LENIN

A BIOGRAPHY

Workers of All Countries, Unite!





VLADIMIR ILYICH LENIN

A BIOGRAPHY

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1870 1924

INTRODUCTION

The Party and Lenin
are body and soul.
Can body and soul
be parted?
Of the Party we speak
when we speak
of Lenin,
Of Lenin we speak
when we speak of the Party.
*MAYAKOVSKY**

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. His name is infinitely dear to hundreds of millions. From all over the vast Soviet Union, from every part of the earth, people of various races and nationalities flock to the Red Square in Moscow, to the Mausoleum, to pay homage to the memory of the wisest and most farsighted, the most unassuming and humane of men of our time.

This name, known in the remotest corners of the globe, has become a guiding star to the working folk of all lands. It will live on in the hearts and minds of all progressive people, inspiring them to strive ceaselessly for peace and socialism, for a radiant future, a free and happy life, for brotherhood among men, for communism.

From his early youth Lenin dedicated himself to the cause of the revolution, of the working class. His life was a daily feat in the service

* From the poem *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.*

of one supreme goal–the happiness of the working man. Of him it may be truly said in the words of Lermontov, the great Russian poet:

One single thought his guide became,
*One passion fired him with its flame.**

Lenin's passion was to serve the people.

Lenin lived to be the greatest of revolutionary leaders, a man who in a new era directed the titanic struggle for "a radical transformation of the living conditions of the whole of mankind". This was no accident. He understood better than any other revolutionary leader that at the turn of the century history had confronted the young proletariat of Russia with a task more revolutionary than any of the immediate tasks facing the proletariat of other countries, namely, that of destroying the monster of tsarism which was then the bulwark of European and Asian reaction. Lenin foretold that the accomplishment of this political task would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. In 1914, looking back on the results of the first Russian revolution (1905-07), which undermined and shook the foundations of the tsarist autocracy, Lenin wrote with legitimate national pride that the Russian nation, too, had created a revolutionary class and proved that "it can give mankind great examples of struggle for freedom and for socialism".

One of the things that helped to form Lenin as a person and a revolutionary was the democratic and progressive views held by the Ulyanov family. Lenin's father came of the people. A fine teacher who worked indefatigably to advance public education, he shared the progressive ideas of the enlighteners of the sixties. Lenin was very fond of his elder brother Alexander, who introduced him to the traditions of revolutionary democracy and Marxist literature. Alexander Ulyanov was on the verge of renouncing the Narodnaya Volya** and adopting Marxism; he had come to realise that the downfall of the exploiter system and the triumph of socialism were historically inevitable. Lenin's mother, Maria Alexandrovna, was ever at her children's side in the trials of their revolutionary struggle. She was proud that her children were revolutionaries.

It was at a very early age that Lenin became a convinced adherent of the revolutionary Marxist doctrine of the reorganisation of the world, a historical mission that was to be carried out by the working class. Lenin's activity in St. Petersburg, particularly in the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class,*** was a decisive factor in making him the leader of Russia's revolutionary proletariat. He took the lead in that great process which combined Marxism with the mass working-class movement in Russia. In St. Petersburg he

* From Lermontov's poem *Mtsiri*.

** *Narodnaya Volya* (*People's Will*), a secret Narodnik society organised in Russia in 1879 to fight the tsarist autocracy.

*** See pp. 50-52.

became friendly with I. Babushkin, whom he regarded as a national hero, V. Shelgunov and other advanced workers who had become full-fledged socialists and were teaching socialism to the masses.

Better than anyone else, Lenin perceived the titanic energy latent in the awakening mass movement of the Russian working class. He held that the political role of Russia's proletariat would far outweigh its numerical strength, its share in the total population of the country. He attached great importance to the high degree of concentration of the Russian working class in the large factories and industrial areas. Developing Marx's idea, expressed in 1856, about the possibility of combining the proletarian revolution with the "peasant war", Lenin made the important theoretical and political discovery that the alliance of the revolutionary proletariat and the labouring peasantry was the basic condition for the victory of the democratic and the socialist revolutions. This alliance, representing the vast majority of the population, would immeasurably enhance the political role of the proletariat. Lenin emphasised the key idea of the alliance of the working class and the peasantry in his early works, at the beginning of his revolutionary activity. It became a basic principle in the strategy and tactics of the Communist Party and in Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution. In his very first works, Lenin substantiated the idea of the leading role, the hegemony, of the proletariat in the democratic revolution; he showed that without this hegemony the decisive victory of the people over the autocracy, and the rapid development of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution would be impossible. Lenin considered that after the victory of the socialist revolution the *supreme principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat* was to maintain and consolidate the alliance of the working class and the peasantry.

Lenin's life was inseparable from the life and struggle of the Communist Party from the moment of its inception. He was the organiser and leader of the revolutionary Marxist party of Russia's proletariat. He clearly saw that great opportunities would open up in Russia for the victory of the revolution once the working-class movement was headed by a well-organised vanguard, by a revolutionary Marxist party. "Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!" was Lenin's impassioned appeal. Such an organisation, such a revolutionary Marxist vanguard of the working class in the shape of the Bolshevik Party, was brought into being under Lenin's leadership. Headed by Lenin, the Bolshevik party, "the intelligence, the honour and the conscience of our era", led the working class of Russia to victory in the Great October Socialist Revolution and placed it at the helm of the world's first socialist state. Lenin and the Leninist party created by the working class of Russia showed mankind the way to socialism and communism, not only in theory but in practice.

Lenin not only adhered to Marx's doctrine but carried it forward. He developed Marx's revolutionary theory, which he brought into line with the conditions of the new era, the era of imperialism and

proletarian revolutions, of mankind's transition from capitalism to socialism, and the building of a communist society. Marxism is inseparable from its continuation, Leninism. The three components of Marxism–philosophy, political economy, and scientific communism–were further developed, enriched and specified in Lenin's immortal works. Lenin answered all the cardinal questions which the new era posed before the working class, and with the flaming torch of Marxist theory lighted man's way to communism.

The fact that Marxism-Leninism is now a generally accepted term is proof of Lenin's invaluable theoretical contribution to Marxist science. Marxism-Leninism is a great internationalist doctrine whose correctness is being more and more forcefully confirmed by the course of world history.

Lenin waged an unrelenting struggle against deviations from the revolutionary essence of Marxism, from the class positions of the proletariat, and against revisionism and reformism. At the same time he vigorously combated all attempts to turn Marxism into a collection of dry, rigid formulas, divorced from reality, from practice. He was fond of repeating that Marxism was not a dogma but a guide to action; all his theoretical and organising activity confirms this idea. In all his works he approaches Marxism in a creative spirit, as an undying, developing doctrine which demands fidelity to principles but rejects all that is dogmatic and stereotyped, a doctrine which always demands that the actual historical conditions be taken into account.

"Marxism demands that we should make a most precise and objectively verifiable analysis of the relation of classes and of the specific features of each historical situation," Lenin pointed out. "We Bolsheviks have always tried faithfully to meet this demand, which is absolutely necessary as a scientific foundation of policy."

The creative development of Marxist-Leninist theory is brilliantly exemplified in the documents and resolutions of the Twentieth, Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the new Programme of the C.P.S.U. adopted by the Twenty-Second Congress of the Party, all of which have been highly assessed and fully approved by the international Communist and working-class movement. The new Programme of the C.P.S.U., which the fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties have named the Communist Manifesto of the present epoch, is a signal achievement of revolutionary theory. It upholds and carries forward the great ideas of Lenin.

The vast significance of Marxism-Leninism and its creative character were stressed in the Declaration and Statement of the Meetings of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties, held in 1957 and 1960. "Marxism-Leninism," says the Statement, "is a great integral revolutionary doctrine, the lodestar of the working class and working people of the whole world at all stages of their great battle for peace, freedom and a better life, for the establishment of the most just society, communism." The socialist commonwealth of nations, and the world

Communist, working-class and liberation movements owe their achievements to Marxism-Leninism. Only on the basis of Marxism-Leninism can the Communist and Workers' Parties accomplish the tasks facing them.

By generalising the practical experience of socialist construction in the People's Democracies and of the working-class movement in the capitalist countries, the fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties are making a major contribution to Marxism-Leninism.

Marxism-Leninism has become a powerful ideological instrument for refashioning the world. Adopted by millions, it has grown into a mighty material force. The entire course of historical development, particularly since the Great October Socialist Revolution, has demonstrated the vitality and invincible power of this doctrine. The great objectives boldly proclaimed by the Bolshevik party–to put an end to age-long oppression by landowners and capitalists, to establish a new and just socialist and communist social system in which the material and cultural standards of the working people will be fundamentally improved, to put an end to the imperialist war–called forth great revolutionary energy in the workers and peasants of Russia.

Lenin's theoretical studies revealed the possibility of breaking the chain of world imperialism at its weakest link, and proved it was possible for socialism to be victorious at first in one country, or in several countries. In October 1917 the working class of Russia, under the leadership of Lenin and the Leninist party, translated this possibility into reality. Lenin refuted the opportunist dogmas of the Mensheviks, the servitors of capitalism, who alleged that a socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 was impossible in view of the country's backwardness, the inadequate development of its productive forces and the numerical weakness of its proletariat. The Mensheviks, Plekhanov among them, therefore called for peace between the classes and collaboration with the capitalists, the Ryabushinskys and Guchkovs, those tycoons of Russian capitalism, who arrogantly threatened to strangle the revolution with the "gaunt hand of famine".

Lenin's revolutionary genius tore aside the veil of time and showed the path history would follow. He predicted that only after the domination of the imperialists, the rule of the capitalists and landowners had been overthrown and the power of the working people established, would our country be able to make good its backwardness, catch up with the leading states and even outstrip them. Lenin's words have come true.

Overcoming the incredible difficulties caused by the country's past backwardness, by the economic dislocation resulting from the First World War and foreign military intervention, and by the invasion of German fascism, the socialist social system has proved its invincible vitality, its tremendous advantages over the capitalist system.

Who today would venture to speak of the "backwardness" of our country? Even communism's worst enemies are compelled to recognise the Soviet Union's breath-taking successes in economy, technology,

science and culture, and the irresistible impact these successes are having on hundreds of millions of people all over the world. Bourgeois politicians and economists today admit that the Soviet Union has far outstripped the United States in rates of development and in the progress made in certain fields of science and technology. They acknowledge that the *growing influence* which the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole exert on the fortunes of mankind is due *chiefly to the force of example,* to the visual proof of what the peoples of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have achieved in a brief historical period.

Lenin was convinced that socialism was a superior system, that it had immense potentialities, and that mankind had entered a new stage of development providing unprecedented opportunities.

In the years when our country was just beginning to emerge from the economic chaos caused by the imperialist and civil wars, Lenin clearly saw the tremendous creative energies and opportunities which the October Revolution, and the Soviet state and social system, had given our people. Already then Lenin maintained that our country had all that was necessary and sufficient for building a complete socialist society. Socialist industrialisation of the country, priority development of heavy industry, organisation of the peasants into co-operatives, mechanisation of agriculture, and a cultural revolution–these were the principal ways, indicated by Lenin, of building a socialist society, which brought the U.S.S.R. to the complete and final victory of socialism.

But the leader of the Party looked further ahead. On the eve of the October Revolution he foretold that socialism would gradually grow into communism, on whose banner would be inscribed, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Lenin advanced the brilliant, programmatic formula of communism: *"Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country."*

Now that the Soviet people, inspired by the programme for the building of a communist society–a programme approved by the Party and the people–have embarked on communist construction, the most daring forecasts and most far-reaching plans of the great Lenin are being translated into reality. They are laid down in the Party's new Programme, which is a notable contribution to the theory of scientific communism. Under the leadership of the Leninist Central Committee of the Party the gigantic triple task set by the new Programme of the C.P.S.U.–that of providing the material and technical basis for communism, shaping new, communist social relations, and educating a new man, the man of the communist epoch–is being tackled with bold determination.

The communist construction going on in the Soviet Union is of international significance. Lenin clearly visualised the future of socialism on an international scale. An ardent internationalist, he built up and put into practice the great idea of the equality and friendship of the

peoples. He took an uncompromising stand against all national bigotry, against nationalism of any kind. His heart pulsed with a warm love for the man of toil and for the oppressed of all lands. The French metalworker and Finnish railwayman, the Polish peasant and Italian fisherman were as near and dear to him as the Russian, Chinese or Indian worker and peasant. The leader of the socialist revolution, as none other, understood and appreciated the awakening of the peoples of the East to political activity and to independent creative work as makers of history, peoples who for centuries had been oppressed by the colonialists, by the imperialist powers, and who, together with the peoples of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, account for the bulk of the world's population.

Lenin made a profound Marxist analysis of imperialism as the last and highest stage of capitalism, and scientifically demonstrated that the capitalist system, by the objective laws of historical development, was on the decline, though it could still cause mankind much harm. In the closing years of his life Lenin declared with prophetic force that the *complete victory of socialism over capitalism on a world scale was fully and absolutely certain.*

Beginning with the first decree of the October Revolution, the Decree on Peace, Lenin led the struggle of the young Soviet Republic for peace and friendship among peoples. Socialism means peace. In the socialist countries there are no exploiter classes who make fortunes out of war and arms drives. The socialist system is supremely humane. Hence the unflagging efforts of the Soviet state in defence of world peace. Lenin advanced and upheld the principles of peaceful coexistence and competition between the two social systems, principles which the Communist Party and the Soviet Government consistently implement and promote.

The inspiring ideas of Marxism-Leninism, the impressive example of the amazing achievements of socialist construction in the Soviet Union and throughout the world socialist system are having a growing impact on the entire course of human history. This impact is particularly great today, in the period of full-scale communist construction in our country, and will keep on growing. The establishment of the most just social system–a system giving man all the benefits and joys of life, a system which the finest and noblest minds dreamed of and which the working people aspired to spontaneously–will attract more and more people to communism throughout the world.

The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. maintains, with the full authority of Leninist scientific prevision:

"When the Soviet people will enjoy the blessings of communism, new hundreds of millions of people on earth will say: 'We are for communism!' It is not through war with other countries, but by the example of a more perfect organisation of society, by rapid progress in developing the productive forces, the creation of all conditions for the happiness and well-being of man, that the ideas of communism win the minds and hearts of the masses.

"The forces of social progress will inevitably grow in all countries, and this will assist the builders of communism in the Soviet Union."

Capitalism as a social system is on the decline; it is doomed, and no amount of effort by its advocates can reverse the march of history. The future belongs to communism. Lenin's precepts and undying example inspire all working people to fight for man's happy future, for communism.

Lenin was the most lovable of men. His contemporaries, those who had the good fortune to know him well, say that in his personal qualities he was the prototype of the man of the future, of communist society. He combined great discernment and wisdom with disarming simplicity and modesty; sternness and an uncompromising attitude towards the enemies of the working class with a touching concern for comrades and a love for people and for children. He showed an unceasing care for the people's welfare, a passionate devotion to the cause of the Party and the working class, and a supreme conviction of the justice of this cause. "He's as simple as the truth itself," workers said about Lenin. He was a real leader of the new humanity.

* * *

This book tells the story of the life and work of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, of his incredible energy and immortal, dynamic ideas, of his supreme devotion to the welfare of the Soviet people and the peoples of the world.

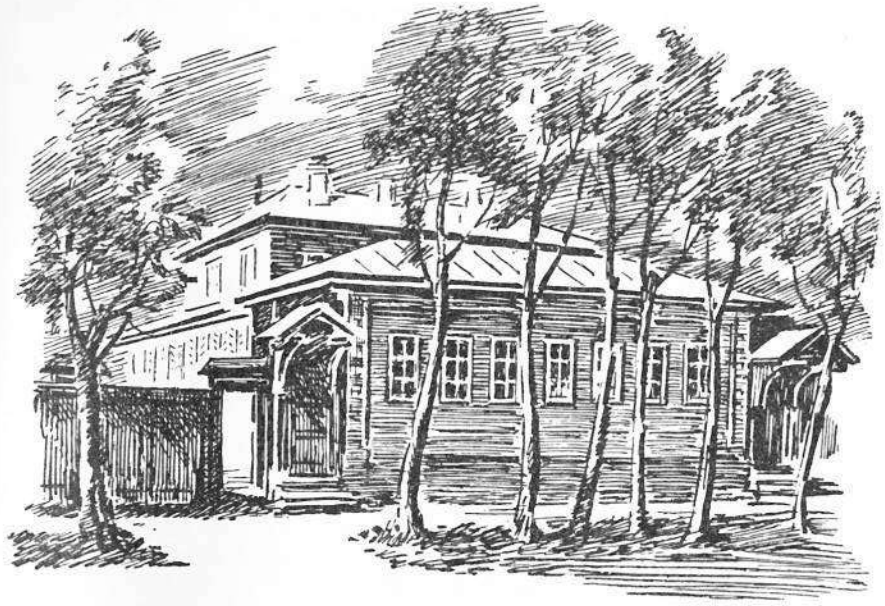
In preparing, by decision of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U., the present, fuller biography of Lenin, the Institute of Marxism-Leninism and the authors have set out to record, besides purely biographical data, Lenin's most important guiding ideas. Lenin's ideological legacy, the immortal and fruitful Marxist-Leninist theory, has always inspired our Party and the fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties to great achievements in socialist and communist construction.

The new edition of Lenin's biography draws more extensively than previous editions on the rich memoir literature of the period. The reminiscences of Lenin's contemporaries and associates have yielded many interesting facts revealing to us Lenin the man, leader and comrade.

Use has been made of material from the archives, of monographs, and of the biographies of Lenin published earlier.

This edition of Lenin's biography includes important supplementary data bearing on the decisions of the historic Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U. In preparing it, account has also been taken of the valuable suggestions received from numerous readers, as well as of new facts obtained through a further study of documents and other material about Lenin's life and work.

The authors express their heartfelt gratitude to all the Soviet and foreign readers who have sent in their comments and suggestions.



Chapter One

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH. THE BEGINNING OF REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY

> We stand entirely on the basis of Marx's theory: it was the first to transform socialism from a utopia into a science, to lay a firm foundation for this science, and to indicate the path that must be followed in further developing this science and elaborating it in all its parts.
>
> *LENIN*

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) was born on April 10 (22),* 1870, in the town of Simbirsk (now Ulyanovsk), situated on the great Russian river, the Volga. He was brought up in a Russian intellectual family. His parents were *raznochintsi.*** Lenin's father, Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov, came from a lower middle-class family in Astrakhan. He got to know at an early age how difficult it was for one of the common people to receive an education. Struggling against poverty, he succeeded by dint of hard work and sheer ability in taking his degree at the University of Kazan, after which he became a teacher of mathematics

* New Style.

** *Raznochintsi* (i.e., "men of different social estates") were the Russian commoner-intellectuals, drawn from the small townsfolk, the clergy, the merchant classes, the peasantry, as distinct from those drawn from the nobility.

and physics in the secondary schools of Penza and Nizhny Novgorod. For prolonged meritorious service he received a nobiliary rank.

Ilya Ulyanov was, for his day, a man of progressive views that were close to the ideas of the Russian enlighteners of the sixties of the nineteenth century. Moved by lofty ideals, he dreamt of serving the common people and spreading knowledge among them. He gave up work as a teacher in 1869 and became inspector, and then director, of elementary schools in Simbirsk Gubernia. An ardent believer in education for the people and himself a teacher by calling, he was in love with his work and gave it all his energies and knowledge.

Ilya Ulyanov's work involved regular tours of the province. He spent weeks and months away from home, travelling from village to village. At all seasons—in the freezing cold of winter, in spring with its slushy roads, and in foul autumn weather—he was to be found at the most out-of-the-way places, setting up schools and helping the teachers to organise instruction for the peasants' children. It was no easy job, and it took a heavy toll of his strength and health. He had to break down the resistance of government officials, landowners and kulaks, who tried to prevent such schools from being set up. No less hard was it to overcome the ignorance and prejudices of backward peasants, to make them see the necessity and usefulness of learning to read and write.

Unaffected by the bureaucratic spirit of the time with its servility, careerism and disregard for the people, Ilya Ulyanov was a true democrat. He readily associated with the peasants and had many friendly talks with them. He could often be seen sitting on the doorstep of a peasant hut or addressing a rural gathering.

Ilya Ulyanov devoted a good deal of his time and energy to the task of bringing learning within the reach of the non-Russian peoples inhabiting the Volga region. These peoples, then backward and oppressed by tsarism, inspired his deep respect and sympathy, and he spared no effort to organise schools for them.

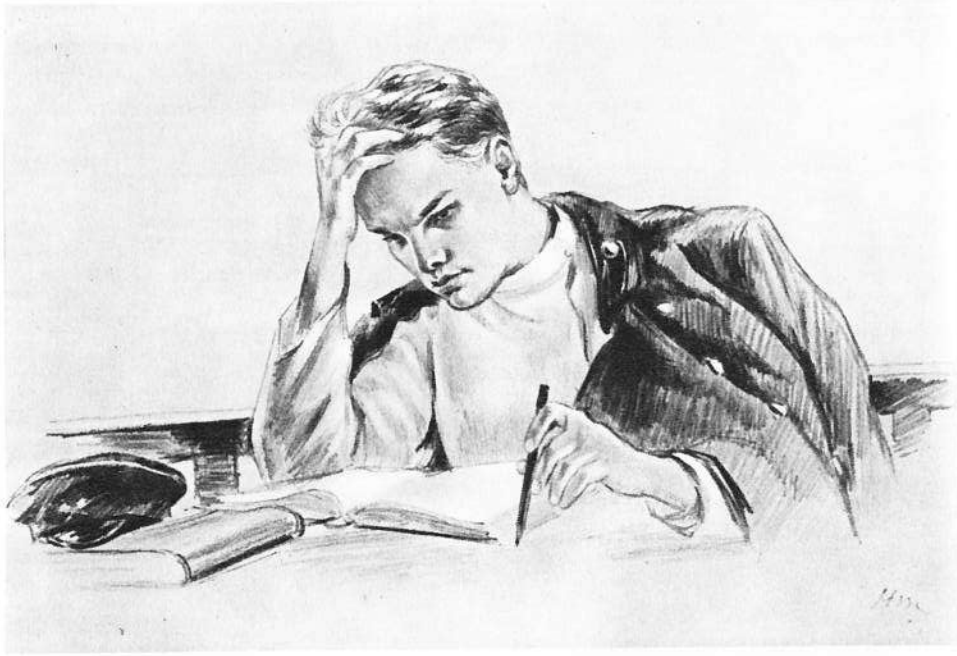
His efforts bore fruit. During his almost twenty years' work in Simbirsk Gubernia the number of schools there increased considerably. He had a large following of progressive-minded school-teachers, who were known as "Ulyanovites".

Lenin's mother, Maria Alexandrovna, was the daughter of a physician. Born and bred in the country, she was educated at home. Owing to straitened circumstances (her father had a large family), she was not able to continue her education, a thing which she always regretted. Being a highly gifted person, however, she mastered several foreign languages, which she afterwards taught to her children; she was very fond of music—she played the piano very well—and read a good deal. Later, by studying on her own, Maria Alexandrovna passed her examinations for elementary school-teacher. Like her husband, she was drawn to educational work, but she did not have a chance to do school work. The cares of a large family, bringing up the children, and the housekeeping took up the whole of her time.



The Ulyanov family. Maria Alexandrovna, Ilya Nikolayevich and their children: Olga, Maria, Alexander, Dmitry, Anna, Vladimir

Photo, 1879



On vacation
Drawing by N. Zhukov

Home and school. The Ulyanovs were a close-knit, friendly family. Ilya Ulyanov was an exemplary and loving husband and father. There were six children in the family: Anna, Alexander, Vladimir, Olga, Dmitry and Maria. Their parents did their best to give them an all-round education, to bring them up to be honest, industrious and responsive to the needs of the people. It was no accident that the Ulyanov children grew up to be revolutionaries.

The personal example set by their parents had a great influence on the children. They saw how much their father was doing for public education, how self-exacting he was, how seriously he took his responsibilities, and what happiness the opening of every new rural school gave him. Their father's whole life, his energy, his ability to throw himself wholeheartedly into the work he loved, his considerate attitude towards the common people, and his unassuming modesty in all things had a tremendous educative impact upon the children. He was greatly respected and loved by them.

Ilya Ulyanov brought up his children according to the pedagogic views of the Russian revolutionary democrat N. Dobrolyubov. He cultivated in them character and an urge towards knowledge; he taught them to understand life, to be self-demanding, and responsible for their own actions. He inculcated sincerity and truthfulness upon his children.

Ilya Ulyanov remained true to the high ideals of his youth all his life. He often read to his children the poems of his favourite poet Nekrasov, and loved to sing the proscribed verse of the Petrashevist* poet Pleshcheyev, especially the words:

Brothers in spirit, side by side
In storm and battle do we stand
And both will hate until our death
Th' oppressors of our native land.

The children felt that their father was putting his whole heart and soul into the song and that its words were sacred to him.

Pleased though he was with the steady progress his children made at school, Ilya Ulyanov always spurred them on to still greater effort. He hated boastfulness and instilled the aversion to it into his children. He spent all his leisure with his family. The children felt at ease in their father's presence; he never waved aside their questions, and carefully explained things to them. He was an interesting and entertaining storyteller.

Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova, too, had a rare gift for bringing up children. A woman of cheerful, equable temper, she never imposed unnecessary restraints upon the children, and yet contrived to maintain discipline. Always neat, methodical, thrifty and modest, she was able

* *Petrashevist*—a member of a group of progressive Russian intellectuals which existed in St. Petersburg between 1845 and 1849. One of its founders was M. Butashevich-Petrashevsky. The Petrashevists were opposed to the autocracy and the feudalist system.

to pass all these qualities on to her children. This frail-looking woman possessed great courage, fortitude and selfless devotion, which she was often to display in later years when bitter trials fell to the lot of the Ulyanov family.

The home environment and upbringing were favourable to the development of the children's minds and characters. The parents encouraged rather than checked the natural spirits of the children. When little Vladimir took it into his head to make a short cut to the street by using the window instead of the door–this happened in the village of Kokushkino, where they lived during the summer–his parents did not scold him for it. In fact, his father made little wooden steps on both sides of the window to enable the toddler to climb in and out without hurting himself. Once the older children decided to start a home journal. Everyone contributed to it as best he could. This journal, written out by hand and illustrated with caricatures depicting amusing incidents from home life, was great fun for everybody. The parents took a lively part in reading and discussing the journal. They directed their children's reading, subscribed to magazines for them, and very often the whole family gathered round to hear an interesting book read.

The Ulyanovs took care to develop work habits in their children. They were taught at an early age to serve themselves and help their elders; the girls saw to it that the boys' clothes and their own were always in good condition. The Ulyanovs' house stood in a small garden which was lovingly tended by the mother, and all the children helped her with it. In the summer their job was to fill two big water-butts from the well. One of the boys would do the pumping while the rest carried the water round in buckets, watering-pots and pitchers. It was good teamwork which went with a gay swing. They also loved the family tea drinking in the garden. Alexander would carry the samovar, while the rest followed with chairs and the tea things. The tea over, the girls would help their mother to wash up, while the boys carried the chairs back into the house. The work was easy and everyone did his chores gladly.

Vladimir's childhood was a happy, light-hearted one. He grew up a lively, healthy, fun-loving boy. He took after his father in looks, and inherited from him his jovial and sociable disposition. He was a tireless leader in all children's games and pastimes. From the reminiscences of relatives we know that he had a very keen sense of fair play and hated fights. "This is not playing, it's disgusting. You can count me out," he would say when a game ended up in a fight. Of an inquiring nature, he learned to read when he was five, and spent a good deal of time over books.

From the age of nine to seventeen Vladimir attended the Gymnasium (grammar school) in Simbirsk. Already at that age he displayed the self-discipline and orderly habits that had been cultivated in him at home. Every morning, at seven sharp, he would leap out of bed without anyone wakening him, run out and wash, stripped to the waist, then make his bed. He always managed to repeat his lessons before breakfast, and half past eight found him at school, to which he had to walk several blocks. And so every day. He kept to this system throughout his eight years of school studies.

Vladimir's abilities and industry revealed themselves immediately in school. A nimble, inquisitive mind, and a serious attitude towards his studies made him top scholar. He passed up from form to form with honours. He attracted notice by his orderly habits, his ability to go through with any job he had started, his genial character, and the sincere, simple way he treated his class-mates, whom he was always ready to help with a difficult lesson. He also had a reputation of being a good swimmer, skater, and chess-player.

The shaping of revolutionary views. Vladimir Ulyanov's childhood and youth coincided with a period when reaction in Russia reigned supreme. People were persecuted for every manifestation of free thinking. Lenin subsequently described that period as one of "unbridled, incredibly senseless and brutal reaction".* Under these conditions all free-thinking was banished from the schools as well. The Gymnasium, therefore, was of no benefit to Lenin as far as the formation of his social ideals was concerned.

Lenin's outlook during that early period of his youth crystallised under the influence of his upbringing at home and of his parents' example, under the influence of revolutionary-democratic literature and contact with the life of the people. He was also greatly influenced by his elder brother Alexander, who had been an incontestable authority to him ever since he was a child. Young Vladimir took after his brother, and whenever asked to take a decision he answered: "I'd do what Alexander would do." This desire to model his conduct on his elder brother did not wear off but rather gained greater depth and meaning as time went on. It was from Alexander that Vladimir first learned about Marxist literature. And it was in Alexander's hands that he first saw Marx's *Capital*.

Alexander Ulyanov was an extremely gifted youth. He was distinguished from childhood for his strong will and moral fibre. "Alexander," Anna Ilyinichna recalls, "was an exceptionally serious and thoughtful boy, with a very strong sense of duty. Not only firm but just, sensitive and kind-hearted, he was the favourite of the younger children. Vladimir tried to imitate his brother. . . ."**

The moral integrity of Alexander Ulyanov and his ideals of service to the people are strikingly illustrated in a school essay of his on the subject "What does a person need to make himself useful to society and the state?" In it he wrote:

"To be useful to society, a person should be honest and hard-working, and in order that his work may yield the greatest possible results, he must be intelligent and know his business. . . . Honesty and a correct

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 285. (References to V. I. Lenin's *Collected Works* apply throughout to the English edition unless otherwise indicated.)

** *Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives*, Moscow, 1956, p. 18.

view of his duties towards those around him should be cultivated in a person from early youth, because these convictions will determine also the kind of work he will choose for himself and whether he will be guided in that choice by his usefulness to society or by a selfish sense of personal gain. . . .

"A love of work should apply not only to what comes easy and is trivial, but to things, which, at first sight, seem formidable. To be a truly useful member of society, a person should get so used to hard work as not to be daunted by any difficulties or obstacles, either those presented by external circumstances or those presented by his own failings and faults. For this purpose, he must be able to exercise self-control and develop in himself a firm and strong character."*

Vladimir began to work out the meaning of things for himself at an early age. A straightforward boy who could not stand lies or hypocrisy, he broke with religion. The spur was provided by an incident against which his whole being revolted. One day, in conversation with a guest, Ilya Ulyanov said that his children were poor church-goers. The guest said, looking at Vladimir: "Give him the birch, don't spare it!" The angered boy ran out of the house and, as a sign of protest, tore off the cross he wore round his neck.

Observing life with a keen eye, Vladimir saw the poverty the people were living in, and the oppression and exploitation the workers and peasants were undergoing. He listened attentively to his father's stories about the ignorance that reigned in the countryside, about the tyranny of the authorities, and the squalor and misery of the peasantry. Coming into contact as he did with working people, he could not help noticing the humiliating condition of the Chuvashes, Mordvinians, Tatars, Udmurts and other disfranchised non-Russian nationalities. All this aroused in him burning hatred for the oppressors of the people.

His sympathy for the peoples oppressed by tsarism is seen from the following fact. In his senior forms at the Gymnasium, he coached the teacher of a Chuvash school by the name of N. Okhotnikov, who wanted to take his examination for a school-leaving certificate. A Chuvash by nationality and a man endowed with considerable mathematical gifts, Okhotnikov longed to receive a higher education but was unable to prepare on his own for the examination, which included the ancient languages, and he could not afford to hire a teacher. On hearing of the man's predicament, Vladimir undertook to coach him free of charge, and did so regularly, three times a week, for eighteen months. Okhotnikov passed his examination and received his certificate, which enabled him to enter the university.

In his quest of solutions to the problems besetting him, Vladimir did a great deal of reading. Among his favourite authors were Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Nekrasov, Saltykov-Shchedrin and Tolstoi.

* *Alexander Ilyich Ulyanov and the Case of March 1, 1887*, Collected Articles, Russ. ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1927, pp. 126-27.

He absorbed the revolutionary spirit of the writings of Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov and Pisarev. The writings of these revolutionary democrats roused in him a hatred for the social and political system of tsarist Russia, and helped to form his revolutionary convictions. Young Lenin was a great admirer of the poets who contributed to the satirical magazine *Iskra*, one of the leading publications of the revolutionary-democratic trend, which came out against feudal-minded reaction and the liberalism of the nobility and the bourgeoisie.

The boy's revolutionary sentiments were reflected even in his school essays. On one occasion the headmaster of the Gymnasium, F. Kerensky (the father of A. Kerensky, head of the bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917), who had always held Ulyanov's work up as an example to the other pupils, returned an essay to him with the warning: "What are these oppressed classes you've written about here? Where do they come in?"

Life dealt Vladimir severe blows when he was still very young. His father died suddenly in January 1886, at the age of 54. Scarcely had the family recovered from this blow when another struck them—Alexander was arrested in St. Petersburg on March 1, 1887, for his part in the attempt to assassinate Tsar Alexander III. Shortly afterwards Anna, who was studying in St. Petersburg, was arrested too.

No one in the family had known about Alexander's revolutionary activities. He was a brilliant student at the St. Petersburg University, where his researches in zoology and chemistry had attracted the attention of eminent scientists. One of his papers on zoology, written in his third year, was awarded a gold medal. He gave promise of becoming a professor. On his last summer holiday at home he spent all his time on his thesis and seemed to be completely absorbed in his studies. No one knew that he was a member of the study-circles of the revolutionary youth in St. Petersburg and conducted political propaganda among the workers. Ideologically, he stood midway between the Narodnaya Volya and Marxism.

A relative of the family wrote to Simbirsk about the arrest of Alexander and Anna, but fearing for Maria Alexandrovna, she sent the letter to the school-teacher V. Kashkadamova, a close friend of the Ulyanov family. This woman immediately sent for Vladimir, who was at school, and showed him the letter. "He frowned, and for a long time said nothing," Kashkadamova wrote in her reminiscences. " 'This is serious,' he said at last. 'It may end badly for Alexander.' "* Vladimir was faced with the difficult task of breaking the sad news to his mother and giving her moral support at this trying hour.

The news spread swiftly in Simbirsk. The town's liberal "society" were quick to shun the Ulyanov family. That was when young Lenin had his first real glimpse of the cowardly face of the liberal intellectual.

* *Alexander Ilyich Ulyanov and the Case of March 1, 1887*, Collected Articles, Russ. ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1927, p. 274.

Maria Alexandrovna attended the trial of Alexander and his comrades, and heard her son's ardent speech in which he fearlessly denounced the autocracy and spoke about the historically inevitable victory of the new social order—socialism.

"I was surprised how well Alexander spoke," she told her daughter Anna. "He was so convincing and eloquent. I never thought he could speak like that. But it was more than I could bear, and I had to leave the courtroom before he finished."*

On May 8, 1887, Alexander Ulyanov, at the age of 21, was executed by the tsarist hangmen. His brother's execution was a great shock to Vladimir, but at the same time it confirmed him in his revolutionary views. Anna Ulyanova-Yelizarova wrote these stirring words about the two brothers: "Alexander Ulyanov died the death of a hero, and the halo of his revolutionary martyrdom lighted the path for his younger brother Vladimir."**

While paying tribute to the noble memory of his brother and his intrepid spirit, Lenin rejected the path of terrorism which Alexander had chosen. "No, we won't take that path," he decided. "That isn't the path to take."

In those tragic days Lenin's self-command and fortitude were revealed at their best. Numbed by sorrow, he found the strength to go on with his studies and passed his school-leaving examination brilliantly. The youngest boy in his form, he was the only one among the graduates to receive a gold medal. The school authorities were in two minds about giving a medal to the brother of an executed "state criminal". But Lenin's outstanding abilities and profound knowledge were too obvious to be ignored. The character given by the headmaster stated: "Highly capable, hardworking and painstaking, Ulyanov was top scholar in all forms, and upon finishing school has been awarded a gold medal as the most deserving pupil in regard to progress, development and conduct."***

Revolutionary baptism. The Ulyanov family left Simbirsk at the end of June 1887. They lived till August in the village of Kokushkino (now Lenino), forty versts from Kazan (in a house belonging to the grandfather on the mother's side and inherited after his death by his daughters), and then moved to Kazan, where Lenin entered the university (faculty of law). Being resolved to dedicate himself to the revolutionary struggle, he wanted to make a study of the social sciences. "These days," he said, "one must study law and political economy."****

Lenin was not admitted into the university at once. The university authorities were afraid to take the responsibility of enrolling him. His application was marked as follows: "Defer pending receipt of a

* *Alexander Ilyich Ulyanov and the Case of March 1, 1887*, Russ, ed., p. 122.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives*, Moscow, 1956, p. 23.
*** *Molodaya Gvardia* No. 1, 1924, p. 89.
**** N. Veretennikov, *Volodya Ulyanov*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1960, p. 60.

character." And it was not until an excellent testimonial was received from the Simbirsk Gymnasium that he was enrolled in the university.

In the Kazan University Lenin became an active member of the illegal Samara-Simbirsk Club. The tsarist authorities banned every kind of student organisation, membership of which was punishable by expulsion under the University Statutes of 1884. It was a time when spying and snooping were rife in the universities of Russia. Lenin got in touch with the progressive-minded students and took an active part in the revolutionary students' circle, which the police described as a coterie of "an extremely pernicious trend".

Students took a resolute stand against police persecution in the universities. On December 4, 1887, the students held a meeting in the assembly hall of the Kazan University. They demanded that the reactionary University Statutes be repealed, that student societies be permitted, that students who had been expelled be reinstated and those responsible for their expulsion be called to account. Lenin took an active part in the meeting. The Warden of the Kazan Educational Area afterwards reported to the Department of Education that Ulyanov "dashed into the assembly hall with the first lot", and the University Inspector described him as "one of the most active participants in the meeting, who was to be seen in the front rows, very excited, almost with clenched fists". On leaving the meeting Lenin was one of the first to lay down his student's card.

The revolutionary action of the students greatly alarmed the Kazan authorities. They kept a battalion of soldiers alerted in the courtyard of the building adjoining the university.

As a demonstration of protest, Lenin decided to quit the university. On December 5, he wrote the following application to the Rector: "As I do not find it possible to continue my education at the university under the present conditions of university life, I beg to ask Your Excellency to issue the necessary order for my name to be crossed out of the list of students of the Imperial Kazan University."*

By order of the Governor of Kazan, Lenin was arrested and imprisoned. On his way to prison, the following interesting conversation took place between him and the police officer who escorted him. "What's the use of rebelling, young man? Don't you see there's a wall before you?" the officer said. "Yes, but the wall is rotten. Give it a good push, and it will topple over!"** the young man answered boldly.

In the prison cell the arrested students compared notes and discussed plans for the future. Asked by his comrades what he would do when released, Lenin answered that only one road lay before him, that of revolutionary struggle. On December 5, Lenin was expelled from the university along with other students who had played an active part in the meeting. He was forbidden to live in Kazan, and on December 7

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 5th Russ. ed., Vol. 1, p. 551.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives*, Moscow, 1956, p. 27.

he was banished to the village of Kokushkino. The covered cart in which he rode was escorted to the edge of the town by a policeman.

That was how Lenin, at the age of seventeen, took the path of revolutionary struggle.

The gendarmes did not rest content with banishing Lenin to the village. The Director of the Police Department sent an order to the Chief of the Kazan Gubernia Gendarmes Office stating: "See to it... that a strict and secret watch be kept on Vladimir Ulyanov banished to the village of Kokushkino, Lapshevo Uyezd."

While in exile Lenin assiduously studied socio-political, economic and statistical literature. Through his relatives in Kazan he received books and periodicals from the libraries. In later recollections he wrote: "I don't think I ever afterwards read so much in my life, not even during my imprisonment in St. Petersburg or exile in Siberia, as I did in the year when I was banished to the village from Kazan. I read voraciously from early morning till late at night."* Lenin pursued his studies according to a strict system. He studied university courses, read the periodicals *Sovremennik, Otechestvenniye Zapiski, Vestnik Yevropy* and *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* the newspaper *Russkiye Vedomosti,* and fiction, especially the works of Nekrasov. Lenin read his favourite authors, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, over and over again, and made précis and notes of their works. He made a profound study of the great Russian revolutionary democrat Chernyshevsky, whose writings advocated a peasant revolution, a struggle to overthrow the autocracy and end serfdom, and set forth his materialist philosophical views and socialist ideas. Lenin later often stressed the tremendous importance of the writings of Chernyshevsky, who was able even in censored articles to educate real revolutionaries.

Lenin admired Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is To Be Done?,* a favourite book of his executed brother Alexander. It embodied in artistic form the socialist ideas which the author expounded in his theoretical writings. Chernyshevsky was the first Russian author to depict a revolutionary, a noble champion of the people's freedom and happiness. Lenin was so fascinated by this book that in the course of several weeks in the summer of 1888 he read it four or five times, every time finding in it new stirring thoughts (he first read the novel when he was fourteen or fifteen). In later recollections Lenin spoke about Chernyshevsky having "deeply ploughed him all up". He said that he even wrote a letter to Chernyshevsky.

In the Marxist study-circle. Lenin spent nearly a year in exile. In the autumn of 1888 he was permitted to return to Kazan, but he was not readmitted to the university. The Warden of the Kazan Educational Area objected to Lenin's returning to the university and wrote to the Department of Public Education: "...Although he possesses outstanding abilities and is extremely well informed, he cannot at present be

* *Voprosy Literatury* No. 8, 1957, p. 133.

considered a reliable person either morally or politically." In the Department the following endorsement was made on this document: "Isn't this the brother of that Ulyanov? He is from the Simbirsk Gymnasium, too, isn't he? Not to be admitted under any circumstances." Prevented from continuing his education in Russia, Lenin applied for permission to leave the country and continue his education abroad, but again he was refused. The Governor of Kazan received an order from the Police Department saying that "no foreign passport ... should be issued" to Vladimir Ulyanov.

Shortly afterwards Lenin joined one of the Marxist study-circles organised by Nikolai Fedoseyev. There were several illegal revolutionary circles in Kazan at the time, where the works of Marx and Engels, circulating in illegal editions and manuscript form, were studied and discussed, and where heated debates were held on the works of Plekhanov aimed against the Narodniks.

It was a time when Narodism had a strong hold on the revolutionary-minded intellectuals. The idealist and anti-historical claim of the Narodniks that capitalism in Russia was an accidental development, that the country would arrive at socialism only through the peasant commune, and their advocacy of the tactics of individual terrorism as a method of political struggle were very popular among the intellectuals. "Nearly all had in their early youth enthusiastically worshipped the terrorist heroes," Lenin pointed out afterwards. "It required a struggle to abandon the captivating impressions of those heroic traditions, and the struggle was accompanied by the breaking off of personal relations with people who were determined to remain loyal to the Narodnaya Volya and for whom the young Social-Democrats had profound respect. The struggle compelled the youthful leaders to educate themselves, to read illegal literature of every trend...."*

The views of the Narodniks obviously clashed with realities. After the abolition of serfdom in 1861 capitalism in Russia began to develop rapidly. Factories sprang up in St. Petersburg, in the central and southern regions, and in the Urals. Railway lines were built connecting the centre with the border regions of the country. A great revolutionary force was growing and gaining strength in Russia in the shape of the proletariat. The working class, which had not yet become conscious of its own power, had already started its struggle against the bourgeois and landowner system. Strikes broke out spontaneously and the first proletarian organisations came into being.

In 1883 the first Russian Marxist organisation—the Emancipation of Labour group headed by Plekhanov—was set up abroad. This group played a prominent part in spreading the ideas of scientific socialism in Russia, in giving a Marxist analysis of the economic situation in the country, and combating Narodism. The writings of Plekhanov were of very great importance, especially his *Socialism and the Political Struggle*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 5, pp. 517-18.

and *Our Differences*, which were avidly read and discussed in the Marxist study-circles of the time. Published abroad free from censorship, they, for the first time, systematically expounded the ideas of Marxism as applicable to Russia. The Emancipation of Labour group, however, in the words of Lenin, only laid the theoretical foundations for the Social-Democratic movement in Russia and took the first step towards the working-class movement.

One of the first revolutionaries in Russia to proclaim his adherence to Marxism was Nikolai Fedoseyev. For reasons of secrecy, the members of the study-circles which he had organised in Kazan did not associate with one another and did not mention names unless they had to. Everyone knew only the members of his own circle. That is why Lenin never met Fedoseyev, although he was a member of one of the circles. Neither did he meet Maxim Gorky, who was a baker's apprentice at the time and also attended the secret study-circles.

Lenin devoted the months spent in Kazan to mastering the theory of Marxism and making personal contacts with the young Marxists there. He made a serious study of Marx's chief work, *Capital*, in which its great author revealed and scientifically demonstrated the economic laws of development of capitalist society, gave a profound analysis of capitalism's contradictions, and incontestably proved the inevitability of its downfall and of the victory of socialism. Marx showed the world-wide historic role of the proletariat, the grave-digger of capitalism and the builder of a new, socialist society. Lenin was completely carried away by the great ideas of Marx, by the irresistible logic and profundity of his scientific conclusions. He did not merely study *Capital* but gave it deep thought, specifically from the angle of its application to the socio-economic conditions and the tasks of the working-class movement in Russia. "He would explain to me with great fervour and enthusiasm the fundamentals of Marx's theory and talk of the new horizons it opened," Anna Ilyinichna writes in her reminiscences. "He seemed to radiate an optimistic confidence which was very catching. Even in those early days his words carried the power to influence and convince. Even then he never kept his knowledge to himself but sought to share every new fact he discovered with others, to win people to his viewpoint. And in Kazan he soon found friends among revolutionary-minded young students of Marxist theory."*

Lenin was one of the first Russian Marxists, a convinced adherent and ardent propagandist of the great ideas of scientific socialism.

Having mastered the Marxist theory, Lenin saw as no one else the great force that would be aroused in the working class of Russia when a socialist consciousness was brought into the young working-class movement. Already at that time he was certain that neither the tsarist autocracy nor the rule of the capitalists would be able to withstand that force.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives*, Moscow, 1956, p. 30.

His warm affection for all working people, for all the oppressed, Lenin received, to quote N. Krupskaya, "as a legacy from the heroic Russian revolutionary movement. This feeling made him seek passionately, earnestly for an answer to the question as to what the paths of liberation for the working people were to be. He found the answers to his questions in Marx. It was not as a mere book-lover that he approached Marx. He approached him as a person seeking answers to vexed pressing questions. And he found those answers there".*

The Samara period. Early in May 1889 the Ulyanovs went out to a farm near the village of Alakayevka in Samara Gubernia, and in the autumn moved to Samara (now Kuibyshev). Meantime the secret police had succeeded in tracking down the Kazan revolutionary study-circles. In July Nikolai Fedoseyev was arrested and imprisoned along with several members of the circle which Lenin attended. It was only by a lucky chance—his departure from Kazan—that Lenin escaped a second arrest.

Lenin had to do something to earn a living. In the course of May and June he advertised in *Samarskaya Gazeta:* "Former student seeks a lesson. Place away from home no obstacle. Write V. U., c/o Yelizarov, Voznesenskaya Street, house of Saushkina." There was a note on the list of persons under police surveillance to the effect that Ulyanov made a livelihood in Samara by giving lessons.

Unable to enter the university either in Russia or abroad, Lenin tried to get permission to pass his university examinations without attending lectures. But it was not until the spring of 1890, after several applications had been made, that he received such permission. He began to prepare for his examinations with his customary energy. He made up his mind to take his degree simultaneously with his former Kazan fellow students. To do that, he would have to master the four-year course of university studies in eighteen months of independent work. Lenin drew up a rigid schedule of studies, and strictly adhered to it. In the summer, in Alakayevka, he set up what he called his "work room" in a distant part of the garden, and he would come there after his morning tea, loaded with books and writing materials, and work till nightfall.

Lenin worked hard, but he knew how to relax as well. In the evenings the house in Alakayevka resounded with music and singing. Lenin often sang together with his sister Olga, who also played the piano accompaniment. He was particularly fond of the song "Our Sea Is Friendless" to the words of "The Swimmer" by the poet Yazykov. He sang with great feeling:

But the billows carry over
Only those whose hearts are strong!
Courage, brothers, let the tempest
Swifter bear our boat along.

* N. K. Krupskaya, *On Lenin*, Collected Articles, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1960, p. 13.

Lenin's relatives pointed out that there was nothing wistful about his singing. It always had a courageous note in it and rang like a call for action. One morning, when Olga was playing the *Marseillaise*, Lenin came into the room and suggested singing *The Internationale*. In those days this hymn was almost unknown in Russia. The brother and sister started to practise the tune, then sang the whole hymn in French. Lenin had studied music as a child, but then gave it up, a thing he always recalled with regret. He was very fond of music, for which he had an appreciative ear.

In 1891 Lenin took his examinations in Law at the St. Petersburg University in two stages–in the spring and autumn. He was the only one of all the examinees to receive the highest marks in all subjects, and was granted a first-class diploma. While in St. Petersburg for his examinations, Lenin took the opportunity of contacting the Marxists there, and obtaining through them a supply of Marxist literature.

At the close of January 1892 Lenin was called to the bar and in March he began to practise in the Samara Circuit Court. He appeared for the defence in court about fifteen times during 1892-93.

His legal practice, however, interested him least of all, his energies being wholly devoted to studying Marxism, to preparing himself for active revolutionary work. At the time of his arrival in Samara there were several illegal study-circles there of revolutionary minded young people, mostly students. The majority of those circles adhered to the Narodnik trend. The most active circle was that of A. Sklyarenko, who printed and distributed illegal publications, carried on propaganda among the students, and had contacts with some of the workers. Lenin was introduced to Sklyarenko by M. Yelizarov, Lenin's brother-in-law, and soon became friendly with him and established contacts with the members of his circle and other study-circles.

Quite a few revolutionary Narodniks of the seventies lived in Samara, but nearly all of them had retired from politics by that time. Always eager to learn and take the best and most useful of everything, Lenin spent a good deal of time in talks with Narodnaya Volya veterans, critically assimilating the experience of the revolutionary movement of the past. He showed a keen interest in their stories about revolutionary work, secrecy techniques, and the behaviour of revolutionaries during interrogations and trials. Although he did not share their views, Lenin had a profound respect for these brave, selfless revolutionaries.

The appearance of this young well-educated Marxist had a powerful impact on the revolutionary study-circles of Samara. With his characteristic ardour and ability to win others over to his way of thinking, Lenin started to advocate Marxism in Samara as well. He was particularly active in Sklyarenko's circle, and many members of the latter, including Sklyarenko himself, broke with Narodnik views under the influence of Lenin's Marxist propaganda.

In Samara Lenin began an unrelenting struggle against Narodnik ideology. He delivered frequent lectures exposing the unscientific nature

of the Narodnik views and showing how untenable they were and how they clashed with reality. He lectured to a study-circle, which included workers of the Samara railway depot, on the subject of "The Village Commune, Its Destiny, and the Ways to Revolution". In the summer and winter of 1892 he wrote and then delivered in illegal study-circles lectures directed against the leading ideologists of liberal Narodism–N. Mikhailovsky, V. Vorontsov and S. Yuzhakov–and also gave talks on the works of Marx and Engels. His paper on Marx's book *The Poverty of Philosophy* roused great interest in the revolutionary study-circles. Lenin delivered his lectures in an atmosphere of sharp ideological struggle. He upheld the Marxist doctrine, skilfully repelling the attacks of his opponents.

