the Party cannot be a single organised whole capable of exercising systematic and organised leadership in the struggle of the working class.

> *"Formerly,"* says Lenin, "our Party was not a formally organised whole, but only the sum of separate groups, and therefore no other relations except those of ideological influence were possible between these groups. *Now* we have become an organised party, and this

> implies the establishment of authority, the transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority, the subordination of lower Party bodies to higher Party bodies" (see Vol. VI, p. 291).

The principle of the minority submitting to the majority, the principle of directing Party work from a centre, not infrequently gives rise to attacks on the part of wavering elements, to accusations of "bureaucracy," "formalism," etc. It scarcely needs proof that systematic work by the Party as one whole, and the directing of the struggle of the working class, would be impossible without putting these principles into effect. Leninism in questions of organisation is the unswerving application of these principles. Lenin terms the fight against these principles "Russian nihilism" and "aristocratic anarchism," which deserves to be ridiculed and swept aside.

Here is what Lenin says about these wavering elements in his book *One Step Forward*:

> "This aristocratic anarchism is particularly characteristic of the Russian nihilist. He thinks of the Party organisation as a monstrous 'factory', he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as 'serfdom'..., division of labour under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragi-comical outcry against people being transformed into 'wheels and cogs'..., mention of the organisational rules of the Party calls forth a contemptuous grimace and the disdainful [...] remark that one could very well dispense with rules altogether."
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> "It is clear, I think, that the cries about this celebrated bureaucracy are just a screen for dissatisfaction with the personal composition of the central bodies, a figleaf. [...] You are a bureaucrat because you were appointed by the congress not by my will, but against it; you are a formalist because you rely on the formal decisions of the congress, and not on my consent; you are acting in a grossly mechanical way because you plead the 'mechanical' majority at the Party Congress and pay no heed to my wish to be co-opted; you are an autocrat because you refuse to hand over the power to the old gang"[28] (see Vol. VI, pp. 310, 287).

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28 The "gang" here referred to is that of Axelrod, Martov, Potresov and others, who would not submit to the decisions of the Second Congress and who accused Lenin of being a "bureaucrat."

3. *The Party as the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat.* The Party is the organised detachment of the working class. But the Party is not the only organisation of the working class. The proletariat has also a number of other organisations, without which it cannot wage a successful struggle against capital: trade unions, co-operatives, factory organisations, parliamentary groups, non-Party women's associations, the press, cultural and educational organisations, youth leagues, revolutionary fighting organisations (in times of open revolutionary action), Soviets of deputies as the form of state organisation (if the proletariat is in power), etc. The overwhelming majority of these organisations are non-Party, and only some of them adhere directly to the Party, or constitute offshoots from it. All these organisations, under certain conditions, are absolutely necessary for the working class; for without them it would be impossible to consolidate the class positions of the proletariat in the diverse spheres of struggle; for without them it would be impossible to steel the proletariat as the force whose mission it is to replace the bourgeois order by the socialist order. But how can single leadership be exercised with such an abundance of organisations? What guarantee is there that this multiplicity of organisations will not lead to divergency in leadership? It may be said that each of these organisations carries on its work in its own special field, and that therefore these organisations cannot hinder one another. That, of course, is true. But it is also true that all these organisations should work in one direction for they serve *one* class, the class of the proletarians. The question then arises: Who is to determine the line, the general direction, along which the work of all these organisations is to be conducted? Where is the central organisation which is not only able, because it has the necessary experience, to work out such a general line, but, in addition, is in a position, because it has sufficient prestige, to induce all these organisations to carry out this line, so as to attain unity of leadership and to make hitches impossible?

   That organisation is the Party of the proletariat.

   The Party possesses all the necessary qualifications for this because,

in the first place, it is the rallying centre of the finest elements in the working class, who have direct connections with the non-Party organisations of the proletariat and very frequently lead them; because, secondly, the Party, as the rallying centre of the finest members of the working class, is the best school for training leaders of the working class, capable of directing every form of organisation of their class; because, thirdly, the Party, as the best school for training leaders of the working class, is, by reason of its experience and prestige, the only organisation capable of centralising the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat, thus transforming each and every non-Party organisation of the working class into an auxiliary body and transmission belt linking the Party with the class.

The Party is the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat.

This does not mean, of course, that non-Party organisations, trade unions, co-operatives, etc., should be officially subordinated to the Party leadership. It only means that the members of the Party who belong to these organisations and are doubtlessly influential in them should do all they can to persuade these non-Party organisations to draw nearer to the Party of the proletariat in their work and voluntarily accept its political leadership.

That is why Lenin says that the Party is "the *highest* form of proletarian class association," whose political leadership must extend to every other form of organisation of the proletariat (see Vol. XXV, p. 194).

That is why the opportunist theory of the "independence" and "neutrality" of the non-Party organisations, which breeds *independent* members of parliament and journalists *isolated* from the Party, *narrow-minded* trade union leaders and *philistine* co-operative officials, is wholly incompatible with the theory and practice of Leninism.

4. *The Party as an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat.* The Party is the highest form of organisation of the proletariat. The Party is the principal guiding force within the class of the proletarians and among the organisations of that class. But it does not by any means follow from this that the Party can be regarded as an end

in itself, as a self-sufficient force. The Party is not only the highest form of class association of the proletarians; it is at the same time an *instrument* in the hands of the proletariat *for* achieving the dictatorship when that has not yet been achieved and *for* consolidating and expanding the dictatorship when it has already been achieved. The Party could not have risen so high in importance and could not have established its influence over all other forms of organisation of the proletariat, if the latter had not been confronted with the question of power, if the conditions of imperialism, the inevitability of wars, and the existence of a crisis had not demanded the concentration of all the forces of the proletariat at one point, the gathering of all the threads of the revolutionary movement in one spot in order to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat needs the Party first of all as its General Staff, which it must have for the successful seizure of power. It scarcely needs proof that without a party capable of rallying around itself the mass organisations of the proletariat, and of centralising the leadership of the entire movement during the progress of the struggle, the proletariat in Russia could not have established its revolutionary dictatorship.

But the proletariat needs the Party not only to achieve the dictatorship; it needs it still more to maintain the dictatorship, to consolidate and expand it in order to achieve the complete victory of socialism.

> "Certainly, almost everyone now realises," says Lenin, "that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, without the strictest, truly iron discipline in our Party, and without the fullest and unreserved support of the latter by the whole mass of the working class, that is, by all its thinking, honest, self-sacrificing and influential elements, capable of leading or of carrying with them the backward strata" (see Vol. XXV, p. 173).

Now, what does to "maintain" and "expand" the dictatorship mean? It means imbuing the millions of proletarians with the spirit of discipline and organisation; it means creating among the proletarian masses a cementing force and a bulwark against

the corrosive influences of the petty-bourgeois elemental forces and petty-bourgeois habits; it means enhancing the organising work of the proletarians in re-educating and remoulding the petty-bourgeois strata; it means helping the masses of the proletarians to educate themselves as a force capable of abolishing classes and of preparing the conditions for the organisation of socialist production. But it is impossible to accomplish all this without a party which is strong by reason of its solidarity and discipline.

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat," says Lenin, "is a stubborn struggle –bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative –against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully" (see Vol. XXV, p. 190).

The proletariat needs the Party *for* the purpose of achieving and maintaining the dictatorship. The Party is an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But from this it follows that when classes disappear and the dictatorship of the proletariat withers away, the Party also will wither away.

5. *The Party as the embodiment of unity of will, unity incompatible with the existence of factions.* The achievement and maintenance of the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible without a party which is strong by reason of its solidarity and iron discipline. But iron discipline in the Party is inconceivable without unity of will, without complete and absolute unity of action on the part of all members of the Party. This does not mean, of course, that the possibility of conflicts of opinion within the Party is thereby precluded. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes criticism and conflict of opinion within the Party. Least of all does it mean that discipline must be "blind." On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline. But after a conflict of opinion has been closed, after criticism has been exhausted and a decision has been arrived at, unity of will and unity of action of all Party members are the necessary conditions without

which neither Party unity nor iron discipline in the Party is conceivable.

> "In the present epoch of acute civil war," says Lenin, "the Communist Party will be able to perform its duty only if it is organised in the most centralised manner, if iron discipline bordering on military discipline prevails in it, and if its Party centre is a powerful and authoritative organ, wielding wide powers and enjoying the universal confidence of the members of the Party" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 282-83).

This is the position in regard to discipline in the Party in the period of struggle preceding the achievement of the dictatorship.

The same, but to an even greater degree, must be said about discipline in the Party after the dictatorship has been achieved.

> "Whoever," says Lenin, "weakens in the least the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 190).

But from this it follows that the existence of factions is compatible neither with the Party's unity nor with its iron discipline. It scarcely needs proof that the existence of factions leads to the existence of a number of centres, and the existence of a number of centres means the absence of one common centre in the Party, the breaking up of unity of will, the weakening and disintegration of discipline, the weakening and disintegration of the dictatorship. Of course, the parties of the Second International, which are fighting against the dictatorship of the proletariat and have no desire to lead the proletarians to power, can afford such liberalism as freedom of factions, for they have no need at all for iron discipline. But the parties of the Communist International, whose activities are conditioned by the task of achieving and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot afford to be "liberal" or to permit freedom of factions.

The Party represents unity of will, which precludes all factionalism and division of authority in the Party.

Hence Lenin's warning about the "danger of factionalism from the point of view of Party unity and of effecting the unity of will of the vanguard of the proletariat as the fundamental condition for the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat," which is embodied in the special resolution of the Tenth Congress of our Party "On Party

Unity."[29]

Hence Lenin's demand for the "complete elimination of all factionalism" and the "immediate dissolution of all groups, without exception, that have been formed on the basis of various platforms," on pain of "unconditional and immediate expulsion from the Party" (see the resolution "On Party Unity").

6. *The Party becomes strong by purging itself of opportunist elements.* The source of factionalism in the Party is its opportunist elements. The proletariat is not an isolated class. It is constantly replenished by the influx of peasants, petty bourgeois and intellectuals proletarianised by the development of capitalism. At the same time the upper stratum of the proletariat, principally trade-union leaders and members of parliament who are fed by the bourgeoisie out of the super-profits extracted from the colonies, is undergoing a process of decay. "This stratum of bourgeoisified workers, or the 'labour aristocracy,"' says Lenin, "who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their entire outlook, is the principal prop of the Second International, and, in our days, the principal *social* (not military) *prop of the bourgeoisie.* For they are real *agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class* movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, real channels of reformism and chauvinism" (see Vol. XIX, p. 77).

   In one way or another, all these petty-bourgeois groups penetrate into the Party and introduce into it the spirit of hesitancy and opportunism, the spirit of demoralisation and uncertainty. It is they, principally, that constitute the source of factionalism and disintegration, the source of disorganisation and disruption of the Party from within. To fight imperialism with such "allies" in one's rear means to put oneself in the position of being caught between two

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29 **Original editor:** The resolution "On Party Unity" was written by V. I. Lenin and adopted by the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), held March 8-16, 1921 (see V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 217-21, and also *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, in Russian, 1941, Part I, pp. 364-66).

fires, from the front and from the rear. Therefore, ruthless struggle against such elements, their expulsion from the Party, is a prerequisite for the successful struggle against imperialism.

The theory of "defeating" opportunist elements by ideological struggle within the Party, the theory of "overcoming" these elements within the confines of a single party, is a rotten and dangerous theory, which threatens to condemn the Party to paralysis and chronic infirmity, threatens to make the Party a prey to opportunism, threatens to leave the proletariat without a revolutionary party, threatens to deprive the proletariat of its main weapon in the fight against imperialism. Our Party could not have emerged on to the broad highway, it could not have seized power and organised the dictatorship of the proletariat, it could not have emerged victorious from the civil war, if it had had within its ranks people like Martov and Dan, Potresov and Axelrod. Our Party succeeded in achieving internal unity and unexampled cohesion of its ranks primarily because it was able in good time to purge itself of the opportunist pollution, because it was able to rid its ranks of Liquidators and Mensheviks. Proletarian parties develop and become strong by purging themselves of opportunists and reformists, social-imperialists and social-chauvinists, social-patriots and social-pacifists.

The Party becomes strong by purging itself of opportunist elements.

> "With reformists, Mensheviks, in our ranks," says Lenin, "it is *impossible* to be victorious in the proletarian revolution, it is *impossible* to defend it. That is obvious in principle, and it has been strikingly confirmed by the experience of both Russia and Hungary. [...] In Russia, difficult situations have arisen *many times*, when the Soviet regime would *most certainly* have been overthrown had Mensheviks, reformists and petty-bourgeois democrats remained in our Party. [...] In Italy, where, as is generally admitted, decisive battles between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for the possession of state power are imminent. At such a moment it is not only absolutely necessary to remove the Mensheviks, reformists, Turatists from the Party, but it may even be useful to remove excellent Communists who are liable to waver, and who reveal a tendency to waver towards 'unity' with the reformists, to remove them from all responsible posts. [...] On the eve of a revolution, and at a moment when a most fierce struggle is being waged for its victory, the slightest waver-

> ing in the ranks of the Party may *wreck everything*, frustrate the revolution, wrest the power from the hands of the proletariat; for this power is not yet consolidated, the attack upon it is still very strong. The desertion of wavering leaders at such a time does not weaken but strengthens the Party, the working-class movement and the revolution" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 462, 463, 464).

IX. Style in Work

I am not referring to literary style. What I have in mind is style in work, that specific and peculiar feature in the practice of Leninism which creates the special type of Leninist worker. Leninism is a school of theory and practice which trains a special type of Party and state worker, creates a special Leninist style in work.

What are the characteristic features of this style? What are its peculiarities?

It has two specific features:

a) Russian revolutionary sweep and

b) American efficiency.

The style of Leninism consists in combining these two specific features in Party and state work.

Russian revolutionary sweep is an antidote to inertia, routine, conservatism, mental stagnation and slavish submission to ancient traditions. Russian revolutionary sweep is the life giving force which stimulates thought, impels things forward, breaks the past and opens up perspectives. Without it no progress is possible.

But Russian revolutionary sweep has every chance of degenerating in practice into empty "revolutionary" Manilovism if it is not combined with American efficiency in work. Examples of this degeneration are only too numerous. Who does not know the disease of "revolutionary" scheme concocting and "revolutionary" plan drafting, which springs from the belief in the power of decrees to arrange everything and remake everything? A Russian writer, I. Ehrenburg, in his story *The Percomman (The Perfect Communist Man*), has portrayed the type of a "Bolshevik" afflicted with this disease, who set himself the task of finding a formula

for the ideally perfect man and [...] became "submerged" in this "work." The story contains a great exaggeration, but it certainly gives a correct likeness of the disease. But no one, I think, has so ruthlessly and bitterly ridiculed those afflicted with this disease as Lenin. Lenin stigmatised this morbid belief in concocting schemes and in turning out decrees as "Communist vainglory."

> "Communist vainglory," says Lenin, "means that a man, who is a member of the Communist Party, and has not yet been purged from it, imagines that he can solve all his problems by issuing Communist decrees" (see Vol. XXVII, pp. 50-51).

Lenin usually contrasted hollow "revolutionary" phrase mongering with plain everyday work, thus emphasising that "revolutionary" scheme concocting is repugnant to the spirit and the letter of true Leninism.

> "Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work...," says Lenin.
>
> "Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but vital [...] facts of communist construction [...]" (See Vol. XXIV, pp. 343 and 335).

American efficiency, on the other hand, is an antidote to "revolutionary" Manilovism and fantastic scheme concocting. American efficiency is that indomitable force which neither knows nor recognises obstacles; which with its business-like perseverance brushes aside all obstacles; which continues at a task once started until it is finished, even if it is a minor task; and without which serious constructive work is inconceivable.

But American efficiency has every chance of degenerating into narrow and unprincipled practicalism if it is not combined with Russian revolutionary sweep. Who has not heard of that disease of narrow empiricism and unprincipled practicalism which has not infrequently caused certain "Bolsheviks" to degenerate and to abandon the cause of the revolution? We find a reflection of this peculiar disease in a story by B. Pilnyak, entitled *The Barren Year*, which depicts types of Russian "Bolsheviks" of strong will and practical determination who "function" very "energetically," but without vision, without knowing "what it is all about," and who, therefore, stray from the path of revolutionary work. No one has ridiculed this disease of practicalism so incisively as Lenin. He branded it as "narrow-minded empiricism" and "brainless practicalism." He usually

contrasted it with vital revolutionary work and the necessity of having a revolutionary perspective in all our daily activities, thus emphasising that this unprincipled practicalism is as repugnant to true Leninism as "revolutionary" scheme concocting.

The combination of Russian revolutionary sweep with American efficiency is the essence of Leninism in Party and state work.

This combination alone produces the finished type of Leninist worker, the style of Leninism in work.

Pravda, Nos. 96, 97, 103,
105, 107, 108, 111;
April 26 and 30,
May 9, 11, 14, 15 and 18, 1924

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.) [1]

MAY 23-31, 1924

PRAVDA, NOS. 118 AND 119;
MAY 27 AND 28, 1924

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1 **Original editor:** The Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)—the first congress of the Bolshevik Party held after the death of V. I. Lenin—took place on May 23-31, 1924. The congress proceedings were directed by J. V. Stalin. There were present 748 delegates with right of voice and vote, representing 735,881 Party members. Of these, 241,591 had joined during the Lenin Enrolment and 127,741 were candidate members who had joined before the Lenin Enrolment. There were also present 416 delegates with right of voice only. The congress discussed the political and organisational reports of the Central Committee, the reports of the Central Auditing Commission and of the Central Control Commission, the report of the R.C.P.(B.) representatives on the Executive Committee of the Comintern, questions of Party organisation, internal trade and the co-operatives, work in the countryside, work among the youth, and other questions.

The congress unanimously condemned the platform of the Trotskyite opposition, defining it as a petty-bourgeois deviation from Marxism, as a revision of Leninism, and it endorsed the resolutions on "Party Affairs" and "Results of the Discussion and the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party" adopted by the Thirteenth Party Conference.

The congress pointed to the enormous importance of the Lenin Enrolment and drew the Party's attention to the necessity of intensifying the education of new members of the Party in the principles of Leninism. The congress instructed the Lenin Institute to prepare a thoroughly scientific and most carefully compiled edition of the complete *Works* of V. I. Lenin, and also selections of his works for the broad masses of the workers in the languages of all the nationalities in the U.S.S.R.

Organisational Report of the Central Committee

May 24

Comrades, the general situation, as it has developed in the country and around the Party in the past year, can be described as favourable. The basic facts: economic progress, increased activity generally, and especially of the working class, more vigorous Party life.

In sum and substance, the question is of the extent to which the Party has succeeded during the year in utilising this situation to enhance its influence in the mass organisations that surround it; the extent to which it has succeeded in improving the composition of its membership, its work generally, the registration, allocation and promotion of responsible workers; and, lastly, the extent to which the Party has succeeded in improving the internal life of its organisations.

From this follow eight points which I propose to discuss:

a) the state of the mass organisations that surround the Party and link it with the class, and the growth of communist influence in these organisations;

b) the condition of the state apparatus—the People's Commissariats and organisations functioning on a business-accounting basis –and of the lower Soviet apparatus, and the growth of communist influence in this sphere;

c) the composition of the Party and the Lenin Enrolment;

d) the composition of leading Party bodies; Party cadres and the younger Party element;

e) the work of the Party in the sphere of agitation and propaganda, work in the countryside;

f) the work of the Party in the registration, allocation and promotion of responsible workers, both Party and non-Party;

g) inner-Party life;

h) conclusions.

I shall have to cite many figures, for without them the report will be incomplete and unsatisfactory. But I must make the reservation that I

have no faith in their absolute accuracy, for our statistics are not up to the mark, since not all Soviet statisticians, unfortunately, possess elementary professional pride.

With this necessary reservation, I pass to the figures.

1. The Mass Organisations That Link the Party With the Class

a) *The trade unions.* Last year, according to the statistical returns, the trade union membership was 4,800,000. This year it is 5,000,000. There is no doubt about the increase. Trade union membership in the industries covered by the twelve principal industrial unions is 92 per cent of all the workers employed. In the basic industries trade union membership comprises 91-92 per cent of the working class. That is the position in industry.

The picture is less favourable in agriculture, where there are some 800,000 workers, and where, if we count the agricultural workers employed outside state-owned enterprises, trade union organisation amounts to 3 per cent.

As for communist influence in the unions, we have data on the chairmen of gubernia and area trade union councils. At the time of the Twelfth Congress the proportion of underground-period Party members among them was in excess of 57 per cent; at the time of the present congress it is only 35 per cent. A decline, but there has been an increase in the percentage of trade union council chairmen who joined the Party after February 1917. The explanation is that the trade union membership has grown, there are not enough underground-period Party members and the cadres are being augmented by the younger Party element. The proportion of workers among these chairmen was 55 per cent; now it has become 61 per cent. The social composition of the leading trade union bodies has improved.

b) *The co-operatives.* In this field the figures are more confused than in any other and inspire no confidence. Last year the consumers' co-operatives had about 5,000,000 members. This year the number is

about 7,000,000. God grant us a new year every day, but I have no faith in these statistics because the consumers' co-operatives have not yet completely gone over to voluntary membership, and no doubt the figures include many "dead souls." The agricultural co-operatives had, we are told, 2,000,000 members last year (though I have figures received last year from the Selskosoyuz giving the membership as 4,000,000). This year they have 1,500,000. There can be no doubt about the decline in the agricultural co-operative membership. Party membership in the central leading bodies of the consumers' co-operatives was 87 per cent last year, and 86 per cent now—a decline. For the gubernia and district unions of co-operatives, the figures are 68 per cent last year and 86 per cent this year—an increase of Party influence. If, however, we examine not the "leading" bodies, but the responsible workers, the actual leaders, we shall find that the proportion of Communists among all responsible workers is only 26 per cent. I believe that this figure is closer to the truth. Party membership in the leading bodies of the agricultural co-operative movement was 46 per cent last year and 55 per cent this year. But if we go into the matter a little deeper and take the responsible leaders, we shall find that only 13 per cent are Communists.

That is how some of our statisticians embellish the facade, the exterior, and conceal the seamy side.

c) *The Young Communist League.* Last year the League had 317,000 members and candidate members (though I have figures for last year, signed by a member of the Central Committee of the R.Y.C.L., giving the membership as 400,000); this year the number is 570,000. Although the figures are somewhat confused, the growth of the organisation is beyond doubt. Last year the percentage of workers in the R.Y.C.L. was 34, this year it is 41; the percentage of peasants was 42 last year and is 40 this year. The number of pupils in factory training schools was 50,000 last year, this year it is 47,000. The proportion of R.C.P.(B.) members in the Young Communist League was about 10 per cent last year, and is 11 per cent this year. Here, tool there has been undoubted progress.

d) *Organisations of working women and peasant women.* The basic organisation in this field is the delegate meeting. There is any amount of confused figures here, but a careful analysis will show that last year there were 37,000 women's delegates in the towns, while this year there are somewhat more—46,000. In the villages there were 58,000 delegates last year, while there are 100,000 this year. I have been unable to obtain anything like accurate figures on the number of working women and peasant women these delegates represent.

In view of the special importance of drawing working women and peasant women into Soviet and Party work, it will not be superfluous to examine their percentage participation in trade union bodies, Soviets, Gubernia and Uyezd Party Committees. The proportion of women in the village Soviets last year was only about one per cent (terribly small). This year it is 2. 9 per cent (also very small), but nevertheless there has been a definite increase. In the executive committees of the volost Soviets the percentage was 0. 3 last year, and is 0. 5 this year, a negligible increase, not worth mentioning. In the executive committees of the uyezd Soviets there were about two per cent of women last year, and a little over two per cent this year (my figures are for the R.S.F.S.R.; there are no data for all the republics). The figures for the executive committees of the gubernia Soviets in the R.S.F.S.R. are: over two per cent last year, and over three per cent this year. Women this year make up 26 per cent of the trade union membership (no figures are available for last year), 14 per cent of the membership of the factory trade union committees, six per cent in the gubernia committees of the various unions, and over four per cent in the union central committees. The proportion of women members in the Party was roughly eight per cent last year, and is about nine per cent this year. Last year the proportion of women among candidate members was about nine per cent, now it is about 11 per cent. All these figures refer to the position prior to the Lenin Enrolment. At the time of the Thirteenth Congress, women make up three per cent of the membership of the Gubernia Party Committees, and about six per cent of the Uyezd Committees. The percentage of Communists in the principal women's organisa-

tions, the delegate meetings, has dropped from 10 to 8, the decline being due to the increase in the number of non-Party delegates. It must be admitted that half of the population of our Soviet Union—the women—still stand aside, or practically stand aside, from the highway of Soviet and Party affairs.

e) *The army.* The total number of Communists in the army, the military colleges and the navy has decreased from 61,000 to 52,000. This is a defect that must be eliminated. At the same time there has been an increase in the number of Party members among the commanding personnel. At the time of the Twelfth Congress 13 per cent of the commanding personnel were Communists; at the present time the figure is 18 per cent. The data on the Party standing of Communists in the army are of interest. Of the 52,000 Communists in the army, 0. 9 per cent—not even one per cent—joined the Party in its underground period; a little over three per cent joined after February and up to October 1917, 11 per cent joined prior to 1919, 22 per cent in 1919, 23 per cent in 1920, and 20 per cent in 1921-23. You will see from this that our army is served mainly, if not exclusively, by the younger Party element.

f) *Voluntary public initiative organisations.* A noteworthy development of the past year has been the appearance of a new type of organisation—voluntary public initiative organisations—diverse cultural and educational circles and societies, sports organisations, auxiliary societies, organisations of worker and peasant correspondents, etc. The number of these bodies is constantly growing, and it should be noted that they include not only organisations sympathetic to the Soviet power, but some that are hostile to it. In the R.S.F.S.R. the number of public initiative organisations has increased from about 78-80 last year to more than 300 this year. If one takes the physical culture organisation in the R.S.F.S.R., it had 126,000 members last year and 375,000 this year. Its social composition: 35 per cent workers last year, 42 per cent now. All these organisations are centred around the trade union committees and clubs in the factories and around the peasant mutual aid

committees[2] in the villages. Especially noteworthy are the worker and peasant correspondents organisations the purpose of which is to act as vehicles of proletarian public opinion. The organisations of worker correspondents embrace 25,000 members, those of peasant correspondents—5,000 members. In the R.S.F.S.R. the proportion of Communists on the gubernia executives of these organisations has increased from 19 per cent last year to over 29 per cent this year. Lastly, mention should be made of a new organisation which held a demonstration yesterday before the Lenin Mausoleum[3]—the Young Pioneers. According to our statistics (which, as I have said, are not altogether up to the mark) it had 75,000 members last June and over 161,000 this April. Of the Young Pioneers, 71 per cent are children of workers in the industrial gubernias and seven per cent are children of peasants. In the national areas workers' children account for 38 per cent of the membership; in the peasant gubernias—for 36 per cent.

That is how matters stand with the mass organisations that surround the Party and link it with the class. Fundamentally there has been an undoubted growth of Party influence in these organisations.

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2 **Original editor:** Peasant mutual aid committees (peasant committees) were set up under village Soviets and executive committees of volost Soviets in conformity with the decree of the Council of People's Commissars on May 14, 1921, signed by V. I. Lenin. They existed until 1933. They were set up for the purpose of improving the organisation of public aid for peasants and families of men in the Red Army, with the aim of stimulating the independent activity and initiative of the broad masses of the peasants, The regulations governing the peasant mutual aid committees, endorsed by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and by the Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. in September 1924, also charged the peasant committees with the task of promoting and strengthening various forms of cooperation among the rural population and of drawing the masses of the poor and middle peasants into these co-operative organisations.

3 **Original editor:** On May 23, 1924, a parade of Young Pioneers was held in the Red Square in Moscow in honour of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) and of the adoption by the Young Pioneer organisation of the new name: "V. I. Lenin Children's Communist Organisation." About 10,000 Young Pioneers took part in the parade, at which the salute was taken by the Presidium of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

2. The State Apparatus

a) *Number of employees.* According to the statistics, the institutions of the People's Commissariats, that is, institutions financed out of the state budget, had over 1,500,000 employees last year, and—so we are told—1,200,000 this year. The drop is 300,000. But if we take institutions functioning on a business-accounting basis, we find that their employees this year number approximately 200,000 (no figures are available for last year). In other words, what we gained by reducing the personnel in institutions financed by the state budget has been largely offset by an increase in the personnel of institutions on a business-accounting basis. This is apart from the fact that part of the employees have been transferred to the local budgets and, consequently, are not included in these figures. On balance, the number of employees has remained the same, or has even increased. Then there are the employees of the co-operatives—103,000 last year, 125,000 this year, an increase; trade union employees—28,000 last year, 27,000 now; and the employees in the Party apparatus—26,000 last year, 23,000 now. All in all, this makes 1,575,000, not counting the employees of institutions financed out of the local budgets. So you see, there are no grounds so far for reporting progress in cutting down our office personnel generally, and that of the state apparatus in particular.

b) *Party composition of higher executive bodies.* In 1923, Communists made up 83 per cent of the members of our higher executive bodies, members of collegiums, heads of central departments and their assistants (exclusive of industry); this year the figure is 86 per cent. Some progress, undoubtedly, has been made compared with the state of affairs that prevailed two years ago. The proportion of workers in these leading bodies was 19 per cent last year, and is now 21 per cent. This is not much, but at any rate there has been an increase.

c) *Party composition of industrial administrations.* The following is the picture in relation to the industrial administrations—trusts, syndicates and the larger enterprises: Communists made up a little over six per cent of the entire apparatus of the various trusts in

the U.S.S.R. last year, and account for a little over 10 per cent this year. The figure for the directing bodies of trusts, syndicates and the larger enterprises was a little over 47 per cent last year, and is a little over 52 per cent this year. Among the directors of the larger enterprises, last year 31 per cent were Communists, and this year 61 per cent. The figures for the entire apparatus of R.S.F.S.R. trusts are 9. 5 and over 12 per cent (nearly 13 per cent) respectively, and for the leading bodies of R.S.F.S.R. trusts—37 and 49 per cent. For the apparatus of the syndicates as a whole the figures are 9 and 10 per cent, and for their executive personnel 42 and 55 per cent.

On the whole, it can be stated that in our economic organisations, if we take the executive personnel, Communists make up approximately 48-50 per cent.

d) *Party composition of trade and credit organisations.* A totally different picture is presented by our trade and credit organisations, which at the present juncture have acquired exceptional importance in our entire economy. Take, for example, the People's Commissariat of Internal Trade, which is of the greatest importance for our entire development. Prior to the last reform, only four per cent of the executive personnel of its central apparatus were Communists. If one takes so vital a department of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade as Gostorg,[4] it is found that only 19 per cent of the responsible officials are Communists, and just what kind of Communists these are may be judged from the fact that 100 per cent of the Communists at the central Gostorg offices have been purged. (*Laughter.*) Another important organisation, one that plays a big part in our entire economy, is Khleboprodukt.[5] This is the picture we have there: not counting the central office, local representatives and their deputies, its 58 branch offices employ a total of 9,900 people, of whom 5. 9 per cent are Communists and 0. 7 per cent members of the R.Y.C.L., the rest are non-Party. In those parts of the organisation that are most closely in contact with the peasantry—the grain delivery centres and all manner of auxiliary centres—and among grain buyers,

4 **Translator:** The state import and export organisation.

5 **Translator:** The grain trading organisation.

Communists make up only 17 per cent. The Khleboprodukt central office has 137 responsible officials, of whom 13, or 9 per cent, are members of the R.C.P.(B.). It should be noted that the Party members in Khleboprodukt are utilised in a most irrational way: only 20 per cent are doing responsible work, while the remaining 80 per cent are lower-category employees. The situation is no better in the State Bank, that key credit centre which is of such great importance for our entire economic life. You know what a powerful weapon credit can be—any section of the population can be ruined or made prosperous depending merely on how the so-called preferential credits are dispensed. Well, in the entire apparatus of the State Bank, only seven per cent are Communists, and of its executive personnel only 12 per cent. Yet the State Bank decides the destinies of a number of enterprises and of very many economic institutions.

e) *Party composition of the Soviets.* Figures are available for the R.S.F.S.R. The proportion of Communists in the village Soviets is now a little over seven per cent, compared with about six per cent last year. In the executive committees of the volost Soviets the proportion of Communists has increased from a little over 39 per cent to 48 per cent; in the executive committees of the uyezd Soviets—from a little over 80 per cent to a little over 87 per cent; in the town Soviets of uyezd towns the proportion has dropped from 61 per cent to 58 per cent, in the executive committees of the gubernia Soviets from 90 per cent to 89 per cent, and in the town Soviets in gubernia towns from 78 per cent to 71 per cent. In these last three cases—town Soviets in uyezd towns, executive committees of gubernia Soviets and town Soviets in gubernia towns—the influence of non-Party elements is insignificant, nevertheless it is growing. As regards the plenums of the executive committees of gubernia Soviets, we have data about 69 gubernias, with information about 2,623 members. What do they show? It appears that about 11 per cent of the membership of these plenums is non-Party. The highest non-Party percentage is in Siberia and the Far Eastern Region, where it forms 20 per cent. As for the national republics, the proportion of non-Party members on the executive committees

of gubernia Soviets is seven per cent—the lowest percentage of all. And this in the national republics, where Party membership is low generally!

3. The Composition of the Party. The Lenin Enrolment

a) *Membership.* The Party had upwards of 485,000 members and candidate members at the time of the Twelfth Congress. The number at present is 472,000, without the Lenin Enrolment. Counting the Lenin Enrolment, taking the figures as on May 1 (by which date 128,000 members had been admitted), our membership totals 600,000. Considering that in about a fortnight from now the Lenin Enrolment will have reached at least 200,000, the membership of the Party can be estimated at 670,000-680,000.

b) *Social composition of the Party.* Last year workers accounted for 44. 9 per cent of the total membership; this year, exclusive of the Lenin Enrolment, they account for 45. 75 per cent—an increase of 0. 8 per cent. The proportion of peasants has declined from 25. 7 per cent to 24. 6 per cent, or by 1. 1 per cent. Office employees and other categories made up just over 29 per cent of the membership; now the percentage is somewhat in excess of 29 per cent, or has slightly increased. The social composition of the R.C.P.(B.), counting members and candidate members, and including the Lenin Enrolment as on May 1, was as follows: workers 55. 4 per cent, peasants 23 per cent, office employees and others 21. 6 per cent.

c) *Composition as regards Party standing.* Members who joined the Party prior to 1905 were 0. 7 per cent last year, and 0. 6 per cent this year. Members who joined in the period 1905-16 were two per cent last year and the figure is the same this year. Those who joined in 1917 accounted for slightly over nine per cent last year, and for slightly under nine per cent this year. The figure for those who joined in 1918 was 16. 5 per cent, and is now 15. 7 per cent; and the figures for those who joined in 1920 are 31. 5 per cent and 30. 4 per cent respectively. Members who joined in 1921 made up 10. 5 per cent last year, and 10. 1 per cent this year. Members who

joined in 1922 now make up 3. 2 per cent; there are no figures for last year. Members who joined in 1923 make up 2. 3 per cent. All these figures are exclusive of the Lenin Enrolment.

d) *Composition according to nationality and sex.* The Thirteenth Congress finds Great Russians forming 72 per cent of the Party membership; the proportion will evidently increase as a result of the Lenin Enrolment. Second come Ukrainians—5. 88 per cent, third Jews 5. 2 per cent, next come the Tyurk nationalities—upwards of four per cent, followed by other nationalities, such as Latvians, Georgians, Armenians, etc. The percentage of women members of the Party at the time of the Twelfth Congress was 7. 8 and it is now 8. 8. The figures for women candidate members are nine per cent and 10. 5 per cent respectively. Thirteen per cent of the new members admitted in the Lenin Enrolment are women, and this should somewhat increase the percentages mentioned above.

   Lastly, on December 1, 1923, 17 per cent of all Communists (members and candidate members) were workers at the bench, and with the Lenin Enrolment, taking the figure as 128,000, the proportion is 35. 3 per cent.

e) *Degree of Party organisation of the working class.* Taking the number of workers in our Party as on May 1, plus the number we shall have admitted about two weeks hence, when the Lenin Enrolment will reach (and probably exceed) the 200,000 mark, we get a total of 410,000 workers in our Party, out of a membership of 672,000. This makes 10 per cent of the entire industrial and rural proletariat of the Union, numbering 4,100,000.

   We have achieved a degree of organisation in which 10 out of every 100 workers are in the Party.

4. The Composition of Leading Party Bodies, Cadres and the Younger Party Element

a) *Composition of local bodies.* I shall cite data on the composition of 45 Gubernia and Regional Party Committees. Party members from the underground period constitute over 32 per cent, the remaining

67 per cent consisting of members who joined the Party later: 23 per cent in 1917, 33 per cent in 1918-19 and nine per cent in 1920. In the leading local bodies, both Gubernia and Regional Party Committees, it is not the underground-period members who predominate, but members who joined after October. Taking the presidiums of 52 Gubernia and Regional Party Committees for which we have statistics on Party standing, we find that 49 per cent of their members joined the Party before the revolution, 19 per cent in 1917, after February, 26 per cent in 1918-19, and the remaining six per cent at later periods. Here we still have a predominance of Party members who joined after February. Among the heads of organisational departments of Gubernia and Regional Party Committees, 27. 4 per cent at the time of the Twelfth Congress, and 30 per cent at the time of the Thirteenth Congress, dated their Party membership from the underground period. The corresponding figures for heads of agitation and propaganda departments are 31 and 23 per cent. A reverse tendency is to be observed in the case of secretaries of Gubernia and Regional Party Committees: of these, 62. 5 per cent at the time of the Twelfth Congress, and 71 per cent at the time of the present congress, joined the Party in the underground period.

The task is clear—we must lower the requirements as to Party standing for secretaries of Gubernia Party Committees.

Composition of 67 Uyezd Committees: underground-period Party members—12 per cent, membership dating from 1917—22 per cent, membership dating from 1918-19—43 per cent. Data on secretaries of 248 Uyezd Committees at the time of the present Thirteenth Congress: underground-period members—25 per cent, membership dating from 1917, before October—27 per cent, membership dating from before 1919—37 per cent. Data on 6,541 secretaries of Party units in 28 gubernias: underground-period members—a little over three per cent, and the largest proportion, 55 per cent, consisting of members who joined the Party after October, in 1917-18.

Data on the social composition of 45 Gubernia and Regional Committees this year show that 48 per cent of their members are workers. Workers constitute 41 per cent of the presidiums of 52 Gubernia

and Regional Committees. The proportion of workers among the secretaries of Gubernia and Regional Committees has risen from 44. 6 per cent at the time of the Twelfth Congress to 48. 6 per cent at the time of the Thirteenth Congress. Workers make up 63. 4 per cent of the Uyezd Committee membership (67 uyezds), and 50 per cent of Uyezd Committee secretaries (248 uyezds).

All these statistics relate to the period preceding the last gubernia and uyezd Party conferences.

But just before the congress I received some statistics on the results of these last conferences. They cover 11 gubernias and 16 regions, and indicate that the proportion of underground-period Party members in the Gubernia and Regional Committees has dropped to 27 per cent, while the proportion of workers has risen to 53 per cent.

This clearly points to two tendencies: on the one hand, the introduction of the younger Party element into the Party cadres and an extension of the cadres, and, on the other, an improvement in the social composition of the Party organisations.

b) *Composition of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission.* Of the 56 members and candidate members of the Central Committee, 44. 6 per cent are workers and 55. 3 per cent are peasants or intellectuals. Consequently, we should broaden the Central Committee by increasing the proportion of workers in it. In the Central Control Commission, 48 per cent of the members and candidate members are workers and 52 per cent are peasants or intellectuals. The same conclusion applies here too. As regards Party standing, 96 per cent of the members and candidate members of the Central Committee joined the Party in the underground period, before February 1917. Of the 56 members and candidate members of the Central Committee, only 2, i.e., four per cent, joined the Party at later periods. We have the same picture in the Central Control Commission. Of its 60 members and candidate members, 57 joined the Party in the underground period, and 3 (i.e., five per cent) at later periods. We must, consequently, add younger people.

c) *Composition of the present congress.* In all, 742 delegates have been

registered, of whom 63. 2 per cent are workers, and 48. 4 per cent underground-period members. The remainder are more or less young members.

5. The Work of the Party in the Sphere or Agitation and Propaganda

a) *Communist education.* What stands out here is the large proportion of political illiteracy among Party members: in some gubernias it is as high as 70 per cent. The average for several central Russian gubernias (60,000 people were examined) is 57 per cent; last year it was about 60 per cent. This is one of the fundamental defects in our work. Evidently, the work has proceeded extensively, rather than intensively. The number of Soviet-Party schools, or rather their student body, has somewhat contracted owing to the fact that some of the schools have been transferred to the local budgets. The Communist Universities have more students than last year. We shall, however, have to reduce the number somewhat, in order, in proportion to available means, to improve their material position and shift the emphasis to more profound communist education. Special stress must be laid on the propaganda of Leninism, which is of decisive importance in our work of communist education.

b) *The press.* Last year we had 560 newspapers; this year the number is less—495, but the circulation has increased from 1,500,000 to 2,500,000. Noteworthy is the increase of newspapers in languages other than Russian. We even have republics without a single newspaper in Russian—for example Armenia, where all the papers without exception are published in Armenian. In Georgia, 91 per cent of the newspapers are published in Georgian. In Byelorussia, 88 per cent are published in languages other than Russian. This increase in the number of newspapers in the national languages is to be observed literally in every national region and republic. Attention should be drawn to the composition of the editorial staffs of our periodical publications. A survey of 287 press organs reveals that only 10 per cent of their editors are underground-period Party

members The greatest proportion of the editors joined the Party in 1918-19. This is a defect which must be remedied by assigning older and more experienced newspapermen to help the younger ones.

c) *Work among the peasants.* There are a number of defects in this sphere. The village and volost Soviets are so far only tax-collecting bodies and the peasant regards them primarily as such. Officials well acquainted with the countryside give the following general opinion of the activities of our rural bodies: our policy is correct, but it is being incorrectly carried out in the localities. The composition of village and volost Soviet bodies leaves very much to be desired. The fact that our Party units in the countryside consist too much of administrative officials adversely affects their work. Still more detrimental is the ignorance of Soviet laws displayed by officials closely associated with village affairs and their inability to explain these laws to the peasant poor, their inability to defend the interests of the poor and middle peasants against kulak domination on the basis of Soviet laws and the privileges these laws extend to the poor peasants. Then there is the general mistake: the attempt to approach the peasant merely with verbal agitation, failing to understand that the peasant requires not verbal, but concrete agitation, agitation that shows tangible results. Recruiting into the co-operatives, utilisation of the privileges extended to the poor peasants, agricultural credits, mutual aid organised by the peasant committees—these, primarily, are the issues that can interest the peasant.

6. The Work of the Party in the Registration, Allocation and Promotion of Forces

a) *Registration and allocation.* The number of responsible workers on our register last year was about 5,000; this year we have on the register about 15,000 responsible workers of all categories. There can be no doubt that our work of registration is improving. The figures show that last year we allocated 10,000 Party workers of all kinds, among them over 4,000 responsible Party workers. This year 6,000 were allocated including 4,000 responsible workers. The main work

of the Party in the allocation of forces centred, firstly, on providing officials for the Party; secondly, for the various bodies of the Supreme Council of National Economy; and, lastly, for the People's Commissariat of Finance—chiefly its tax-collecting apparatus. Allocation of Communists to all other sectors was on a lesser scale. That is a big mistake in our work. At a time when the centre of economic life has shifted to trade we have displayed insufficient initiative and vigour in providing our trade and credit organisations and their branches in the U.S.S.R. and abroad with a maximum number of active workers. I refer in particular to such bodies as the Gostorg and Khleboprodukt.

7. Inner-Party Life

I shall not enumerate the questions examined by the Central Committee and its bodies, nor the nature of these questions. This is not of decisive importance, and moreover it has been dealt with in the written report circulated to you. I would only like to draw your attention to the following:

Firstly, the internal life of our organisations has, undoubtedly, improved. The impression one gets is that the organisations have settled down, there is little squabbling, and business-like work is going on. Some exceptions will be found in the border regions, where, side by side with the older Party workers who are not too well versed in communism, cadres of young Marxists are coming to the fore, those trained in the Sverdlov University and other educational institutions, well versed in Party work, but terribly weak as regards Soviet work. It will take some time before these conflicts between the younger and older workers in the border regions are eliminated. In this respect the border regions are an exception. As for the majority of the central Russian gubernias, it can be taken that the Party organisations there have settled down, and business-like work has made good headway. In Georgia, the Republic where there was more squabbling than anywhere else, and which was the subject of so much talk at the last congress, Party life has now been brought into pacific channels. The better elements among the former deviators, such as Philip Makharadze and Okudzhava, have definitely

broken with the extreme deviators and have announced their readiness to carry on work in harmony.

Secondly, in the Gubernia Committees, and especially in the Central Committee of the Party, in the past year the main emphasis in the work has been shifted from the bureaus or presidiums to the plenums. Formerly Central Committee plenums would entrust the decision of cardinal questions to the Political Bureau. This is no longer the case. Now, cardinal questions of our policy and economy are decided by the plenums. Look through the agendas of our plenums and the stenographic reports, which are circulated to all the Gubernia Committees, and you will appreciate that the centre of activities has shifted from the Political and Organising Bureaus to the plenum. This is very important, for our plenums bring together 100-120 people (members and candidate members of the Central Committee and of the Central Control Commission), and since the centre of activity has shifted to the plenum, the latter has become a highly valuable school for training leaders of the working class, political leaders of the working class. New people, tomorrow's leaders of the working class, are growing up and coming to full stature before our very eyes, and in this lies the inestimable value of our extended plenary sessions.

It is noteworthy that the same tendency is to be observed in the localities. Decision of major problems is passing from the bureaus of the Gubernia Committees to the plenums. The plenums are being enlarged; they hold longer sessions, to which all the best forces in the gubernia are invited, and in this way the plenums are becoming schools for training local and regional leaders. This tendency in the localities, in the gubernias and uyezds, must be made the regular practice.

Thirdly, inner-Party life has in this past year been exceedingly intense, full-blooded, one might say. We Bolsheviks are accustomed to coping with big tasks, and often we fail to notice the greatness of the tasks we perform. Such facts as the discussion and the Lenin Enrolment—and this requires no proof—are developments of the greatest moment for the country and the Party, and, obviously, they could not but animate inner-Party life.

What is the significance of these two facts? They show that our Party,

which has gone through a discussion, is as firm as a rock. They show that our Party, which, by the will and with the approval of the entire working class, has admitted 200,000 new members, is essentially an elected Party, the elected organ of the working class.

8. Conclusions

1. Of the mass organisations surrounding our Party, special attention should be paid to the co-operatives and the organisations of working women and peasant women. I have singled out these organisations because at the present juncture they are the weakest points.
    a) It is beyond doubt that the apparatus of the consumers' co-operatives, whose function it is to link state industry with the peasant economy, has not been on a level with the tasks confronting it. This is borne out by the irrefutable fact that the peasant sector in the consumers' co-operatives accounts for only one-third of the total membership. We must bring about a situation in which the peasants will have their due place in the consumers' co-operatives. Communists must shift the centre of their activities from the gubernias to the uyezds and districts in order to build up contact with the mass of the peasants and in this way convert the consumers' co-operatives into a connecting link between industry and the peasant economy.
    b) Matters are no better in regard to the agricultural co-operatives. Confused figures and a drop in membership during the past year are facts that call for serious consideration. Here too, as in the consumers' co-operatives, Communists must shift the centre of their activities to the uyezds and districts, closer to the peasant masses; they must make it their aim to ensure that the local offices of the Selskosoyuz are not used as a shield for kulak domination. But that is not enough. We must reinforce the leading bodies of the Selskosoyuz with communist forces, for of late its work has begun seriously to deteriorate.

c) The position is worse with regard to work among women. True, the delegate meetings of working women and peasant women are growing in number and scope, but what our forces active in this field have accomplished by way of agitation is far from having been consolidated organisationally. In this respect we have not achieved even a hundredth part of the necessary minimum. This is irrefutably borne out by the percentage of working women and peasant women participating in the Soviets, the trade unions and the Party. The Party must take every measure to make good this deficiency in the very near future. We cannot tolerate a situation when half of the population of the Soviet Union continues to stand aside from the highway of Soviet and Party development.

d) The voluntary public initiative organisations merit special attention, particularly the organisations of worker and peasant correspondents. These have a great future. Given the proper conditions for development, they can become a highly important and powerful medium for expressing and carrying out the will of proletarian public opinion. You are aware of the power of proletarian public opinion in exposing and rectifying shortcomings in our Soviet public life. It is much more effective than administrative pressure. That is why the Party must render these organisations every assistance.

2. Special attention should be paid to the state apparatus. That the position in this sphere is unsatisfactory is hardly open to challenge.

a) Lenin's behests to reduce and simplify the state apparatus have been fulfilled only in part, to a very minute degree. The reduction of the apparatus of the People's Commissariats by 200,000 or 300,000 employees, while at the same time a new apparatus—the trusts, syndicates, etc. —has grown up alongside them, cannot properly be regarded as either a reduction or a simplification of the apparatus. The Party must take every measure to ensure that Lenin's behests in this sphere are carried out with an iron hand.

b) I have given you figures showing that the proportion of non-Party people participating in our Soviets is extremely low. Comrades, this must not continue; we cannot go on building the new state in this way. Serious constructive work is impossible without devoting special attention to drawing non-Party people into Soviet activities in the gubernias and uyezds. Various methods might be suggested. One expedient method might be the following: the organisation, under the different departments of the gubernia and uyezd Soviets, of groups, or better still, of regularly convened conferences on concrete questions for non-Party people—workers in the towns and peasants in the uyezds—in order to draw non-Party elements into active participation in the various branches of administration and subsequently to select the best of these non-Party workers and peasants, the more capable, and appoint them to government posts. Without this extension of the base of our town and uyezd Soviets, without extending the base of Soviet work and drawing non-Party people into it, the Soviets stand in danger of a grave setback in weight and influence.

c) There is an opinion current in our Party that genuine Party work is confined to activities in the Gubernia, Regional and Uyezd Party Committees and in the Party units. As for any other form of work, it is alleged that it is not genuine Party work. People working in the trusts and syndicates are often ridiculed: "They have lost contact with the Party," it is said. (*Voice*: "They are purged.") Some comrades, in both economic bodies and Party organisations, should be purged. However, I am dealing not with the exception, but with the typical case. It is customary among us to divide Party work into two categories: a higher category comprising genuine Party work in the Gubernia and Regional Committees, in the Party units, in the Central Committee; and a lower category referred to as Party work only in quotation marks, which embraces work in all Soviet bodies, and above all in trading bodies. Comrades, such an attitude to business executives

is profoundly contrary to Leninism. Every such business executive working even in the most wretched of shops, in the most wretched of trading establishments, if he advances and improves its work, is a genuine Party worker and deserves every support from the Party. We shall not be able to take a single step forward in our constructive work if this aristocratic, intelligentsia approach to trade persists. I gave a lecture at the Sverdlov University recently, and in the course of it I said that we might, perhaps, have to transfer some 10,000 Communists from Party work or industry to trade. They laughed. They don't want to trade! Yet it should be perfectly clear that all our discussions on socialist construction may degenerate into so much empty talk unless we eradicate from the Party these aristocratic-intelligentsia prejudices about trade and unless we, Communists, master all aspects of trade.

d) Comrades, no constructive work, no state activity, no planning is conceivable without proper *accounting*. And accounting is inconceivable without statistics. Without statistics, accounting cannot advance one inch. Rykov recently told a conference that during the War Communism period he had a statistician working in the Supreme Council of National Economy who would submit one set of figures on a given subject one day, and a different set the next day. Unfortunately, we still have statisticians of that type. The nature of statistics is such that separate components make up a continuous chain and if one of its links is defective, the entire work may be spoiled. In bourgeois countries the statistician possesses a certain minimum of professional pride. He will not lie. Whatever his political beliefs and leanings, when it comes to facts and figures he is prepared to lay down his life rather than submit untrue data. We could do with more of such bourgeois statisticians, people with self-respect and possessing a certain minimum of professional pride! Unless we have this approach to our statistical work, our constructive work will not advance one inch.

The same must be said of *bookkeeping*. No branch of eco-

nomic activity can make headway without proper bookkeeping. But unfortunately our accountants do not always possess the elementary merits of the ordinary honest, bourgeois accountant. I have a high regard for some of our accountants; among them are honest and devoted workers. But the fact remains that we have also worthless accountants capable of concocting any sort of statement and who are more dangerous than counter-revolutionaries. Without overcoming these defects, without eliminating them, we cannot advance either the country's economy or its trade.

e) The percentage of workers and of Communists in the directing bodies of some state institutions is still at a minimum level and inadequate. This defect is very evident in the case of our directing bodies and of the foreign representations of our trading organisations (foreign trade, home trade, syndicates) and credit institutions, which at the present time are of decisive importance for the life and development of our economy, and, above all, of our state industry. The Party must take every measure to fill this gap. Otherwise there can be no question of implementing the Party's economic and political directives.

f) Up till now a key problem in economic development has been to organise the trusts and give them proper shape. Now that the focus has shifted to trade, questions arise concerning the organisation of mixed and joint-stock companies[6] for home

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6 **Original editor:** Joint-stock companies (state, mixed and co-operative) were formed in the U.S.S.R. by the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, the People's Commissariat of Internal Trade and the People's Commissariat of Finance on endorsement by the Council of Labour and Defence. Their function was to attract capital, including those of private businessmen, for the rapid restoration of the national economy and the development of trade.

The mixed companies, one of the forms of the joint-stock companies, attracted foreign capital for procuring export goods within the country and selling them abroad, and for importing goods needed for restoring the national economy. The mixed companies operated under the control of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade. The joint-stock companies existed in the first period of the NEP.

and foreign trade. Practice shows that, while we have coped with the problem of the trusts, our organisations are sadly lacking when it comes to solving the problems connected with mixed and joint-stock companies. There is a tendency to organise trade enterprises of a type that would reduce the effectiveness of state control in this important sphere to a minimum. There can be no doubt that the Party will vigorously combat such tendencies.

3. We must continue to improve the composition of the Party generally, and of its leading bodies in particular. Under no circumstances should the Party cadres be regarded as a sort of closed corporation. They should be widened step by step by drawing in the younger Party element, which must serve to replenish the cadres. Otherwise, there is no point in having Party cadres.

4. As regards agitation activities:

   a) The position with regard to political literacy among Party members is bad (60 per cent politically illiterate). The Lenin Enrolment will increase the proportion. Systematic work is required to eliminate this drawback, and the task is to go ahead with such work.

   b) The position with regard to the cinema is bad. The cinema is a most valuable means of mass agitation. The task is to take this matter in hand.

   c) The press is making progress, but not enough. The task is to raise the circulation of *Krestyanskaya Gazeta*[7] to one million, of *Pravda* to 600,000, and to start a popular paper for the Lenin Enrolment, building up its circulation to at least half a million.

   d) Publication of wall newspapers is making progress, but not enough. The task is to support the wall-newspaper correspondents and to go ahead with the work.

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7 **Original editor:** *Krestyanskaya Gazeta* (*Peasants' Gazette*)—organ of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), a newspaper for the masses of the rural population, published from November 1923 to February 1939.

e) Work in the countryside is in a bad state. Agitation in the countryside must be chiefly concrete. It should consist in rendering all possible assistance to the poor and middle peasant elements, including preferential credits; development of rudimentary collective farming (not communes) along the lines of the Committees of Peasant poor[8] in the Ukraine, where there are some 5,000 collective farms; in recruiting the peasantry into the co-operatives, primarily the agricultural co-operatives. Gaining a dominant influence in the peasant committees must be considered a task of special importance. Nor should we overlook the territorial formations,[9] which offer very important opportunities for agitation in the countryside.

5. As regards registration, allocation and promotion of Party and non-Party forces:

a) Proper registration has been more or less achieved.

b) Things are somewhat worse with regard to allocation of cadres, for the principal tasks involved in regrouping our forces in the new situation of internal development—tasks outlined by Lenin at the Eleventh Congress[10]—have not

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8 **Original editor:** The Ukrainian Committees of Peasant Poor, which united Ukrainian peasants who had little or no land, were formed for the purpose of protecting the interests of the poor and middle peasants. They existed from 1920 onwards and were dissolved after the achievement of complete collectivisation in 1933. In the first period of their existence (1920-21), these committees were political organisations, which helped to consolidate Soviet power in the countryside. On the introduction of the New Economic Policy they were reorganised into public organisations concerned with production, their chief function being to draw the peasants into various agricultural collective organisations. The Committees of Peasant Poor were effective agencies for carrying out the policy of the Party and the state in the countryside.

9 **Original editor:** Territorial formations, i.e., territorial army units, were established by a decree of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. dated August 8, 1923, alongside the regular units of the Red Army. They were organised on a militia basis and their purpose was to provide military training for the working people during short periods at training camps.

10 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 231-91.

yet been fulfilled. The immediate task of bringing a maximum number of our best forces into the various trading organisations still awaits solution.

Properly speaking, in the past year the Registration and Allocation Department served organisations of the Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariat of Finance, especially its tax-collecting apparatus, and supplied workers mainly to these organisations. The task now is to turn our attention to the trade and credit organisations and give them priority over other institutions in the allocation of forces. Some 5,000 Communists may be required here.

Simultaneously, the task is to supplement the existing method of allocating forces with new methods: voluntary enlistment, enrolment of volunteers to organise the work in especially important sectors of Soviet affairs. This method is directly related to the question of organising exemplary work in certain districts, a thing that cannot be dispensed with at the present stage. Lenin's idea concerning exemplary work, outlined by him in *The Tax in Kind*,[11] a must be put into effect.

c) Special attention must be devoted to the promotion of new forces, Party and non-Party. The method of advancing new people only by appointment from above is not sufficient. It must be supplemented by methods of promoting people from below, in the course of practical work, in the course of drawing new forces into our practical activities. In this respect, the production conferences in the factories and trusts should play a big part in advancing factory workers to responsible posts in industrial plants and trusts. We must develop the working groups attached to the various departments of the Soviets in the gubernia and uyezd towns, converting them into periodical conferences that discuss concrete questions and drawing into the work of these conferences both mem-

11 **Original editor:** This refers to V. I. Lenin's work *The Tax in Kind* (see *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 308-43).

bers and, especially, non-members of the Soviets—workers and peasants, both men and women. Only in the course of these broad practical activities will we be able to promote new forces from among the non-Party workers and peasants. The great wave of the Lenin Enrolment in the cities and the enhanced political activity of the peasantry show beyond all doubt that this method of promoting new forces is bound to have great results.

6. Two conclusions regarding inner-Party life:

   a) The so-called "principle" of broadening the Party Central Committee has proved correct. Experience has shown the immense value of broadening the Central Committee, it has shown that the comrades who upheld the "principle" of narrowing down the Central Committee were taking a wrong course.

   b) It is now clear to all that the opposition was entirely wrong in asserting, during the discussion, that the Party was in a state of disintegration. You are not likely to find in our Party a single organisation of any importance which, observing the development of inner-Party life and the Party's powerful growth, would not say that the people who only recently were croaking that our Party was heading for ruin, did not, in actual fact, know the Party, were far removed from it, and were very reminiscent of people who ought rightly to be described as aliens in the Party.

To sum up: our Party is growing; it is forging ahead; it is learning efficient administration; it is becoming the most influential organ of the working class. The Lenin Enrolment is a direct indication of this. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Reply to the Discussion

May 27

Comrades, I found no objections in any of the speeches to the Central Committee's organisational report. I take this to mean that the congress agrees with the conclusions of that report. (*Applause.*)

In my report, I deliberately refrained from discussing our inner-Party disagreements. I did not touch on them because I did not wish to reopen wounds which, so it seemed, had healed. But since Trotsky and Preobrazhensky have touched on these questions, making a number of inaccurate statements and throwing down a challenge—it would not be right to be silent. In this situation silence would not be understood.

Comrade Krupskaya has objected here to repetition of the debate on our disagreements. I am absolutely opposed to such repetition and that is precisely why I did not touch on the disagreements in my report. But since the comrades of the opposition have brought up the subject and have thrown down a challenge, we have no right to be silent.

In speaking of our disagreements, both Trotsky and Preobrazhensky try to focus the attention of the congress on one resolution, that of December 5. They forget that there is another resolution as well, on the results of the discussion.[12] They forget that there has been a Party conference and that the Central Committee's December 5 resolution was followed by a new wave of discussion, the results of which were appraised in a special resolution of the Thirteenth Conference. They forget that hushing up the Thirteenth Conference cannot but have its repercussions for the opposition.

I draw the attention of the congress to the fact that the conference adopted one resolution on economic policy and two on Party affairs. Why? There was one resolution, endorsed by the entire Party and

12 **Original editor:** This refers to the resolution "Results of the Discussion and the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party" adopted at the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on January 18, 1924 on J. V. Stalin's report "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs" (see *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 540-45).

adopted by the Central Committee on December 5, and then it was found necessary to adopt a second resolution on the same question, on the petty-bourgeois deviation. Why this affliction? What is the explanation? The explanation is that the whole discussion went through two periods. The first concluded with the unanimously adopted resolution of December 5, and the second with the resolution on the petty-bourgeois deviation. At that time, i.e., in the first period, we believed that the December 5 resolution would probably put an end to the controversy in the Party, and that was why last time, in my report at the Thirteenth Conference, when dealing with this period, I said that, if the opposition had so wished, the December 5 resolution could have terminated the struggle within the Party. That was what I said, and that was what we all believed. But the point is that the discussion was not brought to a close with that period. After the December 5 resolution Trotsky's letters appeared—a new platform which raised new issues; and this ushered in a fresh wave of discussion, more violent than the preceding one. It was this that destroyed the opportunity of establishing peace in the Party. This was the second period, which the oppositionists now try to hush up and by-pass.

The point is that there is a vast difference between the discussion in the second period and that in the first, where the discussion found its reflection in the December 5 resolution. That resolution did not raise the question of a degeneration of the cadres. Trotsky, with whom we jointly framed that resolution, did not so much as hint at a degeneration of the cadres. Evidently, he was saving this additional issue for his later pronouncements. Further, the December 5 resolution does not raise the question of the student youth being the truest barometer. This question, too, Trotsky was apparently keeping in reserve for fresh discussion pronouncements. In the December 5 resolution there is nothing of the tendency to attack the apparatus, nor of the demands for punitive measures against the Party apparatus, about which Trotsky spoke at such length in his subsequent letters. Lastly, in the December 5 resolution there is not even a hint about groups being necessary, although this question, the question of groups, is one on which Trotsky spoke at great length in his subsequent letters.

There you have the immense difference between the stand taken by the opposition prior to December 5 and the stand its leaders took after December 5.

Now Trotsky and Preobrazhensky try to hush up and hide their second platform, the one that figured in the second period of the discussion, in the belief, evidently, that they can outwit the Party. No, you will not succeed! You cannot deceive the congress with your none-too-clever stratagems and diplomacy. I do not doubt that the congress will state its opinion both on the first stage of the discussion, summed up in the December 5 resolution, and on the second stage, summed up in the conference resolution on the petty-bourgeois deviation.

These two resolutions are two parts of a single whole—the discussion. And whoever thinks he can deceive the congress by confusing these two parts is mistaken. The Party has matured; its political understanding is at a higher level, and it is not to be tricked by diplomacy. This the opposition fails to understand, and that is the sum and substance of its mistake.

Let us examine who has proved right on the issues raised in the opposition platform after December 5. Who has proved right on the four new issues brought up in Trotsky's letters?

First issue—degeneration of the cadres. We have all demanded and continue to demand that facts be adduced to prove that the cadres are degenerating. But no facts have been produced, nor could they be, because no such facts exist. And when we looked into the matter properly we all found that there was no degeneration, but that there was undoubtedly a deviation towards petty-bourgeois policy on the part of certain opposition leaders. Who, then, has proved to be right? Not the opposition, it would seem.

Second issue—the student youth which, supposedly, is the truest barometer. Who has proved right on this point? Again, it would seem, not the opposition. If we look at the growth of our Party in this period, at the admission of 200,000 new members, it follows that the barometer must be sought not among the student youth, but in the ranks of the proletariat, and that the Party must orientate itself not on the student youth,

but on the proletarian core of the Party. Two hundred thousand new members—that is the barometer. Here, too, the opposition has proved wrong.

Third issue—punitive measures against the apparatus, attack on the Party apparatus. Who has proved right? Again, not the opposition. It furled its flag of attack on the apparatus and passed to the defensive. All of you here have seen how it tried to wriggle out, how it beat a disorderly retreat in the fight against the Party apparatus.

Fourth issue—factions and groups. Trotsky has announced that he is resolutely opposed to groups. That is all well and good. But if we must go into the history of the issue, then allow me to re-establish certain facts. In December a sub-commission of the Party Central Committee framed the resolution published on December 5. This sub-commission consisted of three members: Trotsky, Kamenev, Stalin. Have you noticed that there is no mention of groups in the December 5 resolution? It deals with the prohibition of factions but says nothing about prohibiting groups. There is only a reference to the well-known Tenth Congress resolution on Party unity. How is this to be explained? Was it an accident? No, it was not. Kamenev and I firmly insisted on the prohibition of groups. Trotsky protested against their prohibition, and his protest was tantamount to an ultimatum, for he declared that in such a case he could not vote for the resolution. And so we confined ourselves to a reference to the Tenth Congress resolution, which Trotsky, apparently, had not read at the time, and which provides not only for the prohibition of factions, but for the prohibition of groups as well. (*Laughter, applause.*) At that time Trotsky was in favour of freedom of groups. At this congress he has praised the December 5 resolution. But in his letter to the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee of December 9, that is four days after the adoption of the resolution on Party affairs, Trotsky wrote: "I am especially alarmed by the purely formal attitude of the Political Bureau members on the question of groups and factional formations." What do you think of that? Here is a man who extols the resolution but who, it turns out, is especially alarmed in his soul by the Political Bureau's attitude on the question of groups and factions. This does not seem to indicate that he was then in favour of prohibiting groups. No, Trotsky at that time was in favour of the formation and freedom of groups.

Further, who does not remember the resolution Preobrazhensky sub-

mitted in Moscow, demanding that the question of factions, which had been decided by the Tenth Party Congress, be given a more precise formulation in the sense of removing some of the restrictions? Here in Moscow, everyone remembers this. And is there anyone of you who does not remember the newspaper articles in which Preobrazhensky demanded that we revive the order of things which existed in the Party at the time of the Brest Peace? Yet we know that in the Brest period the Party was compelled to permit the existence of factions—as we all know very well. And who does not remember that at the Thirteenth Conference, when I proposed the simplest thing—to remind the Party membership of point seven of the resolution on unity, on the prohibition of groups—who does not remember how all the oppositionists raged, insisting that this point should not be introduced? Consequently, on this issue the opposition's attitude has been wholly and entirely one of freedom for groups. It thought that it could lull the vigilance of the Party by declaring that it was demanding freedom not for factions, but for groups. If today we are told that the opposition is against groups, that is all well and good. But this certainly cannot be called an offensive on their part: it is a disorderly retreat, it is a sign that the Central Committee was right on this issue too.

After this review of the facts, permit me, comrades, to say a few words on certain fundamental mistakes made by Trotsky and Preobrazhensky in their utterances on questions of Party organisation.

Trotsky has said that the essence of democracy can be reduced to the question of generations. That is wrong, wrong in principle. The essence of democracy can by no means be reduced to that. The question of generations is a secondary one. The life of our Party, and figures relating to it, show that the younger generation of the Party is being drawn step by step into the cadres—the cadres are being extended from the ranks of the youth. That always has been, and will continue to be, the Party's line. Only those who regard our cadres as a closed entity, as a privileged caste which does not admit new members to its ranks; only those who regard our cadres as a sort of officer corps of the old regime which looks down on all other Party members as "beneath its dignity," only those who want to drive a wedge between the cadres and the younger Party members—only they can make the question of generations in the Party the pivotal question of democracy. The essence of democracy lies not in the question of

generations, but in the question of independent activity, of members of the Party taking an active part in its leadership. It is in this way, and in this way alone, that the question of democracy can be presented if, of course, we are discussing not a party with formal democracy, but a genuinely proletarian party linked by indissoluble bonds with the mass of the working class.

The second question. The greatest danger, Trotsky says, is bureaucratisation of the Party apparatus. This too is wrong. The danger resides not in this, but in the possibility of the Party's actual isolation from the non-Party masses. You can have a party with a democratically constructed apparatus, but if the Party is not linked with the working class this democracy will be worthless, it won't be worth a brass farthing. The Party exists *for* the class. So long as it is linked with the class, maintains contact with it, enjoys prestige and respect among the non-Party masses, it can exist and develop even if it has bureaucratic shortcomings. But in the absence of all this the Party is doomed, no matter what kind of Party organisation you build—bureaucratic or democratic. The Party is part of the class; it exists for the class, not for itself.

The third contention, also erroneous in principle: the Party, Trotsky says, makes no mistakes. That is wrong. The Party not infrequently makes mistakes. Ilyich taught us to teach the Party, on the basis of its own mistakes, how to exercise correct leadership. If the Party made no mistakes there would be nothing from which to teach it. It is our task to detect these mistakes, to lay bare their roots and to show the Party and the working class how we came to make them and how we should avoid repeating them in future. The development of the Party would be impossible without this. The development of Party leaders and cadres would be impossible without this, for they are developed and trained in the struggle to combat and overcome their mistakes. It seems to me that this statement of Trotsky's is a kind of compliment, accompanied by an attempt—an unsuccessful one it is true—to jeer at the Party.

Next—about Preobrazhensky. He spoke of the purge. Preobrazhensky feels that the purge is a weapon used by the Party majority against the opposition. Evidently he does not approve of the methods employed in the purge. This is a question of principle. Preobrazhensky's profound mistake is his failure to understand that the Party cannot strengthen its

ranks without periodical purges of unstable elements. Comrade Lenin taught us that the Party can strengthen itself only if it steadily rids itself of the unstable elements which penetrate, and will continue to penetrate, its ranks. We would be going against Leninism if we were to repudiate Party purges in general. As for the present purge, what is wrong with it? It is said that individual mistakes have been made. Certainly they have. But has there ever been a big undertaking that was free from individual mistakes? Never. Individual mistakes may and will occur; but in the main the purge is correct. I have been told with what fear and trepidation some non-proletarian elements among the intellectuals and office employees awaited the purge. Here is a scene that was described to me: a group of people are sitting in an office, waiting to be called before the purging commission. It is a Party unit in a Soviet institution. In another room is the purging commission. One of the members of the Party unit comes rushing out of the commission room, perspiring. He is asked what happened, but all he can say is: "Let me get my breath, let me get my breath. I'm all in." (*Laughter.*) The purge may be bad for the kind of people who suffer and perspire like that; but for the Party it is a very good thing. (*Applause.*) We still have, unfortunately, a certain number of Party members receiving 1,000 or 2,000 rubles a month, who are considered to be Party members but who forget that the Party exists. I know of a Party unit at one of the Commissariats, in which men of this type work. The members of this unit include several chauffeurs, and the unit selected one of them to sit on the purging commission. This evoked no little grumbling, such as saying that a chauffeur should not be allowed to purge Soviet big-wigs. There have been cases like that here in Moscow. Party members who have evidently lost contact with the Party are indignant, they cannot stomach the fact that "some chauffeur" will put them through the purge. Such Party members must be educated and re-educated, sometimes by expulsion from the Party. The chief thing about the purge is that it makes people of this kind feel that there exists a master, that there is the Party, which can call them to account for all sins committed against it. It seems to me absolutely necessary that this master go through the Party ranks with a broom every now and again. (*Applause.*)

Preobrazhensky says: Your policy is correct, but your organisational line is wrong, and therein lies the basis of the possible ruin of the Party.

That is nonsense, comrades. That a party with a correct policy should perish because of shortcomings in its organisational line is something that does not happen. It never works out that way. The foundation of Party life and Party work resides not in the organisational forms it adopts or may adopt at any given moment, but in its policy, in its home and foreign policy. If the Party's policy is correct, if it has a correct approach to the political and economic issues that are of decisive significance for the working class—then organisational defects cannot be of decisive significance; its policy will pull it through. That has always been the case, and will continue to be so in the future. People who fail to understand this are bad Marxists; they forget the very rudiments of Marxism.