The members of Sklyarenko's circle observed strict secrecy in their activities. To hear lectures and discuss theoretical and practical questions, they sometimes made what they called a "grand tour"–a boat trip down the Volga to the end of the Samara Bend, where they continued their trip up a small river which flows north and then joins the Volga. The trip lasted several days, and the circle members were able to discuss the questions that interested them without hindrance or fear of the police coming down on them. The trip was also an excellent form of relaxation. Years later, when he was compelled to live abroad, Lenin recalled with pleasure the "grand tours" he made with his comrades in Samara and how he enjoyed seeing new places.

In Samara Lenin translated Marx's and Engels's *Communist Manifesto* from German into Russian. The manuscript of his translation circulated from hand to hand, was read in the Samara circles and even found its way outside Samara. Unfortunately, this manuscript was lost.

In 1892 Lenin organised the first Marxist circle in Samara. It comprised A. Sklyarenko, I. Lalayants (from 1893), M. Semyonov, engine-driver's mate I. Kuznetsov, girl student of a school for doctors' assistants M. Lebedeva, and A. Belyakov. The circle discussed the works of Marx and Engels–*Capital*, *Anti-Dühring*, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*–the works of Plekhanov and others. All the Marxist literature that could be obtained in Samara at the time was studied and discussed. The circle members carried on active propaganda of Marxism.

Lenin often lectured in the circle on questions of Marxist theory and read articles which he wrote on the subject. During his stay in Samara he wrote several articles, among them, according to the testimony of the circle members, an article on V. Vorontsov's book *The Destiny of Capitalism in Russia* (a fundamental work of liberal Narodism), and an article dealing with one of the works of S. Krivenko, a prominent liberal Narodnik.

Lenin's prestige among his followers stood very high. "Simplicity, tactfulness, a zest for life were remarkably combined in this twenty-

three-year-old man with dignity, profound knowledge, ruthless logical consistency, clear judgement and precision in definitions,"* L. Lalayants wrote in his reminiscences.

Already at that time Lenin displayed a creative faculty of mind in dealing with the problems he was studying. He approached the theory of Marxism with an open mind, and *accepted nothing as dogma. He regarded theory as a key to the understanding of Russia's economic and political situation, and every conclusion he drew from the books he read he tried to verify in practice and apply to reality.*

Equipped with the Marxist scientific method, Lenin made a profound and thorough study of Russia's economy. He collected and analysed a vast amount of data on peasant farming, especially Zemstvo statistics.** He set forth his analyses and conclusions first in a lecture to the study-circle and then in an article entitled "New Economic Developments in Peasant Life", which he wrote in the spring of 1893. It was the earliest *theoretical* work of Lenin that has reached us. It shows that Lenin was already well versed in Marxist theory, and used it competently in his study of the life of Russia's peasants. Lenin had a high opinion of the statistical data cited in V. Postnikov's *Peasant Farming in South Russia* which he described as a book supplying ample information for an analysis of the situation in the Russian countryside. Lenin used that information but criticised the author for his inconsistency and his methodological errors. He gave a Marxist analysis of the state of affairs in the countryside and smashed the Narodnik myth about the special and immutable character of peasant farming. Lenin showed that while the Narodniks denied the development of capitalism in Russia, capitalism was growing with irresistible force, and that a process of profound economic differentiation was going on among the peasantry, who were splitting up into poor, middle and rich peasants (kulaks). Data cited by Lenin proved the existence of antagonistic classes among the "communal" peasantry, whom the Narodniks idealised.

Lenin planned to have his article published in the liberal *Russkaya Mysl*, but the editors rejected it "as unsuitable to the trend of this periodical". As he attached great importance to the question raised in the article, Lenin decided to publish it in pamphlet form. But he was unable to do that at the time. He used the more important data contained in the article in Chapter II of his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia.* The article "New Economic Developments in Peasant Life" was first published in 1923.

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* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 102.

** *Zemstvos*—the name given to the local government bodies formed in the central provinces of tsarist Russia in 1864. They were dominated by the nobility and their powers were limited to purely local economic problems (hospital and road building, statistics, insurance, etc.). Their activities were controlled by the provincial governors and by the Ministry of the Interior, which could rescind any decisions of which the government disapproved.

Lenin carefully studied Russian country life and often had talks with the peasants and with people who were familiar with the countryside. During his stay at the farm in the summer Lenin often called on A. Preobrazhensky, the organiser of the Narodnik agricultural colony situated within a few miles of Alakayevka. At Preobrazhensky's he often met and spoke to the peasants, notably D. Kislikov from the village of Gvardeitsy, which was described by Gleb Uspensky in his *Three Villages.* Kislikov, for his part, called on Lenin, who was greatly interested in this gifted peasant who, at the age of thirty, had started to learn to read and write, had begun to write poetry, and expressed daring views. Lenin remembered him for years to come. In 1905 he wrote to Preobrazhensky: "Is that peasant Radical you introduced to me still alive? What is he doing now?" During the revolution of 1905-07 Kislikov conducted propaganda among the peasants which was close to Social-Democratic propaganda.

In 1893 Lenin suggested to Preobrazhensky that he should investigate one of the villages, and helped him to draw up a household census card with a list of questions. The results of the investigation were later sent to Lenin in St. Petersburg. Lenin also received valuable material on the condition of the peasants from Sklyarenko, who was employed as secretary to a J. P. and therefore had frequent opportunities to visit the country and associate with the peasants.

The sound knowledge of peasant farming which his study of the countryside had given him was to stand Lenin in good stead in his subsequent theoretical researches. It equipped him with authentic factual data which gave him ample material for profound scientific generalisations and conclusions, and for a devastating criticism of Narodnik views.

Lenin's activities were not confined to Samara. He was in touch with a number of towns in the Volga region. Through M. Yelizarov he established close contact with the statistician V. Ionov and A. Yeramasov, who lived in Syzran and visited Samara. Under Lenin's influence these two men became Marxists. A number of people came to Samara from Saratov, Kazan and other Volga towns to study the new, Marxist doctrine. In this manner, the Volga region began to play an important part in spreading Marxist ideas in Russia.

Lenin corresponded with Fedoseyev. They exchanged views on Marxist theory and on the economic and political development of Russia. In 1893 Lenin received from Fedoseyev, then in prison, a manuscript dealing with the causes of the fall of serfdom in Russia. The manuscript, with Lenin's marginal notes, was read and discussed by the members of the Marxist study-circle. This correspondence between Lenin and Fedoseyev went on for a number of years. Lenin had a deep affection for his like-minded friend. Many years later he wrote: "Fedoseyev played a very important role in the Volga area and certain parts of Central Russia during that period; and the turn towards Marxism at that time was,

undoubtedly, very largely due to the influence of this exceptionally talented and exceptionally devoted revolutionary."*

Kazan and Samara were very important landmarks in Lenin's life and activity. It was in those years that his Marxist convictions crystallised. The Samara period was a period of mustering strength before coming out into the broad arena of revolutionary struggle. He longed to have full scope for revolutionary work. He wanted to be in a major industrial centre with a numerous proletariat. In August 1893, with this aim in view, he left Samara for St. Petersburg.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 453.



Chapter Two

LEADER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT OF RUSSIA

Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!

LENIN

Lenin took advantage of his trip to St. Petersburg to get in touch with Marxists in Nizhny Novgorod and Moscow. In a long talk with the comrades in Nizhny Novgorod, he particularly stressed the need for setting up a Social-Democratic organisation and establishing contacts between the Marxists of different cities. Their meeting with Lenin created a strong impression on the Nizhny Novgorod Marxists. "Young Lenin," wrote S. Mitskevich, who took part in the talk, "impressed one as a man of great erudition, sound judgement, and powerful intellect. It is interesting to note that already at that time one could see in him the future organiser of our Party. He devoted great attention to gathering all the available forces of the revolutionary Marxists and establishing contacts between the Marxists scattered in various towns."*

From Nizhny Novgorod Lenin went to Moscow, where the Ulyanov family was now living, Dmitry Ilyich having entered the university

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 131.

there. Lenin met the local Marxists and worked in the reading-room of the Rumyantsev Museum (now the Lenin State Library).

Among the St. Petersburg proletariat. Lenin arrived in St. Petersburg on August 31 (the tsarist secret police lost no time in notifying the Police Department about it). Two days later he was appointed assistant barrister to a St. Petersburg lawyer. This job, however, was merely an official screen for his revolutionary activities. He devoted very little time to law practice, and gave himself up entirely to revolutionary work.

The Nizhny Novgorod Marxists had given Lenin a secret address in St. Petersburg. They had also given him a letter to a countryman of theirs named M. Silvin, who was studying there and through whom he got into contact with the Marxists in the capital. Shortly afterwards Lenin joined a Marxist study-circle consisting mainly of students of the Technological Institute. It included S. Radchenko, G. Krzhizhanovsky, V. Starkov, G. Krasin, A. Vaneyev, P. Zaporozhets, M. Silvin and A. Malchenko. It was a small group carrying on Marxist propaganda among a narrow section of advanced workers.

Before Lenin's arrival, however, none of the members of the circle knew how to apply Marxism to problems of Russian economy. "None of us," Krzhizhanovsky wrote in his reminiscences, "was familiar to such an extent with first-hand information on this economy, with the wealth of material afforded by our Zemstvo statistics. None of us could vie with him in the breadth and depth of the class analysis of the forces in operation."

Lenin infused new life into the circle. His appearance there was compared to "a thunderburst that had a vivifying effect". *Unshakable faith in the victory of the working class, vast knowledge, a profound understanding of Marxism, and the ability to apply it in solving the problems vital to the masses* earned Lenin the sincere respect of the St. Petersburg Marxists and made him their recognised leader.

Lenin was already absorbed in the cardinal task of doing away as quickly as possible with the isolation and amateurishness of the Social-Democratic circles and proceeding to found a revolutionary proletarian party. Recalling that period at a later date, he wrote: "I used to work in a study-circle that set itself very broad, all-embracing tasks; and all of us, members of that circle, suffered painfully and acutely from the realisation that we were acting as amateurs at a moment in history when we might have been able to say, varying a well-known statement: 'Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!'"* It was to the building of such an organisation that Lenin applied himself in St. Petersburg.

His activities in St. Petersburg coincided with the beginning of an upswing in the mass working-class movement which gained particular momentum in the nineties of the nineteenth century. With the development of capitalism in Russia, the working class grew rapidly. There

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 466-67.

were already nearly three million workers employed in big factories, on the railways, and in the mining industry. Their life was a hard and wretched one. The working day was from twelve to thirteen hours, and in some industries from fifteen to sixteen. The employers drove the worker hard, and often made him work overtime. The sweated worker received low wages, and as for women and children, who were widely employed in industry, they received a mere pittance. The capitalists cheated the workers in every way they could. They fined the workers on the least pretext, and forced them to buy low-grade products in the employer's store at exorbitant prices.

Backbreaking labour, semi-starvation and appalling living conditions drove the proletarian masses to protest and fight back. But the workers' spontaneous, sporadic protests against grinding exploitation and poverty usually ended in their defeat. Those who dared to voice their dissatisfaction with the existing system were severely persecuted, thrown into prison, exiled or condemned to penal servitude.

If the struggle against the capitalists was to be effective, it had to be waged in an organised fashion and infused with the revolutionary ideas of scientific socialism. The tasks Lenin set before the Marxists of St. Petersburg were to politically educate and organise the workers, to develop their socialist consciousness and explain to them the common aims and paths of the proletarian class struggle.

Lenin's work among the St. Petersburg proletariat started in the autumn of 1893. He established contacts with V. Shelgunov, I. Babushkin, V. Knyazev, N. Merkulov, the Bodrov brothers, I. Kostin, I. Yakovlev, B. Zinoviev, P. Dmitriev, and many other advanced workers. He was in touch with the workers of the Putilov (now Kirov) Works, the Semyannikov (now the Lenin Nevsky Engineering) Works, the Obukhov (now Bolshevik) Works, the Thornton (now Thaelmann) Mill, the Laferme (now Uritsky) Mill, and other factories.

When Lenin arrived in St. Petersburg he found several workers' political circles functioning there. He began to attend them. He went to meetings held in workers' homes, often met with the organisers of the circles, and took an active part in conferences of the revolutionary-minded proletarians. He made a close study of the working and living conditions and temper of the workers, and lent an attentive ear to what they had to say about the way things were run at the factories, about the hard lives they led, and about landowner oppression in the countryside, with which many of them were closely connected.

Lenin devoted a good deal of his energy to the political education of the workers. He conducted workers' study-circles in the Nevskaya Zastava, Petersburg and Vyborg districts of the city. They met in the homes of the workers. Besides conducting the circles, he helped individual workers with their studies.

Lenin spread the great doctrine of Marxism among the workers, linking it with the vital questions of the country's life and the needs of the proletariat. He helped the workers to assimilate Marxist theory.

In expounding the first volume of *Capital*, he illustrated the economic doctrine of Marx with examples from the life of his listeners. He had a way of explaining the most complicated questions of theory in simple, comprehensible terms. The workers listened with lively interest to their circle-leader, who skilfully drew them into a discussion of the problems that he raised. I. Babushkin, a member of one of the circles, recalls with admiration the way Lenin conducted studies on political economy:

"The lecturer explained the subject to us in his own words, without reading from notes; he would try to get us to disagree with him or start a dispute, and then he would egg us on, making one of us argue his point of view with another. Our lectures, therefore, were very lively and interesting, and tended to develop a habit for public speaking; this method of study was the best way of mastering the subject. We were all very pleased with the lectures and constantly admired the ability of our lecturer. . . ."*

The worker V. Knyazev, another of Lenin's pupils, subsequently wrote that the members of the circle clearly grasped their teacher's main idea, namely, that if the workers "rallied together and united, they would represent a force capable of destroying all obstacles to the achievement of a better life. By acquiring knowledge, they could improve their own condition and win free from oppression. . .".**

Every lecture of Lenin's left the workers richer with knowledge, broadened their horizon, moulded their class consciousness and added to their political understanding. They took to the teachings of Marx eagerly. Overworked though they were, they went without sleep or rest in order to read up for circle studies. "This period," wrote Babushkin, "was one of intense activity in the sense of mental development; every minute was precious, every hour we were not at work was scheduled and allocated beforehand; our whole week was strictly mapped out. When I look back on this period now I wonder where on earth we got the energy for such an intensive life."***

Lenin gave special attention to the training of organisers and instructors for the workers' circles. "You must read more, gain more knowledge and help others to gain it . . . you must work hard. You must develop politically, then you will all enjoy your work in the circle," Knyazev quotes Lenin in his recollections.

Shelgunov tells us that Lenin constantly impressed upon the workers that they should never lose sight of the political side of things, that they should go the revolutionary way and not swerve to the reformist sidepath of the English trade unions, because trade unionism meant the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie. He taught the workers how to behave in the event of arrest, interrogation, and trial, how to help arrested and exiled comrades, and how to raise

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, pp. 113-14.
** *Ibid.*, p. 119.
*** *Recollections of Ivan Vasilyevich Babushkin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1951, p. 58.

funds for that purpose. He urged that libraries should be organised and a reading programme drawn up to promote the education of the workers.

Lenin taught the circle members to do independent political work. He got them to lend a hand in collecting material for the writing of leaflets on the burning topics of the day, leaflets calling upon the workers to fight their oppressors. He often gave the circle members written questions, to answer which they had to make a study of factory conditions. Through one of his acquaintances Lenin succeeded in obtaining permission to visit the Putilov Works. He went over this vast establishment, familiarising himself with the work conditions of the industrial proletariat.

The concrete knowledge of the condition of the working class which he thus obtained helped him to guide the growing movement of the proletariat.

It was characteristic of Lenin as an instructor of the workers' circles that he not only taught the workers, but *constantly learned from them, and studied their living and working conditions.*

His familiarity with working-class life provided Lenin with invaluable material for drawing conclusions and making generalisations in his theoretical works about the proletariat as the leading force of society, about its great revolutionary role. "His work among the St. Petersburg workers, his talks with them, and the attention with which he listened to what they had to say, gave Lenin an understanding of Marx's great idea, the idea that the working class was the vanguard of all the toiling people, that the toiling people, and all the oppressed, followed its lead, that herein lay its strength and the pledge of its victory. Only as a leader of all the toiling people could the working class be victorious. Lenin realised this when he was active among the St. Petersburg workers."*

Lenin enjoyed the deep affection and respect of the workers, to whom he was a teacher and friend. More and more workers flocked to his circle. Originally consisting of Babushkin, Shelgunov and two other workers, the circle membership increased to nineteen, among whom there were also women workers.

Lenin trained advanced revolutionary proletarians to be organisers of the proletarian masses, and it was on them he mainly relied in building up a Marxist working-class party in Russia. His pupils proved worthy of their teacher. Special mention should be made of Shelgunov, a revolutionary who organised a circle of advanced workers and who conducted vigorous organising and propaganda work among the proletarians. Lenin thought highly of Shelgunov's role in the working-class movement of Russia. Babushkin, who became a prominent leader of the proletarian party, was another pupil of Lenin, and a close associate of his. The son of a poor peasant, who had known poverty

* N. K. Krupskaya, *On Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1960, p. 14.

and exploitation ever since his childhood and who had afterwards become a skilled fitter, he was a staunch revolutionary devoted heart and soul to the cause. A man of no ordinary abilities, Babushkin could never slake his thirst for knowledge. Lenin subsequently wrote of him: "I. V. Babushkin is one of those working-class militants who *10 years* before the revolution began to create the *workers'* Social-Democratic Party. Had it not been for the tireless, heroically persistent work of *such* militants among the proletarian masses the R.S.D.L.P. could not have existed ten months let alone ten years. Thanks only to the activities of *such* militants, thanks only to their support, the R.S.D.L.P. developed by 1905 into a party which *became inseparably fused* with the proletariat in the great days of October and December, which maintained this connection in the person of the *workers' deputies* not only in the Second, but even in the Third, Black-Hundred Duma."*

In the winter of 1894-95 Lenin often met Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, whose acquaintance he made in February 1894. At the time of their first meeting she had been working free of charge for over three years as a teacher at an evening Sunday school for workers in the Nevskaya Zastava district. This school was attended by workers from the Maxwell and Pal Mills, Alexandrovsky Mechanical and Semyannikov Works, and other enterprises. Many of them–Babushkin, Borovkov, Gribakin, the Bodrov brothers, Zhukov and others–were members of the circles which Lenin conducted in 1894-95. Lenin and Krupskaya were drawn together by the common cause, and it formed the basis of their lifelong friendship.

Krupskaya was brought up in a revolutionary environment. Her father, Konstantin Krupsky, was a typical representative of the revolutionary intellectuals of the sixties of the nineteenth century. She dedicated herself to revolutionary activities from her early youth. In the nineties she joined a Marxist circle. She was an ardent revolutionary, devoted to the cause of the working class.

On his way home from the lectures, Lenin would drop in on Krupskaya, who lived together with her mother. "I was in love with my school work," Krupskaya wrote in her reminiscences, "and could talk about it for hours if you did not stop me–talk about the school, the pupils, the Semyannikov, Thornton, Maxwell and other factories and mills in the neighbourhood. Vladimir Ilyich was interested in every little detail that could help him to piece together a picture of the life and conditions of the workers, to find some sort of avenue of approach to them in the matter of revolutionary propaganda."**

Lenin put before the Russian Social-Democrats the task of *changing over from the propaganda of Marxism in small circles of advanced workers to political agitation among the broad mass of the workers.*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 363.
** N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 18.



Ivan Babushkin
Photo



Vasily Shelgunov
Photo

This was an important step forward in the activities of Russia's Marxists. This change-over was first made by the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats during the disturbances at the Semyannikov Works at the end of 1894, caused by systematic delays in paying out wages. In connection with those disturbances, Lenin wrote a leaflet, addressed to the Semyannikov workers. According to Lenin, Babushkin helped to draw up this *first agitation leaflet* and, moreover, took part in distributing it.

When the workers of Novy Port went on strike, the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats issued a leaflet entitled "What the Dock Workers Should Fight For". It was distributed among the dockers and elsewhere in the city, and helped the dock workers to win the strike.

The ideological defeat of Narodism. Along with organising and propaganda activities, Lenin devoted himself to an extensive study of theoretical problems. His profound understanding of Marxism and creative approach to it were here revealed with striking force.

In the nineties the Russian Marxists were faced four-square with the problem of completely defeating Narodism ideologically. There could be no progress until this political trend, hostile to Marxism, was exposed.

From the very outset of his revolutionary activities in St. Petersburg Lenin waged an unremitting struggle against the Narodnik ideology. In the autumn of 1893, in connection with a paper by Herman Krasin on "The Market Question", Lenin at a Marxist circle meeting sharply criticised the views of the liberal Narodniks on the future of capitalism in Russia. Subsequently Lenin set forth his views in a paper "On the So-Called Market Question", which he read at a meeting of the circle early in November 1893. This was the second important work of the young Lenin which has come down to us. He showed in it a profound understanding of the economic relations that were developing in the country and gave a brilliant Marxist analysis of the economic conditions prevailing in Russia in the late nineteenth century.

It would seem at first sight that the market question had no bearing on the revolutionary movement of the working class. But it was precisely this question that gave rise to serious controversy at the time, and a proper understanding of it was highly important for combating Narodism effectively. To prove their assertion that capitalism could not develop in Russia, the Narodniks pointed to the absence in the country of a wide home market which was essential for capitalism. They believed that no such market could exist in Russia, where the growing impoverishment of the people, they alleged, made it impossible.

Lenin showed how untenable these arguments were. On the basis of numerous statistical data covering various gubernias, he proved that with the development of capitalism the peasantry was being differentiated into bourgeoisie and proletariat, that simultaneously with the ruining of the small producers' farms the formation of large capitalist farms

was going on. He showed that capitalism had become "the main background of the economic life of Russia".*

Lenin's paper played an important role in the theoretical development of the Marxists, and strengthened their ideological positions in the struggle against Narodism. It was distributed among the Social-Democratic circles in St. Petersburg and other cities. For a long time Lenin's manuscript was considered lost; it was found as late as 1937 and published then for the first time.

Early in January 1894 Lenin visited Moscow. It was vacation time, when young people got together at evening parties that served as a screen for illegal meetings. At one of these meetings, Lenin came out against V. Vorontsov, one of the Narodnik leaders. This was reported to the authorities by a police spy. From the files of the secret police we know that some other Marxist had spoken before Lenin, but Vorontsov had out-argued him, and "someone by the name of Ulyanov (supposed to be a brother of the hanged revolutionary) took up the cudgels and defended the man's views with skill and knowledge".**

Lenin's speech was a great help to the Moscow Marxists. According to Anna Yelizarova, "it opened the eyes of the young Marxists to many things, uplifted and acted as a spur to them". Lenin subsequently read a lecture on Vorontsov's book *The Destiny of Capitalism in Russia* to the Marxists of Nizhny Novgorod.

In the nineties the Narodniks, once revolutionary fighters against tsarism, became moderate liberals who fawned on the autocracy. At the end of 1893, they started a veritable crusade against Marxism in their legally published magazine *Russkoye Bogatstvo* (*Russian Wealth*) in which they grossly distorted the views of the Russian Marxists. The need to repel the furious attacks of the Narodniks against Marxism became all the more urgent because their views still found sympathy with a certain section of the revolutionary youth and because the Narodniks were trying to influence the workers as well. The Narodnik publicists grouped around *Russkoye Bogatstvo* were headed by N. Mikhailovsky, who was known in the past for his opposition to serfdom and therefore enjoyed great prestige. He was called at the time "the ruler of men's minds". Few people realised that Mikhailovsky, who declared himself a socialist, had actually become a proponent of liberal-bourgeois views. It was necessary to expose the Narodniks, show their departure from the revolutionary traditions of the Narodniks of the seventies, their backsliding to liberalism, and the theoretical and political indefencibility of their world outlook. This task was brilliantly performed by Lenin.

During the spring and summer of 1894 he wrote his well-known book *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* (A Reply to Articles in *Russkoye Bogatstvo* Opposing the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 109.
** *Krasny Arkhiv* No. 1 (62), 1934, p. 76.

Marxists). This book was written on the basis of Lenin's Samara lectures criticising the liberal Narodniks V. Vorontsov, N. Mikhailovsky, S. Yuzhakov and S. Krivenko, and of his subsequent speeches in St. Petersburg and Moscow. In this book, which creatively applied Marxism in analysing the economic and political position of Russia, Lenin subjected the theoretical concepts, political programme and tactics of the Narodniks of the nineties to a searching criticism. He showed convincingly that revolutionary Narodism had degenerated into liberal Narodism. With all deference to the revolutionary experience of the Narodniks of the seventies, whom he admired for their courage, heroism and revolutionary stamina, Lenin exposed the liberal Narodniks and revealed the class springs and class essence of their ideology. He showed that the liberal Narodniks were political enemies of Social-Democracy, ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, and exponents of the interests of the kulaks, and not "friends of the people", as they called themselves.

In his criticism of the reactionary nature of the liberal Narodniks' petty-bourgeois theories, Lenin showed that they tried to conceal the existing contradictions in socio-economic relations in Russia, that they denied the historical role of the Russian working class as the champion for the emancipation of all the toiling people of the country, and played down the grievous condition of the peasantry, the class struggle in the countryside, and the exploitation of the poor by the kulaks.

Lenin exposed the idealistic views of the Narodniks regarding the history of society's development. As they did not understand the objective laws governing the development of society, the Narodniks believed the course of history could be directed at will according to the desires of "critically minded", "morally developed" individuals. The makers of history, they claimed, were individual "heroes". As for the people, or "the crowd", to use their own term, they could only blindly follow the "heroes". Lenin exploded these unscientific views. He showed that the real maker of history was the people. Outstanding individuals could play an important role only insofar as they adhered to the same position as the foremost class, expressed its interests and took a correct view of the growing needs of social development, and only insofar as their activities were backed by the people.

In *What the "Friends of the People" Are* Lenin scathingly criticised pseudo-socialist theories from the standpoint of principle, and showed himself to be a staunch champion of the working-class cause. In setting forth the essence of the Marxist doctrine, he stressed the tremendous importance of Marxism as the ideological weapon of the proletariat in its struggle for political and social emancipation. The object of Marxist science, he stressed, was to lay bare all the forms of social contradictions under capitalism and show the proletariat the way out of capitalist wage-slavery.

In this work Lenin showed that one could not be a leader of the proletariat without spreading the ideas of Marxism among the mass

of the workers, just as one could not direct the proletarian class struggle without systematic organising work among the working class. Study, propaganda, organisation–this was how Lenin pithily defined the task of the Russian Marxists. Theoretical and practical activities must be inseparably linked together. Theory must serve practice, meet the needs of life and be verified by practical experience.

One of the most important ideas expounded by Lenin in *What the "Friends of the People" Are* was the idea of founding a Marxist workers' party. Lenin put this cardinal task before the Russian Marxists, and fought over many years to achieve it. He gave to this struggle all his political and organising genius, all the energy and passion of a Communist revolutionary.

In his *"What the 'Friends of the People' Are", Lenin was the first Marxist in Russia theoretically to substantiate the historical role of the Russian working class as the leader, the leading revolutionary force of society, as the consistent fighter against tsarism and capitalism for the emancipation of all the working and exploited people, for the victorious socialist revolution.* "The political activity of the Social-Democrats," he wrote, "lies in promoting the development and organisation of the working-class movement in Russia, in transforming this movement from its present state of sporadic attempts at protest, 'riots' and strikes devoid of a guiding idea, into an organised struggle of the *whole* Russian working *class* directed against the bourgeois regime and working for the expropriation of the expropriators and the abolition of the social system based on the oppression of the working people. Underlying these activities is the common conviction of Marxists that the Russian worker is the sole and natural representative of Russia's entire working and exploited population."*

Lenin considered that the immediate task of the Russian working class on the way towards abolishing the capitalist system was to overthrow the autocracy. In its struggle against autocratic-police tyranny, the working class would rally all the democratic elements of the country, first and foremost the peasantry, which was vitally concerned in abolishing the survivals of serfdom and would, therefore, be a reliable ally of the working class in the revolutionary movement. In *What the "Friends of the People" Are,* Lenin *for the first time advanced the idea of a revolutionary alliance of the workers and the peasants as the decisive force, as the chief condition for overthrowing tsarism, the landowners and the bourgeoisie and building a communist society.* This idea, which has become one of the fundamental, unshakable principles of Leninism, was upheld and elaborated by Lenin throughout his life.

The book ends with an inspired prophecy concerning the great historical mission of the working class of Russia: "...it is on the working class that the Social-Democrats concentrate all their attention

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 298-99.

and all their activities. When its advanced representatives have mastered the ideas of scientific socialism, the idea of the historical role of the Russian worker, when these ideas become widespread, and when stable organisations are formed among the workers to transform the workers' present sporadic economic war into conscious class struggle–then the Russian *worker,* rising at the head of all the democratic elements, will overthrow absolutism and lead the *Russian proletariat* (side by side with the proletariat of *all countries*) *along the straight road of open political struggle to the victorious communist revolution."**

Lenin's work *What the "Friends of the People" Are* consisted of three parts.** The first and third parts were published illegally in St. Petersburg. In addition, Parts One and Two were published in Gorki, an estate in Vladimir Gubernia owned by Ganshin, and partly in Moscow. The local organisations had handwritten, typewritten and hectographed copies of it made; it was circulated illegally in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Vilno, Chernigov, Poltava, Vladimir, Penza, Rostov-on-Don, Kiev, Tomsk and other cities and was extremely popular among the Social-Democrats.

The book had a stimulating effect upon the whole activity of the Russian Marxists. M. Kalinin wrote that it "was a huge success in the underground and was distributed widely among the young people, especially the students. It served for a long time as an effective weapon in underground propaganda".*** Mitskevich, member of a Marxist circle in Moscow, wrote that "when this book appeared Lenin became a still more popular and recognised authority among the Marxists. The young Russian Marxist trend realised that it had found in him a man of great political and theoretical stature".****

Exposing the bourgeois essence of "legal Marxism". During the years of preparation for the founding of a proletarian party Lenin had to wage a stubborn struggle not only against the Narodniks, but against the so-called "legal Marxists" as well. As Marxism began to spread widely throughout Russia it found transient fellow travellers among the bourgeois intellectuals. They declared themselves to be adherents of this doctrine and expounded their views in the legal organs of the press, whence their name of "legal Marxists". The "legal Marxists" criticised the Narodniks in their own way. They recognised the progressive character of capitalism compared with feudalism, which had outlived itself, and argued that bourgeois economic relations were developing in Russia. But they took only one aspect of Marx's doctrine–his postulate that capitalism was progressive compared with the social formations that had preceded it. As to the quint-essence of Marxism–its doctrine of the class struggle, the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 300.
** Part II is still missing.
*** M. Kalinin, *On Lenin's Book "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats"*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1952, p. 20.
**** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 136.

proletariat–they rejected it. They extolled the capitalist system, which they made out to be better than it was. Thus the "legal Marxists" distorted Marxism in the liberal-bourgeois spirit. Covering up their views with theoretical postulates which they quoted at random from Marx's doctrine and to which they gave a false and one-sided interpretation, they sought to subordinate the working-class movement to the ideology and interests of the bourgeoisie. Many of them subsequently became Cadets (Constitutional Democrats–the chief party of the Russian liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie), and after the Great October Socialist Revolution, fought bitterly against Soviet power.

At the very birth of "legal Marxism" Lenin saw this liberal-bourgeois trend for what it was–a defence of the class interests of the bourgeoisie–and realised that its spokesmen were disguised enemies of Marxism, advocates of capitalism.

In the autumn of 1894, at a meeting of a St. Petersburg Marxist circle, Lenin read a paper entitled "The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature", concerning Struve's book *Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia's Economic Development*. In this paper Lenin sharply criticised the views of the "legal Marxists", who sought to rob Marxism of its revolutionary content, and misrepresent it in a liberal-bourgeois spirit.

Inasmuch, however, as the "legal Marxists" opposed the Narodniks, Lenin considered it possible to enter into a temporary agreement with them for a joint struggle against Narodism, provided the Marxists were absolutely free to criticise the "legal Marxists'" political and theoretical views. Already in those years Lenin gave evidence of the flexibility of his tactics, of his ability to use even temporary and unreliable fellow travellers in the interest of the class struggle of the proletariat. As a result, a miscellany was published in the spring of 1895 entitled *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development* and edited not only by Lenin, V. Starkov and S. Radchenko, but also by the "legal Marxists" P. Struve and R. Klasson. It included "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book", an article by Lenin signed "K. Tulin".

Afterwards, speaking of that agreement with the "legal Marxists", Lenin maintained that the question of the Marxists' attitude to temporary political alliances was fundamentally important. He pointed out that "only those who are not sure of themselves can fear to enter into temporary alliances even with unreliable people; not a single political party could exist without such alliances. The combination with the legal Marxists was in its way the first really political alliance entered into by Russian Social-Democrats. Thanks to this alliance, an astonishingly rapid victory was obtained over Narodism, and Marxist ideas ... became very widespread."*

It gave a sweeping criticism of Narodism and "legal Marxism", contrasting them to the revolutionary class stand of Marxism. Lenin showed that the views of the "legal Marxists" boiled down to a laudation of capitalism, a desire to perpetuate it, to adapt Marxism and the working-class movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie. It was no accident that Struve urged that "we acknowledge our lack of culture and go and learn from capitalism."

Lenin showed that Struve's line of argument was essentially anti-revolutionary, which was evident from Struve's bourgeois objectivism and his effort to obscure social contradictions and the struggle of the classes. "The main feature of the author's arguments," Lenin pointed out, "... is his narrow objectivism, which is confined to proving the inevitability and necessity of the process and makes no effort to reveal at each specific stage of this process the form of class contradiction inherent in it–an objectivism that describes the process in general, and not each of the antagonistic classes whose conflict makes up the process."*

In contrast to bourgeois objectivism, Lenin developed the principle of partisanship and the class character of social science, of philosophy. Unlike the objectivist, who confined himself to talking dispassionately "about the paths and fortunes of humanity", the materialist, Lenin wrote, must give an accurate characterisation of the course of social development in question, indicating which classes in particular promote that development and in whose interests it serves.

Lenin stressed that materialism connotes partisanship, which means that in appraising a development a Marxist must explicitly and openly adopt the standpoint of a specific class. In his struggle against the "legal Marxists", Lenin defended the revolutionary essence of Marxism–the doctrine of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat–and developed this doctrine still further.

Lenin stressed the necessity of adopting an uncompromising attitude towards all deviations from Marxism, of treasuring the theory of scientific socialism, elaborating it in a creative spirit and defending it against distortion and vulgarisation on the part of the opportunists and reformists.

The tsarist censorship saw in the miscellany *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development* "a pernicious trend aimed at shaking the existing order". The censor's report concerning the book dealt mainly with K. Tulin's article, which he described as "the most outspoken and complete programme of the Marxists". The tsarist authorities banned the book, which was confiscated and burned. Only about 100 copies out of 2,000 were saved, and these were circulated secretly among the Social-Democrats of St. Petersburg and other cities.

The "legal Marxists" were the first revisionists of Marxism on Russian soil. But "legal Marxism", or Struveism, which Lenin described as a

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 362.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 499.

reflection of Marxism in bourgeois literature, was an international as well as a Russian phenomenon. Lenin's struggle against it in Russia was also a struggle against international revisionism.

Lenin's trip abroad. His meetings with Plekhanov. In the middle of February 1895 Lenin attended a conference in St. Petersburg of members of the Social-Democratic groups of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev and Vilno. The conference discussed the question of changing over from the propaganda of Marxism in narrow circles to mass political agitation, and of publishing popular literature for the workers and establishing close contact with the Emancipation of Labour group. It was decided to send a representative abroad, but owing to differences on matters of principle no agreement was reached on sending one person representing all the groups. Two men were therefore sent abroad–Lenin from the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats, and Y. Sponti from the Moscow group.

The question of changing over to mass agitation was discussed also at a joint conference of the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats and workers. The hectographed pamphlet *On Agitation*, issued by the Vilno Social-Democrats, was read out and discussed. Some of those who attended the conference considered the transition to new forms of political activity premature. But Lenin urged the necessity of such a transition. The workers attending the conference unanimously supported Lenin, and his motion was carried by a majority vote. Agitation by the Social-Democrats of St. Petersburg stimulated the growth of a mass working-class movement.

The trip abroad was delayed, as Lenin fell ill with pneumonia and could not leave until the end of April. Ostensibly the object of this trip was to take a convalescent holiday. Before going abroad Lenin visited Moscow. All frontier points were notified by a special police circular of Lenin's intended trip, and agents abroad were instructed "to keep a careful watch of Lenin's activities and foreign connections".

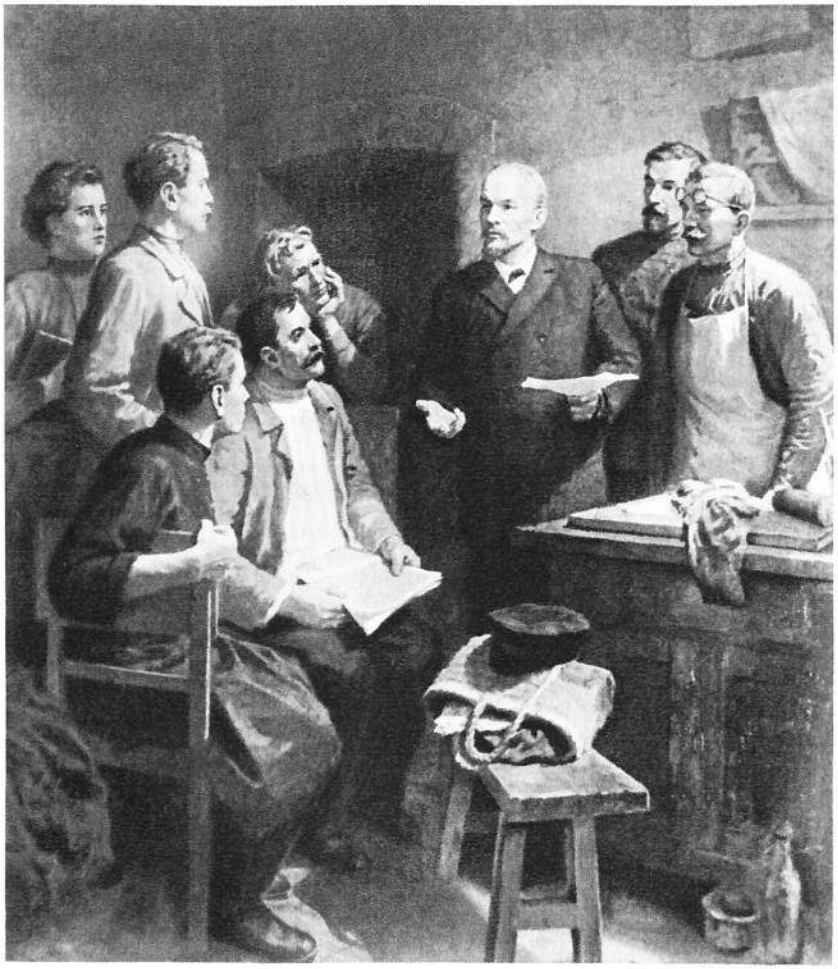
Lenin's first meeting with Plekhanov took place in Geneva. After their talk Plekhanov said that he had never met such an outstanding representative of the revolutionary youth before. In one of his letters he wrote that he had seen many people from Russia during the many years he had been living abroad, but that none of them had inspired such hopes in him as did young Ulyanov. "As far as I remember," wrote Krzhizhanovsky, who was acquainted with the contents of Plekhanov's letter, "he also mentioned in that letter Lenin's amazing erudition, the consistency of his revolutionary outlook, and his dynamic energy."* Lenin, for his part, had the greatest respect and liking for Plekhanov, the first outstanding Russian Marxist.

But already at that time Lenin and Plekhanov differed on a number of fundamental issues. Lenin developed and upheld the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat, and of the proletariat's alliance with the

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 153.



Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya
Photo, 1895



First leaflet
From painting by F. Golubkov

peasantry. He regarded this alliance as the main force guaranteeing the overthrow of the exploiter system and the construction of a communist society. As for Plekhanov, he had no faith in the strength of the working class or its ability to lead the peasants. He denied the revolutionary character of the peasant class, and holding the Russian liberal bourgeoisie to be revolutionary, he assigned it the role of leader and motive force of the coming bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia. After reading Lenin's article against the liberal Narodniks and the "legal Marxists" contained in the miscellany *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development*, which Lenin had brought with him, Plekhanov said: "You... are turning your backs on the liberals, while we are facing them."*

Lenin's trip abroad was of great importance not only for the activities of the Social-Democrats in Russia, but also for the Emancipation of Labour group, which from that time established closer contacts with the Social-Democrats working in Russia. It was at that time, too, that Lenin's proposal to publish popular collections of articles for the workers was adopted and the decision taken to publish abroad a miscellany entitled *Rabotnik*.

After a stay of about three weeks in Switzerland Lenin left for Paris. There he met Paul Lafargue, son-in-law of Karl Marx and a prominent leader of the French and international working-class movement. Lafargue was a close friend and disciple of Marx and Engels, and one of the founders of the French Workers' Party.

After nearly six weeks in Paris, Lenin went back to Switzerland. He spent several days in a nursing home, then left for Germany, where he rented a room in a Berlin suburb. He spent much of his time in the Berlin Imperial Library, where he studied foreign Marxist literature, and made notes and abstracts. At that time Lenin made a *précis* of the book *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Critique. Against Bruno Bauer & Co.* by Marx and Engels. He studied the life and conditions of the German people and, as in Paris, attended workers' meetings. In Berlin he met Wilhelm Liebknecht, one of the leaders of the German Social-Democrats. Lenin had looked forward to meeting Frederick Engels, who was living in London at the time. But Engels was seriously ill and the meeting did not take place.

Lenin returned to Russia early in September 1895. He succeeded in escaping the vigilance of the secret police, who had strict orders to search his luggage carefully at the frontier. He brought illegal Marxist literature from abroad concealed between the double lining of his suitcase. According to a report submitted to the Police Department, "nothing reprehensible was discovered despite the most careful examination of his luggage". Before going back to St. Petersburg Lenin visited Vilno, Moscow and Orekhovo-Zuyevo, where he met members of the

* *Correspondence between G. Plekhanov and P. Axelrod*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1925, Vol. I, p. 271.

local Social-Democratic groups and made arrangements for contributions to the foreign publication of the *Rabotnik* miscellany. On his return to St. Petersburg the literature which he had brought with him from abroad was distributed among the Social-Democrats of St. Petersburg and other cities.

In St. Petersburg Lenin was under secret surveillance of the police, but being well up in secrecy techniques, he was able to elude detection. In a number of workers' circles he was known as Nikolai Petrovich, and in the Narvskaya Zastava district as Fyodor Petrovich. He was familiar with the through yards of many residential blocks in St. Petersburg and was able to throw the spies off his track. During his stay in St. Petersburg he repeatedly changed his address to keep his whereabouts a secret.

Owing to lack of funds, Lenin was obliged to rent a cheap room. In a letter home he complained: "The room next door is divided off by a very thin partition, so that I can hear everything, and sometimes I have to run away from the balalaika which my neighbour strums right over my ear."* Under these conditions he could do no work at home. And so he used to go to the library, where he often had meetings with Social-Democrats. Lenin regularly visited the Imperial and other libraries and reading-rooms in St. Petersburg. He closely followed the Russian and foreign press and all the latest books and magazines.

In private life Lenin was a man of very simple habits. The following fact is highly characteristic of him. On his arrival in St. Petersburg he started an account-book in which he made regular entries in the course of a month in order to plan his budget. On adding up his expenses, Lenin was annoyed to find them so high. In a letter to his mother he wrote: "I am spending too much–for example, I spent 1 ruble 36 kopeks on tram fares alone."**

On his return from abroad Lenin found himself under special surveillance. The tsar's spies said boastfully: "We've now tracked down Ulyanov, a dangerous state criminal whose brother was hanged. He's arrived from abroad and he won't get away from us." Lenin knew of the danger threatening him. But while taking all possible precautions, he stepped up his revolutionary work among the St. Petersburg proletariat.

The League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class. In the autumn of 1895 a historic event took place in the life of the Russian Social-Democrats–all the Marxist circles of St. Petersburg united, under Lenin's leadership, into a single political organisation, which was the embryo of the proletarian party in Russia. In December this organisation adopted the name of the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class.

The League of Struggle was led by a central group under Lenin. Among its members were A. Vaneyev, P. Zaporozhets, G. Krzhizhanovsky, N. Krupskaya, L. Martov (Y. Zederbaum), A. Potresov, S. Radchenko

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 17.
** *Ibid.*, p. 2.

and V. Starkov. It based its activities on the workers' factory study-circles, which united into district groups. The League adhered to the principle of centralism, and maintained strict discipline and close ties with the workers. It led the activities of Marxist circles and the strike movement, and published leaflets. All its publications were edited by Lenin.

Early in November the League organised a strike at the Thornton Factory involving 500 weavers. It issued and distributed a leaflet "What the Weavers Are Demanding". A joint meeting of delegates of Social-Democratic groups and advanced workers of St. Petersburg was called in connection with the strike to ascertain what the situation was in the different districts and to draw up a plan of action. The meeting was attended by Lenin. Soon the League issued another leaflet "To the Working Men and Women of the Thornton Factory", written by Lenin. It called upon all the mill hands to support the striking weavers. "Let us, then, comrades, stand firm and steadfast and carry on to the very end, let us remember that we can improve our conditions only by our common and concerted efforts,"* it said. The leaflet made a strong impression on the workers, and strengthened their solidarity and staunchness. They won the strike. Their example inspired the workers in many other industrial establishments of St. Petersburg to fight.

The activities of the League of Struggle, as Lenin pointed out, showed that the proletariat, led by the Social-Democrats, was a powerful political factor which the government could no longer ignore.

It had always been a cherished dream of Lenin's to write for the workers. "There is nothing I would like so much as to write for the workers," he pointed out afterwards. In the autumn of 1895 he wrote the pamphlet *Explanation of the Law on Fines Imposed on Factory Workers.* The question of fines agitated all workers at the time. The pamphlet gave a popular account of how the employers exploited the workers and by what means the proletariat should fight its oppressors.

Lenin cited striking examples from the life of the workers to show that the government, which sided with the employers, would always pass laws that benefited the latter. The workers had only one way of fighting oppression by the government and the capitalists, and that was to take a common stand against the capitalists and the unfair conditions established by the law. The pamphlet was printed in 3,000 copies in the illegal printing plant of the Narodnaya Volya group and was widely circulated among the workers.

Lenin's League of Struggle linked up the struggle of the workers for pressing economic demands with the political struggle against tsarism and capitalist exploitation. It fulfilled a historical mission, for it was *the first organisation in Russia to begin combining the ideas of scientific socialism with the working-class movement.* From then on the working-class movement in Russia developed under the banner of Marxism.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 81.

The St. Petersburg League of Struggle served as a model for the amalgamation of workers' groups in similar leagues in other cities and regions of Russia. It was essential to establish solid ties among them. With this aim in view, the St. Petersburg League of Struggle decided to publish an illegal newspaper called *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Lenin collected material for the newspaper among the workers, and instructed other League members to do the same. He also edited letters about the working-class movement in Russia for *Rabotnik*, a non-periodical miscellany, whose publication was being prepared abroad by the Emancipation of Labour group.

Upon Engels's death, Lenin wrote an article for this miscellany entitled "Frederick Engels", in which he described the great services which Engels had rendered the international proletariat. After Karl Marx, wrote Lenin, Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the proletariat in the whole civilised world. The article gave a profound and comprehensive characterisation of Engels's role. It stressed the importance of his writings, and told about the remarkable friendship of the two founders of scientific socialism.

All the more important articles for the first issue of *Rabocheye Dyelo* were written by Lenin, among them "To the Russian Workers" (editorial), "What Are Our Ministers Thinking About?", and "The Yaroslavl Strike in 1895". The editorial explained the historic tasks of the working class in Russia, chief among which was the winning of political liberty. The first number of the newspaper was edited entirely by Lenin.

At a meeting of the leading group of the League of Struggle, held in Krupskaya's flat on December 8, 1895, the copy for number one of *Rabocheye Dyelo* was discussed. This, in Lenin's words, was the first attempt of the Russian Social-Democrats of the nineties to set up an illegal Social-Democratic workers' newspaper. The issue was prepared in duplicate. Vaneyev took one copy for a final perusal before it went to press, and the other remained with Krupskaya.

But *Rabocheye Dyelo* did not see the light of day. On the night of December 8 Lenin and a large group of his St. Petersburg League associates were arrested. At Vaneyev's flat, the police seized the manuscript of the first issue. Lenin was sent to a house of detention where he was placed in a solitary cell. The workers reacted to the arrest of Lenin and his associates by issuing on their own initiative a leaflet that was purely political in character. They mimeographed it and distributed it at the factories in St. Petersburg.

Behind prison bars. Even in prison Lenin carried on with his revolutionary work. He quickly found ways and means of directing the activities of the League from behind prison bars. He wrote illegal pamphlets and leaflets and smuggled them out of prison.

While in prison Lenin wrote a draft programme for the Party and explanatory notes to it. He gave a profound analysis of capitalism in Russia and defined the basic tasks of the class struggle of the proletariat. He formulated in precise and clear terms the necessity for

overthrowing the autocracy, to be followed by the overthrow of the rule of the capitalists, and by the transfer of power to the working class. He also set the task of abolishing private ownership of the means of production, and of building a socialist society.

Lenin wrote these illegal documents with lemon juice or milk out of little "ink-wells" made of bread. Whenever he heard his jailers at the peep-hole he would immediately eat up his ink-well. "I have eaten six ink-wells today," he wrote jokingly in one of his letters. The recipients of this secret correspondence would warm the invisible writing or dip the sheets in hot water to bring out the lines.

While in prison Lenin continued his researches in the economic development of the country, and began to write his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. In one of his letters he wrote: "I have a plan that has occupied my mind considerably ever since I was arrested, increasingly so as time passes. I have long been working on an economic problem (that of the marketing of the products of manufacturing industry within the country), have selected some literature, drawn up a plan for its analysis and have even done some writing with a view to having my work published in book form should its dimensions exceed those of a magazine article."* Lenin sent his comrades a list of the books he needed and his plan of work, and asked them to send him the books. With the help of relatives and friends, he began to receive the necessary literature from various libraries in St. Petersburg (those of the Academy of Sciences, the University, the Free Economic Society, etc.). It was apparently in prison that Lenin wrote the work *Essays on Political Economy in the Early Nineteenth Century*, which has so far not been found.

Imprisoned though he was himself, Lenin was always thinking about his comrades in the same plight. Every letter he sent out contained some request concerning a fellow-prisoner. Now it was for a fictitious "fiancée" to be sent to visit a lonely comrade who had no relatives in town, now it was for somebody to be told through visiting relatives to look for letters on such-and-such a page, of such-and-such a book in the prison library, now it was for warm clothes to be sent to so-and-so. Lenin corresponded with imprisoned comrades through prison library books in which he used dots to mark off the letters forming the message. Krzhizhanovsky wrote that receiving and reading a letter of Lenin's "was like taking a bracing, refreshing drink, it bucked one up immediately and was a moral tonic. This man possessed such vast reserves of moral strength, such an ability to raise the spirits of any person who stood in need of it, that these qualities alone under any sort of conditions, and particularly prison conditions, made him an indispensable comrade."**

Lenin established for himself in prison a rigid regime which helped him bear the hardships of a prisoner's life. He spent most of the day

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 18.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 155.

working, and before bedtime he never missed doing his physical exercises. "I'd limber up so well," he afterwards recalled, "that I'd feel warm even in the bitterest cold, when the cell was like a block of ice, and I'd sleep far better after that."*

Several more League members were arrested early in January 1896, among them Babushkin; and in August Krupskaya was arrested. As soon as Lenin heard of this he got in touch with the arrested comrades. He continued to give advice and directions to those outside.

Despite its heavy losses, the League of Struggle weathered the storm, because it had by that time become deeply rooted in the working-class movement. The advanced workers educated by Lenin's League formed new contacts, organised new study-circles, and extended agitation, propaganda and organising work among the masses.

The summer of 1896 saw major strikes in St. Petersburg that subsequently spread to Moscow. The St. Petersburg League of Struggle launched agitation work on a large scale. It published as many as thirteen leaflets in the course of one month. The strikes of 1896, Lenin later wrote, "... ushered in an era of steadily mounting workers' movement—the most potent factor in the whole of our revolution".** "The inception of a mass working-class movement, with the participation of Social-Democrats, dates from 1895-96, the time of the famous St. Petersburg strikes," he pointed out. At the turn of the century the proletariat of St. Petersburg took the lead of the working-class movement in Russia.

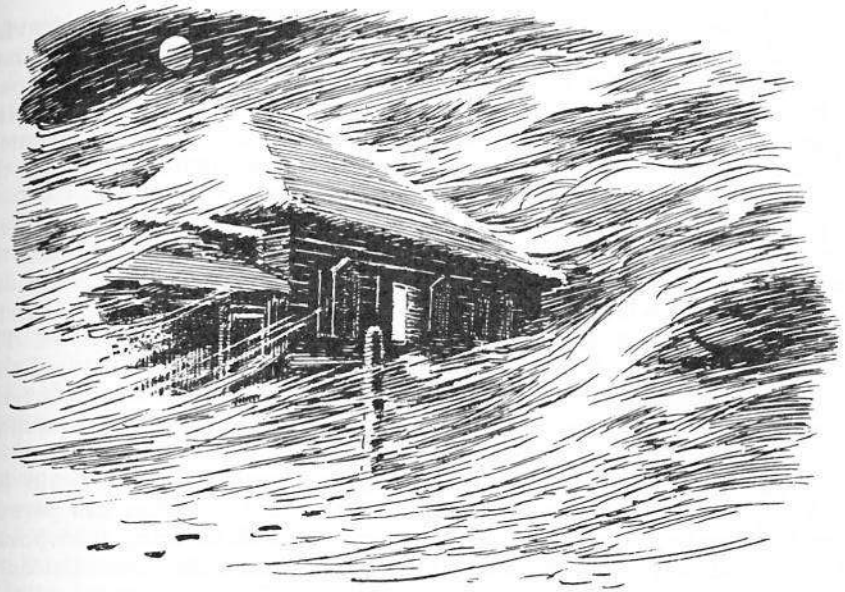
The St. Petersburg period was a very important one in the life and work of Lenin. It was there that he established close contact with the working class and its foremost representatives. Being closely connected with the hereditary proletarians of the capital and thoroughly familiar with their needs and aspirations, Lenin grew in stature as an organiser and leader of the working class. At that time the Russian Social-Democrats, led by Lenin, changed over from circle propaganda to mass political agitation.

It was in St. Petersburg that Lenin formed the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, the first embryo of a revolutionary Marxist party basing its activity on a mass working-class movement.

Lenin's political and theoretical activities, his uncompromising struggle against opportunism, against attempts to distort the Marxist theory, his work in educating the proletariat in the revolutionary spirit, his creative application of Marxism to Russian conditions, and his scientific generalisation of the experience of the mass working-class movement in the country ushered in a new, Leninist phase in the development of Marxism, in the activities of the Russian Marxists, and in the working-class movement in Russia.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 82.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 94.



Chapter Three

SIBERIAN EXILE

Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.

LENIN

After more than fourteen months' imprisonment Lenin was sentenced to three years' exile in Eastern Siberia under open police surveillance. The sentence was announced to him on February 13, 1897, and the next day he was released from prison.

Like other of his comrades who had been released, Lenin was allowed to stay three days in St. Petersburg to arrange his personal affairs. He used that time to carry on revolutionary work and hold Social-Democratic meetings. During the discussion of questions of tactics and organisation at those meetings "serious differences of opinion were revealed and a heated controversy arose" between the "old" members of the League (Lenin, Krzhizhanovsky, Starkov, Vaneyev and others) and some of the "young" members.

The differences centred on the tasks of the Social-Democrats in Russia, which constituted the main issue. The "old" members insisted on the revolutionary character of Social-Democratic organisation as the political leader of the working class, while the "young" expressed narrow trade-unionist views and denied the political tasks of the Social-Democrats. In effect the "young" Leaguers were for abandoning the struggle for

political liberty and socialism in favour of economic struggle, leaving political activity to the liberal bourgeoisie. They thereby greatly narrowed the tasks of the Russian proletariat and pushed it along the path of trade-unionism. The views of the "young" Leaguers were Economism in embryo, that opportunist trend in the Russian working-class movement which somewhat later became fairly widespread, and hampered the revolutionary education of the proletariat.

The revolutionary Social-Democrats headed by Lenin countered these manifestations of Economism by stressing the need to consolidate the League of Struggle, extend its links with the foremost workers, and properly organise leadership of the workers' study-circles, mutual benefit societies, circles for propaganda among the students, and so on. The differences between the "old" and the "young" Leaguers showed that two trends had arisen in the Russian Social-Democratic movement–the revolutionary and the opportunist trends. Subsequently a sharp struggle arose between the two trends on fundamental issues.

Exile. Arrival in Shushenskoye. On February 17, 1897, Lenin left St. Petersburg for his place of exile in Siberia. His mother got permission for him to travel at his own expense instead of being transported in the usual way. This relieved Lenin of the distressing experiences of travelling by stages from prison to prison. On his way to exile he visited his mother in Moscow, where he stayed for a few days. He used this opportunity to do some work in the Rumyantsev Museum reading-room, where he collected material on the development of capitalism in Russia.

Lenin left Moscow on the night of February 22, and arrived in Krasnoyarsk early in March. There, while waiting to be assigned to his place of exile, and then for first open water to enable him to travel further by boat, he lived in the house of K. Popova, which was known in the town as a refuge for political exiles. The place was always crowded. Lenin met local and exiled Social-Democrats there, as well as Polish revolutionaries and Narodnaya Volya members. He met the writer V. Anuchin, the exiles V. Bukshnis, P. Krasikov and others.

The local doctor V. Krutovsky introduced Lenin to the Krasnoyarsk merchant G. Yudin, the owner of a large, and for those days, rare library of over a hundred thousand books. Every day, first thing in the morning, Lenin went to Yudin's library, two versts from the town, and worked there till the evening. He also visited the town library. Thus, even on his way to exile, he never missed an opportunity to continue with his work.

On April 24 Lenin was officially informed that he was to be deported to the village of Shushenskoye in the Minusinsk District, Yenisei Gubernia. Exiled Decembrists* lived in this village between the thirties and fifties of the nineteenth century, and M. Butashevich-Petrashevsky, a prominent leader of the Russian emancipation movement, lived there in exile in the sixties.

Lenin left Krasnoyarsk by steamboat on April 30 together with Krzhizhanovsky and Starkov, who had also been sentenced to three years' exile in Siberia and were on their way to the village of Tesinskoye. It took them a week to get to Minusinsk, and from there, escorted by two gendarmes, Lenin travelled by cart to Shushenskoye. He arrived at his destination on the evening of May 8 and was lodged in the cottage of a peasant named Ziryanov. The small room which Lenin occupied contained a wooden bed, a table and four chairs. Lenin received an exile's allowance of eight rubles a month, and he lived mainly on this money during his period of exile. A man of simple tastes and habits, he could make do with very little when he had to.

In those days Shushenskoye was an out-of-the-way village,* over 600 versts from the railway. It took about a fortnight for the mail to arrive from Central Russia. No one in the village subscribed to any newspapers and for more than a month Lenin went without seeing them. It was not until the middle of June that he started getting *Russkiye Vedomosti*. "I read the paper avidly–an understandable reaction against the long reading gap," he wrote home.

In a letter to his sister, Lenin described Shushenskoye as follows: "It is a large village with several streets, all of them pretty muddy and dusty, just as you would expect. It lies in the steppe–no gardens or vegetation whatever."

It was a trying ordeal for Lenin to be in exile; the worst thing about it was his forced dissociation from direct work among the proletariat. At first he could not bear to look at the maps of European Russia and Europe. "It made me feel so sad when I unrolled those maps and looked at all the black dots on them," he wrote to his sister. "But I've got used to it now and can examine the maps more calmly."**

Despite the hard conditions of exile, Lenin never lost his inexhaustible optimism. Despondency and despair were foreign to his nature. Nor did exile affect his extraordinary capacity for work. He started a voluminous correspondence with exiled Social-Democrats scattered all over Siberia and the North. He corresponded with N. Fedoseyev in Verkholensk, with Y. Martov in Turukhansk, with A. Potresov in Vyatka Gubernia, with A. Malchenko and M. Grigoryev in Archangel Gubernia, with Lydia Knipovich in Astrakhan, and many other exiles in the Minusinsk District. Lenin made a profound study of the history of philosophy and frequently corresponded on this subject with F. Lengnik, who was also in exile. Unfortunately, this correspondence has not been

* *Decembrists*–Russian revolutionaries from among the nobles, who raised an armed revolt against serfdom and the autocracy in December 1825.

* Shushenskoye today is a large district centre of Krasnoyarsk Territory, 78 kilometres from the railway with which it has a regular bus service. Shushenskoye has a milk cannery, two libraries, a secondary school, an agricultural college, a House of Culture and a Young Pioneer House. The house in which Lenin lived was turned into a Lenin museum in 1937.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 125.

found. According to Lengnik, Lenin, in these letters, came out sharply against idealism, which he opposed by the materialist philosophy of Marx and Engels. In those days Lenin spoke about his philosophical knowledge with characteristic modesty: "... I am only too well aware of my lack of a philosophical education and I do not intend to write on these subjects until I have learned more. That is just what I am doing—I have started with Holbach and Helvétius, and am now taking up Kant. I have got hold of the chief works of the chief philosophers."* On Lenin's initiative, an exchange of literature was organised among the exiles.

Lenin maintained contacts with the centres of the working-class movement in Russia—St. Petersburg and Moscow, and with Marxists in Nizhny Novgorod and Voronezh. Through his sister Anna Yelizarova he arranged a regular correspondence with the Emancipation of Labour group.

Lenin carried on a regular and frequent correspondence with his relatives, especially his mother. His letters to her were full of tender love and care. He tried as hard as he could to reassure her and cheer her up. His usual form of address was "Dear Mummy". He was concerned about her health and begged her not to worry about him. He wrote her long letters describing his life, his thoughts and plans. Lenin's mother shared her children's ideas and appreciated their revolutionary aspirations. She tried to help them bear the hardships of imprisonment or exile. In trying to obtain permission to visit her children, she waited patiently in the reception-rooms of the police authorities and took long walks round the prison in the hope of catching a glimpse of a dear face through one of the barred windows. During one of her numerous visits to the Police Department, the Director there threw cynically into her face:

"You can be proud of your offspring—one of them was hanged and another one is also asking for the rope."

To which Lenin's mother answered with dignity:

"Yes, I am proud of my children!"

The whole Ulyanov family helped Lenin in his work. Through his relatives and friends he obtained the literature he needed. They sent him statistical handbooks, catalogues, books on political economy and philosophy. At the same time he continued to study the works of Marx and Engels. In a letter to his elder sister he asked her to send him the following books, published in French: *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right* by Karl Marx and *Force and Economy Used in Establishing the New German Empire* by Frederick Engels. Lenin followed the latest publications of Marxist literature in foreign languages, as well as the Russian and foreign press. He was interested to read the report of the Stuttgart Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party in a German newspaper, and asked his relatives to send him verbatim reports of parliamentary debates,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, p. 20.

and literature on the economics of agriculture in Western Europe and on the history of forms of industry.

Lenin subscribed to many newspapers and periodicals, including *Russkoye Bogatstvo, Vestnik Finansov, Novoye Slovo, Nauchnoye Obozreniye, Niva*, etc., as well as the German magazines *Archiv für soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik, Soziale Praxis, Die Neue Zeit, Frankfurter Zeitung*, and others. All this enabled him to keep abreast of events and follow the working-class movement and economic developments in Russia and Western Europe.

While in exile Lenin continued his study of agrarian relations in Russia, which he had started in the Volga region. He now made a careful study of Siberian rural life and the conditions of the peasantry. In this he was helped by his close ties with the peasants of Shushenskoye. The villagers had great respect for Lenin and sought his help. Being a political exile, he had no right to engage in legal practice, but unofficially he gave the peasants advice and taught them how to protect themselves against the arbitrary actions of the local authorities and the rich. On one occasion he helped a worker to win his suit against his employer, the owner of a gold mine who had sacked him without paying him his wages. After this Lenin's prestige with the local population rose still higher. People from other neighbourhoods started coming to him for advice.

"... When I was in exile in Siberia," Lenin recalled twenty-five years later, "I had occasion to act in the capacity of a lawyer, I was not a certified lawyer, because, being summarily exiled, I was not allowed to practise; but as there was no other lawyer in the region, people came and confided their troubles to me."*

Two other exiles lived in Shushenskoye besides Lenin. They were I. Prominski, a Polish worker, who was exiled in 1895 for taking part in the Lodz organisation of the Polish Social-Democrats, and a Putilov worker, a Finn named Oscar Engberg, who was exiled in the autumn of 1897 for taking part in a strike. Prominski had a large family—a wife and six children, all of whom lived with him in exile. Lenin became close friends with these people. He never missed an opportunity to do something that would gladden Prominski's children, and wrote home asking that all the children's picture books available in the family should be sent out to him. He helped Engberg to master the fundamentals of Marxism. When parting with them at the end of his term of exile, Lenin gave each of his comrades a signed photograph of himself.

The arrival of Krupskaya. Krupskaya was sentenced to three years' exile in connection with the League of Struggle case and was banished to Ufa Gubernia. She asked for permission to go to the village of Shushenskoye instead, on the grounds of being Lenin's fiancée. Lenin, for his part, wrote to the Director of the Police Department asking for his fiancée to be allowed to move to Shushenskoye. Their request was

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 453.

granted. Lenin looked forward eagerly to Krupskaya's arrival. He had declared his love to her in an invisible ink letter when she was still in prison in St. Petersburg. Afterwards he wrote to her from Shushenskoye, asking her to join him there and become his wife. Krupskaya loved Lenin deeply and tenderly, and in reply to his letter wrote half-banteringly: "Well, if wife, then wife let it be." Lenin often remembered this reply in after years.

Krupskaya arrived in Shushenskoye early in May 1898 together with her mother Yelizaveta Vasilyevna. Quite a crowd gathered in the Ziryanovs' cottage, all curious to see the newcomers. The village girls gazed wonderingly at Lenin's fiancée, a slender girl with a long thick plait, the like of whom they had never seen before.

The police authorities warned Krupskaya that if she did not marry immediately she would be sent back to Ufa. However, it was not until July 10 that Lenin and Krupskaya got married. At first they continued to live in Ziryanov's cottage, and then moved to the cottage of a peasant woman named P. Petrova. After a while they set up house on their own, and planted a small kitchen-garden, as well as flowers and hops. Krupskaya's mother did the housekeeping. The young couple lived very happily. Thirty years later Krupskaya wrote in her reminiscences: "Those days of primitive integrity and the sheer joy of living rise so vividly before my eyes. Everything was so primitive and natural—the scenery, the sorrel, the mushroom gathering, hunting, skating, the narrow circle of friends, the holiday trips we took together . . . to Minusinsk, the walks we had together, the songs we sang, the naïve fun we had together, at home—Mother, the primitive household, a sort of semi-natural domestic economy, our life together—our work, our common experiences and reactions: our indignation and disgust on getting Bernstein, etc."*

From Krupskaya Lenin learned of the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., held in Minsk in March 1898. The news of the Congress, which announced the founding of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, rejoiced Lenin, who identified himself with the main propositions of the Congress "Manifesto". The First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was of great historic importance, for it closed the "period of childhood and adolescence" of the Russian Social-Democratic movement.

Shortly after the Congress the Central Committee of the Party was arrested. The tsar's government also struck out at many local Party organisations. The Marxist organisations found themselves disunited again and there began ideological vacillation. This meant, in effect, that no party in the sense of a single centralised organisation had been created. It was not until the Second Party Congress that the task of founding a real party in accordance with Lenin's political and organisational principles was tackled.

Lenin and Krupskaya worked hard in exile. They translated foreign books into Russian together, and copied out Lenin's writings. In

* *Slavniye Bolshevichki*, Moscow, 1958, p. 35.

Shushenskoye, Krupskaya wrote her first pamphlet entitled *The Working Woman*.

When they were not working they took long walks in the woods, on the river and in the fields. Lenin loved the great Siberian wilds and the mighty Yenisei. Krzhizhanovsky wrote that "Lenin was a great lover of clean frosty air, brisk walking, ice skating, chess and hunting". Lenin went in for sports a good deal. He attached great importance to physical exercise, and believed that a revolutionary whose life was dedicated to struggle and was full of hardships and adversities should be physically fit, strong and tough.

In the evenings Krupskaya and Lenin often enjoyed rereading Pushkin, Lermontov, Nekrasov and other Russian classics. Lenin's album, which he took with him into exile, contained, in addition to Marx and Engels, the photographs of Chernyshevsky, Pisarev, Herzen and Zola. He thought very highly of the latter, both as a writer and a progressive public figure.

Meetings with fellow exiles. Visits by comrades and trips to see them were joyous, if rare events in a life devoted entirely to work. In September 1897, Lenin spent two days in Minusinsk, where he met the local exiles. Among them were the well-known Narodnaya Volya revolutionary A. Tyrkov, the Warsaw worker M. Blazejewski, who took part in the Polish uprising in 1863, Felix Kohn, a prominent leader of the revolutionary working-class movement, and others. From Minusinsk Lenin went to the village of Tesinskoye, where Krzhizhanovsky and Starkov lived; he had permission to spend five days there. A month later Lenin visited Minusinsk again, this time on his own, without permission. During one of his visits he met N. Martyanov, the organiser of the Museum of Local Studies, which now bears his name. Martyanov's museum played an important role in the life of the exiles. It was a favourite haunt of theirs. A highly educated man of progressive ideas, Martyanov was a true friend of the exiled revolutionaries. F. Kohn wrote that every single exile he knew spoke highly of Martyanov.

Sometimes Lenin received visits from his St. Petersburg comrades, who lived in the neighbourhood, such as Krzhizhanovsky, Starkov, Vaneyev, Kurnatovsky, Lepeshinsky, Silvin and other Social-Democrats. Nearly eighteen months after his arrival at his place of exile Lenin contrived to visit Krasnoyarsk for a few days. He met the local political exiles there, and attended their gatherings. He recollected that trip with pleasure. "Although there were few of our people in Krasnoyarsk, it was pleasant to meet them after Shusha and chat about things other than hunting and local 'news'."* On one occasion Krzhizhanovsky invented an excuse to enable Lenin to visit him. He wrote that there was a hill in Tesinskoye, where he lived, which was of geological interest, and suggested that Lenin should write to the district police officer, saying that he wished to explore that hill. Lenin did so, just for

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, pp. 117-18.

fun, and asked for his wife to be allowed to go with him as his assistant. To Lenin's surprise and amusement, the officer not only gave his permission, but sent it down by messenger. Once Lenin went to see Kurnatovsky, who was working at a sugar refinery twenty versts away. Lenin inspected the refinery with keen interest. The working conditions there were so bad that even the factory manager, in a conversation with Lenin, was forced to admit it.

Many revolutionaries took their exile very hard. Many of them ruined their health and quite a few of them died in exile. Fedoseyev committed suicide in Verkholensk in the summer of 1898. Constant persecutions by the police, the slanderous attacks upon him by one of the exiles, and the dire poverty which sapped his strength and made him unfit for work was more than he could bear. Lenin was deeply upset by the news of Fedoseyev's death. In the autumn of 1893 he had made an attempt to see Fedoseyev and had gone specially to Vladimir in the hope of meeting him there, but Fedoseyev was in prison at the time and the meeting did not take place. While in exile Lenin corresponded with Fedoseyev on cardinal questions of Marxist theory. Fedoseyev left all his manuscripts to Krzhizhanovsky, with whom he was very friendly, and asked him to tell Lenin that he was dying "with complete and supreme faith in life and not from disillusionment". The death of Fedoseyev was a great loss to the Russian Social-Democratic movement.

About a year later the exiled Social-Democrats made a collection for a tombstone for Fedoseyev. One day the gendarmes intercepted the receipt of a letter which the exile Lyakhovsky had written to Lenin. The letter was about collecting money for a tombstone, but this was a good enough excuse for the gendarmes to come down on Lenin and make a house-search. It happened on May 2, 1899. Luckily for Lenin and Krupskaya, everything went off well. The gendarmes never found Lenin's illegal correspondence. Lenin pushed a chair up for the gendarmes to stand on, and they began their search from the top shelves of his bookcase. They got so tired examining the statistical handbooks, which were Greek to them, that they did not even look at the lower shelves, where they would have found the illegal correspondence the tsarist secret police was so interested in. Had the gendarmes discovered that correspondence, Lenin and Krupskaya would certainly have had their term of exile extended by several years.

The Russian Social-Democrats sustained another loss in September 1899 when Vaneyev, an admirable Russian revolutionary, died of consumption in the village of Yermakovskoye. Prison and exile had killed him. Lenin attended the funeral of his comrade and made a speech over his grave.

Great courage, great moral and physical strength were required to bear all the hardships of exile and return to one's place in the revolutionary battle ranks.

The tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats. In the difficult conditions of exile in the Siberian wilds Lenin developed tremendous theoretical

activity. During that period, in connection with the rapid growth of capitalism and the development of the working-class movement, the question of applying the Marxist theory to Russian conditions loomed large before the Russian Marxists. It was Lenin who gave a theoretical substantiation of the paths the revolutionary movement would take in Russia and who worked out the ideological principles of a Marxist party.

During his exile Lenin often worked far into the night, the light in his window glimmering amid the brooding darkness of the sleeping village. Shchipachov's poem "The House in Shushenskoye" contains the following lines:

The candle burns; the shadows shrink and quiver,
Around the village raging blizzards whirl–
Here, next to Lenin, wrapt in thought and study,
Through Shushenskoye runs the axis of the world.
Midnight long past, the snow obscures the windows
But still he writes and writes–for time is dear.
Through nineteenth century windows blurred by snowstorms
O Twentieth Century, he sees you true and clear!
He sees, he knows what Russia's strength will lie in,
What wondrous flame her brilliant future lights.
Although the purple ink is only drying
Already deathless are the words he writes. . .

Among the works written by Lenin in exile, special mention should be made of his pamphlet *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats* (1897). In the prefaces to the second and third editions of the pamphlet, Lenin stressed that the author had "summed up only the 'early experience' of my party activity" and that the pamphlet "gives only a general outline of the tasks of the Social-Democracy", which were consistently elaborated in the subsequent period. Lenin propounded the important thesis that an indissoluble connection existed between the socialist and democratic tasks of a Marxist party and that they must not be treated as opposites. A proper understanding of their connection and interrelation was particularly important in the conditions prevailing in Russia, where a struggle had to be carried on both against tsarism and against capitalism. Hence, the object of the Social-Democrats' activity was to organise the class struggle of the proletariat and guide it in both its manifestations: the democratic (struggle against the autocracy and the landowners, and establishment of a democratic republic), and the socialist (struggle against the capitalists, and organisation of a socialist society).

The pamphlet *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats* demonstrated the leading role of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement, and upheld the idea of the hegemony of the working class in the

forthcoming revolution in Russia. Lenin emphasised that the working class was the only thoroughly consistent revolutionary force, a force rallying behind it the peasant masses, who were hostile to tsarism, and that the overthrow of tsarism was the first step on the path of struggle for socialism. "The proletariat alone can be the *vanguard fighter* for political liberty and for democratic institutions. Firstly, this is because political tyranny bears most heavily upon the proletariat.... Secondly, the proletariat alone is capable of bringing about the *complete* democratisation of the political and social system, since this would place the system in the hands of the workers."* Lenin laid particular emphasis on the importance of the party principle and the independent position of the Social-Democrats. The Social-Democrats, he said, supported all the political opposition elements, but this support did not imply any concessions of principle in programmes and theories that were alien to Marxism.

In this pamphlet Lenin pointed out how essential revolutionary theory was for the emancipation struggle of the proletariat, and advanced the well-known thesis, which became a guiding principle for all Marxists, that "without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement".** Lenin consistently developed this thesis in his later works, in which he stressed the extreme importance of revolutionary theory for a proletarian party. Marxists, Lenin pointed out, should draw all their convictions from revolutionary theory, and should proceed from it in their practical activities.

Lenin called upon the Social-Democratic groups and workers' circles scattered throughout Russia to found "a single *Social-Democratic Labour Party*".

The pamphlet was first published in Geneva in 1898 by the Emancipation of Labour group and was widely read by the Social-Democrats and foremost workers of Russia. It was found during house-searches and arrests in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Smolensk, Kazan, Orel, Kiev, Vilno, Feodosia, Irkutsk, Archangel, Sormovo, Kovno and other towns. It did much to promote the political and economic struggle of the working class and disseminate the ideas of Marxism, and helped to create a proletarian party.

While upholding the purity of revolutionary theory, Lenin constantly stressed the need to carry forward Marxist theory.

"We do not regard Marx's theory," he wrote, "as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists *must* develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an *independent* elaboration of Marx's theory is especially essential for Russian socialists; for this theory provides only general *guiding* principles, which, *in particular*, are applied in England differently

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 336.
** *Ibid.*, p. 343.



Lenin with a group of prominent members of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class

Photo, 1897



The house in Shushenskoye where Lenin lived in exile
Photo

than in France, in France differently than in Germany, and in Germany differently than in Russia."*

Lenin's own writings were a further independent elaboration of Marx's theory. They constituted a guide to action for the proletariat of Russia and its party during three revolutions. They are supreme examples of the further theoretical development of Marxism, of its enrichment on the basis of the generalised experience of the world proletariat's class struggle, on the basis of new data concerning the economic and political life of Russia and other countries. Leninism is of international significance.

"The Development of Capitalism in Russia." In exile Lenin completed his classic work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia,* which dealt the final blow to Narodism and defeated "legal Marxism". The draft of the book (originally entitled *The Process of the Formation of a Home Market for Large-Scale Industry*) was ready early in August 1898. After that Lenin proceeded to give it the finishing touches. Krupskaya wrote to Lenin's mother in October 1898 that Lenin was "up to his ears in his markets and is writing from morning till night". The first two chapters were finished in November, copied out by Krupskaya in separate writing-books and sent to Lenin's relatives to be handed over to the publisher. "Today I am mailing to Mother's address two copybooks of my 'markets'," Lenin wrote to his elder sister. "These are the first two chapters, approximately a quarter or one-fifth of the whole book. There are altogether eight chapters, and I am now finishing the third, so that it will all be ready probably by January, since Nadezhda is copying it out fairly quickly as I go along."**

Lenin finished the last two chapters and the appendices at the end of January 1899. He wanted his book on the development of capitalism in Russia to be intelligible not only to learned specialists, but chiefly to the wide circles of the revolutionary intellectuals and the advanced workers. He showed chapters of his book to his close friends in exile. He attached great importance to the opinions of his fellow thinkers. Krupskaya read the whole book in the manuscript. "I am acting the 'uncomprehending reader'," she wrote, "and have to judge whether the subject of 'markets' is expounded lucidly enough. I try to be as 'uncomprehending' as I can, but I can find no particular fault with anything."***

To arrange for the publication of the book from exile was no easy task. Lenin's relatives and friends helped him. He sent the manuscript to his sister Anna Yelizarova in Podolsk, who did the proof-reading for him. The proof-reading of the tabular statements was done by the statistician V. Ionov, a Samara acquaintance of Lenin. The book was being published in St. Petersburg, and Anna Yelizarova went there specially.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 4, pp. 211-12.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 122.
*** *Ibid.,* p. 478.

There was some delay in deciding on the book's title. Modest and self-exacting as he was, Lenin refused for a long time to entitle his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. He believed that "this is too bold, too sweeping and pretentious. I think *On the Question of the Development of Capitalism in Russia* is more suitable."* Neither did Lenin like the suggestion that with the title *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* the book would sell faster. "...It is extremely difficult, indeed impossible, to answer all minor and particular questions from here," he wrote to his mother. "They should be settled on the spot. Therefore, I do not want to cavil at the change of the title, although I do not like it; nor do I like the suggestion that it will 'sell' better with a broad title. The simpler title was chosen deliberately. But since it remains in the subtitle it doesn't really matter."** The book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (*The Process of the Formation of a Home Market for Large-Scale Industry*) came off the press in March 1899 under the pen-name of "Vladimir Ilyin". The 2,400 edition sold out very quickly.

The book was the result of over three years' research. This important work was a direct continuation of Marx's *Capital*. Lenin drew on his profound knowledge of life and used hundreds of books and ample statistical evidence to trace the general objective laws of the capitalist mode of production, which manifested themselves strikingly in the course of Russia's capitalist development. Lenin's analysis of the problem of the formation of a home market was an important contribution to Marx's economic doctrine. Lenin examined the Narodniks' theoretical errors on the question of the home market and the development of capitalism in Russia, and showed that the problem of the home market was inseparable from that of the development of capitalism, that the formation of a home market in capitalist production was based on a process of small farmers splitting up into agricultural employers and hired proletarians. "The 'home market' for capitalism is created by growing capitalism itself, which deepens the social division of labour and resolves the direct producers into capitalists and workers."***

On the basis of carefully studied and verified statistical data, Lenin gave a true picture of Russia's economic development, and a Marxist scientific analysis of the process of differentiation among the peasantry. The peasant, he showed, was subordinated to the market, and was dependent on it as regards both his personal consumption and his farming.

Lenin disclosed in the socio-economic relations of the Russian countryside all those contradictions which are inherent in every commodity economy and every kind of capitalism, namely, competition, a tendency towards the concentration of production in the hands of a minority, the transition of the mass of small producers, the peasants, into the ranks

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 162.
** *Ibid.*, p. 147.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 69.

of the proletariat and semi-proletariat, and their exploitation by the capitalists and the kulaks.

The continuous and rapid differentiation of the peasantry ("depeasantising") created two new diametrically opposite types of rural population—the bourgeoisie, or kulaks, on the one hand, and the rural proletariat, the class of hired labourers having allotments, on the other. It was this differentiation of the peasantry that created a home market for capitalism.

Lenin examined the inner economic structure of peasant and landowner farming, showed the changes that were taking place in agricultural production, and revealed the process of gradual transition of the landowners from the corvée to capitalist economy based on the wide use of agricultural machines and hired labour.

In this book Lenin gave a vivid picture of how and in what direction the various aspects of the Russian economy were developing, including industrial production, of their interconnection and interdependence, and of the brutal exploitation of the working people. The post-Reform epoch,* he wrote, differed radically from the previous epochs in Russian history. The Russia of the wooden plough and the flail, of the water-mill and the hand-loom, was becoming a Russia of the iron plough and the threshing-machine, of the steam-mill and the power-loom.

At the same time Lenin noted that Russia still lagged far behind the other capitalist countries in her economic development. That development was admittedly slow compared with the rate of development which could be achieved under the existing level of technology and culture. "And it cannot but be slow, for in no single capitalist country has there been such an abundant survival of ancient institutions that are incompatible with capitalism, retard its development, and immeasurably worsen the condition of the producers, who 'suffer not only from the development of capitalist production, but also from the incompleteness of that development'."**

Lenin came to the conclusion that there were two possible ways for the capitalist development of Russia's agriculture. One was slow transformation of the old landowner economy, bound as it was by thousands of threads to serfdom, into a capitalist economy. The other was revolutionary destruction of every vestige of serfdom, primarily the landed estates. This alternative path offered an opportunity for the speediest and freest development of the productive forces on a capitalist basis, and created favourable conditions for the working class subsequently accomplishing its fundamental task—the overthrow of capitalism and the reorganisation of the country's economy on socialist lines.

It was important for the theory and practice of the revolutionary struggle to take a correct view of the destiny of capitalism. The question was, which class must and could accomplish a radical reorganisation

* That is, the epoch following the abolition of serfdom in Russia (1861).
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 599.

of society, what social force the revolutionaries should rely on and what were the prospects and conditions for the victory of the coming revolution?

Lenin focussed his attention on these points, and showed that a great people's revolution under the leadership of the proletariat was maturing in Russia.

The Development of Capitalism in Russia builds up a *well-reasoned exhaustive economic argument in support of the idea of an alliance of the working class and the peasantry, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the coming revolution.* Lenin showed that the ranks of the proletariat were growing swiftly and steadily in town and country alike, that the working class of Russia was becoming a tremendous political force. In his preface to the second edition Lenin, on the basis of the experience of the first Russian revolution, laid special emphasis on the leading role of the working class. "The strength of the proletariat in the process of history," he wrote, "is immeasurably greater than its share in the total population."* He showed that it was not only a question of the proletariat's growing numerical strength, but of its concentration in large factories and major industrial centres, as well as of its alliance with the peasantry, together with whom it constituted the majority of the population. This important thesis of Leninism was proved correct by the subsequent revolutionary struggle of the Russian proletariat, which scored epoch-making victories despite the fact that it made up a comparatively small proportion of the country's total population. It was on the basis of Lenin's scientific analysis of Russia's socio-economic system and class structure that the Bolsheviks elaborated their strategy and tactics in the first Russian revolution.

His analysis of the economic development of Russia enabled Lenin, in the first place, to deal the final blow both to Narodism and to the "legal Marxists" and to show that their views were utterly untenable; secondly, to prove on the basis of economic data the historical role of the working class as the leading political force in society; and thirdly, to demonstrate the role of the peasantry as an ally of the proletariat. Lenin's book is an outstanding scientific research, every conclusion of which is documented by a wealth of factual material. It is an example of the use of theory as a weapon of revolutionary practice. The contents of the book prove irrefutably that under capitalist domination the masses are inevitably doomed to exploitation and poverty and that the tyranny of the landowners and the bourgeoisie can only be abolished through revolution, through socialism.

Lenin's political and economic substantiation of the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution dealt a blow at the opportunists all over the world, who asserted that the proletariat could not and should not fight for power and for socialism so long as it constituted a

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 31.

minority in the country. Lenin smashed these false allegations of the opportunists.

During his three years in exile Lenin wrote over thirty books and articles, in which he outlined the paths of revolutionary struggle of the working class, elaborated the programme and tactics of the Party, and fought against the Economists. Skilfully evading the tsarist censorship, he used the legal journals of the day for the propaganda of revolutionary Marxism.

The idea of publishing his articles in book form had occupied Lenin's thoughts since the beginning of 1898. He was able to realise his plan. His first book of collected articles appeared in St. Petersburg in October 1898, under the title of *Economic Studies and Essays*, signed "Vladimir Ilyin". It included "A Characterisation of Economic Romanticism", "Gems of Narodnik Project-Mongering", "The Heritage We Renounce" and other articles written in exile.

Against the revisionist critics of Marxism. Lenin gave his attention to every burning issue of the European and Russian Social-Democratic movement even while living in the Siberian backwoods. He followed with indignation the growth of opportunism in the West, and the opportunists' attempts to distort the revolutionary nature of Marxism. By their vulgar misinterpretation of Marxism, the opportunists depreciated the role of the Party in the working-class movement, extolled trade-unionism, reduced to naught the importance of political struggle, and also belittled the role of theory. In 1896-98 the German Social-Democrat Eduard Bernstein published a series of articles under the general title *Problems of Socialism*, later (in 1899) published in book form under the title *The Prerequisites of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democrats*, in which he frankly revised the basic tenets of Marxism and sought to substitute a liberal reformist doctrine for Marxism. Bernstein proclaimed the opportunist slogan "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing", thereby advocating rejection of revolutionary struggle by the working class, and renunciation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At that time, too, the French "socialist" Millerand showed by deed what revisionist and reformist deviations from Marxism lead to. He disgraced himself by joining the reactionary bourgeois government of which General Galliffet, the bloody butcher of the Paris Commune, was a member. Bernstein applauded Millerand's behaviour.

Bernstein's book and the statements of his fellow thinkers in the press angered Lenin. He stressed that "a regular war will have to be waged" against the revisionists. It was with great satisfaction that he read Plekhanov's *Essays on the History of Materialism* and his articles against Bernstein published in *Die Neue Zeit*, the journal of the German Social-Democrats. Lenin was strongly opposed to neo-Kantianism, which was reviving the most reactionary and idealistic postulates of Kant's philosophy. Under cover of pseudo-socialist phrases, the neo-Kantians were fighting against Marxism, against the doctrine of the proletarian

revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the victory of socialism. Neo-Kantian views were also upheld by the revisionist Bernstein, who, taking his cue from bourgeois professors, proclaimed "back to Kant".

On receiving Kautsky's book against Bernstein entitled *Bernstein and the Social-Democratic Programme. Anti-Criticism,* Lenin and Krupskaya translated it into Russian in the course of a fortnight. The manuscript of this translation circulated from hand to hand. It was read by exiled Social-Democrats both in the Minusinsk District and elsewhere.

At the close of August 1899 Maria Ulyanova sent a copy of Bernstein's book to her brother in exile. Lenin started reading it the moment he got it, and the next day he wrote to his mother that Krupskaya and he had read more than half the book "and its contents shock us more and more. It is incredibly lame theoretically; a repetition of other people's ideas. Phrases about criticism, and not even an attempt at serious and independent criticism. Practically speaking, it is opportunism (or rather Fabianism*: the original of the bulk of Bernstein's assertions and ideas can be found in the Webbs' recent books), crass opportunism and Possibilism,** and *craven* opportunism at that, since Bernstein does not attack the programme directly. There can hardly be any doubt about his fiasco. We deeply resented Bernstein's assertion that many Russians share his views."***

Lenin also sharply criticised the Russian distorters of Marxism, who, like Bernstein, attacked the revolutionary content of the theory of scientific socialism. He considered that the revolutionary Social-Democrats must wage a relentless struggle against the revision of Marxism and staunchly uphold the purity of revolutionary theory.

Lenin was concerned about a problem of paramount political importance at the time, namely, the path which the young Russian working-class movement would take. Either, inspired by socialist ideology, it would follow the path of bold, consistent revolutionary struggle against tsarism and capitalism for the dictatorship of the proletariat, or it would slide to the path of reformism, subservience to bourgeois ideology, and adaptation to tsarism and capitalism. Lenin concentrated all his energies on instilling a socialist consciousness into the working-class movement and directing its development into a revolutionary channel, the only one that was correct.

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* The *Fabian Society*, a reformist organisation founded in Britain in 1884, grouped mostly bourgeois intellectuals–scientists, writers, politicians (Sydney and Beatrice Webb, Ramsay MacDonald, G. B. Shaw and others). Its members denied the need for the class struggle of the proletariat and for the socialist revolution, and maintained that the transition from capitalism to socialism could be effected only through petty reforms and gradual changes in the organisation of society.

** The *Possibilists* constituted a petty-bourgeois, reformist trend in the French socialist movement. They proposed restricting the struggle of the workers to the "possible" (hence their name).

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 209.

Lenin detected in the earliest manifestations of Economism the Russian Bernsteinians' desire to divert the working class to the path of compromise with the bourgeoisie. Only Lenin's insight could so unerringly detect the bourgeois-reformist essence of Economism at a time when it was just beginning to take shape.

How profoundly right Lenin was, was proved by subsequent events and by the whole history of the struggle for socialism. The ideological enemies of Marxism and of the Russian revolutionary movement of the nineties sank ever deeper in the slough of opportunism and eventually landed in the camp of the Soviet Union's most rabid enemies. Thus, Kuskova, one of the leaders of the Economists, became a bitter enemy of the working class and the U.S.S.R., and the former "legal Marxist" Bulgakov became a White émigré priest in 1918.

While in exile in Shushenskoye Lenin received from Anna Ulyanova-Yelizarova in St. Petersburg a copy of the Economists' "Credo", a document written by Kuskova. He immediately subjected this programme of Russian Bernsteinism to a detailed criticism. He wrote a sharply denunciatory article, "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats", against the "Credo", and called upon the Russian Social-Democrats to declare war on the opportunist ideas of the Economists, who wanted to revise the fundamental tenets of Marxism and denied the necessity of founding a Marxist revolutionary proletarian party in Russia.

Lenin organised a conference of exiled Social-Democrats in the summer of 1899 to discuss the "Protest". It was held in the village of Yermakovskoye on the pretext of celebrating the birthday of the Lepeshinskys' daughter. Exiles gathered from all over the Minusinsk District: A. Vaneyev and D. Vaneyeva, M. Silvin, V. Kurnatovsky, P. Lepeshinsky and O. Lepeshinskaya, who lived in Yermakovskoye; V. Lenin, N. Krupskaya and O. Engberg, who arrived from Shushenskoye; V. Starkov and A. Starkova, G. Krzhizhanovsky and Z. Krzhizhanovskaya from Minusinsk; A. Shapovalov, N. Panin, F. Lengnik and Y. Baramzin from the village of Tesinskoye.

Lenin was elected to the chair. The conference was unanimous in its disapproval of Economism. The seventeen exiled Social-Democrats discussed Lenin's "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats" and unanimously adopted and signed it. After the "Protest" was discussed and adopted Lenin considered it a collective document and it became known as "A Protest by Seventeen Exiled Social-Democrats". The "Protest" stated that the programme of the Economists boiled down to the idea that the working class of Russia should confine itself to the economic struggle while the "liberal opposition elements" fight, with the "participation" of the Marxists, for "legal forms". Lenin wrote indignantly that "the application of such a programme would be tantamount to the political suicide of Russian Social-Democracy".*

The "Protest" emphatically opposed the views of the Economists and

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 178.

warned all Marxists against the danger of the Russian Social-Democracy being diverted from the path it had already mapped out for itself, namely, the formation of an independent political workers' party inseparable from the class struggle of the proletariat and having as its immediate aim the winning of political liberty.

Stating that only the theory of revolutionary Marxism could be the banner of the workers, the "Protest" defined the aims of the Russian Social-Democrats. It stressed the tremendous importance of a proletarian party in the struggle for the emancipation of the working people. "Only an independent working-class party can serve as a strong bulwark in the fight against the autocracy, and only in alliance with such a party, only by supporting it, can all the other fighters for political liberty play an effective part."*

Thus Lenin gave decisive battle to the manifestations of Bernsteinism on Russian soil and dealt a blow at West European opportunism, which had begun to corrode the Social-Democratic parties in Germany, France and other countries.

The conference decided to send the "Protest" to the various colonies of political exiles in order to collect as many signatures to it as possible, and then send it abroad to Plekhanov for publication. Lenin took this job upon himself. Shortly afterwards the colonies of exiles in Turukhansk and Orlov, Vyatka Gubernia (V. Vorovsky, N. Bauman and others), signed the "Protest". Lenin sent it to the Emancipation of Labour group, who had it published in Plekhanov's "*Vademecum* for the Editors of *Rabocheye Dyelo*", a collection of articles against the Economists. The "Protest" played an outstanding part in the struggle against the Economists. It contributed to the development of Marxist thinking and to the organisation of a revolutionary party of the working class in Russia.

The plan for a Marxist party. The idea of creating a single Marxist party in Russia occupied a central place in all of Lenin's writings at that period. He resumed his work on a draft programme for the party which he had begun in prison in St. Petersburg. His draft analysed the development of capitalism in Russia and defined the principal aims and tasks of the class struggle of the proletariat. Lenin specified the ultimate goal of the proletariat, which was to win political power, abolish private ownership of the means of production and establish a socialist society. The draft included practical demands of the Social-Democrats: demands affecting the whole country, demands of the working class and those of the peasants. It laid down the principles of the Russian Marxists' agrarian programme, and formulated the immediate aim of the proletarian class struggle–the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy.

In 1897 Lenin wrote an article entitled "The Heritage We Renounce", which defined the attitude of the proletarian party to the revolutionary traditions of its country. Lenin forcefully refuted the falsehood spread

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 181.

by the liberal Narodnik press to the effect that the Marxists "abjure the 'heritage', break with the best traditions of the best section of Russian society, and so forth". He compared the views of the Russian enlighteners of the sixties, the Narodniks and the Social-Democrats and showed that the Marxists "*are much more consistent and faithful guardians of the heritage than the Narodniks*".* Unlike the Narodniks, whose ideology led naturally to historical pessimism and frustration, the revolutionary enlightener democrats were characterised by historical optimism and faith in their country's bright future. The revolutionary enlightener democrats were emphatically opposed to all manifestations of serfdom in Russian social life. They ardently believed in the country's progressive development and staunchly championed the interests of the working people. All this was fully adopted by the Russian Marxists.

Lenin considered the Marxist party to be the legitimate heir to all the progressive gains and revolutionary democratic traditions of the peoples of Russia. But it goes without saying, Lenin pointed out, that the Russian Marxists did not want to guard the heritage in the way an archivist guards an old document. To guard the heritage did not mean confining oneself to the heritage received; it was necessary to go further, to independently determine, on the basis of Marxism, the ways and means for the revolutionary struggle of the working classes for their emancipation.

While in exile Lenin gave much thought to the plan of founding a Marxist party. He expounded it in his articles "Our Programme", "Our Immediate Task" and "An Urgent Question" written for *Rabochaya Gazeta*. The paper was recognised by the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. as the official organ of the Party, but the police closed it shortly after. In 1899, an attempt was made to resume publication. In the autumn of 1899, Lenin accepted an offer to contribute to this newspaper and to be its editor. But the attempt to resume publication of the paper failed and Lenin's articles remained unpublished. They first saw light of day in 1925.

Exposing Bernstein and his followers who advocated the theory of concessions to the proletariat's bitter enemies, to the governments and parties of the bourgeoisie, Lenin pointed out in his article "Our Programme" that only the theory of Marx mapped out the right path and task of the revolutionary socialist party, namely, the organisation of the class struggle of the proletariat and the leadership of that struggle the ultimate aim of which was the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the building up of socialist society.

Lenin became the organiser of a revolutionary Marxist party, in founding which a new path different from any other had to be followed. He was the first Marxist to use a new approach to the question of the working-class party which was to be a party of a *new type*. The parties of the old type–the Socialist parties of Western Europe–had formed and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 526.

developed in the conditions of legality and parliamentary struggle. They were gradually losing their revolutionary character, refusing to train the working class for revolutionary battles to overthrow bourgeois rule and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. They were sliding to opportunism, to the path of compromise with the bourgeoisie. Nor did the type of organisation created by the Russian revolutionary Narodniks of the seventies accord with Lenin's principles of building up a proletarian party. The Narodniks were isolated from the people. They proceeded from an erroneous theory and resorted to terroristic conspiracies as a method of struggle. Thereby they did great harm to the revolutionary movement. Neither of the two types of organisation could serve as a model for the revolutionary working-class party that was in the making in Russia.

In his article "Our Immediate Task", Lenin wrote:

"The history of socialism and democracy in Western Europe, the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, the experience of our working-class movement–such is the *material* we must master to elaborate a purposeful organisation and purposeful tactics for our Party. 'The analysis' of this material must, however, be done independently, since there are no ready-made models to be found anywhere."*

Lenin regarded the inadequate organisation of the Russian Social-Democratic movement as an urgent issue, a "sore point". His article "An Urgent Question" stressed the imperative need to improve revolutionary organisation and discipline and to perfect secrecy techniques. "...All the sound and developing sections of our society," he wrote, "are in favour of democracy and socialism; but, in order to conduct a systematic struggle against the government, we must raise revolutionary organisation, discipline, and the technique of underground work to the highest degree of perfection."** It was indispensable to link together the numerous Marxist study-circles and organisations scattered all over the country, get rid of primitive methods and found a Marxist party that would be the political leader and guide of the working class.

But to achieve that, Lenin wrote, "we must have as our immediate aim *the founding of a party organ that will appear regularly and be closely connected with all the local groups.*"*** Without such a press organ no broad organisation of the working-class movement would be possible, since only a common party organ consistently applying the principles of political struggle and holding high the banner of democracy could win over to its side all the militant democratic elements and use all the progressive forces of Russia in the struggle for political liberty. Lenin believed that only an all-Russian illegal political newspaper could, under the existing conditions, serve as an important means of rallying the Social-Democrats ideologically and organisationally. Owing to police persecution, it was impossible to publish such a paper in Russia, and Lenin therefore decided to have it published abroad.

Lenin's thoughts were occupied with the problem of putting into effect his well-thought-out plan for creating a revolutionary proletarian party. "I shall never forget one of my last walks with Lenin on the banks of the broad Yenisei," wrote Krzhizhanovsky. "It was a frosty moonlit night, and the Siberian snows spread before us in an endless glittering waste. Lenin spoke with enthusiasm about his plans when he returned to Russia."*

Lenin looked forward eagerly to the day when his term of exile would be over, fearing that the tsarist authorities, as often happened, might prolong his term. He became nervous and slept poorly. He longed to be doing active work. "He sat up all night, working out his plan in fullest detail," wrote Krupskaya. "He discussed it with Krzhizhanovsky and with me, he corresponded with Martov and Potresov about it, and made arrangements with them for going abroad. He grew more and more impatient as time went on, eager to throw himself into the work."**

Luckily, Lenin's apprehensions proved groundless–his term was not prolonged. Early in January 1900, the Police Department sent Lenin a notice to the effect that the Minister of the Interior had forbidden him to reside in the capital and university cities and large industrial centres after the completion of his term of exile. Lenin chose Pskov as his place of domicile to be nearer to St. Petersburg.

At last came the long-awaited day. Lenin and his family left Shushenskoye on the morning of January 29, 1900. Friends–peasants and exiles–pressed round the sledge fitted out for the long journey. Many of them had tears in their eyes. On parting, O. Engberg presented N. Krupskaya, his teacher, with a brooch he had made himself, in the shape of a book inscribed *Karl Marx*. Little Minka, the son of an exiled Lett and a favourite of Lenin's, bustled about among the adults. He was busy carrying to his home the "treasures" he had been left–books, colour pencils, paper, pictures...

The parting with Shushenskoye was warm and moving. The peasants had become truly attached to Lenin during his exile in the village. They saw the family off with good wishes and words of gratitude.

Lenin and his family arrived in Minusinsk late in the evening, where they spent the night, leaving again the next morning. In Minusinsk the Ulyanovs were joined by V. Starkov and Olga Silvina. They rode 300 versts by sledge, travelling day and night despite the severe frost. At Achinsk they boarded a train.

Lenin's exile in Siberia was at an end. His life and work entered a new period.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 217.
** *Ibid.*, p. 222.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 218.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 158.
** N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 45.



Chapter Four

FOR A MARXIST PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

> As a trend of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism has existed since 1903.
>
> *LENIN*

Free at last, Lenin rejoiced that he could now devote himself wholly to his cherished aim. Only one thing shadowed the joy of complete freedom for revolutionary activity: the necessity of separation from his wife, who had still a year to spend in exile in Ufa Gubernia. How would she live this year, in what conditions? On the way back from Siberia Lenin stopped off in Ufa with his wife and mother-in-law and helped them to get settled.

Before leaving for abroad, Lenin had much to do in Russia. Connections with the Social-Democratic organisations in different cities had to be established, and their support assured; and funds had to be procured for the printing of the paper. With the energy and insistence that always characterised him, Lenin set at once to work to carry out the plan he had so thoroughly elaborated.