Was the Party right on the issues involved in the discussion—on the economic questions and on the questions of Party affairs? Anyone who wants to obtain an immediate, concise answer to that should turn to the Party and the mass of the workers and put the question: how does the mass of non-Party workers regard the Party? Is it sympathetic or unsympathetic? If the members of the opposition were to put the question that way, if they were to ask themselves: how does the working class regard the Party—is it sympathetic or unsympathetic? —they would realise that the Party is on the correct path. The Lenin Enrolment is the key to an understanding of everything involved in the results of the discussion. If the working class sends 200,000 of its members into the Party, selecting the most upright and staunch, this signifies that such a party is invincible because it has, in fact, become the elected organ of the working class, one that enjoys the undivided confidence of the working class. Such a party will live and strike fear into its enemies; such a party cannot disintegrate. The trouble with our opposition is that it did not approach Party problems and the results of the discussion from the standpoint of the Marxist, who appraises the weight of the Party in the light of its influence among the masses—for the Party exists for the masses, and not vice versa—but approached them from the formal standpoint, from the standpoint of "pure" apparatus. To find a simple and direct clue to understanding the results of the discussion one must turn not to this babbling about the apparatus, but to the 200,000 who have joined the Party and who have demonstrated its profound democracy. References to democracy in the speeches of the oppositionists are just empty talk. But when the working

class sends 200,000 new members into the Party, that is real democracy. Our Party has become the elected organ of the working class. Point me out another such party. You cannot point one out because so far there does not exist one. But, strange as it may seem, even such a powerful party as ours is not to the liking of the oppositionists. Where on this earth will they find a better one? I am afraid they will have to migrate to Mars in their search for a better party. (*Applause.*)

The last question—that of the opposition's petty-bourgeois deviation; the assertion that the charge of a petty-bourgeois deviation is unjust. Is that true? No, it is not. How did the charge arise, what is the foundation for it? It is founded on the fact that in their unbridled agitation for democracy in the Party the oppositionists have unwittingly, without so desiring, served as a sort of mouthpiece for that new bourgeoisie which does not care a hang about democracy in our Party, but which would like, and very much like, to obtain democracy for itself in the country. The section of the Party which has raised such a clamour over questions of democracy has unwittingly served as a mouthpiece and vehicle for the agitation in the country that emanates from the new bourgeoisie and aims at weakening the dictatorship, at "broadening" the Soviet constitution and at re-establishing political rights for the exploiters. That is the mainspring and secret why members of the opposition, who undoubtedly love the Party and so on and so forth, have without themselves noticing it become a mouthpiece for elements outside the Party, elements which seek to weaken and disintegrate the dictatorship.

No wonder the sympathies of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are with the opposition. Is that accidental? No, it is not. The alignment of forces internationally is such that every attempt to weaken the authority of our Party and the stability of the dictatorship in our country will inevitably be seized upon by the enemies of the revolution as a definite gain for them, irrespective of whether such attempts are made by our opposition or by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Whoever fails to understand this, fails to grasp the logic of factional struggle within our Party, fails to realise that the outcome of this struggle depends not on personalities and desires, but on the results produced in the sum total of the struggle between the Soviet and

anti-Soviet elements. That is the basis of the fact that in the opposition we are dealing with a petty-bourgeois deviation.

Lenin once said about Party discipline and the unity of our ranks: "Whoever weakens in the least the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 190). Is there any need to prove, after this, that the comrades of the opposition, by their attacks on the Moscow organisation and the Party's Central Committee, have been weakening Party discipline and undermining the foundations of the dictatorship, for the Party is the basic core of the dictatorship?

That is why I think that the Thirteenth Conference was right in declaring that we are dealing here with a deviation towards petty-bourgeois policy. This is not as yet a petty-bourgeois policy. By no means! At the Tenth Congress, Lenin explained that a deviation is something as yet unconsummated, something that has not assumed definite shape. And if you, comrades of the opposition, do not persist in this petty-bourgeois deviation, in these small mistakes—everything will be rectified and the Party's activities will go forward. But if you do persist, the petty-bourgeois deviation may develop into a petty-bourgeois policy. Consequently, it all depends on you, comrades of the opposition.

What are the conclusions? The conclusions are that we must continue to conduct inner-Party work on the basis of the complete unity of the Party. Look at this congress, at its solid support of the Central Committee line—there you have Party unity. The opposition represents an insignificant minority in our Party. That our Party is united, that it will continue to be united, is demonstrated by the present congress, by its unanimity and solidity. Whether we will have unity with that insignificant group in the Party known as the opposition, depends on them. We want to work in harmony with the opposition. Last year, at the height of the discussion, we said that joint work with the opposition was necessary. We re-affirm this here today. But whether this unity will be achieved, I do not know, for in future unity will depend entirely on the opposition. In the present instance unity comes as the result of the interaction of two factors, the Party majority and minority. The majority wants united activity. Whether the minority sincerely wants it, I do not know. That depends

entirely on the comrades of the opposition.

Conclusion. The conclusion is that we must endorse the Thirteenth Conference resolutions and approve the activity of the Central Committee. I do not doubt that the congress will endorse these resolutions and approve the political and organisational activity of the Central Committee. (*Prolonged applause.*)

THE RESULTS OF THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

Report Delivered at the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) Courses for Secretaries of Uyezd Party Committees

June 17, 1924

Comrades, I do not propose to give a detailed analysis of the Thirteenth Congress resolutions. There are quite a number of them—they make up a whole pamphlet—and it is hardly possible to examine them now in detail, the more so because neither you nor I can spare the time just now. I think, therefore, it will be more expedient to outline and explain the basic starting points in order to facilitate your own study of the resolutions when you return home.

And so, a detailed study of the Thirteenth Congress resolutions will reveal that the manifold questions they deal with can be reduced to four basic questions which run through all the resolutions like a red thread.

What are these questions?

The first basic question, or first group of questions, concerns the external position of our Republic, the consolidation of its international position.

The second basic question, or second group of questions, concerns the bond between state industry and the peasant economy, the alliance between the proletariat and peasantry.

The third group of questions embraces the education and re-education of the working masses in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism. Included in this group are such questions as those of the state apparatus, work among the peasants, among the women toilers and among the youth.

Lastly, the fourth group of questions concerns the Party itself, its internal life, its existence and development.

I shall deal especially, in the concluding part of my report, with the tasks of Party workers in the uyezds in connection with the Thirteenth Congress decisions.

Foreign Affairs

What new developments in Soviet Russia's international position has the past year produced? What basic, new developments in the international field must be taken into account in proceeding from the past year to the new—developments which the Thirteenth Congress could not but take into account?

These new developments consist, firstly, in the fact that during the past year we have had occasion to witness a number of attempts at the open fascisation of internal policy in the West-European countries; attempts that have proved futile and miscarried. Leaving aside Italy, where fascism is disintegrating, attempts to fascise European policy in the main countries, France and Britain, have miscarried, and the authors of these attempts, Poincaré and Curzon, have, to put it plainly, come a cropper, they have been thrown overboard.

This is the first new development of the past year.

The second new development of the past year was a series of attempts by the bellicose imperialists of Britain and France to isolate our country, attempts that were defeated. There can hardly be any doubt that Poincaré's numerous machinations against the Soviet Union, and Curzon's notorious ultimatum, were intended to isolate our country. But what happened? Instead of isolation, the result has been the factual recognition of the Soviet Union. More, instead of isolation of the Soviet Union, the result has been isolation of the isolators, the resignation of Poincaré and Curzon. Our country has proved to be a more weighty factor than some of the older imperialist politicians were prone to believe.

This is the second new development of the past year in the sphere of foreign policy.

What is the explanation of all this?

Some are inclined to attribute it to the wisdom of our policy. I do not deny that our policy has been, if not wise, at any rate correct, and this has been confirmed by the Thirteenth Congress. But neither the wisdom nor the correctness of our policy can be regarded as sufficient explanation. The explanation lies not so much in the correctness of our policy, as in the situation that has arisen in Europe of late, and which determined the success of our policy. Three circumstances should be noted in this connection.

Firstly. The impotence of the imperialist powers to cope with the results of their war victories and to establish anything resembling a tolerable peace in Europe. They are incapable of developing further without plundering the defeated countries and colonies, without conflicts and clashes among themselves over division of the loot. Hence, the new armaments. Hence, the danger of another war. But the masses do not want war, for they have not yet forgotten the sacrifices they had to make for the sake of the capitalists' profits. Hence, the growing resentment which the policy of bellicose imperialism is evoking among the peoples.

That is the reason for the inner weakness of imperialism. Why were Curzon and Poincaré thrown out? Because public opinion regards them as instigators of another war. Because by their frankly bellicose policy they aroused mass resentment against imperialism generally, and thereby created a danger for imperialism.

Secondly. The consolidation of Soviet power inside the country. The capitalist states counted on the collapse of Soviet power inside the country. Divine truth, the psalmist tells us, is sometimes uttered through the mouths of infants. Well, if Western imperialism is to be regarded as a divinity, then it is only natural that it should be unable to do without an infant of its own. And so, it has found one, in the person of Benes, the not unknown Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs. Through him it announced to the world that there was no need to hurry with the recognition of the Union of Republics, in view of the instability of Soviet power, and that since the latter would soon be replaced by a new, bourgeois-democratic government, it would be better to "abstain," for the time being, from establishing "normal relations"

with the Soviet Union. That was how things stood only a short while ago. But the "truth" of imperialism, proclaimed to the world through the mouth of its infant, hardly lasted a couple of months, for, as we know, a number of countries soon abandoned the policy of "abstention" for one of "recognition."[1] Why? Because there is no going against the facts, and the facts are that Soviet power is as firm as a rock. To begin with, the man in the street, no matter how naive he may be politically, could not but notice that the Soviet government is, evidently, more stable than any bourgeois government, for in these seven years of proletarian dictatorship bourgeois governments have come and gone, but the Soviet government remains. Further, the man in the street could not but notice our economic progress, if only from the steady increase of our exports. Is additional proof required that all these circumstances speak in favour of the Soviet Union, not against it? We are accused of conducting propaganda in Western Europe against capitalism. I must say that there is no need for us to conduct such propaganda; we do not need it. The very existence of the Soviet regime, its growth, its material prosperity, its indubitable consolidation, are all most effective propaganda among the European workers in favour of Soviet power. Any worker who comes to the Soviet land and takes a look at our proletarian order of things will not fail to see what Soviet power is, and what a working class in power is capable of accomplishing. This is indeed real propaganda, but propaganda by facts, which has a much greater effect on the worker than oral or printed propaganda. We are accused of conducting propaganda in the East. That, too, is nonsense. There is no need for us to conduct propaganda in the East. Any citizen of a dependency or colony has only to come to the Soviet Union and see how the people run the country, how black and white, Russians and non-Russians, people of every colour of skin, and of every nationality, have joined together in the work of running a great country, to convince himself that ours is the only land

1 **Original editor:** The capitalist countries' policy of recognising the U.S.S.R. was expressed in the establishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. in February 1924 by Great Britain, Italy, Norway and Austria; in March by Greece and Sweden; in June by Denmark; in October by France, and in January 1925 by Japan and a number of other countries.

where the brotherhood of nations is not a phrase, but a reality. With such propaganda by facts as the existence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, we require no printed or oral propaganda.

Thirdly. The increasing weight and prestige of the Soviet government, its mounting popularity among the masses in the capitalist countries, due first and foremost to the fact that ours is the only country in the world which is capable of pursuing, and actually is pursuing, a policy of peace—pursuing this policy not hypocritically, but honestly and openly, resolutely and consistently. Today everyone, both friend and foe, admits that ours is the only country that can be rightly called the buttress and standard-bearer of the policy of peace throughout the world. Does it need to be proved that this circumstance was bound to increase support and sympathy for the Soviet Union among the European masses? Have you noticed that certain European rulers are endeavouring to build their careers on "friendship" with the Soviet Union, that even such of them as Mussolini are not averse, on occasion, to "profit" from this "friendship"? This is a direct indication of the very real popularity the Soviet government has won among the broad masses in the capitalist countries. More than to anything else, however, the Soviet government owes its popularity to the policy of peace it has been honestly and courageously pursuing amid the difficult conditions of capitalist encirclement.

These, in general outline, are the factors which have determined the success of our foreign policy in the past year.

The Thirteenth Congress in its resolution has approved the Central Committee's policy on foreign affairs. What does this imply? It implies that the congress has bound the Party to continue its policy of peace, its policy of determined struggle against another war, of ruthlessly exposing each and every advocate and abettor of new armaments and new conflicts.

Questions of the Bond Between Town and Country

What is meant by the bond between town and country? It means constant contact, constant exchange, between town and country, between our industry and the peasant economy, exchange of the products of our

industry for the food and raw materials produced by the peasant economy. The peasant economy cannot thrive, cannot exist, without selling its foodstuffs and raw materials in the urban market and obtaining from the cities, in exchange, the manufactures and implements it requires. Similarly, state industry cannot develop without selling its products in the peasant market and obtaining from the countryside supplies of food and raw materials. Consequently, the home market, and above all the peasant market, the peasant economy, is the life-source of our socialist industry. For that reason the question of the bond between town and country is one that involves the existence of our industry, the existence of the proletariat itself; it is a question of life or death for our Republic, a question of the victory of socialism in our country.

We did not succeed in effecting this bond, this constant contact between town and country, between industry and the peasant economy, through direct exchange of industrial goods for peasant-farm produce. We did not succeed because of our low industrial development, because we did not have a ramified supply network covering the entire country, and because following the war our economy as a whole was in a state of disruption. That is why we were obliged to introduce what is known as the New Economic Policy, i.e., we were obliged to proclaim freedom of trade, free circulation of commodities, to permit capitalism, to mobilise the efforts of millions of peasants and small proprietors so as to create a flow of goods in the country and promote trade, in order subsequently, after gaining control of the key positions in trade, to build up the bond between industry and the peasant economy through trade. That is what Lenin called the roundabout method of building up the bond—not directly, not by means of direct exchange of peasant-farm produce for industrial goods, but through the medium of trade.

The task is, by utilising the efforts of millions of small proprietors, to gain control of trade, to bring the chief supply channels of town and country into the hands of the state and the co-operatives, and in this way to establish uninterrupted contact, an indissoluble bond, between industry and the peasant economy.

It would be wrong to say that this task is beyond our capacity. Wrong because the proletariat, being in power, possesses all the chief

instruments, so to speak, required for establishing the bond between town and country by roundabout means, through trade. Firstly, the proletariat holds state power. Secondly, it owns industry. Thirdly, it controls credit, and credit is a potent force in the hands of the state. Fourthly, it has its own trading apparatus, good or bad, but at any rate an apparatus that is developing and gaining strength. Lastly, it possesses certain commodity stocks which can be thrown onto the market from time to time in order to curb or neutralise market fluctuations, influence prices, and so on. The workers' state has all these means at its command and for that reason it cannot be said that establishing the bond between town and country through trade is beyond our capacity.

That is how matters stand with regard to organising the bond between town and country and the possibilities for its establishment.

And so, what new and significant developments has the past year produced from the standpoint of establishing the bond between town and country?

What new materials did the Thirteenth Congress have to deal with when framing its decisions on the bond?

The year's new developments in this sphere lie in the fact that in our practical work we have for the first time been confronted with a broad struggle, waged on a large scale, between the socialist and private capitalist elements within our national economy and, consequently, have for the first time approached the question of the bond in a practical and very concrete way. Questions of the bond and of trade appeared before us no longer as questions of theory, but as vital questions of immediate practice, requiring urgent solution.

You will recall that already at the Eleventh Congress Lenin said[2] that capture of the market by the state and the co-operatives, and gaining control of the basic channels of trade, would not be a matter of peaceful work, but would assume the form of struggle between the socialist and the private capitalist elements; that it would assume the form of fierce rivalry between these two opposite elements in our national economy. Now this

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2 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 231-91.

struggle has flared up. It has made itself evident mainly in two spheres: trade between town and country, and credit, chiefly in the countryside.

What have been the results of this struggle?

Firstly. Private capital, we found, had penetrated not into industry, where the risk is greater and the turnover of capital slower, but into trade, the very sphere which, as Lenin said, in our transition period constitutes the basic link in a chain of processes. And having penetrated into trade, private capital entrenched itself there to such an extent that it controlled about 80 per cent of the country's entire retail trade, and about 50 per cent of all its wholesale and retail trade. This is due to the fact that our trading and co-operative organisations were young and not yet properly organised; to the incorrect policy of our syndicates, which abused their monopoly position and forced up commodity prices; to the weakness of our Commissariat of Internal Trade, whose function it is to regulate trade in the interests of the state, and, lastly, to the instability of the Soviet currency then in circulation, which hit mainly at the peasant and forced down his purchasing capacity.

Secondly. Rural credit, we found, was entirely in the hands of the kulak and the usurer. The small peasant, having no agricultural implements of his own, was forced into bondage to the usurer, was compelled to pay extortionate interest and to tolerate the usurer's domination without a murmur. This is due to the fact that we still have no local agricultural credit system capable of granting the peasant cheap credit and ousting the usurer; to the fact that the usurer has this field entirely to himself.

Thus we see that the merchant and the usurer have wedged themselves in between the state, on the one hand, and the peasant economy, on the other, with the result that the bond between socialist industry and the peasant economy has proved more difficult to organise, and in fact has not been properly organised. The summer marketing crisis last year was an expression of this difficulty and lack of proper organisation.

Already then, even before the congress, the Party took steps to overcome the marketing crisis and lay the foundation for a system of agricultural credit. A new, stable currency was introduced, which improved the situation. Commodity stocks were put on the market to bring down prices, and this likewise had a favourable effect. The Commissariat of

Internal Trade was reorganised in a way that ensured successful struggle against private capital. The question was raised of reorganising the work of the trade and co-operative bodies with a view to cementing the bond between town and country. The marketing crisis was, in the main, eliminated.

But the Party could not confine itself to these measures. It was the task of the Thirteenth Congress to consider the question of the bond anew in all its implications and to work out the basic lines for solving it in the new situation created after the marketing crisis had been eliminated.

What did the Thirteenth Congress decide on this score?

Firstly. The congress called for a further expansion of industry, primarily of light industry, and also metals, for it is clear that with our present stocks of manufactured goods we cannot satisfy the peasant's hunger for commodities. This apart from growing unemployment, which makes industrial expansion imperative. The further expansion of industry is, therefore, a question of life or death (see the congress resolution on the Central Committee's report[3]).

Secondly. The congress called for a further expansion of peasant farming, for assistance to the peasants in extending crop areas. This, too, is necessary to strengthen the bond, for it is clear that the peasantry is interested in meeting not only the requirements of our industry, of course in exchange for manufactures, but also the requirements of the foreign market, of course in exchange for machines. Hence, the further expansion of peasant farming as an immediate task of Party policy (see the resolution on "Work in the Countryside"[4]).

Thirdly. The congress endorsed the formation of the People's Commissariat of Internal Trade and made it the principal task of all our trading and co-operative organisations to combat private capital, gain control of the market, and oust private capital from the sphere of trade by economic measures, by reducing commodity prices and improving the

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3 **Original editor:** See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 566-68.

4 **Original editor:** See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 589-98.

quality of goods, by manoeuvring with commodity stocks, utilising preferential credits, etc. (see the resolutions on "Internal Trade" and on the "Co-operatives"[5]).

Fourthly. The congress raised and decided the very important question of agricultural credit. The question concerns not only the Central Agricultural Bank, or even the gubernia agricultural credit committees, but chiefly the organisation of a network of local credit co-operatives in the uyezds and volosts. It is a question of democratising credit, of making agricultural credit available to the peasant, of replacing the extortionate credit of the usurer by cheap state credit, and of ousting the usurer from the countryside. This is a highly important question for the whole of our economy, and unless it is solved there can be no really durable bond between the proletariat and the peasantry. That is why the Thirteenth Congress devoted special attention to this problem (see the resolution on "Work in the Countryside"). The Central Committee has secured the appropriation of 40 million rubles to augment the basic capital of the Agricultural Bank, on the understanding that by an arrangement with the State Bank it will be possible to increase the amount to 80 million rubles. I believe that with some exertion of effort the amount can be raised to 100 million rubles. Certainly this is not very much for such a giant as our Union; nevertheless it will do something to help the peasant to improve his farming and to undermine bondage to the usurer. I have already spoken of the importance of local peasant credit co-operatives for the small peasants, for the bond between the peasantry and the workers' state. But the local credit co-operatives can be of assistance not only to the peasant. Under the proper conditions, they can become a most valuable source not only of state assistance to the peasant, but also of peasant assistance to the state. Indeed, if we develop a ramified network of local agricultural credit co-operatives in the uyezds and volosts, and if these institutions enjoy prestige among the peasant masses, they can engage not only in credit, but in debit operations, too; in other words, the peasants will not only come to them for state loans, but will deposit money in them as well. It

5 **Original editor:** See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 582-88.

should not be difficult to visualise that if these local credit institutions develop favourably they can become a source of substantial assistance to the state by the peasant millions, a source with which no foreign loan can compare. As you see, the congress did not err in devoting special attention to the organisation of cheap rural credit.

Fifthly. The congress re-affirmed the inviolability of our monopoly of foreign trade. I do not think there is any need to explain the importance of the foreign trade monopoly for our industry and agriculture as well as for the bond between the two. Its cardinal significance requires no fresh proof (see the resolution on the Central Committee's report).

Sixthly. The congress endorsed the need to increase our exports in general, and the export of grain in particular. This decision, too, I believe, requires no comment (see the resolution on the Central Committee's report).

Seventhly. The congress resolved that every measure be taken to complete the carrying through of the currency reform,[6] which has facilitated trade and the establishment of firm ties between industry and the peasant economy, and to ensure that both central and local bodies create all the conditions necessary for this (see the resolution on the Central Committee's report).

Such are the slogans issued by the Thirteenth Congress on the bond between town and country. Their purpose is to gain control of trade, establish a firm bond between our industry and the peasant economy and thereby pave the way for the victory of the socialist elements of our national economy over the capitalist elements.

Questions of the Education and Re-education of the Working Masses

One of the essential tasks confronting the Party in the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to re-educate the older generations and

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6 **Original editor:** Currency reform—the replacement of the depreciated Soviet paper money by chervonets (ten-ruble) notes with a firm gold backing, carried out by the Soviet Government during 1924.

educate the new generations in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism. The old habits and customs, traditions and prejudices inherited from the old society are most dangerous enemies of socialism. They—these traditions and habits—have a firm grip over millions of working people; at times they engulf whole strata of the proletariat; at times they present a great danger to the very existence of the proletarian dictatorship. That is why the struggle against these traditions and habits, their absolute eradication in all spheres of our activity, and, lastly, the education of the younger generations in the spirit of proletarian socialism, represent immediate tasks for our Party without the accomplishment of which socialism cannot triumph. Work to improve the state apparatus, work in the countryside, work among women toilers and among the youth—these are the principal spheres of the Party's activity in the fulfilment of these tasks.

a) *The struggle to improve the state apparatus.* The congress devoted little time to the question of the state apparatus. The report of the Central Control Commission on the fight against defects in the state apparatus was endorsed without debate. The resolution on "The Work of the Control Commissions"[7] was likewise adopted without debate. This, I believe, was due to lack of time and to the great number of questions which the congress was called upon to consider. But it would be absolutely wrong to infer from this that the Party does not regard the question of the state apparatus as one of key importance. On the contrary, it is a vital issue in all our constructive work. Does the state apparatus function honestly, or does it indulge in graft; does it exercise economy in expenditure, or does it squander the national wealth; is it guilty of duplicity, or does it serve the state loyally and faithfully; is it a burden on the working people, or an organisation that helps them; does it inculcate respect for proletarian law, or does it corrupt the people's minds by disparaging proletarian law; is it progressing towards transition to a communist society in which there will be no state, or

7 **Original editor:** See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 578-82.

is it retrogressing towards the stagnant bureaucracy of the ordinary bourgeois state—these are all questions the correct solution of which cannot but be a matter of decisive importance for the Party and for socialism. That our state apparatus is full of defects, that it is cumbersome and expensive and nine-tenths bureaucratic, that its bureaucracy weighs heavily on the Party and its organisations, hampering their efforts to improve the state apparatus—these are things which hardly anyone will doubt. Yet it should be perfectly clear that, if our state apparatus were to rid itself of at least some of its basic faults, it could, in the hands of the proletariat, serve as a most valuable instrument for the education and re-education of broad sections of the population in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism.

That is why Lenin devoted special attention to improving the state apparatus.

That is why the Party has set up special organisations of workers and peasants (the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the enlarged Central Control Commission) to combat deficiencies in our state apparatus.

The task is to help the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in their difficult work of improving, simplifying, reducing the cost of the state apparatus and bringing a healthier atmosphere into it from top to bottom (see the congress resolution on "Work of the Control Commissions")

b) *Work in the countryside.* This is one of the most complex and difficult problems of our practical Party activity. The congress adopted a splendid resolution on the basic lines of our work in the countryside. One need only compare this resolution with that of the Eighth Congress on work in the countryside[8] to appreciate the Party's progress in this field. But it would be a mistake to think that the Thirteenth Congress has given, or could have given this year, an exhaustive solution to the very complicated problem of work in the

8 **Original editor:** See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 307-11.

countryside. Such questions as the organisational forms of collective farming; reorganisation of the state farms; proper adjustment of land tenure, both in the central and border regions; new forms of organisation of labour in connection with the activities of the agricultural co-operatives; understanding of the specific features obtaining in different regions of our Union, and proper regard for these specific features in our work—all these questions, for reasons that will be readily appreciated, could not be exhaustively settled in the congress resolution. The importance of that resolution lies in the fact that it charts the basic lines of our work and contributes to the further study of these questions. You probably know that the Central Committee plenum[9] set up a permanent commission on work in the countryside for a detailed study of these questions.

The focal point of the resolution is the slogan of developing the co-operative movement among the peasantry. This should proceed along three lines: consumers' co-operatives, agricultural co-operatives and credit co-operatives. This is one of the surest ways of implanting the idea of collectivism and collective methods, among the peasantry, among the poor and middle sections of the peasantry (see the congress resolution on "Work in the Countryside").

c) *Work among women toilers.* In my report to the congress, I remarked on the neglect shown in regard to this work, which is of extreme, in

9 **Original editor:** This refers to the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) held on June 2, 1924, after the Thirteenth Party Congress. J. V. Stalin was elected to the Political Bureau, to the Organising Bureau and to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), and re-elected General Secretary of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.). The plenum discussed the question of the representation of the R.C.P.(B.) on the E.C.C.I. and at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, questions concerning wages, the metal industry, the drought, etc. The plenum decided to set up a permanent commission of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) for detailed study of questions concerning work in the countryside. On the instructions of the plenum, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee appointed the following to this commission: V. M. Molotov (chairman), J. V. Stalin, M. I. Kalinin, L. M. Kaganovich, N. K. Krupskaya, and others. By a decision of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) held in September 1924, the commission was transformed into a Council on Work in the Countryside under the auspices of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.).

some cases of decisive, importance to the Party for the training of the younger generations in the spirit of socialism. There is no point, certainly, in repeating here what has already been said at the congress. I would like only to call your attention to the fact that, although the congress, unfortunately, had no opportunity to discuss activities among women toilers as a separate item, it adopted a special decision stating that: "The congress draws the particular attention of the entire Party to the need for intensifying our activities among working women and peasant women and for promoting their participation in all Party and Soviet elected bodies" (see the resolution on the Central Committee's report). I think that the next congress will have to deal with this question specially. In accordance with the congress decision, the Central Committee plenum held immediately after the congress instructed the C.C. Organising Bureau to initiate special measures to raise our activities among women toilers to the proper level.

d) *Work among the youth.* The congress devoted particular attention to work among the youth. Its resolution on the subject is, in my opinion, the most detailed and exhaustive of all the congress resolutions, and is therefore of immense value to the Party and to the youth.

The importance of the youth—I am referring to the working-class and peasant youth—lies in the fact that it constitutes a most favourable soil for building the future, that it represents our country's future and is the bearer of that future. If our work in the state apparatus, among the peasants, among women toilers, is of immense importance for overcoming old habits and traditions, for *re-educating* the older generations of working people, work among the youth, who are more or less free from these traditions and habits, assumes inestimable importance for the *education* of new cadres of working people in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism, for here—and this is self-evident—we have an extremely favourable soil.

From this follows the very great importance of the Young Communist League and of its offshoot, the Pioneers.

The Young Communist League is a voluntary organisation of

young workers and peasants. The young workers are its centre, its core; the young peasants—its support. The basis of the organisation of the youth is the alliance of the working-class youth and peasant youth. Its tasks are: to gather around the proletarian core all honest-minded and revolutionary elements among the peasant youth; to draw its members into all branches of activity—economic and cultural, military and administrative; to train them to be fighters and builders, workers and leaders of our country (see the resolution on "Work Among the Youth"[10])

The Party

There are four questions here: the opposition, the Lenin Enrolment, democratisation of the Party leadership, theory in general and the propaganda of Leninism in particular.

a) *The opposition.* Now that the question of the opposition has been decided by the congress and the whole matter, consequently, is settled, one might ask: What is the opposition, and what, essentially, was the issue involved in the discussion? I think, comrades, that the issue was one of life or death for the Party. Perhaps the opposition itself did not realise this, but that is not the point. The important thing is not what aims particular comrades or opposition groups set themselves. The important thing is the objective results that are bound to follow from the actions of such a group. What does declaring war on the Party apparatus mean? It means working to destroy the Party. What does inciting the youth against the cadres mean? It means working to disintegrate the Party. What does fighting for freedom of groups mean? It means attempting to demolish the Party, its unity, What does the effort to discredit the Party cadres by talk about degeneration mean? It means trying to disrupt the Party, to break its backbone. Yes, comrades, the issue was one of life or death for the Party. And that, indeed, explains the passion of

10 **Original editor:** See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1941, pp. 610-17.

the discussion. It also explains the fact, unparalleled in our Party's history, that the congress *unanimously* condemned the opposition platform. The gravity of the danger welded the Party into a solid ring of iron.

It is interesting to trace the history of the opposition. We can begin with the Seventh Party Congress, the first after the establishment of Soviet power (in the early part of 1918). There was an opposition at that congress, and it was headed by the same people who led the opposition at the Thirteenth Congress. The issue was war or peace, the Brest Peace. At that time the opposition had one quarter of the whole congress on its side—no mean proportion. No wonder there was talk then of a split.

Two years later, at the Tenth Congress, the inner-Party struggle flared up anew, this time over the trade union issue, and the opposition was headed by the same people. The opposition mustered one-eighth of the congress, which, of course, was less than the quarter it had before.

Another two years passed, and a new struggle flared up at the Thirteenth Congress, the one that has just concluded. Here, too, there was an opposition, but it failed to muster a single vote at the congress. This time, as you see, its showing was a sorry one indeed.

And so, on three occasions the opposition has tried to wage war against the Party's basic cadres. The first time at the Seventh Congress, the second time at the Tenth, and the third time at the Thirteenth Congress. It met with defeat on all these occasions, each time losing some of its following and with every new step diminishing the strength of its army.

What do all these facts show? Firstly, that the history of our Party in these past six years has been one of progressive rallying of the majority of our Party around its basic cadres. Secondly that the opposition's supporters have been steadily breaking away from it to join the basic core of the Party and swell its ranks. The conclusion that follows is this: it is not precluded that from the opposition, which

had no delegates at the Thirteenth Congress (we do not have proportional representation) but which undoubtedly has followers in the Party, a number of comrades will break away and join the basic core of the Party, as has happened in the past.

What should our policy be with regard to these oppositionists, or, more precisely, with regard to these former oppositionists? It should be an exceptionally comradely one. Every measure must be taken to help them to come over to the basic core of the Party and to work jointly and in harmony with this core.

b) *The Lenin Enrolment.* I shall not dwell on the fact that the Lenin Enrolment, that is, the admission into our Party of 250,000 new members from among the workers, is evidence of the Party's profound democracy, of the fact that it actually is the elected organ of the working class. The importance of the Lenin Enrolment from this aspect is, of course, tremendous. But that is not the aspect I should like to discuss today. I wish to draw your attention to the dangerous infatuation which has made its appearance in our Party of late in connection with the Lenin Enrolment. Some say that we should go further and bring the number of members up to one million. Others want to go beyond that figure, maintaining that it would be better to go as far as two millions. I do not doubt that others are prepared to go further still. This is a dangerous infatuation, comrades. Infatuation has been the cause of the downfall of the world's biggest armies; they seized too much and then, being unable to digest what they had seized, they fell to pieces. The biggest parties can perish if they yield to infatuation, seize too much and then prove incapable of embracing, digesting what they have captured. Judge for yourselves. Political illiteracy in our Party is as high as 60 per cent—60 per cent prior to the Lenin Enrolment, and I am afraid that with the Lenin Enrolment it will be brought up to 80 per cent. Is it not time to call a halt, comrades? Is it not time to confine ourselves to 800,000 members and put the question squarely and sharply of improving the *quality* of the membership, of *teaching* the Lenin Enrolment the foundations of Leninism, of converting the new members into conscious Leninists? I think it is time to do that.

c) *Democratisation of the Party leadership.* The Lenin Enrolment testifies to the profound democracy of our Party, to the proletarian composition of its basic units, to the undoubted confidence it enjoys among the millions of non-Party people. But these are not the only features of democracy in our Party; they make up only one aspect of democracy. Another aspect is the steady democratisation of the Party leadership. It was pointed out at the congress that the focus in Party leadership is being shifted more and more from narrow leading bodies and bureaus to wider organisations, to the plenums of the local and central bodies; and that the plenums themselves are being extended and their composition improved. You probably know that the congress fully approved this tendency in the development of our leading organisations. What does all this indicate? It indicates that our leading organisations are beginning to take root in the very midst of the proletarian masses. It is interesting to trace the development of our Party's Central Committee during the past six years, from the point of view of size and social composition. At the time of the Seventh Congress (1918) the Central Committee consisted of 15 members, of whom only *one* (7 per cent) was a worker, while intellectuals numbered 14 (93 per cent). That was at the Seventh Congress. Now, after the Thirteenth Congress, the Central Committee has 54 members, of whom 29 (53 per cent) are workers and 25 (47 per cent) are intellectuals. This is a sure sign of the democratisation of the principal Party leadership.

d) *Theory in general and the propaganda of Leninism in particular.* One of the dangerous shortcomings of our Party is the decline in the theoretical level of its members. This is due to the devilish pressure of routine work, which kills the desire for theoretical study and fosters a certain dangerous disregard—to put it mildly—for questions of theory. Here are a few examples.

I recently read in a newspaper a report on the Thirteenth Congress by one of the comrades (I think it was Kamenev) which said in so many words that our Party's immediate slogan was conversion of "*Nepman* Russia" into socialist Russia. And what is still worse, this strange slogan was attributed to none other than Lenin himself—

no more and no less! Yet we know that Lenin did not say anything of the kind, nor could he have done so, for everyone knows that no such thing as "Nepman" Russia exists. True, Lenin spoke of *"NEP"* Russia. But "NEP" Russia (that is, Soviet Russia which is carrying out the new economic policy) is one thing, and "Nepman" Russia (that is, a Russia ruled by Nepmen) is quite another. Does Kamenev appreciate this fundamental difference? Of course he does. Why then did he come out with this strange slogan? Because of the usual disregard for questions of theory, for precise theoretical formulations. Yet, unless the error is corrected, this strange slogan is very likely to give rise to a good deal of misunderstanding in the Party.

Another example. People often say that we have a "dictatorship of the Party." Someone will say: I am for the dictatorship of the Party. I recall that the expression figured in one of our congress resolutions, in fact, I believe, in a resolution of the Twelfth Congress. This, of course, was an oversight. Apparently, some comrades think that ours is a dictatorship of the Party, not of the working class. But that is sheer nonsense, comrades. If that contention were right, then Lenin was wrong, for he taught us that the Soviets *implement* the dictatorship, while the Party *guides* the Soviets. Then Lenin was wrong, for he spoke of the dictatorship of the proletariat, not of the dictatorship of the Party. If the contention about "dictatorship of the Party" were correct, there would be no need for the Soviets, there would have been no point in Lenin, at the Eleventh Congress, speaking of the necessity to draw a *"distinction* between Party and Soviet organs." But from what quarter, and how, has this nonsense penetrated into our Party? It is the result of the passion for the "Party principle," which does so much harm precisely to the Party principle, without quotation marks. It is the result of a disregard for questions of theory, of the habit of putting forward slogans without considering them properly beforehand, for very little thought is required to realise the utter absurdity of substituting the dictatorship of the Party for the dictatorship of the class. Does it need proof that this absurdity may well give rise to confusion and misunderstanding in the Party?

Or another example. Everybody knows that during the discussion one section of our Party succumbed to the opposition's anti-Party agitation against the organisational principles of Leninism. Any Bolshevik who has had even the briefest schooling in the theory of Leninism would have immediately realised that these opposition preachings had nothing in common with Leninism. However, a section of the Party, as we know, failed at first to see the opposition in its true colours. Why? Because of this same disregard for theory, because of the low theoretical level of our Party members.

The discussion brought the question of studying Leninism to the forefront. The death of Lenin made this question more acute, by heightening the Party members' interest in theory. The Thirteenth Congress merely reflected this sentiment, when in a number of resolutions it confirmed the need to study and propagate Leninism. The task of the Party is to take advantage of this heightened interest in questions of theory and do everything to raise, at last, the theoretical level of the membership to the proper degree. We must not forget Lenin's words that without a clear and correct theory, there can be no correct practice.