Preparations for founding an all-Russian newspaper. On his first day in Ufa Lenin met with A. Tsyurupa, V. Krokhmal and A. Svidersky, Social-Democrats living in exile in that city, and acquainted them with his plan for setting up a revolutionary newspaper. Opening up broad

possibilities for the activities of the Russian Marxists, this plan brought new inspiration to the Ufa Social-Democrats. They later declared that with Lenin's coming it was as though a window had been thrown open in a stuffy room, letting in a gust of fresh, bracing, sunlit air.

Lenin spent only two days in Ufa. His work called him on. "It was a pity we had to part just when the 'real' work was starting," Krupskaya afterwards recalled, "but it did not even enter our heads that Vladimir Ilyich could remain in Ufa when he had a chance to move nearer to St. Petersburg."*

First place, as always, went not to personal desires or convenience, but to the revolutionary work to which Lenin and Krupskaya devoted their whole lives.

Disregarding the police ban, Lenin went to Moscow to visit his family. He had talks there with several Moscow comrades, and also with a representative of the Yekaterinoslav Committee, I. Lalayants. After a brief stay in Moscow he made a secret visit to St. Petersburg, where he met Vera Zasulich, just arrived from abroad, and proposed to her that the Emancipation of Labour group participate in the publication abroad of an all-Russian Marxist newspaper, *Iskra* (*The Spark*), and of a theoretical and political magazine to be called *Zarya* (*The Dawn*).

Lenin arrived in Pskov only at the end of February 1900. Secret police surveillance was immediately established over all his movements. As a means of livelihood, and to screen his revolutionary activities, Lenin took work to do for the gubernia statistical office. He associated with the local statisticians, and frequented the city library. Meetings with the local Social-Democrats also began; and from Pskov, Lenin carried on far-reaching activities, establishing contact with Social-Democratic groups and individual Social-Democrats in different cities and arranging for their co-operation with the newspaper. He drafted an editorial board declaration of *Iskra* and *Zarya* on the programme and tasks of the newspaper and magazine, in which he emphasised that the time had come for the Russian Social-Democrats "to come out on the road of open advocacy of socialism, on the road of open political struggle. The establishment of an all-Russian organ of Social-Democracy must be *the first step on this road*".**

Early in April Lenin made a trip to Riga to establish contact with the Lettish Social-Democrats. He was helped in this by M. Silvin, who was living in Riga at the time. The Lettish comrades, Silvin recalls, were deeply impressed by Lenin and carried away by the plan he presented to them.

On his return to Pskov, Lenin took an active part in meetings of the local revolutionary and radical intellectuals. Some of the Social-Democrats, among them A. Stopani, I. Radchenko and N. Lokhov, undertook to set up an *Iskra* assistance group in Pskov.

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* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 48.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 330.

Lenin applied to the authorities for permission to travel abroad. Permission was granted, and early in May he was issued a passport; but at the same time the St. Petersburg secret police instructed the Pskov police "to intensify surveillance over Ulyanov, resident in Pskov".

His passport received, Lenin was not at once able to make use of it, for he had still a number of organisational matters to settle in Russia.

To arrange with the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats for methods of communication after his departure for abroad, Lenin in May made a second illegal trip to St. Petersburg. This time, however, the police tracked him out, and he was arrested for visiting the capital without leave. The arrest took place in the street, and, as Lenin later recalled, he was "pinioned by both elbows so that he could not throw anything out of his pockets. And in the cab two detectives held him by both elbows all the way".* Thus, he was unable to destroy or get rid of his list of contacts abroad, written in invisible ink on a sheet of paper, outwardly an ordinary bill. In prison, Lenin worried constantly over that bill. Were its true nature discovered, there would be no going abroad for him, no carrying out of his plan for an all-Russian newspaper. Only just free, after three years of exile; only just getting down to work—and, the work hardly begun, back in prison again!

But the gendarmes noticed nothing suspicious about the bill. After ten days' detention, Lenin was released for lack of evidence. A secret police official escorted him to Podolsk, in Moscow Gubernia, where his mother was then living. Permission for a visit here had been received before his arrest. The official turned Lenin over to the police officer of Podolsk Uyezd. Learning that Lenin was in possession of a passport for travel abroad, this officer arbitrarily decided to confiscate it. Lenin declared that he would complain to the Police Department. And the threat worked (at which, later, Lenin had a hearty laugh). The officer got cold feet and respectfully returned the passport.

The week Lenin spent in Podolsk was a busy time of meetings with comrades. Social-Democrats from many districts came to Podolsk to see him, among them P. Lepeshinsky and Sophia and Sergei Shesternin. Lenin arranged with each of them about the details of code, and got their agreement to write for the newspaper and to support it.

In June, accompanied by his mother and his elder sister, Lenin visited Nadezhda Krupskaya. On the way to Ufa he stopped off at Nizhny Novgorod, where he arranged a conference of Social-Democrats to discuss their participation in the publication of the newspaper. From Nizhny Novgorod the trip continued by steamboat along the Volga, Kama and Belaya rivers. Lenin spent long hours on deck, in the happiest of moods, breathing deep of the pure air that floated down from the woods along the river banks.

In Ufa, where he spent over two weeks, Lenin arranged with the local Social-Democrats for their collaboration with the newspaper. On

* *Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives*, Moscow, 1956, p. 86.

his return trip he visited Samara and enlisted the support of the Samara Social-Democrats for the all-Russian organ. He also went to Syzran, on the same errand.

To discuss the plan for the organisation of the paper with Ivan Babushkin, Lenin went to Smolensk, where Babushkin was then staying. Later, Lenin was to note that Babushkin had fervently approved the idea of a political newspaper, published abroad, which would help to unite and consolidate the Social-Democratic Party.

The support of the Social-Democrats secured, and a reliable base for the newspaper within Russia thus provided, Lenin in July 1900 left for abroad.

"How the 'Spark' Was Nearly Extinguished". Lenin went to Switzerland, where the members of the Emancipation of Labour group had settled. After a visit to P. Axelrod, in Zurich, he went on to Geneva to discuss the publication of newspaper and magazine with G. Plekhanov. Plekhanov, like the other members of his group, approved the idea of such Marxist periodicals. But he considered himself entitled to a privileged position on the editorial board, and his arrogance was such as to exclude the possibility of normal collective work. Lenin, who stood always for collective effort, could not accept this stand. The programme of the newspaper and magazine and the problems of publication and of joint editorial work were discussed at conferences held in Belrive and Corsier (near Geneva). The disagreement with Plekhanov came out with particular force during the conference at Corsier, attended by Lenin, Plekhanov, Zasulich, Axelrod and Potresov. The discussion here was very heated, and relations were strained almost to the breaking point.

Obviously, collective work under such conditions would be impossible. The plan for an all-Russian newspaper was in danger of collapse. Lenin took this very keenly to heart. "It was a real drama; the complete abandonment of the thing which for years we had tended like a favourite child, and with which we had inseparably linked the whole of our life's work,"* he wrote in a detailed record of his meetings and talks with Plekhanov on the publication of *Iskra* which he kept for his wife, and which he entitled, "How the *Spark* Was Nearly Extinguished" —a dramatic and profoundly moving document, bearing vivid witness to the pain it caused Lenin that Plekhanov, whom he so sincerely admired and liked, should behave in this pettish, supercilious manner.

The negotiations with the Emancipation of Labour group finally ended in agreement that until some system of formal relationships could be worked out Lenin, Plekhanov, Zasulich, Axelrod, Martov and Potresov would be co-editors, Plekhanov having two votes. It was decided that *Iskra* be put out in Germany, though Plekhanov and Axelrod, who wanted the newspaper to be under their direct management, and all contacts with Russia to be handled by them, had insisted

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 341.

on Switzerland. Lenin considered it essential that the newspaper be kept at a distance from the emigrant centre, and thoroughly secretised. That was of tremendous importance for security of communication with Russia.

Agreement reached, Lenin went to Munich, where the main editorial work was to be centred. Here, for purposes of secrecy, he lived for some time without a passport, under the name of Meyer. Later, Bulgarian Social-Democrats supplied him with a passport made out to a Bulgarian named Jordanov. For secrecy, again, he carried on his correspondence with Russia through the Czech Social-Democrat F. Modráček, who lived in Prague.

Lenin's life in Munich, at the beginning, was very unsettled. The room he rented was inconvenient, and meals were a problem. Morning and evening he would make shift with tea, which he drank from a tin cup. This continued until Nadezhda Krupskaya arrived, in April 1901. To arrange for her coming Lenin had to go to Prague, and then to Vienna, in search of a Russian consulate which could certify his signature on his application for a passport for his wife. In Prague Lenin had talks with Czech Social-Democrats. "I regret that I never studied the Czech language," he wrote to his mother. "It's interesting. Very close to the Polish. Many ancient Russian words." In Vienna–"a huge, lively, beautiful city"–he visited the Museum of Fine Arts.*

After Krupskaya's arrival Lenin's life in Munich became easier. By advertisement they found a room in a worker's home. Here Krupskaya had the use of the kitchen, but only for the actual cooking of meals. All the preparatory work had to be done in the room in which they lived–and it had to be done as quietly as possible, in order not to disturb Lenin in his work. After a month of this they moved to a little flat in the Schwabing suburb. They bought some second-hand furnishings, which they resold when leaving Munich for twelve marks (about six rubles in the Russian currency of that period).

While living in Munich Lenin and Krupskaya strictly observed the rules of secrecy, meeting almost no one but the members of the editorial staff. Only once did Lenin break these rules. When Rosa Luxemburg arrived in Munich, he went to see her.

"The spark will kindle a flame." Lenin's thoughts were concentrated wholly upon the newspaper. Its organisation was a very difficult matter. Printing premises had to be found, and Russian type–unobtainable through ordinary, legitimate channels–had to be procured. Clara Zetkin, an outstanding leader of the German and the international working-class movement and one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany, was of great assistance in the organisation of the paper, as were also the German Social-Democrat Adolf Braun (stopping off at Nuremburg on his way to Munich, Lenin had met Braun and arranged with him for organisational and technical assistance in the publication

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, pp. 247, 248.

of *Iskra*), the Polish revolutionary Julian Marchlewski, who was living in Munich at that period, and a group of printing trades workers who procured the needed type.

In October 1900 a *Declaration of the Editorial Board of "Iskra"*, written by Lenin, came out in leaflet form. Noting the urgent necessity for building a revolutionary party that would be inseparably bound up with the working-class movement, the *Declaration* at the same time pointed out that this could be achieved only in resolute struggle against amateurishness, against ideological confusion, against every manifestation of opportunism; that before uniting, and in order to unite, it was necessary first of all to draw firm and definite lines of demarcation. The *Declaration* emphasised the great role of the working class in Russia, and of the party of that class. Only if organised in a revolutionary party, it explained, could the proletariat carry out its immediate historical task–that of uniting all the democratic elements in the country under its banner, and overthrowing the autocracy.

Through the latter half of November Lenin was occupied with the preparation and publication of the first issue of the magazine *Zarya*. In the latter half of December he went to Leipzig to complete the final editing of the first issue of *Iskra* (the first issue was printed in Leipzig, the following issues in Munich). This first issue, dated December 1900, had been made up by December 11 (24), but its printing was somewhat delayed, and it did not come out until January 1901. As its motto, the newspaper carried a line from the Decembrists' reply to Pushkin: "The spark will kindle a flame."*

Both in organisational matters and in matters of ideology, it was Lenin who headed *Iskra*. He entered, literally, into every question concerning the content of the paper or its publication. He indicated topics, found contributors, edited articles, kept in touch with the paper's correspondents, procured funds, arranged for ways and means of having the paper smuggled into Russia, and saw to it that *Iskra* came out regularly. Krupskaya, acting as secretary of the editorial board, was of tremendous assistance to Lenin in this work.

In 1900-03 the world was hit by economic crisis. In every issue, *Iskra* carried materials on the crisis and its grievous consequences for the people. Lenin had predicted as early as 1897, in the writings of his period of exile, that the production boom must inevitably be followed by crisis. Crises, he had pointed out, are a fearful chronic disease of every capitalist society. "Capitalist production," he now wrote in *Iskra*, "cannot develop otherwise than by leaps and bounds–two steps forward and one step (and sometimes two) back"**; and this will continue inevitably, until the working class overthrows capital and destroys private property in the means of production.

* In 1827 Pushkin sent a message in verse to the Decembrists who had been sentenced to penal servitude. The words, "The spark will kindle a flame", are taken from the reply to Pushkin written by the poet Decembrist Odoyevsky.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 90.

In Russia the economic crisis led to industrial stagnation and mass unemployment in the cities. The situation was aggravated by famine in the countryside, the result of a serious crop failure. Unemployment, famine, and the intensifying severities of police rule fanned the flame of the people's hatred for the autocracy, and aroused them to political struggle.

Iskra came into being at a time when the revolutionary movement in Russia was gathering momentum, when huge demonstrations were taking place in the streets of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkov, Kiev and other cities of Russia, carrying the slogan, "Down with the autocracy!"

Throughout the land, the breath of revolutionary storm was rising. This brought forward with particular force and urgency the need for a party that would act as political leader of the working class, that would take the leadership in the approaching revolution. *Iskra* fought for the organisation of such a party; and this gained it tremendous popularity among the workers. The building of the revolutionary Marxist party in Russia began in a period when capitalism had entered on its highest, final phase–imperialism; a period when proletarian revolution was becoming a matter of immediate perspective. In Russia, at this time, revolution was maturing–a revolution headed by the working class.

Lenin sensed clearly as none other the approach of revolution. At the turn of the century he worked to create a proletarian party–a party of a new type, one that would be capable of heading the revolutionary upsurge of the toiling masses; a party that would stand staunch and determined against any and every attempt to turn the working class from the revolutionary path to the path of compromise and reformism. Lenin worked to build a party that would be capable of leading the working class to the overthrow of tsarism, to the defeat of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In an editorial entitled, "The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement", in the first issue of *Iskra*, Lenin singled out as the cardinal task the creation of a strong, well-organised Marxist party, inseparably linked with the working-class movement; for without such a party "the working class will never be able to fulfil its great historical mission–to emancipate itself and the whole of the Russian people from political and economic slavery".*

No. 4 of *Iskra* (May 1901) carried an editorial entitled "Where To Begin", in which Lenin discussed questions of the most vital importance, at that period, to the Social-Democratic movement in Russia: that of the character and the content of political agitation, and that of organisational tasks. The article outlined a concrete plan for the building of a Marxist party, and discussed in every aspect the role of an all-Russian political newspaper in the accomplishment of this plan. "A

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 370.

newspaper," Lenin wrote, "is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser."* This thesis became a guiding principle not only for *Iskra*, but for all future revolutionary Marxist organs.

"Where To Begin" was extensively circulated in Russia. After its appearance in *Iskra* it was republished in pamphlet form by various local Social-Democratic organisations. The Siberian Social-Democratic League reprinted it in five thousand copies. Another reprint was made in Rzhev. The article was widely read in Saratov, Tambov, Nizhny Novgorod, Ufa and other cities. It was particularly appreciated by working-class readers.

"I have shown *Iskra* to many comrades. It's almost in shreds, yet it is precious," a weaver wrote in a letter to the paper. "It tells all about our cause, all about our Russian cause, which you can't price in kopeks or count in hours. When you read it, you understand why the gendarmes and the police are afraid of us workers and of the intellectuals whose lead we follow. Yes, they are truly terrifying to the tsar, and the bosses, and all, and not only the bosses' pockets. Of course, I am only a plain worker, and not much educated, but I feel very well where the truth lies. I know what the workers need. The working folk today can catch fire very easily. Underneath, everything is smouldering already. It needs only a spark, and the fire will break out. How true, those words, that the spark will kindle a flame! . . . Every strike used to be an event. But now everyone can see that one strike is nothing. Now we must fight for freedom, we must fight for it might and main. Everyone would read now, old and young, but there's our trouble–we can't get the books. Last Sunday I got eleven friends together and read them 'Where To Begin', and we sat over it till nightfall. How true it all is, and how it gets down to everything!"**

Babushkin wrote from Orekhovo-Zuyevo: "*Iskra* is eagerly read here, and all the copies received are in circulation. Thanks to the paper, we note a great rise of enthusiasm among the workers. There is particularly much talk of the article on the peasant question in No. 3,*** so that there is a demand for more copies of that issue."****

Lenin's *Iskra* was the first all-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper, a militant revolutionary publication that became a decisive factor in the creation of a Marxist party of the working class. Lenin particularly emphasised the importance of *Iskra* as the chief instrument by which all the Social-Democratic committees could be united both ideologically and organisationally, and by which the party cadres and the advanced workers could be trained in the spirit of scientific socialism and of irreconcilable struggle against all manifestations of revisionism.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 22.
** *Iskra* No. 7, August 1901.
*** The reference is to Lenin's article, "The Workers' Party and the Peasantry" (1901).
**** *Iskra* No. 9, October 1901.

Iskra taught the advanced, class-conscious workers of Russia how to fight their enemies. There were articles by Lenin in almost every issue, over forty articles in all—classic examples of revolutionary Marxist journalism, dealing with all the basic problems of party building and of the class struggle of the proletariat, and also with important developments in international affairs. Relentlessly, with militant party spirit, Lenin laid bare the reactionary policy of tsarism, attacked the bourgeois liberals, exposed Zubatovism,* unmasked the Bundist** nationalists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and sharply criticised the opportunism of the Economists. Lenin's articles gave the working class of Russia new faith in its own strength and in the inevitable overthrow first of tsarism, and then of capitalism.

In building the party, Lenin and his comrades had to contend with the narrow outlook and amateurish methods of work of the local Social-Democratic organisations; with confusion and vacillation among a section of the Social-Democrats; with the lordly contempt which certain of them displayed towards the idea of a strictly disciplined party with a clearly-defined organisational structure; with the opportunism of the Economists.

Lenin founded the party of the working class in struggle against numerous foes, overcoming tremendous difficulties. The Russian revolutionaries had to build the party under the fire of savage persecution. They were constantly in danger of prison, penal servitude, or exile. Many paid with their lives for their revolutionary activities.

"We are marching," Lenin wrote, "in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire."***

The tsarist authorities made every effort to do away with Lenin. Colonel Zubatov, chief of the Moscow secret police, wrote in a secret letter to the head of the Police Department in December 1900 that "there is nobody bigger than Ulyanov in the revolution today". He recommended Lenin's immediate assassination.

It was at the end of 1901 that Vladimir Ilyich began to use the pseudonym "Lenin" in some of his writings. People often ask what lay behind this choice of name. Pure chance, most probably, Lenin's associates used to reply: but there was one circumstance that may possibly have influenced his choice. Plekhanov, with whom he worked on *Iskra*, used the pen-name "Volgin", after the great Russian river Volga; and Lenin, after his years of exile in Siberia, may have chosen

* *Zubatovism*, or the policy of "police socialism", applied in the period 1901-03 at the suggestion of Colonel of the Gendarmes S. Zubatov, chief of the Moscow secret police, consisted in the setting up of legal workers' organisations to divert the workers from political struggle against the autocracy.

** The *Bund*, or General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia, was organised in 1897. Its membership was made up chiefly of Jewish artisans in the Western regions of Russia.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 355.

his own pen-name after one of the great Siberian rivers—the Lena. The first work to appear over this signature was the beginning of the article, "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (Chapters I to IV) in *Zarya* for December 1901. In this article Lenin levelled annihilating criticism at the German and Russian bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologists who were attempting to revise Marxism on the agrarian question.

Lenin's *Iskra* built up a strong organisational backbone for the Party. In the beginning of 1901, at Lenin's initiative and under his guidance, *Iskra* assistance groups were organised in Russia, and *Iskra* agents set energetically to work. These agents distributed *Iskra*, which was delivered to them from abroad; arranged for the reprinting of *Iskra* articles at illegal printshops within Russia; sent in articles, reports and funds, and kept the paper informed on all developments in Party life and in the revolutionary movement within the country. Lenin's *Iskra* rallied and united leading cadres for the Party—professional revolutionaries, daring and devoted fighters for the cause of the working class. Lenin attached tremendous importance to their training and development, and to the part that *Iskra* played in this training. G. Krzhizhanovsky has written of *Iskra*, in this connection:

"In Russia it became a banner, rallying forces which were destined to demonstrate on a scale unexampled in history the all-conquering might of Lenin's tactics, of Lenin's 'Marxism in action'."*

Staunchly, courageously, undaunted by constant police persecution, by the threat of prison or exile, the *Iskra* agents carried on their work in different parts of Russia. Their ranks included such revolutionaries as N. Bauman, I. Dubrovinsky, R. Zemlyachka, V. Ketskhoveli, P. Krasikov, Z. and G. Krzhizhanovsky, L. Knipovich, F. Lengnik, O. and P. Lepeshinsky, G. Okulova, I. Radchenko, M. Silvin, Y. Stasova, M. Ulyanova, A. Tsyurupa. Ivan Babushkin was mentioned by Lenin as one of the most active of the *Iskra* agents.

"While Ivan Vasilyevich was at liberty," Lenin later wrote, "*Iskra* never went short of genuine workers' correspondence. Look through the first twenty issues of *Iskra*, all these letters from Shuya, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Orekhovo-Zuyevo and other places in Central Russia: they nearly all passed through the hands of Ivan Vasilyevich, who made every effort to establish the closest contact between *Iskra* and the workers. Ivan Vasilyevich was *Iskra*'s most assiduous correspondent and its ardent supporter."**

Lenin corresponded regularly with the *Iskra* agents and groups in Russia. In accordance with the plan he had worked out, a Russian *Iskra* organisation was set up, with the *Iskra* agents as its core.

Lenin guided the work of the *Iskra* organisation in Russia, helping it to overcome parochial tendencies and to further unity among the

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 159.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 362.

Party organisations on the principles of revolutionary Marxism. The organisation functioned up to the Second Party Congress, and played an important part in the preparations for the Congress and its convocation.

Under Lenin's guidance, L. Goldman organised a secret *Iskra* printshop in Kishinev. This shop reprinted *Iskra* articles, and whole issues of the paper, from matrices received from abroad. The reprinting of certain issues of *Iskra* was organised in Yekaterinoslav and in Baku as well. The underground printshop in Baku was known in coded correspondence as "Nina".

Iskra was sent into Russia by various routes—via London, Stockholm, Geneva, Alexandria (Egypt), and also via Marseilles, where P. Smidovich settled specially for this purpose, smuggling the paper out with the assistance of sailors on ships bound for Batum. In 1902, the *Iskra* dispatching service in Zurich was headed by M. Litvinov. *Iskra* was smuggled across the border hidden in double-bottomed suitcases, in the bindings of books, and by various other methods. For convenience of transportation, it was printed on thin, but strong paper.

Differences on the editorial board. The atmosphere on the *Iskra* editorial board was very strained. Lenin had to wage a continuous fight against opportunist vacillations, and grave differences arose on many cardinal questions. Particularly heated was the discussion of the article, "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", in which Lenin sharply criticised the pseudo-revolutionism of the Russian liberals, their policy of "grandiloquence and shameful flabbiness". The debate dragged on for almost six weeks, Plekhanov, Axelrod and Vera Zasulich took issue with the political trenchancy of Lenin's appraisal of the liberals; but Lenin firmly refused to alter the general tone of his article, to depart from principle in his approach to the question. Thus once more Lenin's and Plekhanov's views on the liberal bourgeoisie and its ideologists radically diverged.

The differences on the editorial board came out still more sharply in the process of working out the Party Programme. At Lenin's proposal, the board had commissioned Plekhanov to draw up the first draft of the theoretical section of the programme, while Lenin wrote the agrarian section and the conclusion of the draft. In January 1902, Lenin presented critical remarks on Plekhanov's draft. He strongly criticised, also, the second draft that Plekhanov submitted. The ideas presented, Lenin pointed out, were formulated far too abstractly, particularly in the parts dealing with Russian capitalism. Further, the second draft omitted "reference to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*"; it failed to stress the leading role of the working class as the only truly revolutionary class; it spoke, not of the class struggle of the proletariat, but of the common struggle of all the toiling and exploited; it did not sufficiently bring out the proletarian nature of the Party. Lenin wrote a draft of his own (what is known as the "Frey draft").

Krupskaya, in her reminiscences, has vividly described the atmosphere in which Lenin had to carry on his work on the editorial board, and to champion his stand. Here is her description of one of the meetings of the editorial board:

"Plekhanov attacked parts of the draft programme which Lenin had drawn up. Vera Zasulich did not agree with Lenin on all points, but neither did she agree entirely with Plekhanov. Axelrod also agreed with Lenin on some points. The meeting was a painful one. Vera Zasulich wanted to argue with Plekhanov, but he looked so forbidding, staring at her with his arms folded on his chest, that she was thrown off her balance. The discussion had reached the voting stage. Before the voting took place, Axelrod, who agreed with Lenin on this point, said he had a headache and wanted to go for a walk.

"Vladimir Ilyich was terribly upset. To work like that was impossible. The discussion was so unbusinesslike."*

To draw up a single draft programme for the R.S.D.L.P. on the basis of the drafts submitted by Lenin and Plekhanov, the *Iskra* editorial board set up a "co-ordinating" committee. This committee presented a final draft, which was approved at a conference of the editorial board held in Zurich, in Lenin's absence. Lenin submitted remarks on the committee's draft, and also additions to it. Materials that have now been made public bear witness to the tremendous amount of work Lenin devoted to the preparation of the programme.

Besides such documents as Lenin's draft programme and his remarks on Plekhanov's first and second drafts and on the draft submitted by the co-ordinating committee, time has preserved materials accumulated in the preparation of the programme, materials reflecting the high points in the work of the *Iskra* editorial board on the draft programme of the R.S.D.L.P.

The tension was such, and Lenin was compelled to battle so persistently in defence of Marxist principle, that he himself confessed: "My nerves are worn thin, and I feel absolutely ill."

Lenin attached great importance to the party's agrarian programme. He was the first of the Marxists to work out for the proletariat a scientifically grounded policy towards the peasantry in the new historical conditions. He had set forth the *Iskra* position on this question in his article "The Workers' Party and the Peasantry", actually a rough outline for the agrarian programme of the proletarian party. And in February and early March of 1902 he wrote the article, "The Agrarian Programme of Russian Social-Democracy", in which he commented on the agrarian section of the draft programme of the R.S.D.L.P. In these articles Lenin formulated the basic demands of the Social-Democratic Labour Party in the agrarian field, going thoroughly into the class content of each demand and its fitness in the current historical period. As the central point of the agrarian programme, he pointed to the

* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 67.

demand for the return of the cut-off lands.* "When the revolutionary moment comes", however, he pointed out, this demand should be replaced by the demand for nationalisation of the land.

"Our principal immediate aim," he wrote, "is to clear the way for the free development of the class struggle in the countryside, the class struggle of the proletariat, which is directed towards attainment of the ultimate aim of the international Social-Democratic movement, the conquest of political power by the proletariat, and the laying of the foundations of a socialist society."**

When Lenin's article "The Agrarian Programme of Russian Social-Democracy" came up for discussion, debate once more flared up on the *Iskra* editorial board. Plekhanov, and with him some of the other members of the board, objected to basic propositions set forth in the article, and demanded that its attacks on the enemies of Marxism be toned down. After protracted argument the editorial board deleted all passages dealing with nationalisation of the land.

Repeated discussion finally brought the draft programme of the R.S.D.L.P. to completion, and it was published in *Iskra* No. 21, June 1902. Thanks to Lenin's determined stand the draft included a clear-cut statement of the leading role of the working class in the revolution, and also that cardinal point–the dictatorship of the proletariat. In these points, above all others, lay the fundamental difference between the consistently revolutionary programme of the working-class party in Russia and the programmes of the parties of the Second International. This Programme remained in force until the Party's Eighth Congress.

"What Is To Be Done?" Of the most outstanding importance in the process of founding of the Communist Party was Lenin's book, *What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement.* Lenin began work on this book in May 1901. His manner of work has been vividly described by his wife. "When writing," we read in her reminiscences, "he would usually pace swiftly up and down the room, whispering what he was going to write."*** The book was completed in February 1902, and published in March, in Stuttgart.

In *What Is To Be Done?*, as Lenin wrote in his preface, he made "an attempt . . . in the simplest possible style, illustrated by numerous and concrete examples, *systematically to 'clarify' all* our basic points of difference with *all* the Economists".****

In this work Lenin presented a thorough analysis of the state of international Social-Democracy, demonstrating that two trends had formed within it, and that an irreconcilable struggle was going on between them. One of these trends, consistently revolutionary, upheld the ideas of Marxism; the other–the "new", opportunist, trend–distorted

* The cut-off lands were strips of land which the landowners had cut off for themselves from the peasant allotments when serfdom was abolished.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 148.
*** N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 63.
**** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 350.

the fundamental principles of Marxist theory. The true essence of the "new" trend, which proclaimed its "critical" attitude towards what it called "outdated, dogmatic" Marxism, but in reality came out against the revolutionary content of the Marxist doctrine, fully revealed itself in Bernstein's opportunist, revisionist views. Bernsteinism vulgarised Marxism and corrupted the political consciousness of the working class by its preaching of the theory of the toning down of social contradictions, by its denial of the idea of social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, by its confining of the working-class movement and the class struggle to narrow trade-unionism and bourgeois-liberal reformism. Demagogically demanding "freedom of criticism", the adherents of Bernsteinism in reality advocated freedom to introduce bourgeois ideas into the working-class movement, freedom to transform Social-Democracy from a revolutionary party into a reformist party. "He who does not deliberately close his eyes," Lenin wrote, "cannot fail to see that the new 'critical' trend in socialism is nothing more nor less than a new variety of *opportunism*."*

Thus, in the first years of the twentieth century, Lenin exposed the opportunist trend in Social-Democracy and the harm it brought the international working-class movement. In this lay one of his great services to the movement.

Disclosing the international nature of opportunism, Lenin showed that, while assuming different forms in different countries, in its content opportunism remained everywhere the same. In France it found expression in Millerandism; in England, in trade-unionism; in Germany, in Bernsteinism; in Russian Social-Democracy, in Economism. Under cover of the false slogan of "freedom of criticism", the Economists, like the Bernsteinists, were ideologically corrupting Social-Democracy. They minimised the importance of revolutionary theory, of the Programme and tactics of the party; sought to convert the working-class movement into a passive appendage of bourgeois liberalism; denied the leading role of the party in the working-class movement.

On all these fundamental issues Lenin gave determined battle to the Economists, and at the same time to international opportunism.

In *What Is To Be Done?*, further, Lenin dealt thoroughly with the cardinal ideological and organisational problems with which Russian Social-Democracy was concerned at that period of its activities. He laid bare the ideological sources of opportunism, demonstrated the vast importance of revolutionary theory and socialist consciousness, showed the role of the party as a revolutionising and guiding force in the working-class movement, and substantiated the basic Marxist thesis that the proletarian party is called upon to unite the working-class movement with socialism.

Lenin showed that behind the Economists' fine talk of "freedom of criticism" lay utter disregard for theory, lack of principle. *"The role*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 354.

of vanguard fighter," he declared emphatically, *"can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory."** In confirmation of this thought he cited Engels, who recognised three forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy—political, economic and theoretical.

An important point at issue between the revolutionary Social-Democrats and the Economists was the question of the relation between spontaneity and socialist consciousness in the working-class movement. The proper solution of this question was of tremendous importance, and Lenin went into it very thoroughly.

The Economists were worshippers of spontaneity in the working-class movement, and belittled the role of socialist consciousness. They tried even to lay down a theoretical basis for their worship of spontaneity, declaring that socialist ideology arose spontaneously, that its elements gradually accumulated within the working-class movement in the course of its spontaneous development. Actually, however—as Lenin showed—socialist ideology does not arise in the working-class movement spontaneously. It is introduced into the working-class movement by the revolutionary Marxist party.

In bourgeois society, torn by class antagonism, Lenin explained, there can be no such thing as non-class or above-class ideology. The only alternatives are, bourgeois ideology or socialist ideology. There is no middle course. The working class gravitates towards socialism. This gravitation is a natural outcome of its position in society, of the very conditions of its life. By its entire environment, it is best prepared for acceptance of the socialist ideology. "The working class," Lenin wrote, "*spontaneously* gravitates towards socialism. This is perfectly true in the sense that socialist theory reveals the causes of the misery of the working class more profoundly and more correctly than any other theory, and for that reason the workers are able to assimilate it so easily."** The bourgeoisie, however, as the ruling class, having at its disposal a vast apparatus for the spiritual enslavement of the masses, strives by all the means in its power to spread its own ideology and implant it among the proletariat. Therefore "*all* worship of the spontaneity of the working-class movement, all belittling of the role of 'the conscious element', of the role of Social-Democracy, *means, quite independently of whether he who belittles that role desires it or not, a strengthening of the influence of bourgeois ideology upon the workers*".*** To protect the working class from the influence of bourgeois ideas and to implant socialist ideas in its consciousness, a determined struggle must be waged against bourgeois ideology.

As a result of their worship of spontaneity, the Economists belittled not only revolutionary theory, but also the political tasks of the party and of the working class. They confined the tasks of the working-class

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 370.
** *Ibid.*, p. 386.
*** *Ibid.*, pp. 382-83.

movement to a purely trade union, economic struggle against the employers and the government, for better conditions of labour within the framework of bourgeois society. Such reformist policy, Lenin demonstrated, would lead to the preservation of capitalist wage slavery for long years to come. Going no further than the struggle of the workers of a given trade for better terms in the sale of their labour power, it was essentially not a revolutionary, but a purely trade union policy. The Social-Democratic activities of the proletarian party, in contrast, were directed not only towards winning better terms in the sale of labour power, but towards the destruction of the social system which compelled the poor to sell their labour power to the rich.

Hence Lenin concluded that the Social-Democrats must set actively about the political education of the working class, must "*utilise* the sparks of political consciousness which the economic struggle generates among the workers, for the purpose of *raising* the workers to the level of *Social-Democratic* political consciousness".* It was not enough to propagandise the idea of hostility of the working class towards the autocracy, the idea that the interests of the workers were opposed to the interests of the employers. It was necessary to expose all and every kind of autocratic and police oppression, as manifested in the most diverse fields of life and activities—professional, civic, personal, family, religious, scientific, etc.

"The Social-Democrat's ideal," Lenin wrote, "should not be the trade union secretary, but *the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."**

A considerable part of *What Is To Be Done?* was devoted to organisational questions, on which, too, Lenin gave battle to the Economists. Restricting the concept of the political tasks of the proletariat, the Economists belittled the leading role of the party in the working-class movement, depreciated its organisational tasks. They justified the amateurish methods, petty practicality, and lack of unity of the local organisations. Lenin once more comprehensively substantiated the necessity for building up a centralised, united organisation of revolutionaries. To achieve that, he pointed out, it was necessary that every attempt to depreciate the political tasks and restrict the scope of organisational work be denounced by the mass of the party's practical

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 416.
** *Ibid.*, p. 423.

workers. "Our task is not to champion the degrading of the revolutionary to the level of an amateur," he wrote, "but *to raise* the amateurs to the level of revolutionaries."*

Exposing the Economists' opportunism in question of organisation, Lenin elaborated *a plan for the organisational structure of the Party*. According to this plan, the Party was to consist of two sections: a narrow circle of leading functionaries, in the main professional revolutionaries, and a broad network of local Party organisations, which would have the sympathy and support of the toiling masses.

Developing further the ideas of Marx and Engels on the proletarian party, Lenin in *What Is To Be Done?* laid the ideological foundations for a party of a new type. These ideas were eagerly accepted by the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia.

The St. Petersburg R.S.D.L.P. committee, in its declaration of "adherence to *Iskra*'s theory, tactics and ideas of organisation", stated: "The Committee has reached the conviction that, as it is put by the author of *What Is To Be Done?*, it is time we finished with the period of amateurish methods, the period of disunity, of organisational chaos, of dissent on the programme."**

The Moscow R.S.D.L.P. Committee wrote to *Iskra* expressing its gratitude to Lenin for *What Is To Be Done?*; the Tula Committee wrote of the effectiveness of Lenin's book, noting that it had made "the real position and aims of *Iskra* clear to the Committee and to the most advanced of the workers"; the Siberian League wrote: "Lenin's book *What Is To Be Done?* strongly impresses active Social-Democrats, and completes the victory of *Iskra*'s views on questions of organisation and of tactics."

Lenin was particularly interested in the workers' reaction to his book. To I. Radchenko, in St. Petersburg, he wrote in July 1902:

"Derived the greatest pleasure from your report of a talk with workers. It is extremely rarely that we receive such letters, which are truly tremendously heartening. Tell this to your workers without fail, and hand on to them our request that they write to us themselves, *not only for publication*, but simply with the purpose of interchange of ideas, so that we do not lose contact and mutual understanding. I personally am particularly interested in knowing what the workers think about *What Is To Be Done?*, for as yet I have received no opinions from workers."***

This book greatly helped to rally the Social-Democratic committees in Russia around *Iskra*, and played a signal role in the preparations for the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.

***"Iskra"* organisations in Russia.** Lenin's activities abroad had as their aim the solution of the problems of Party work in Russia, the development of the working-class and peasant movement. Lenin maintained close contact with the Party organisations in Russia. The letters that have come down to us reveal his thorough, detailed knowledge of the practical activities of the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa and other local committees. The instructions and advice he sent them helped to correct mistakes and shortcomings in their work. In September 1902, in reply to a letter received from a St. Petersburg Social-Democrat, Lenin wrote his "A Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks", in which he explained in detail the *Iskra* principles on building a party of a new type–the principles which he had already set forth in the article *Where To Begin* and the book *What Is To Be Done?* The "Letter to a Comrade" played an important part in the fight the revolutionary Marxists had to wage against the primitive methods of work fostered by the Economists, to establish the *Iskra* organisational principles. Lenin attached particular importance to the bigger factories, where large numbers of workers were concentrated. Emphasising the significance of factory organisations as the basic unit of the Social-Democratic movement, he wrote: "Every factory must be our fortress." Hectographed copies of the "Letter", passed from hand to hand, were widely circulated not only in St. Petersburg, but in Moscow, Riga, Rostov-on-Don, Nakhichevan, Nikolayev, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk and other cities. In January 1904, the "Letter" was published by the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. in Russia in pamphlet form, with a foreword and afterword written by Lenin.

Meetings with worker *Iskra* agents from Russia were very joyful occasions for Lenin. Coming to him for advice, the agents would receive exhaustive replies to all their urgent problems, and a clear explanation of their immediate tasks. Their talks with Lenin, *Iskra* agents declared, were to them a true Marxist political schooling.

Lenin's intensive, tireless activities towards the building of the Party bore their fruit. Lenin's *Iskra* was a centre uniting the Party's forces, training the Social-Democratic organisations and consolidating them into a militant, centralised, all-Russian proletarian party with a Marxist programme, revolutionary tactics, a single will and iron discipline. The *Iskra* organisations headed the struggle of the working class against the autocracy. Under *Iskra*'s influence, the revolutionary movement became more and more a mass movement, as witness the wave of strikes and demonstrations that swept city after city. "The finest elements in the class-conscious proletariat," Lenin was later to write, with pride, of this period, "sided with *Iskra*."*

London, Paris, Geneva. In the spring of 1902 police persecution forced *Iskra* to shift its publication to London. On March 30 (April 12), 1902, Lenin and Krupskaya left Munich for England. On their way they stopped off at Cologne, then at Liége, and for a short time at Brussels.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 467.
** *Iskra* No. 26, October 15, 1902.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 86.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 332.

In London, the British Social-Democrats helped to organise the printing of *Iskra*, hospitably offering it the facilities of their own print-shop. Lenin later recalled that Harry Quelch, editor of the progressive *Justice*, "had to 'squeeze up'. A corner was boarded off at the printing works by a thin partition to serve him as editorial room. This corner contained a very small writing-table, a bookshelf above it, and a chair. When the present writer visited Quelch in this 'editorial office' there was no room for another chair. . . ."*

In London Lenin and Krupskaya took the name of Richter. They lived at first in furnished rooms, but later rented two rooms in a little house not far from the British Museum. Mornings, Lenin would work in the Museum library, where Karl Marx had worked before him; afternoons, he would write at home. In his free time he studied London life. Its crying contrasts of wealth and poverty made him say, through clenched teeth, "Two separate nations!" He made an attentive study, too, of the British working-class movement, frequently visiting working-class districts and attending workers' meetings.

While in London Lenin determined to improve his knowledge of English. Through an advertisement he found people who agreed to give him and Krupskaya English lessons in return for lessons in Russian.

At the end of June 1902 Lenin went to France to meet his mother and elder sister and to take a brief rest away from the strained atmosphere of the editorial office. These weeks spent with his mother, in the little town of Loguivie on the north coast of France, brought him great pleasure. He wanted fervently to have her always with him; but she stayed invariably with whichever of her children needed her most at the given moment. And her help was very often needed, for back in Russia now one, now another of the family—and sometimes two or three at once—was either in prison or in exile.

At this period, both in his articles for the press and in his speeches, Lenin devoted much attention to propaganda of the Marxist agrarian programme and to criticism of the programme and tactics of the petty-bourgeois party of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who propagated the reactionary views of the liberal Narodniks. While declaring themselves socialists, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, as Lenin showed, degraded "their so-called socialism to the level of the most banal petty-bourgeois reformism",** and by their agrarian programme misled the peasants.

Exposing the harm the Socialist-Revolutionaries brought to the Russian revolutionary movement, Lenin read a paper against them at a meeting of Russian political emigrants in Paris. Later, in the autumn of 1902, he read similar papers in a number of Swiss towns (Lausanne, Geneva, Berne, Zurich), and also in London and Liége.

In February 1903, at the Russian Higher School of Social Sciences in Paris, Lenin delivered a series of lectures on "Marxist Views on the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 371.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 174.

Agrarian Question in Europe and in Russia". This school was a legally functioning institution which had been set up for Russian students resident abroad. Its administrators were openly hostile to the revolutionary Marxists, taking the side of the Narodniks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. But such was Lenin's reputation as a theoretician in the field of the agrarian question that under pressure from a group of Social-Democratic students of the school, who acted in concert with the Paris *Iskra* group, the faculty council resolved to invite "the well-known Marxist V. Ilyin, author of the legally published books *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* and *Economic Studies*", to deliver a course of lectures on the agrarian question. What, then, were the professors' amazement and dismay when they discovered that Ilyin was Lenin! The school authorities attempted to call off the lectures, but to no avail. The students responded to Lenin's lectures with stormy applause, and declared afterwards that the course had been a red-letter event for them.

On his return to London, Lenin on March 18 addressed a huge workers' meeting in Whitechapel on the occasion of the anniversary of the Paris Commune. Several Communards were present, and one of them, Louise Michel, also addressed the meeting.

In March 1903 Lenin wrote the pamphlet *To the Rural Poor. An Explanation for the Peasants of What the Social-Democrats Want.* The need for such a pamphlet had been suggested to him by the peasant disturbances of 1902. Lenin wrote this pamphlet with great care, trying to make it as comprehensible to the peasants as possible. To Plekhanov he wrote that he was very anxious, in explaining to the peasants the Marxist ideas on the class struggle in the countryside, to use real, factual material concerning the four strata of the rural population: the landowners, the peasant bourgeoisie, the middle peasantry, and the semi-proletarian and proletarian stratum. In his pamphlet Lenin explained to the peasants, simply and clearly, what it was the workers' party was striving to attain, and why the rural poor should join forces with the workers. This pamphlet was a splendid model of popular Marxist literature.

Addressing himself to the rural poor, Lenin wrote: "We want to achieve a new and better order of society: in this new and better society there must be neither rich nor poor; all will have to work. Not a handful of rich people, but all the working people must enjoy the fruits of their common labour. Machines and other improvements must serve to ease the work of all and not to enable a few to grow rich at the expense of millions and tens of millions of people. This new and better society is called *socialist society*. The teachings about this society are called *socialism*."* Further, he wrote: "That is a great cause, and to that cause it is worth devoting one's whole life."**

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 366.
** *Ibid.*, p. 413.

Again and again, Lenin stressed the necessity of consolidating the alliance of the workers and peasants, and pointed out the tremendous role of the rural poor in this alliance.

The pamphlet came out in Geneva in May 1903, with an appendix containing the text of the draft programme of the R.S.D.L.P. and an introduction to it written by Lenin. Smuggled into Russia, the pamphlet was widely circulated there. It was studied in underground Social-Democratic and workers' circles, and found its way to the countryside, to the army, to the navy. By December 1905, according to incomplete data now available, the pamphlet had been received in 75 towns and villages. It was reprinted abroad in 1904, in 10,000 copies, and was repeatedly reprinted in Russia. In 1905, a legal edition appeared in Russia. Lenin was later told by a worker who came from a poor peasant family that the pamphlet *To the Rural Poor* had made him a Bolshevik.

In the spring of 1903, at the insistence of the Emancipation of Labour group, the printing of *Iskra* was shifted to Geneva. Early in May Lenin and Krupskaya left London for Switzerland.

Until the autumn of 1904 Lenin and his family lived in a little house which they rented in the working-class settlement of Séchéron, in the suburbs of Geneva. The house consisted of a roomy, stone-floored kitchen and, on the upper floor, reached by a wooden staircase, three rooms, each furnished with a desk, a simple iron bed, spread with a steamer rug, several chairs, and crude bookshelves. In the kitchen, much of the furniture consisted of boxes that had held books or dishes. Occupying the whole of the ground floor, this kitchen served also as dining-room and drawing-room. Here Lenin often sat talking with his comrades, who liked to visit this hospitable and friendly home. *Iskra* agent T. Zelikson-Bobrovskaya, recalling a visit to Lenin, noted his simplicity, cordiality, modesty and buoyancy. Of his appearance, she wrote, "Vladimir Ilyich wore a dark-blue Russian blouse, which gave his stocky figure a truly Russian look."*

Lenin was solicitous for the welfare of every comrade, and particularly of new arrivals, many of whom escaped from prison or from place of exile, reached Geneva without any means, lacking, often, even decent clothing and footwear. He knew no rest until such comrades had been provided with lodging, food, clothing and all else that was needed. Lenin was a responsive and attentive comrade, a cordial and charming companion. His tremendous tact, his constant readiness to render assistance to all who needed it, made him a lodestone to human hearts.

Lenin's energy was inexhaustible. He was fond of a good joke, fond of a song, of music, of popular festivities. A tireless worker, he nonetheless found time for pleasant relaxation among his friends. Not infrequently, he and Nadezhda Krupskaya, with other comrades, would bicycle out into the countryside. Of a Sunday, at times, with Nadezhda Krupskaya and her mother, he would undertake an all-day excursion.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 240.

РОССІЙСКАЯ СОЦІАЛЬ-ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКАЯ РАБОЧАЯ ПАРТІЯ

ИСКРА

„Изъ искры возгорится пламя!"...
Отвѣтъ декабристовъ Пушкину

№ 1. ДЕКАБРЬ 1900 ГОДА. № 1.

НАСУЩНЫЯ ЗАДАЧИ НАШЕГО ДВИЖЕНІЯ.

Русская социалдемократія не разъ уже заявляла, что ближайшей политической задачей русской рабочей партіи должно быть непосредственное самодержавіе, завоеваніе политической свободы. Это заявляли больше 15 лѣтъ тому назадъ представители русской социалдемократіи, члены группы „Освобожденіе Труда", это заявили два съ половиной года тому назадъ и представители русскихъ социалдемократическихъ организацій, образовавшіе весной 1898 года Российскую Социалдемократическую Рабочую Партію. Но не смотря на эти неоднократныя заявленія, вопросъ о политическихъ задачахъ социалдемократіи въ Россіи снова выступаетъ на очередь въ настоящее время. Многіе представители нашего движенія выражаютъ сомнѣніе въ правильности указаннаго рѣшенія вопроса. Говорятъ, что преобладающее значеніе имѣетъ экономическая борьба, отодвигаютъ на второй планъ политическія задачи пролетаріата, съуживаютъ и органически извращаютъ эти задачи, заявляютъ даже, что разговоры объ образованіи самостоятельной рабочей партіи въ Россіи просто повторяніе чужихъ словъ, что рабочимъ надо вести одну экономическую борьбу, предоставивъ политику интеллигенціи, которая должна вести однимъ своимъ силами политическую борьбу. Такія воззрѣнія, какъ разъ въ моментъ новаго символа вѣры (говоритъ стефъ) сводятся къ признанію за рабочимъ права на политическую борьбу, къ признанію русскаго пролетаріата несовершеннолѣтнимъ и къ полному отрицанію социалдемократической программы. А „Рабочая Мысль" (особенно въ отдѣльныхъ Приложеніяхъ) высказалась въ этомъ смыслѣ. Русская социалдемократія переживаетъ періодъ колебаній, періодъ сомнѣній, доходящихъ до самоотрицанія. Съ одной стороны, рабочее движеніе отрывается отъ соціализма, рабочимъ помогаютъ вести экономическую борьбу, но вовсе не разъясняютъ при этомъ или недостаточно разъясняютъ соціалистическихъ цѣлей и политическихъ задачъ всего движенія въ цѣломъ. Съ другой стороны, соціализмъ отрывается отъ рабочаго движенія, которое понижается подъ „политической" дѣятельность, отторгаемую отъ рабочаго движенія, которые съужаютъ политику до одной только заговорщицкой борьбы. Отвергая такую политику, социалдемократы впадаютъ въ крайность, отодвигая на второй планъ политику вообще. Въ-третьихъ, разсѣянное дѣйствуя въ мѣстныхъ мелкихъ рабочихъ кружкахъ, социалдемократы недостаточно обращали вниманіе на необходимость организаціи революціонной партіи, объединяющей всю дѣятельность мѣстныхъ группъ и дающей возможность правильно поставить революціонную работу. А преобладаніе разрозненной работы естественно связано съ преобладаніемъ экономической борьбы.

Всѣ указанныя обстоятельства породили увлеченіе одной стороной движенія. „Экономическое" направленіе, (вопреки смолкшимъ тутъ кликамъ говорящихъ о „направленіи") создало попытки возвести эту узость въ особую теорію, попытки воспользоваться для этой цѣли модной берштейніадой, модной „критикой марксизма", проводящей старыя буржуазныя идеи подъ новымъ фразовымъ флагомъ. Лишь эти попытки породили опасность ослабленія связи между русскими рабочими движеніемъ и русской социалдемократіей, какъ передовымъ борцомъ за политическую свободу. И самая насущная задача нашего движенія состоитъ въ укрѣпленіи этой связи.

Социалдемократія есть соединеніе рабочаго движенія съ соціализмомъ, ея задача — не пассивное служеніе рабочему движенію на каждой его отдѣльной стадіи, а представительство интересовъ всего движенія въ цѣломъ, указаніе этому движенію его конечной цѣли, его политическихъ задачъ, охрана его политической и идейной самостоятельности. Оторванное отъ социалдемократіи, рабочее движеніе мельчаетъ и необходимо впадаетъ въ буржуазность: ведя одну экономическую борьбу, рабочій классъ теряетъ свою политическую самостоятельность, становится хвостомъ другихъ партій, измѣняетъ великому завѣту: „освобожденіе рабочихъ должно быть дѣломъ самихъ рабочихъ". Во всѣхъ странахъ былъ такой періодъ, когда рабочее движеніе и соціализмъ существовали отдѣльно другъ отъ друга и шли особой дорогой, — и во всѣхъ странахъ такая оторванность приводила къ слабости соціализма и рабочаго движенія: во всѣхъ странахъ только соединеніе соціализма съ рабочимъ движеніемъ создавало прочную основу и для того и для другого. Но въ каждой странѣ это соединеніе соціализма съ рабочимъ движеніемъ вырабатывалось исторически, вырабатывалось особыми путями, въ зависимости отъ условій мѣста и времени. Въ Россіи необходимость соединенія соціализма и рабочаго движенія теоретически провозглашена уже давно, — но практически это соединеніе вырабатывается лишь въ настоящее время. Прочность этой выработки есть очень трудный процессъ, и нѣтъ ничего особенно удивительнаго въ томъ, что онъ сопровождается разными колебаніями и сомнѣніями.

Какой-же урокъ вытекаетъ для насъ изъ прошлаго?

Исторія всего русскаго соціализма привела къ тому, что самой его насущной задачей оказалась борьба противъ самодержавнаго правительства, завоеваніе политической свободы: наше соціалистическое движеніе концентрировалось, такъ сказать, на борьбѣ съ самодержавіемъ. Съ другой стороны, исторія показала, что въ Россіи оторванность соціалистической мысли отъ передовыхъ представителей трудящихся классовъ гораздо больше, чѣмъ въ другихъ странахъ, и что при такой оторванности русское революціонное движеніе осуждено на безсиліе. Отсюда сама собою вытекаетъ та задача, которую призвана осуществить русская социалдемократія: внѣдрить соціалистическія идеи и политическое самосознаніе въ массу пролетаріата и организовать революціонную партію, неразрывно связанную съ стихійнымъ рабочимъ движеніемъ. Много уже сдѣлано въ этомъ отношеніи русской социалдемократіей: но еще больше остается сдѣлать. Съ ростомъ движенія поприще дѣятельности для социалдемократіи становится все шире, работа все разнообразнѣе, все большее число дѣятелей движенія сосредоточиваетъ свои силы на осуществленіи различныхъ частныхъ задачъ, которыя выдвигаются повседневными нуждами пропаганды и агитаціи. Это явленіе совершенно законное и неизбѣжное, но оно заставляетъ обращать особое вниманіе на то, чтобы частныя задачи дѣятельности и отдѣльные пріемы борьбы не возводились въ нѣчто самодовлѣющее, чтобы подготовительная работа не возводилась на степень главной и единственной работы.

Содѣйствовать политическому развитію и политической организаціи рабочаго класса — наша главная и основная задача. Всякій, кто отодвигаетъ эту задачу на второй планъ, кто не понимаетъ ея всѣхъ частныхъ задачъ и отдѣльныхъ пріемовъ борьбы, тотъ становится на ложный путь и наноситъ серьезный вредъ движенію.

Отодвигаютъ эту задачу, во-вторыхъ, тѣ, кто съуживаетъ содержаніе и размахъ политической пропаганды, агитаціи и организаціи, кто считаетъ возможнымъ и достижимымъ отдѣльные кружки, организующіе только экономическую борьбу, кто считаетъ возможнымъ и достижимымъ „политическій" только въ исключительные моменты жизни, только въ торжественныхъ случаяхъ, это слишкомъ заботливо разжёвываетъ политическую борьбу противъ самодержавія рабочимъ массамъ, это не умѣетъ использовать каждаго повода для политическаго протеста, это не заботится о томъ, чтобы эти требованія отдѣльныхъ уступокъ возвести въ систематическую и безповоротную борьбу революціонной рабочей партіи противъ самодержавія.

„Организуйтесь!", повторяетъ рабочимъ на разные лады газета „Рабочая Мысль", повторяютъ всѣ сторонники „экономическаго" направленія. И мы, конечно, всецѣло присоединяемся къ этому клику, но мы непремѣнно добавимъ къ нему: организуйтесь не только въ общества взаимопомощи, стачечныя кассы и рабочіе кружки, организуйтесь также и въ политическую партію, организуйтесь для рѣшительной борьбы противъ самодержавія и для рѣшительнаго протеста противъ всего капиталистическаго общества. Безъ такой организаціи пролетаріатъ не способенъ подняться до сознательной классовой борьбы, безъ такой организаціи рабочее движеніе осуждено на безсиліе, и самыя только кассовыя, кружковыя и обществ[ен]ныя взаимопомощи рабочему классу никогда не удастся исполнить лежащую на немъ великую историческую задачу: освободить себя и весь русскій народъ отъ его политическаго и экономическаго рабства. Ни одинъ классъ въ исторіи не боялся господства, если онъ не выдвигалъ своихъ политическихъ вождей, своихъ передовыхъ представителей, способныхъ организовать движеніе и руководить имъ. И русскій рабочій классъ покажетъ умѣетъ, что онъ способенъ выдвигать такихъ людей: широко развившаяся борьба русскихъ рабочихъ за 5-6 послѣднихъ лѣтъ показала, какая масса революціонныхъ силъ таится въ рабочихъ классѣ, взять самыя отчаянныя правительственныя преслѣдованія не умѣютъ ихъ остановить, а увеличиваютъ число рабочихъ, рвущихся къ сознанію, къ политическому сознанію и къ политической борьбѣ. Съѣздъ нашихъ товарищей въ 1898 г. вѣрно поставилъ задачу, а не повторимъ чужія слова, не выразимъ одно только увлеченіе „интеллигентовъ". И мы должны рѣшительно взяться за выполненіе этихъ задачъ, поставивъ на очередь вопросъ о программѣ, организаціи и тактикѣ партіи. Какъ мы смотримъ на основныя положенія нашей программы, мы уже сказали, а подробно развивать эти положенія здѣсь, конечно, не мѣсто. Вопросамъ организаціонныхъ мы намѣрены посвятить рядъ статей въ ближайшихъ номерахъ. Это одинъ изъ самыхъ больныхъ нашихъ вопросовъ. Мы сильно отстали отъ старыхъ завѣтовъ русскаго революціоннаго движенія; надо прямо признать этотъ недочетъ и направить свои силы на выработку болѣе конспиративной постановки дѣла, на систематическую пропаганду привлекъ ведущія дѣла, поручать подготовленныхъ людей, посвящающихъ революціи не одни только свободные вечера, а всю свою жизнь, надо подготовлять организацію, настолько крупную, чтобы въ ней можно было провести строгое раздѣленіе труда между различными видами нашей работы. Что касается, наконецъ, до вопросовъ тактики, то мы ограничимся здѣсь слѣдующимъ: соціалдемократія не связываетъ себѣ рукъ, не съуживаетъ своей дѣятельности однимъ какимъ-нибудь путемъ, допускаетъ всѣ способы борьбы, — она признаетъ всѣ средства борьбы, лишь бы они соотвѣтствовали наличнымъ силамъ партіи и давали возможность достигать наибольшихъ результатовъ, достижимыхъ при данныхъ условіяхъ. При этомъ организаціонной партіи отдѣльная стачка можетъ превратиться въ политическую демонстрацію, въ политическую побѣду надъ правительствомъ. При крѣпкой организованной партіи возстаніе въ данный моментъ, разростись въ побѣдоносную революцію. Мы должны помнить, что борьба съ правительствомъ за отдѣльныя требованія, отвоеваніе отдѣльныхъ уступокъ, это — только мелкія стычки съ непріятелемъ, это — небольшія сраженія на форпостахъ, а рѣшительная схватка еще впереди. Передъ нами стоитъ во всей своей силѣ непріятельская крѣпость, изъ которой осыпаютъ насъ тучи ядеръ и пуль, уносящіе лучшихъ борцовъ. Мы должны взять эту крѣпость, и мы возьмемъ ее, если всѣ силы пробуждающагося пролетаріата соединятся со всѣми силами русскихъ революціонеровъ въ одну партію, къ которой потянется все, что есть въ Россіи живого и честнаго. И только тогда исполнится великое пророчество русскаго рабочаго-революціонера, Петра Алексѣева: „подымется изсушенная руна милліоновъ рабочаго люда, и ярмо деспотизма, ограждённое солдатскими штыками, развалится въ прахъ!"

ВИЛЬГЕЛЬМЪ ЛИБКНЕХТЪ

(родился 29-го марта 1826 г., умеръ 7-го августа 1900 г.)

Со смертью старѣйшаго вождя германской социалдемократіи революціонный пролетарій всего міра лишился одного изъ своихъ наиболѣе закалённыхъ и неутомимыхъ борцовъ и руководителей. Не даромъ вѣсть объ его внезапной кончинѣ, какъ громомъ поразила передовыхъ рабочихъ всѣхъ цивилизованныхъ странъ. Не только изъ всѣхъ концовъ Германіи, но и изъ другихъ странъ Европы, да не одной лишь Европы, а и Америки, Австраліи, и даже изъ южной Африки, Японіи посланы были сочувственныя телеграммы, съ выраженіемъ глубокой скорби о незамѣнимой утратѣ, понесенной международной социалдемократіей. Похороны Либкнехта приняли характеръ и размѣры величественной манифестаціи, въ которой приняли участіе сотни тысячъ, быть можетъ, около милліона нѣмецкихъ рабочихъ и представителей рабочихъ партій Англіи, Франціи, Австріи, Венгріи, Бельгіи, Даніи и разныхъ другихъ странъ. Подавляющимъ заявленіемъ всѣхъ добросовѣстныхъ газетныхъ корреспондентовъ, внѣшнюю эту манифестацію, такъ горячо сказавшуюся похоронамъ не удостаивался ещё ни одинъ король, ни одинъ императоръ.

Всеобщія глубокія симпатіи борющагося пролетаріата всего міра къ Либкнехту, съ такой силой и искренностью выразившіяся по случаю его кончины, были имъ многолѣтней службой дѣлу освобожденія рабочаго класса, неутомимымъ усиліямъ его на пользу умственнаго и политическаго возвышенія эксплуатируемыхъ и угнетенныхъ рабочихъ массъ. Представить полную и разносторонюю оцѣнку его заслугъ передъ международнымъ пролетаріатомъ — значитъ дать подробное описаніе его жизни и дѣятельности, по меньшей мѣрѣ, начиная съ шестидесятыхъ годовъ, т. е. приблизительно за сорокъ лѣтъ. Но начало его общественной дѣятельности относится къ революціи 1848 г., а выработка его убѣжденій и идеаловъ, на служеніи которымъ онъ отдалъ свои способности, началась еще ранѣе, въ тѣ времена, когда въ Германіи, какъ теперь въ Россіи, не только рабочіе, но и буржуазные классы, въ особенности образованные ихъ слои, терпѣли отъ правительственнаго произвола и устарѣлыхъ государственныхъ и общественныхъ порядковъ. Исторія жизни и дѣятельности Либкнехта тѣсно-тѣснымъ образомъ связана, поэтому, съ исторіей Германіи, а косвенно съ важнѣйшими событіями и событіями всей исторіи Европы, за періодъ болѣе продолжительный, чѣмъ полвѣка столѣтіе. Для того, чтобы представить біографію Либкнехта въ такихъ широкихъ рамкахъ, надобно написать объемистую книгу. Здѣсь же мы ограничимся только сообщеніемъ нѣсколькихъ фактовъ изъ его, полной и интересной, жизни и борьбы жизни, и, главнымъ образомъ, изъ того періода ея, въ теченіе котораго онъ воспитался и подготовился къ роли вождя германскихъ рабочихъ.

По своему рожденію и воспитанію, Либкнехтъ принадлежитъ къ буржуазіи и именно къ тѣмъ ея слоямъ, которые у насъ извѣстны подъ названіемъ „интеллигенціи". Какъ я уже сказалъ, во времена его дѣтства и юности въ Германіи господствовалъ монархическій и полицейскій самодержавный строй, отъ котораго больше всего страдали, конечно, мелкіе городскіе классы да деревенскія массы, находившіеся подъ гнетомъ помѣщиковъ; но чувствительно давилъ сверхъ того, подъ гнетомъ помѣщиковъ, но чувствительно и буржуазные классы, — торговцы, фабриканты, а въ особенности образованные ихъ слои, врачи, адвокаты, учителя, профессора и учащіеся, по преимуществу, университетская молодежь. Всѣдствіе этого, буржуазія вообще, а интеллигенціи въ особенности, проникнута была духомъ недовольства противъ существующихъ порядковъ, но чувствительнѣйшія благородныя натуры и горячія головы изъ интеллигенціи проникнуты были сочувствіемъ къ народнымъ страданіямъ, мечтали о такихъ общественныхъ порядкахъ, при которыхъ не будетъ мѣста неравенству и несправедливости и старались даже распространить эту и несправедливости и соціалистическія идеи среди рабочихъ. Внутри самой Германіи пропаганда эта велась, конечно, тайкомъ, съ большими опасностями и трудностями. Но мѣстами-тѣмъ, подъ страхомъ строжайшихъ наказаній. Но мѣстами-тѣмъ, подъ страхомъ строжайшихъ наказаній. Но мѣстами-тѣмъ, молодые подмастерья, мѣстами рабочіе, главнымъ образом

Что дѣлать?

Наболѣвшіе вопросы нашего движенія

Н. ЛЕНИНА.

. . . „Партійная борьба придаетъ партіи силу и жизненность, величайшимъ доказательствомъ слабости партіи является ея расплывчатость и притупленіе рѣзко обозначенныхъ границъ, партія укрѣпляется тѣмъ, что очищаетъ себя“ . . . (Изъ письма Лассаля къ Марксу отъ 24 іюня 1852 г.).

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Cover of the first edition of Lenin's book *What Is To Be Done?*

Of one such holiday he wrote: "We had a splendid day. Got drunk as children, all of us, on the fresh air, and afterwards I was tired as if I'd been out hunting in Siberia. Altogether, we're not bad excursionists. Of all the local comrades, we are the only ones who explore *all* the city's environs. We search out all sorts of 'rustic' paths. We know the near environs thoroughly, and have it in mind to venture further out. I have been well of late, working regularly and not bothered by the to-do."*

Of an evening, now and again, Lenin's comrades would gather at his home. They would sing together—the *Internationale*, the *Marseillaise*, *Whirlwinds of Danger*, *Victim of Dire Bondage*, the *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, *Sacred Baikal*, the *Cliff*, and other songs; and Lenin would join in the singing, forgetful of all else.

In conversation with his friends Lenin spoke with lively interest of literature, and in particular of such favourite writers as Chernyshevsky, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Nekrasov. His knowledge in this field was broad and varied. He could recite many of Nekrasov's poems by heart, conveying to his listeners not only the poet's ideas, but the true beauty of his verse. He had an excellent knowledge of Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoi.

Living abroad, Lenin sorely missed his homeland. This feeling is often to be sensed in his letters to his mother. In Munich, on a wet evening, his thoughts turned to winter as it is in Russia—real winter, with its crisp sleigh-roads and its keen, frosty air. From London, he wrote: "If we could spend the summer on the Volga!" In the mountains of Switzerland, sun, snow and toboggans reminded him of "a fine winter day in Russia". He often spoke of Russia's open spaces, of his native Volga region, of the rugged beauty of Siberia. A newspaper item on the production of Chekhov's *Three Sisters* at the Art Theatre aroused his lively interest, and, in writing to his people, he asked about their impressions of the play. "The acting at the low-priced Art Theatre is superb," he wrote. "I still recall with pleasure my visit there last year."** In another letter he wrote that he would like to see Gorky's *Lower Depths* at the Art Theatre. Again, he wrote to his mother of the pleasure it had given him to hear Chaikovsky's *Symphonie Pathétique* at a concert that he had attended. Always, wherever he might be, Lenin remembered Russia.

At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. Three years gained *Iskra* tremendous influence among the R.S.D.L.P. committees in Russia. Economism was routed ideologically. The period of confusion and vacillation approached its end. The victory of Lenin's plan had laid the foundation for a united, militant proletarian party, which was to become a model for the international revolutionary working-class movement.

Having united the Party organisations in Russia around *Iskra*, Lenin proposed the calling of the Party's Second Congress and launched a far-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 280.
** *Ibid.*, p. 245.

reaching preparatory campaign. Both the preparations for the Congress and the Congress itself, he realised, would be attended by sharp ideological struggle; and he pointed out repeatedly to the Russian Marxists the importance of the coming Congress and the vital necessity that it adopt the *Iskra* programme and organisational principles. He made thorough preparations, further, to combat *Iskra*'s opponents and all opportunist elements.

On August 15, 1902, in London, Lenin conferred with representatives from the St. Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., the Russian *Iskra* organisation, and the Northern League of the R.S.D.L.P. This conference set up an Iskrist nucleus for the Organising Committee (O.C.) that was to convene the Second Party Congress. In November, at Lenin's proposal, a conference of representatives of Social-Democratic committees held in Pskov set up the actual Organising Committee, made up in its overwhelming majority of *Iskra* supporters.

Under Lenin's leadership, the Organising Committee set about extensive preparations for the Congress. Lenin worked out a draft agenda and rules of procedure for the Congress; drew up a draft of the Party Rules, which he presented to the members of the *Iskra* editorial board and to delegates arriving in Geneva before the date set for the opening of the Congress; and attended meetings of these delegates, in order to work out a common stand. He drew up the plan for the report to the Congress on the activities of the *Iskra* organisation, and drafted resolutions on the following questions: on demonstrations; on the status of the Bund in the R.S.D.L.P.; on the attitude to be taken towards the student youth; on Party literature; on the economic struggle; on May Day; on the international congress; on terrorism; on propaganda; on the distribution of forces. Shortly before the Congress Lenin wrote an article entitled, "Reply to Criticism of Our Draft Programme", explaining the agrarian section of the Party Programme. This article was published in the pamphlet, *On X's Agrarian Programme. N. Lenin's Reply to Criticism of Our Draft Programme*, which was distributed to the Congress delegates in lieu of a report on the agrarian question.

Altogether, the main burden of the preparatory work for the Congress was carried by Lenin and by the *Iskra* editorial board which he had brought into being.

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. opened on July 17 (30), and sat until August 10 (23), 1903. It was with the most eager impatience that Lenin had awaited this Congress, of which he had so ardently dreamed, and which he saw as an event of historic significance. The Congress began its deliberations in Brussels, but after some days persecution by the Belgian police compelled a shift to London. In Brussels, for purposes of secrecy, the Congress sittings were held on the premises of a flour warehouse. The big warehouse window was curtained with red. Mounting to the makeshift platform, Plekhanov, with deep emotion, delivered his opening address. Elation filled all hearts in this historic hour.

Whereas at the First Congress there had been only nine delegates, at the Second there were forty-three delegates with fifty-one votes, and fourteen with consultative votes. The delegates represented twenty-six Party organisations. The Congress agenda included twenty items, the most important of these being: the Party Programme; the organisation of the Party (adoption of the Party Rules); and election of the Central Committee and of the editorial board of the Central Organ.

To direct the work of the Congress, a bureau (presidium) was elected, with Plekhanov as chairman and Lenin and P. Krasikov as vice-chairmen. Lenin was elected, also, to the credentials committee and to the committees on the Party Programme and the Party Rules. From the opening of the Congress and to its conclusion, he kept a detailed record of its proceedings.

It was a hard-fought struggle that Lenin and his adherents, the firm Iskrists, had to wage at the Congress against the Economists, the Bundists, the Centrists and the unstable or "mild" Iskrists, who supported Martov.

Lenin, and with him the firm Iskrists, fought at the Congress for the ideological and organisational principles advocated by *Iskra*, for a solid and militant party, closely bound up with the mass working-class movement—a party of a new type, differing fundamentally from the reformist parties of the Second International. Lenin and the Iskrists sought to found a party that would be the vanguard, class-conscious, organised detachment of the working class, armed with revolutionary theory, with a knowledge of the laws of development of society and of the class struggle, with the experience gained in the revolutionary movement. At the Congress, Lenin and Plekhanov drew closer together. Plekhanov supported Lenin, though not without vacillation. He came out against the Economists, as he had before the Congress, and firmly supported the propositions Lenin had advanced in the book *What Is To Be Done?* In a speech directed against the Economist Akimov, Plekhanov declared, "He [Akimov—*Ed.*] is determined to divorce me from Lenin. But ... I refuse to divorce Lenin, and hope that he, too, has no intention of divorcing me."*

The discussion and adoption of the Party Programme aroused sharp struggle at the Congress. The opportunists attacked the basic principles of the Marxist programme. In particular, the Bundist Lieber and the Economists Akimov and Martynov opposed the inclusion in the Programme of the clause on the dictatorship of the proletariat. The firm Iskrists, headed by Lenin, battled for a revolutionary programme, for the clauses on the dictatorship of the proletariat, the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, the right of nations to self-determination, and proletarian internationalism. Lenin's uncompromising struggle ended in victory. The Congress adopted the *Iskra* programme. For the

* *Minutes of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1959, p. 137.

first time in the history of the international working-class movement since the death of Marx and Engels, a revolutionary programme had been adopted, a programme in which, at Lenin's insistence, the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat was set down as the fundamental task of the party of the working class.

Reporting to the Congress on the Party Rules, Lenin visualised the Party as a militant organisation and its members as devoted fighters, ready equally for humdrum daily work or for battle with arms in hand. Every member of the Party, Lenin felt, must answer for the Party as a whole; and the Party as a whole for its every member. The draft Rules aroused heated debate, particularly in connection with their first clause, which defined Party membership. Essentially, it was a question of what sort of organisation the Party was to be: opportunist or militant; amorphous and liberal, or consistently proletarian.

The first clause of the Rules as Lenin formulated it defined a Party member as one who accepted the Party Programme and who supported the Party both financially and by personal participation in one of its organisations. This formulation was designed to hinder admittance to the Party for unstable and non-proletarian elements and thus to help make the Party a strong, well-organised and disciplined body.

Arguing for his formulation of the first clause of the rules, Lenin said: "It would be better if ten who do work should not call themselves Party members (real workers don't hunt after titles!) than that one who only talks should have the right and opportunity to be a Party member."* Again, "It is our task," he pointed out, "to safeguard the firmness, consistency and purity of our Party. We must strive to raise the calling and importance of a Party member higher, higher and still higher."**

Lenin strove for a party that would be capable of leading the working class to the establishment of dictatorship of the proletariat; and the formulation of the first clause of the Rules was inseparably bound up with this aim.

Lenin's principle of Party membership was opposed by Martov, and with him by all the opportunist and vacillating elements among the delegates. As formulated by Martov, the first clause of the Rules did not require for Party membership that a person belong to one of the Party's organisations. It demanded only that he afford the Party regular personal assistance under the guidance of one of the Party organisations. With membership so defined, the Party would become an amorphous body, open to opportunist elements. Such a party could not lead the workers to victory, to the seizure of power. Martov's formulation minimised the significance of Party membership; its tendency would be to create not a revolutionary, but a reformist party.

Martov's formulation of the first clause, and the speeches of his adherents, reflected their views on the main Programme question—that

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 503.
** *Ibid.*, p. 504.

of dictatorship of the proletariat. To them, the victory of dictatorship of the proletariat was a matter of the distant future. Like the Western opportunists, they considered that the proletariat ought not to fight for power until it comprised a majority in the population of its country. Trotsky declared at the Congress that victory would be possible only when the working class came to comprise "the majority of the nation". They therefore felt no need for the militant, revolutionary type of party without which there could be no hegemony of the working class, no victory of dictatorship of the proletariat. By a narrow majority, the Congress accepted Martov's formulation.

Plekhanov defended Lenin's formulation of the first clause, declaring that Martov's formulation opened the door to the opportunists. "The truth is on Lenin's side," Plekhanov insisted.

An important question was that of the organisational principles on which the Party was to be built. Lenin sharply condemned the separatist stand of the Bundists, who attempted to split the Party into nationality groups. The Party, he emphasised, was to be of a new type, founded on the principle of proletarian internationalism. The Congress firmly repulsed the Bundists on this point.

A bitter struggle flared at the Congress when it came to the election of the Party's directing centres—the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ. This was a matter of paramount importance. Lenin maintained that only firm and consistent revolutionaries should be elected to the Central Committee and to the editorial board. The opportunists, for their part, tried to get their own followers into the Party centres. In the election of the editorial board of the Central Organ the Congress minority, headed by Martov, insisted that the old board (made up of six members) be retained in its entirety. Lenin proposed that the new editorial board be made up of only three members. The old board of six, as a body, had proved altogether incapable. In three years it had never once met in full strength. Axelrod had been constantly away, and had hardly worked at all—no more than three or four articles in 45 issues of the paper. Vera Zasulich and Potresov had done none of the editorial work. Issues 46 to 51 had been edited entirely by Lenin and Plekhanov, with no help from the others. Obviously, the editorial board could not continue in this way. The proposal that the Congress endorse the old composition of the board, Lenin declared, was an open attempt to provoke a clash.

Lenin had the support of the delegates from the biggest of the Party committees—those of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Baku, the Don, Kiev, Odessa, Tula and the Northern League. In view of the fact that a section of the opportunists, the Bundists among them, had left the Congress when their proposals were defeated, the balance of forces had altered in favour of the firm Iskrists, who were now in the majority at the Congress.

On this question, then, it was Lenin's adherents who won the day. Their proposal to elect three members each to the Central Committee

and to the editorial board of the Central Organ was approved. Lenin, Plekhanov and Martov were elected to the editorial board, and Krzhizhanovsky, Lengnik and Noskov to the Central Committee.

As the supreme Party institution, the Rules adopted at the Second Congress set up the Council of the Party, whose function it was to co-ordinate and unify the activities of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ, and also to renew these bodies should their membership go out of commission. The Council was to have five members: two from the editorial board of the Central Organ, two from the Central Committee, and one elected directly at the Congress. As this fifth member, the Congress elected Plekhanov, who thus became the Council chairman. Lenin became one of the Council members representing the editorial board of *Iskra*.

Lenin's supporters, who had received the majority of votes in the election of the Party's central institutions, began to be known as Bolsheviks [from the Russian word *bolshinstvo*, which means, majority–*Ed.*]; and the opportunists, now in the minority, became known as Mensheviks [from *menshinstvo*, or minority–*Ed.*]. This split among the Iskrists was one of the most important political results of the Second Congress. The majority supported the principles and tactics advocated by *Iskra*, while the minority swerved to opportunism.

The struggle at the Congress was open and determined. Lenin afterwards wrote, recalling a conversation he had had at the Congress with one of the "Centre" delegates:

"'How oppressive the atmosphere is at our Congress!' he complained. 'This bitter fighting, this agitation of one against the other, this biting controversy, this uncomradely attitude.'... 'What a splendid thing our Congress is!' I replied. 'A free and open struggle. Opinions have been stated. The shades have been revealed. The groups have taken shape. Hands have been raised. A decision has been taken. A stage has been passed. Forward! That's the stuff for me! That's life! That's not like the endless, tedious word-chopping of your intellectuals, which stops not because the question has been settled, but because they are too tired to talk any more.'...

"The comrade of the 'Centre' stared at me in perplexity and shrugged his shoulders. We were talking different languages."*

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was a turning-point in the world working-class movement. It crowned with victory *Lenin's titanic struggle for the creation in Russia of a revolutionary proletarian party, a party of a new type, differing fundamentally from the reformist parties of the Second International.*

The Second Congress brought into being a party of a new type, the Leninist, Bolshevik Party. In that lies its tremendous historical significance.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 347.

"As a trend of political thought and as a political party," Lenin subsequently wrote, "Bolshevism has existed since 1903."*

At the time of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. the trends of development of the working-class movement in Russia had brought to the fore a vital political question–namely, whether this movement was to accept the ideology of revolutionary Marxism, or to fall under the sway of bourgeois ideology. Thanks to the efforts of Lenin and his adherents, this question was settled in favour of revolutionary Marxism. The victory of Lenin's brilliant plan for the creation of a revolutionary Marxist party, a party of social revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat, showed that in Lenin the Russian and the international proletariat had a great theoretician who would carry further the cause and the teachings of Marx and Engels, an outstanding strategist of the revolution, seeing far ahead into the future of the working-class movement.

After the closing of the Second Congress Lenin, with the other Bolshevik delegates, visited the grave of Marx in Highgate Cemetery. Soon afterwards he left London to resume his work in Geneva.

The struggle within the Party after the Congress. After the Congress the struggle within the Party flared up with renewed force. Defeated at the Congress, the Mensheviks did everything in their power to sabotage its decisions, to disorganise Party work, and to gain control of the Party's central bodies. The old opportunists–the Economists–had been routed; but in their place, Lenin clearly realised, the Party now had to deal with a new brand of opportunists: the Mensheviks. And Plekhanov now sided with the Mensheviks. Flouting the will of the Party Congress, Plekhanov decided to recall to the editorial board all the former editors of *Iskra*. Lenin demanded that the Congress decisions be observed. He could not agree to their violation in factional interests. He therefore decided to resign from the *Iskra* editorial board and to entrench himself in the Central Committee, thence to campaign against the opportunists. He turned in a statement to the effect that he was no longer a member of the editorial board, and requested that this statement be published in *Iskra*. Beginning with its 52nd issue *Iskra* came under Menshevik control. On the pages of this new, opportunist *Iskra*, the Mensheviks launched a venomous campaign against Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

In the latter half of November Lenin was co-opted to the Central Committee, to which he soon submitted a draft statement of protest against Plekhanov's co-optation of the Menshevik former editors to the editorial board of *Iskra*. In early December Lenin wrote an open letter to the editorial board of the Menshevik *Iskra*, under the heading, *Why I Resigned from the "Iskra" Editorial Board*; but, as the editors were too cowardly to publish it, he was compelled to get it out himself and send it to Russia as a separate leaflet.

In mid-January 1904, Lenin drafted an appeal "To the Party Membership", in which he criticised the opportunist views of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 378.

Menshevik *Iskra*. In the Council of the Party, too, where he now represented the Central Committee, he had to carry on a persistent struggle against the Mensheviks. This struggle grew so strained that he was compelled temporarily to leave the Council. Obviously, the Mensheviks aimed to gain control of the Central Committee as well; and of this Lenin warned the Bolsheviks in Russia, demanding that the local Party committees begin preparations for convening the Third Party Congress.

Deprived of so important a means for communicating with the Party as the newspaper had been, Lenin maintained close contact with the Party organisations by personal correspondence, writing and receiving, at this period, as many as 300 letters monthly. Thus, in his determined struggle against the splitting, disorganising activities launched by the Mensheviks, Lenin was always backed by the mass of the Party functionaries.

"One Step Forward, Two Steps Back". The Bolsheviks were faced with the urgent necessity of exposing the Mensheviks' anti-Party activities, their distortion of the facts of the struggle within the Party both at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and after the Congress. This Lenin did in his book *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (*The Crisis in Our Party*), written in February to May 1904 and published in Geneva in May 1904. In writing this book, Lenin thoroughly reviewed the minutes and resolutions of the Second Congress, the political groupings which had taken shape at the Congress, and the documents of the Central Committee and the Council of the Party.

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back presents a detailed analysis of the struggle during and after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., focussing the attention of the Party membership on two central points: the political significance of the division of the Party into a "majority" and a "minority", and the significance in point of principle of the stand taken by the new *Iskra* on questions of organisation. By his analysis of these two questions Lenin demonstrated incontrovertibly that the "majority" was the revolutionary, and the "minority" the opportunist wing of the R.S.D.L.P. The "minority" had manifested their opportunism as early as in the debate on the first clause of the Party Rules. The principal task of the Congress, Lenin pointed out, had been "to create a *real* party on the basis of the principles and organisational ideas that had been advanced and elaborated by *Iskra*... *Iskra*'s programme and trend were to become the programme and trend of the Party; *Iskra*'s organisational plans were to be embodied in the Rules of Organisation of the Party".*

This was not to be attained without a struggle. Step by step, Lenin exposed the opportunist vacillations, the political spinelessness of the anti-Iskrists and the unstable, "marsh" elements at the Congress. He took up in particular detail the discussion on the Rules, in which the opportunism of these elements had been most clearly manifested.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 211.

Examining the different formulations of the first clause of the Party Rules, which had aroused such heated debates at the Congress, Lenin stressed the necessity of understanding the true character of the shadings of opinion which had come out in this debate. He showed that it lay in essentially different understanding of the nature of the proletarian party and of its role in the working-class movement.

The debate on the Rules at the Second Congress, Lenin noted, was a clash between the adherents of bourgeois-intellectual individualism, whose views and interests were expressed by the opportunist wing of the Congress, led by Martov, and the adherents of proletarian organisation and discipline.

Ridiculing Martov's proposition that "*every striker* should have the right *to proclaim himself a Party member*", Lenin showed that by this proposition Martov at once carried his error to the point of absurdity. It was the direct and unquestionable duty of Social-Democracy to direct all manifestations of the class struggle of the proletariat, including strikes. But that did not mean that every striker was a member of the Party. "This example of the *'striker'* brings out with particular clarity the difference between the *revolutionary striving* to direct every strike in a Social-Democratic way and the *opportunist phrase-mongering* which proclaims *every* striker a Party member."*

Lenin exposed the shameful conduct of the Mensheviks after the Congress, condemning their use of such unworthy methods of struggle as disorganisation of the Party's activities, disruption of Party work. Describing the position of the new, Menshevik, *Iskra* as opportunism in matters of organisation, Lenin demonstrated that this stand was hostile to centralism and strict proletarian discipline, that it defended anarchism and organisational looseness and opened wide the doors of the Party to petty-bourgeois, opportunist elements.

As a result of the work of the old *Iskra* and of the Second Party Congress the Social-Democratic movement had made a great forward stride: it had attained ideological unity, as formulated in the Party Programme and the Party resolutions; it had broken away from the narrow circle outlook and isolation, and had brought together dozens of scattered groups to form a party. And after that, Lenin wrote, attempts were being made to drag the movement back, to destroy the Party, to disorganise the Party's work. The old *Iskra* had taught the truths of revolutionary struggle, had been an organ of militant Marxism. The new *Iskra* taught the worldly wisdom of yielding and getting on with opportunists. The old *Iskra* had earned the honour of being detested by the opportunists, both Russian and West European. The new *Iskra*, for its disorganising line, was praised by the most extreme opportunists.

The division of the R.S.D.L.P. into "majority" and "minority", Lenin showed, was a direct and inevitable continuation of the division of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 262.

Social-Democrats into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing which had long since made its appearance in other countries. A characteristic feature of opportunism is its vagueness, diffuseness, elusiveness. "An opportunist, by his very nature, will always evade taking a clear and decisive stand, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to 'agree' with both and reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, innocent and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth."*

Basing himself on the ideas of Marx and Engels on the proletarian party, Lenin in his book *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* developed these ideas into a consistent and integrated teaching applicable to the new conditions of the struggle of the proletariat in the period of imperialism. According to this teaching, the Party is a part of the working class, its vanguard, class-conscious and organised detachment, the highest form of its organisation, its political leader, without whose guiding activities it is impossible to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and to build a socialist society. Insistently, Lenin pointed out that "the stronger our Party organisations, consisting of *real* Social-Democrats, the less wavering and instability there is *within* the Party, the broader, more varied, richer and more fruitful will be the Party's influence on the elements of the working-class *masses* surrounding it and guided by it. The Party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused, after all, with the entire class."**

In *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* Lenin worked out very definite standards for Party life, standards which became law for all the Party's subsequent activities. Of these standards, the most important are: strict observance of the Party Rules and a common Party discipline by all Party members without exception; consistent application of the principles of democratic centralism and inner-Party democracy; utmost development of the independent activity of the broad masses of the Party membership; development of criticism and self-criticism. Further, Lenin considered that Party organisations, and the Party as a whole, could function normally only on the condition of strict observance of the principle of collective leadership, which would secure the Party against the adoption of chance or biased decisions.

Replying to the Party's enemies, who viewed with malicious glee the open controversy in which the proletarian party laid bare and discussed the shortcomings and defects in its work, Lenin wrote: "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."***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 404.
** *Ibid.*, p. 260.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 208.

The concluding passage of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* vividly demonstrates the tremendous importance Lenin attached to the organisation of the working class, the great guiding force he saw in the revolutionary proletarian party:

"In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organisation. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the 'lower depths' of utter destitution, savagery and degeneration, the proletariat can, and inevitably will, become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism being reinforced by the material unity of organisation, which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the senile rule of the Russian autocracy nor the senescent rule of international capital will be able to withstand this army."*

The Mensheviks were infuriated by *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. Plekhanov demanded that the Central Committee dissociate itself from Lenin's book. The conciliators on the Central Committee attempted to hold up its printing and distribution. But these efforts failed. In Russia, the Party organisations hailed the book with the warmest approval. It was widely circulated among the advanced workers. It was found by the police during arrests and searches in the homes of revolutionaries in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, Baku, Riga, Saratov, Tula, Orel, Ufa, Perm, Kostroma, Shchigri, Shaveli (Kovno Gubernia) and other parts of the country. Armed with Lenin's ideas, the Bolsheviks united more closely than ever, and set to work to improve their forms of organisation.

The campaign for the convocation of the Third Congress. The bitter struggle against the Mensheviks undermined Lenin's health. From the opening day of the Second Congress, his nerves had been strained to breaking point. Constantly agitated, taking deeply to heart the Mensheviks' intrigues, he became a victim of complete insomnia. Over-fatigue compelled him, in the end, to drop everything for a time. After a week of rest in Lausanne, he and Krupskaya, knapsack on back, set out into the mountains, following wild trails into the most remote retreats.

"The change of surroundings, the mountain air, solitude, wholesome physical fatigue and normal sleep," Krupskaya later recalled, "had a wonderful healing effect on Vladimir Ilyich. He regained his old vigour and spirit, his old cheerfulness."

After their trip through the mountains, Lenin and Krupskaya spent August in a little village by Lac de Bré (in the vicinity of Lausanne). Lenin took great pleasure in digging in the kitchen-garden with the Swiss peasant in whose home they lodged. This outdoor labour rested him splendidly. With A. Bogdanov and M. Olminsky, who were also summering here, Lenin discussed plans for further work. It was decided to start publication of a Bolshevik organ abroad, and to launch

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 415.

extensive agitation in Russia for the calling of the Third Congress. On his return to Geneva, in early autumn, Lenin moved from the suburbs to new quarters, closer to the central part of the city. He now spent much time at the library of the *Société de lecture*, which provided excellent working conditions. The members of the Society were rare visitors at the library, and Lenin had a room entirely to himself. He could pace up and down, as he was accustomed, when thinking out an article, and take books from the shelves at pleasure. There was nothing and no one to interrupt or hinder his work.

In Russia, at this time, a revolutionary crisis was brewing. For many months now the country had been plunged into the Russo-Japanese War, which had laid bare all the vice, all the rotten core, of the tsarist autocracy. Prophetically, Lenin wrote that the shameful end of this shameful war was not far off; that it would intensify the revolutionary unrest in the country and would call for the most determined offensive measures on the part of the party of the proletariat. And he worked to prepare the Party for the approaching revolution.

In view of the tasks facing the Party, it became more and more urgent that the Third Party Congress be called without delay. The Mensheviks persisted in their disruptive activities. Taking advantage of the vacillations and the conciliatory stand of Central Committee members V. Noskov, L. Galperin and L. Krasin, the Mensheviks gained control of the Central Committee as well. With all the Party centres in their hands, they could allow themselves still more freedom. They were actively supported, too, by the leaders of the Second International, who opposed the rise in Russia of a Marxist party of a new type.

A letter written by Potresov in May 1904 may be quoted here as a vivid instance of the subversive intrigues of the Mensheviks, and of the support they received from the leaders of the Second International. On receiving Kautsky's agreement to the publication in *Iskra* of his article against the Bolsheviks, Potresov wrote to Axelrod: "And so, the first bomb has been cast, and–God willing–Lenin will be blown up. I would attach the greatest importance to the elaboration of a joint plan of campaign against Lenin. If he is to be blown up, let him be blown up completely, methodically, systematically.... The question is, how to strike at Lenin. First of all, to my mind, there should be an attack by the big shots–Kautsky (already provided), Rosa Luxemburg, and Parvus.... But how is the next blow to be dealt? By all of us? Should we fill *Iskra* with our articles, and to what extent? And what if we put out a collective pamphlet against him?... Your proposal that we demand that the Central Committee recall Lenin from the Council seems to me hardly acceptable; and in any case, opinion must first be stirred up against him. Only then can we begin to think of anything in that order."*

* *The Social-Democratic Movement in Russia*, Russ. ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1928, Vol. I, pp. 124, 125.

Lenin exposed the true, opportunist nature of the Russian and West European renegades from Marxism. The blow thus dealt to international revisionism was of tremendous assistance towards the development of the revolutionary working-class movement the world over.

Although formally united with the Mensheviks in a single party, the R.S.D.L.P., the Bolsheviks followed an independent, consistently revolutionary line that accorded with the fundamental interests of the proletariat, the peasantry, and all the different peoples inhabiting Russia. In August 1904, a conference of twenty-two Bolsheviks held under Lenin's guidance in the vicinity of Geneva discussed the question of the Party crisis and how to end it. The conference adopted an appeal "To the Party", written by Lenin, which called upon the Party organisations to campaign for the immediate convening of the Third Congress, as the one possible way out of the crisis. This appeal became the Bolsheviks' fighting programme for Party unity.

In this most critical period of struggle within the Party Lenin had the support of the majority of the Party committees within Russia, which launched an active campaign for the Congress. In September to December, three regional conferences of Bolshevik committees (Southern, Caucasian and Northern) elected a Bureau of Majority Committees, which, under Lenin's leadership, began practical preparations for the Third Party Congress. In his draft "Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees", Lenin wrote: "Our slogan is the fight for the Party spirit against the circle spirit, the fight for the consistent revolutionary line against zigzags, confusion, and a reversion to *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ism, a fight in the name of proletarian organisation and discipline against the disrupters of organisation."*

As the immediate tasks of the Party, Lenin listed the establishment of ideological and organisational unity among the Bolsheviks, both in Russia and abroad; support of the publishing house for mass Party literature organised abroad; the struggle against the opportunism of the Mensheviks, who had seized control of the central bodies of the Party; preparations for the Third Party Congress, and assistance to the local Party committees.

The struggle with the Mensheviks grew more and more bitter. The Menshevik *Iskra* and Central Committee resorted to the most unworthy methods in their anti-Party splitting activity. Lenin called upon the Bolsheviks to break decisively with the Mensheviks and to convene the Third Congress of the Party without delay. "The centres," he wrote, "*have put themselves outside* the Party. There is no middle ground; one is either with the centres, or with the Party. It is time to draw the line of demarcation."**

In the struggle for the Party and the Party principle, Lenin attached particular importance, and devoted particular attention, to the founding

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 492-93.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 64.

of a Bolshevik newspaper. "The main thing now is to have such an organ," he wrote to the Bolsheviks in Russia. In early December 1904, Lenin addressed meetings in Paris and in Switzerland, reporting on the situation in the Party. The money collected at these gatherings was used for the founding of the newspaper. As an interesting detail, we may note that when the Socialist-Revolutionary group in Zurich learned that Lenin would be speaking there they wrote to their leader, Chernov, appealing for help: "We most urgently request that you speak here, and oppose Lenin, who, they say, will soon arrive. We will telegraph you when he arrives. Our existence here depends on your eloquence."*

At a meeting of Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin, held in Geneva on November 29 (December 12), the question of founding a Bolshevik Party organ was finally decided. The meeting endorsed Lenin's suggestion for the name of the newspaper–*Vperyod* (*Forward*)–and the text of the announcement of its publication. The name Lenin had chosen for the paper expressed the Bolsheviks' determination to push ever forward in the work of consolidating the Party and of organising the working-class movement, whereas the Mensheviks were trying to drag the Party back to the outlived stage of organisational disunity and the circle principle. The meeting set up the editorial board of the paper–Lenin, V. Vorovsky, M. Olminsky and A. Lunacharsky–and discussed the articles prepared for the first issue. As V. Karpinsky, a participant in the meeting, recalls, this free discussion and frank criticism, a striking manifestation of inner-Party democracy, deeply impressed the rank-and-file Party members.

In "A Letter to the Comrades (With Reference to the Forthcoming Publication of the Organ of the Party Majority)" Lenin stressed the designation of the newspaper *Vperyod* as an organ of the Russian working-class movement, and proposed that regular correspondence be set up between the Party functionaries and the editorial board, so that the paper would be the product of collective Party effort. Lenin was particularly anxious that worker correspondents contribute to the paper. He asked the comrades to inform him as to how the workers had received the news of the founding of a Bolshevik newspaper and the appeal to them to write for it. He considered it highly important that tens and hundreds of workers write directly to the paper, and that they give their addresses so that *Vperyod* might be sent to them. He advised the organisation of subscriptions to the paper among the workers.

Comrades leaving for Russia, M. Olminsky was later to recall, would be instructed by Lenin "to make it their particular care that workers write to the editorial board about the life of the factories. To every local functionary arriving from Russia, the question was put: 'Are there workers on your committee? And if not, why not?'

"One day two young committee members, just arrived from Odessa, answered:

" 'We tried having workers on the committee, but it didn't work out.'

" 'What was the trouble?'

" 'Why, they demanded right off that we put out leaflets about wages and other petty demands in the different factories.'

"With what indignation Ilyich came down on those young committeemen! How he lashed out at them, explaining that this demand of the Odessa workers proved more than anything else how necessary and beneficial it would be to have workers among the members of the committee."*

The first issue of *Vperyod* came out in Geneva on December 22, 1904 (January 4, 1905). The issue included several articles written by Lenin, among them "The Autocracy and the Proletariat" (editorial), "Good Demonstrations of Proletarians and Poor Arguments of Certain Intellectuals" and "Time To Call a Halt". Lenin stressed the fact that "the line of *Vperyod* is *the line of the old 'Iskra'*. In the name of the old *Iskra*, *Vperyod* resolutely combats the new *Iskra*".** Under Lenin's guidance, the newspaper *Vperyod* played an important part in the struggle to consolidate the Party and in the preparations for the Third Congress.

Lenin's long years of persistent and courageous revolutionary activity had gained him tremendous prestige among the Russian Social-Democrats. Inspired by his daring plan for the creation of the Party, the finest representatives of the working class, the Bolsheviks, rallied to his side. They were now ready for new battles–for the approaching revolutionary storm of 1905.

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* *Krasnaya Letopis* No. 1 (22), 1927, p. 35.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1960, Part 3, pp. 10-11.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 130.



Chapter Five

THE FIRST ASSAULT ON THE TSARIST AUTOCRACY

Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905, the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 would have been impossible.

LENIN

The year 1905 began with events that were destined to make history. On January 3, a strike broke out at the Putilov Works in St. Petersburg, involving 12,000 workers. The Putilov strike was supported by the workers of other St. Petersburg factories. On January 7, the strike became general.

The tsarist government did everything in its power to check the working-class movement. Police and soldiery–over forty thousand men–were concentrated in the capital, to terrorise the workers by violence and bloodshed and thus to squelch the movement before it could develop further. At the same time, steps were taken to intensify the activity of the Zubatov organisations–bogus workers' organisations, subsidised by the police, designed to divert the workers from political, revolutionary struggle and to direct the working-class movement along the reformist path. Particularly active was the Assembly of Russian

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1905.

Cover of the first edition of Lenin's book *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*



Lenin
Photo, 1910

Factory Workers of St. Petersburg, with a membership of almost nine thousand, led by the priest Gapon–an agent of the secret police. Gapon proposed that the workers march in procession to the tsar and present a petition stating their needs. Convinced that once the tsar learned of the intolerable hardships the people were suffering, he would be sure to help them, the workers supported Gapon's plan. The Bolsheviks warned the people that nothing could be attained by such a petition; but, realising that the procession could not be prevented, they decided to march in it together with the workers.

Bloody Sunday. Early in the morning on Sunday, January 9, the workers of St. Petersburg, carrying church banners, icons and portraits of the tsar, set out in procession towards the Winter Palace. Many had brought along their families–wives, children, old folk, all in festive spirits. Over 140,000 people joined in the march. As had been planned beforehand, the tsarist government gave the order to open fire on the unarmed marchers. Over a thousand were killed and nearly five thousand wounded, in this "dastardly, cold-blooded massacre of defenceless and peaceful people".*

The tsarist government had thought, by such bloodshed and violence, to crush the workers' fighting spirit, to teach the lesson of humility and obedience. But the government had miscalculated. The shooting down of peaceful, unarmed petitioners destroyed the people's naïve faith in the tsar's "kindness" and "mercy". Even the most backward workers now realised that neither appeals nor petitions could ease the unbearable conditions in which they lived; that freedom could be won only with arms in hand. The Zubatovite attempt to turn the working-class movement from the path of revolution ended in hopeless failure. Before evening fell, barricades were being thrown up in the working-class districts of St. Petersburg. The people began to rise in struggle against tsarism.

Lenin learned of the January 9 events on the following morning, with deep emotion. "Instinct drew us," recalls Krupskaya, "together with all the other Bolsheviks who had heard the news, to the emigrants' restaurant kept by the Lepeshinskys. We sought each other's company. But hardly a word was spoken–we were all so excited. We sang the revolutionary funeral march *You Have Fallen in the Struggle* . . . with grim set faces. The realisation came over everyone in a wave that the revolution had begun, that the shackles of faith in the tsar had been torn apart, and the hour was near when 'tyranny shall fall, and the people shall rise up, great, powerful, and free'. . . ."**

That same day Lenin wrote his article "Revolution in Russia", throbbing with the hot breath of revolution, vividly portraying the heroic struggle of the St. Petersburg proletariat on January 9. "Force against force. Street fighting is raging, barricades are being thrown up,

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 109.
** N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, pp. 110-11.

rifles are crackling, guns are roaring. Rivers of blood are flowing, the civil war for freedom is blazing up. Moscow and the South, the Caucasus and Poland are ready to join the proletariat of St. Petersburg. The slogan of the workers has become: Death or freedom!"* "Long live the revolution! Long live the insurgent proletariat!" Lenin proclaimed.

On January 9, 1905, Lenin wrote, the Russian working class received a momentous lesson in civil war; the revolutionary education of the proletariat made more progress in this one day than it could have made in months and years of drab, humdrum, wretched existence. Lenin assessed the workers' wrathful protest against tsarist bloodshed and repression as the beginning of revolution in Russia.

Lenin's assessment of the first Russian revolution. Compelled to live as a political emigrant, in the "accursed afar", as he bitterly put it, Lenin kept in close touch with events in Russia, reacting swiftly to each new development and subjecting it to thorough analysis and appraisal. With brilliant foresight, he had recognised the inevitability of revolution long before its outbreak, and had foreseen that it would involve the entire people. And he had worked indefatigably to prepare the Party for the coming social battles, in which the working class was destined to play the leading role.

When the revolution began Lenin stressed the tremendous influence that would be exerted on the world working-class movement by the heroic struggle of the proletariat in Russia. "The proletariat of the whole world," he wrote, "is now looking eagerly towards the proletariat of Russia. The overthrow of tsarism in Russia, so valiantly begun by our working class, will be the turning-point in the history of all countries; it will facilitate the task of the workers of all nations, in all states, in all parts of the globe."**

Lenin's instructive articles in the Bolshevik press, his numerous letters to Party organisations, his conversations with comrades arriving from Russia helped and guided the Party in the development of the revolution. "We worked in Russia, touring the committees and putting into practice the directions Ilyich gave us," recalls M. Lyadov. "Every now and again I'd go abroad, illegally, and spend a week or so there. I would tell Ilyich all the news, get his instructions and advice, and then back I'd go to look up the comrades from the Bureau of Majority Committees. And it was always a wonder to us, living as he did in Geneva, how clearly Ilyich grasped the situation, how well he understood all the tangled interrelations brought about in Russia by the unsuccessful war with Japan and by the bloodshed on the ninth of January."***

Lenin explained the nature of the first Russian revolution, its specific features as determined by the course of history. In character and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 71.
** *Ibid.*, p. 100.
*** *About Lenin*, Collection of Reminiscences, Russ. ed., Book 2. Edited and foreword by N. Meshcheryakov, Moscow, 1925, pp. 93-94.

objectives, he demonstrated, this was a bourgeois-democratic revolution, aimed at the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy, the abolition of landed proprietorship and other survivals of serfdom, and the establishment of a democratic republic. Notwithstanding its bourgeois-democratic nature, however, the leader and chief motive force in this revolution was the proletariat. Actually, as Lenin was later to show, the revolution was in some senses a proletarian one: both in the sense that the proletariat was its leading force, and in its specifically proletarian methods of struggle, most important among these being strikes and armed uprising. Only the proletariat–consistently and actively revolutionary, and ruthlessly uncompromising in its attitude towards the autocracy–could carry the revolution to complete victory over tsarism; and such victory could be achieved only if the proletariat gained the following of the peasantry, if proletariat and peasantry acted in close alliance.