The Tasks of Party Workers in the Uyezds

Comrades, it is not accidental that it is to you that I have come to report on the congress. I have come here not only because of your invitation, but also because at the present stage of development the uyezds, and in particular the Party workers in the uyezds, represent the principal connecting link between the Party and the peasantry, between town and country. And, as you are well aware, establishing the bond between town and country is today the fundamental question of our practical Party and state activities.

I have already said that establishing the bond between state industry and the peasant economy must proceed along three main lines: consumers' co-operatives, agricultural co-operatives and local credit

co-operatives. I have said that these are the three basic channels through which the bond must be organised. But it would be fanciful to imagine that we shall succeed at once in linking up industry with the peasant economy directly on the volost level, by-passing the uyezd. There is no need to prove that we have neither the forces for this, nor the skill, nor the funds. Therefore, at this juncture, the uyezd, the area, remains the pivotal point in building up the bond between town and country. To entrench ourselves in the sphere of trade there is no need to oust the very last shopkeeper from the very last volost; all we need is to convert the uyezd into a base of Soviet trade, so that all the shopkeepers will be compelled to revolve round the co-operative or Soviet shop in the uyezd as the planets revolve round the sun. To gain control in the sphere of credit there is no need at all at the present moment to cover the volosts and villages with a network of credit co-operatives; it is sufficient to build a base in the uyezd, and the peasants will immediately begin to break away from the kulak and usurer. And so on and so forth.

In short, in the near future the uyezd (area) must be converted into the principal base for organising the bond between town and country, between the proletariat and the peasantry.

How quickly this conversion will take place depends upon you comrades working in the uyezds. There are some 300 of you now—a veritable army. And it depends upon you, and your comrades in the uyezds of our country, to convert the uyezd, as quickly as possible, into the pivotal point of our Party and state work in establishing the bond between industry and the peasant economy. I do not doubt that the uyezd workers will fulfil their duty to the Party and the country.

Pravda, Nos. 136 and 137,
June 19 and 20, 1924

WORKER CORRESPONDENTS

Interview With a Representative of the Magazine "Rabochy Korrespondent"[1]

The importance of workers' participation in the conduct of a newspaper lies primarily in the fact that such participation makes it possible to transform this sharp weapon in the class struggle, as a newspaper is, from a weapon for the enslavement of the people into a weapon for their emancipation. Only worker and peasant *correspondents* can bring about this great transformation.

Only as an *organised* force can worker and peasant correspondents play, in the course of development of the press, the part of mouthpiece and vehicle of proletarian public opinion, of exposer of the defects in Soviet public life, and of tireless fighter for the improvement of our work of construction.

Should worker correspondents be elected at workers' meetings, or should they be chosen by the editors? I think that the second method (choice by the editors) is more advisable. The underlying principle must be the correspondent's independence of the institutions and persons that, in one way or another, he comes in contact with in the course of his work. This, however, does not mean independence of that intangible but constantly operating force that is called proletarian public opinion, of which the worker correspondent must be the vehicle.

Worker and peasant correspondents must not be regarded merely as

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1 **Original editor:** *Rabochy Korrespondent* (*Worker Correspondent*)—a monthly magazine, published from January 1924 to June 1941. In January 1925 its title was changed to *Raboche-Krestyansky Korrespondent* (*Worker and Peasant Correspondent*).

future journalists, or as factory social workers in the narrow sensa of the term; they are primarily exposers of the defects in our Soviet public life, fighters for the removal of those defects, commanders of proletarian public opinion, striving to direct the inexhaustible forces of this immense factor so that they help the Party and the Soviet power in the difficult task of socialist construction.

This gives rise to the question of educational work among worker and peasant correspondents. It is, of course, necessary to give worker and peasant correspondents some grounding in the technique of journalism; but that is not the main thing. The main thing is that the worker and peasant correspondents should learn in the course of their work and acquire that intuition of the journalist-public worker without which the correspondent cannot fulfil his mission; and which cannot be implanted by any artificial measures of training in the technical sense of the term.

Direct ideological guidance of worker and peasant correspondents must be exercised by the newspaper editors, who are linked with the Party. The censorship of articles must be concentrated in the hands of the newspaper editors.

Persecution of worker and peasant correspondents is barbarous, a survival of bourgeois customs. The newspaper must undertake to protect its correspondent from persecution, for it alone is capable of raising a fierce campaign to expose obscurantism.

I wish *Rabochy Korrespondent* every success.

J. Stalin

Rabochy Korrespondent, No. 6,
June 1924

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF POLAND

Speech Delivered at a Meeting of the Polish Commission of the Comintern [1]

July 3, 1924

Comrades, I have not sufficient material at my disposal to enable me to speak as emphatically as some of those who have spoken here. Nevertheless, on the basis of the material that I did, after all, manage to obtain, and on the basis of the debate that has taken place here, I have formed a definite opinion, which I would like to share with you.

Undoubtedly, the Polish Communist Party is in an abnormal state. That there is a crisis in the Polish Party is a fact. It was admitted by Walecki; you have all admitted it, and it was clearly revealed here, for it was noted that there is discord in the Central Committee of the Polish Party between practical workers who are members of the C.C. and the leaders of the C.C. Moreover, the Central Committee of the Polish Party itself, at its plenums of December last year and March this year, admitted in its resolutions that a number of its actions had been of an opportunist character and it condemned them without mincing words. That seems to be proof enough. I repeat, all this goes to show that there is undoubtedly a crisis in the Communist Party of Poland.

What is the cause of this crisis?

The cause lies in certain opportunist transgressions committed in

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1 **Original editor:** The Polish commission was set up at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, held in Moscow from June 17 to July 8, 1924. J. V. Stalin was a member of the most important commissions of this congress and was chairman of the Polish commission. The resolution on the Polish question proposed by the commission was unanimously adopted at the first sitting of the enlarged plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern held on July 12, 1924.

their practical work by the official leaders of the Communist Party of Poland.

Permit me to quote a few examples confirming this statement.

The "Russian" question. Some Polish comrades say that this is a question of external policy and, as such, is of no great importance for the Polish Party. That is wrong. The "Russian" question is of decisive importance for the entire revolutionary movement, in the West as well as in the East. Why? Because Soviet power in Russia is the base, the bulwark, the haven of the revolutionary movement all over the world. If in this base, i.e., in Russia, the Party and the government begin to waver, it must cause very grave harm to the entire revolutionary movement throughout the world.

During the discussion in our R.C.P.(B.) wavering began in the Party. By its struggle against the Party, the opposition, which is essentially opportunist, tended to shake, to weaken the Party, and hence, to weaken the Soviet power itself; for our Party is the ruling party and the chief guiding factor in the state. It is natural that wavering within the R.C.P.(B.) could eventually lead to the wavering, the weakening of the Soviet power itself; and the wavering of the Soviet power would mean harm to the revolutionary movement all over the world. Precisely for this reason, disagreements within the R.C.P.(B.), and the fate of the R.C.P.(B.) in general, cannot but directly affect the fate of the revolutionary movement in other countries. That is why the "Russian" question, although an external question for Poland, is one of prime importance for all the Communist Parties, including the Polish Communist Party.

Well, what was the attitude of the leaders of the Polish Party towards the "Russian" question? Whom did they support: the opportunist opposition or the revolutionary majority in the R.C.P.(B.)? It is clear to me that in the first period of the struggle within the R.C.P.(B.), the struggle against the opportunist opposition, the leaders of the Polish Party unambiguously supported that opposition. I shall not delve into the minds of Warski or Walecki; what Warski was thinking when he wrote the well-known resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Poland in support of the opposition in the R.C.P.(B.) is of no impor-

tance for me. It is not people's intentions, but the objective results of that resolution that are of primary importance for me. And the objective results of that resolution are that it brings grist to the opposition's mill. That resolution supported the opportunist wing of the R.C.P.(B.). That is the whole point. At the time when the Central Committee of the Polish Party adopted that resolution and sent it to the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) it represented the Polish branch of the opportunist opposition within the R.C.P.(B.). If we regard the opposition within the R.C.P.(B.) as a sort of business firm having branches in different countries, we can say that at that time the Communist Party of Poland was the Polish branch of that firm. That is the essence of the opportunist transgressions on the "Russian" question committed by the leaders of the Polish Party. It is sad, but, unfortunately, it is a fact.

The German question. Next to the "Russian" question, this one is of the greatest importance, firstly, because Germany is more pregnant with revolution than any other country in Europe; and secondly, because a revolutionary victory in Germany would be victory in the whole of Europe. If a revolutionary upheaval commences anywhere in Europe it will be in Germany. Only Germany can take the initiative in this matter, and the victory of the revolution in Germany will ensure the victory of the international revolution.

You know that last year a struggle flared up within the Communist Party of Germany between its revolutionary majority and opportunist minority. You know how greatly a victory of the Left or of the Right wing of the German Communist Party would affect the whole course of the international revolution. Well, whom did the leaders of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party support in that struggle? They supported the Brandler group[2] against the revolutionary majority of the

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2 **Original editor:** The Brandler group—a Right-wing opportunist group in the Communist Party of Germany. Without regard to principles, the Brandlerites entered into collaboration with the leaders of German Social-Democracy and helped to cause the defeat of the German working class at the time of the revolutionary events in 1923. The Fifth Congress of the Comintern (1924) condemned the capitulatory policy of the Brandler group. The fifth enlarged plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, held on April 4, 1925, passed a decision prohibiting the Brandler group from interfering

German Communist Party. That is now admitted by all, both friends and foes. The same thing happened as on the "Russian" question. If we assume that there is in Germany a sort of business firm in the shape of the opportunist opposition in the Communist Party, then the Polish leaders were the Polish branch of that firm. This, too, is sad, but you cannot go against facts; facts must be admitted.

The method of fighting the opportunist opposition. Kostrzewa said that they, i.e., the leaders of the Polish Central Committee, in essence support the Russian Central Committee and, perhaps, the present German Central Committee, but disagree with those bodies on the methods of fighting the Opposition. They, you see, demand mild methods of fighting the opposition. They are in favour of war against the opposition, but they want a war that will involve no casualties. Walecki even went so far as to shout out: But we are in favour of the "three"! I must say that nobody demands that Walecki should say ditto to the Russian Central Committee in everything. Besides, I don't know who these "three" are about whom Walecki is so enthusiastic. He has forgotten that nobody is obliged to say ditto to the Russian Central Committee in everything (Walecki, from his seat: "I am not obliged to, but I can.") Of course, you can, but one ought to realise that such conduct places both Walecki and the Russian Central Committee in an awkward position. It is not at all a matter of saying ditto. The point is that in Russia, under the conditions of the NEP, a new bourgeoisie has arisen which, being unable to come into the political arena openly, is trying to breach the communist front from within and is looking for champions among the leaders of the R.C.P.(B.). Well, this circumstance is giving rise to oppositionist sentiments within the R.C.P.(B.) and is creating the ground for an opportunist deviation. Hence, the point is that our fraternal parties must define their attitude towards this circumstance and take a definite stand. The point lies in that, I repeat, and not in saying ditto to the Russian Central Committee.

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in the affairs of the Communist Party of Germany and from taking part in the work of the Comintern. In 1929, Brandler was expelled from the Communist Party on account of factional activities.

As for Kostrzewa's mild method, I must say that it does not stand the slightest criticism. Kostrzewa is in favour of fighting the opportunist opposition, but in such a way as not to lead to discrediting the leaders of the opposition. But firstly, history knows no struggle that has not involved some casualties. Secondly, we cannot defeat the opposition and disregard the fact that our victory will result in undermining the prestige of the leaders of the opposition, otherwise we would have to abandon all idea of fighting the opposition. Thirdly, complete victory over the opposition is the *sole* guarantee against a split. Party practice knows of no other guarantee. The entire history of the R.C.P.(B.) proves this.

Before the war, when German Social-Democracy was orthodox, it fought opportunism by the same mild method that Kostrzewa spoke of here. But the result it achieved by that was that opportunism proved to be the victor and a split became inevitable.

The R.C.P.(B.) fought opportunism by the tried and tested method of resolutely isolating the opportunist leaders. And the result it achieved was that revolutionary Marxism triumphed and the Party acquired exceptional unity.

I think that the experience of the R.C.P.(B.) should serve as a lesson for us. The method of fighting recommended by Kostrzewa is a hangover from Social-Democratic opportunism. It is fraught with the danger of a split in the Party.

Lastly, the question of leadership of the Party. What is the characteristic feature of the development of the Communist Parties in the West at the present time? It is that the parties have come right up against the question of reorganising their practical activities on new, revolutionary lines. It is not a matter of adopting a communist programme or of proclaiming revolutionary slogans. It is a matter of reorganising the parties' everyday work, their practical activities, along such a line that every step and every action they take should naturally lead to the revolutionary education of the masses, to preparation for revolution. That is now the essence of the matter and not the adoption of revolutionary directives.

Yesterday, Pruchniak read here a whole string of revolutionary resolutions adopted by the leaders of the Polish Central Committee. He read

those resolutions with a triumphant air, believing that leadership of the Party consists solely in drafting resolutions. He has no inkling that drafting resolutions is only the first step, the beginning of leadership of the Party. He does not realise that, at bottom, leadership consists not in drafting resolutions, but in the implementation of them, in putting them into effect. As a consequence, in his long speech he forgot to tell us what became of those resolutions; he did not deem it necessary to tell us whether the Communist Party of Poland has carried out those resolutions, and to what extent. And yet, the essence of Party leadership consists precisely in the implementation of resolutions and directives. Looking at him, I was reminded of the typical Soviet bureaucrat called to "report" to an inspection commission. "Has such and such a directive been carried out?" the inspection commission asks. "Measures have been taken," answers the bureaucrat. "What measures?" the inspection commission asks. "Orders have been issued," the bureaucrat answers. The inspection commission calls for the document. With a triumphant air the bureaucrat presents a copy of the orders. The inspection commission asks: "What has become of these orders? Were they carried out and if so, when?" The bureaucrat looks blank, and says "We have received no information." Of course, the inspection commission calls such a bureaucrat to account. It was precisely such a Soviet bureaucrat that Pruchniak reminded me of when he, with a triumphant air, read the revolutionary resolutions, concerning the implementation of which he has "no information." That is not leadership of the Party; it is a mockery of all leadership.

What are the conclusions? The conclusions can be summed up as follows.

Firstly. In the forthcoming Party discussion in Poland, I am emphatically opposed to any dividing line being drawn between the former Polish Socialist Party and the former Social-Democracy. That would be dangerous for the Party. The former P.S.P. and P.S.D. have long been merged in a single party and are jointly fighting the Polish landlords and bourgeoisie. To divide them now retrospectively into two parts would be a profound error. The fight must not be waged along the old line as between the P.S.P. and P.S.D., but along the new line of isolating the opportunist wing of the Communist Party of Poland. Complete victory over the opportunist

wing—that is the guarantee against a split and the guarantee of the Party's unity.

Secondly. I am emphatically opposed to the so-called amputation method, i.e., to the removal of certain members of the Central Committee from that body. In general, I am opposed to the reorganisation of the Central Committee from above. It must be borne in mind that surgical operations carried out when there is no imperative need for them leave a bad aftermath in the Party. Let the Communist Party of Poland itself reorganise its Central Committee at the forthcoming congress or conference. It is inconceivable that a growing party should not promote new leaders.

Thirdly. I think that the practical proposals put forward by Unszlicht are quite correct. It would be quite rational to set up in place of the present Organising Bureau and Political Bureau, which have become divorced from each other, a single political and practical centre consisting of members of the present Polish Central Committee.

Doubts have been expressed here about the theoretical knowledge and party experience of the new leaders who have come to the fore in the revolutionary struggle in Poland. I think that this circumstance is not of decisive importance. There have been cases in the life of the R.C.P.(B.) when workers with inadequate theoretical and political knowledge became the heads of huge regional organisations. But those workers proved to be better leaders than many intellectuals who lack the necessary revolutionary intuition. It is quite possible that at first things will not run quite smoothly with the new leaders, but there will be no harm in that. They will stumble once or twice, but eventually they will learn to lead the revolutionary movement. Trained leaders never fall from the skies. They grow up only in the course of the struggle.

Bolshevik, No. 11,
September 20, 1924

A LETTER TO COMRADE DEMYAN BEDNY

Dear Demyan,

I am very late in replying. You have a right to be angry with me, but you must bear in mind that I am unusually remiss as regards letters and correspondence in general.

Point by point.

1. It is very good to hear that you are in a "joyful mood." The philosophy of "Weltschmerz" is not our philosophy. Let the departing and the dying grieve. Our philosophy was quite aptly expressed by the American Whitman: "We live! Our scarlet blood seethes with the fire of unspent strength!" That's the way it is, Demyan.
2. You write: "I am afraid to offend, but I must take a cure." My advice is: better offend a couple of visitors than refrain from taking a cure according to all the rules of the art. You must take a cure; you must without fail. To refrain from offending visitors is a concern of the moment; but to offend them a little in order to take a serious cure is a concern of more lasting importance. Opportunists differ from their antipodes precisely in the fact that they place concerns of the first kind above those of the second. Needless to say, you will not imitate the opportunists.
3. You write: "There was a touch of subtlety in the amnesty tone of your report to the Uyezd Party Committee secretaries."[1] It would be truer to say that there is here a *policy* which, speaking generally, does not preclude a certain amount of subtlety. I think that, *after having* smashed the leaders of the opposition to smithereens, we, i.e., the Party, must now adopt a milder tone towards the rank-and-

1 **Original editor:** See this volume, pp. 190-211.

file and middle followers of the opposition in order to make it easier for them to abandon the opposition leaders. Leave the generals without an army—that is the *leitmotif*. The opposition has about forty or fifty thousand followers in the Party. The majority of them would like to abandon their leaders, but they are hindered by their own pride, or by the rudeness and arrogance of certain supporters of the Central Committee who torment the rank-and-file followers of the opposition with their pinpricks and thereby hinder them from coming over to our side. The "tone" of my report was directed against such supporters of the Central Committee. Only in this way can we destroy the opposition now that its leaders have been disgraced in sight of the whole world.

4. You ask: "Will not the harvest let us down?" It has already let us down somewhat. Whereas, last year we harvested (gross crop) over two thousand seven hundred million poods, this year we expect about two hundred million poods less. This will be a blow to exports, of course. True, the number of farms affected by the crop failure this year is only a fifth of the number affected in 1921, and we shall be able to cope with the evil unaided without exceptional effort. You need have no doubt about that. Still, a blow is a blow. But it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. We have decided to take advantage of the increased readiness of the peasants to do all in their power to insure themselves against the chance of drought *in future*, and we shall try to take the utmost advantage of this readiness to carry out (jointly with the peasants) resolute measures for land melioration, improvement of methods of cultivation, and so forth. We intend to *start* by creating a necessary minimum meliorated zone along the line Samara-Saratov-Tsaritsyn-Astrakhan-Stavropol. We are assigning fifteen to twenty million rubles for the purpose. Next year we shall pass to the southern gubernias. This will mark the beginning of a revolution in our agriculture. The local people say that the peasants will render considerable assistance. It needs thunder to make the peasant cross himself. It turns out that the scourge of drought is needed to raise agriculture to a higher stage and to insure our country for ever

against the hazards of the weather. Kolchak taught us to build an infantry, and Denikin taught us to build a cavalry. Drought is teaching us to build agriculture. Such are the paths of history. And there is nothing unnatural about it.

5. You write: "Come." Unfortunately, I cannot come. I cannot, because I cannot spare the time. I advise you to go for "a spree in Baku." You must. Tiflis is not so interesting, although outwardly it is more attractive than Baku. If you have not yet seen a forest of oil derricks then you "have seen nothing." I am sure that Baku will provide you with a wealth of material for gems like your *Railway Traffic*.[2]

   Here in Moscow the congress period is not yet over. The speeches and debates at the Fifth Congress are, of course, worth while, but strictly speaking they are merely a trimming. Much more interesting are the friendly talks with the delegates from the West (and also from the East) which all of us here have had. I had a long talk with German, French and Polish workers. Magnificent revolutionary "material"! Everything goes to show that over there, in the West, hatred, real revolutionary hatred of the bourgeois order is growing. I was delighted to hear them express in simple but powerful speeches their desire "to make a revolution in the Russian way" in their own countries. These are a new type of workers. We have not had any like them at our congresses before. It is still a long way to the revolution, of course, but that things are moving towards revolution there can be no doubt. I was struck by yet another feature about these workers: their warm, ardent, almost maternal love for our country and their colossal, boundless faith in the rightness, capability and might of our Party. Of the scepticism that was only recently evident there was not a trace. That, too, is no accident. It is also a sign of the maturing revolution.

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2 **Original editor:** This refers to a poem about railwaymen by Demyan Bedny (see Demyan Bedny, *Complete Works*, Russ. ed., 1928, Vol. IX, pp. 86-93).

That's the way it is, Demyan.

Well, enough for the present. Firmly gripping your hand,

Yours,
J. Stalin

15. VII. 24

Published for the first time



Y. M. SVERDLOV

There are people, leaders of the proletariat, about whom no noise is made in the press—perhaps because they do not like to make a noise about themselves—but who are, nevertheless, the vital sap and genuine leaders of the revolutionary movement. Y. M. Sverdlov was a leader of this type.

An organiser to the marrow of his bones, an organiser by nature, by habit, by revolutionary training, by instinct, an organiser in all his abounding activity—such is the portrait of Y. M. Sverdlov.

What does being a leader and organiser mean under our conditions, when the proletariat is in power? It does not mean choosing assistants, setting up an office and issuing orders through it. Being a leader and organiser, under our conditions, means, firstly, knowledge of the cadres, ability to discern their merits and shortcomings, ability to handle them; and secondly, ability to arrange them in such a way that:

1. each one feels that he is in the right place;
2. each one is able to serve the revolution to the utmost of his ability;
3. this arrangement of cadres results not in hitches, but in harmony, unity and the general progress of the work as a whole;
4. the general trend of the work organised in this way serves as the expression and implementation of the political idea for the sake of which the cadres are assigned to their posts.

Y. M. Sverdlov was precisely that kind of leader and organiser of our Party and of our state.

The period of 1917-18 marked a turning point for the Party and the state. In that period the Party, for the first time, became a ruling force. For the first time in human history a new kind of power came into being, the power of the Soviets, the power of the workers and peasants. To trans-

fer the Party, which hitherto had been underground, to the new lines, to create the organisational foundations of the new proletarian state, to devise the organisational forms of the inter-relations between the Party and the Soviets that would ensure leadership by the Party and normal development for the Soviets—such was the extremely complicated organisational problem that then confronted the Party. Nobody in the Party will dare to deny that Y. M. Sverdlov was one of the first, if not the first, skilfully and painlessly to solve that organisational problem of building the new Russia.

The ideologists and agents of the bourgeoisie are fond of repeating threadbare assertions that the Bolsheviks are unable to build, that they are only able to destroy. Y. M. Sverdlov, all his activities, are a living refutation of these falsehoods. Y. M. Sverdlov and his work in our Party were not the result of chance. The Party that produced a great builder like Y. M. Sverdlov can boldly say that it can build the new as well as it can destroy the old.

I do not by any means claim that I am fully acquainted with all the organisers and builders of our Party, but I must say that of all the outstanding organisers I am acquainted with, I know only two, of whom, next to Lenin, our Party can and should be proud: I. F. Dubrovinsky, who died in exile in Turukhansk, and Y. M. Sverdlov, who worked himself to death in building the Party and the state.

Proletarskaya Revolyutsia,
No. 11 (34), November 1924
Signed: *J. Stalin*

CONCERNING THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

In characterising the present international situation, I think that there is no need to take into account all the facts of some degree of importance, absolutely all the specific features of the present state of international affairs. For this purpose it is sufficient to take into account only the principal, decisive factors in the present situation. At the present time there are, in my opinion, three such factors:

a) the opening of an "era" of bourgeois-democratic "pacifism";

b) the intervention of America in European affairs and the Entente's London agreement on reparations;

c) the strengthening of the Left-wing elements in the European labour movement and the growth of the international weight and prestige of the Soviet Union.

Let us examine these principal factors.

1. The Period of Bourgeois-democratic "Pacifism"

The Entente has proved incapable of coping with the results of its war victories. It fully succeeded in defeating Germany and in encircling the Soviet Union. It also succeeded in drawing up a plan for plundering Europe. This is shown by the innumerable conferences and treaties of the Entente countries. But it has proved incapable of carrying out that plan of plunder. Why? Because the contradictions between the countries in the Entente are too great. Because they have not succeeded, and will not succeed, in reaching agreement on sharing the loot. Because the resistance of the countries to be plundered is growing stronger and stronger. Because the implementation of the plan of plunder is fraught with military conflicts, and the masses do not want to fight. It is now obvious to "every-

body" that the imperialist frontal attack on the Ruhr with the object of annihilating Germany has proved to be dangerous for imperialism itself. It is also obvious that the undisguised imperialist policy of ultimatums, with the object of isolating the Soviet Union, is merely producing results opposite to those intended. A situation was created in which Poincaré and Curzon, while faithfully and loyally serving imperialism, nevertheless, by their "work" intensified the growing crisis in Europe, roused the resistance of the masses to imperialism, and pushed the masses towards revolution. Hence, the bourgeoisie's inevitable transition from the policy of frontal attack to the policy of compromise, from undisguised to disguised imperialism, from Poincaré and Curzon to MacDonald and Herriot. Naked plundering of the world has become dangerous. The Labour Party in Britain and the Left bloc in France[1] are to serve as a cloak to cover the nakedness of imperialism. That is the origin of "pacifism" and "democracy."

Some people think that the bourgeoisie adopted "pacifism" and "democracy" not because it was compelled to do so, but voluntarily, of its own free choice, so to speak. And it is assumed that, having defeated the working class in decisive battles (Italy, Germany), the bourgeoisie felt that it was the victor and could now afford to adopt "democracy." In other words, while the decisive battles were in progress, the bourgeoisie needed a fighting organisation, needed fascism; but now that the proletariat is defeated, the bourgeoisie no longer needs fascism and can afford to use "democracy" instead, as a better method of consolidating its victory. Hence, the conclusion is drawn that the rule of the bourgeoisie has become consolidated, that the "era of pacifism" will be a prolonged one, and that the revolution in Europe has been pigeonholed.

This assumption is absolutely wrong.

Firstly, it is not true that fascism is only the fighting organisation

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1 **Original editor:** The "Left bloc" in France was a bloc of Radicals and Radical-Socialists, headed by Edouard Herriot, which came to power in May 1924. Under the cloak of "Left" phrases the "Left-bloc" government in practice actively assisted French imperialism in its home and foreign policy. The Herriot government remained in power until April 1925.

of the bourgeoisie. Fascism is not only a military-technical category. Fascism is the bourgeoisie's fighting organisation that relies on the active support of Social-Democracy. Social-Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of fascism. There is no ground for assuming that the fighting organisation of the bourgeoisie can achieve decisive successes in battles, or in governing the country, without the active support of Social-Democracy. There is just as little ground for thinking that Social-Democracy can achieve decisive successes in battles, or in governing the country, without the active support of the fighting organisation of the bourgeoisie. These organisations do not negate, but supplement each other. They are not antipodes, they are twins. Fascism is an informal political bloc of these two chief organisations; a bloc, which arose in the circumstances of the post-war crisis of imperialism, and which is intended for combating the proletarian revolution. The bourgeoisie cannot retain power without such a bloc. It would therefore be a mistake to think that "pacifism" signifies the liquidation of fascism. In the present situation, "pacifism" is the strengthening of fascism with its moderate, Social-Democratic wing pushed into the forefront.

Secondly, it is not true that the decisive battles have already been fought, that the proletariat was defeated in these battles, and that bourgeois rule has been consolidated as a consequence. There have been no decisive battles as yet, if only for the reason that there have not been any mass, genuinely Bolshevik parties, capable of leading the proletariat to dictatorship. Without such parties, decisive battles for dictatorship are impossible under the conditions of imperialism. The decisive battles in the West still lie ahead. There have been only the first serious attacks, which were repulsed by the bourgeoisie; the first serious trial of strength, which showed that the proletariat is not *yet* strong enough to overthrow the bourgeoisie, but that the bourgeoisie is *already* unable to discount the proletariat. And precisely because the bourgeoisie is already unable to force the working class to its knees, it was compelled to renounce frontal attacks, to make a detour, to agree to a compromise, to resort to "democratic pacifism."

Lastly, it is also not true that "pacifism" is a sign of the strength and not of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, that "pacifism" should result in

consolidating the power of the bourgeoisie and in postponing the revolution for an indefinite period. Present-day pacifism signifies the advent to power, direct or indirect, of the parties of the Second International. But what does the advent to power of the parties of the Second International mean? It means their inevitable self-exposure as lackeys of imperialism, as traitors to the proletariat, for the governmental activity of these parties can have only one result: their political bankruptcy, the growth of contradictions within these parties, their disintegration, their decay. But the disintegration of these parties will inevitably lead to the disintegration of the rule of the bourgeoisie, for the parties of the Second International are props of imperialism. Would the bourgeoisie have undertaken this risky experiment with pacifism if it had not been compelled to do so; would it have done so of its own free will? Of course, not! This is the second time that the bourgeoisie is undertaking the experiment with pacifism since the end of the imperialist war. The first experiment was made immediately after the war, when it seemed that revolution was knocking at the door. The second experiment is being undertaken now, after Poincaré's and Curzon's risky experiments. Who would dare deny that imperialism will have to pay dearly for this swinging of the bourgeoisie from pacifism to rabid imperialism and back again, that this is pushing vast masses of workers out of their habitual philistine rut, that it is drawing the most backward sections of the proletariat into politics and is helping to revolutionise them? Of course, "democratic pacifism" is not yet the Kerensky regime, for the Kerensky regime implies dual power, the collapse of bourgeois power and the coming into being of the foundations of proletarian power. But there can scarcely be any doubt that pacifism signifies the immense awakening of the masses, the fact that the masses are being drawn into politics; that pacifism is shaking bourgeois rule and preparing the ground for revolutionary upheavals. And precisely for this reason pacifism is bound to lead not to the strengthening, but to the weakening of bourgeois rule, not to the postponement of the revolution for an indefinite period, but to its acceleration.

It does not, of course, follow that pacifism is not a serious danger to the revolution. Pacifism serves to sap the foundations of bourgeois rule, it is creating favourable conditions for the revolution; but it can have

these results only *against* the will of the "pacifists" and "democrats" themselves, only *if* the Communist Parties vigorously expose the imperialist and counter-revolutionary nature of the pacifist-democratic rule of Herriot and MacDonald. As for what the pacifists and democrats want, as for the policy of the imperialists, they have only one aim in resorting to pacifism: to dupe the masses with high-sounding phrases about peace in order to prepare for a new war; to dazzle the masses with the brilliance of "democracy" in order to consolidate the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; to stun the masses with clamour about the "sovereign" rights of nations and states in order the more successfully to prepare for intervention in China, for slaughter in Afghanistan and in the Sudan, for the dismemberment of Persia; to fool the masses with high-faluting talk about "friendly" relations with the Soviet Union, about various "treaties" with the Soviet government, in order to establish still closer relations with the counter-revolutionary conspirators who have been kicked out of Russia, with the aim of bandit operations in Byelorussia, the Ukraine and Georgia. The bourgeoisie needs pacifism as a camouflage. This camouflage constitutes the chief danger of pacifism. Whether the bourgeoisie will succeed in its aim of fooling the people depends upon the vigour with which the Communist Parties in the West and in the East expose the bourgeoisie, upon their ability to tear the mask from the imperialists in pacifist clothing. There is no doubt that events and practice will work in favour of the Communists in this respect by exposing the discrepancy between the pacifist *words* and the imperialist *deeds* of the democratic servitors of capital. It is the duty of the Communists to keep pace with events and ruthlessly to expose every step, every act of service to imperialism and betrayal of the proletariat committed by the parties of the Second International.

2. The Intervention of America in European Affairs and the Entente's London Agreement on Reparations

The London conference of the Entente[2] most fully reflects the false and mendacious character of bourgeois-democratic pacifism. Whereas the advent to power of Mac-Donald and Herriot and the clamour about "establishing normal relations" with the Soviet Union were intended to cover up and camouflage the fierce class struggle raging in Europe and the deadly enmity of the bourgeois states towards the Soviet Union, the purpose of the agreement that the Entente concluded in London is to cover up and camouflage the desperate struggle of Britain and France for hegemony in Europe, the growing contradiction between Britain and America in the struggle for domination in the world market, and the superhuman struggle of the German people against Entente oppression. There is no longer any class war, there is an end to revolution, matters can now end up with class co-operation, shout the MacDonalds and Renaudels. There is no longer a struggle between France and Britain, between America and Britain and between Germany and the Entente, there is an end to war, matters can now end up with universal peace under the aegis of America, echo their friends of the London agreement and their brothers in betraying the cause of the working class—the Social-Democratic heroes of pacifism.

But what actually happened at the London conference of the Entente?

Before the London conference the reparations problem was decided by France alone, more or less independently of the "Allies," for France had a secure majority in the Reparations Commission. The occupation of the Ruhr served as a means for the economic disruption of Germany and as a guarantee that France would receive reparation payments from Germany, coal and coke for the French metallurgical industry, chemical semi-manufactures and dyes for the French chemical industry, and the right to export Alsace textiles to Germany duty-free. The plan was in-

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2 **Original editor:** The London conference of the Entente took place from July 16 to August 16, 1924, with the participation of Great Britain, France, the United States and other countries. The conference was convened for the purpose of discussing and settling the German reparations question.

tended to create a material base for France's military and economic hegemony in Europe. As is known however, the plan failed. The occupation method merely led to the opposite results. France received neither payments nor deliveries in kind in any satisfactory quantities. Finally, Poincaré, who was responsible for the occupation, was thrown overboard because of his undisguised imperialist policy, which was fraught with a new war and revolution. As regards France's hegemony in Europe, it proved a failure not only because the method of occupation and undisguised plunder precluded the possibility of an economic bond between French and German industry, but also because Britain was strongly opposed to the establishment of such a bond, for she could not but be aware that the combination of German coal with French metal is bound to undermine the British metallurgical industry.

What did the London conference of the Entente produce in place of all this?

Firstly, the conference rejected the method by which reparation questions were decided by France alone and resolved that, in the last instance, disputes should be settled by an Arbitration Commission consisting of representatives of the Entente headed by representatives of America.

Secondly, the conference rejected the occupation of the Ruhr and recognised the necessity of evacuation, economic (immediately) and military (in a year's time, or earlier). Motives: the occupation of the Ruhr at the present stage is dangerous from the viewpoint of the political state of Europe, and inconvenient from the viewpoint of the organised and systematic plundering of Germany. There can scarcely be any doubt, however, that the Entente intends to plunder Germany thoroughly and systematically.

Thirdly, while rejecting military intervention, the conference fully approved of financial and economic intervention, recognising the necessity of:

a) setting up an emission bank in Germany to be controlled by a special foreign commissioner;

b) transferring to private hands the state railways, which are to be run under the control of a special foreign commissioner;

c) setting up a so-called "Transfer Committee," consisting of representatives of the Allies, to have sole control of all reparation payments in German currency, to finance German deliveries in kind out of those payments, to have power to invest some of the reparation payments in German industry (in cases where it is deemed inadvisable to transfer them to France), and thus have full opportunity to control the German money market.

It scarcely needs proof that this means converting Germany into a colony of the Entente.

Fourthly, the conference recognised France's right to receive from Germany compulsory deliveries of coal and chemical products for a certain period, but at once added the reservation that Germany had the right to appeal to the Arbitration Commission for a reduction, or even the cessation, of these compulsory payments in kind. By this it nullified, or almost nullified, France's right.

If to all this we add the loan to Germany of 800,000,000 marks, covered by British and, chiefly, by American bankers, and if we further bear in mind that the conference was bossed by bankers, above all American bankers, the picture will be complete: of France's hegemony not a trace is left; instead of the hegemony of France there is the hegemony of America.

Such are the results of the London conference of the Entente.

On these grounds some people think that henceforth the antagonism of interests inside Europe must wane in view of America's hegemony; that America, interested in exporting capital to Europe, will manage to put the European countries on rations and compel them to sit still while her bankers rake in profits; that, in view of this, peace in Europe, compulsory it is true, may be regarded as more or less ensured for a more or less prolonged period. This assumption is utterly wrong.

Firstly, in settling the German problem, the conference reckoned without its host, the German people. It is possible, of course, to "plan" Germany's conversion into a regular colony. But to attempt in actual fact to convert a country like Germany into a colony at the present time, when even the backward colonies are being kept in hand with difficulty, means placing a mine under Europe.

Secondly, France had pushed herself forward too much, so the conference pushed her back somewhat. The natural result of this is that Britain has gained actual preponderance in Europe. But to think that France can resign herself to Britain's preponderance means failing to reckon with facts, failing to reckon with the logic of facts, which usually proves to be stronger than all other logic.

Thirdly, the conference recognised the hegemony of America. But American capital is interested in financing Franco-German industry, in the most rational exploitation of the latter, for example, along the lines of combining the French metallurgical industry with the German coal industry. There can scarcely be any doubt that American capital will make use of its advantages in precisely this direction, which is the most profitable for it. But to think that Britain will resign herself to such a situation means not knowing Britain, means not knowing how greatly Britain values the interests of her metallurgical industry.

Lastly, Europe is not an isolated country; it is bound up with its colonies, it lives on the vital sap from these colonies. To think that the conference can make any change for "the better" in the relations between Europe and its colonies, that it can restrain or retard the development of the contradictions between them, means believing in miracles.

What conclusion is to be drawn from this?

Only one: the London conference has not eliminated a single one of the old contradictions in Europe; on the contrary, it has added new ones to them, contradictions between America and Britain. Undoubtedly, Britain will continue as of old to aggravate the antagonism between France and Germany in order to ensure her own political predominance on the continent Undoubtedly, America, in her turn, will aggravate the antagonism between Britain and France in order to ensure her own hegemony in the world market. It is needless for us to speak of the intense antagonism between Germany and the Entente.

World events will be determined by these antagonisms and not by the "pacifist" speeches of the gallows-bird Hughes, or the grandiloquent Herriot. The law of uneven development of the imperialist countries and of the inevitability of imperialist wars remains in force today more than

ever before. The London conference merely masks these antagonisms, only to create new premises for their unprecedented intensification.

3. Strengthening of the Revolutionary Elements in the European Labour Movement. Growth of the International Popularity of the Soviet Union

One of the surest signs of the instability of the "pacifist-democratic regime," one of the most unmistakable signs that this "regime" is froth on the surface of the profound revolutionary processes that are taking place in the depths of the working class, is the decisive victory achieved by the revolutionary wing in the Communist Parties of Germany, France and Russia, the growth of activity of the Left wing in the British labour movement, and lastly, the growth of the Soviet Union's popularity among the toiling masses in the West and in the East.

The Communist Parties in the West are developing under peculiar conditions. Firstly, their composition is not uniform, for they were formed out of former Social-Democrats of the old school and of young party members who have not yet had sufficient revolutionary steeling. Secondly, their leading cadres are not purely Bolshevik, for responsible posts are occupied by people who have come from other parties and who have not yet completely discarded Social-Democratic survivals. Thirdly, they are confronted by such an experienced opponent as hard-boiled Social-Democracy, which is still an enormous political force in the ranks of the working class. Lastly, they have against them such a powerful enemy as the European bourgeoisie, with its tried and tested state apparatus and all-powerful press. To think that such Communist Parties can overthrow the European bourgeois system "overnight" is a great mistake. Hence, the immediate task is to make the Communist Parties of the West really Bolshevik; they must train genuinely revolutionary cadres who will be capable of reorganising all party activities along the lines of the revolutionary education of the masses, of preparing for revolution.

That is how matters stood with the Communist Parties in the West in the still recent past. During the last half year, however, there has been

a turn for the better. The last half year is remarkable for the fact that it produced a radical change in the life of the Communist Parties of the West as regards eliminating Social-Democratic survivals, Bolshevising the Party cadres and isolating opportunist elements.

The danger that Social-Democratic survivals in the Communist Parties can represent for the revolution was strikingly revealed by the sad experience of the Workers' Government in Saxony,[3] where the opportunist leaders tried to convert the idea of a united front, as a means for the revolutionary mobilisation and organisation of the masses, into a means for Social-Democratic parliamentary combinations. That marked a turning point, which opened the eyes of the mass of the Party membership and roused them against the opportunist leaders.

The second question that undermined the prestige of the Right-wing leaders and brought new revolutionary leaders to the front was the so-called "Russian" question, i.e., the discussion in the R.C.P.(B.). As is known, the Brandler group in Germany and the Souvarine group[4] in France strongly supported the opportunist opposition in the R.C.P.(B.) against the principal cadres of the R.C.P.(B.), against its revolutionary majority. This was a challenge to the revolutionary mass of the workers

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3 **Original editor:** The Workers' Government in Saxony was formed on October 11, 1923, as a result of the mass revolutionary movement that had spread over the whole of Germany. Five Social-Democrats and two Communists entered this government, which was headed by the "Left" Social-Democrat Zeigner. The Communists in this government pursued the capitulatory policy of the Brandler leadership of the Communist Party of Germany and, jointly with the "Left" Social-Democrats, frustrated the arming of the proletariat and the development of the revolution in Germany. On October 30, 1923, imperial troops dispersed the Workers' Government in Saxony.

4 **Original editor:** The Souvarine group was an opportunist group within the Communist Party of France, headed by Souvarine, an out-and-out supporter of Trotsky. Supporting the Trotskyite opposition in the R.C.P.(B.), the Souvarine group slandered the Communist Party of France and the Comintern and grossly violated party discipline. In 1924, the fourth enlarged plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern granted the demand of the Communist Party of France for the expulsion of Souvarine from the Party, and the seventh enlarged plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, held in 1926, expelled him from the ranks of the Communist International for conducting counter-revolutionary propaganda.

in the West, who definitely sympathised with the Soviet government and its leader, the R.C.P.(B.). It was a challenge to the mass of the party membership and the revolutionary wing of the Communist Parties in the West. It is not surprising that this challenge resulted in the utter defeat of the Brandler and Souvarine groups. It is not surprising that this had its repercussion in all the other Communist Parties in the West. If to this we add the complete isolation of the opportunist trend in the R.C.P.(B.), the picture will be complete. The Fifth Congress of the Comintern[5] merely sealed the victory of the revolutionary wing in the principal sections of the Comintern.

Undoubtedly, the mistakes of the opportunist leaders were an important factor in hastening the Bolshevisation of the Communist Parties in the West; but it is equally beyond doubt that other, more profound, causes also operated here: the successful capitalist offensive during the past few years, the deterioration of the living conditions of the working class, the existence of a vast army of unemployed, the general economic instability of capitalism, the growing revolutionary unrest among the broad masses of the workers. The workers are marching towards revolution, and they want to have revolutionary leaders.

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5 **Original editor:** The Fifth World Congress of the Comintern took place in Moscow from June 17 to July 8, 1924. There were present 510 delegates, representing 60 organisations in 49 countries.

The congress discussed the activities of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, the world economic situation, the economic situation in the U.S.S.R. and the discussion in the R.C.P.(B.), fascism, tactics in the trade union movement, factory units of the Party, questions relating to the Parties in various countries, the programme, the national question, the agrarian question, etc. J. V. Stalin was a member of the presidium of the congress and also of its most important commissions: the political commission, the programme commission, and the commission for drafting a resolution on Leninism, and was chairman of the Polish commission. The Fifth Congress of the Comintern unanimously supported the Bolshevik Party in its fight against Trotskyism. The congress endorsed the resolution of the Thirteenth Conference and Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) "Results of the Discussion and the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party" and decided to publish it as a decision of the congress. The congress adopted a resolution on strengthening the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries, on Bolshevising them and transforming them into real mass parties resting on the trade unions.

Summing up. The process of *definitely* forming genuine Bolshevik parties in the West, parties which will constitute the bulwark of the coming revolution in Europe, has *begun.* Such is the summing up of the past half year.

Still more difficult and peculiar are the conditions under which the trade unions are developing in the West.

Firstly, they are narrow owing to their "tried" craft-union practice and are hostile to socialism, for, having arisen before the Socialist parties, and having developed without the aid of the latter, they are accustomed to plume themselves on their "independence," they place craft interests above class interests, and refuse to recognise anything beyond "a penny a day" increase in wages.

Secondly, they are conservative in spirit and hostile to all revolutionary undertakings, for they are led by the old, venal trade union bureaucracy, which is being fed by the bourgeoisie and is always ready to place the trade unions at the service of imperialism.

Lastly, these trade unions, united around the Amsterdam reformists, constitute that vast army of reformism which serves as a prop for the present-day capitalist system.

Of course, besides the Amsterdam reactionary unions there are the revolutionary unions, which are associated with the Profintern.[6] But, firstly, a considerable section of the revolutionary unions, not wishing to cause a split in the trade union movement, remain in the Amsterdam federation[7] and submit to its discipline; secondly, in the decisive European

6 **Original editor:** The Profintern—the Red International of Trade Unions—was formed in 1921 and existed to the end of 1937. It was a federation of revolutionary trade unions and adopted the standpoint of the Communist International.

7 **Original editor:** The Amsterdam federation (the Amsterdam International)—the International Federation of Trade Unions formed in July 1919 at an international

countries (Britain, France and Germany) the Amsterdamites still represent the majority of the workers. It must not be forgotten that the Amsterdam federation unites no less than fourteen million organised workers. To think that it will be possible to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat in Europe *against* the will of these millions of workers would be a great mistake; it would mean departing from the path of Leninism and courting inevitable defeat. Hence, the task is to win these millions of workers to the side of the revolution and communism, to free them from the influence of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy, or at least to get them to adopt an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards communism.

That is how matters stood until recently. But during the past few years the situation began to improve. The home of the narrow and reactionary trade unions is Britain, once the industrial-capitalist monopolist of the world market. Her loss of this monopoly is connected with the development of finance capital, characteristic of which is the struggle between a number of the biggest countries for colonial monopoly. The imperialist phase of capitalism is accompanied by an expansion of *territory* for the narrow, reactionary trade unions, but it also causes a shrinkage of their material base, for imperialist super-profits are the object of the struggle of a number of countries, and the colonies are less and less inclined to remain in the role of colonies. Nor must it be forgotten that the war has seriously undermined production in Europe. As is known, total production in Europe at the present time amounts to not more than 70 percent of pre-war production. Hence the curtailment of production and the successful capitalist offensive against the working class. Hence the wage cuts, the virtual abolition of the 8-hour day, and the series of unsuccessful defensive strikes, which once again demonstrated the betrayal of the working class by the trade union bureaucracy. Hence the colossal unemployment and the growth of the workers' dissatisfaction with the reactionary trade unions. Hence the idea of a united front in the economic struggle of the working class and the plan to unite the two trade union Internation-

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congress in Amsterdam. It consisted of reformist trade unions in a number of countries of Western Europe and the United States, and in its programme and tactics adopted an anti-revolutionary standpoint, hostile to communism. It went out of existence on the formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions at the First World Congress of Trade Unions (September-October 1945).

als into a single International capable of organising resistance to capital. The talk of the reformists at the Vienna Congress of the Amsterdam International (June 1924) about negotiating with the "Russian" trade unions and the appeal of the British trade unions at the Trades Union Congress (beginning of September 1924) for trade union unity are merely a reflection of the growing pressure that the masses are bringing to bear upon the reactionary trade union bureaucracy. The most remarkable thing about all this is the fact that it is precisely the British trade unions, that centre of conservatism and the principal core of the Amsterdam federation, which are taking the initiative in the matter of uniting the reactionary and revolutionary trade unions. The appearance of Left-wing elements in the British labour movement is the surest indication that all is not well "among them, over there," in Amsterdam.

Some people think that the campaign for trade union unity is needed precisely at the present time because Left-wing elements have appeared in the Amsterdam federation who *absolutely* must be supported by *all* efforts and by *all* means. That is not true, or, to be more exact, it is only partly true. The point is that the Communist Parties in the West are becoming mass organisations, they are turning into genuine Bolshevik parties, they are growing and are advancing to power simultaneously with the growth of discontent among the broad masses of the workers, and, hence, that things are moving towards proletarian revolution. But the bourgeoisie cannot be overthrown unless it is deprived of its prop in the shape of the reactionary Amsterdam federation; the dictatorship cannot be achieved unless that bourgeois citadel in Amsterdam is won to the side of the revolution. That, however, cannot be done by one-sided action from outside. That aim can be achieved at the present time only by combined work inside and outside for obtaining trade union unity. That is why the question of trade union unity and of entering international industrial federations is becoming an urgent one. Of course, the Lefts must be supported and pushed forward. But real support can be rendered the Lefts only if the banner of the revolutionary unions is kept unfurled, if the reactionary Amsterdam leaders are scourged for their treachery and splitting tactics, if the Left leaders are criticised for their half-heartedness and irresolution in the struggle against the reactionary leaders. Only such a policy can prepare the ground for real trade union unity. Otherwise we

may get a repetition of what occurred in Germany in October last year, when the reactionary Right-wing Social-Democracy successfully utilised Levi's Left-wing group[8] for the purpose of surrounding the German revolutionary workers.

Lastly, about the growth of the Soviet Union's popularity among the people in the bourgeois countries. The surest indication of the instability of the "pacifist-democratic regime" is, perhaps, the indubitable fact that, far from waning, the Soviet Union's influence and prestige among the toiling masses in the West and in the East are growing year after year and month after month. The point is not that the Soviet Union is being "recognised" by a number of bourgeois states. Taken by itself, there is nothing particular in that "recognition," for it is dictated, firstly, by the needs of capitalist competition between the bourgeois countries, which are striving to obtain "their place" in the Soviet Union market; and secondly, by the "programme" of pacifism, which calls for the establishment of "normal relations" with the Soviet country, the signing of at least some kind of "treaty" with the Soviet Union. The point is that the present-day "democrats" and "pacifists" defeated their bourgeois rivals in the parliamentary elections *thanks* to their platform of "recognition" of the Soviet Union; that the Mac-Donalds and Herriots came into power, and can remain in power, *thanks*, among other things, to their spouting about "friendship with Russia"; that the prestige of these "democrats" and "pacifists" is the reflection of the Soviet government's prestige among the masses of the people. It is characteristic that even such a notorious "democrat" as Mussolini often deems it necessary to boast to the workers about his "friendship" with the Soviet government.

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8 **Original editor:** Levi's Left-wing group—a group within the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. In October 1923, when the Workers' Government was formed in Saxony, the Levi group, afraid of losing influence among the masses of the workers, announced its readiness to co-operate with the Communists. Actually, it served as a screen for the counter-revolutionary policy of Social-Democracy and helped the bourgeoisie to suppress the revolutionary proletarian movement.

It is no less characteristic that even such notorious appropriators of other people's property as the present rulers of Japan do not want to dispense with "friendship" with the Soviet Union. There is no need to mention the colossal prestige that the Soviet government enjoys among the masses of the people in Turkey, Persia, China and India.

What is the explanation of the unprecedented prestige and extraordinary popularity among the masses of the people in other countries enjoyed by such a "dictatorial" and revolutionary government as the Soviet government?

Firstly, the fact that the working class hates capitalism and is striving to emancipate itself from it. The workers in the bourgeois countries sympathise with the Soviet government, primarily because it is a government which overthrew capitalism. Bromley, the well-known representative of the British railwaymen, said recently at the Trades Union Congress:

"The capitalists know that the eyes of the workers of the world are turned towards Russia and that, if the Russian revolution succeeds, the intelligent workers of the world will ask themselves, is it not possible that we also might be successful in throwing off capitalism?"

Bromley is not a Bolshevik, of course, but what he said expressed the thoughts and aspirations of the European workers. For, indeed, why not throw off European capitalism, considering that for nearly seven years already the "Russians" have been doing without capitalists and are benefiting by it? That is the cause of the immense popularity the Soviet government enjoys among the broad working-class masses. The growth of the international popularity of the Soviet Union is, therefore, an indication of the growth of the hatred of the working class in all countries towards capitalism.

Secondly, the fact that the masses of the people hate war and are striving to frustrate the war plans of the bourgeoisie. The masses of the people know that the Soviet government was the first to launch the attack against the imperialist war, and by doing so hastened its termination. The masses of the people see that the Soviet Union is the only country that is waging a struggle to prevent the outbreak of a new war. They sympathise with the Soviet government because it is the banner-bearer of peace among the nations and a reliable bulwark against war. The growth of the inter-

national popularity of the Soviet government is, therefore, an indication of the growth of the hatred of the masses of the people all over the world towards imperialist war and its organisers.

Thirdly, the fact that the oppressed masses in the dependent countries and colonies hate the yoke of imperialism and are striving to smash it. The Soviet power is the only power that has smashed the chains of "home" imperialism. The Soviet Union is the only country which is building its life on the basis of the equality and co-operation of nations. The Soviet Government is the only Government in the world which is unreservedly championing the unity and independence, freedom and sovereignty of Turkey and Persia, Afghanistan and China, the colonies and dependent countries all over the world. The oppressed masses sympathise with the Soviet Union because they regard it as their ally in the cause of emancipation from imperialism. The growth of the international popularity of the Soviet government is, therefore, an indication of the growth of the hatred of the oppressed masses all over the world towards imperialism.

Such are the facts.

There can scarcely be any doubt that these *three hatreds* will not serve to strengthen the "pacifist-democratic regime" of present-day imperialism.

The other day, the United States Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the "pacifist" and Kolchakite Hughes, published a Black-Hundred declaration against the Soviet Union. Undoubtedly, envy of Poincaré's laurels keeps Hughes awake at night. But there can scarcely be any doubt that Hughes's Black-Hundred-pacifist declaration will serve only to increase still further the Soviet Union's influence and prestige among the toiling masses all over the world.

Such are the chief factors that are characteristic of the present international situation.

Bolshevik, No. 11,
September 20, 1924
Signed: *J. Stalin*

THE PARTY'S IMMEDIATE TASKS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Speech Delivered at a Conference of Secretaries of Rural Party Units, Called by the Central Committee of the R.C.P. (B.)[1]

October 22, 1924

Defects in the Reports from the Localities

Comrades, I would like first of all to deal with the defects in the reports that were heard here. In my opinion, there were two principal defects.

The first defect is that the delegates spoke all the time about successes and scarcely mentioned the defects of our work in the countryside, although there are hosts of them. They told us about the Party standing, date of birth and the number of members in the units, and so forth, but said almost nothing about the defects in our work. And yet, the question of the defects in our work in the countryside is the fundamental question of our practical work. Hence, if you will excuse my saying so, there was a certain touch of officialdom about the reports. Any outsider who heard

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1 **Original editor:** The conference of secretaries of rural Party units called by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) took place on October 21-24, 1924. There were present 62 local Party workers, of whom 4 represented central regions and Gubernia Committees, 15 represented Area and District Committees, 17 represented Volost Committees, 11 represented village units, 11 represented Y.C.L. units and 4 were volost organisers of peasant women. The conference heard the following reports: "Immediate Tasks of Rural Units," by V. M. Molotov; "The New Regulations Governing Peasant Mutual Aid Committees," by M. I. Kalinin; "The Local Soviet Apparatus," by L. M. Kaganovich, and "Political and Educational Work in the Countryside," by N. K. Krupskaya. Reports were also delivered on the situation in the localities, and other questions were discussed. J. V. Stalin took part in the proceedings, and at the sitting on October 22 he spoke on "The Party's Immediate Tasks in the Countryside."

the reports might have thought that people had come to give an account of themselves to the Central Committee, saying: "the work is proceeding satisfactorily," or "all is well." That is of no use, comrades, for we all know, both we and you, that all is not well with the work, either with your work in the localities, or with our work in the Central Committee.

The second defect in the reports is that they dealt mainly with the Party units themselves, with the mood prevailing in them, but, for some reason, no mention was made of the mood of the millions of non-Party peasants. It turns out that the Communists are concerned mainly with themselves: the internal life of the units, how many lectures have been delivered, what kind of propaganda is conducted, and so forth. It turns out that the Communists mostly keep their eyes on themselves and forget that they are surrounded by an ocean of non-Party people, without whose support the entire work of the units stands in danger of being reduced to useless botch-work. What are the relations between the Party organisations and the non-Party masses? About this nothing, or almost nothing, was said. It is wrong to keep your eyes only on yourselves. You must look first of all at the millions of non-Party peasants, study their needs and wishes and reckon with their requirements and moods. This explains the dryness of and the bureaucratic touch about the reports.

Those are the two principal defects that I wanted to mention in order that the comrades should take note of them.

I shall ask you again, comrades, to excuse me for telling you the blunt truth. But I earnestly ask you to tell us in your turn the truth about the defects and mistakes in the work of the Central Committee.

And now to business.

The Party's Chief Defect—the Weakness of Party Work in the Countryside

What is our Party's chief defect at the present time, under the conditions of the NEP, when the peasantry is displaying greater political activity, and when much more is demanded of the Party than was demanded, say, two years ago?

The chief defect of our Party is the weakness of its work in the coun-

tryside, its lack of organisation and its poor quality. What is the cause of this weakness? How are we to explain the fact that Party work in the towns is going full steam ahead, whereas in the countryside it is in a bad way? Is not agriculture developing? Have not the conditions of the peasants improved during the past two years since the surplus-appropriation system was abolished? Are not the growth of industry and the supply of urban manufactures easing the conditions of the peasants? Has not the stable currency eased the conditions of the peasants? What is the source, then, of the weakness of our Party's work in the countryside? To answer this question it is necessary, first of all, to decide another question: What is the source of our Party's strength in the towns?

Wherein Lies the Strength of Our Party in the Towns?

And so, wherein lies the strength of our Party in the towns? Its chief strength in the towns lies in the fact that it has around it a wide non-Party active of *workers*, numbering several hundred thousand, which serves as a bridge between the Party and the vast mass of the working class. Our Party is strong in the towns because between the Party and the vast mass of the working class there is not a wall, but a connecting bridge, in the shape of a mass active of non-Party workers numbering several hundred thousand. The Party recruits forces from this active. Through it the Party wins the confidence of the masses. You have heard that six months ago over 200,000 workers joined our Party. Where did they come from? From the non-Party active, which creates an atmosphere of confidence around our Party, links it with the rest of the non-Party masses. Hence, the non-Party active is not only a connecting bridge, but also the very ample reservoir from which our Party draws new forces. Without such an active our Party could not develop. The Party grows and gains strength *if* a wide non-Party active grows and gains strength around the Party. The Party grows sick and feeble *if* there is no such active.

Wherein Lies the Weakness of Our Work in the Countryside?

And so, wherein lies the weakness of our Party work in the countryside?

It lies in the fact that the Party does not have in the countryside a wide non-Party active of *peasants* that could link the Party with the tens of millions of toiling peasants in our country.

What is the situation in the countryside? There is a thin network of Party units in the countryside. Then comes an equally thin network of non-Party peasants who sympathise with the Party. Beyond it stretches an ocean of non-Party people, tens of millions of peasants, whom the thin network of the non-Party active does not and cannot link with the Party. This, properly speaking, explains why this thin network cannot stand the strain, why it often breaks and, instead of a connecting bridge, a blank wall sometimes rises between the Party and the non-Party masses in the countryside.

The Chief Task Is to Create a Peasant Active Around the Party

Hence, our Party's chief task in the countryside is to create a numerous, non-Party peasant active, numbering several hundred thousand, capable of linking the Party with the tens of millions of toiling peasants. Comrades! *Either* we create such an active and thereby raise our Party's position in the countryside to the level existing in the towns, and then no problems and no difficulties need daunt us, *or* we fail to create such an active, in which case all our work in the countryside will be in a bad way. It is this that we must now make the focal point of all our work. Unless our Party creates such an active, which must be numerous, and must consist of *genuine* peasants, our Party is doomed to chronic ailment in the countryside. Of course, this is a difficult task; such an active cannot be created in one year. But created it must be, and the sooner we begin to create it, the better.

The Soviets Must Be Revitalised

But how is such an active to be created? How is this problem to be solved? To think that it can be solved by means of verbal propaganda, by quoting from books, would be a great mistake. A wide, non-Party peasant active can be created around the Party only in the course of mass work in con-

nection with the practical needs of the countryside, in the course of extensive Soviet constructive work in the countryside, by drawing the peasants into the work of volost, district, uyezd and gubernia administration. To revitalise the Soviets, to put them on their feet, to draw all the best elements of the peasantry into the Soviets—that is the way in which a wide, non-Party peasant active can be built up.

Lenin said that the Soviets are the organ of the bond between the workers and the peasants, the organ through which the workers lead the peasants. And so, if we want to ensure that the political activity of the toiling peasants does not become detached from the leadership of the workers, we must take all measures to ensure that the peasants are drawn into the Soviets, that the Soviets are revitalised and put on their feet, that the peasantry find an outlet for their political activity by participating unfailingly in the administration of the country. Only in the course of such work can the peasantry provide extensive cadres of a non-Party active. Only from such an active can the Party select tens of thousands of members in the countryside.

The Approach to the Peasantry Must Be Changed

To revitalise the Soviets, however, apart from everything else, one condition must be fulfilled. To achieve this the very approach to the peasants must be radically changed. What must be the nature of this change? It consists in the Communist learning to approach the non-Party man as an equal. He must not domineer, but carefully heed the voice of the non-Party people. He must not only teach the non-Party people, but also learn from them. And we have something to learn from the non-Party people. The question of the relations between Party and non-Party people is a major question of our Party practice. Lenin defined those relations by the term: mutual confidence. But the non-Party peasant cannot display confidence when he is not treated as an equal. In such cases, instead of confidence, distrust is created, and often the result is that a blank wall rises between the Party and the non-Party people, the Party is divorced from the masses and the bond between the workers and peasants is converted into estrangement.

The Lessons of the Revolt in Georgia

A vivid illustration of such a turn of affairs is the recent revolt in Georgia.[2] Our newspapers write that the events in Georgia were stage-managed. That is true, for, in general, the revolt in Georgia was an artificial, not a popular revolt. Nevertheless, in some places, thanks to the bad link between the Communist Party and the masses, the Mensheviks succeeded in drawing a section of the peasant masses into the revolt. It is characteristic that they are the localities that are the most saturated with communist forces. There are relatively far more Communists in those localities than in the rest. And yet it was there that our people missed, overlooked, failed to notice the fact that there was unrest among the peasants, that something was brewing among them, that there was discontent among them, that it had been growing day by day, and the Party knew nothing about it. In the places that were most saturated with Communists, the latter proved to be most divorced from the sentiments, thoughts and aspirations of the non-Party peasantry. That is the crux of the problem.

How could this incongruous thing have happened? It happened because the Communists did not know how to approach the peasants in the Leninist way; instead of an atmosphere of confidence they created an atmosphere of mutual distrust and thus divorced the Party from the non-Party peasants. An interesting point is that one of the most active responsible workers in Georgia attributes this incongruity to the weakness of the local Soviets and to the Party being divorced from the non-Party people. "Undoubtedly," he says, "the prime reason why we failed to see that a revolt was brewing is to be found in the weakness of the local Soviets." Lenin said that the Soviets are the surest barometer, the surest indicator of the mood of the peasantry. Now, it was just this barometer that the Communist Party in some of the uyezds of Georgia lacked.

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2 **Original editor:** This refers to the counter-revolutionary revolt in Georgia at the end of August 1924, organised by the Georgian Mensheviks and bourgeois nationalists, who were supported by the leaders of the Second International and by agents of foreign governments. The revolt was quickly put down with the active assistance of the Georgian workers and toiling peasant masses.

Comrades, the events in Georgia must be regarded as symptomatic. What happened in Georgia may be repeated all over Russia if we do not radically change our very approach to the peasantry, if we do not create an atmosphere of complete confidence between the Party and the non-Party people, if we do not heed the voice of the non-Party people, and, lastly, if we do not revitalise the Soviets in order to provide an outlet for the political activity of the toiling masses of the peasantry.

One thing or the other: *either* we succeed in adopting the correct Leninist approach to the non-Party peasants in order to direct the growing political activity of the peasantry into the channel of constructive Soviet work and thus ensure that the peasants are led by the workers, *or* we fail to do this, in which case the political activity of the masses will by-pass the Soviets, will pass over the heads of the Soviets, and take the form of bandit revolts like that which occurred in Georgia.

That is how the question stands, comrades.

A Tactful Approach to the Peasantry Is Needed

To illustrate how tactlessly the peasants are approached sometimes, a few words must be said about anti-religious propaganda. Occasionally, some comrades are inclined to regard the peasants as materialist philosophers and to think that it is enough to deliver a lecture on natural science to convince the peasant of the non-existence of God. Often they fail to realise that the peasant looks on God in a practical way, i.e., he is not averse to turning away from God sometimes, but he is often torn by doubt: "Who knows, maybe there is a God after all. Would it not be better to please both the Communists and God, as being safer for my affairs?" He who fails to take this peculiar mentality of the peasant into account totally fails to understand what the relations between Party and non-Party people should be, fails to understand that in matters concerning anti-religious propaganda a careful approach is needed even to the peasant's prejudices.

The Party's Chief Tasks

And so we arrive at the following conclusions:

1. The chief defect of Party work in the countryside is the absence of a wide, non-Party peasant active between the Party and the tens of millions of non-Party peasants.
2. The Party's immediate task is to create such an active around the Party in the countryside to serve as a source from which the Party could recruit new forces.
3. Such an active can be created only by revitalising the Soviets and by drawing the peasants into the work of governing the country.
4. To revitalise the Soviets a radical change must be made in our approach to the non-Party peasants; there must be no domineering, and an atmosphere of mutual confidence must be created between Party and non-Party people.

Such are the Party's tasks.

Conditions for the Work

Are there favourable conditions for carrying out these tasks? Undoubtedly, there are. There are three such conditions—I have in mind the principal ones.

Firstly. The growing political activity of the rural poor. Attention should be paid to certain specific features of the development of agriculture. Whereas the development of industry is uniting the workers, putting an end to the declassing of the working class and restoring it as an integral whole, in the countryside, on the contrary, the development of agriculture is leading to the disintegration, to the differentiation, of the peasantry, to the formation of two camps: the camp of the kulaks, who are striving to capture the commanding positions in the countryside, and the camp of the poor peasants, who are seeking allies against the kulaks. Undoubtedly, revitalising the Soviets will provide an outlet for the growing activity of the rural poor in order to create a united front, headed by the workers, against the domination of the kulaks, profiteers and usurers.

Secondly. The institution of local budgets as the material basis for revitalising the Soviets. Needless to say, budget questions, the collections of taxes and modes of expenditure, are of major importance for the peasantry. Hence, the participation of the peasantry in constructive Soviet work is now of more urgent importance than ever before.

Thirdly. The timely assistance rendered by the Soviet government to the famine-stricken districts of our country. Undoubtedly, this assistance has created among the peasants an atmosphere of confidence towards the Soviet government. It scarcely needs proof that this atmosphere will facilitate the work of revitalising the Soviets.

The Chief Thing Is to Maintain Contact with the Millions of Non-party People

And so, we have before us not only certain immediate tasks which our Party must carry out in the countryside, but also a number of favourable conditions which facilitate the fulfilment of these tasks. It is now a matter of setting to work with a will on their fulfilment.

In this connection we must bear in mind Lenin's immortal words to the effect that our Party's strength lies in maintaining living contact with the millions of non-Party people, that the more effective this contact is, the more durable will be our successes. He uttered those words at the Eleventh Congress of our Party. Here they are:

> "Among the mass of the people we (the Communists—*J. St.*) are after all but *a drop in the ocean*, and we can administer *only* when we properly express what the people are conscious of. Unless we do this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the proletariat will not lead the masses, and the whole machine will collapse."[3,4]

Pravda, No. 242,
October 23, 1924

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3 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 273.

4 My italics.

THE PARTY'S TASKS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Speech Delivered at a the Plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P(B.)[1]

October 26, 1924

Comrades, since the preceding speakers have dealt with work in the countryside in fairly great detail, I shall have to confine myself to a few remarks about the specific features of the present situation.

What are the specific features of the present situation as regards the conditions of the peasants?

The first specific feature is that the old capital, the moral capital, that we acquired in the struggle to emancipate the peasants from the landlords is already beginning to run out. Some comrades say: "Why is all this fuss being made about work among the peasantry? We have discussed the peasantry on many occasions, we have never forgotten the peasants, why all this fuss about them?" But these comrades, apparently, fail to understand that the old moral capital that our Party accumulated in the period of October and in the period of the abolition of the surplus-appropriation system is already running out. They fail to understand that we now need new capital. We must acquire new capital for the Party under the conditions of a new struggle. We must win over the peasantry anew. That is the point. That we helped them to throw off the

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1 **Original editor:** The plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) took place on October 25-27, 1924. It discussed economic questions and a report by V. M. Molotov "Immediate Tasks in the Countryside." The plenum adopted a resolution on "Immediate Tasks in the Countryside," containing supplementary instructions to the Party organisations in furtherance of the decisions of the Thirteenth Party Congress on work in the countryside. J. V. Stalin directed the proceedings of the plenum and at the sitting on October 26 spoke on "The Party's Tasks in the Countryside."

landlords and to obtain land, that we ended the war, that there is now no tsar, and that, together with the tsar, all the other tsarist scorpions were swept away—the peasants have already forgotten about all this. We cannot go on living much longer on this old capital. Whoever fails to understand this understands nothing about the new situation, about the new conditions created by the NEP. We are winning over the peasantry anew—this is the first specific feature of our internal situation.

From this it follows, however, that, far from being superfluous, the new talk about the peasantry is even somewhat belated.

The second specific feature is that during this period our principal classes—the workers and the peasants—have changed, they have become different. Formerly, the proletariat was declassed, scattered, while the peasants were filled with the desire to retain the land which had been taken from the landlords and to win the war against the landlords. That was the situation before. Now it is different. There is no war. Industry is growing. Agriculture is developing. The present-day proletariat is no longer a declassed working class, but a full-blooded proletariat, whose culture and requirements are growing day by day. As regards the peasantry, it is no longer the old peasantry, downtrodden, terrified lest they lose the land, and ready to make every sacrifice in order to be freed from the landlords. It is a new class, free and active, which has already forgotten the landlords and is now concerned about receiving cheap commodities and selling its grain at the highest possible price. Its characteristic feature is its growing political activity. It is no longer possible to say "The Party will settle everything," "The Party will arrange everything for everybody." The peasants, not to speak of the workers, would not understand such talk now. We must now go deeper among the masses, we must now explain, elucidate and convince more than we did before. We must now win anew the confidence of the millions of non-Party people and hold it by organisational means, primarily through the Soviets. The enhanced political activity of the masses demands this.

But it is not only the classes that have changed. The battle-field has changed too, for it has become different, quite different. What was the issue in the struggle before? Whether the surplus-appropriation system was necessary or not. Earlier than that the issue was whether landlords

were necessary or not. These questions already belong to the past, for now there are no landlords and no surplus-appropriation system. The issue now is not the landlords, or the surplus-appropriation system, but the price of grain. This is an entirely new battle-field, a very wide and intricate one, which calls for serious study and arduous struggle. Even taxes are not now the issue, for the peasants would pay the tax if the price of grain was "sufficiently high," and if the price of textiles and other urban manufactures was "sufficiently" reduced. The principal question now is that of the market and the price of urban manufactures and agricultural produce.

Here is what the secretary of the Gomel Gubernia Committee writes to the Central Committee:

"In three volosts there was a mass refusal to accept the tax forms. Receipts are coming in at only a third of the rate that they should come in. The non-Party volost conferences that were held were so stormy that some of them had to be closed, and at some of them amendments were carried requesting the centre to reduce the tax and to raise the price of grain. I do not know what the situation is in other gubernias, but in our gubernia it does not coincide with the conclusions that you (meaning me) draw in your last confidential letter. The mood among our local officials is rather bad. The countryside is like a disturbed beehive; everybody is talking about the tax and the price of grain."

The Central Committee has received similar communications from Siberia, the South-East, and the Kursk, Tula, Nizhni-Novgorod, Ulyanovsk and other gubernias.

The meaning of all these communications is that the peasant finds our price policy irksome, and he would like to weaken, or even get rid of, the levers with which this price policy is operated, and without which our industry would not be able to advance a single step. The peasant, as it were, says to us: "You are afraid to reduce the price of urban manufactures to the utmost, you fear an influx of foreign goods, and so you have set up all sorts of tariff barriers to protect our young industry from foreign competition; but I don't care about your industry, I want cheap goods, no matter where they come from." Or: "You are afraid to raise the price

of grain because you fear this may undermine wages, and so you have invented all sorts of procurement bodies, you have established a monopoly of foreign trade, and so forth; but I don't care about your barriers and levers, I want a high price for grain."

Such is the meaning of the struggle in the sphere of price policy.

A particularly striking illustration of this is provided by the recent revolt in Georgia. Of course, this revolt was stage-managed, but in some uyezds, particularly the Guria Uyezd, it undoubtedly bore a mass character. What did the peasants in Guria want? Cheap commodities and a high price for maize. Guria lies on the border of the West, it sees that foreign goods are cheaper than our Soviet goods and it would like the prices of our goods to be reduced at least to the level of foreign prices, or the price of maize to be raised high enough to make it pay to buy Soviet goods. That is the economic basis of the Guria revolt in Georgia. And precisely for that reason, that revolt is indicative of the new conditions of the struggle all over the Soviet country. That is why the revolt in Georgia must not be put on a par with that in Tambov, where the issue was not the price of manufactures and of agricultural produce, but the abolition of the surplus-appropriation system.