The specific feature distinguishing the Russian revolution from earlier bourgeois revolutions in the West lay, as Lenin pointed out, in the fact that this was the first people's revolution to take place in the new historical conditions, when the bourgeoisie had already become a counter-revolutionary force, and the proletariat had grown into an independent political force capable of heading the revolutionary struggle against tsarism.

Lenin defined the tasks set before the Party, as the leader and organiser of the working class, by the revolution that had now begun. The revolution, he pointed out, created new conditions for the Party's activities and new ways and means of educating the masses. It was the duty of the Party organisations to launch broad organisational effort, to encourage revolutionary initiative, unhesitatingly to advance young, rising forces. To carry out its functions as the vanguard of the proletariat, the Party must reorganise its work and its methods of mass leadership as demanded by the new, revolutionary situation. "The more the popular movement spreads," Lenin wrote, "the more clearly will the true nature of the different classes stand revealed and the more pressing will the *Party*'s task be in leading the class, in becoming its organiser."* It was the duty, the fundamental task of the workers' party, he declared, persistently, day by day, to rally and unite the forces of the proletariat, preparing them for open mass struggle, for an armed uprising of the entire people to overthrow the autocracy.

Lenin devoted great attention, in that period, to the question of armed struggle by the masses, to the proper organisation of insurrection. Krupskaya writes: "Ilyich had not only reread and very carefully studied and thought over all that Marx and Engels had written about revolution and insurrection, but had read many books dealing with the art of warfare, made a thorough study of the technique and organisation of armed uprising. He had given more thought to this than people know."**

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 216.
** N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 114.

Of particular interest to Lenin was the experience of the Paris Commune. This, he felt, must be brought to the knowledge of Social-Democratic and advanced workers in Russia. He edited for publication in the newspaper *Vperyod* a Russian translation of the memoirs of General Cluseret, *Street Fighting,* in which the experience of the Paris Communards in barricade fighting is summed up and generalised, and wrote a preface to the memoirs and a brief biography of this famous general of the Commune. On March 5 (18), 1905, at a meeting of the Russian colony of political emigrants in Geneva, Lenin read a paper on the Paris Commune. "In the present movement we all stand on the shoulders of the Commune,"* Lenin reminded his hearers.

The Third Party Congress. During the revolution the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks intensified. The Mensheviks' opportunism was brought out with particular clarity by their appraisal of the motive forces in the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution, and by the tactics they adopted. To them, the bourgeoisie seemed the principal motive force in the revolution. This conception was a distortion of Marxism. It came of failure to understand the new conditions of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the era of imperialism; of failure to recognise the leading role of the working class in these new conditions.

The Mensheviks held that the chief concern of Social-Democracy and the working class should be to avoid frightening the bourgeoisie by "excessive" revolutionary spirit. Assigning the leading role in the revolution to the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks thereby depreciated not only the role of the proletariat, but also that of the proletarian party as leader and organiser of the masses.

Uncompromisingly, Lenin combated the opportunist line of the Mensheviks, exposing their limited, dogmatic, hackneyed political thinking, their cowardice and fear of the revolution, their betrayal of the interests of the proletariat and the peasantry. The Mensheviks, he wrote, *"fear* ... the leading role in the democratic revolution, and they are *terrified* at the thought of having 'to conduct the uprising'. The thought lurks at the back of their minds–only they do not yet dare to voice it outright in the columns of *Iskra*–that the Social-Democratic organisation *must not* 'conduct the uprising', that it must not strive to take full control over the revolutionary transition to the democratic republic."**

While Lenin and the Bolsheviks worked far in advance to prepare the proletariat for revolution, for active leadership in revolutionary events, the efforts of the Mensheviks were directed towards disarming the working class both ideologically and organisationally, educating it in the spirit of reformism and adaptation to the policy and tactics of the liberal bourgeoisie. Throughout the revolution, the Mensheviks pursued

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 8, p. 208.
** *Ibid.,* p. 173.

this anti-revolutionary, opportunist line, which Lenin subjected to annihilating criticism.

In his constructive approach to the problems raised by the revolution, Lenin emphasised the tremendous importance of the proletarian party. He demonstrated, in sharp ideological dispute with the Mensheviks, that tsardom could be overthrown, and a democratic republic established, only if the struggle of the revolutionary masses was directed by a party of the working class. The hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution and the vanguard role of the proletarian party–such was the basic idea which Lenin maintained in all his writings and in all his activities, which he upheld in implacable struggle against the Mensheviks.

The crisis within the R.S.D.L.P. intensified. There was hardly a question of tactics or organisation that did not arouse furious differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks in the local R.S.D.L.P. committees. The central Party bodies, which had been seized by the Mensheviks, had lost the respect of the majority of the Party functionaries. Such a state of affairs could not be tolerated, the more so that the rising tide of revolution demanded of the proletarian party concerted, united action, unerring tactics. To end the Mensheviks' opportunism in matters of organisation and tactics and to work out united tactics for the proletariat in the revolution, it was essential that a Party Congress be convened without delay. But this the Mensheviks did everything in their power to prevent.

The Bureau of Majority Committees, under Lenin's guidance, began preparations for the Third Party Congress. In an editorial written by Lenin, "The Convening of the Third Party Congress", the newspaper *Vperyod* presented a tentative agenda for the Congress. As the central issue at the Congress, it advanced the questions of organisation and tactics posed by the vast sweep of the revolutionary movement in the country.

Having mapped out a programme of work for the Congress, Lenin elaborated the basic ideas on tactics which he intended to present for discussion at the Congress, and drew up draft resolutions on all the principal questions to be considered. Also, he drew up a questionnaire designed to collect and generalise the practical experience of the Party organisations, indispensable for the revision of the Party Rules and for the drafting of the Congress resolutions. The collective experience of all Party members, Lenin felt, was of vital importance to the proper solution of the questions of organisation and tactics raised by the revolutionary movement. He proposed that all the Party committees, both Bolshevik and Menshevik, be invited to the Congress. But the Mensheviks refused to participate in the Third Congress. Instead, acting as a body entirely split away from the Party, they called a congress of their own, in Geneva. So few delegates arrived, however, that this gathering was termed merely a conference. Two congresses–two parties. was Lenin's comment.

The Third Party Congress was held in London. On their way to London some of the delegates stopped off at Geneva to confer with Lenin. In his talks with them Lenin inquired about the situation in their Party organisations, about the factories operating in their localities and the number of workers these factories employed; about the number of workers belonging to the Party, the mood of the peasants and the soldiery, etc. And he, in turn, explained to them his plans and views.

The Congress opened on April 12 (25), 1905. It was attended by delegates from twenty-one Bolshevik committees.

Lenin had been accredited by the Odessa Committee. Elected chairman of the Congress, Lenin directed all its work. He spoke on the principal items on the agenda: on the armed uprising, on the participation of the Social-Democrats in a provisional revolutionary government, on the attitude towards the peasant movement. The Congress Minutes record some 140 statements and proposals made by Lenin. He kept a detailed diary of the Congress sittings, and, as a member of the resolutions committee, drafted and edited resolutions and reports.

The Bolshevik Congress mapped out a strategic plan and revolutionary tactics for the Party in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. In substance, the plan was that the proletariat, acting in alliance with the whole of the peasantry and neutralising the liberal bourgeoisie, must carry the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its completion and thus clear the way for a socialist revolution.

The Congress discussed the question of armed uprising thoroughly, in every aspect. It adopted a resolution, drafted by Lenin, which declared it one of the major and most urgent tasks of the Party to organise the proletariat for direct struggle against the autocracy by means of armed uprising. The Congress instructed all Party organisations to explain to the proletariat not only the political significance, but also the practical, organisational aspect of the impending armed uprising, and the part to be played in the rising by mass political strikes. The Party organisations, the Congress resolution stated, must take energetic steps to arm the proletariat and to draw up a plan for the armed uprising and for direct leadership in it.

Speaking at the Congress, Lenin sharply criticised the opportunist views and actions of the Menshevik ideologists–Plekhanov, Martov and Martynov. In his report on the participation of the Social-Democrats in a provisional revolutionary government, Lenin demolished the Mensheviks' dogmatic arguments against Social-Democratic participation in such a government. Once the tsarist regime had been overthrown, he demonstrated, a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry would have to be set up, with a provisional revolutionary government as its political organ. And, if conditions were favourable, representatives of the Social-Democrats must enter this provisional government, there to combat ruthlessly all attempts at counter-revolution and to uphold the independent interests of the working class in order to carry the revolution to its completion.

Recalling this speech of Lenin's M. Tskhakaya writes: "He began his report very simply. Wrathfully exposing the opportunist theses propounded in the articles of the Menshevik *Iskra*, he opposed these rotten Menshevik ideas with firm revolutionary Marxist directives. He illustrated his thoughts abundantly with facts taken from the history of the international working-class movement and particularly from the current struggle of the workers in Russia in the early months of revolutionary 1905. Towards the end of his speech all the delegates were standing, listening with breathless attention, carried away by the iron logic of the theoretician, tribune and organiser of the revolution.

"When Ilyich had finished, there was round upon round of thunderous applause. Before us stood a great revolutionary, theoretician and tribune."*

Lenin's draft resolution on the relations between workers and intellectuals within the Social-Democratic organisations called upon the Party to "make every effort to strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses of the working class by raising still wider sections of proletarians and semi-proletarians to full Social-Democratic consciousness".** Lenin insisted that worker Social-Democrats be advanced to membership on the local Party centres and the all-Party centre. Workers, Lenin pointed out, have the class instinct, and, given some political experience, they soon become staunch Marxists. On learning that there was only one worker on the St. Petersburg committee, he exclaimed indignantly, "Disgraceful!" And in one of his speeches at the Congress he declared, "I could hardly keep my seat when it was said here that there are no workers fit to sit on the committees."***

The growth of the peasant movement in Russia made it essential that the Party formulate its agrarian platform. Now that the peasant movement was on the order of the day, Lenin said, the Party of the proletariat must officially declare its full support of this movement. It was the Party's first task to make the peasant masses politically conscious, to set up revolutionary peasant committees to carry through land reforms.

The Congress endorsed Lenin's formulation of the first clause of the Party Rules. It set up a single authoritative Party centre, the Central Committee, headed by Lenin; and the Central Committee appointed Lenin as its representative abroad, and also as responsible editor of the newspaper *Proletary*, established by the Congress as the Central Organ of the Party in place of *Iskra*.

After the Congress Lenin, with the other delegates, visited the grave of Karl Marx, as he had done after the Second Congress. In the days remaining before his departure from London, he took the delegates, for most of whom this was their first trip abroad, to see the sights of the British capital. Then, with a group of delegates, he left for Geneva.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 303.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 409-10.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 411.

During the brief stop in Paris, Lenin showed his comrades places connected with the revolutionary struggles of the French people, and with them visited the Pére Lachaise Cemetery, where the Paris Communards had been shot.

Lenin attributed the greatest importance to propaganda of the tactical line adopted by the Third Congress and to criticism of the Mensheviks' opportunist tactics.

In this a large part was played by the newspaper *Proletary*, continuing the traditions of the old *Iskra* and *Vperyod*. *Proletary* was published in Geneva over a period of six months, in which time it carried something like 90 articles and items written by Lenin. Its first issue contained three articles by Lenin devoted to the Congress: "Report on the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" (editorial); "The Third Congress", and a note to the resolution "How the Congress Was Constituted". It published also the most important of the Congress resolutions, most of which had been drawn up by Lenin.

Lenin informed the International Socialist Bureau–the executive and information body of the Second International–of the Third Party Congress and of its decision to consider the newspaper *Proletary* the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P. He arranged for the publication of the more important Congress documents in German and in French, to help advanced West European workers reach a proper understanding of the tactics of the Bolsheviks. In reply to the distorted account of the Third Congress resolutions published by Kautsky, Lenin sent an open letter of protest to the editorial board of the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, in which, addressing himself to the German Social-Democrats, he wrote: "If you really consider the R.S.D.L.P. to be a fraternal party, do not believe a word of what the so-called impartial Germans tell you about our split. Insist on seeing the documents, the authentic documents. And do not forget that prejudice is further from the truth than ignorance."*

The Third Congress decisions were received by the majority of the Party organisations in Russia as a militant programme of struggle for the victory of the democratic revolution; they served as the basis of the Party's entire practical activity.

"Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution". The most urgent task of the proletarian party in that period, Lenin held, lay in the thorough study and propaganda of the tactical resolutions of the Third Congress of the Bolsheviks, in attaining a clear understanding of the concrete tasks of the proletariat in the democratic revolution. It was essential, further, that the opportunist line of the Mensheviks be exposed before the whole of Social-Democracy and before the broad masses of the workers. This Lenin did in his book *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, written during June and July 1905 and published in Geneva at the end of July.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 532-33.

In *Two Tactics* Lenin set forth brilliantly the theoretical considerations behind the Third Congress decisions, behind the Bolsheviks' strategic plan and tactical line in the revolution. It was Lenin who first went into the question of the specific features of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, its motive forces and its prospects. Thoughts which he had set out briefly in articles and in speeches at the Congress received profound and thorough treatment in his *Two Tactics*. In this book he presented a comprehensive substantiation of the idea of hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution–the basis of the Party's strategy and tactics in that period. At the same time he subjected to devastating criticism the tactical line adopted by the Mensheviks at their Geneva conference, and pointed out the basic difference between the Bolshevik and the Menshevik tactics in the revolution.

The Mensheviks attempted to bolster up their opportunist tactics by reference to the bourgeois revolutions of the past. Drawing formal, unhistorical analogies between the revolution in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century and the West European bourgeois revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they maintained that in Russia, just as in Western Europe, it would be the bourgeoisie that played the leading role in the revolution. That being so, they argued, the task of the proletariat and of its party lay in supporting the liberal bourgeoisie, in urging it on from below; and to anything more than that, in the bourgeois revolution, the proletariat neither could nor should aspire. Lenin scouted this anti-Marxist assessment of the character and motive forces of the Russian revolution. The Mensheviks, he showed, argued along dogmatic, stereotyped lines. They evinced neither the ability nor the desire to understand the new conditions in which the revolution in Russia was taking place.

A scientific analysis of Russia's social-economic and political development and of the experience of the world revolutionary movement brought Lenin to the conclusion that the bourgeois revolution in Russia did not fall into the same category as the West European revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, inasmuch as it was taking place in a different historical period–in the era of imperialism–and at a far more advanced stage of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The Russian bourgeois revolution differed fundamentally from all past revolutions in that it was the proletariat, and not the bourgeoisie, that formed its leading force.

The Mensheviks did not understand the meaning of the concept, bourgeois revolution. As they saw it, a bourgeois revolution could be of advantage only to the bourgeoisie. There could be nothing, Lenin explained, more erroneous than such an idea. The elimination of all survivals of the serf-owning system, which hampered the free and rapid development of capitalism, was indisputably of advantage to the working class. But this could be accomplished only as a result of the victory of the bourgeois revolution. "The more complete, determined,

and consistent the bourgeois revolution," Lenin wrote, "the more assured will the proletariat's struggle be against the bourgeoisie and for socialism."*

Lenin showed, further, that in a certain sense a bourgeois revolution was more advantageous to the proletariat than to the bourgeoisie; that the bourgeoisie was anxious to restrict the scope of the revolution, to confine it within the framework of constitutional-monarchist law. It was to the interest of the bourgeoisie that the monarchy, and with it the entire feudal state machinery—courts, police, standing army—should not be smashed completely, that they be preserved so far as possible, for they would be needed to fight the workers and to defend bourgeois private property. It was to the advantage of the bourgeoisie that the introduction of bourgeois democracy be accomplished as slowly as possible, that it come gradually, by means of cautious reforms and not by means of revolution. The working class, on the other hand, would gain more if the essential measures in the direction of bourgeois democracy were accomplished by revolution rather than reform; if the monarchy and its institutions were removed from the nation's body by way of swift, direct amputation, which would do completely away with the old police autocracy. But to achieve this the working class must be the most active of the revolutionary forces. "Marxism," Lenin wrote, "teaches the proletarian not to keep aloof from the bourgeois revolution, not to be indifferent to it, not to allow the leadership of the revolution to be assumed by the bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, to take a most energetic part in it, to fight most resolutely for consistent proletarian democratism, for the revolution to be carried to its conclusion."**

Lenin posed the question: what were the social forces that determined the sweep of the revolution? And he proceeded to examine these forces. The bourgeoisie, he showed, was self-seeking and cowardly in its attitude towards the revolution; and as the revolution developed it would be more and more inclined to come to terms with tsarism, to desert to the side of counter-revolution. Only the proletariat, he demonstrated, could remain consistent to the end, could carry the democratic revolution to complete victory. This, however, it could not achieve alone, but only in close alliance with the peasantry, which had a vital interest in the complete destruction of the autocracy, in the establishment of a republic, in clearing Russian soil of all remnants of serfdom. Only the victory of the revolution could solve the land problem and other problems troubling the peasantry, could help it to emerge from the mire of semi-serfdom, from the murk of oppression and poverty, and improve its living conditions.

Lenin's Marxist appraisal of the character and motive forces of the Russian revolutionary process indicated the only road that could lead to the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia. The Mensheviks' assessment of the motive forces of the bourgeois

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 50.
** *Ibid.*, p. 52.

revolution, on the contrary, doomed the proletariat to complete isolation, to passivity and defeat; it played into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Comparing the resolutions of the Third Congress with those of the Menshevik conference, Lenin wrote: "One resolution expresses the psychology of active struggle, the other that of the passive onlooker; one resounds with the call for live action, the other is steeped in lifeless pedantry."*

Lenin held that the victory of a bourgeois-democratic revolution in which the proletariat played the leading role and was the principal motive force should result not in a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, but in a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Only such a dictatorship of the two revolutionary classes could put a complete end to tsarism and crush the resistance of the landowners and the big bourgeoisie. And it would have to rely on military force, on the armed masses, on an uprising—not on institutions "lawfully" or "peaceably" established.

The political organ of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry would be a provisional revolutionary government, backed by the armed people. The Mensheviks opposed Social-Democratic participation in a provisional revolutionary government. They regarded participation in such a government as something very like betrayal of the working class. Lenin, on the contrary, considered such participation not only possible, but—in favourable conditions—necessary, as it would land the government the will and the resolution to put into effect all the democratic demands of the worker and peasant masses, to carry the revolution to completion.

One of Lenin's great accomplishments was his theory of development of bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, based on Marx's well-known thesis concerning uninterrupted revolution and the combination of proletarian revolution and peasant war. Approaching Marxism creatively, Lenin developed this thesis as dictated by the new historical conditions, and advanced strategic slogans defining the tasks of the first and the second stages of the revolution.

*"The proletariat must carry the democratic revolution to completion, allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush the autocracy's resistance by force and paralyse the bourgeoisie's instability. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population, so as to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance by force and paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie."***

At this time Lenin's theory of socialist revolution already included such vital theses as those concerning hegemony of the proletariat in revolution; alliance of the working class and the peasantry; the leading

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 39.
** *Ibid.*, p. 100.

and directing role to be played by a party of a new type; the development of bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, and the manner of this development. Later, in 1915, these fundamental theses, together with his discovery of the law of uneven economic and political development of capitalism in the age of imperialism, were to lead Lenin to his brilliant conclusion that socialism might triumph, first in some one capitalist country. Lenin contributed to Marxism a new theory concerning socialist revolution, a theory of world-wide significance.

The ideas set forth in Lenin's *Two Tactics* retain to this day their political and theoretical importance to all the peoples of the world in the struggle for democracy and socialism.

Two Tactics, appearing on the upgrade of the revolution, was enthusiastically received by the Party organisations in Russia. "We all felt," recalls V. Adoratsky, a member of the Kazan organisation, "that the advancement of the revolution could not have been more correctly, more consistently, more brilliantly defended than by Vladimir Ilyich."* S. Gusev, at that time Secretary of the Odessa Party Committee, wrote to Lenin, "To my mind, your pamphlet will be of tremendous, if not epoch-making, importance. Particularly splendid is the revolutionary spirit that imbues its every line, and its amazing clarity and simplicity."** The book was distributed throughout Russia. In the course of 1905 it was twice republished within Russia.

The growth of revolution in Russia. The revolutionary struggle in Russia was steadily gaining momentum, the flame of revolution spreading the country over. The activity of the masses, led by the Bolsheviks, became more and more energetic, and more and more political in character.

The course of revolutionary development bore out the strategy and tactics which Lenin had worked out for the Bolshevik Party. The revolution was history's first test of the vitality of Lenin's thesis on the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, of his teaching on the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Lenin was leading the Party and the working class to armed uprising against the autocracy. "We will rise up in arms to overthrow the tsarist government and win freedom for the entire people. To arms, workers and peasants!"***–he wrote in a May Day leaflet.

A major advance in the development of the revolutionary movement against the autocracy was the mutiny on the battleship *Potemkin*, which set off a series of revolts in the armed forces. This mutiny, Lenin wrote, signified the open transition of a part of the army to the side of the revolution. It was of tremendous importance as the first attempt to form the nucleus of a revolutionary army.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 268.
** *Proletarskaya Revolutsia* No. 12 (47), 1925, p. 41.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 349.

To assist the insurgent battleship, Lenin sent M. Vasilyev-Yuzhin to Odessa. "'Try at all costs to get on the ship,' he said, 'and urge the crew to swift and resolute action, to an immediate landing. If necessary, don't hesitate to shell the government institutions. We must capture the city. Then, arm the workers immediately and launch the strongest agitation among the peasants. Muster all available forces of the Odessa organisation for this work. By leaflets and by word of mouth, call on the peasants to seize the landed estates and to unite with the workers for joint struggle. I attach immense, exceptional importance to the alliance of workers and peasants in the struggle that has begun.... Further, every effort must be made to capture the rest of the fleet. I am confident that most of the ships will join the *Potemkin*. But action must be resolute, swift and fearless. When that is done, send a torpedo boat for me immediately. I shall leave for Rumania.'

"'Do you seriously believe all this is possible?' asked Vasilyev-Yuzhin.

"'Of course I do,' Lenin confidently replied. 'Only we must act swiftly and resolutely. But, of course, not without account of the actual situation.'"*

Unfortunately, by the time Vasilyev-Yuzhin reached Odessa the *Potemkin* had already left port. The mutiny ended in defeat. One of its leaders, the sailor Matyushenko, visited Lenin in Geneva and described to him in full detail the heroic struggle waged by the crew of the revolutionary battleship.

Preparing the working class for armed uprising, Lenin urged upon the Party organisations the need for serious study of the military art, and for the formation of hundreds and thousands of fighting squads. He attached particular importance to the formation of armed detachments in the big cities and their working-class suburbs. He stressed the necessity of organising these detachments, of arming them with whatever came to hand, of teaching and training them. In a letter written in October 1905 to the Combat Committee of the St. Petersburg R.S.D.L.P. Committee, he outlined ways and means of preparation for armed uprising. On his instructions, military groups were formed in the local Party organisations to arrange for the acquirement and manufacture of weapons. The Bolsheviks launched extensive propaganda and agitation among the soldiers and sailors, and began to issue newspapers for the troops. There were more than twenty of these, of which the best known, *Kazarma* (*Barracks*), receiving direct guidance from Lenin, had a circulation of some 20,000 copies.

Lenin foresaw the manoeuvres to which the tsarist government might resort against the rising revolution. When, in an effort to stem the mounting tide of revolution, the tsar in August 1905 promised to convene a deliberative Duma and instructed Minister Bulygin to draft election regulations, Lenin saw through this subterfuge and called for

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, pp. 291-92.

a resolute boycott of the Duma. The Bulygin Duma, he declared, was no more than a bait, designed to divert the people from revolution. The proletariat of Russia thwarted the farce of the Bulygin Duma.

By the autumn of 1905 the revolutionary movement in Russia had attained unexampled power. The political strike called in October spread throughout the country, involving over two million people, of whom nearly a million were industrial workers. The strike slogans were, "Down with the autocracy!", "Long live the democratic republic!"

Lenin described the closing months of 1905 as a period of revolutionary whirlwind. In his article "The All-Russian Political Strike", written at the height of events, he declared: "We are witnesses of thrilling scenes of one of the greatest of civil wars, wars for liberty, mankind has ever experienced."* The All-Russian strike was growing into armed uprising. In October, as Lenin wrote elatedly, "the nation-wide strike ... reached its climax. The mighty arm of the proletariat, which was raised in an outburst of heroic solidarity all over Russia, brought the entire industrial, commercial and administrative life of the country to a standstill. It was the lull before the storm."**

The general political strike was a new form of proletarian struggle, unprecedented either in Russia or abroad. The peasant movement, too, spread as never before, embracing over one-third of all uyezds. The working people of all the nationalities inhabiting Russia were inspired by the revolutionary example of the Russian people. In the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Poland, the Baltic provinces, the Transcaucasia, Central Asia and other border areas of tsarist Russia, the working people waged a heroic struggle against the autocracy and the landowners. The Russian proletariat, led by the Bolsheviks, wholeheartedly supported the national liberation movement of the peoples of the Russian empire.

Alarmed by the growth of the forces of revolution, the tsar on October 17 issued a Manifesto promising "civil liberties" and a "legislative" Duma. This, too, Lenin had foreseen, predicting that, to stifle the revolution, the tsar would consent to a curtailed constitution. Now, noting this first victory gained by the revolutionary proletariat, Lenin wrote that the next step must be to expand the revolution; that the working class, carrying with it the peasantry, must launch a new, more powerful onslaught on the enemy and "sweep the throne of the bloodthirsty tsar from the face of the earth".

In the course of the general strike the proletariat in Russia set up the world's first mass proletarian political organisations, the Soviets of Workers' Deputies. Originally founded to lead the strike struggle, many of these Soviets became organs of the revolutionary movement as a whole. The Soviets, Lenin wrote, grew on soil tilled by political strike and fertilised with the blood of fighters for freedom. During October and November 1905 Soviets were set up in many towns and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 392.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 427-28.

working-class centres. As events developed and the strike struggle grew into uprising, the Soviets became organs of the armed struggle of the masses, the embryo of a new, revolutionary state authority. In later years, in his treatment of the form to be assumed by the government of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin was to base his conclusions on the experience gained in the revolution of 1905-07 and on the work of these first Soviets.

Lenin's first appraisal of the Soviets as organs of revolt and as the embryo of a new, revolutionary authority was set forth in his programme article "Our Tasks and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies (A Letter to the Editor)", written in early November 1905 in Stockholm, where he had stopped off on his way to Russia. Lenin regarded the St. Petersburg Soviet as the embryo of an all-Russian political centre, deeply rooted in the people and enjoying the confidence and support of the broad masses. The Soviet of Workers' Deputies, he wrote, should strive to include deputies from all factory and office workers, domestic servants, farm labourers, etc., from all who wanted and were able to fight for a better life for the working people.

He emphasised the necessity of turning the Soviet of Workers' Deputies into a provisional revolutionary government whose programme would include "the complete realisation of political freedom ... the convocation of a national constituent assembly that would enjoy the support of a free and armed people and have full authority and strength to establish a new order in Russia".*

The article "Our Tasks and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies" was written for the legal newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*), published in St. Petersburg. It did not appear in this paper, however, and the manuscript was found only in 1940.

In revolutionary Russia. Lenin longed to return home. He passionately dreamed of the time when he would be able to speak not from the "hateful 'abroad' of an exile", "not from the cursed remoteness of Geneva, but at meetings of thousands of workers in the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg, at the free village meetings of the Russian 'muzhiks' ".** At the height of the general strike he enthusiastically wrote: "It's a fine revolution we're having in Russia, take my word for it! We hope to be returning soon. Matters are shaping that way with astonishing speed."***

Lenin arrived in St. Petersburg on November 8, 1905, and immediately launched vigorous revolutionary activity, directing the work of the Central and St. Petersburg Bolshevik committees, addressing meetings and conferences in St. Petersburg and in Moscow, conferring with Party functionaries, writing articles for the Bolshevik press. Under his leadership, the Bolsheviks carried on energetic preparations for armed uprising.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 24-25.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 288.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, p. 311.

On his first day in St. Petersburg Lenin met L. Krasin, a member of the C.C., and other Party functionaries at a secret Bolshevik meeting place. On the same day he visited the Preobrazhensky Cemetery, where the victims of "Bloody Sunday" lay buried, to bow his head in grief over the graves of the St. Petersburg proletarians. Lenin's heart beat high with love for the working people. The people's suffering and grief were his suffering and grief; the people's struggle for freedom and happiness was his struggle.

In the evening, at an enlarged meeting of the St. Petersburg Bolshevik Committee, Lenin defined the tasks of the Party with respect to the Soviets—a question on which, at that time, not all members of the Party were quite clear in their minds. Lenin put the question very clearly. The Party, he said, must guide the Soviets, direct their activity; but it must not substitute itself for them, nor dissolve itself in them. As M. Essen recalls, Lenin "gave us a piece of his mind for having allowed the Mensheviks to gain leadership in the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.* With the arrival of Lenin our fight for the Soviets intensified".**

On the following day, November 9, Lenin called a joint meeting of the Bolshevik members of the editorial board of the legal newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* and the local Party functionaries. He now headed the editorial board, and *Novaya Zhizn* became in effect the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P. Lenin enlisted as contributors some of the Party's finest writers, among them such outstanding Party publicists as M. Olminsky, V. Vorovsky, A. Lunacharsky, V. Bonch-Bruyevich. Maxim Gorky was an active contributor, and greatly helped the paper financially as well. Circulation rose almost to 80,000 copies.

The paper's editorial offices on Nevsky Prospekt were used as a secret meeting place for Party comrades, and also as premises for meetings of the Central and the St. Petersburg committees. It was here that Lenin and Maxim Gorky first met. Recalling this occasion, M. Andreyeva, Gorky's wife, writes: "Lenin came out of one of the back rooms and strode quickly to meet Gorky. They shook hands lengthily. Lenin was in high spirits. Gorky, as always when embarrassed, spoke in an even deeper bass than usual. Over and over, he repeated:

" 'So this is what you're like.... Fine, fine! I'm very glad, very glad.' "***

In the evening they met again, at a sitting of the Central Committee. Lenin went into every aspect of the work connected with the publication of *Novaya Zhizn*, and was a frequent visitor at the print-shop. He read every line to be printed in the paper, from important articles to the briefest of items. The main material, as a rule, was discussed at editorial conferences, which Lenin called regularly. His own articles, too, were read at these conferences, and—as always—he turned a ready ear to any suggestions or criticism that his comrades

* Reference is to the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 257.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 324.

had to offer. "Generally speaking," Lunacharsky writes, recalling their joint work on *Novaya Zhizn*, "Lenin was always strongly in favour of collective effort in the true sense of the term; that is, all of us putting our heads together to work a rough draft into a finished exposition."*

As in the old *Iskra*, as in *Vperyod* and *Proletary*, Lenin was the heart and brain of *Novaya Zhizn*. Under his editorship the paper exerted tremendous influence on the life and work of the Party. Articles by Lenin appeared regularly on its pages. On November 10, it started publication of the article, "The Reorganisation of the Party", the first to come from Lenin's pen after his return from abroad. Impatient, as always, of dogmatism and stereotype, Lenin made it clear that in this new, revolutionary period it would be mistaken for the Party to confine itself to its old methods of work. He called for a radical reorganisation of the Party's work, taking full advantage of the possibilities for open, legal activity that had been gained by the general political strike of October 1905. The Party, he wrote, should recruit new members more freely, particularly among the workers; the elective principle should be introduced in setting up Party organs; and, while the underground Party apparatus must be preserved, legal and semi-legal Party organs and affiliated organisations should be built up.

The new conditions of Party work, in which the difference between the illegal and the legal press was beginning to disappear, brought sharply forward the question of Party literature. In this connection Lenin wrote his famous article, "Party Organisation and Party Literature", which appeared in *Novaya Zhizn* on November 13. The importance of this article cannot be overestimated. It advanced and substantiated the principle of the Party spirit in literature, subsequently to become a guiding principle for all progressive writing. Literature, Lenin wrote, "must become Party literature. In contradistinction to bourgeois customs, to the profit-making, commercialised bourgeois press, to bourgeois literary careerism and individualism, 'aristocratic anarchism' and drive for profit, the socialist proletariat must put forward the principle of *Party literature*, must develop this principle and put it into practice as fully and completely as possible."**

To the socialist proletariat, Lenin wrote, literature cannot be a means of enriching individual groups or persons, cannot be a private affair, independent of the common cause of the working class. It must become a part of the common proletarian cause, inseparable from the Party's organised, planned work. To be sure, Lenin explained, literature is least of all subject to mechanical adjustment or levelling; here greater scope must undoubtedly be allowed to personal initiative and individual inclinations, to thought and fantasy, form and content. This, however, does not refute the proposition that literature must by all means and necessarily be firmly linked with Party work.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 309.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 45.

Lenin exposed the servitors of capital who hypocritically lauded "freedom of the press" in bourgeois society. He showed that this notorious freedom is no more than a bourgeois or anarchistic phrase. The so-called freedom of the writer, artist, or actor in capitalist society is simply masked dependence on the money-bags, on bribery. To this hypocritically free literature, in reality linked to the bourgeoisie, the socialists oppose a really free literature, openly linked to the proletariat. "It will be a free literature, because the idea of socialism and sympathy with the working people, and not greed or careerism, will bring ever new forces to its ranks. It will be a free literature, because it will serve, not some satiated heroine, not the bored 'upper ten thousand' suffering from fatty degeneration, but the millions and tens of millions of working people—the flower of the country, its strength and its future."*

In all, thirteen articles by Lenin appeared in *Novaya Zhizn*. The paper existed a little over a month. It was suppressed by the tsarist government on December 2. On December 3, its last, 28th issue, appeared illegally. But the Party could not work without a newspaper. Beginning with the spring of 1906 the Bolsheviks began to put out, in place of *Novaya Zhizn*, a new legal paper of which Lenin was factually the editor. The new paper appeared under various names: *Volna* (*Wave*), *Vperyod* (*Forward*), *Ekho* (*Echo*). In July it too was suppressed.

In mid-November 1905, Lenin delivered a report, "A Criticism of the Agrarian Programme of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party", at a meeting of St. Petersburg Party functionaries held on the premises of the Free Economic Society. This was Lenin's first opportunity to address so large an audience within Russia. The hall was filled to capacity, and Lenin's appearance on the platform was met with a thunder of applause. But his report was interrupted by the police, and was completed only several days later, in a privately owned school-house.

Lenin directed the work of the Bolshevik group in the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies. Shortly after his return from abroad he addressed a meeting of the Soviet discussing measures to combat the lock-out organised by the capitalists in answer to the workers' revolutionary introduction of the eight-hour working day in the St. Petersburg factories. Lenin's speech evoked an ovation, and the resolution he proposed was adopted with applause and cries of enthusiasm. Leaving the hall after this meeting, the workers said of Lenin: "He knows what to do. He knows how to lead the working class."

A development of great importance to the further activities of the Bolshevik organisations was the first Bolshevik conference, held in Tammerfors, Finland, in mid-December 1905.

Lenin was elected chairman of the conference. He delivered two reports: on the current situation and on the agrarian question. The conference passed resolutions moved by Lenin, on the reorganisation of the Party and on the agrarian question. A number of amendments,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 48-49.

necessitated by the development of the revolution, were introduced into the Party's agrarian programme, and a decision was taken on the restoration of Party unity. The Central Committee was instructed to convene a unity congress of the R.S.D.L.P.

The armed uprising in Moscow. In mid-November V. Shantser, Secretary of the Moscow Committee and standing C.C. representative in the Moscow organisation, and M. Lyadov, a member of the Moscow Soviet, went to St. Petersburg on the instructions of the Moscow Committee to establish contact with the C.C. and with Lenin personally. This meeting of representatives of the Moscow Bolsheviks with Lenin was to exert tremendous influence on the entire subsequent activity of the Moscow Party Committee and also of the Moscow Soviet, which was under Bolshevik leadership. Lenin gave the Moscow comrades clear directions. He considered that, first and foremost, it was necessary, over the heads of the Mensheviks, to unite the workers. As Lyadov recalls it, Lenin said: "In Moscow the Soviet puts into effect whatever the M.C. decides; through the Soviet the Moscow Committee reaches and influences the non-Party working masses. Here in St. Petersburg, the Soviet trails behind the non-Party masses, doing everything possible to discredit the very idea of armed uprising. For you, it will be easy to carry the workers with you and to set up a real, militant Bolshevik organisation that will be respected by all the workers."

On December 5, a conference of the Moscow Bolsheviks unanimously resolved to declare a general strike and commence armed struggle. On December 7, barricade fighting began between the Moscow workers and the tsarist troops. The chief centres of the armed uprising were in the Presnya, Zamoskvorechye and Rogozhsko-Simonovsky districts of the city. Almost a thousand barricades were put up in the city streets. In the Presnya district, the fighting was particularly determined. For nine days the Moscow workers battled heroically, with arms in hand.

At several conferences, attended by Lenin, the St. Petersburg Bolsheviks discussed ways and means of assisting the Moscow workers. One of these conferences outlined measures to prevent the dispatch of troops from St. Petersburg to Moscow. It was decided to blow up the tracks, thereby holding up the troop trains; to seize the arms depot at Okhta, with the help of revolutionary-minded soldiers from the railway battalion and the sappers, and to arm the workers. But all attempts to prevent the dispatch of troops to Moscow failed. The government succeeded in sending off the Semyonov Regiment and also a number of other regiments, with orders to suppress the Moscow uprising.

At a meeting of the C.C. held in St. Petersburg on the evening of December 17, M. Lyadov, just arrived from Moscow, delivered a detailed report on the situation there. On Lenin's proposal, the C.C. instructed the Moscow Committee to call an organised halt to the armed struggle. The C.C. declared unsatisfactory the work of the military organisation of the St. Petersburg Committee, which had failed to render assistance to the Moscow workers.

In January 1906, Lenin visited Moscow and attended a meeting of the Moscow Committee's Lecture Bureau at which the experience of the December armed uprising was discussed. Lenin spoke highly of the heroism and courage evinced by the Moscow workers, and took the keenest interest in every aspect of their struggle. I. Skvortsov-Stepanov recalls that Lenin "showed an avid interest... in everything connected with the Moscow uprising. I can still see his glowing eyes, and the smile of pleasure that lit his face when I told him that nobody in Moscow was despondent–least of all the workers; that, on the contrary, spirit was high.... Vladimir Ilyich made me do all the talking. He spoke very little himself, except to demand more and still more facts."*

The armed uprising of the Moscow workers was defeated; but its significance was tremendous. Years later, Lenin was to write: "Before the armed uprising of December 1905, the people of Russia were incapable of waging a mass armed struggle against their exploiters. After December they were no longer the same people. They had been reborn. They had received their baptism of fire. They had been steeled in revolt. They trained the fighters who were victorious in 1917...."** The heroism of the Moscow workers, Lenin wrote, set an example of struggle for all the labouring masses of Russia. Their fight was not fought in vain. This first breach in the tsarist monarchy slowly but steadily widened, weakening the old medieval order. For the first time in history the revolutionary struggle had attained such development, such power, that armed uprising was conjoined with mass strike action.

After the Moscow events revolts flared up, in December 1905 and January 1906, in other parts of the country as well: in Nizhny Novgorod, Rostov-on-Don, Novorossiisk, the Donbas, Yekaterinoslav, Motovilikha, Ufa, Krasnoyarsk, Chita. Armed uprisings on a large scale began in Transcaucasia, Poland, Finland and the Baltic provinces. But all these scattered risings were brutally suppressed.

When the December armed uprising was defeated, the Mensheviks declared that the strike had been inopportune and should not have been started; that the forces of the proletariat, as they–the Mensheviks–had foreseen, had proved inadequate for victory. The proletariat, Plekhanov declared, "should not have taken to arms". Lenin indignantly denounced this apostasy of the Mensheviks. "On the contrary," he declared, "we should have taken to arms more resolutely, energetically and aggressively." In his article "Lessons of the Moscow Uprising" Lenin analysed the causes of defeat and outlined basic tactics by which the Party and the proletariat should be guided in preparation of armed uprising and in its conduct. First, arms must be taken up more resolutely, and it must be explained to the masses that a peaceful strike alone was not sufficient; that armed struggle was necessary. Second, an active fight must be waged for the troops, to win over wavering units. Third,

* *Leningradskaya Pravda* No. 17, January 21, 1926.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 373.

offensive tactics must be pursued. Citing the well-known statement of Marx and Engels that insurrection must be treated as an art, Lenin developed this idea in connection with the new situation, the new conditions in which the proletarian struggle now found itself. Fourth, Lenin pointed out, the participation of the rural population in the common struggle must be ensured.

Against the Cadets. Throughout the revolution the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, waged an implacable struggle against the Cadets (Constitutional Democrats)–the party of compromise with tsarism. Lenin unmasked the Cadets, with their call for petty reforms to "pacify" the people. He exposed the duplicity and cowardice of these counter-revolutionaries, their false talk of democracy.

"The proletariat is fighting, the bourgeoisie is stealing its way into power. The proletariat is shattering the autocracy by its struggle; the bourgeoisie clutches at the sops thrown to it by the enfeebled autocracy. Before the whole people the proletariat holds on high the standard of struggle; the bourgeoisie raises the flag of minor concessions, deals and haggling"*–such was Lenin's appraisal of the revolutionary line of the proletariat and the self-seeking of the liberal bourgeoisie.

In his pamphlet *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party* (March 1906) Lenin referred to the Cadets as the "worms in the grave of the revolution". He showed that the Cadets were opposed to armed uprising; that they regarded the Duma as a sort of plaster to draw the attention of the people away from revolution; that their tactics would inevitably boil down to manoeuvring between the autocracy and the revolutionary people. Essentially, the Cadets' tactics consisted in the effort to utilise the popular struggle in their own ends, despite their fear of revolutionary popular action. More than anything else, they feared the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution. To the best of their ability, they vilified revolution and extolled and glorified tranquil social development–the "dray-horse" way, as Lenin so aptly termed it; the way that did not wipe out the survivals of serfdom. "When human history rushes forward with the speed of a locomotive, he calls it a 'whirlwind', a 'torrent', the 'vanishing' of all 'principles and ideas'. When history plods along at dray-horse pace, the very symbol of it becomes reason and method"**–such was the point of view of the Cadets.

The objective conditions in which the Russian revolution found itself at that time called for a determined class struggle for democratic liberties, combining both Duma and extra-Duma activity. The parliamentary activity of the workers' party was bound up with all other aspects of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. The parliamentary game played with such gusto by the bourgeois politicians was carried on behind the backs of the people. At such a time, Lenin warned,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 28.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, pp. 252-53.

there could be nothing more harmful, more dangerous, than constitutional illusions, which were no more and no less than opportunist, bourgeois poison that the Cadet press was injecting into the people's minds. It was the task of the proletarian party to combat these illusions, systematically explaining to the workers and the peasants that, as before, the principal form of the social movement was the direct revolutionary struggle of the broad masses. Further, Lenin exposed the attitude of the Mensheviks, who dragged in the wake of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie.

In this pamphlet Lenin summarised the experience gained by the Russian proletariat in the struggle of October-December 1905–a struggle which he regarded as an important advance in the cause of the working class the world over. The events of 1905 confirmed a basic proposition of Marxism: that the only thoroughly revolutionary class in contemporary society, and therefore the vanguard fighter in any revolution, is the proletariat. In the October-December fighting the working class had employed tactics proposed in a resolution adopted by the Third Party Congress, which had stressed the importance of combining mass political strikes with insurrection. Lenin wrote highly of the creative role of the people in the revolution, expressed in the conquest of political freedom by arbitrary seizure; in the establishment of new, self-constituted organs of revolutionary authority, not envisaged by tsarist law and defying this law; in the use of violence by the people to counter violence against the people.

Lenin refuted the Mensheviks' opportunist view on the Soviets as "organs of self-government" and emphasised again the historic role of the Soviets as the embryo of dictatorship of the revolutionary people, of the vast majority over the minority. He enriched the idea of hegemony of the proletariat with new content, based on the experience gained in the revolution.

Preparations for the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. At the Congress. The development of the revolution brought once more to the forefront the urgent need for a Party Congress. The worker Social-Democrats were demanding Party unity. Lenin and the Bolsheviks, supporting this demand, at the same time held that unity with the Mensheviks was possible only on the ideological and organisational basis of revolutionary Marxism. In letters to the Central Committee written in August-October 1905 Lenin pointed out that, preparing for unity with the Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks must put forward clear-cut ideas on Rules and tactics, on which they must take a firm stand. In the desire for unity, he insisted, the Bolsheviks must not gloss over fundamental differences on questions of revolution. It was in this spirit that the Bolsheviks, seeking Party unity, proposed to the Mensheviks that a joint Congress be called.

In the form of a series of draft resolutions, Lenin mapped out the Bolshevik tactical platform to be submitted to the Congress. Lenin made a special trip to Moscow, in early March 1906, to lead discussion of this

platform at a number of Bolshevik conferences and to report to an enlarged meeting of the Moscow Committee on the questions to be settled at the Party Congress.

On his return from Moscow Lenin organised a similar conference of the St. Petersburg Bolsheviks. After discussion of the platform, this conference elected Lenin to a committee set up to edit the final text; and shortly afterwards the "Tactical Platform for the Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P." was published in the newspaper *Partiiniye Izvestia* (*Party News*). All but one of the resolutions entering into the platform were written by Lenin.

In the preparations for the Fourth Congress Lenin devoted much attention to the agrarian question, participating in the work of a committee set up by the United C.C. R.S.D.L.P. to draft an agrarian programme for submission to the Congress. In a pamphlet entitled *Revision of the Agrarian Programme of the Workers' Party*, written in the latter half of March, he formulated the basic principles of the report on the agrarian question which he was to deliver at the Congress, and traced the historical development of Russian Social-Democracy's views on this question.

During March and early April the tactical platforms of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks were widely discussed in the Party. Lenin addressed several of the numerous discussion meetings held in St. Petersburg.

Early in April Lenin left for Stockholm, where the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was to meet. The Congress was held April 10 to 25 (April 23 to May 8), 1906, in the Stockholm People's House, placed at the disposal of the delegates by the Swedish Social-Democrats. Lenin was elected to the presidium of the Congress, and served as chairman at several of its sittings. The principal questions discussed were the agrarian programme, the current situation and the tasks of the proletariat as a class, and the Party's attitude towards the State Duma.

The Congress was marked by bitter struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Heated debate arose over the agrarian question. The text of Lenin's report to the Congress on this question, unfortunately, has not been found, and only his concluding remarks are at present available. Lenin and the Bolsheviks upheld at the Congress a programme of nationalisation of the land. The Bolshevik agrarian programme called uncompromisingly for the overthrow of the autocracy; it called on the peasants to rise in revolution against the tsar and the landowners. Speaking in defence of nationalisation, Lenin brought out the significance of the peasant committees, whose establishment he regarded as a call to the people, oppressed by the survivals of serfdom and the police regime, immediately and most resolutely to do away with these survivals and rid themselves of landowners and government officials.

Lenin emphasised the indissoluble connection between agrarian revolution and political revolution, declaring at the Congress: "We must

plainly and definitely say to the peasants: if you want to carry the agrarian revolution to the end, you must also carry the political revolution to the end; for unless the political revolution is carried to the end there will be no durable agrarian revolution, and perhaps none at all."*

In his concluding remarks on the agrarian programme Lenin forcefully criticised the objections to nationalisation of the land raised by Plekhanov, Maslov and other Mensheviks, who at the Congress advocated a programme of municipalisation, that is, putting the landed estates into the hands of the local self-government bodies or Zemstvos (municipalities). The Menshevik programme of municipalisation was based on expectation of a revolution that would go only half-way; on the idea of a gradual, peaceful reform of the landowner-autocratic system. It represented a deal with the landowners. Taking issue with the Mensheviks, Lenin advanced two basic arguments: first, that the peasants themselves would never agree to municipalisation; and second, that without a democratic republic, without the fully guaranteed sovereignty of the people and without electiveness of government officials, municipalisation would be harmful.

Further, Lenin criticised as mistaken and inadequate the point of view advocated by S. Suvorov (Borisov), J. Stalin, V. Bazarov-Rudnev and a number of other delegates, who called for division of the confiscated landed estates among the peasantry as their private property. The supporters of this demand failed to take it into account that the bourgeois-democratic revolution could develop into a socialist revolution. They proceeded from the mistaken premise that there must be a lengthy interval between the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist revolutions. Later, criticising the programme of "division", Lenin explained that this programme was mistaken because its proponents regarded the peasant movement only in the light of the past and present, and gave no consideration to the future. "The advocates of division *rightly* understand what the peasants say about nationalisation, they *rightly interpret what they say*; but the point is that they do not know how to convert this correct interpretation into *an instrument for changing the world*, into an instrument of progress. We are not suggesting that we should impose nationalisation on the peasants instead of division.... What we are suggesting is that a socialist, in ruthlessly exposing the peasants' petty-bourgeois illusions about 'God's land', should be able to show them the road of progress."**

Lenin made the report on the current situation and the class tasks of the proletariat, and a co-report on the question of policy in regard to the State Duma. He also spoke on the armed uprising and on questions of organisation. He was a member of the committee set up to draft the Rules of the R.S.D.L.P. The Congress adopted Lenin's formulation of the first clause of the Party Rules, dealing with Party membership,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 282.
** *Ibid.*, p. 345.

which was so obviously right that the Mensheviks could no longer oppose it.

In his speeches at the Congress Lenin criticised the opportunist tactics of the Mensheviks, their negation of hegemony of the proletariat and of armed uprising, their idea of the tsarist Duma as a "centre of the revolutionary forces of the country". Ruthlessly, he exposed the sham democracy and the political vacillation of the Cadets.

The Mensheviks, at this Congress, were in the majority; and this predetermined the Congress decisions. On the most vital questions it was the Menshevik resolutions that were adopted, including the programme of municipalisation of the land. The resolutions adopted in regard to armed uprising offered no clear appraisal of the experience of the October-December battles of 1905.

Though the Bolshevik line was not accepted by the Congress, and the Mensheviks secured a majority on the Central Committee, Lenin never lost his confidence in eventual victory over the Mensheviks, in the inevitable triumph of revolutionary Marxism, revolutionary strategy and tactics.

Feeling that the broad masses of the workers must be informed of the struggle that had taken place at the Unity Congress, Lenin wrote "An Appeal to the Party by Delegates to the Unity Congress Who Belonged to the Former 'Bolshevik' Group". This appeal, which was discussed and endorsed by a conference of the Bolshevik delegates, criticised the Menshevik resolutions adopted by the Congress and exposed the opportunist line of the Mensheviks, their renunciation of revolution. A thorough analysis of the work of the Unity Congress was presented in Lenin's pamphlet *Report on the Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (A Letter to the St. Petersburg Workers)*, written in May and published in June 1906. Shortly after his return from Stockholm to St. Petersburg, Lenin delivered reports on the Congress to Party functionaries and to a number of district Social-Democratic organisations.

In the summer of 1906, the revolutionary movement in Russia began a new upswing. There was a wave of political strikes; the peasant struggle against the landowners flared up again, and there were cases of unrest in army units.

The E.C. of the St. Petersburg Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., in a resolution drafted by Lenin on July 16, delegated several Party members to Sveaborg (near Helsingfors), where the situation was extremely acute and an outbreak might be expected at any moment. On July 17, the soldiers and sailors of the Sveaborg garrison mutinied. On July 19, mutiny broke out in Kronstadt as well. Here the mutineers seized Fort Constantin and attempted to rouse the garrison and the crews of the ships in the harbour. On July 20, Lenin recommended to the Bolsheviks on the St. Petersburg Committee that a strike be called in support of the Sveaborg and Kronstadt risings. Both risings, however, were brutally crushed.