This new struggle in the market and in the countryside against the Soviet price policy is inspired by the kulaks, the profiteers and other anti-Soviet elements. Those elements are striving to divorce the vast masses of the peasantry from the working class and thus undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence, our task is to isolate the kulaks and profiteers, to wrest the toiling peasants from them, to draw the toiling peasants into constructive Soviet work and thereby give them an outlet for their political activity. We can do this, and we are already doing it, for it is in the interest of the toiling masses of the peasantry, and of the rural poor in particular, to maintain the alliance with the workers, to maintain the proletarian dictatorship and, consequently, to maintain those economic levers by which the dictatorship is upheld.

What is needed for this? First of all we must set to work to create around the Party in the countryside numerous non-Party peasant cadres who could link our Party with the millions of peasants. Unless we do this

it will be useless to talk about wresting the peasantry from the kulaks and profiteers, about winning and keeping the tens of millions of peasants for the Party. This is a difficult matter, of course. But difficulty must not be an insuperable barrier for us. We must send into the countryside to help our Party units hundreds, and perhaps even thousands (it is not a matter here of the number), of experienced Party workers who are familiar with the countryside and who are capable of initiating and forming an active of non-Party peasants. In this we must bear in mind the peasants' natural distrust of townsfolk, a distrust which still exists in the countryside, and which will probably not be dispelled quickly. You know how the peasants welcome a townsman, especially if he is rather young: "Here's another one of those good-for-nothings from the town. He wants to pull the wool over our eyes, that's certain." This is because the peasants have most confidence in people who themselves engage in farming and know something about it. That is why I think that in our work in the countryside we must now focus our attention on creating an active from among the peasants themselves, from which the Party could recruit new forces.

But how is that to be done? In my opinion, the first thing to be done for this purpose is to revitalise the Soviets. All the active, honest, enterprising and politically conscious elements, particularly ex-Red Army men, who are the most politically conscious and enterprising among the peasants, must be drawn into the work of the Soviets. Why the Soviets? Because, firstly, the Soviets are organs of government, and it is the immediate task of the Party to draw the toiling peasantry into the work of governing the country. Because, secondly, the Soviets are organs of the bond between the workers and peasants, organs through which the workers lead the peasants, and leadership of the peasants by the workers is now more necessary than ever before. Because, thirdly, the Soviets draw up the local budgets, and the budget is a vital matter for the peasantry. Because, lastly, the Soviets are the surest barometer of the mood of the peasantry, and it is our bounden duty to heed the voice of the peasantry. In the countryside there are also other extremely important non-Party organisations, such as the peasant, committees, the co-operatives, and the organisations of the Young Communist League. But there is a danger that, under certain circumstances, these organisations may become purely peasant as-

sociations, which may become divorced from the workers. To prevent this happening, the activities of these organisations must be coordinated in the Soviets, the very structure of which ensures the leadership of the peasants by the workers. That is why, at the present time, when peasant organisations are springing up like mushrooms, the revitalising of the Soviets is a task of prime importance.

Recently, at a conference of village units, I called upon the comrades ruthlessly to criticise the defects in our Party work in the countryside.[2] This caused some displeasure. It appears that there are Communists who are afraid of criticism, who do not want to expose the defects in our work. That is dangerous, comrades. I will say more: fear of self-criticism, or of criticism by non-Party people, is a most dangerous disease at the present time. For, either one thing or the other: either we criticise ourselves and allow non-Party people to criticise our work—in which case we can hope that our work in the countryside will make progress; or we do not permit such criticism—in which case we shall be criticised by events like the revolts in Kronstadt, in Tambov and in Georgia. I think that criticism of the first kind is preferable to criticism of the second kind. That is why we must not fear criticism, whether from Party people or, especially, from non-Party people.

First published in the book:
J. Stalin, *The Peasant Question*,
Moscow and Leningrad, 1925

2 **Original editor:** See this volume, pp. 245-53.

ENTRY IN THE RED BOOK OF THE DYNAMO FACTORY

My wish for the workers of Dynamo, as for the workers of all Russia, is that our industry may forge ahead, that the number of proletarians in Russia may increase in the near future to 20-30 millions, that collective farming in the countryside may thrive and bring individual farming under its influence, that a highly developed industry and collective farming may finally weld the proletarians of the factories and the labourers of the soil into a single socialist army. [...]

J. Stalin

7/XI 24

First published
in *Pravda*, No. 152,
June 4, 1930



TO THE FIRST CAVALRY ARMY

Greetings to the glorious Cavalry Army, the terror of the whiteguard legions of Krasnov and Denikin, Wrangel and Pilsudski!

Greetings to the leaders of the Cavalry Army, Comrade Budyonny, the Red peasant general, and Comrade Voroshilov, the Red worker general!

Men of the Cavalry Army! Your Red Banners are covered with the unfading glory of resounding victories on the fronts of the four years' civil war. On this day of celebration of the fifth anniversary you must vow that you will remain faithful to these banners to the end of your days, that you will fulfil with honour your duty to your socialist Motherland when the working class calls upon you to fight new battles for the victory of communism.

Yours,
J. Stalin

Pravda, No. 261,
November 16, 1924



TO *KRESTYANSKAYA GAZETA*

GREETINGS TO *KRESTYANSKAYA GAZETA*, FAITHFUL GUARDIAN OF THE GREAT CAUSE OF THE ALLIANCE OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS!

Krestyanskaya Gazeta! Remember these three commandments:

1. Guard your peasant correspondents like the apple of your eye. They are your army;
2. Establish the closest ties with the most honest and most politically conscious peasants, especially with ex-Red Army men. They are your support;
3. Disseminate truth in the countryside, and proclaim for all the world to hear, untiringly proclaim, that the emancipation of the peasants is inconceivable without a fraternal alliance with the workers, that labour cannot achieve victory over capital unless the peasants are led by the workers.

J. Stalin

Krestyanskaya Gazeta, No. 51,
November 17, 1924

TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM?

Speech Delivered at the Plenum of the Communist Group in the A.U.C.C.T.U.

November 19, 1924

Comrades, after Kamenev's comprehensive report there is little left for me to say. I shall therefore confine myself to exposing certain legends that are being spread by Trotsky and his supporters about the October uprising, about Trotsky's role in the uprising, about the Party and the preparation for October, and so forth. I shall also touch upon Trotskyism as a peculiar ideology that is incompatible with Leninism, and upon the Party's tasks in connection with Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

I. The Facts About the October Uprising

First of all about the October uprising. Rumours are being vigorously spread among members of the Party that the Central Committee as a whole was opposed to an uprising in October 1917. The usual story is that on October 10, when the Central Committee adopted the decision to organise the uprising, the majority of the Central Committee at first spoke against an uprising, but, so the story runs, at that moment a worker burst in on the meeting of the Central Committee and said: "You are deciding against an uprising, but I tell you that there will be an uprising all the same, in spite of everything." And so, after that threat, the story runs, the Central Committee, which is alleged to have become frightened, raised the question of an uprising afresh and adopted a decision to organise it.

This is not merely a rumour, comrades. It is related by the well-known John Reed in his book *Ten Days.* Reed was remote from our

Party and, of course, could not know the history of our secret meeting on October 10, and, consequently, he was taken in by the gossip spread by people like Sukhanov. This story was later passed round and repeated in a number of pamphlets written by Trotskyites, including one of the latest pamphlets on October written by Syrkin. These rumours have been strongly supported in Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

It scarcely needs proof that all these and similar "Arabian Nights" fairy tales are not in accordance with the truth, that in fact nothing of the kind happened, nor could have happened, at the meeting of the Central Committee. Consequently, we could ignore these absurd rumours; after all, lots of rumours are fabricated in the office rooms of the oppositionists or those who are remote from the Party. Indeed, we have ignored them till now; for example, we paid no attention to John Reed's mistakes and did not take the trouble to rectify them. After Trotsky's latest pronouncements, however, it is no longer possible to ignore such legends, for attempts are being made now to bring up our young people on them and, unfortunately, some results have already been achieved in this respect. In view of this, I must counter these absurd rumours with the actual facts.

I take the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party on October 10 (23), 1917. Present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov, Lomov. The question of the current situation and the uprising was discussed. After the discussion, Comrade Lenin's resolution on the uprising was put to the vote. The resolution was adopted by a majority of 10 against 2. Clear, one would think: by a majority of 10 against 2, the Central Committee decided to proceed with the immediate, practical work of organising the uprising. At this very same meeting the Central Committee elected a *political* centre to direct the uprising; this centre, called the Political Bureau, consisted of Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokolnikov and Bubnov.

Such are the facts.

These minutes at one stroke destroy several legends. They destroy the legend that the majority on the Central Committee was opposed to an uprising. They also destroy the legend that on the question of the uprising the Central Committee was on the verge of a split. It is clear from the

minutes that the opponents of an immediate uprising—Kamenev and Zinoviev—were elected to the body that was to exercise political direction of the uprising on a par with those who were in favour of an uprising. There was no question of a split, nor could there be.

Trotsky asserts that in October our Party had a Right wing in the persons of Kamenev and Zinoviev, who, he says, were almost Social-Democrats. What one cannot understand then is how, under those circumstances, it could happen that the Party avoided a split; how it could happen that the disagreements with Kamenev and Zinoviev lasted only a few days; how it could happen that, in spite of those disagreements, the Party appointed these comrades to highly important posts, elected them to the political centre of the uprising, and so forth. Lenin's implacable attitude towards Social-Democrats is sufficiently well known in the Party; the Party knows that Lenin would not for a single moment have agreed to have Social-Democratically-minded comrades in the Party, let alone in highly important posts. How, then, are we to explain the fact that the Party avoided a split? The explanation is that in spite of the disagreements, these comrades were old Bolsheviks who stood on the common ground of Bolshevism. What was that common ground? Unity of views on the fundamental questions: the character of the Russian revolution, the driving forces of the revolution, the role of the peasantry, the principles of Party leadership, and so forth. Had there not been this common ground, a split would have been inevitable. There was no split, and the disagreements lasted only a few days, because, and only because, Kamenev and Zinoviev were Leninists, Bolsheviks.

Let us now pass to the legend about Trotsky's special role in the October uprising. The Trotskyites are vigorously spreading rumours that Trotsky inspired and was the sole leader of the October uprising. These rumours are being spread with exceptional zeal by the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, Lentsner. Trotsky himself, by consistently avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the Party, by saying nothing about the leading role of these organisations in the uprising and vigorously pushing himself forward as the central figure in the October uprising, voluntarily or involuntarily helps to spread the rumours about the special role he is supposed to have played in the uprising. I am far from denying Trotsky's undoubtedly im-

portant role in the uprising. I must say, however, that Trotsky did not play any special role in the October uprising, nor could he do so; being chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, he merely carried out the will of the appropriate Party bodies, which directed every step that Trotsky took. To philistines like Sukhanov, all this may seem strange, but the facts, the true facts, wholly and fully confirm what I say.

Let us take the minutes of the next meeting of the Central Committee, the one held on October 16 (29), 1917. Present: the members of the Central Committee, plus representatives of the Petrograd Committee, plus representatives of the military organisation, factory committees, trade unions and the railwaymen. Among those present, besides the members of the Central Committee, were: Krylenko, Shotman, Kalinin, Volodarsky, Shlyapnikov, Lacis, and others, twenty-five in all. The question of the uprising was discussed from the purely practical-organisational aspect. Lenin's resolution on the uprising was adopted by a majority of 20 against 2, three abstaining. A *practical* centre was elected for the organisational leadership of the uprising. Who was elected to this centre? The following five: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov, Uritsky. The functions of the practical centre: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising in conformity with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something "terrible" happened at this meeting of the Central Committee, i.e., "strange to relate," the "inspirer," the "chief figure," the "sole leader" of the uprising, Trotsky, was not elected to the practical centre, which was called upon to direct the uprising. How is this to be reconciled with the current opinion about Trotsky's special role? Is not all this somewhat "strange," as Sukhanov, or the Trotskyites, would say? And yet, strictly speaking, there is nothing strange about it, for neither in the Party, nor in the October uprising, did Trotsky play any *special* role, nor could he do so, for he was a relatively new man in our Party in the period of October. He, like all the responsible workers, merely carried out the will of the Central Committee and of its organs. Whoever is familiar with the mechanics of Bolshevik Party leadership will have no difficulty in understanding that it could not be otherwise: it would have been enough for Trotsky to have gone against the will of the Central Committee to have been deprived of influence

on the course of events. This talk about Trotsky's special role is a legend that is being spread by obliging "Party" gossips.

This, of course, does not mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. It did have its inspirer and leader, but this was Lenin, and none other than Lenin, that same Lenin whose resolutions the Central Committee adopted when deciding the question of the uprising, that same Lenin who, in spite of what Trotsky says, was not prevented by being in hiding from being the actual inspirer of the uprising. It is foolish and ridiculous to attempt now, by gossip about Lenin having been in hiding, to obscure the indubitable fact that the inspirer of the uprising was the leader of the Party, V. I. Lenin.

Such are the facts.

Granted, we are told, but it cannot be denied that Trotsky fought well in the period of October. Yes, that is true, Trotsky did, indeed, fight well in October; but Trotsky was not the only one who fought well in the period of October. Even people like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who then stood side by side with the Bolsheviks, also fought well. In general, I must say that in the period of a victorious uprising, when the enemy is isolated and the uprising is growing, it is not difficult to fight well. At such moments even backward people become heroes.

The proletarian struggle is not, however, an uninterrupted advance, an unbroken chain of victories. The proletarian struggle also has its trials, its defeats. The genuine revolutionary is not one who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising, but one who, while fighting well during the victorious advance of the revolution, also displays courage when the revolution is in retreat, when the proletariat suffers defeat; who does not lose his head and does not funk when the revolution suffers reverses, when the enemy achieves success; who does not become panic-stricken or give way to despair when the revolution is in a period of retreat. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries did not fight badly in the period of October, and they supported the Bolsheviks. But who does not know that those "brave" fighters became panic-stricken in the period of Brest, when the advance of German imperialism drove them to despair and hysteria? It is a very sad but indubitable fact that Trotsky, who fought well in the period

of October, did not, in the period of Brest, in the period when the revolution suffered temporary reverses, possess the courage to display sufficient staunchness at that difficult moment and to refrain from following in the footsteps of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Beyond question, that moment was a difficult one; one had to display exceptional courage and imperturbable coolness not to be dismayed, to retreat in good time, to accept peace in good time, to withdraw the proletarian army out of range of the blows of German imperialism, to preserve the peasant reserves and, after obtaining a respite in this way, to strike at the enemy with renewed force. Unfortunately, Trotsky was found to lack this courage and revolutionary staunchness at that difficult moment.

In Trotsky's opinion, the principal lesson of the proletarian revolution is "not to funk" during October. That is wrong, for Trotsky's assertion contains only a *particle* of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The *whole* truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution is "not to funk" not only when the revolution is advancing, but also when it is in retreat, when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and the revolution is suffering reverses. The revolution did not end with October. October was only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad to funk when the tide of insurrection is rising; but it is worse to funk when the revolution is passing through severe trials after power has been captured. To retain power on the morrow of the revolution is no less important than to capture power. If Trotsky funked during the period of Brest, when our revolution was passing through severe trials, when it was almost a matter of "surrendering" power, he ought to know that the mistakes committed by Kamenev and Zinoviev in October are quite irrelevant here.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the October uprising.

II. The Party and the Preparation for October

Let us now pass to the question of the preparation for October.

Listening to Trotsky, one might think that during the whole of the period of preparation, from March to October, the Bolshevik Party did

nothing but mark time; that it was being corroded by internal contradictions and hindered Lenin in every way; that had it not been for Trotsky, nobody knows how the October Revolution would have ended. It is rather amusing to hear this strange talk about the Party from Trotsky, who declares in this same "preface" to Volume III that "the chief instrument of the proletarian revolution is the Party," that "without the Party, apart from the Party, by-passing the Party, with a substitute for the Party, the proletarian revolution cannot be victorious." Allah himself would not understand how our revolution could have succeeded if "its chief instrument" proved to be useless, while success was impossible, as it appears, "by-passing the Party." But this is not the first time that Trotsky treats us to oddities. It must be supposed that this amusing talk about our Party is one of Trotsky's usual oddities.

Let us briefly review the history of the preparation for October according to periods.

1. *The period of the Party's new orientation (March-April*). The major facts of this period:
   a) the overthrow of tsarism;
   b) the formation of the Provisional Government (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie);
   c) the appearance of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry);
   d) dual power;
   e) the April demonstration;
   f) the first crisis of power.

   The characteristic feature of this period is the fact that there existed together, side by side and simultaneously, both the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry; the latter trusts the former, believes that it is striving for peace, voluntarily surrenders power to the bourgeoisie and thereby becomes an appendage of the bourgeoisie. There are as yet no serious conflicts between the two dictatorships. On the other hand,

there is the "Contact Committee."[1]

This was the greatest turning point in the history of Russia and an unprecedented turning point in the history of our Party. The old, pre-revolutionary platform of direct overthrow of the government was clear and definite, but it was no longer suitable for the new conditions of the struggle. It was now no longer possible to go straight out for the overthrow of the government, for the latter was connected with the Soviets, then under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war against both the government and the Soviets, a war that would have been beyond its strength. Nor was it possible to pursue a policy of supporting the Provisional Government, for it was the government of imperialism. Under the new conditions of the struggle the Party had to adopt a new orientation. The Party (its majority) groped its way towards this new orientation. It adopted the policy of pressure on the Provisional Government through the Soviets on the question of peace and did not venture to step forward at once from the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the new slogan of power to the Soviets. The aim of this halfway policy was to enable the Soviets to discern the actual imperialist nature of the Provisional Government on the basis of the concrete questions of peace, and in this way to wrest the Soviets from the Provisional Government. But this was a profoundly mistaken position, for it gave rise to pacifist illusions, brought grist to the mill of defencism and hindered the revolutionary education of the masses. At that time I shared this mistaken position with other Party comrades and fully

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1 **Original editor:** The "Contact Committee," consisting of Chkheidze, Steklov, Sukhanov, Filippovsky and Skobelev (and later Chernov and Tsereteli), was set up by the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on March 7, 1917, for the purpose of establishing contact with the Provisional Government, of "influencing" it and "controlling" its activities. Actually, the "Contact Committee" helped to carry out the bourgeois policy of the Provisional Government and restrained the masses of the workers from waging an active revolutionary struggle to transfer all power to the Soviets. The "Contact Committee" existed until May 1917, when representatives of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries entered the Provisional Government.

abandoned it only in the middle of April, when I associated myself with Lenin's theses. A new orientation was needed. This new orientation was given to the Party by Lenin, in his celebrated April Theses.[2] I shall not deal with these theses, for they are known to everybody. Were there any disagreements between the Party and Lenin at that time? Yes, there were. How long did these disagreements last? Not more than two weeks. The City Conference of the Petrograd organisation[3] (in the latter half of April), which adopted Lenin's theses, marked a turning point in our Party's development. The All-Russian April Conference[4] (at the end of April) merely completed on an all-Russian scale the work of the Petrograd Conference, rallying nine-tenths of the Party around this united Party position.

Now, seven years later, Trotsky gloats maliciously over the past disagreements among the Bolsheviks and depicts them as a struggle waged as if there were almost two parties within Bolshevism. But, firstly, Trotsky disgracefully exaggerates and inflates the matter, for the Bolshevik Party lived through these disagreements without the slightest shock. Secondly, our Party would be a caste and not a revolutionary party if it did not permit different shades of opinion in its ranks. Moreover, it is well known that there were disagreements among us even before that, for example, in the period of the Third Duma, but they did not shake the unity of our Party. Thirdly, it will not be out of place to ask what was *then* the position of Trotsky himself, who is *now* gloating so eagerly over the past disagreements among the Bolsheviks. Lentsner, the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, assures us that Trotsky's letters from America

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2 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 24, pp. 1-7.

3 **Original editor:** The Petrograd City Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) took place from April 14-22 (April 27-May 5), 1917, with 57 delegates present. V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin took part in the proceedings. V. I. Lenin delivered a report on the current situation based on his April Theses. J. V. Stalin was elected to the commission for drafting the resolution on V. I. Lenin's report.

4 **Original editor:** Concerning the Seventh All-Russian April Conference of the Bolshevik Party see the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Short Course*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 291-96.

(March) "wholly anticipated" Lenin's *Letters from Afar*[5] March), which served as the basis of Lenin's April Theses. That is what he says: "wholly anticipated." Trotsky does not object to this analogy; apparently, he accepts it with thanks. But, firstly, Trotsky's letters "do not in the least resemble" Lenin's letters either in spirit or in conclusions, for they wholly and entirely reflect Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik slogan of "no tsar, but a workers' government," a slogan which implies a revolution *without* the peasantry. It is enough to glance through these two series of letters to be convinced of this. Secondly, if what Lentsner says is true, how are we to explain the fact that Lenin on the very next day after his arrival from abroad considered it necessary to dissociate himself from Trotsky? Who does not know of Lenin's repeated statements that Trotsky's slogan of *"no tsar, but a workers' government"* was an attempt "to skip the still unexhausted peasant movement," that this slogan meant "playing at the seizure of power by a workers' government"?[6]

What can there be in common between Lenin's Bolshevik theses and Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik scheme with its "playing at the seizure of power"? And what prompts this passion that some people display for comparing a wretched hovel with Mont Blanc? For what purpose did Lentsner find it necessary to make this risky addition to the heap of old legends about our revolution of still another legend, about Trotsky's letters from America "anticipating" Lenin's well-known *Letters from Afar*[7]?

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5 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 23, pp. 289-333.

6 See Lenin's *Works*, Vol. XX, p. 104. See also the reports made at the Petrograd City Conference and at the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) (middle and end of April 1917).

7 Among these legends must be included also the very widespread story that Trotsky was the "sole" or "chief organiser" of the victories on the fronts of the Civil War. I must declare, comrades, in the interest of truth, that this version is quite out of accord with the facts. I am far from denying that Trotsky played an important role in the Civil War. But I must emphatically declare that the high honour of being the organiser of our victories belongs not to individuals, but to the great collective body of advanced workers in our country, the Russian Communist Party. Perhaps it will not be out of place to

No wonder it is said that an obliging fool is more dangerous than an enemy.

2. *The period of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses (May-August*). The major facts of this period:
    a) the April demonstration in Petrograd and the formation of the coalition government with the participation of "Socialists";

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quote a few examples. You know that Kolchak and Denikin were regarded as the principal enemies of the Soviet Republic. You know that our country breathed freely only after those enemies were defeated. Well, history shows that both those enemies, i.e., Kolchak and Denikin, were routed by our troops *in spite* of Trotsky's plans.

Judge for yourselves.

1. *Kolchak*. This is in the summer of 1919. Our troops are advancing against Kolchak and are operating near Ufa. A meeting of the Central Committee is held. Trotsky proposes that the advance be halted along the line of the River Belaya (near Ufa), leaving the Urals in the hands of Kolchak, and that part of the troops be withdrawn from the Eastern Front and transferred to the Southern Front. A heated debate takes place. The Central Committee disagrees with Trotsky, being of the opinion that the Urals, with its factories and railway network, must not be left in the hands of Kolchak, for the latter could easily recuperate there, organise a strong force and reach the Volga again; Kolchak must first be driven beyond the Ural range into the Siberian steppes, and only after that has been done should forces be transferred to the South. The Central Committee rejects Trotsky's plan. Trotsky hands in his resignation. The Central Committee refuses to accept it. Commander-in-Chief Vatsetis, who supported Trotsky's plan, resigns. His place is taken by a new Commander-in-Chief, Kamenev. From that moment Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Eastern Front.
2. *Denikin*. This is in the autumn of 1919. The offensive against Denikin is not proceeding successfully. The "steel ring" around Mamontov (Mamontov's raid) is obviously collapsing. Denikin captures Kursk. Denikin is approaching Orel. Trotsky is summoned from the Southern Front to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. The Central Committee regards the situation as alarming and decides to send new military leaders to the Southern Front and to withdraw Trotsky. The new military leaders demand "no intervention" by Trotsky in the affairs of the Southern Front. Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Southern Front. Operations on the Southern Front, right up to the capture of Rostov-on-Don and Odessa by our troops, proceed without Trotsky.

Let anybody try to refute these facts.

b) the May Day demonstrations in the principal centres of Russia with the slogan of "a democratic peace";

c) the June demonstration in Petrograd with the principal slogan: "Down with the capitalist ministers!" ;

d) the June offensive at the front and the reverses of the Russian army;

e) the July armed demonstration in Petrograd; the Cadet ministers resign from the government;

f) counter-revolutionary troops are called in from the front; the editorial offices of *Pravda* are wrecked; the counter-revolution launches a struggle against the Soviets and a new coalition government is formed, headed by Kerensky;

g) the Sixth Congress of our Party, which issues the slogan to prepare for an armed uprising;

h) the counter-revolutionary Conference of State and the general strike in Moscow;

i) Kornilov's unsuccessful march on Petrograd, the revitalising of the Soviets; the Cadets resign and a "Directory" is formed.

The characteristic feature of this period is the intensification of the crisis and the upsetting of the unstable equilibrium between the Soviets and the Provisional Government which, for good or evil, had existed in the preceding period. Dual power has become intolerable for both sides. The fragile edifice of the "Contact Committee" is tottering. "Crisis of power" and "ministerial re-shuffle" are the most fashionable catch-words of the day. The crisis at the front and the disruption in the rear are doing their work, strengthening the extreme flanks and squeezing the defencist compromisers from both sides. The revolution is mobilising, causing the mobilisation of the counter-revolution. The counter-revolution, in its turn, is spurring on the revolution, stirring up new waves of the revolutionary tide. The question of transferring power to the new class becomes the immediate question of the day.

Were there disagreements in our Party then? Yes, there were. They

were, however, of a purely practical character, despite the assertions of Trotsky, who is trying to discover a "Right" and a "Left" wing in the Party. That is to say, they were such disagreements as are inevitable where there is vigorous Party life and real Party activity.

Trotsky is wrong in asserting that the April demonstration in Petrograd gave rise to disagreements in the Central Committee. The Central Committee was absolutely united on this question and condemned the attempt of a group of comrades to arrest the Provisional Government at a time when the Bolsheviks were in a minority both in the Soviets and in the army. Had Trotsky written the "history" of October not according to Sukhanov, but according to authentic documents, he would easily have convinced himself of the error of his assertion.

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in asserting that the attempt, "on Lenin's initiative," to arrange a demonstration on June 10 was described as "adventurism" by the "Right-wing" members of the Central Committee. Had Trotsky not written according to Sukhanov he would surely have known that the June 10 demonstration was postponed with the full agreement of Lenin, and that he urged the necessity of postponing it in a big speech he delivered at the well-known meeting of the Petrograd Committee (see minutes of the Petrograd Committee[8]).

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in speaking about "tragic" disagreements in the Central Committee in connection with the July armed demonstration. Trotsky is simply inventing in asserting that some members of the leading group in the Central Committee "could not but regard the July episode as a harmful adventure." Trotsky, who was then not yet a member of our Central Committee and was merely our Soviet parliamentary, might, of course, not have known that the Central Committee regarded the July demonstration only as a means of sounding the enemy, that the Central Committee

8 **Original editor:** See "Speech by V. I. Lenin at the Meeting of the Petrograd Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), June 24 (11), 1917, Concerning the Cancelling of the Demonstration." (*Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 25, pp. 62-63).

(and Lenin) did not want to convert, did not even think of converting, the demonstration into an uprising at a time when the Soviets in the capitals still supported the defencists. It is quite possible that some Bolsheviks did whimper over the July defeat. I know, for example, that some of the Bolsheviks who were arrested at the time were even prepared to desert our ranks. But to draw inferences from this against certain supposed "Rights," supposed to be members of the Central Committee, is a shameful distortion of history.

Trotsky is wrong in declaring that during the Kornilov days a section of the Party leaders inclined towards the formation of a bloc with the defencists, towards supporting the Provisional Government. He, of course, is referring to those same alleged "Rights" who keep him awake at night. Trotsky is wrong, for there exist documents, such as the Central Organ of the Party of that time, which refute his statements. Trotsky refers to Lenin's letter to the Central Committee warning against supporting Kerensky; but Trotsky fails to understand Lenin's letters, their significance, their purpose. In his letters Lenin sometimes deliberately ran ahead, pushing into the forefront mistakes that might *possibly* be committed, and criticising them in advance with the object of warning the Party and of safeguarding it against mistakes. Sometimes he would even magnify a "trifle" and "make a mountain out of a molehill" for the same pedagogical purpose. The leader of the Party, especially if he is in hiding, cannot act otherwise, for he must see further than his comrades-in-arms, he must sound the alarm over every possible mistake, even over "trifles." But to infer from such letters of Lenin's (and he wrote quite a number of such letters) the existence of "tragic" disagreements and to trumpet them forth means not to understand Lenin's letters, means not to know Lenin. This, probably, explains why Trotsky sometimes is wide of the mark. In short: there were no disagreements in the Central Committee during the Kornilov revolt, absolutely none.

After the July defeat disagreement did indeed arise between the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the future of the Soviets. It is known that Lenin, wishing to concentrate the Party's at-

tention on the task of preparing the uprising outside the Soviets, warned against any infatuation with the latter, for he was of the opinion that, having been defiled by the defencists, they had become useless. The Central Committee and the Sixth Party Congress took a more cautious line and decided that there were no grounds for excluding the possibility that the Soviets would revive. The Kornilov revolt showed that this decision was correct. This disagreement, however, was of no great consequence for the Party. Later, Lenin admitted that the line taken by the Sixth Congress had been correct. It is interesting that Trotsky has not clutched at this disagreement and has not magnified it to "monstrous" proportions.

A united and solid party, the hub of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses—such was the picture presented by our Party in that period.

3. *The period of organisation of the assault (September-October*). The major facts of this period:
   a) the convocation of the Democratic Conference and the collapse of the idea of a bloc with the Cadets;
   b) the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets go over to the side of the Bolsheviks;
   c) the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region[9]; the Petrograd Soviet decides against the withdrawal of the troops;
   d) the decision of the Central Committee on the uprising and

9 **Original editor:** The Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of the Northern Region took place in Petrograd on October 24-26 (11-13), 1917, under the direction of the Bolsheviks. Representatives were present from Petrograd, Moscow, Kronstadt, Novgorod, Reval, Helsingfors, Vyborg and other cities. In all there were 94 delegates, of whom 51 were Bolsheviks. The congress adopted a resolution on the need for immediate transference of all power to the Soviets, central and local. It called upon the peasants to support the struggle for the transference of power to the Soviets and urged the Soviets themselves to commence active operations and to set up Revolutionary Military Committees for organising the military defence of the revolution. The congress set up a Northern Regional Committee and instructed it to prepare for the convocation of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets and to co-ordinate the activities of all the Regional Soviets.

the formation of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet;

e) the Petrograd garrison decides to render the Petrograd Soviet armed support; a network of commissars of the Revolutionary Military Committee is organised;

f) the Bolshevik armed forces go into action; the members of the Provisional Government are arrested;

g) the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet takes power; the Second Congress of Soviets sets up the Council of People's Commissars.

The characteristic feature of this period is the rapid growth of the crisis, the utter consternation reigning among the ruling circles, the isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and the mass flight of the vacillating elements to the side of the Bolsheviks. A peculiar feature of the tactics of the revolution in this period must be noted, namely, that the revolution strove to take every, or nearly every, step in its attack in the guise of defence. Undoubtedly, the refusal to allow the troops to be withdrawn from Petrograd was an important step in the revolution's attack; nevertheless, this attack was carried out under the slogan of protecting Petrograd from possible attack by the external enemy. Undoubtedly, the formation of the Revolutionary Military Committee was a still more important step in the attack upon the Provisional Government; nevertheless, it was carried out under the slogan of organising Soviet control over the actions of the Headquarters of the Military Area. Undoubtedly, the open transition of the garrison to the side of the Revolutionary Military Committee and the organisation of a network of Soviet Commissars marked the beginning of the uprising; nevertheless, the revolution took these steps under the slogan of protecting the Petrograd Soviet from possible action by the counter-revolution. The revolution, as it were, masked its actions in attack under the cloak of defence in order the more easily to draw the irresolute, vacillating elements into its orbit. This, no doubt, explains the outwardly defensive character of the speeches, articles and slogans of that period, the inner content of which, none the less, was of a profoundly attacking nature.

Were there disagreements in the Central Committee in that period? Yes, there were, and fairly important ones at that. I have already spoken about the disagreements over the uprising. They are fully reflected in the minutes of the meetings of the Central Committee of October 10 and 16. I shall, therefore, not repeat what I have already said. Three questions must now be dealt with: participation in the Pre-parliament, the role of the Soviets in the uprising, and the date of the uprising. This is all the more necessary because Trotsky, in his zeal to push himself into a prominent place, has "inadvertently" misrepresented the stand Lenin took on the last two questions.

Undoubtedly, the disagreements on the question of the Pre-parliament were of a serious nature. What was, so to speak, the aim of the Pre-parliament? It was: to help the bourgeoisie to push the Soviets into the background and to lay the foundations of bourgeois parliamentarism. Whether the Pre-parliament could have accomplished this task in the revolutionary situation that had arisen is another matter. Events showed that this aim could not be realised, and the Pre-parliament itself was a Kornilovite abortion. There can be no doubt, however, that it was precisely this aim that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries pursued in setting up the Pre-parliament. What could the Bolsheviks' participation in the Pre-parliament mean under those circumstances? Nothing but deceiving the proletarian masses about the true nature of the Pre-parliament. This is the chief explanation for the passion with which Lenin, in his letters, scourged those who were in favour of taking part in the Pre-parliament. There can be no doubt that it was a grave mistake to have taken part in the Pre-parliament.

It would be a mistake, however, to think, as Trotsky does, that those who were in favour of taking part in the Pre-parliament went into it for the purpose of constructive work, for the purpose of "directing the working-class movement" "into the channel of Social-Democracy." That is not at all the case. It is not true. Had that been the case, the Party would not have been able to rectify this mistake "in two ticks" by demonstratively walking out of the Pre-parliament. Incidentally, the swift rectification of this mistake was an expression of our Party's vitality and revolutionary might.

And now, permit me to correct a slight inaccuracy that has crept into the report of Lentsner, the "editor" of Trotsky's works, about the meeting of the Bolshevik group at which a decision on the question of the Pre-parliament was taken. Lentsner says that there were two reporters at this meeting, Kamenev and Trotsky. That is not true. Actually, there were four reporters: two in favour of boycotting the Pre-parliament (Trotsky and Stalin), and two in favour of participation (Kamenev and Nogin).

Trotsky is in a still worse position when dealing with the stand Lenin took on the question of the form of the uprising. According to Trotsky, it appears that Lenin's view was that the Party should take power in October "independently of and behind the back of the Soviet." Later on, criticising this nonsense, which he ascribes to Lenin, Trotsky "cuts capers" and finally delivers the following condescending utterance: "That would have been a mistake." Trotsky is here uttering a falsehood about Lenin, he is misrepresenting Lenin's views on the role of the Soviets in the uprising. A pile of documents can be cited, showing that Lenin proposed that power be taken *through* the Soviets, either the Petrograd or the Moscow Soviet, and not *behind the back* of the Soviets. Why did Trotsky have to invent this more than strange legend about Lenin?

Nor is Trotsky in a better position when he "analyses" the stand taken by the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the date of the uprising. Reporting the famous meeting of the Central Committee of October 10, Trotsky asserts that at that meeting "a resolution was carried to the effect that the uprising should take place not later than October 15." From this it appears that the Central Committee fixed October 15 as the date of the uprising and then itself violated that decision by postponing the date of the uprising to October 25. Is that true? No, it is not. During that period the Central Committee passed only two resolutions on the uprising—one on October 10 and the other on October 16. Let us read these resolutions.