At workers' meetings. Hiding from the police. To this day but little is known of Lenin's vast practical activity in the years of the first Russian revolution. His energy and capacity for work were astounding. He found time for everything: lectures for propagandists on the tasks of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement and on the agrarian programme of the Party; participation in meetings of the Vasilyevsky Ostrov District Committee of the Party, and visits to secret study-circles among the workers of the Putilov Plant, at which he discussed questions of tactics. He was a familiar figure at Party meetings and at workers' gatherings, at meetings of intellectuals and of students, at the quarters of the clerks' and accountants' trade union, the shop-assistants' union, etc. A large part of his speeches and reports at such gatherings was devoted to substantiation and defence of the Bolsheviks' Duma tactics, to exposure of the Mensheviks' policy, and to the agrarian question.

Always eager for contact with the masses, Lenin missed no opportunity to meet and talk with working people. On May 9, 1906, he addressed an audience of three thousand, in their majority workers, gathered at the Panina People's House* in St. Petersburg. Before Lenin, this meeting had been addressed by the well-known Cadets Vodovozov and Ogorodnikov and by representatives of other parties. The Cadets had tried to clear themselves of the charge that they were in collusion with the tsarist government, maintaining that there had been no agreement, but merely talks of a private, informative nature. The last to take the floor was some unknown person introduced as Karpov. Karpov was Lenin.

"Ilyich was terribly agitated," Krupskaya recalls. "He stood silent for about a minute, very pale. All the blood had flowed to his heart. You could sense at once that the speaker's agitation was communicating itself to the audience. Then all of a sudden a burst of hand-clapping swept through the hall—the Party comrades had recognised Ilyich."**

Lenin's speech, devoted to R.S.D.L.P. tactics in regard to the State Duma, made a tremendous impression on the audience. Lenin denounced the Cadets for seeking agreement with the autocracy behind the backs of the people. "According to Ogorodnikov there was no agreement, only talks. But what are talks? The beginning of agreement. And what is agreement? The end of talks," Lenin declared.

"I well remember," recalls A. Schlichter, who was present at the meeting, "the surprise and amazement of all, positively all, at so simple, so clear and precise a way of putting the issue. . . .

"Lenin's animation on the platform; the remarkably, brilliantly simple way in which he would bring out the main points, the essence of a question; his gestures; his eyes, now twinkling with humour, now darkening in concentration; and, finally, his altogether extraordinary

* *People's houses* were cultural and educational institutions in pre-revolutionary Russia, maintained by philanthropic societies or by individual philanthropists. In 1905-07 the Bolsheviks made wide use of these people's houses for public meetings.

** N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 149.

wealth and range of intonation—all this held the audience spellbound, unable to tear their eyes from him."*

The meeting unanimously passed a resolution moved by Lenin, expressing firm confidence that, as always, the proletariat would remain the leader of all revolutionary elements among the people. A tremendous wave of enthusiasm swept the audience after Lenin's speech. They poured out of the hall into the streets, carrying red flags and singing revolutionary songs. This meeting gave Lenin great satisfaction. In after years he recalled it with pleasure.

During May-July 1906, Lenin addressed workers from the St. Gal subdistrict; representatives of the Vyborg District Party organisations; the Social-Democratic organisation of the Baltic Shipyards; a group of delegates of the All-Russia Teachers' Congress; meetings of Social-Democratic workers of the Narva District; Party functionaries of the St. Petersburg R.S.D.L.P. organisation, etc.

Lenin was particularly glad to address working-class audiences. And he never broke his word. Once he had promised to attend a meeting, he was sure to come, and to come on time. Early in July 1906, Lenin attended a meeting of women workers of the Shapshala Tobacco Factory, and actively supported their decision to call a strike in answer to the refusal of the administration to meet their economic demands. For the workers of the Semyannikov subdistrict, Nevskaya Zastava District, he delivered a lecture on the subject of election agreements in the West and in Russia. On all problems arising in the revolutionary struggle, the St. Petersburg proletariat received advice and directions from Lenin. And these direct contacts with the workers served to strengthen his profound conviction that the leading force in the revolution was the proletariat, and that the creative possibilities of the working class were inexhaustible.

Lenin's vast activities in leadership of the Party and of the revolutionary struggle of the working class were carried on under incredibly difficult conditions. To evade the police, he was compelled to be always on the move. At first, in St. Petersburg, he did not register at any domicile. When Nadezhda Krupskaya arrived from abroad, she and Lenin lived separately for several days. Later they moved into furnished rooms, where they registered under assumed names. Only a week passed, however, and Nadezhda Krupskaya was summoned to police headquarters, her passport having aroused suspicion. A new move had to be made, and quickly. It was decided to attempt legal registration, in the flat of an acquaintance of Lenin's sister Maria. But this refuge had to be abandoned the very next day, for the police immediately set up a close watch over the house.

Lenin had repeatedly to change passports. Only in the latter half of December 1905 was he able to settle down for some time, still illegally, true, but with a more or less reliable passport. But it was not long before

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, pp. 338, 339.

the police traced him again, and again he had to seek new lodgings every night. In January 1906 Lenin visited Moscow. When he returned to St. Petersburg, he and his wife were obliged again to live in hiding. Lenin's meetings with members of the Central and St. Petersburg committees, and with Party functionaries arriving from all parts of Russia, would be arranged in a dental surgery, at a storehouse, in the homes of acquaintances, etc.

The tsarist secret police spared no effort in the attempt to lay hands on Lenin. On the appearance of his article "The Workers' Party and Its Tasks in the Present Situation", published in the legal Social-Democratic student paper *Molodaya Rossiya* (*Young Russia*), the Police Department took action to arrest Lenin. One evening towards the end of February Lenin spoke on work in the countryside at a meeting of Party functionaries held in the home of a St. Petersburg barrister. Leaving the house after the meeting, Lenin noticed that he was being followed, and decided not to go home. All through the night his wife sat at her window, waiting; but he did not come. Not without difficulty had he shaken off his pursuers and left for Finland.

Towards the end of the summer of 1906 Lenin settled down at Vasa, a country-house in Kuokkala occupied by the Bolshevik G. Leiteizen and his family. Situated in a secluded spot at the edge of a wood, Vasa was very convenient as a hiding-place. Lenin lived there, on and off, up to December 1907, making secret trips to St. Petersburg to direct the work of the C.C. and the St. Petersburg Committee.

Vasa became the Party's organisational centre, from which Lenin directed Party activities, and where he conducted Party and editorial board conferences and had talks with Party functionaries. There was such a constant stream of visitors that the doors were never locked. Among Lenin's visitors at Vasa were Ter-Petrosyan–the fabulous Kamo*; Krasin, Vorovsky, Stasova, Bonch-Bruyevich; representatives from the Party organisations in Nizhny Novgorod, Ivanovo-Voznesensk and other towns, and workers from the Putilov and Sestroretsk factories. A special messenger from St. Petersburg brought Lenin the press and mail every day, and took back from him articles and other material.

In connection with preparations for the first Bolshevik conference of fighting groups and military organisations of the R.S.D.L.P., Y. Yaroslavsky, one of the initiators of the conference, came to see Lenin in Kuokkala. This was in November 1906. "Lenin," Yaroslavsky recalls, "was keenly interested in the military training school we had set up to teach our comrades how to make and how to handle explosive devices; to instruct them in the use of machine-guns and other types of arms, in the laying of mines, and in the tactics of street fighting–in a word, to train potential commanders to lead our fighting squads in the coming revolution. Vladimir Ilyich questioned me particularly closely about

* *Kamo*–pseudonym of the Bolshevik Ter-Petrosyan, a professional revolutionary famed for his extraordinary resourcefulness in underground activities and for his daring escapes from prisons.

our immediate plans. Fearing that we might plunge into some rash, unconsidered venture, he cautioned us to undertake nothing serious without the knowledge of the Bolshevik Centre."*

In August 1906, the Bolsheviks began to publish an illegal newspaper named, as formerly, *Proletary* and edited by Lenin. For purposes of safety *Proletary* was set up in Vyborg (Finland) and brought to St. Petersburg in matrix form, to be printed there. In early August Lenin and Krupskaya spent almost two weeks in Vyborg in this connection. Actually, *Proletary* was the Central Organ of the Bolsheviks. It existed more than three years, and in this period carried upwards of a hundred articles and notes by Lenin, almost half of them dated in the period of revolution–up to June 1907.

During his stay at Vasa Lenin wrote a large number of articles, pamphlets and draft resolutions. He got through an incredible amount of work, and, as always, with remarkable speed. For all this pressure of work, however, he often found time to play with Leiteizen's children, to share in their merriment. Before going to bed, he made it his rule to go out for a walk with Krupskaya, or perhaps with some visiting comrade.

During the summer of 1906 part of Lenin's time was spent in the study of philosophy (not enough time, as he noted later, because he was occupied with the urgent work of the revolution). When A. Bogdanov sent him his *Empirio-Monism* (Book III), Lenin went thoroughly through it and arrived at the conclusion that Bogdanov's views were mistaken, and his approach non-Marxist.

"I thereupon wrote him a 'declaration of love'," Lenin later recalled, "a letter on philosophy taking up three notebooks. I explained to him that I was just *an ordinary Marxist* in philosophy, but that it was precisely his lucid, popular, and splendidly written works that had finally convinced me that he was essentially wrong and that Plekhanov was right. I showed these notebooks to some friends (including Lunacharsky) and thought of publishing them under the title 'Notes of an Ordinary Marxist on Philosophy', but I never got round to it. I am sorry now that I did not have them published at the moment."** Unfortunately, this work of Lenin's has not been found.

Observing the necessary precautions, Lenin made frequent trips to St. Petersburg during this period, visiting the warehouse and editorial offices of the Bolshevik publishing house–Vperyod. As head of the editorial board, he directed all the work of the publishing house. He spent whole evenings there, going over and correcting proofs, manuscripts and plans, or discussing various matters with the staff. He attended many meetings of the St. Petersburg Party Committee held on the *Vperyod* premises.

Elections to the Second Duma were approaching, and the Bolsheviks had to decide immediately on their election tactics. In the new situation,

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 342.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 449.

it was clear that wide use must be made of the Duma as a platform for revolutionary propaganda and public exposure of the policy of the autocracy and the bourgeoisie. In this connection Lenin and other Bolsheviks kept it always in mind that the boycott of the First Duma had not justified itself. Coming at a time when the tide of revolution had begun to ebb, the boycott had turned out to be mistaken tactics.

Lenin gave much thought to the question of the Party's tactics in regard to the Second Duma, and to the question of election agreements. At a series of Party conferences held between November 1906 and the elections to the Second Duma, which took place in February 1907, he spoke in vigorous defence of the Bolshevik tactics. Seeking complete independence for the working-class party in the election campaign, the Bolsheviks advocated a Left bloc, that is, a working agreement with the parties which represented the democratic petty bourgeoisie of town and countryside and which opposed tsarism and the liberal bourgeoisie. The basic task of revolutionary Social-Democracy, Lenin explained, lay in wresting the petty-bourgeois strata, and primarily the peasantry, away from the influence of the Cadets. He firmly opposed the Menshevik tactics of a bloc with the Cadets and support of the Cadets in the Duma, declaring agreement with the Cadets impermissible in principle and politically harmful.

More and more, the Mensheviks were following in the lead of the Cadet bourgeoisie. Behind the backs of the workers, as Lenin showed in his writings of that period, the Mensheviks were negotiating with the Cadets, bargaining with them for seats in the Duma, at the same time attempting to cover up their intrigues with hypocritical rant.

"Plekhanov . . ." Lenin wrote, "had the best of intentions: peace and good will with the Cadets against the Black-Hundred danger; but the outcome was an infamy and disgrace for the Social-Democrats."*

Thus exposed by Lenin, the Mensheviks fought back furiously against the Bolsheviks. The Menshevik C.C. actually summoned Lenin to stand trial before a "Party tribunal" for his pamphlet *The St. Petersburg Elections and the Hypocrisy of the Thirty-One Mensheviks.* The tribunal consisted of three Mensheviks, three supporters of Lenin, and three Presidium members appointed by the Central Committees of the Lettish and Polish Social-Democrats and of the Bund. The trial took place in March 1907. The tribunal held two sittings, at which it examined only three witnesses out of the several dozen listed. In his speech at the first sitting ("Speech for the Defence [or for the Prosecution of the Menshevik Section of the Central Committee]") delivered at the Menshevik-inspired Party Tribunal Lenin exposed the disruptive activities of the Mensheviks in the St. Petersburg Party organisation.

The Duma campaign brought out with particular clarity the anti-revolutionary, compromising policy followed by the Menshevik C.C.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 407.

A majority of the Party organisations declared against this policy. The situation in the country and within the Party called urgently for a new Party Congress, and Lenin began active preparations in this direction. In mid-February 1907, he drafted several resolutions for the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. In March, he delivered a report on the current situation and the tasks of the Party at a meeting of instruction for Bolsheviks leaving for the provinces to conduct elections of delegates to the Congress. In April, a pamphlet by Lenin appeared, entitled *Report to the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. on the St. Petersburg Split and the Institution of the Party Tribunal Ensuing Therefrom.* In April, too, Lenin was elected a delegate to the Fifth Congress from the Verkhnyaya Kama (Urals) Party organisation.

Prior to the Fifth Congress, the Mensheviks proposed the convocation of what they termed a "workers' congress", representing various workers' organisations and designed, as they put it, to set up a "broad labour party" that would include Social-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists. Lenin vigorously opposed this Menshevik proposal, which was, in effect, an attempt to liquidate the truly proletarian party, to discard its revolutionary programme and tactics.

Victory at the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. At the end of April Lenin left for Copenhagen, where the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was scheduled to take place. Here he organised a conference of the Bolshevik delegates, and spoke at the conference on the question of fighting squads. Suddenly, however, the Danish police appeared and demanded that the delegates leave the country within twelve hours. The Congress had to be transferred to London. On the way there Lenin stopped off in Berlin, where he went sightseeing with Maxim Gorky and visited Karl Kautsky and Rosa Luxemburg. In London, the conference of Bolshevik delegates re-assembled and elected a bureau of the Bolshevik group at the Congress, headed by Lenin.

Maxim Gorky was invited to the Fifth Congress as a delegate with deliberative vote. Knowing that Gorky had tuberculosis, Lenin was particularly solicitous for his comfort. He accompanied Gorky to his hotel, and expressed deep concern because the hotel room seemed to him rather damp. "For a long time after Lenin had left," writes M. Andreyeva, "Gorky paced the floor of the cheerless room . . . twirling and biting the ends of his moustache, as was his habit. Finally he said slowly, half to himself: 'What a wonderful person!' "*

The Fifth (London) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. opened on April 30 (May 13), 1907. It met in the building of a Reformed Church on the outskirts of London. The Congress was attended by 336 delegates, representing 147,000 members of the Party. This time the Bolsheviks commanded a stable majority. They were supported, on all major questions, by the Polish Social-Democrats and by a majority of the Lettish delegates. Lenin took a leading part in the Congress proceedings.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 325.

He was elected to the Presidium, presided over seven sittings and delivered several reports and speeches.

One of the chief items on the agenda was Lenin's report on the attitude to be adopted towards the bourgeois parties. This was one of the central differences dividing the R.S.D.L.P. into two camps—differences connected with the appraisal of the bourgeois revolution in Russia. When deciding what attitude should be adopted towards the bourgeois parties, Lenin explained, it was necessary first of all to define the class nature of the different parties. Next, it was necessary to make clear in what relation the interests of these classes stood to the continuation or development of the given revolution and the role of the various parties in the revolution, and to furnish practical directions concerning the policy of the workers' party on this question.

Maxim Gorky, in his reminiscences, vividly describes Lenin's speech at the Congress. Lenin, Gorky wrote, "did not try to invent fine phrases. He set things forth word by word, revealing each in its precise meaning, and with amazing ease. It is very difficult to convey the unusual impression he made.

"His arm outstretched and slightly raised, he seemed to weigh every word in his open palm, winnowing away his opponents' fine talk and replacing it with weighty arguments, demonstrating the right and the duty of the working class to take its own way rather than follow, or even accompany, the liberal bourgeoisie. All this was unaccustomed, and it was said not as though coming from him, Lenin, but as the dictate of history."*

The Congress adopted a resolution, moved by Lenin, calling for relentless struggle against the parties of the Black Hundreds, the parties of the landowners and the big bourgeoisie, and for uncompromising exposure of the hypocritical democratic phraseology of the Cadets. As to the Trudoviks,** inasmuch as they voiced the interests and views of the peasant masses and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the Congress considered occasional agreements with them in the struggle against tsarism and the Cadets permissible. It pointed out the necessity of exposing the pseudo-socialist character of the Narodnik or Trudovik parties, at the same time explaining that every effort must be made to win them away from the influence and leadership of the bourgeois liberals.

The policy of the Mensheviks, in effect denying the independence of the proletariat and accommodating itself to the liberal bourgeoisie, was defeated at the Congress. Lenin was later to note that "the London Congress's adoption of the Bolshevik resolution on non-proletarian parties

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 370.

** The *Trudoviks*, or Trudovik group, were a group of petty-bourgeois democrats, formed in April 1906 by peasant deputies to the First Duma. The Trudoviks demanded the transfer of the landed estates to the peasantry, the abolition of all restrictions based on social estate or on nationality, and the introduction of universal suffrage.

means that the workers' party decisively rejects all deviations from the class struggle, and recognises, in point of fact, the socialist criticism of non-proletarian parties and the independent revolutionary tasks of the proletariat in the present revolution.

"The rejection of the Menshevik amendments to the resolution adds further weight to this."*

At the Congress Lenin and the Bolsheviks fought to unite revolutionary Russian Social-Democracy on the Bolshevik platform, against the opportunism of the Mensheviks, the Bund and Trotsky. The Fifth (London) Congress confirmed the Bolshevik line in the revolution, confirmed the support of this line by the majority of the class-conscious workers of Russia.

Between Congress sittings, Lenin spent much of his time in conversation with worker delegates. Everything interested him: their living conditions, daily routine, the life of the working-class women. "Well, and the women?" he would ask. "Burdened with household drudgery? Do they manage to get in any study, any reading?" His approach to people was so friendly, his questions so imbued with genuine affection and interest, that response was always frank and warm.

"In Hyde Park," Maxim Gorky tells us, "several workers who had not met Lenin before were sharing impressions of his activities at the Congress. One of them remarked:

" 'Maybe the workers here in Europe have someone as clever as Lenin—Bebel, maybe, or some other. But I can't believe there's another man on earth I'd give my heart to from the first, like him.'

"Another worker added, with a smile:

" 'He's one of us!'

" 'So is Plekhanov,' somebody put in.

"The reply was swift:

" 'Plekhanov—he's our teacher, our fine gentleman. Lenin is our leader and our comrade.'

"And one young fellow concluded, grinning:

" 'Plekhanov can't forget he wears a frock-coat.' "**

The Fifth Congress elected Lenin a member of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. Among other Bolsheviks elected to the C.C. were Dubrovinsky, Krasin and Leiteizen. Further, the newly elected C.C. included a number of Mensheviks, and also representatives of the non-Russian Social-Democratic organisations. These not infrequently vacillated in their stands. To ensure a consistent revolutionary line in the spirit of the Congress decisions, the Bolsheviks met separately at the end of the Congress and set up a Bolshevik Centre, headed by Lenin.

After the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. Lenin attended the Second Congress of the Lettish Social-Democrats—also held in London. Here he delivered a brief report on the tasks of the proletariat in the present

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 500.

** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, pp. 371-72.

stage of the bourgeois revolution, and moved a draft resolution on this question.

After the coup d'état of June 3. On June 3, 1907, the tsarist government dissolved the Second Duma, an act which became known as the coup d'état of June 3. The government launched a furious assault on the revolution. The members of the Social-Democratic group in the Duma were arrested and exiled to Siberia; thousands of workers and peasants were shot by punitive expeditions; the prisons and places of exile and penal servitude were crowded to overflowing with revolutionaries. Thus began the grim period of the Stolypin reaction, so called after the tsarist lackey, Prime Minister Stolypin, hangman of freedom and of revolution. Particularly savage was the persecution of the Bolsheviks. On June 18, 1907, the special department of the St. Petersburg gubernia gendarmerie instructed the chief of the St. Petersburg secret police to submit all available material concerning Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) and to "institute proceedings for his extradition from Finland".

Lenin moved to a place called Styrsudd, in the Finnish interior. This was necessary not only to avoid discovery. Lenin's health was bad, and he needed a rest.

But he did not rest long. In July, at a conference of the St. Petersburg organisation of the R.S.D.L.P. held in Terijoki, he delivered a report on the attitude to be adopted by the Social-Democratic Labour Party towards the Third State Duma; and in the same month he participated in a conference of the R.S.D.L.P. held in Kotka to discuss questions of tactics in connection with the dissolution of the Second Duma and the convocation of the Third.

In August, Lenin went to Stuttgart, as a member of the delegation sent by the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. to the Congress of the Second International. This was the first international congress in which Lenin had participated. As a member of the International Socialist Bureau–to which he had been appointed in October 1905 as representative from the R.S.D.L.P.–he was elected to the Presidium of the Congress and also to the commission that drafted the resolution on militarism and international conflicts.

The Stuttgart Congress was marked by sharp collision between the revolutionary and the opportunist trends in international Social-Democracy. Lenin, who led the Bolshevik delegation, headed the fight against the opportunist elements. The principal issue under discussion was the colonial question. The Dutch "socialist" Henry van Kol, who made the report on this question, tried to justify the enslavement of the colonial peoples by the imperialists; he approved capitalism's "civilising mission" in the colonies, and maintained that the Socialist parties should support the colonial policy. The commission on the colonial question was so composed that the opportunist elements, headed by van Kol, got the upper hand. Then the question was submitted to the Congress. Heated debate arose. The majority of the German delegation, headed by Bernstein and David, voted for the opportunist resolution. Lenin came out

vigorously against the revisionists, qualifying van Kol's position as "a decisive step towards subordinating the proletariat to bourgeois ideology, to bourgeois imperialism".* Lenin's struggle was successful. The Congress voted down the opportunist resolution on the colonial question.

Lenin drew up and, jointly with Rosa Luxemburg, proposed to the Congress vital amendments to the resolution presented by A. Bebel on militarism and international conflicts. One of these amendments declared that, should war break out, the working class and its representatives in the different parliaments must strive to utilise the crisis created by the war in the interests of socialist revolution. Lenin and his adherents, by their firm, uncompromising stand, succeeded in changing Bebel's resolution fundamentally, in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. This was the first such resolution to be adopted in all the history of international Social-Democracy.

During the Congress Lenin worked incessantly to unite the Left-wing forces in international Social-Democracy, and determinedly fought the opportunists and revisionists. With Bebel, Singer, Rosa Luxemburg, Jaurès and others, he signed a message of greeting from the Congress to the American working-class leader William Haywood, who had been arrested by the American government on trumped-up charges.

After the Congress Lenin returned to Kuokkala. Here, during August and September, he wrote two articles devoted to the Stuttgart Congress. One of these, written in popular form, was intended for the Bolshevik publication *Kalendar dlya Vsekh, 1908* (*Everyman Yearbook, 1908*). In early September, Lenin spoke on the Stuttgart Congress at a conference of the St. Petersburg organisation of the R.S.D.L.P. held in Terijoki.

Much of Lenin's time was devoted to determining proper Bolshevik tactics in the period of defeat of the revolution, and to implementing such tactics. At two Party conferences–in Terijoki in late October and in Helsingfors in November–he delivered reports on the Third Duma and on the tactics to be followed by the Social-Democratic group in the Duma. Heated debate developed at each of these conferences. The Mensheviks and the Bundists disputed Lenin's appraisal of the June 3 regime and the tasks he outlined for the Party. They advocated support of the ruling Octobrist** Party. Both conferences, however, carried the Bolshevik resolutions.

During August-December 1907 Lenin prepared for press a three-volume edition of his works, under the title: *Twelve Years*. In September he wrote a preface to the first volume. Of the three planned volumes, only Volume I and the first book of Volume II were actually published. Volume I came off the press in the middle of November 1907 (although

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 76.

** The *Octobrists* were a counter-revolutionary party of the big industrial bourgeoisie and the landowners, formed shortly after the publication of the tsar's Manifesto of October 17, 1905 (hence the name–Octobrists), in which the tsar, frightened by the revolution, promised Russia "civil liberties" and a constitution. The Octobrists fully supported the tsarist government's home and foreign policy.

its cover carried the date 1908). The author's name was given as Vl. Ilyin. The first book of Volume II appeared at the beginning of 1908.

Volume I, which covered the period from 1895 to 1905, included: "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book"; "The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats"; "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism"; "What Is To Be Done?"; "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back"; "The Zemstvo Campaign and *Iskra's* Plan", and "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution". The writings collected in this volume, Lenin wrote in his preface, dealt with the programme, tactical and organisational questions of Russian Social-Democracy.

The police were searching all Finland for Lenin. In November the St. Petersburg Chamber of Justice banned his *Twelve Years.* The book was confiscated, and proceedings were instituted against its author. On December 22 the Chamber of Justice ordered the book *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* destroyed. Evading the police, Lenin left Kuokkala for Aggelby. A meeting of the Bolshevik centre decided to transfer the publication of *Proletary* abroad, and accordingly Lenin in December left Finland. Stopping off in Helsingfors, just before his departure for abroad, he conferred with comrades come from St. Petersburg to meet him. On the train for Abo, Lenin noticed that he was being shadowed. He managed to leave the train unnoticed when still several miles or so from Abo, and, though the day was bitterly cold, tramped the rest of the way on foot, swinging his small suitcase. It was two o'clock in the morning when he reached the home of the Finnish Social-Democrat Valter Borg, who had been charged with arranging his passage from Abo to Stockholm.

Arriving so late, Lenin missed the steamer whose captain had agreed to take on a passenger at Abo. Accompanied by two Finnish comrades, Lenin set out for the boat's next stopping place. Part of the way lay across ice, which, for all the December frosts, was still unreliable. At one point the ice cracked underfoot and, as Lenin was later to relate, the first thought to cross his mind was, "What a stupid way to die!" At great risk, he succeeded finally in getting out of Finland.

After a brief wait in Stockholm, Lenin was joined by his wife, who had stayed behind in St. Petersburg to wind up their affairs. On her arrival they started for Geneva, stopping off for a few days in Berlin, where they visited Rosa Luxemburg. Their second period of emigration had begun.

The first Russian revolution had ended in defeat. But the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, had fought with honour in this mighty onset of the entire people against tsarism. As early as 1906, Lenin had written: "As the supporters and ideologists of the revolutionary proletariat, we shall do our duty to the last—we shall keep to our revolutionary slogans despite the treachery and baseness of the liberals, despite the vacillation, timidity and hesitancy displayed by the petty bourgeois—we shall make the utmost use of *all* revolutionary possibilities—we shall take pride in the fact

that we were the *first* to take the path of an uprising and will be the *last* to abandon it, if this path in fact becomes impossible."*

Lenin expressed the highest praise for the heroic struggle of the proletariat in the first Russian revolution, and dedicated impassioned lines to the memory of its finest sons, fallen in the struggle for freedom and happiness for the people. He wrote a heartfelt obituary for Nikolai Bauman, brutally murdered in October 1905 by Black-Hundred assassins. Vividly, he portrayed the life and activities of the worker Iskrist Ivan Babushkin, an active participant in the revolution of 1905, shot in Siberia by a punitive expedition of the tsarist government. He described Babushkin as a national hero, the pride of the Bolshevik Party. "Everything won from the tsarist autocracy," he wrote, "was won *exclusively* by the struggle of the masses led by such people as Babushkin."**

Throughout the revolution Lenin thoroughly analysed the course of events, interpreting the tactics of the tsarist government and charting the tasks of the Party and the means of struggle to be adopted. Pursuing a consistently revolutionary line, he taught the working class to lead the revolution, and exposed the opportunist tactics of the Mensheviks. The revolution brought out with tremendous force the leading role of the proletariat, its strength and unity, its high level of organisation and political understanding. The Russian proletariat evinced a power as yet unexampled in any Western bourgeois revolution. In the struggle against tsarism it displaced the liberals and the Cadets as leaders of the masses and, in particular, of the peasantry.

The first Russian revolution ushered in a period of revolutionary battles in the era of imperialism. It strongly influenced the development of the liberation movement the world over.

The revolution of 1905-07 showed that the centre of the world revolutionary movement had shifted to Russia, and that the heroic Russian proletariat had become the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. The struggle of the Russian proletariat was led by the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin.

The revolution put to the test of practice Lenin's great principles: the hegemony of the proletariat; the union of proletariat and peasantry; the role of the Party as the guiding force in the working-class movement. It demonstrated the correctness of the tactical slogans Lenin had advanced for the Bolshevik Party. Lenin acted in the revolution not only as a theoretician, but as the organiser and leader of the masses in the assault upon the tsarist autocracy.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 360-61.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 16, p. 364.



Chapter Six

THE YEARS OF REACTION

> At present our Party is passing through difficult days but it is invincible, just as the proletariat is invincible.
>
> *LENIN*

Lenin and Krupskaya arrived in Geneva on a cold, windy day of January 1908. Coming back to this quiet, sleepy town from revolutionary Russia was hard. Especially hard were the first days in Geneva. "I have a feeling as if I've come here to be buried," Lenin remarked bitterly.

And Krupskaya recalls: "It was difficult for us, after the revolution, to get used to life in emigration again. Vladimir Ilyich spent all his days in the library, and in the evenings we did not know what to do with ourselves. We had no desire to sit in the cold cheerless room we had rented and longed to be among people. Every evening we went to the cinema or the theatre, although we seldom stayed to the end, usually leaving in the middle of a show to wander about the streets, most often along the lake."*

* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 176.

Shortly after his arrival Lenin addressed several émigré meetings. At one of these, a gathering of Polish Social-Democrats, he exposed the counter-revolutionary role of the nationalist bourgeoisie, showing how it adapted itself to the tsarist regime and opposed to it the internationalist position of the proletariat. "Long live a proletarian, workers' and peasants' Poland!" were his concluding words.

All Lenin's thoughts were centred on the Russian revolution. He was deeply convinced that the proletariat had suffered only temporary defeat, that victory would be won in the heroic battles that lay ahead. With unfailing foresight and unswerving faith in the working class and the triumph of socialism, he worked passionately for that victory. He was sure it would come, and in his mind's eye saw the brighter future that was in store for Russia and the whole of mankind.

After the defeat of the revolution. The years that followed the defeat of the revolution Lenin described as hellishly difficult. Reaction was rampant throughout Russia. The proletariat bore the brunt of political persecution. The Social-Democratic Party was in a state of deep crisis, organisationally, ideologically and politically. Party membership dropped drastically; the intellectual and petty-bourgeois elements that had joined the Party during the revolution were now scared off by the tsarist terror. A considerable section of the Social-Democrats gave way to confusion and vacillation, and a fairly wide section of the proletariat to dismay and apathy. Such was the position within the working-class movement and the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia.

But Lenin and the Bolsheviks did not lose heart. The revolution had proved a splendid political school for millions of workers and peasants and brought to the fore a large cadre of militants. Try as the tsarist government did, it could not crush the progressive, forward-looking trends and elements that had emerged and matured during the revolution. "The Russian people are not what they were prior to 1905," Lenin wrote. "The proletariat has taught them to fight. The proletariat will bring them to victory."*

In the new situation Lenin considered the Party's basic tasks to be: retention and strengthening of the illegal organisation; assessment and interpretation of the results and experience of the revolution; defence of the theoretical foundations of Marxism; preservation of the revolutionary tradition, education of the working class in a revolutionary spirit; closer ties with the masses, and building up the forces for the new revolution.

Back in Geneva, Lenin concentrated on organising the publication of a Party newspaper which, in the situation that had arisen, he considered of paramount importance. "I am convinced," he wrote to Maxim Gorky, "that what the *Party* needs now is a regularly published political organ capable of waging a sustained and effective struggle against the dejection and disintegration–a *Party* organ, a political newspaper. Many

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 304.

in Russia do not believe in a newspaper published abroad. They are wrong, and our collegium was right in deciding to transfer publication of *Proletary* to Geneva. That it will be hard to revive it and properly organise publication here goes without saying. But it *must* be done, and done it shall be."*

The organisation of the paper took up much of Lenin's time and energy. Everything had to be begun anew. Fortunately, there were stocks of type and thin newsprint left over from 1905 in the Bolshevik library, of which V. Karpinsky was in charge. A press was rented from a French printshop. I. Vladimirov acted as compositor and I. Dubrovinsky as manager. They were joined later by N. Semashko. In time the Party set up its own printshop.

Lenin invited Maxim Gorky, A. Lunacharsky and other prominent publicists to contribute to the paper.

Lenin did not confine his activities to publishing *Proletary*. He arranged for its delivery to Russia, devoting much attention to finding reliable communication facilities and organising transportation. A week after his arrival in Geneva he instructed Maria Andreyeva to contact the secretary of the Maritime Workers' Union through whom, for appropriate remuneration, arrangements could be made for the weekly delivery of the paper to Russia via Odessa. This had to be done as soon as possible, Lenin insisted, in order that everything be prepared beforehand for *Proletary* to be shipped to Russia immediately it came off the press. Publication was resumed less than two months after Lenin returned to Geneva, with the appearance of issue No. 21.

Through the dark night of reaction, amidst all the confusion and frustration, there sounded the powerful and confident voice of the leader of the Party and revolutionary working class of Russia:

"We knew how to work during the long years preceding the revolution. Not for nothing do they say we are as hard as rock. The Social-Democrats have built a proletarian party which will not be disheartened by the failure of the first armed onslaught, will not lose its head, nor be carried away by adventures. That party is marching to socialism, without tying itself or its future to the outcome of any particular period of bourgeois revolutions. That is precisely why it is also free of the weaker aspects of bourgeois revolution. And this proletarian party is marching to victory."**

Lessons of the revolution. Lenin considered a correct appraisal of the 1905-07 revolution and the lessons it held for the working class to be of the utmost practical importance. He wrote: "We must take advantage of temporary lulls in mass action in order critically to study the experience of the great revolution, verify this experience, purge it of dross, and pass it on to the masses as a guide for the impending struggle."*** This was necessary in order to apply the revolutionary

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, p. 331.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 446.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 429.

methods of struggle more successfully, and in order to train, unite and organise even wider masses of the proletariat than in the 1905-07 revolution.

In his analysis of the revolution, Lenin emphasised that both its victories and defeats taught the people great historical lessons. The first and fundamental lesson was that only mass revolutionary struggle could improve the workers' conditions and secure a measure of democracy. The second lesson was that it was not enough to undermine or restrict tsarist rule; it had to be destroyed. The third and cardinal lesson consisted in the Party having seen *how* the various classes of the Russian people acted. All classes of society came out openly and showed themselves in their true colours, revealed their true ambitions.

It was especially important, Lenin said, to show that the working class was the leader and driving force of the Russian revolution. It was this leading role of the proletariat, and the fact that the liberal bourgeoisie had been pushed aside, that gave the revolution its tremendous scope and created conditions for a decisive battle for democratic freedoms. "By the heroic struggle it waged during the course of three years (1905-07) the Russian proletariat won for itself and for the Russian people gains that took other nations decades to win. It won the *emancipation* of the working masses *from the influence* of treacherous and contemptibly impotent *liberalism*. It won *for itself* the *hegemony* in the struggle for freedom and democracy as a pre-condition of the struggle for socialism. It won for all the oppressed and exploited classes of Russia the *ability* to wage a revolutionary mass struggle, without which nothing of importance in the progress of mankind has been achieved anywhere in the world."*

Time and again Lenin stressed the immense importance of the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, regarding this as an earnest of victory in the struggles that loomed ahead.

"Our Party," he declared, "holds firmly to the view that the role of the proletariat is the *role of leader* in the bourgeois-democratic revolution; that *joint actions* of the proletariat and the peasantry are essential to carry it through to victory; that unless *political power is won* by the revolutionary classes, victory is impossible."**

Lenin discussed the character of the Russian revolution and the lessons to be drawn from it in a number of articles and speeches. Beginning with the spring of 1908, he addressed international gatherings in Geneva, Paris, Antwerp and London, and conducted a sharp polemic with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Firmly and confidently he answered all the hysterical outcries of his opponents and demolished their demagogic arguments and contentions.

Lenin convincingly showed that the first Russian revolution was of tremendous international significance: it marked the beginning of a new rise of the revolutionary movement in Europe and exerted a powerful

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 387.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 379.

influence on the national liberation struggle in Asia. "The Russian revolution," he wrote later, "engendered a movement throughout the whole of Asia. The revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China prove that the mighty uprising of 1905 left a deep imprint, and that its influence, expressed in the forward movement of *hundreds and hundreds* of millions, is ineradicable."*

The historic experience of the first Russian revolution, generalised by Lenin, was thus brought to the knowledge of the international proletariat.

The agrarian question. In these years of reaction Lenin devoted much time to a study of the agrarian question. For it was this problem that laid its peculiar, specifically national imprint on the revolution in Russia, with her overwhelmingly peasant population. The struggle for the land and against the oppression of the landowners impelled large sections of the peasantry to take an active part in the democratic revolution, for only through revolutionary action could the landed estates be abolished and democratic freedoms won.

The feudal landlords tried to solve the agrarian problem from above, in a way that would suit their interests, and adapt themselves to the development of capitalism. They realised that something had to be done to avoid a new outbreak of peasant risings. In November 1906, the tsar's Minister, Stolypin, issued a new agrarian law enabling the peasants to leave the village communes and set up separate farms. The idea was to encourage the rise of a large stratum of kulaks, or rich peasant farmers, as an additional class base of the autocracy. Lenin showed that the Stolypin reform, the second major reform since the freeing of the serfs in 1861, was a further step towards conversion of the autocracy into a bourgeois monarchy. It accelerated the capitalist development of agriculture, in a form especially tormenting for the working people. This was the "Prussian" path—retention of the power, property and privileges of the landed nobility. The Stolypin policy did not resolve the antagonism between peasant and landowner. It had a ruinous effect on the toiling peasants, and only aggravated class contradictions between the kulaks and the peasant poor.

The wealth of experience gained in the agrarian movement of 1905-07, when the revolutionary nature of the peasants' demands was so explicitly manifested, made it necessary to revise the agrarian programme the Party had adopted at its Fourth (Unity) Congress. The fallacy and harm of the Menshevik programme of land municipalisation had to be exposed and a profound theoretical grounding worked out for the Bolshevik agrarian programme. That was done by Lenin.

His *Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-07* holds a special place in his writings of this period and played an outstanding role in the development of Marxist theory and tactics. Proceeding from the experience of the revolution and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 252.

creatively adapting Marx's theory to Russian conditions, Lenin comprehensively substantiated the Bolshevik programme of nationalising all the land, showed its economic and political importance.

In revising the agrarian programme, Lenin made a close analysis of the new data on landownership. He examined the economic factors that made necessary a revolutionary break-up of agrarian relations, drew a vivid picture of land distribution and clearly showed what the peasants had fought for in the revolution. He cited these figures:

"Ten million peasant households own 73,000,000 dessiatines of land, whereas 28,000 noble and upstart landlords own 62,000,000 dessiatines. Such is the main background of the arena on which the peasants' struggle for the land is developing."*

The issue at stake in the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution, Lenin explained, was whether Russia's capitalist development would follow the "Prussian" path (retention of landed proprietorship) or the "American" path (abolition of landed proprietorship and emergence of a farmer class). That was the economic basis of the revolution, and unless this were made clear, there could be no clarity on the question of an agrarian programme. The revolutionary Bolshevik programme stood out in sharp contrast to the frankly pro-landowner programmes of Stolypin and the Cadet party, both of which were predicated on retention of the landed estates and the survivals of serfdom.

The central theme of Lenin's book was an examination of the R.S.D.L.P. agrarian programmes and how they had fared in the first Russian revolution. He disclosed the defects of the early agrarian demands advanced by the Russian Social-Democrats, criticised the programme adopted by the Menshevik majority at the Fourth R.S.D.L.P. Congress, and demolished all the arguments in favour of land municipalisation.

The chief Menshevik argument for municipalisation was that the peasants were opposed to nationalisation of their allotment lands,** with the result that the peasant movement would bypass the Social-Democratic Party, or even be directed against it, thus placing the Party outside the revolution. What the Mensheviks "overlooked", Lenin said, was that the system of peasant allotments was just as much a survival of medievalism as landed proprietorship itself. The fundamental difference between the nationalisation and municipalisation programmes was that the former would destroy the commune and the medieval system of allotments with maximum benefit to the peasant, whereas the latter would obstruct the inevitable and economically-necessary process of eliminating medieval land tenure. The Mensheviks, Lenin wrote, framed their agrarian programme not with a view to combating medieval land tenure, "not to clear the way completely for capitalism, but for a *pitiful philistine attempt* to combine 'harmoniously' the old with the new,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 225.

** The allotments the peasants were given after the abolition of serfdom in 1861. They were the property of the commune, could not be sold, and were subject to periodical redivision.

landed property which arose as a result of the system of allotment and the latifundia of the feudalists confiscated by the revolution".*

The 1905-07 revolution refuted all the Menshevik arguments, all their reactionary claims about peasant hostility to the Bolshevik nationalisation programme. Three years of revolution had taught the peasants that they could expect nothing from the tsar and convinced them that the whole system of medieval land tenure had to be eliminated. That could be fully accomplished by nationalisation.

As the party of the working class, the Bolsheviks consistently upheld the interests of the labouring peasantry. Expounding the Bolshevik agrarian programme, Lenin emphasised that the Social-Democratic Labour Party supported the peasants' revolutionary struggle up to and including confiscation of the landed estates. At the same time, however, it believed that land nationalisation was the best form of agrarian relations in a capitalist society, and the surest way of abolishing serfdom.

Lenin showed the indissoluble link between land nationalisation and political revolution: nationalisation could be carried out only with the victory of the revolution, only with the overthrow of tsarism, and it would facilitate the transition to socialist revolution. Land nationalisation was, in fact, a component part of Lenin's theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing over into socialist revolution.

The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-07 was published in St. Petersburg in 1908 but was immediately confiscated and destroyed by the censors. Only one copy was salvaged, but without the concluding pages. These Lenin wrote nearly ten years later, in September 1917, when the book was finally put out. In the summer of 1908, at the request of the Polish Social-Democrats, he wrote a synopsis of the book for their magazine *Przeglad Socjaldemokratyczny* (*Social-Democrat Review*).

Against philosophical revisionism and reactionary philosophy. The reactionary ideologists took advantage of the defeat of the revolution to distort, vulgarise and discredit the revolutionary theory of Marx and Engels. The reactionary forces especially sought to revive religion, in the hope that religious preachment would divert the masses from the struggle for a better life, and that religious ideology could be used to bolster the tsarist regime and the bourgeois-landlord system generally. A trend known as "God-seeking" gained wide currency among the bourgeoisie, notably among intellectuals.

This frustration and disbelief in the revolution, in the strength of the working class and people, and in the scientific validity and creative nature of Marxism, affected also a section of Party intellectuals. A number of Mensheviks (P. Yushkevich, N. Valentinov and others) and also several Bolshevik writers (A. Bogdanov, V. Bazarov, A. Lunacharsky and others) proceeded to "criticise" Marxism and its philosophical foundations. Some of them, the so-called "God-builders", advocated the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 165-66.

merger of socialism with religion, arguing that, presented in a religious dressing, socialism would be more easily understood. Actually, however, they were duping the workers.

This rampant reaction was not a purely Russian phenomenon. With the advent of imperialism, the bourgeoisie of all countries turned from democracy to "all-out reaction" in economics, politics and ideology.

A philosophy known as "critical experience", or empirio-criticism, gained wide currency in Europe at the close of the nineteenth and in the early years of the twentieth centuries. It originated with the Austrian physicist and philosopher Ernst Mach and the German philosopher Richard Avenarius. The Machians denied the objective existence of a material world and the objective character of the laws governing natural and social development. The world we live in, they maintained, was not material, but simply our own sensation, and all things in the world were no more than "complexes of sensations".

Machism was, at that time, the most dangerous trend in bourgeois idealistic philosophy with which the working class had to contend. Ostensibly, the Machians were opposed to idealism, even claiming that modern natural science provided substantiation for their theory, and this gave it a semblance of scientific validity. Their doctrine was supported by the reactionary imperialist forces and was seized upon by the opportunist elements in the Second International (Max Adler, Otto Bauer and others). The central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, *Neue Zeit*, of which Karl Kautsky was editor, and the party's theoretical journal, *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, one of the chief organs of international opportunism, for many years published articles by Machians and other revisionists. In his article "Those Who Would Liquidate US" Lenin emphasised that Kautsky was wrong in denying the idealistic nature of Machism.

The West European and Russian revisionists proclaimed the Machian philosophy, which was no more than camouflaged clericalism, the latest word in scientific thought. Their bitterest attacks were levelled at the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism. They tried to prove that Marxism had no philosophy of its own, and that Machism could therefore become its theory of knowledge. The revisionists continued to parade as Marxists, claiming that their sole aim was to "improve" Marxism, though in actual fact they were revising all the basic tenets of materialism, notably dialectical materialism.

Lenin was particularly disgusted with the appearance, early in 1908, of *Studies in the Philosophy of Marxism*, a collection of articles by Bazarov, Berman, Bogdanov, Helfond, Lunacharsky, Suvorov and Yushkevich. He dubbed it "Studies Against the Philosophy of Marxism" for in it the Marxist philosophy was opposed by idealism and mysticism clothed in quasi-scientific verbiage.

It was therefore necessary to expose and defeat these foes of the Marxist ideology, repel the attacks of Russian and West European opportunists on the Marxist world outlook and show up the reactionary

role of Machian philosophy. Defence of the theoretical foundations of the Marxist party became an urgent task, and Lenin explained why: the Russian working class needed a truly scientific, Marxist philosophy for a profound theoretical generalisation of the experience of the 1905-07 revolution. He wrote: "The present moment in Russia is precisely one in which the theoretical work of Marxism, its deepening and expansion, are dictated ... by the whole objective state of affairs in the country. When the masses are digesting a new and exceptionally rich experience of direct revolutionary struggle, the theoretical struggle for a revolutionary outlook, i.e., for revolutionary Marxism, becomes the watchword of the day."*

Lenin was fully confident that another revolution would take place in Russia, and considered it highly important, politically, to provide theoretical proof of its inevitability, scientifically to substantiate the policy of the working-class party on the basis of the objective laws of social development.

This "philosophical sorting out", Lenin remarked, was necessary also in view of the new discoveries in the natural sciences. Progress in physics and other sciences posed many new philosophical problems for which bourgeois philosophy had no answer and which, Lenin said, dialectical materialism had to tackle. It was therefore necessary to give a philosophical interpretation of major developments in the natural sciences since Marx and Engels. Lenin's writings on philosophy were not only of Russian, but of international significance.

In February 1908, he began work on a book in which he gave battle to all opponents of Marxist philosophy. And though engrossed in this work, he carried on an active correspondence with Gorky, then strongly influenced by "God-building" and Machism.

Gorky tried to persuade Lenin not to come out publicly against Bogdanov, Bazarov and Lunacharsky. Lenin could not agree to that, and he wrote Gorky: "You must understand–as you doubtlessly will–that once a Party man is convinced that a certain doctrine is utterly fallacious and *harmful*, it is his duty to come out against it. I would not have made all this noise were I not absolutely convinced (and my conviction grows stronger daily, as I become more familiar with the fount of wisdom of Bazarov, Bogdanov and Co.), that their book, the *whole* of it, is absurd, harmful, philistine and clerical from beginning to end, from branch to root, right down to Mach and Avenarius."** And Lenin emphasised that "neutrality" on such issues was absolutely our of the question.

In mid-April 1908, Lenin completed his famous article "Marxism and Revisionism", which he described as "a formal declaration of war" on revisionism. The article was written for the twenty-fifth anniversary of Marx's death and appeared in the symposium *Karl Marx*, published in St. Petersburg in 1908. In it Lenin showed that since the 1890s, when the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 290.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, p. 338.

triumph of Marxism in the working-class movement was in the main completed, the fight against Marxism had assumed new forms. The revisionists sought to undermine this great doctrine of the revolutionary proletariat, on the plea of "amending" and "modifying" Marx.

Lenin proved that the revisionists, limping behind bourgeois professorial science, negated Marxist materialism and dialectics, rejected the fundamental tenets of Marxian political economy and the idea of class struggle and proletarian dictatorship, abandoned socialism as the ultimate aim of the working-class movement, and fully embraced reformism. Revisionism, Lenin demonstrated, was an international phenomenon with deep class roots in capitalist society. As long as capitalism exists, there will always be revisionism and, hence, the need for constant, systematic and energetic struggle against revisionism in the working-class movement.

Lenin put all his conviction into this attack on the distorters of Marxism, prophetically declaring that the ideological struggle of revolutionary Marxism against revisionism was but the prelude to the great revolutionary battles of the proletariat, which was marching forward to the complete triumph of its cause, overcoming weaknesses and vacillations in the working-class movement.

Visit to Capri. In the second half of April 1908, Lenin visited Gorky on the Isle of Capri, Italy, in response to Gorky's repeated invitations. Lenin again warned Gorky against useless attempts to reconcile him with Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and Bazarov, then living in Capri. He was not going to discuss philosophy and religion with them; he had come to discuss Gorky's more active participation in *Proletary*.

Lenin had many talks with Gorky. He listened with keen interest to Gorky's stories of his childhood and youth in Nizhny Novgorod, of the great Volga, of Gorky's travels and wanderings through Russia. He suggested that Gorky write the story of his life. It would make splendid and very instructive reading, he said. Gorky followed this advice in later years, when he wrote his famous trilogy *Childhood*, *My Apprenticeship* and *My Universities*.

Together with Gorky, Lenin visited Naples, its National Museum and suburbs, the ruins of Pompeii, climbed Vesuvius. On several occasions they went out to sea with the Capri fishermen. In his conversations with them he would ask about their life, their earnings, their families. Gorky said in his reminiscences there was "something magnetic" about Lenin, something that attracted the hearts of working folk. The Capri fishermen had met Chaliapin and many other famous Russians, but none of them had won their affection as Lenin had. One of these fishermen, Giovanni Spadaro, on hearing Lenin's hearty laugh, remarked: "Only honest men can laugh like that." And long after Lenin had left the fishermen would ask Gorky about "Signor Lenin", afraid lest he fall into the hands of the tsar's police.

The Capri visit brought Lenin and Gorky still closer together. Gorky admired in Lenin his wide range of interests and knowledge: "He showed

the same interest in a game of chess, in a book on the *History of Dress*; could spend hours in argument with comrades, fishing, rambling in the hills under the hot southern sun, admiring the golden hues of the Genista, or talking to children in the fishing villages." Gorky was strongly impressed by Lenin's advice and by his remarks that the writer should always be in close touch with his country and people.

At Lenin's suggestion, part of their daily talks was devoted to reminiscences of Russia. One day, as he watched fishermen untangling a net partly torn by sharks, Lenin remarked: "Our people do it better." Gorky questioned that, and Lenin said, not without regret: "Hm, aren't you forgetting Russia, living on this hump?"

Gorky was later to write of Lenin: "He was a Russian who, long away from Russia, looked at her with eager eyes–from afar the picture was of a more vivid, fuller Russia. And Lenin was able accurately to gauge her potential strength–the extraordinary talent of her people, a talent still poorly expressed, yet to be awakened by harsh history. But the talent was there, everywhere, standing out like a star of gold against the sombre, fantastic background of Russian life."*

The Capri visit, their subsequent meetings in Paris in 1911 and 1912 and their correspondence, are striking evidence of the concern the leader of the working class showed for the development of the great proletarian writer, a splendid example of how creative writing benefits from Party leadership. Lenin helped the great writer discard his erroneous views. "His attitude," Gorky wrote, "was that of a strict teacher and good, solicitous friend."