The Central Committee's resolution of October 10:

> "The Central Committee recognises that the international position of the Russian revolution (the mutiny in the German navy, which is an extreme manifestation of the growth throughout Europe of the world socialist revolution, and

> the threat of peace[10] between the imperialists with the object of strangling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the indubitable decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans), and the fact that the proletarian party has gained a majority in the Soviets—all this, taken in conjunction with the peasant revolt and the swing of popular confidence towards our Party (the elections in Moscow), and, finally, the obvious preparations being made for a second Kornilov affair (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the dispatch of Cossacks to Petrograd, the surrounding of Minsk by Cossacks. etc.)—all this places an armed uprising on the order of the day.
>
> "Considering, therefore, that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organisations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the actions of the people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view."[11]

The resolution adopted by the conference of the Central Committee with responsible workers on October 16:

> "This meeting fully welcomes and wholly supports the Central Committee's resolution, calls upon all organisations and all workers and soldiers to make thorough and most intense preparations for an armed uprising and for support of the centre set up by the Central Committee for this purpose, and expresses complete confidence that the Central Committee and the Soviet will in good time indicate the favourable moment and the suitable means for launching the attack."[12]

You see that Trotsky's memory betrayed him about the date of the uprising and the Central Committee's resolution on the uprising.

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in asserting that Lenin underrated Soviet legality, that Lenin failed to appreciate the great importance of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets taking power on October 25, and that this was the reason why he insisted that power be taken before October 25. That is not true. Lenin proposed that power be taken before October 25 for two reasons. Firstly, because the counter-revolutionaries might have surrendered Petrograd at any moment, which would have drained

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10 Obviously, this should be "a separate peace."

11 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 26, p. 162.

12 **Original editor:** See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 26, p. 165.

the blood of the developing uprising, and so every day was precious. Secondly, because the mistake made by the Petrograd Soviet in *openly* fixing and announcing the day of the uprising (October 25) could not be rectified in any other way than by actually launching the uprising *before* the legal date set for it. The fact of the matter is that Lenin regarded insurrection as an art, and he could not help knowing that the enemy, informed about the date of the uprising (owing to the carelessness of the Petrograd Soviet) would certainly try to prepare for that day. Consequently, it was necessary to forestall the enemy, i.e., without fail to launch the uprising *before* the legal date. This is the chief explanation for the passion with which Lenin in his letters scourged those who made a fetish of the date—October 25. Events showed that Lenin was absolutely right. It is well known that the uprising was launched prior to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It is well known that power was actually taken before the opening of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and it was taken not by the Congress of Soviets, but by the Petrograd Soviet, by the Revolutionary Military Committee. The Congress of Soviets merely *took over* power from the Petrograd Soviet. That is why Trotsky's lengthy arguments about the importance of Soviet legality are quite beside the point.

A virile and mighty party standing at the head of the revolutionary masses who were storming and overthrowing bourgeois rule—such was the state of our Party in that period.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the preparation for October.

III. Trotskyism or Leninism?

We have dealt above with the legends directed against the Party and those about Lenin spread by Trotsky and his supporters in connection with October and the preparation for it. We have exposed and refuted these legends. But the question arises: For what purpose did Trotsky need all these legends about October and the preparation for October, about Lenin and the Party of Lenin? What is the purpose of Trotsky's new literary pronouncements against the Party? What is the sense, the purpose, the aim of these pronouncements now, when the Party does not want a

discussion, when the Party is busy with a host of urgent tasks, when the Party needs united efforts to restore our economy and not a new struggle around old questions? For what purpose does Trotsky need to drag the Party back, to new discussions?

Trotsky asserts that all this is needed for the purpose of "studying" October. But is it not possible to study October without giving another kick at the Party and its leader Lenin? What sort of a "history" of October is it that begins and ends with attempts to discredit the chief leader of the October uprising, to discredit the Party, which organised and carried through the uprising? No, it is not a matter here of studying October. *That* is not the way to study October. *That* is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously, there is a different "design" here, and everything goes to show that this "design" is that Trotsky by his literary pronouncements is making another (yet another!) attempt to create the conditions for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism. Trotsky needs "desperately" to discredit the Party, and its cadres who carried through the uprising, in order, after discrediting the Party, to proceed to discredit Leninism. And it is necessary for him to discredit Leninism in order to drag in Trotskyism as the "sole" "proletarian" (don't laugh!) ideology. All this, of course (oh of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the dragging operation may be performed "as painlessly as possible."

That is the essence of Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

That is why those literary pronouncements of Trotsky's sharply raise the question of Trotskyism.

And so, what is Trotskyism?

Trotskyism possesses three specific features which bring it into irreconcilable contradiction with Leninism.

What are these features?

Firstly. Trotskyism is the theory of "permanent" (uninterrupted) revolution. But what is permanent revolution in its Trotskyist interpretation? It is revolution that fails to take the poor peasantry into account as a revolutionary force. Trotsky's "permanent" revolution is, as Lenin said, "skipping" the peasant movement, "playing at the seizure of power." Why

is it dangerous? Because such a revolution, if an attempt had been made to bring it about, would inevitably have ended in failure, for it would have divorced from the Russian proletariat its ally, the poor peasantry. This explains the struggle that Leninism has been waging against Trotskyism ever since 1905.

How does Trotsky appraise Leninism from the standpoint of this struggle? He regards it as a theory that possesses "anti-revolutionary features." What is this indignant opinion about Leninism based on? On the fact that at the proper time Leninism advocated and upheld the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and *peasantry.*

But Trotsky does not confine himself to this indignant opinion. He goes further and asserts: "The entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and bears within itself the poisonous elements of its own decay" (see Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze, 1913). As you see, we have before us two opposite lines.

Secondly. Trotskyism is distrust of the Bolshevik Party principle, of the monolithic character of the Party, of its hostility towards opportunist elements. In the sphere of organisation, Trotskyism is the theory that revolutionaries and opportunists can co-exist and form groups and coteries within a single party. You are, no doubt, familiar with the history of Trotsky's August bloc, in which the Martovites and Otzovists, the Liquidators and Trotskyites, happily co-operated, pretending that they were a "real" party. It is well known that this patchwork "party" pursued the aim of destroying the Bolshevik Party. What was the nature of "our disagreements" at that time? It was that Leninism regarded the destruction of the August bloc as a guarantee of the development of the proletarian party, whereas Trotskyism regarded that bloc as the basis for building a "real" party.

Again, as you see, we have two opposite lines.

Thirdly. Trotskyism is distrust of the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt to discredit, to defame them. I do not know of a single trend in the Party that could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism or the central institutions of the Party. For exam-

ple, what should be said of Trotsky's "polite" opinion of Lenin, whom he described as "a professional exploiter of every kind of backwardness in the Russian working-class movement" (*ibid.*)? And this is far from being the most "polite" of the "polite" opinions Trotsky has expressed.

How could it happen that Trotsky, who carried such a nasty stock-in-trade on his back, found himself, after all, in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? It happened because at that time Trotsky abandoned (actually did abandon) that stock-in-trade; he hid it in the cupboard. Had he not performed that "operation," real co-operation with him would have been impossible. The theory of the August bloc, i.e., the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been shattered and thrown overboard by the revolution, for how could there be any talk about unity when an armed struggle was raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? Trotsky had no alternative but to admit that this theory was useless.

The same misadventure "happened" to the theory of permanent revolution, for not a single Bolshevik contemplated the immediate seizure of power on the morrow of the February Revolution, and Trotsky could not help knowing that the Bolsheviks would not allow him, in the words of Lenin, "to play at the seizure of power." Trotsky had no alternative but recognise the Bolsheviks' policy of fighting for influence in the Soviets, of fighting to win over the peasantry. As regards the third specific feature of Trotskyism (distrust of the Bolshevik leaders), it naturally had to retire into the background owing to the obvious failure of the first two features.

Under those circumstances, could Trotsky do anything else but hide his stock-in-trade in the cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, considering that he had no group of his own of any significance, and that he came to the Bolsheviks as a political individual, without an army? Of course, he could not!

What is the lesson to be learnt from this? Only one: that prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely abandons his old stock-in-trade, only if he completely

accepts Leninism. Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets that, in addition to all the other lessons, there is one more lesson of October, the one I have just mentioned, which is of prime importance for Trotskyism. Trotskyism ought to learn that lesson of October too.

It is evident, however, that Trotskyism has not learnt that lesson. The fact of the matter is that the old stock-in-trade of Trotskyism that was hidden in the cupboard in the period of the October movement is now being dragged into the light again in the hope that a market will be found for it, seeing that the market in our country is expanding. Undoubtedly, Trotsky's new literary pronouncements are an attempt to revert to Trotskyism, to "overcome" Leninism, to drag in, implant, all the specific features of Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism is not a mere repetition of the old Trotskyism; its feathers have been plucked and it is rather bedraggled; it is incomparably milder in spirit and more moderate in form than the old Trotskyism; but, in essence, it undoubtedly retains all the specific features of the old Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism does not dare to come out as a militant force against Leninism; it prefers to operate under the common flag of Leninism, under the slogan of interpreting, improving Leninism. That is because it is weak. It cannot be regarded as an accident that the appearance of the new Trotskyism coincided with Lenin's departure. In Lenin's lifetime it would not have dared to take this risky step.

What are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism?

1. *On the question of "permanent" revolution.* The new Trotskyism does not deem it necessary openly to uphold the theory of "permanent" revolution. It "simply" asserts that the October Revolution fully confirmed the idea of "permanent" revolution. From this it draws the following conclusion: the important and acceptable part of Leninism is the part that came after the war, in the period of the October Revolution; on the other hand, the part of Leninism that existed before the war, before the October Revolution, is wrong and unacceptable. Hence, the Trotskyites' theory of the division of Leninism into two parts: pre-war Leninism, the "old," "useless" Leninism with its idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and the new, post-war, October Leninism, which they count on adapting to the requirements of Trotskyism. Trotskyism needs

this theory of the division of Leninism as a first, more or less "acceptable" step that is necessary to facilitate further steps in its struggle against Leninism.

But Leninism is not an eclectic theory stuck together out of diverse elements and capable of being cut into parts. Leninism is an integral theory, which arose in 1903, has passed the test of three revolutions, and is now being carried forward as the battle-flag of the world proletariat.

> "Bolshevism," Lenin said, "as a trend of political thought and as a political party, has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *whole* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and to maintain under most difficult conditions the iron discipline needed for the victory of the proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 174).

Bolshevism and Leninism are one. They are two names for one and the same thing. Hence, the theory of the division of Leninism into two parts is a theory intended to destroy Leninism, to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque theory.

2. *On the question of the Party principle.* The old Trotskyism tried to undermine the Bolshevik Party principle by means of the theory (and practice) of unity with the Mensheviks. But that theory has suffered such disgrace that nobody now even wants to mention it. To undermine the Party principle, present-day Trotskyism has invented the new, less odious and almost "democratic" theory of contrasting the old cadres to the younger Party members. According to Trotskyism, our Party has not a single and integral history. Trotskyism divides the history of our Party into two parts of unequal importance: pre-October and post-October. The pre-October part of the history of our Party is, properly speaking, not history, but "pre-history," the unimportant or, at all events, not very important preparatory period of our Party. The post-October part of the history of our Party, however, is real, genuine history. In the former, there are the "old," "pre-historic," unimportant cadres of our Party.

In the latter there is the new, real, "historic" Party. It scarcely needs proof that this singular scheme of the history of the Party is a scheme to disrupt the unity between the old and the new cadres of our Party, a scheme to destroy the Bolshevik Party principle.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque scheme.

3. *On the question of the leaders of Bolshevism.* The old Trotskyism tried to discredit Lenin more or less openly, without fearing the consequences. The new Trotskyism is more cautious. It tries to achieve the purpose of the old Trotskyism by pretending to praise, to exalt Lenin. I think it is worth while quoting a few examples.

   The Party knows that Lenin was a relentless revolutionary; but it knows also that he was cautious, that he disliked reckless people and often, with a firm hand, restrained those who were infatuated with terrorism, including Trotsky himself. Trotsky touches on this subject in his book *On Lenin*, but from his portrayal of Lenin one might think that all Lenin did was "at every opportunity to din into people's minds the idea that terrorism was inevitable." The impression is created that Lenin was the most bloodthirsty of all the bloodthirsty Bolsheviks.

   For what purpose did Trotsky need this uncalled-for and totally unjustified exaggeration?

   The Party knows that Lenin was an exemplary Party man, who did not like to settle questions alone, without the leading collective body, on the spur of the moment, without careful investigation and verification. Trotsky touches upon this aspect, too, in his book. But the portrait he paints is not that of Lenin, but of a sort of Chinese mandarin, who settles important questions in the quiet of his study, by intuition.

   Do you want to know how our Party settled the question of dispersing the Constituent Assembly? Listen to Trotsky:

   "'Of course, the Constituent Assembly will have to be dispersed,' said Lenin, 'but what about the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries?'

"But our apprehensions were greatly allayed by old Natanson. He came into 'take counsel' with us, and after the first few words he said:

"'We shall probably have to disperse the Constituent Assembly by force.'

"'Bravo!' exclaimed Lenin. 'What is true is true! But will your people agree to it?'

"'Some of our people are wavering, but I think that in the end they will agree,' answered Natanson."

That is how history is written.

Do you want to know how the Party settled the question about the Supreme Military Council? Listen to Trotsky:

"'Unless we have serious and experienced military experts we shall never extricate ourselves from this chaos,' I said to Vladimir Ilyich after every visit to the Staff.

"'That is evidently true, but they might betray us. [...] '

"'Let us attach a commissar to each of them.'

"'Two would be better,' exclaimed Lenin, 'and strong handed ones. There surely must be strong-handed Communists in our ranks.'

"That is how the structure of the Supreme Military Council arose."

That is how Trotsky writes history.

Why did Trotsky need these "Arabian Nights" stories derogatory to Lenin? Was it to exalt V. I. Lenin, the leader of the Party? It doesn't look like it.

The Party knows that Lenin was the greatest Marxist of our times, a profound theoretician and a most experienced revolutionary, to whom any trace of Blanquism was alien. Trotsky touches upon this aspect, too, in his book. But the portrait he paints is not that of the giant Lenin, but of a dwarf like Blanquist who, in the October days, advises the Party "to take power by its own hand, independently of and behind the back of the Soviet." I have already said, however,

that there is not a scrap of truth in this description.

Why did Trotsky need this flagrant [...] inaccuracy? Is this not an attempt to discredit Lenin "just a little"?

Such are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism.

What is the danger of this new Trotskyism? It is that Trotskyism, owing to its entire inner content, stands every chance of becoming the centre and rallying point of the non-proletarian elements who are striving to weaken, to disintegrate the proletarian dictatorship.

You will ask: what is to be done now? What are the Party's immediate tasks in connection with Trotsky's new literary pronouncements?

Trotskyism is taking action now in order to discredit Bolshevism and to undermine its foundations. It is the duty of the Party *to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend.*

There is talk about repressive measures against the opposition and about the possibility of a split. That is nonsense, comrades. Our Party is strong and mighty. It will not allow any splits. As regards repressive measures, I am emphatically opposed to them. What we need now is not repressive meas ures, but an extensive ideological struggle against renascent Trotskyism.

We did not want and did not strive for this literary discussion. Trotskyism is forcing it upon us by its anti-Leninist pronouncements. Well, we are ready, comrades.

Pravda, No. 269,
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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS

Preface to the Book ``On the Road to October''[1]

I. The External and Internal Setting for the October Revolution

Three circumstances of an external nature determined the comparative ease with which the proletarian revolution in Russia succeeded in breaking the chains of imperialism and thus overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Firstly, the circumstance that the October Revolution began in a period of desperate struggle between the two principal imperialist groups, the Anglo-French and the Austro-German; at a time when, engaged in mortal struggle between themselves, these two groups had neither the time nor the means to devote serious attention to the struggle against the October Revolution. This circumstance was of tremendous importance for the October Revolution; for it enabled it to take advantage of the fierce conflicts within the imperialist world to strengthen and organize its own forces.

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1 **Original editor:** J. V. Stalin's book *On the Road to October* appeared in two editions, one in January and the other in May 1925. The articles and speeches published in that book are included in Vol. 3 of J. V. Stalin's *Works*. The author finished the preface in December 1924, but it was given in full only in the book *On the Road to October*. The greater part of the preface, under the general title *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*, has appeared in all the editions of J. V. Stalin's *Problems of Leninism*, as well as in various symposia and separate pamphlets. A part of the preface is given in Vol. 3 of Stalin's *Works* as an author's note to the article "Against Federalism."

Secondly, the circumstance that the October Revolution began during the imperialist war, at a time when the labouring masses, exhausted by the war and thirsting for peace, were by the very logic of facts led up to the proletarian revolution as the only way out of the war. This circumstance was of extreme importance for the October Revolution; for it put into its hands the mighty weapon of peace, made it easier for it to link the Soviet revolution with the ending of the hated war, and thus created mass sympathy for it both in the West, among the workers, and in the East, among the oppressed peoples.

Thirdly, the existence of a powerful working-class movement in Europe and the fact that a revolutionary crisis was maturing in the West and in the East, brought on by the protracted imperialist war. This circumstance was of inestimable importance for the revolution in Russia; for it ensured the revolution faithful allies outside Russia in its struggle against world imperialism.

But in addition to circumstances of an external nature, there were also a number of favourable internal conditions which facilitated the victory of the October Revolution.

Of these conditions, the following must be regarded as the chief ones:

Firstly, the October Revolution enjoyed the most active support of the overwhelming majority of the working class in Russia.

Secondly, it enjoyed the undoubted support of the poor peasants and of the majority of the soldiers, who were thirsting for peace and land.

Thirdly, it had at its head, as its guiding force, such a tried and tested party as the Bolshevik Party, strong not only by reason of its experience and discipline acquired through the years, but also by reason of its vast connections with the labouring masses.

Fourthly, the October Revolution was confronted by enemies who were comparatively easy to overcome, such as the rather weak Russian bourgeoisie, a landlord class which was utterly demoralized by peasant "revolts," and the compromising parties (the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), which had become completely bankrupt during the war.

Fifthly, it had at its disposal the vast expanses of the young state, in which it was able to manoeuvre freely, retreat when circumstances so required, enjoy a respite, gather strength, etc.

Sixthly, in its struggle against counter-revolution the October Revolution could count upon sufficient resources of food, fuel and raw materials within the country.

The combination of these external and internal circumstances created that peculiar situation which determined the comparative ease with which the October Revolution won its victory.

This does not mean, of course, that there were no unfavourable features in the external and internal setting of the October Revolution. Think of such an unfavourable feature as, for example, the isolation, to some extent, of the October Revolution, the absence near it, or bordering on it, of a Soviet country on which it could rely for support. Undoubtedly, the future revolution, for example, in Germany, will be in a more favourable situation in this respect, for it has in close proximity a powerful Soviet country like our Soviet Union. I need not mention so unfavourable a feature of the October Revolution as the absence of a proletarian majority within the country.

But these unfavourable features only emphasize the tremendous importance of the peculiar internal and external conditions of the October Revolution of which I have spoken above.

These peculiar conditions must not be lost sight of for a single moment. They must be borne in mind particularly in analysing the events of the autumn of 1923 in Germany. Above all, they should be borne in mind by Trotsky, who draws an unfounded analogy between the October Revolution and the revolution in Germany and lashes violently at the German Communist Party for its actual and alleged mistakes.

> "It was easy for Russia," says Lenin, "in the specific, historically very special situation of 1917, to *start* the socialist revolution, but it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to *continue* the revolution and carry it through to the end. I had occasion to point this out already at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view. Such specific conditions, as 1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending, as a consequence of this rev-

olution, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree; 2) the possibility of taking advantage for a certain time of the mortal conflict between two world-powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; 5) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; 4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to take the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of the members of which were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realize them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat—such specific conditions do not exist in Western Europe at present; and a repetition of such or similar conditions will not come so easily. That, by the way, apart from a number of other causes, is why it will be more difficult for Western Europe to *start* a socialist revolution than it was for us" (See Vol. XXV, p. 205).

These words of Lenin's should not be forgotten.

II. Two Specific Features of the October Revolution—or October and Trotsky's Theory of "Permanent" Revolution

There are two specific features of the October Revolution which must be understood first of all if we are to comprehend the inner meaning and the historical significance of that revolution.

What are these features?

Firstly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat was born in our country as a power which came into existence on the basis of an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry, the latter being led by the proletariat. Secondly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat became established in our country as a result of the victory of socialism in one country—a country in which capitalism was little developed—while capitalism was preserved in other countries where capitalism was more highly developed. This does not mean, of course, that the October Revolution has no other specific features. But it is precisely these two specific features that are important for us at the present moment, not only because they distinctly express the essence of the October Revolution, but also because they brilliantly reveal the opportunist

nature of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Let us briefly examine these features.

The question of the labouring masses of the petty bourgeoisie, both urban and rural, the question of winning these masses to the side of the proletariat, is highly important for the proletarian revolution. Whom will the labouring people of town and country support in the struggle for power, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat; whose reserve will they become, the reserve of the bourgeoisie or the reserve of the proletariat—on this depend the fate of the revolution and the stability of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The revolutions in France in 1848 and 1871 came to grief chiefly because the peasant reserves proved to be on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October Revolution was victorious because it was able to deprive the bourgeoisie of its peasant reserves, because it was able to win these reserves to the side of the proletariat, and because in this revolution the proletariat proved to be the only guiding force for the vast masses of the labouring people of town and country.

He who has not understood this will never understand either the character of the October Revolution, or the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the specific characteristics of the internal policy of our proletarian power.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not simply a governmental top stratum "skilfully" "selected" by the careful hand of an "experienced strategist," and "judiciously relying" on the support of one section or another of the population. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for achieving the final victory of socialism, on the condition that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat.

Thus, it is not a question of "slightly" underestimating or "slightly" overestimating the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement, as certain diplomatic advocates of "permanent revolution" are now fond of expressing it. It is a question of the nature of the new proletarian state which arose as a result of the October Revolution. It is a question of the character of the proletarian power, of the foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself.

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat," says Lenin, "is a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of working people (the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these; it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital, at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and of any attempt on its part at restoration, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of socialism" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).

And further on:

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat, if we translate this Latin, scientific, historical-philosophical term into simpler language, means the following:
>
> "Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited in the struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, in the process of the overthrow itself, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system, in the whole struggle for the complete abolition of classes" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 336).

Such is the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat given by Lenin.

One of the specific features of the October Revolution is the fact that this revolution represents a classic application of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Some comrades believe that this theory is a purely "Russian" theory, applicable only to Russian conditions. That is wrong. It is absolutely wrong. In speaking of the labouring masses of the non-proletarian classes which are led by the proletariat, Lenin has in mind not only the Russian peasants, but also the labouring elements of the border regions of the Soviet Union, which until recently were colonies of Russia. Lenin constantly reiterated that without an alliance with these masses of other nationalities the proletariat of Russia could not achieve victory. In his articles on the national question and in his speeches at the congresses of the Comintern, Lenin repeatedly said that the victory of the world revolution was impossible without a revolutionary alliance, a revolutionary bloc, between the proletariat of the advanced countries and the oppressed peoples of the enslaved colonies. But what are colonies if not the oppressed labouring masses, and, primarily, the labouring masses of the peasantry? Who does not know that the question of the liberation of the

colonies is *essentially* a question of the liberation of the labouring masses of the non-proletarian classes from the oppression and exploitation of finance capital?

But from this it follows that Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a purely "Russian" theory, but a theory which necessarily applies to all countries. Bolshevism is not only a Russian phenomenon. "Bolshevism," says Lenin, is *"a model of tactics for all"* (see Vol. XXIII, p. 386).

Such are the characteristics of the first specific feature of the October Revolution.

How do matters stand with regard to Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" in the light of this specific feature of the October Revolution?

We shall not dwell at length on Trotsky's position in 1905, when he "simply" forgot all about the peasantry as a revolutionary force and advanced the slogan of "no tsar, but a workers' government," that is, the slogan of revolution without the peasantry. Even Radek, that diplomatic defender of "permanent revolution," is now obliged to admit that "permanent revolution" in 1905 meant a "leap into the air" away from reality. Now, apparently everyone admits that it is not worth while bothering with this "leap into the air" any more.

Nor shall we dwell at length on Trotsky's position in the period of the war, say, in 1915, when, in his article "The Struggle for Power," proceeding from the fact that "we are living in the era of imperialism," that imperialism "sets up not the bourgeois nation in opposition to the old regime, but the proletariat in opposition to the bourgeois nation," he arrived at the conclusion that the revolutionary role of the peasantry was bound to subside, that the slogan of the confiscation of the land no longer had the same importance as formerly. It is well known that at that time, Lenin, examining this article of Trotsky's, accused him of "denying" "the role of the peasantry," and said that "Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal labour politicians in Russia who understand 'denial' of the role of the peasantry to mean *refusal* to rouse the peasants to revolution!" (see Vol. XVIII, p. 318).

Let us rather pass on to the later works of Trotsky on this subject, to the works of the period when the proletarian dictatorship had already become established and when Trotsky had had the opportunity to test his theory of "permanent revolution" in the light of actual events and to correct his errors. Let us take Trotsky's "Preface" to his book *The Year 1905*, written in 1922. Here is what Trotsky says in this "Preface" concerning "permanent revolution":

> "It was precisely during the interval between January 9 and the October strike of 1905 that the views on the character of the revolutionary development of Russia which came to be known as the theory of 'permanent revolution' crystallized in the author's mind. This abstruse term represented the idea that the Russian revolution, whose immediate objectives were bourgeois in nature, could not, however, stop when these objectives had been achieved. The revolution would not be able to solve its immediate bourgeois problems except by placing the proletariat in power. And the latter, upon assuming power, would not be able to confine itself to the bourgeois limits of the revolution. On the contrary, precisely in order to ensure its victory, the proletarian vanguard would be forced in the very early stages of its rule to make deep inroads not only into feudal property but into bourgeois property as well. In this it would come into *hostile collision* not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also *with the broad masses of the peasantry* with whose assistance it came into power. The contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population could be solved *only* on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution."[2]

That is what Trotsky says about his "permanent revolution."

One need only compare this quotation with the above quotations from Lenin's works on the dictatorship of the proletariat to perceive the great chasm that separates Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat from Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution."

Lenin speaks of the *alliance* between the proletariat and the labouring strata of the peasantry as the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotsky sees a *"hostile collision"* between "the proletarian vanguard" and "the broad masses of the peasantry."

Lenin speaks of the *leadership* of the toiling and exploited masses by

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2 My italics.

the proletariat. Trotsky sees *"contradictions* in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population."

According to Lenin, the revolution draws its strength primarily from among the workers and peasants of Russia itself. According to Trotsky, the necessary strength can be found *only* "in the arena of the world proletarian revolution."

But what if the world revolution is fated to arrive with some delay? Is there any ray of hope for our revolution? Trotsky offers no ray of hope; for "the contradictions in the position of a workers' government [...] could be solved *only* [...] in the arena of the world proletarian revolution." According to this plan, there is but one prospect left for our revolution: to vegetate in its own contradictions and rot away while waiting for the world revolution.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Lenin?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which rests on an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for "the complete overthrow of capital" and for "the final establishment and consolidation of socialism."

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Trotsky?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which comes "into hostile collision" with "the broad masses of the peasantry" and seeks the solution of its "contradictions" *only* "in the arena of the world proletarian revolution."

What difference is there between this "theory of permanent revolution" and the well-known theory of Menshevism which repudiates the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. "Permanent revolution" is not a mere underestimation of the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. "Permanent revolution" is an underestimation of the peasant movement which leads to the *repudiation* of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is a variety of Menshevism.

This is how matters stand with regard to the first specific feature of the October Revolution.

What are the characteristics of the second specific feature of the October Revolution?

In his study of imperialism, especially in the period of the war, Lenin arrived at the law of the uneven, spasmodic, economic and political development of the capitalist countries. According to this law, the development of enterprises, trusts, branches of industry and individual countries proceeds not evenly—not according to an established sequence, not in such a way that one trust, one branch of industry or one country is always in advance of the others, while other trusts or countries keep consistently one behind the other—but spasmodically, with interruptions in the development of some countries and leaps ahead in the development of others. Under these circumstances the "quite legitimate" striving of the countries that have slowed down to hold their old positions, and the equally "legitimate" striving of the countries that have leapt ahead to seize new positions, lead to a situation in which armed clashes among the imperialist countries become an inescapable necessity. Such was the case, for example, with Germany, which half a century ago was a backward country in comparison with France and Britain. The same must be said of Japan as compared with Russia. It is well known, however, that by the beginning of the twentieth century Germany and Japan had leapt so far ahead that Germany had succeeded in overtaking France and had begun to press Britain hard on the world market, while Japan was pressing Russia. As is well known, it was from these contradictions that the recent imperialist war arose.

This law proceeds from the following:

1. "Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of 'advanced' countries" (see Preface to the French edition of Lenin's *Imperialism*, Vol. XIX, p. 74);
2. "This 'booty' is shared between two or three powerful world robbers armed to the teeth (America, Britain, Japan), who involve the whole

world in *their* war over the sharing of *their* booty" (*ibid.*);

3. The growth of contradictions within the world system of financial oppression and the inevitability of armed clashes lead to the world front of imperialism becoming easily vulnerable to revolution, and to a breach in this front in individual countries becoming probable;
4. This breach is most likely to occur at those points, and in those countries, where the chain of the imperialist front is weakest, that is to say, where imperialism is least consolidated, and where it is easiest for a revolution to expand;
5. In view of this, the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is less developed in the capitalist sense, while capitalism remains in other countries, even if those countries are more highly developed in the capitalist sense—is quite possible and probable.

Such, briefly, are the foundations of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

What is the second specific feature of the October Revolution?

The second specific feature of the October Revolution lies in the fact that this revolution represents a model of the practical application of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

He who has not understood this specific feature of the October Revolution will never understand either the international nature of this revolution, or its colossal international might, or the specific features of its foreign policy.

> "Uneven economic and political development," says Lenin, "is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized its own socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." For "the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states" (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).

The opportunists of all countries assert that the proletarian revolution can begin—if it is to begin anywhere at all, according to their

theory—only in industrially developed countries, and that the more highly developed these countries are industrially the more chances there are for the victory of socialism. Moreover, according to them, the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, and one in which capitalism is little developed at that, is excluded as something absolutely improbable. As far back as the period of the war, Lenin, taking as his basis the law of the uneven development of the imperialist states, opposed to the opportunists his theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is one in which capitalism is less developed.

It is well known that the October Revolution fully confirmed the correctness of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

How do matters stand with Trotsky's "permanent revolution" in the light of Lenin's theory of the victory of the proletarian revolution in one country?

Let us take Trotsky's pamphlet *Our Revolution* (1906).

Trotsky writes:

> "Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant."

What does this quotation mean? It means that the victory of socialism in one country, in this case Russia, is impossible *"without* direct state support from the European proletariat," i.e., before the European proletariat has conquered power.

What is there in common between this "theory" and Lenin's thesis on the possibility of the victory of socialism "in one capitalist country taken separately"?

Clearly, there is nothing in common.

But let us assume that Trotsky's pamphlet, which was published in 1906, at a time when it was difficult to determine the character of our revolution, contains inadvertent errors and does not fully correspond to Trotsky's views at a later period. Let us examine another pamphlet writ-

ten by Trotsky, his *Peace Programme*, which appeared before the October Revolution of 1917 and has now (1924) been republished in his book *The Year 1917.* In this pamphlet Trotsky criticizes Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country and opposes to it the slogan of a United States of Europe. He asserts that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, that the victory of socialism is possible only as the victory of several of the principal countries of Europe (Britain, Russia, Germany), which combine into a United States of Europe; otherwise it is not possible at all. He says quite plainly that "a victorious revolution in Russia or in Britain is inconceivable without a revolution in Germany, and vice versa."

> "The only more or less concrete historical argument," says Trotsky, "advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Sotsial-Demokrat* (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks—*J. St.*) in the following sentence: 'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' From this the *Sotsial-Demokrat* draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible argument. But this unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of Britain, Austria, Germany or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe,' which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no country in its struggle must 'wait' for others, is an elementary thought which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporizing international inaction. Without waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think—as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify—that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe, or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world."

As you see, we have before us the same theory of the simultaneous victory of socialism in the principal countries of Europe which, as a rule, excludes Lenin's theory of revolution about the victory of socialism in one country.

It goes without saying that for the *complete* victory of socialism, for a *complete* guarantee against the restoration of the old order, the united

efforts of the proletarians of several countries are necessary. It goes without saying that, without the support given to our revolution by the proletariat of Europe, the proletariat of Russia could not have held out against the general onslaught, just as without the support given by the revolution in Russia to the revolutionary movement in the West the latter could not have developed at the pace at which it has begun to develop since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. It goes without saying that we need support. But what does support of our revolution by the West-European proletariat imply? Is not the sympathy of the European workers for our revolution, their readiness to thwart the imperialists' plans of intervention—is not all this support, real assistance? Unquestionably it is. Without such support, without such assistance, not only from the European workers but also from the colonial and dependent countries, the proletarian dictatorship in Russia would have been hard pressed. Up to now, has this sympathy and this assistance, coupled with the might of our Red Army and the readiness of the workers and peasants of Russia to defend their socialist fatherland to the last—has all this been sufficient to beat off the attacks of the imperialists and to win us the necessary conditions for the serious work of construction? Yes, it has been sufficient. Is this sympathy growing stronger, or is it waning? Unquestionably, it is growing stronger. Hence, have we favourable conditions, not only for pushing on with the organizing of socialist economy, but also, in our turn, for giving support to the West-European workers and to the oppressed peoples of the East? Yes, we have. This is eloquently proved by the seven years history of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. Can it be denied that a mighty wave of labour enthusiasm has already risen in our country? No, it cannot be denied.

After all this, what does Trotsky's assertion that a revolutionary Russia could not hold out in the face of a conservative Europe signify?

It can signify only this: firstly, that Trotsky does not appreciate the inherent strength of our revolution; secondly, that Trotsky does not understand the inestimable importance of the moral support which is given to our revolution by the workers of the West and the peasants of the East; thirdly, that Trotsky does not perceive the internal infirmity which is consuming imperialism today.

Carried away by his criticism of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution, Trotsky unwittingly dealt himself a smashing blow in his pamphlet *Peace Programme* which appeared in 1917 and was republished in 1924.

But perhaps this pamphlet, too, has become out of date and has ceased for some reason or other to correspond to Trotsky's present views? Let us take his later works, written after the victory of the proletarian revolution in *one country*, in Russia. Let us take, for example, Trotsky's "Postscript," written in 1922, for the new edition of his pamphlet *Peace Programme.* Here is what he says in this "Postscript":

> "The assertion reiterated several times in the *Peace Programme* that a proletarian revolution cannot culminate victoriously within national bounds may perhaps seem to some readers to have been refuted by the nearly five years' experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would be unwarranted, The fact that the workers' state has held out against the whole world in one country, and a backward country at that, testifies to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other, more advanced, more civilized countries will be truly capable of performing miracles. But while we have held our ground as a state politically and militarily, we have not arrived, or even begun to arrive, at the creation of a socialist society [...] . As long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries we shall be compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to strive for agreements with the capitalist world; at the same time it may be said with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to mitigate some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory*[3] of the proletariat in the major European countries."

Thus speaks Trotsky, plainly sinning against reality and stubbornly trying to save his "permanent revolution" from final shipwreck.

It appears, then, that, twist and turn as you like, we not only have "not arrived," but we have "not even begun to arrive" at the creation of a socialist society. It appears that some people have been hoping for "agreements with the capitalist world," but it also appears that nothing will come of these agreements; for, twist and turn as you like, "real progress of a socialist economy" will not be possible until the proletariat has been victorious in the "major European countries."

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3 My italics.

Well, then, since there is still no victory in the West, the only "choice" that remains for the revolution in Russia is: either to rot away or to degenerate into a bourgeois state.

It is no accident that Trotsky has been talking for two years now about the "degeneration" of our Party.

It is no accident that last year Trotsky prophesied the "doom" of our country.

How can this strange "theory" be reconciled with Lenin's theory of the "victory of socialism in one country"?

How can this strange "prospect" be reconciled with Lenin's view that the New Economic Policy will enable us "to build the foundations of socialist economy"?

How can this "permanent" hopelessness be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

> "Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. We still retain our old bad opinion of icons. We have dragged socialism into everyday life, and here we must find our way. This is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing the conviction that, difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and no matter how many difficulties it may entail, we shall all—not in one day, but in the course of several years—all of us together fulfil it whatever happens so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 366).

How can this "permanent" gloominess of Trotsky's be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

> "As a matter of fact, state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc. —is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society? This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building" (see Vol. XXVII, p 392).

It is plain that these two views are incompatible and cannot in any way be reconciled. Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is the repudiation of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution; and conversely, Lenin's

theory of the proletarian revolution is the repudiation of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Lack of faith in the strength and capacities of our revolution, lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the Russian proletariat—that is what lies at the root of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Hitherto only *one* aspect of the theory of "permanent revolution" has usually been noted—lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. Now, in fairness, this must be supplemented by *another* aspect—lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the proletariat in Russia.

What difference is there between Trotsky's theory and the ordinary Menshevik theory that the victory of socialism in one country, and in a backward country at that, is impossible without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution "in the principal countries of Western Europe"?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" is a variety of Menshevism.

Of late rotten diplomats have appeared in our press who try to palm off the theory of "permanent revolution" as something compatible with Leninism. Of course, they say, this theory proved to be worthless in 1905; but the mistake Trotsky made was that he ran too far ahead at that time, in an attempt to apply to the situation in 1905 what could not then be applied. But later, they say, in October 1917, for example, when the revolution had had time to mature completely, Trotsky's theory proved to be quite appropriate. It is not difficult to guess that the chief of these diplomats is Radek. Here, if you please, is what he says:

> "The war created a chasm between the peasantry, which was striving to win land and peace, and the petty-bourgeois parties; the war placed the peasantry under the leadership of the working class and of its vanguard the Bolshevik Party. This rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class relying on the peasantry. What Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky advanced against Lenin in 1905 (i.e., "permanent revolution"—*J. St.*) proved, as a matter of fact, to be the second stage of the historic development."

Here every statement is a distortion.

It is not true that the war "rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class relying on the peasantry." Actually, the February Revolution of 1917 was the materialization of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, interwoven in a peculiar way with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It is not true that the theory of "permanent revolution," which Radek bashfully refrains from mentioning, was advanced in 1905 by Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky. Actually, this theory was advanced by Parvus and Trotsky. Now, 10 months later, Radek corrects himself and deems it necessary to castigate Parvus for the theory of "permanent revolution." But in all fairness Radek should also castigate Parvus' partner, Trotsky.

It is not true that the theory of "permanent revolution," which was brushed aside by the 1905 revolution, proved to be correct in the "second stage of the historic development," that is, during the October Revolution. The whole course of the October Revolution, its whole development, demonstrated and proved the utter bankruptcy of the theory of "permanent revolution" and its absolute incompatibility with the foundations of Leninism.

Honeyed speeches and rotten diplomacy cannot hide the yawning chasm which lies between the theory of "permanent revolution" and Leninism.

III. Certain Specific Features of the Tactics of the Bolsheviks During the Period of Preparation for October

In order to understand the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks during the period of preparation for October we must get a clear idea of at least some of the particularly important features of those tactics. This is all the more necessary since in numerous pamphlets on the tactics of the Bolsheviks precisely these features are frequently overlooked.

What are these features?

First specific feature. If one were to listen to Trotsky, one would think that there were only two periods in the history of the preparation for October: the period of reconnaissance and the period of uprising, and that all else comes from the evil one. What was the April demonstration of 1917? "The April demonstration, which went more to the 'Left' than it should have, was a reconnoitring sortie for the purpose of probing the disposition of the masses and the relations between them and the majority in the Soviets." And what was the July demonstration of 1917? In Trotsky's opinion, "this, too, was in fact another, more extensive, reconnaissance at a new and higher phase of the movement." Needless to say, the June demonstration of 1917, which was organized at the demand of our Party, should, according to Trotsky's idea, all the more be termed a "reconnaissance."

This would seem to imply that as early as March 1917, the Bolsheviks had ready a political army of workers and peasants, and that if they did not bring this army into action for an uprising in April, or in June, or in July, but engaged merely in "reconnaissance," it was because, and only because, "the information obtained from the reconnaissance" at the time was unfavourable.

Needless to say, this oversimplified notion of the political tactics of our Party is nothing but a confusion of ordinary military tactics with the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks.

Actually, all these demonstrations were primarily the result of the spontaneous pressure of the masses, the result of the fact that the indignation of the masses against the war had boiled over and sought an outlet in the streets.

Actually, the task of the Party at that time was to shape and to guide the spontaneously arising demonstrations of the masses along the line of the revolutionary slogans of the Bolsheviks.

Actually, the Bolsheviks had no political army ready in March 1917, nor could they have had one. The Bolsheviks built up such an army (and had finally built it up by October 1917) only in the course of the struggle and conflicts of the classes between April and October 1917, through the April demonstration, the June and July demonstrations, the elections to

the district and city Dumas, the struggle against the Kornilov revolt, and the winning over of the Soviets. A political army is not like a military army. A military command begins a war with an army ready to hand, whereas the Party has to create its army in the course of the struggle itself, in the course of class conflicts, as the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of the Party's slogans and policy.

Of course, every such demonstration at the same time threw a certain amount of light on the hidden interrelations of the forces involved, provided certain reconnaissance information, but this reconnaissance was not the motive for the demonstration, but its natural result.

In analysing the events preceding the uprising in October and comparing them with the events that marked the period from April to July, Lenin says:

> "The situation now is not at all what it was prior to April 20-21, June 9, July 3; for then there was *spontaneous excitement* which we, as a party, either failed to perceive (April 20) or tried to restrain and shape into a peaceful demonstration (June 9 and July 3). For at that time we were fully aware that the Soviets were *not yet* ours, that the peasants *still* trusted the Lieber-Dan-Chernov course and not the Bolshevik course (uprising), and that, consequently, we could not have the majority of the people behind us, and hence, an uprising was premature" (see Vol. XXI, p. 345).

It is plain that "reconnaissance" alone does not get one very far.

Obviously, it was not a question of "reconnaissance," but of the following:

1. all through the period of preparation for October the Party invariably relied in its struggle upon the spontaneous upsurge of the mass revolutionary movement;
2. while relying on the spontaneous upsurge, it maintained its own undivided leadership of the movement;
3. this leadership of the movement helped it to form the mass political army for the October uprising;
4. this policy was bound to result in the entire preparation for October proceeding under the leadership of *one* party, the Bolshevik Party;

5. this preparation for October, in its turn, brought it about that as a result of the October uprising power was concentrated in the hands of *one* party, the Bolshevik Party.

Thus, the undivided leadership of *one* party, the Communist Party, as the principal factor in the preparation for October—such is the characteristic feature of the October Revolution, such is the first specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

It scarcely needs proof that without this feature of Bolshevik tactics the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of imperialism would have been impossible.

In this the October Revolution differs favourably from the revolution of 1871 in France, where the leadership was divided between two parties, neither of which could be called a Communist Party.

Second specific feature. The preparation for October thus proceeded under the leadership of one party, the Bolshevik Party. But how did the Party carry out this leadership, along what line did the latter proceed? This leadership proceeded along the line of isolating the *compromising* parties, as the most dangerous groupings in the period of the outbreak of the revolution, the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. What is the fundamental strategic rule of Leninism?

It is the recognition of the following:

1. the *compromising* parties are the most dangerous social support of the enemies of the revolution in the period of the approaching revolutionary outbreak;
2. it is impossible to overthrow the enemy (tsarism or the bourgeoisie) unless these parties are isolated;
3. the main weapons in the period of preparation for the revolution must therefore be directed towards isolating these parties, towards winning the broad masses of the working people away from them.

In the period of the struggle against tsarism, in the period of preparation for the bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905-16), the most dangerous social support of tsarism was the liberal-monarchist party, the Cadet Party. Why? Because it was the compromising party, the party of *compro-*

mise between tsarism and the majority of the people, i.e., the peasantry as a whole. Naturally, the Party at that time directed its main blows at the Cadets, for unless the Cadets were isolated there could be no hope of a *rupture* between the peasantry and tsarism, and unless this rupture was ensured there could be no hope of the victory of the revolution. Many people at that time did not understand this specific feature of Bolshevik strategy and accused the Bolsheviks of excessive "Cadetophobia"; they asserted that with the Bolsheviks the struggle against the Cadets "overshadowed" the struggle against the principal enemy –tsarism. But these accusations, for which there was no justification, revealed an utter failure to understand the Bolshevik strategy, which called for the isolation of the compromising party *in order* to facilitate, to hasten the victory over the principal enemy.

It scarcely needs proof that without this strategy the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution would have been impossible.

In the period of preparation for October the centre of gravity of the conflicting forces shifted to another plane. The tsar was gone. The Cadet Party had been transformed from a compromising force into a governing force, into the ruling force of imperialism. Now the fight was no longer between tsarism and the people, but between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In this period the petty-bourgeois democratic parties, the parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were the most dangerous social support of imperialism. Why? Because these parties were then the compromising parties, the parties of *compromise* between imperialism and the labouring masses. Naturally, the Bolsheviks at that time directed their main blows at these parties; for unless these parties were isolated there could be no hope of a *rupture* between the labouring masses and imperialism, and unless this rupture was ensured there could be no hope of the victory of the Soviet revolution. Many people at that time did not understand this specific feature of the Bolshevik tactics and accused the Bolsheviks of displaying "excessive hatred" towards the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and of "forgetting" the principal goal. But the entire period of preparation for October eloquently testifies to the fact that only by pursuing these tactics could the Bolsheviks ensure the victory of the October Revolution.

The characteristic feature of this period was the further revolutionization of the labouring masses of the peasantry, their disillusionment with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, their defection from these parties, their turn towards rallying directly around the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary force, capable of leading the country to peace. The history of this period is the history of the struggle between the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, on the one hand, and the Bolsheviks, on the other, for the labouring masses of the peasantry, for winning over these masses. The outcome of this struggle was decided by the coalition period, the Kerensky period, the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to confiscate the landlords' land, the fight of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to continue the war, the June offensive at the front, the introduction of capital punishment for soldiers, the Kornilov revolt. And they decided the issue of this struggle entirely in favour of the Bolshevik strategy; for had not the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks been isolated it would have been impossible to overthrow the government of the imperialists, and had this government not been overthrown it would have been impossible to break away from the war. The policy of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks proved to be the only correct policy.

Thus, isolation of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties as the main line in directing the preparations for October—such was the second specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks.

It scarcely needs proof that without this feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks, the alliance of the working class and the labouring masses of the peasantry would have been left hanging in the air.

It is characteristic that in his *Lessons of October* Trotsky says nothing, or next to nothing, about this specific feature of the Bolshevik tactics.

Third specific feature. Thus, the Party, in directing the preparations for October, pursued the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, of winning the broad masses of the workers and peasants away from them. But how, concretely, was this isolation effected by the Party—in what form, under what slogan? It was effected in the form

of the revolutionary mass movement for the power of the Soviets, under the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" , by means of the struggle to convert the Soviets from organs for mobilizing the masses into organs of the uprising, into organs of power, into the apparatus of a new proletarian state power.

Why was it precisely the Soviets that the Bolsheviks seized upon as the principal organizational lever that could facilitate the task of isolating the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, that was capable of advancing the cause of the proletarian revolution, and that was destined to lead the millions of labouring masses to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

What are the Soviets?

"The Soviets," said Lenin as early as September 1917, "are a new state apparatus, which, in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants; and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army, but is most closely bound up with the people. From the military standpoint, this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces; from the revolutionary standpoint, it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly, this apparatus provides a bond with the masses, with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble, so readily controllable and renewable, that there was nothing even remotely like it in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly, this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that its personnel is elected and subject to recall at the will of the people without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly, it provides a close contact with the most diverse professions, thus facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most profound reforms without bureaucracy. Fifthly, it provides a form of organization of the vanguard, i.e., of the most politically conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the *oppressed* classes, the workers and peasants, and thus constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, train, educate, and lead *the entire vast mass* of these classes, which has hitherto stood quite remote from political life, from history. Sixthly, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of parliamentarism with the advantages of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to unite in the persons of the elected representatives of the people both legislative *and executive* functions. Compared with bourgeois parliamentarism, this represents an advance in the development of democracy which is of world-wide historic significance. [...]

"Had not the creative spirit of the revolutionary classes of the people given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would be a hopeless affair; for the proletariat undoubtedly could not retain power with the old state apparatus, and it is impossible to create a new apparatus immediately" (see Vol. XXI, pp. 258-59).

That is why the Bolsheviks seized upon the Soviets as the principal organizational link that could facilitate the task of organizing the October Revolution and the creation of a new, powerful apparatus of the proletarian state power.

From the point of view of its internal development, the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" passed through two stages: the first (up to the July defeat of the Bolsheviks, during the period of dual power), and the second (after the defeat of the Kornilov revolt).

During the first stage this slogan meant breaking the bloc of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries with the Cadets, the formation of a Soviet Government consisting of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (for at that time the Soviets were Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik), the right of free agitation for the opposition (i.e., for the Bolsheviks), and the free struggle of parties within the Soviets, in the expectation that by means of such a struggle the Bolsheviks would succeed in capturing the Soviets and changing the com position of the Soviet Government in the course of a peaceful development of the revolution. This plan, of course, did not signify the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it undoubtedly facilitated the preparation of the conditions required for ensuring the dictatorship; for, by putting the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in power and compelling them to carry out in practice their anti-revolutionary platform, it hastened the exposure of the true nature of these parties, hastened their isolation, their divorce from the masses. The July defeat of the Bolsheviks, however, interrupted this development; for it gave preponderance to the generals' and Cadets' counter-revolution and threw the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks into the arms of that counter-revolution. This compelled the Party temporarily to withdraw the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" , only to put it forward again in the conditions of a fresh revolutionary upsurge.

The defeat of the Kornilov revolt ushered in the second stage. The slogan "All power to the Soviets!" became again the immediate slogan. But now this slogan had a different meaning from that in the first stage. Its content had radically changed. Now this slogan meant a complete rupture with imperialism and the passing of power to the Bolsheviks, for the majority of the Soviets were already Bolshevik. Now this slogan meant

the revolution's direct approach towards the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of an uprising. More than that, this slogan now meant the organization of the dictatorship of the proletariat and giving it a state form.

The inestimable significance of the tactics of transforming the Soviets into organs of state power lay in the fact that they caused millions of working people to break away from imperialism, exposed the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties as the tools of imperialism, and brought the masses by a direct route, as it were, to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thus, the policy of transforming the Soviets into organs of state power, as the most important condition for isolating the compromising parties and for the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat—such is the third specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

Fourth specific feature. The picture would not be complete if we did not deal with the question of how and why the Bolsheviks were able to transform their Party slogans into slogans for the vast masses, into slogans which pushed the revolution forward; how and why they succeeded in convincing not only the vanguard, and not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the people, of the correctness of their policy.

The point is that for the victory of the revolution, if it is really a people's revolution embracing the masses in their millions, correct Party slogans alone are not enough. For the victory of the revolution one more necessary condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of these slogans. Only then do the slogans of the Party become the slogans of the masses themselves. Only then does the revolution really become a people's revolution. One of the specific features of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October was that they correctly determined the paths and turns which would naturally lead the masses to the Party's slogans—to the very threshold of the revolution, so to speak—thus helping them to feel, to test, to realize by their own experience the correctness of these slogans. In other words, one of the specific features

of the tactics of the Bolsheviks is that they do not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses; that they clearly see the difference between the first sort of leadership and the second; that they, therefore, represent the science, not only of leadership of the Party, but of leadership of the vast masses of the working people.

A graphic example of the manifestation of this feature of Bolshevik tactics was provided by the experience of convening and dispersing the Constituent Assembly.

It is well known that the Bolsheviks advanced the slogan of a Republic of Soviets as early as April 1917. It is well known that the Constituent Assembly was a bourgeois parliament, fundamentally opposed to the principles of a Republic of Soviets. How could it happen that the Bolsheviks, who were advancing towards a Republic of Soviets, at the same time demanded that the Provisional Government should immediately convene the Constituent Assembly? How could it happen that the Bolsheviks not only took part in the elections, but themselves convened the Constituent Assembly? How could it happen that a month before the uprising, in the transition from the old to the new, the Bolsheviks considered a temporary combination of a Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly possible?

This "happened" because:

1. the idea of a Constituent Assembly was one of the most popular ideas among the broad masses of the population;
2. the slogan of the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly helped to expose the counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional Government;
3. in order to discredit the idea of a Constituent Assembly in the eyes of the masses, it was necessary to lead the masses to the walls of the Constituent Assembly with their demands for land, for peace, for the power of the Soviets, thus bringing them face to face with the actual, live Constituent Assembly;
4. only this could help the masses to become convinced through their own experience of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Constituent Assembly and of the necessity of dispersing it;

5. all this naturally presupposed the possibility of a temporary combination of the Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly, as one of the means for eliminating the Constituent Assembly;
6. such a combination, if brought about *under* the condition that all power was transferred to the Soviets, could only signify the subordination of the Constituent Assembly to the Soviets, its conversion into an appendage of the Soviets, its painless extinction.

It scarcely needs proof that had the Bolsheviks not adopted such a policy the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly would not have taken place so smoothly, and the subsequent actions of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks under the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly!" would not have failed so signally.

> "We took part," says Lenin, "in the elections to the Russian bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? [...] Did not we, the Russian Bolsheviks, have more right in September-November 1917 than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we had; for the point is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long or a short time, but how far the broad masses of the working people are *prepared* (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to disperse the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dispersed). That, owing to a number of special conditions, the working class of the towns and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were in September-November 1917 exceptionally well prepared to accept the Soviet system and to disperse the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments, is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did *not* boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before the proletariat conquered political power and *after"* (see Vol. XXV, pp. 201-02).

Why then did they not boycott the Constituent Assembly? Because, says Lenin,

> "participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet Republic, and even *after* such a victory, not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but actually helps it to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be dispersed; it *helps* their successful dispersal, and *helps* to make bourgeois parliamentarism 'politically obsolete.'" (*ibid.*)

It is characteristic that Trotsky does not understand this feature of Bolshevik tactics and snorts at the "theory" of combining the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, qualifying it as Hilferdingism.

He does not understand that to permit such a combination, *accompanied* by the slogan of an uprising and the probable victory of the Soviets, in connection with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, was the only revolutionary tactics, which had nothing in common with the Hilferding tactics of converting the Soviets into an appendage of the Constituent Assembly; he does not understand that the mistake committed by some comrades in *this* question gives him no grounds for disparaging the absolutely correct position taken by Lenin and the Party on the "combined type of state power" *under* certain conditions (*cf.* Vol. XXI, p. 338).

He does not understand that if the Bolsheviks had not adopted this special policy towards the Constituent Assembly they would not have succeeded in winning over to their side the vast masses of the people; and if they had not won over these masses they could not have transformed the October uprising into a profound people's revolution.

It is interesting to note that Trotsky even snorts at the words "people," "revolutionary democracy," etc., occurring in articles by Bolsheviks, and considers them improper for a Marxist to use.

Trotsky has evidently forgotten that even in September 1917, a month before the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin, that unquestionable Marxist, wrote of "the necessity of the immediate transfer of the whole power to *the revolutionary democracy headed by the revolutionary proletariat"* (see Vol. XXI, p. 198).

Trotsky has evidently forgotten that Lenin, that unquestionable Marxist, quoting the well-known letter of Marx to Kugelmann[4] (April 1871) to the effect that the smashing of the bureaucratic-military state machine is the preliminary condition for every real *people's* revolution on the continent, writes in black and white the following lines:

> "particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is 'the preliminary condition for every real *people's* revolution.' This concept of a 'people's' revolution seems strange coming from Marx, and the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists,

4 **Original editor:** See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1951, pp. 420-21.

> might possibly declare such an expression to be a 'slip of the pen' on Marx's part. They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretchedly liberal distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution—and even this antithesis they interpret in an extremely lifeless way. [...]
>
> "In Europe, in 1871, there was not a single country on the continent in which the proletariat constituted the majority of the people. A 'people's' revolution, one that actually brought the majority into movement, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasantry. These two classes then constituted the 'people.' These two classes are united by the fact that the 'bureaucratic-military state machine' oppresses, crushes, exploits them. To *break up* this machine, to *smash* it—this is truly in the interest of the 'people,' of the majority, of the workers and most of the peasants, this is 'the preliminary condition' for a free alliance between the poor peasants and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible" (see Vol. XXI, pp. 395-96).
>
> These words of Lenin's should not be forgotten.

Thus, ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party slogans on the basis of their own experience, by bringing them to the revolutionary positions, as the most important condition for the winning over of the millions of working people to the side of the Party—such is the fourth specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

I think that what I have said is quite sufficient to get a clear idea of the characteristic features of these tactics.

IV. The October Revolution as the Beginning of and the Pre-condition for the World Revolution

There can be no doubt that the universal theory of a simultaneous victory of the revolution in the principal countries of Europe, the theory that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, has proved to be an artificial and untenable theory. The seven years' history of the proletarian revolution in Russia speaks not for but against this theory. This theory is unacceptable not only as a scheme of development of the world revolution, for it contradicts obvious facts. It is still less acceptable as a slogan; for it fetters, rather than releases, the initiative of individual countries

which, by reason of certain historical conditions, obtain the opportunity to break through the front of capital independently; for it does not stimulate an active onslaught on capital in individual countries, but encourages passive waiting for the moment of the "universal denouement"; for it cultivates among the proletarians of the different countries not the spirit of revolutionary determination, but the mood of Hamlet-like doubt over the question as to "what if the others fail to back us up?" Lenin was absolutely right in saying that the victory of the proletariat in one country is the "typical case," that "a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries" can only be a "rare exception" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 354).

But, as is well known, Lenin's theory of revolution is not limited only to this side of the question. It is also the theory of the development of the world revolution.[5] The victory of socialism in one country is not a self-sufficient task. The revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means *for* hastening the victory of the proletariat in all countries. For the victory of the revolution in one country, in the present case Russia, is not only the product of the uneven development and progressive decay of imperialism; it is at the same time the beginning of and the pre-condition for the world revolution.

Undoubtedly, the paths of development of the world revolution are not as plain as it may have seemed previously, before the victory of the revolution in one country, before the appearance of developed imperialism, which is "the eve of the socialist revolution." For a new factor has arisen—the law of the uneven development of the capitalist countries, which operates under the conditions of developed imperialism, and which implies the inevitability of armed collisions, the general weakening of the world front of capital, and the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries. For a new factor has arisen—the vast Soviet country, lying between the West and the East, between the centre of the financial exploitation of the world and the arena of colonial oppression, a country which by its very existence is revolutionizing the whole world.

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5 See above *The Foundations of Leninism*.

All these are factors (not to mention other less important ones) which cannot be left out of account in studying the paths of development of the world revolution.

Formerly, it was commonly thought that the revolution would develop through the even "maturing" of the elements of socialism, primarily in the more developed, the "advanced," countries. Now this view must be considerably modified.

> "The system of international relationships," says Lenin, "has now taken a form in which one of the states of Europe, viz., Germany, has been enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, a number of states, which are, moreover, the oldest states in the West, find themselves in a position, as the result of their victory, to utilize this victory to make a number of insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of 'social peace.'
>
> "At the same time, precisely as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries—the East, India, China, etc. —have been completely dislodged from their groove. Their development has definitely shifted to the general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that cannot but lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism."
>
> In view of this fact, and in connection with it, "the West-European capitalist countries will consummate their development towards socialism [...] not as we formerly expected. They are consummating it not by the even 'maturing' of socialism in them, but by the exploitation of some countries by others, by the exploitation of the first of the countries to be vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has definitely come into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement" (see Vol. XXVII, pp. 415-16).

If we add to this the fact that not only the defeated countries and colonies are being exploited by the victorious countries, but that some of the victorious countries are falling into the orbit of financial exploitation at the hands of the most powerful of the victorious countries, America and Britain; that the contradictions among all these countries are an extremely important factor in the disintegration of world imperialism; that, in addition to these contradictions, very profound contradictions exist and are developing within each of these countries; that all these contradictions are becoming more profound and more acute because of the ex-

istence, alongside these countries, of the great Republic of Soviets—if all this is taken into consideration, then the picture of the special character of the international situation will become more or less complete.

Most probably, the world revolution will develop by the breaking away of a number of new countries from the system of the imperialist states as a result of revolution, while the proletarians of these countries will be supported by the proletariat of the imperialist states. We see that the first country to break away, the first victorious country, is already being supported by the workers and the labouring masses of other countries. Without this support it could not hold out. Undoubtedly, this support will increase and grow. But there can also be no doubt that the very development of the world revolution, the very process of the breaking away from imperialism of a number of new countries will be the more rapid and thorough, the more thoroughly socialism becomes consolidated in the first victorious country, the faster this country is transformed into a base for the further unfolding of the world revolution, into a lever for the further disintegration of imperialism.

While it is true that the *final* victory of socialism in the first country to emancipate itself is impossible without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several countries, it is equally true that the unfolding of the world revolution will be the more rapid and thorough, the more effective the assistance rendered by the first socialist country to the workers and labouring masses of all other countries.

In what should this assistance be expressed?

It should be expressed, firstly, in the victorious country achieving "the utmost possible in one country ***for*** the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries"* (see Lenin, Vol. XXIII, p. 385).

It should be expressed, secondly, in that the "victorious proletariat" of one country, "having expropriated the capitalists and organized socialist production, would stand up [...] *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes

and their states" (see Lenin, Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).

The characteristic feature of the assistance given by the victorious country is not only that it hastens the victory of the proletarians of other countries, but also that, by facilitating this victory, it ensures the *final* victory of socialism in the first victorious country.

Most probably, in the course of development of the world revolution, side by side with the centres of imperialism in individual capitalist countries and with the system of these countries throughout the world, centres of socialism will be created in individual Soviet countries and a system of these centres throughout the world, and the struggle between these two systems will fill the history of the unfolding of the world revolution.

> For, says Lenin, "the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states." (*ibid.*)

The world significance of the October Revolution lies not only in the fact that it constitutes a great beginning made by one country in causing a breach in the system of imperialism and that it is the first centre of socialism in the ocean of imperialist countries, but also in that it constitutes the first stage of the world revolution and a mighty base for its further development. Therefore, not only those are wrong who forget the international character of the October Revolution and declare the victory of socialism in one country to be a purely national, and only a national, phenomenon, but also those who, although they bear in mind the international character of the October Revolution, are inclined to regard this revolution as something passive, merely destined to accept help from without. Actually, not only does the October Revolution need support from the revolution in other countries, but the revolution in those countries needs the support of the October Revolution, in order to accelerate and advance the cause of overthrowing world imperialism.

December 17, 1924

J. Stalin, *On the Road to October*
GIZ, 1925

BIOGRAPHICAL CHRONICLE

(1924)

January 4

The Krasnaya Presnya District Conference of the. R.C.P.(B.) elects J. V. Stalin a delegate to the Moscow Gubernia Party Conference.

January 9

J. V. Stalin gives an interview to a Rosta correspondent on the discussion concerning the situation in the Party.

January 14-15

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

January 14

At the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) J. V. Stalin reports on the draft resolution "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs" for the Thirteenth Party Conference.

January 15

The plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) appoints J. V. Stalin reporter at the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on the question of "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs."

January 16-18

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.).

January 16

The Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) elects J. V. Stalin to the presidium of the conference.

January 17

J. V. Stalin reports to the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs."

January 18

J. V. Stalin replies to the discussion at the Thirteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on his report on "Immediate Tasks in Party Affairs."

January 19

The Eleventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets elects J. V. Stalin to the presidium of the congress.

January 21, 6:50 p.m.

Death of V. I. Lenin (in Gorki).

9:30 p.m.

J. V. Stalin with the other members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) leave for Gorki.

January 22

J. V. Stalin makes amendments to the text of the appeal of the Eleventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets "To All the Working People of the U.S.S.R." concerning the death of V. I. Lenin. In a telegram to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bukhara, J. V. Stalin announces the death of V. I. Lenin and appeals for support of Lenin's policy of strengthening the alliance between the workers and peasants, and for closer solidarity with the Soviet government.

January 23, 9 a.m.

J. V. Stalin and other members of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) carry out the coffin with Lenin's body from the house in Gorki.

1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.

J. V. Stalin and delegates at the Second All-Union Congress and the Eleventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets, members of the Central Committee of the Party, members of the Government, workers, and representatives of various organisations, carry the coffin with Lenin's body from the Paveletsky Railway Station to the House of Trade Unions.

6:10 p.m.

J. V. Stalin stands in the guard of honour at Lenin's bier in the Hall of Columns of the House of Trade Unions.

January 25

Pravda, No. 20, publishes the appeal of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), signed by J. V. Stalin, to all Party organisations, institutions and to the press to collect all documents, etc., concerning V. I. Lenin and to send them to the Lenin Institute of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

January 26, 8:24 p.m.–8:40 p.m.

At the memorial session of the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R., J. V. Stalin delivers a speech "On the Death of Lenin" and in the name of the Bolshevik Party takes a vow to guard and fulfil the behests of Lenin.

January 27, 8 a.m.

J. V. Stalin stands in the guard of honour at Lenin's bier in the Hall of Columns of the House of Trade Unions.

8:30 A.M.

J. V. Stalin stands at the head of Lenin's bier in the Hall of Columns of the House of Trade Unions.

9 A.M.

J. V. Stalin and workers' representatives carry out the coffin with Lenin's body from the House of Trade Unions.

4 P.M.

On the conclusion of the memorial meeting in the Red Square, J. V. Stalin, V. M. Molotov and others, lift the coffin with Lenin's body and proceed towards the tomb.

January 28

J. V. Stalin delivers a speech at a gathering of students of the A.R.C.E.C. Kremlin Military School, held in memory of V. I. Lenin.

January 29

At a sitting of the Eleventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets, J. V. Stalin is elected to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

January 29, 31

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

January 30

J. V. Stalin is elected to the presidium of the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R.

February 2

At a sitting of the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets, J. V. Stalin is elected to the Soviet of the Union of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. At a sitting of the first session of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. (second convocation), J. V. Stalin is elected

to the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. At a sitting of the first session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (eleventh convocation), J. V. Stalin is elected to the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

February 3

At the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on the report of the commission that investigated the state of the Red Army.

March 5-12

On the instructions of J. V. Stalin, the commission of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. appointed to perpetuate the memory of V. I. Lenin confers with prominent Soviet scientists on the question of preserving the body of V. I. Lenin.

March 25

J. V. Stalin completes his "Outline of Studies in Leninism." The "Outline" was published in May 1924 in the magazine *Krasnaya Molodyozh* (*Red Youth*), No. 1.

March 27

At a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on the report on internal trade and the consumers' co-operatives.

March 31-April 2

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

April 1

At the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on the report on internal trade and the consumers' co-operatives.

April 2

At the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on M. I. Kalinin's report on work in the countryside.

April 3

Pravda, No. 76, publishes the announcement of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), signed by J. V. Stalin, of the convocation of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) on May 20, 1924. J. V. Stalin speaks at the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) conference on work among the youth.

Beginning of April

J. V. Stalin delivers lectures at the Sverdlov University on *The Foundations of Leninism*.

April 28

J. V. Stalin, with other comrades formerly in Baku, sends greetings to the Baku organisation of the Communist Party on its twenty-fifth anniversary.

May 9

In a telegram to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Baltic Fleet, J. V. Stalin states that, owing to the preparations for the forthcoming Thirteenth Party Congress, he cannot accept the invitation to attend the Fleet's celebrations. This telegram was published in the newspaper *Krasny Baltiisky Flot* (*Red Baltic Fleet*), No. 106, May 15, 1924.

May 11

The Twentieth Leningrad Gubernia Party Conference elected J. V. Stalin to the Leningrad Gubernia Committee of the Party and also as a delegate to the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

May 15

The Third Congress of the Transcaucasian Communist organisations elects J. V. Stalin as a delegate to the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

May 18

The Twelfth Moscow Gubernia Party Conference elects J. V. Stalin as a delegate to the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

May 23-31

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), the first Party congress held since the death of V. I. Lenin.

May 23

J. V. Stalin and the members of the presidium of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) take the salute at the Young Pioneers' parade held in the Red Square, Moscow, in honour of the Thirteenth Congress. J. V. Stalin presents S. M. Kirov with a copy of the book *On Lenin and Leninism* with the inscription: "To my friend and beloved brother, from the author. J. Stalin."

May 24

J. V. Stalin makes the Central Committee's organisational report at the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

May 27

At the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin replies to the discussion on the Central Committee's organisational report.

May 29

At the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin is elected to the commission on work among the youth.

May 31

The Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) elects J. V. Stalin to the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

June 2

The plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) elects J. V. Stalin to the Political Bureau, Organising Bureau and the Secretariat, and re-elects him General Secretary of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

June 4

Greetings to the Baku workers on the occasion of the opening of a new gusher in the Surakhani oil field, signed by J. V. Stalin and the other members of the presidium of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), are published in the newspaper *Bakinsky Rabochy* (*Baku Worker*), No. 125.

June 12

The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) appoints J. V. Stalin to the commission of the plenum of the Central Committee on work in the countryside.

June 17

J. V. Stalin delivers a report on the "Results of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)" at the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) Courses for Secretaries of Uyezd Party Committees.

June 17-July 8

J. V. Stalin takes part in the proceedings of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International.

June 17

J. V. Stalin is elected to the presidium of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern.

June 19

The Fifth Congress of the Comintern elects J. V. Stalin to the commission for drafting the resolution on Leninism, and to the political and programme commissions.

June 20

A sitting of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern endorses J. V. Stalin's appointment as chairman of the Polish commission.

June 27

The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) appoints J. V. Stalin to the Central Committee's commission on work among working women and peasant women.

June

The magazine *Rabochy Korrespondent*, No. 6, publishes J. V. Stalin's interview with a representative of this magazine on the functions of worker and peasant correspondents.

July 1-3

J. V. Stalin directs the meetings of the Polish commission of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern.

July 3

J. V. Stalin delivers a speech on "The Communist Party of Poland" at a meeting of the Polish commission of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern.

July 5

J. V. Stalin, with the other members of the presidium of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, signs the "Manifesto of the Communist International to the World Proletariat" that was adopted by the congress.

July 8

J. V. Stalin is elected to the Executive Committee and to the Presidium of the E.C. of the Comintern.

July 15

J. V. Stalin writes a letter to Demyan Bedny.

July 25

The appeal of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to all Party organisations, signed by J. V. Stalin, concerning measures to be taken to combat the drought and its consequences, is published in *Pravda*, No. 167.

July 28

J. V. Stalin speaks at a meeting of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on the report of the Bureau's commission on work in the Red Army.

July 31

In a letter to Manuilsky, J. V. Stalin gives his views on the resolutions adopted by the Fifth Congress of the Comintern on the national question in Central Europe and in the Balkans, and on Eastern and colonial questions.

July

J. V. Stalin makes amendments to the text of the appeal of the Executive Committee of the Comintern "To All the Organisations of the Communist Party of Poland."

August 2

J. V. Stalin writes the article "Y. M. Sverdlov."

August 4

J. V. Stalin speaks at a meeting of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on the report of the Bureau's commission on the Young Pioneer movement.

August 11

J. V. Stalin speaks at a meeting of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on the report of the commission on the education of the Party members of the Lenin Enrolment.

August 16-20

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

September 12

J. V. Stalin finishes the article "Concerning the International Situation," published in *Pravda*, No. 214, September 20, and in the magazine *Bolshevik*, No. 11.

October 20

J. V. Stalin has a talk with young correspondents of the magazine *Yuniye Stroitely* (*Young Builders*).

October 21-24

J. V. Stalin takes part in the proceedings of a conference of secretaries of rural Party units called by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

October 22

At the conference of secretaries of rural Party units called by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on "The Party's Immediate Tasks in the Countryside."

October 25-27

J. V. Stalin directs the proceedings of the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.).

October 26

At the plenum of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin speaks on "The Party's Tasks in the Countryside."

Before November 7

J. V. Stalin receives a delegation representing the workers of the Dynamo Factory, who invite him to attend a meeting at the factory on November 7 to celebrate the seventh anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

November 7

J. V. Stalin speaks at a meeting of the workers at the Dynamo Factory held on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the unveiling of a memorial plaque to commemorate Lenin's visit to the factory in 1921. J. V. Stalin makes an entry in the Red Book of the factory.

November 15

J. V. Stalin writes his greetings to the First Cavalry Army on the occasion of its fifth anniversary.

November 16

On the instructions of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), J. V. Stalin writes a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany in connection with the forthcoming Reichstag elections. In the letter he exposes the treacherous role played by counter-revolutionary German Social-Democracy.

November 17

J. V. Stalin's greetings to *Kreslyanskaya Gazeta* on its first anniversary are published in that newspaper, No. 51.

November 19

J. V. Stalin delivers a speech on "Trotskyism or Leninism?" at a plenary meeting of the Communist group in the A.U.C.C.T.U.

November 20

The Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) appoints J. V. Stalin to the Council of the Lenin Institute of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.).

November 29

In the name of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) J. V. Stalin sends a letter to the Central Committee of the C.P.(B.) of the Ukraine on the fight against Trotskyism.

December 8

J. V. Stalin speaks at a meeting of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on the report of the commission on the education of the Party members of the Lenin Enrolment.

December 17

J. V. Stalin finishes the preface to his book *On the Road to October*.

December 19

J. V. Stalin signs a circular letter of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to all Party organisations calling for strict implementation of the decisions on internal trade adopted by the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

POLITICS / HISTORY

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