Try as Lenin did to steer clear of philosophical problems, he could not avoid them. And Bogdanov, Bazarov and Lunacharsky had to listen to many a sharp and critical remark on the subject. Lenin reaffirmed his complete opposition to their philosophical views but suggested that "our common resources and energies should be used on counterblasting the Menshevik-liquidationist version of the history of the revolution** with a *Bolshevik history of the revolution*, but these Capriotes turned down my proposition, preferring to disseminate their own special philosophical views rather than to work for the common cause of the Bolsheviks".***

"Materialism and Empirio-Criticism". Back in Geneva, Lenin continued work on his book. This entailed a great deal of scientific research, the study of hundreds of works on philosophy, the natural sciences, notably physics, in German, French, English and Russian, rereading of the philosophical works of Marx and Engels, and of the writings of Plekhanov, Mehring, Feuerbach, Dietzgen and other authors. In May 1908, Lenin went to London, where he worked in the British Museum.

The work progressed rapidly and the book was completed in October

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, pp. 381, 392.

** Reference is to *The Early Twentieth-Century Social Movement in Russia*, published under the editorship of L. Martov, P. Maslov and A. Potresov.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 474.

1908. Publishing the book legally presented many difficulties. However, arrangements for its publication were made, through I. Skvortsov-Stepanov, with Zveno, a Moscow publishing firm run by L. Krumbugel. Lenin was anxious to have it published as soon as possible. "It is important to get the book out without delay," he wrote to his sister Anna. "For me it is connected not only with literary, but also with serious political considerations." Lenin was anxious to get the book out because a meeting of the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* (actually the Bolshevik centre) was scheduled for June 1909, at which he intended to wage a decisive battle against Bogdanov and his supporters.

The book was off the press in May 1909. Its full title is: *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. Critical Comments on a Reactionary Philosophy.*

It was a striking example of uncompromising struggle against the enemies of Marxist philosophy, an example of militant Bolshevik partisanship and defence of Marxism.

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin subjected to comprehensive and closely argued criticism bourgeois idealistic philosophy and philosophic revisionism, exposed their new methods of defending capitalism, and formulated and further developed the basic propositions of Marxist philosophy–the materiality of the world, the objective character of the laws governing development in nature and society, the dialectical process of cognition.

Lenin demonstrated that Mach and other bourgeois philosophers, while proclaiming theirs to be a new philosophy, were palming off the old idealistic rubbish in a new guise. Under the abstruse name of "empirio-criticism", they were resurrecting, in a somewhat refurbished version, the philosophy of Berkeley, the eighteenth-century English bishop and arrant obscurantist. Lenin was able to prove that the underlying premise of Berkeley's philosophy and of empirio-criticism was one and the same, namely, subjective idealism.

In his refutation of the Machist understanding of the world as a conglomeration of subjective sensations, Lenin squarely confronted the Russian and West-European Machians with this question: "Did nature exist prior to man?" And Lenin was able to show that the Machians' claim that all things were complexes of sensations must inevitably, whether the Machians wanted it or not, lead to the absurd view that the world, nature, all humans, existed only as our sensations, in the mind of the philosopher himself. Lenin also asked the question: "Does man think with the help of the brain?" The empirio-criticists made the absurd claim that the brain was not the organ of thought and, consequently, that thought was possible without the brain. This Lenin ridiculed as a "brainless philosophy" and proved that it was fundamentally contradictory to science and everyday practice, both of which confirmed the materialist proposition that matter is primary and consciousness, thinking, secondary.

The Marxist theory of knowledge. Lenin's classical definition of matter, part of his consistent substantiation of dialectical materialism,

represents an invaluable contribution to scientific philosophy. "Matter," Lenin wrote, "is a philosophical category denoting the objective reality which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations, while existing independently of them." Or, in short, matter is "objective reality existing independently of the human mind and reflected by it".* And Lenin regarded matter as being in constant movement–objective reality is matter in movement. The proposition that matter exists outside and independently of our consciousness is the basic tenet of philosophical materialism.

Lenin devoted special attention to elaborating the cardinal problems of the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism, that is, the theory of reflection. Our sensations and concepts of things are the reflection of the *objective world* and are therefore objective in content, independent of man and mankind. Lenin defined this objective content of our sensations, of our consciousness as *objective truth.* And the great cognitive force of Marxism lies in the fact that it relies wholly on objective truth. "Historical materialism and Marx's entire economic doctrine," Lenin emphasised, "are permeated through and through by a recognition of objective truth."**

Lenin's comprehensive presentation of the process of knowledge, of the *dialectics of absolute and relative truth,* is unparalleled for its depth of analysis and is of vast theoretical and practical significance. He demonstrated that human knowledge is in process of constant and uninterrupted development–from ignorance to knowledge, from incomplete and inexact knowledge to more complete and more exact, from relative to absolute truth. And there is no impassable boundary between the two: "Human thought ... by its nature is capable of giving, and does give, absolute truth, which is compounded of a sum-total of relative truths."***

The dialectical-materialist doctrine of absolute and relative truth is the key to a scientific and creative understanding of theoretical problems and, at the same time, a powerful weapon against revisionism and dogmatism. Marxism is objective truth confirmed by the course of history. The fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism have to be creatively developed, concretised, enriched by the new data of science and practice. But there can be no revision of the substance and revolutionary spirit of Marxism.

Revisionism in the theory of knowledge is essentially based on a subjective and idealist interpretation of the concept of truth. It negates the very possibility of objective truth and of our knowledge developing from relative to absolute truth.

The latter-day revisionists seek to justify their departure from Marxism-Leninism by pleading the need to take into account social changes and scientific discoveries. No one will dispute that. But the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 14, pp. 130, 261.
** *Ibid.,* p. 319.
*** *Ibid.,* p. 135.

revisionists maintain that these changes can be understood and explained only by a doctrine that regards all our knowledge as relative, as totally unconnected with objective, absolute truth. They attack such Marxist-Leninist propositions as "absolute truth", "struggle of opposites", "antagonistic contradictions", "class analysis" of social phenomena, etc. They seek to substitute idealist for materialist dialectics, separate historical materialism from dialectical materialism, etc.

And proceeding from that "philosophy", the revisionists contend that the principles of Marxism are relative, subjective and that its chief propositions–the history-dictated need for socialist revolution and proletarian dictatorship, the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party–are "obsolete". Marxism, they claim, is in general inapplicable to present-day realities. They urge "peaceful co-existence" of socialist and bourgeois ideology. The revisionists are, in effect, peddling the ideas of bourgeois-reformist philosophy and nationalist ideology in the working-class movement.

Dogmatism goes to the other extreme: it flatly negates the relative nature of our knowledge, claiming that it is always absolute and, accordingly, clings to old formulae and conclusions, applying them in total disregard of concrete historical conditions and new developments. The dogmatists do not understand the creative nature of Marxism, the need to develop it further on the basis of the new data provided by science and practice. In practical Party activity dogmatism inevitably leads to sectarianism, loss of contact with the masses.

Marxists-Leninists must wage a two-front struggle–against revisionism and dogmatism and sectarianism.

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* Lenin gave a comprehensive exposé of the *role of practice in the process of knowledge.* He showed, first, that knowledge and science stem from the requirements of practice, that practice is the most profound source of knowledge, its chief motive power, and that practical activities are of vast significance for our knowledge of theory. "The standpoint of life, of practice, should be first and fundamental in the theory of knowledge."*

Lenin fully disclosed, secondly, the role of practice as a criterion of truth and the best refutation of all the diverse species of idealism and agnosticism, of all manner of fabrication and delusion. A theoretical concept proved by practice becomes objective truth. Practice is a process of constant development and regeneration. This prevents man's knowledge from deteriorating into an "absolute", into an ossified dogma, and makes for the steady advancement and deepening of our knowledge. *Marxism represents the integral unity of scientific theory and revolutionary practice.*

Lenin's elaboration of the theory of knowledge is a splendid example of the creative development of dialectical materialism and a most valuable contribution to Marxist philosophy.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 14, p. 142.

Lenin trenchantly criticised the Machians' views on society and their attempts to inject idealism into the social sciences and undermine the scientific proof of the inevitability of proletarian revolution. The Machian "sociology", Lenin showed, had nothing to distinguish it from bourgeois sociology. In fact, reactionary bourgeois ideologists have long been campaigning against scientific cognition of the laws of history. They have good reason to fear genuine science, and hence their frenzied campaigns against Marxism, which reveals to us the objective laws of historical development.

Later, in his article "Socialism Demolished Again", directed against P. Struve, ideologist of the Russian bourgeoisie, Lenin wrote: "Despair of ever being able to give a scientific analysis of the present, a denial of science, a tendency to despise all generalisations, to hide from all the 'laws' of historical development, and make the trees screen the *wood*–such is the class idea underlying the fashionable bourgeois scepticism, the dead and deadening scholasticism, which we find in Mr. Struve's book."*

Analysis of the contradictions of capitalism inspires in the bourgeoisie fear and despair in the face of the laws of history, for the march of history inevitably leads to the collapse of capitalist society and its replacement by communist society.

Lenin enriched and carried further the Marxist principle of partisanship in philosophy.

He especially emphasised the integral and harmonious character of Marxist philosophy and demolished all revisionist attempts to separate Marx's economic and political doctrines from philosophical materialism. "From this Marxist philosophy, which is cast from a single piece of steel, you cannot eliminate one basic premise, one essential part, without departing from objective truth, without falling a prey to a bourgeois-reactionary falsehood."**

Philosophical generalisation of new developments in the natural sciences. Both in Russia and Western Europe, the revisionists claimed that Machism was a "new philosophy of the natural sciences". That speculation on the natural sciences had to be effectively refuted and the *new scientific discoveries* given *philosophical interpretation.* Lenin brilliantly accomplished both tasks in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.*

He revealed the causes and substance of the profound crisis in the natural sciences. Great scientific discoveries were made at the turn of the century: X-rays (1895), radioactivity (1896), the electron (1897), radium (1898), the electron theory of matter. This was the beginning of a veritable revolution in the natural sciences, one that drastically changed the generally accepted views of classical physics. It was established that the mass of the electron depended on speed and that the chemical elements could be transformed into one another. These fundamental discoveries led to a crisis in physics.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 199.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 326.

"The *essence* of the crisis in modern physics," Lenin pointed out, "consists in the break-down of the old laws and basic principles, in the rejection of an objective reality existing outside the mind, that is, in the replacement of materialism by idealism and agnosticism."*

The need had matured for physics to shift from its positions of spontaneous, unrealised and often metaphysical materialism to new positions of dialectic materialism.

Reactionary philosophers immediately seized on the new scientific discoveries and on the gnoseological problems posed by these discoveries to give prominence to their own interpretations, based entirely on idealistic theories, and divert the scientist from materialism to the old, discredited path of idealism and reconcile science with religion.

The now generally accepted fact that the mass of the electron was changeable was exploited by idealist philosophers and physicists who subscribed to their theories to prove that movement and energy were conceivable without matter, that "matter vanished", that the very concept of matter had become obsolete. There appeared a new trend, "physical idealism".

Lenin exposed the utter untenability of this idealistic interpretation. Is the electron objective reality, does it exist outside and independently of the human mind?–that was the question he put to the Machian physicists who had strayed into idealism. And Lenin wrote: "The scientists will also have to answer this question unhesitatingly; and they do invariably answer it in the *affirmative*, just as they unhesitatingly recognise that nature existed prior to man and prior to organic matter. Thus, the question is decided in favour of materialism."**

Lenin maintained that the electron was not the ultimate "immutable essence of things", the last "brick" of nature. "The electron is as *inexhaustible* as the atom, nature is infinite."***

Lenin was able to prove that the new scientific discoveries fully corroborated dialectical materialism, for "the destructibility of the atom, its inexhaustibility, the mutability of all forms of matter and of its motion, have always been the stronghold of dialectical materialism".****

And dialectical materialism was the only true method of investigation and the only true philosophy. For it alone is intrinsically connected with the natural sciences, and by penetrating every field of research makes it possible correctly to interpret scientific achievements and indicate the sure road to resolving any crisis in science. But materialism, being a scientific world outlook, has to be constantly developed and enriched by new scientific discoveries. We cannot effectively uphold dialectical materialism, Lenin stressed, if we stand still, and he urged all Marxists to study modern science and the struggle for materialism

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 258.
** *Ibid.*, p. 261.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 262.
**** *Ibid.*, p. 281.

in science. The science of matter and its structure, he emphasised, was a powerful weapon against idealism and agnosticism.

Engels once said that "with each epoch-making discovery even in the sphere of natural science materialism has to change its form".* And it was Lenin who gave materialism a new form in adaptation to the new conditions of history, when capitalism had entered its imperialist stage, and when science was undergoing revolutionary transformation. His *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* concretised, investigated and elucidated, on the basis of the latest achievements of science, all the cardinal problems of dialectical materialism: matter and its motion, time and space, causality, freedom and necessity, reflection of the objective world in man's mind, the dialectical nature of knowledge, the relation between social consciousness and social being, etc.

"Materialism and Empirio-Criticism" represents the new, Lenin stage in Marxist philosophy.

It is a paean to the power of the human mind, revealing the limitless prospects for our scientific understanding of the essence of phenomena in infinite nature. "Human reason has discovered many amazing things in nature and will discover still more, and will thereby increase its power over nature."** Modern science, which has demonstrated the potency of human knowledge, is disclosing the laws governing the "amazing" processes taking place within the atom and its nucleus, and learning to control these processes. The noble task facing science is to make all the great discoveries and the immense energy they release serve mankind and peace.

Powerful theoretical weapon. The appearance of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* was of immense importance for the Party's activities, for in it Lenin not only defended the Party's theoretical heritage against attacks by the revisionists and dogmatists, but made an invaluable contribution to Marxist philosophy, which he raised to a new, higher plane.

Its publication was followed by heated philosophical discussions among Russian Social-Democrats in many parts of Europe. The largest discussion gatherings and the most frequent were held in Paris, where hundreds of Russian socialist workers living in the Paris working-class districts visited the Bolshevik *Proletary* club. Lenin's views were forcefully supported at these and other discussions by I. Dubrovinsky, a member of the Bolshevik Centre and the *Proletary* editorial board. Using Lenin's "Ten Questions to a Lecturer", he was able to make out a very convincing case against Bogdanov at the latter's public lecture in Geneva in the summer of 1908.

In Russia the philosophical struggle was waged in Party organisations and among political prisoners in tsarist jails and places of exile. Lenin was warmly supported in his battle with the Russian Machians and

* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1958, Vol. II, p. 373.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, pp. 281-82.

Otzovists by V. Vorovsky, I. Teodorovich, Y. Rudzutak, N. Skrypnik and rank-and-file Bolshevik workers.

In June 1909, V. Vorovsky was able to review Lenin's book in the Odessa newspaper *Obozreniye*. Remarking that "an outstanding theoretician of Russian Marxism" had written a closely-argued book against Machism, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. Critical Comments on a Reactionary Philosophy*, Vorovsky wrote: "Lenin scathingly criticises a doctrine reactionary not only in relation to the philosophy and gnoseology of Marx and Engels, but even to that of Kant, whose 'thing-in-itself' Avenarius and like-minded philosophers flatly negate and advance their own theory of 'complexes of sensations'."

Lenin's criticism of Machism, Vorovsky further pointed out, "is of particular value for Russia, where Messrs. the Bogdanovs, Bazarovs, Yushkeviches, Bermans and their ilk have departed from historical materialism and are causing chaos in readers' minds by presenting as Marxism 'something incredibly muddled, confused and reactionary'. While ostensibly arguing against Plekhanov, they are in reality arguing against Marx and Engels".*

Some Bolsheviks, however, underestimated the significance of Lenin's battle against Machism and his defence of dialectical and historical materialism.

In these years of reaction, Stalin displayed indecision in the fight against Otzovism and took a conciliatory attitude towards the Machist attacks on Marxist philosophy. His letter to Mikha Tskhakaya (July 1908),** who was then living in Switzerland and at one time sided with the Otzovists and "God-builders", suggests that he did not appreciate the importance of the struggle Lenin and the Party were waging against the Bogdanov, Bazarov and Lunacharsky group on philosophical issues. Stalin described it as a "storm in a teacup". Though admitting that empirio-criticism (Machism) was unacceptable to a proletarian party, he argued that Machism had its "good aspects", regarding Mach and Avenarius, on a par with Holbach and Hegel, as "men of science" in matters of philosophy. He suggested, in his letter to Tskhakaya, that the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels be developed and concretised "in the spirit of Joseph Dietzgen, assimilating, at the same time, the good aspects of Machism". In another letter, to M. Toroshelidze in Geneva, written shortly after publication of the book,*** Stalin praised it as "the only one of its kind to give a full summary of the philosophy (gnoseology) of materialism". At the same time, however, he maintained that Bogdanov had "aptly and correctly" spotted "certain *individual* defects" in Lenin's analysis.

* To avoid complications with the censor, Vorovsky's article was printed as a review of Fervorn's *Natural Science and Philosophy. The Problem of Life*, though the review dealt solely with *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. It appeared in the Odessa *Obozreniye* of June 5, No. 439, 1909, p. 3, and was reprinted in *Voprosy Filosofii* (*Problems of Philosophy*) No. 3, 1957, p. 123.

** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

*** *Ibid.*

The appearance of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* was an event of first-rate importance in the life and work of the Party.

Lenin was keenly interested in everything comrades from Russia could tell him about how the book had been received, particularly in St. Petersburg, where the Machians enjoyed considerable influence. Its appearance aroused wide interest in the study of Marxist philosophy among Party members and did much to help Party activists and front-rank workers master dialectical and historical materialism.

By exposing Machism, Lenin and the Bolsheviks dealt a telling blow to Menshevik ideology, for in Russia Machism was especially strong in the Menshevik organisations, which were composed chiefly of petty-bourgeois intellectuals. In fact Machism was the theoretical basis of Liquidationism and Menshevik defection from the revolution. The struggle against Machism waged by Lenin and the Bolsheviks played a direct part also in defeating Otzovism, a Left-sectarian trend which, essentially, was a variety of Menshevism or, in Lenin's words, "Liquidationism inside-out".

Materialism and Empirio-Criticism was a powerful weapon of the Party in the battle against all forms and varieties of opportunism, against all the falsifiers of Marxism in the Russian working-class movement. It played an outstanding part in the ideological arming of the Bolsheviks, in the theoretical substantiation of the principles of the Marxist party of the new type and in rallying and strengthening its ranks.

For more than half a century now this classical work of Lenin has served the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as a reliable guide in forming the scientific world outlook of the people and in combating reactionary ideology. The fight waged by Lenin and the Bolsheviks against philosophical revisionism had a strong international impact—it exposed the Second International leaders' contention that philosophy had no relation to politics, that the philosophical views of Party members were their private affair, and that one could be a Marxist without subscribing to dialectical materialism.

Materialism and Empirio-Criticism has for many progressive scientists been a guide in their research, helping them to break with idealistic views and adopt a scientific, materialist world outlook. For a number of outstanding progressive scientists, acquaintance with Marxist-Leninist theory and the experience of the liberation struggle of the working people was decisive in winning them over to the working class and communism. That is how the eminent French scientists and peace fighters Paul Langevin and Frédéric Joliot-Curie joined the communist ranks.

In our day, too, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* contributes to the struggle against bourgeois philosophy, revisionism and dogmatism, helping the peoples to understand and reorganise in a revolutionary fashion the world they live in.

In Paris. Towards the close of 1908, publication of *Proletary* was transferred to Paris, then the centre of Russian political emigration.

This made it necessary for Lenin and Krupskaya to move to Paris too. Besides, conditions in Geneva had changed—the authorities had begun to persecute the Russian revolutionaries and landlords often refused to rent them rooms.

There was some difficulty in finding a suitable flat in Paris. At first they rented a four-room apartment—a rather sumptuous affair with mirrored mantlepieces—but it was too expensive and out of keeping with the furniture they had brought from Geneva. The concierge looked on with scorn as the new lodgers brought in their modest belongings. The landlord even refused to give Krupskaya the letter of recommendation required of all lending library subscribers. Arter a while a suitable two-room apartment (now the Lenin Museum) was found in the Rue Marie-Rose.

Most of the Russian émigrés lived in extreme poverty. Many did not have regular jobs and led a semi-starvation existence. Lenin himself lived very modestly (Krupskaya recalled later that they had to economise on tram fares, food, etc.), but managed to contribute to the émigrés mutual-aid fund. The proceeds from his public lectures went to help comrades, and if Lenin saw that a comrade was in pressing circumstances, he did everything to find him work.

In Paris, as in Geneva, there were always many visitors; they felt at home at the "Ilyiches" in the atmosphere of complete harmony, mutual affection, consideration and infinite tact. Everyone who visited them remarked on this and on the unfailing consideration Lenin showed for Krupskaya's aged mother, whom he always helped with her household chores. This friendly atmosphere never failed to attract the émigrés for whom separation from Russia was especially painful in these difficult post-revolution years.

Everyone who knew Lenin in these trying times remarked on his optimism, and varied interests. Though engrossed in political activity, he always found time for a lecture on Shakespeare, a brief visit to Antwerp, its port and museum, a game of chess (his mother had sent him a set of chessmen carved by his father), a première at the theatre, or Victor Hugo's verse about the 1848 revolution. On sleepless nights he would read Verhaern. Lenin was fond of a theatre frequented by workers in one of the suburbs. It staged revolutionary plays that could not be produced on the regular Paris stage. He also liked to hear Montegus, whose performance of revolutionary songs had made him a favourite of the working-class suburbs. Montegus was the son of a Paris Communard and Lenin enjoyed chatting with him.

Lenin was keenly interested in aviation and liked to watch the test flights at the Juvisy Airfield near Paris.

In Paris Lenin made a close study of the French labour movement. Together with Nadezhda Konstantinovna he visited Paul Lafargue and his wife, Laura, the daughter of Karl Marx, at their home in Draveil, some twenty kilometres from Paris. The Lafargues received them with great cordiality. Lenin had a long talk with Lafargue, whom he had

first met in 1895, on philosophical subjects, notably *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Laura Lafargue walked with Nadezhda Konstantinovna in the park and they discussed events in Russia and the participation of women in the revolutionary movement. The visit left an indelible impression.

Lenin reacted to every political development in Russia. In January-March 1909, during the leather workers' strike in Vilno, he took energetic measures to organise relief. In a letter to Camille Huysmans, Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau, he urged organisation of a strike relief fund. After discussing the matter with P. V. Eidukyavichus (Martseli), who had come from Russia to collect money for the strikers, he again approached Huysmans, endorsing Eidukyavichus's mission. He returned to the subject somewhat later in a third letter pressing for action by the I.S.B.

Struggle to preserve and strengthen the illegal revolutionary party. In those trying years of reaction, Lenin considered the Bolsheviks' chief task to be preservation and strengthening of the illegal working-class party and preparation of the proletariat for the new rise of the revolution. "We were able to work years and decades before the revolution, carrying our revolutionary slogans first into the study-circles, then among the masses of the workers, then on to the streets, then on to the barricades. We must be capable, *now too*, of organising first and foremost that which constitutes the task of the hour, and without which all talk about co-ordinated political action will be empty words, namely, the task of building a strong proletarian organisation, everywhere carrying on *political agitation* among the masses for its revolutionary watchwords."*

Lenin elaborated and substantiated the Party's policy and tactics of preserving and rallying together the forces needed to prepare for a new revolutionary offensive. He taught the Bolsheviks to avail themselves of every opportunity, even the smallest, to come out in the open, bring into the movement new proletarian forces, imbue every aspect of their activity with the spirit of revolutionary struggle.

The illegal workers' party could be preserved and strengthened only through uncompromising struggle against its numerous enemies—the Mensheviks, Trotskyites and their accomplices. The Mensheviks had retreated in panic, had shamefully renounced the Party's revolutionary programme, tactics and goals, had no faith in a new rise of the revolution. They appealed to the workers to seek agreement with the bourgeoisie. They wanted to liquidate, abolish the illegal party organisations, cease all illegal activity and tried to set up a reformist, legal party. These were the Liquidators, and they did great harm to the working-class movement. They denied that a new democratic revolution against the monarchy was inevitable. In their view, the revolution had been completed and there was no longer any need for an illegal revolutionary

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 218.

proletarian party. The need now, they argued, was to come to terms with the tsarist regime and fight for reforms.

The emergence of this Liquidationist trend, Lenin pointed out, was no mere accident. It was a deep-rooted social phenomenon, indissolubly connected with the counter-revolutionary position of the liberal bourgeoisie and disintegration among the petty-bourgeois fellow travellers of the revolution. Menshevik Liquidationism, Lenin wrote, "consists ideologically in negation of the revolutionary class struggle of the socialist proletariat in general, and denial of the hegemony of the proletariat in our bourgeois-democratic revolution in particular."* Organisationally, Liquidationism signified negation of the illegal Social-Democratic Party, defection from the R.S.D.L.P., resignation from its ranks, and struggle against the Party in the legal press and legal workers' organisations. Without relentlessly combating Liquidationism and destroying it, Lenin stressed, the Party could make no headway.

The ideological confusion and disintegration led not only to direct Liquidationism, but to "Liquidationism inside-out", or Otzovism. In the spring of 1908, an opportunist group of Bolsheviks—Bogdanov, Alexinsky, Lunacharsky and others—declared that in view of the fierce reactionary onslaught, the Party should confine itself to illegal activities. Accordingly, the group urged the recall of the Social-Democratic members of the Duma. These were the Otzovists (from the Russian word "otozvat", meaning recall), and they were hampering the Party's efforts to use the Duma rostrum and build up support in the semi-legal and legal working-class organisations. In other words, the Otzovists were destroying the Party's ties with the masses, renouncing leadership of the masses and working to convert the Party into a sectarian organisation incapable of marshalling the forces for a new rise of the revolution. They distorted the very essence of revolutionary Marxist tactics, which call for adapting forms and methods of struggle to new situations without, however, losing sight of the Party's ultimate goal. The Otzovists were doing immense harm to the Party; they were weakening it, for sectarianism inevitably leads to isolation from the masses.

Otzovism, Lenin stressed, was a departure from revolutionary Marxism, and therefore a departure from the principles of Bolshevism. Objectively, the Otzovists were leading the Party towards isolation from the masses and, consequently, towards its liquidation as the revolutionary party of the working class. Lenin described Otzovism as a caricature of Bolshevism.

The Party sent its representatives to the Duma in order that they might use its rostrum to advocate revolutionary demands and slogans. In conditions of rampant reaction, when extra-parliamentary opportunities for propaganda, agitation and organisation had been reduced to practically nil, it was of the utmost political importance to make use of the Duma tribune as a powerful means of mobilising the masses and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 454.

winning them over to the side of the revolution. But the Otzovists were making it impossible for the Party to do that, and Lenin called for a relentless war against Otzovism. In his efforts to preserve the Party, he fought both varieties of Liquidationism, Right and Left.

Lenin also had to fight Trotsky, who under the guise of "non-factionalism" was advocating centrism, or unity of revolutionaries and opportunists within a single party. Trotsky used the newspaper he published in Vienna to distort Bolshevism, falsify the history of the first Russian revolution and support the Liquidators. Trotsky refused to submit to the Central Committee, though he did everything he could to have his factional paper published on Party money. This was outright duplicity. Lenin branded it as such and opposed any support of Trotsky's paper. In an indignant letter to the editors of the Central Party Organ he wrote: "Trotsky behaves like a most despicable careerist and factionalist. . .", either he submits to the Central Committee, or "a break with this scoundrel and his exposure in the Central Organ. He pays lip service to the Party but behaves worse than any other factionalist".*

A turning-point in the life of the Party at that period was the Fifth All-Russia R.S.D.L.P. Conference in Paris, December 21-27, 1908 (January 3-9, 1909), which Lenin attended as a representative of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee. The keynote was the struggle on two fronts–against the Menshevik Liquidators and the "Left" opportunists–the Otzovists and the Ultimatumists.** The central point was Lenin's report, "The Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party", on which the conference adopted a resolution drafted by Lenin. The conference resolutely condemned Liquidationism.

Lenin attached exceptional importance to the conference resolutions, which defined the Party's revolutionary line and organisational policy for the entire period of reaction. They revealed, he said, the causes and implications of the crisis in the Party and indicated the way out. They gave an analysis of class relationships and of tsarism's new policy, formulated the immediate aim of proletarian struggle, assessed the lessons of the revolution and shaped Party tactics in the light of these lessons, laid down a clear line on the relation between legal and illegal organisations, emphasised the need to utilise the Duma and draw up precise directives for the Duma group based on the criticism of its mistakes.

The conference resolutions were approved by a plenary meeting of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee and published in a Central Committee Statement. Taking the conference decisions as their basis, Lenin and his associates launched a decisive struggle against the enemies of the Party. Plekhanov also came out against Liquidationism, and this Lenin regarded as a victory for Bolshevism.

The struggle for the Party grew more and more bitter. In 1909 the Otzovists organised a "Party" school in Capri. In reality it was the directing centre of their faction, but by advertising it as an "all-Party school", they were able to attract several workers from Russia. Gradually, however, these workers saw through the theories expounded by Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, Alexinsky and Co. and realised that this was not a genuine Party school. They invited Lenin to deliver a series of lectures in Capri. In his reply Lenin exposed the anti-Party nature of the school, declined the invitation to lecture and invited the Capri students to come to Paris.

Lenin's indignation knew no bounds. In his articles he denounced Bogdanov and his group as adventurers who had enticed a few workers into their school by fraud and deception. In attacking the factionalists, Lenin emphasised: "Nothing could be more harmful now than treating them with kid gloves. *A complete break* and war *waged with more energy than against the Mensheviks.*"*

It was not long before a struggle flared up in the Capri school between Leninist Bolsheviks and Bogdanov supporters. Six of the students, including one of the school's organisers, the worker Vilonov (Mikhail), were expelled for supporting Lenin. They came to Paris, where Lenin warmly welcomed them, followed later, when the school closed, by the rest of the students. Lenin lectured on "The Present Situation and Our Tasks" and "Stolypin's Agrarian Policy". He had long talks with the students, patiently helping them to understand the anti-Party substance of Otzovism and winning them over to the Bolshevik position.

In the fight to preserve and strengthen the R.S.D.L.P. Lenin devoted much attention to the activities of Party organisations in Russia and training of Party cadres, especially from among the workers. He believed that the worker groups in the big industrial centres, which were gradually taking over direction of Party activities, should be given the utmost attention. Everything should be done, he said, to build up strong Party cadres within these groups, for only on that basis would it be possible to preserve and strengthen the Party. Lenin himself devoted much energy and care to training Party functionaries with working-class background. Meetings with workers gave him the greatest pleasure. That was evident from his animation, from the warm sparkle in his eyes.

A meeting of the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* was held in Paris to rally the Bolshevik forces against the Otzovists. On the eve of the meeting Lenin conferred with members of the editorial board and representatives of local Social-Democratic organisations and explained

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, p. 349.

** *Ultimatumism*–a variety of Otzovism, from which it differed only in form. The Ultimatumists failed to appreciate the need for painstaking work to help the Social-Democratic deputies overcome their mistakes and adopt a consistent revolutionary line. They proposed that the Social-Democratic Duma members be presented with an ultimatum–either they fully submit to the decisions of the Party Central Committee or be recalled from the Duma.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, pp. 351-52.

the situation that had arisen in the Party. The editorial board meeting began on June 8 (21), 1909, and proceeded under Lenin's leadership. He made the report on Otzovism and Ultimatumism. The resolution adopted by the meeting on this subject exposed the great harm Otzovist and Ultimatumist propaganda was causing the working-class movement and Social-Democratic activity, and the menace it created to Party unity. The editorial board meeting declared in its resolution that Otzovism and Ultimatumism had nothing in common with Bolshevism, were cutright deviations from revolutionary Marxism and should be resolutely combated as such by all Bolsheviks.

Lenin also delivered a report on the tasks of the Bolsheviks in the Duma, emphasising that the Duma was an important propaganda vehicle. More attention, he said, should be paid to popularising the aims of the socialist revolution and explaining the basic ideas and principles of scientific socialism. The Duma group must hold aloft the banner of the revolution, the proletarian banner. Together with the Party it must actively intervene on all issues of labour legislation, show up the hypocrisy and fraud of social-reformism, explain the class nature of the bourgeois political parties, expose the counter-revolutionary liberal bourgeoisie and the vacillation of the petty-bourgeois democrats.

The meeting urged maximum use of all legal opportunities. This should not, however, be regarded as an aim in itself; it should always be closely connected with the objects and methods of the Party's illegal revolutionary activities.

The Bolsheviks' fight for the Party and the Party spirit, the meeting declared, must concentrate on all-round active support of the Central Committee and the Central Organ against the Liquidators and all varieties of revisionism, and on co-operation with other groups that support the Party's line.

The meeting described the Capri school as the centre of a new break-away group pursuing its own factional objectives on the ideological and political fronts. This was obvious from the fact that the school had been initiated and organised by Otzovists, Ultimatumists and "God-builders". The enlarged editorial board therefore announced that "the Bolsheviks do not and cannot bear any responsibility for the school". Bogdanov, its organiser, was expelled from the Party.

Lenin's struggle against the Liquidators, Otzovists, Machians and "God-builders" met with strong support in Party organisations in Russia.

Lenin was uncompromising also in opposing the sectarians and the "Lefts", who used revolutionary phraseology as a cover for their opportunism. Fighting on two fronts, the Bolsheviks strengthened their ranks and upheld their revolutionary policy and tactics. Lenin wrote later that after the defeat of the first Russian revolution "the Bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat, with the least loss to their 'army', with its core best preserved, with the least significant splits (in respect of profundity and irremediability), with the least demoralisation, and in the best condition to resume the work on the broadest scale and in

the most correct and energetic manner. The Bolsheviks achieved this only because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrase-mongers, who refused to understand that one had to retreat, that one had to know how to retreat, and that one had absolutely to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary parliaments, in the most reactionary trade unions, co-operative societies, insurance societies and similar organisations."*

After the *Proletary* editorial board meeting the family spent some time at a cheap but fairly comfortable pension (found through a newspaper advertisement) in the little village of Bombon (Seine-et-Marne Department). There were frequent walks in the surrounding countryside and cycling trips to the Clamart woods about fifteen kilometres away.

Lenin returned to Paris towards the end of September, back to his rigorous work schedule: up at eight, breakfast, the Bibliothèque Nationale till the reading-room closed for lunch, back home at two for the midday meal and after that work at home, usually late into the night. Unlike Geneva, where the library was within walking distance, he had to make long bicycle journeys, and this was exhausting.

Lenin was much sought after as a speaker, lecturing to widely different audiences on the situation in Russia, the Paris Commune and other subjects. In the latter part of October 1909, he addressed a gathering of Social-Democrats in Liège, Belgium, on the position in the Party and gave a public lecture on "The Ideology of the Counter-Revolutionary Bourgeoisie". One of the audience described the lecture (in a letter to Kiev intercepted by the tsarist police) as "excellent in content and delivery. Now I understand why Lenin enjoys such influence, affection even, among wide sections of the Party. He is a splendid propagandist, brilliant diplomat, profound theoretician, shrewd practical leader, equally effective before a university audience and a workers' meeting and understood and appreciated by the masses—in short, the embodiment of everything one expects in a Party leader."**

In this period Lenin invested much time and effort in exposing and combating counter-revolutionary liberalism. This was all the more necessary in view of the appearance of *Vekhi* (*Landmarks*), a collection of articles by such recognised spokesmen of the Cadet Party as Berdyaev, Bulgakov and Struve. Cringing and fawning upon the tsarist government, these Cadet ideologists declared with cynical frankness: "We... should ... bless this [tsarist] government which alone with its bayonets and prisons still protects us from popular fury."

In his article "Concerning *Vekhi*" Lenin described the collection as an encyclopaedia of liberal renegacy. Its publication, he wrote, was proof of a complete break between Russian liberalism and the Russian liberation movement. Having renounced the underlying ideas of democracy, "the liberal bourgeoisie has decisively turned away from

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* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 381.
** *Izvestia* No. 238, October 11, 1935.

defence of popular rights to defence of institutions hostile to the people".* And Lenin branded the Cadet symposium a "torrent of reactionary mud poured on the head of democracy".**

Counter-revolutionary liberalism and its ideology was the subject of a public lecture Lenin gave in November 1909 at the Science Society on the Rue Danton. The hall was filled to capacity. There were many Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary hecklers among the audience, but they were soon silenced by the iron logic of Lenin's arguments and his clear, lucid delivery. The meeting adopted a resolution proposed by Lenin.

The fight Lenin and the Bolsheviks waged against the Liquidators took on fresh force at the plenary meeting of the Party Central Committee in Paris in January 1910. The atmosphere at the meeting was tense. Lenin later wrote to Maxim Gorky of the "long plenum"... "three weeks of nerve-racking torment, a veritable hell!" To such important and crucial factors as the need to purge the Social-Democratic movement of Liquidationism and Otzovism, Lenin wrote, to the incredible difficulties facing the Party and Social-Democratic activity generally, the plenum added conciliatory sentiments, enmity towards the Bolshevik centre for its relentless ideological struggle, Menshevik intrigue and Menshevik attempts to stir up trouble. Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov and Dubrovinsky and Nogin, displayed a dangerous tendency, advocating joint work with the Liquidators. Lenin said of these conciliators that they had always been a pawn in the hands of the Liquidators, and for all practical purposes, were working to liquidate the illegal revolutionary party. At the plenum the conciliators joined forces with Trotsky to put through anti-Leninist decisions. Trotsky and his supporters succeeded in getting Menshevik Liquidators appointed to the central Party bodies in opposition to Lenin's proposal to appoint pro-Party Mensheviks. They also succeeded in securing a decision to stop publication of *Proletary* and give financial support to Trotsky's paper, of which Kamenev was made one of the editors, representing the Central Committee.

Lenin put all his energy into the fight against the conciliators and their ally Trotsky. His draft resolution on the position in the Party condemned both Liquidationism and Otzovism, and it was only on his insistence that the meeting branded them as manifestations of bourgeois influence on the proletariat. Its resolution said both were dangerous deviations from Marxism. But again, the conciliators and Trotskyites insisted that Liquidationism and Otzovism should not be mentioned by name: the resolution merely mentioned the "two deviations".

The struggle became sharper still after the Central Committee plenary meeting. The Menshevik Liquidators stooped to outright foul play. The

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 126.
** *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Otzovists were provoking all manner of squabbles: "We are in the very centre of all these squabbles," Lenin wrote. "Émigré life now is a hundred times worse than it was before the revolution. Émigré life and squabbling are inseparable.

"But the squabbling can be dismissed—nine-tenths of it takes place abroad; squabbling is a minor detail. The thing is that the Party, the Social-Democratic movement, are developing and going forward in face of all the hellish difficulties of the present situation,"* Lenin declared confidently.

It took much effort on Lenin's part to overcome the extremely damaging conciliatory decisions of the Central Committee plenum. But towards the end of March 1910, Lenin could record with a feeling of satisfaction (in a letter to N. Vilonov) that the conciliatory and bogus unity mist was beginning to dispel.

The Central Committee plenum elected Lenin to the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Central Party Organ, now published abroad. Lenin used its pages for a resolute struggle against Liquidationism, Otzovism and Trotskyism. In fact, his articles were the central feature of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, and at times there were as many as four in a single issue. His articles—a total of more than 80 were published—were an important factor in saving the illegal Party and in strengthening its unity and ties with the masses.

But work on the paper was hard, for at every step Lenin had to counteract the opposition of the other editors, Martov and Dan. He was adamant in upholding a consistently Bolshevik policy against conciliatory tendencies. The atmosphere became especially strained following the January Central Committee plenary meeting, and at one time Lenin was on the verge of resigning from the editorial board. Martov brazenly announced he would begin "military operations"; together with Dan he began an anti-Party campaign of intrigue against the Bolsheviks and the pro-Party Mensheviks.

Lenin stood for co-operation with Plekhanov and his pro-Party Menshevik followers, who were opposed to Liquidationism. But he emphasised that it was purely a matter of joint struggle against Liquidationism, and that there could be no question of glossing over the political differences with the pro-Party Mensheviks.

Against opportunism in the Second International. Throughout all these years Lenin fought opportunism in the Second International, whose leaders continued to support the Mensheviks. The two chief German Social-Democratic publications, *Neue Zeit* and *Vorwärts*, threw their columns open to calumnious Menshevik attacks on the Bolsheviks. And the Mensheviks were only too ready to engage in such calumny, using every means to discredit the Bolsheviks in the eyes of the West European Socialist parties.

In October 1908, Lenin went to Brussels for a meeting of the International Socialist Bureau, at which he consistently opposed the oppor-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ, ed., Vol. 34, pp. 368, 369.

tunists. On the eve of the meeting he attended an international peace rally. Next day, when the I.S.B. met, he criticised Kautsky's resolution in admitting the British Independent Labour Party to the International. While supporting its application, Lenin emphasised that, contrary to Kautsky's contention, it was not really independent of the bourgeoisie and was not really committed to an independent class policy. He also argued against admitting the Zionist socialists to the Russian section of the International.

The International Socialist Bureau held its eleventh meeting in November 1909 and discussed two major questions, the International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen in 1910 and the split in the Dutch Social-Democratic Labour Party, the result of a long struggle between the opportunists and Marxists. The opportunists sought rapprochement with the liberals, and had abandoned the Party's old, Marxist, programme. Speaking on this question Lenin insisted that the Dutch Marxists be admitted to the International.

Lenin closely followed and vigorously combated the growing menace of world war. He exposed imperialist hypocrisy, the tactics of concealing war preparations behind a barrage of diplomatic talk. An ardent champion of peace, he urged the workers' parties to oppose militarism and strain every effort to prevent war. He stressed the need for intensified anti-militarist activity and the promotion of international solidarity. In his article "Bellicose Militarism and the Anti-Militarist Tactics of Social-Democracy", Lenin sharply criticised Vollmar, Noske and the other German Right-wing Social-Democrats for contending that, since militarism and war were inevitable concomitants of capitalism, there was no point in combating them. That line of argument, Lenin showed, led to nationalism, to defence of one's own capitalist "fatherland".

That opportunist policy of the Social-Democratic Right wing, it will be recalled, did lead to social-chauvinism in the First World War.

In other articles, "Inflammable Material in World Politics", "Events in the Balkans and in Persia", Lenin denounced the predatory imperialist policy of the European colonialists in Asia. Pointing to their suppression of the national liberation movement in Persia, India and other countries, he showed "what *brutes* the highly 'civilised' European 'politicians', men who have passed through the high school of constitutionalism, can turn into when it comes to a rise in the mass struggle against capital and the capitalist colonial system, i.e., a system of enslavement, plunder and violence".* Lenin called for a struggle against colonial oppression and colonial policy: "Down with all colonial policy, down with the whole policy of intervention and capitalist struggle for the conquest of foreign lands and foreign populations, for new privileges, new markets, control of the Straits, etc.!"

In the summer of 1910, Lenin vacationed with his family at Pornic on the shores of the Bay of Biscay. They lived in the home of a customs-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 182.

house watchman, and Lenin became friendly with the family, especially after the watchman's wife, a laundress, told him of her war with the Catholic priests, who were trying to induce her to send her little boy to a monastery school.

Towards the end of the summer Lenin went to Copenhagen for the Eighth Congress of the Second International. This was the second international congress he attended. On his first day in the Danish capital he took part in a meeting of the Congress Bureau and, as at the Stuttgart Congress, he convened a conference of Left-wing delegates. This was a further step towards uniting and organising the revolutionary element in the international labour movement.

One of the chief items on the Congress agenda was socialist policy towards the co-operative movement, an issue in which there were sharp differences between the revolutionary and revisionist trends. Two basic policies emerged from the debate, one expressive of proletarian class struggle, and the other of petty-bourgeois opportunism. Exponents of the revolutionary policy regarded the co-operatives as weapons of the class struggle, as one of its auxiliary means, and defined the conditions under which the co-operatives could perform that function effectively and not remain merely commercial enterprises. The petty-bourgeois line was to play down the role of the co-operatives in the proletarian class struggle.

As a member of the congress co-operative committee, Lenin drafted a resolution clearly and comprehensively defining the role and tasks of the co-operatives in the class struggle. Lenin's resolution was made the basis of the draft submitted to the Congress by the R.S.D.L.P. delegation.

The Russian delegation was dominated by opportunists, and Lenin had to wage a vigorous struggle against them. In their rabid hatred of the Bolsheviks and their leader, the Mensheviks even accused Lenin, at a delegation meeting, of trying to "wreck the Party". When a Bolshevik delegate asked how one man could wreck the Party, Dan replied: "He devotes twenty-four hours to the revolution, has no other thoughts save thoughts of the revolution, even sees revolution in his sleep. What can you do with such a man?"*

A bitter enemy of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, Dan unwittingly spoke the truth. For Lenin devoted all his energies to the victory of the revolution, to the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, to the triumph of socialism and the happiness of the working people.

In the course of the Congress, Lenin again drew closer to Plekhanov. They were united in a common effort to preserve the illegal Marxist party against the Liquidators, Trotskyites and revisionists of every stripe. Together they rebutted Trotsky's slanderous writings in the German press, in which he gave a false picture of the situation in the

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1925, edited by N. Meshcheryakov, Vol. II, p. 49.

R.S.D.L.P., claiming that the Party was in a state of confusion and disintegration. Together they vigorously protested against these malicious fabrications. In a letter to the German Social-Democratic leadership they exposed Trotsky's article in *Vorwärts*, and after the Congress Lenin wrote a long article, "The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia", in which he effectively refuted all Trotsky's lies.

Using the false Liquidationist arguments and pleading independence of any faction, Trotsky claimed that the Bolshevik-Menshevik struggle was for influence "on a politically immature proletariat". He distorted Bolshevism and the history of the Russian revolution. That was typical of his politics. Lenin wrote: "One day Trotsky plagiarises from the ideological stock-in-trade of one faction; the next day he plagiarises from that of another, and therefore declares himself to be standing *above* both factions."* And to the Trotsky and Martov version of a backward and immature Russian proletariat, Lenin opposed irrefutable facts. The proletariat, he stressed, had won *for itself* the role of *hegemon* in the battle for freedom and democracy as a precondition of its fight for socialism. It had won for all of Russia's oppressed and exploited classes the *ability* to wage a revolutionary mass struggle. Mankind had never made any real progress without such a struggle.

Lenin continued his tense work in Copenhagen, visiting the public library every day before and after the Congress sittings. He was chiefly interested in Danish agriculture and made a careful study of agricultural statistics, which he later used in a number of articles. On the closing day of the Congress he signed a message to Tina Kirkova, the Bulgarian revolutionary, on behalf of a group of Marxist delegates.

In mid-September, Lenin went to Stockholm to meet his mother. During the revolution they had met in St. Petersburg, Kuokkala and at Sablino, where Maria Alexandrovna was then staying. That was nearly three years ago. Maria Alexandrovna was now 75 and the trip to Stockholm was not an easy one for her. Lenin awaited her arrival with great emotion. He found suitable lodgings and took pains to make his mother as comfortable as possible. The mornings were usually spent in work at the library, but the afternoons were wholly devoted to his mother; they often took walks in the city and its environs.

In Stockholm Lenin addressed several Social-Democratic meetings on the International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen and the situation in the Russian Party. Maria Alexandrovna attended one of the lectures, arranged by the Stockholm Bolshevik group. This was the first time she heard her son speak in public, "and it seemed to me," wrote Lenin's sister, Maria Ilyinichna who accompanied her, "that listening to him [Lenin] she was reminded of the speech of her other son, Alexander Ilyich, at his trial. That was evident from her changed expression."**

The day of parting came. Lenin stood on the pier wistfully watching his mother board the ship. He could not go abroad since it was a Russian ship and he ran the risk of being arrested. It was a sad farewell, for Lenin had a feeling that this was probably the last time he was to see his mother. And so it was; Maria Alexandrovna died in 1916. She did not live to see her son carry his great cause to victory.

Towards the end of September 1910 Lenin returned to Paris. He broke the journey in Copenhagen, where he delivered a lecture on the International Congress.

In those difficult years after the defeat of the first Russian revolution Lenin and his associates protected the Party against Liquidationist attempts to destroy it, exposed the phrase-mongers, upheld and further developed Marxist philosophy and steeled the Party, preparing it for the new offensive. Lenin gave the Party a clear perspective in the struggles ahead, defined its tasks and tactics in the new conditions. With unshakable faith in victory, he taught the proletariat to remain true to, and to develop and strengthen its revolutionary traditions, to educate the masses in the spirit of these traditions, so they can be carried forward to the new, inevitable rise of the revolution. The Russian proletariat, Lenin emphasised, was guided "not by 'vague hopes', but by the scientifically grounded conviction that the revolution will come again".

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 391.

** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.



Chapter Seven

THE NEW RISE OF THE REVOLUTION

> Despite everything, our cause is advancing. And the workers' party is being built, a *revolutionary* Social-Democratic party standing opposed to the liberal renegades and the Liquidators. Things will look brighter for us too.
>
> *LENIN*

As Lenin had foreseen, the triumph of the Stolypin reaction was shortlived. The summer of 1910 saw a revival of the working-class movement, and in the autumn there were more frequent strikes in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw and other industrial centres.

Offensive against tsarism. The proletariat was the first to take the offensive against tsarism—the lessons of the 1905-07 revolution made for heightened class consciousness. The industrial revival meant an increase in the number of workers and, what was of exceptional importance, a greater degree of concentration: over half of the industrial labour force was employed in factories with 500 or more workers each, as against only about one-third in the United States. Russia, in fact, had the world's highest concentration of industrial workers. And though the working class was comparatively small numerically, its economic and political conditions and militancy, the result of Bolshevik revolutionary activity

and organisation, made it the decisive force of the liberation movement against tsarism and capitalism.

The aims of the bourgeois-democratic revolution had not been achieved, and the maturing of a new revolutionary crisis, a new revolution, Lenin pointed out, was therefore inevitable. The proletariat would again give leadership to the entire people in the battle to carry the democratic revolution to completion, in the battle of *all* the working people, *all* the exploited, against the oppressors and exploiters.

And the selfless struggle waged by the working class was an example to the peasantry and the other democratic forces, bringing them into the fight for freedom. The peasants replied to Stolypin's agrarian reform by setting fire to manor-houses and kulak farms.

Strike struggles, peasant actions, worker and student demonstrations when Tolstoi died in November 1910—these were all part of the revival of the revolutionary and democratic forces, clear signs of a change in mass sentiment. Over 100,000 participated in the strike struggles of 1911, twice as many as in 1910. Mass meetings in the working-class districts of St. Petersburg demanded the release of the Social-Democratic members of the Second Duma, sentenced to penal servitude in 1907 on trumped-up charges. Lenin appealed to socialists in all countries to support that demand, and protest meetings were held in Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Austria, the United States and other countries.

The Party's chief task, as formulated by Lenin, was to muster all the revolutionary forces, with the working class at their head, and prepare for the new revolution against the autocracy. The decisive part was to be played by the working-class party. And the accomplishment of this momentous task depended on the Party's mass ideological and organisational work, its illegal activity, its ability to utilise every legal opportunity, however slight, for rallying the masses around the revolutionary banner and the militant proletarian slogans.

But the position within the Party remained tense. There was a bitter struggle between the Bolsheviks, on the one hand, and the Liquidators, Trotskyites and conciliators, on the other. The three Menshevik Liquidator C.C. members working in Russia refused to join the Central Committee Russian Bureau. They even proclaimed the existence of the Central Committee to be "harmful". With the arrest of its Bolshevik members, the Russian Bureau ceased to function; the Party in Russia was left without a central leadership; its very existence was in jeopardy. The strengthening of the Party became the chief task, and to it Lenin devoted all his energies.

Lenin intensified his ideological struggle against the Liquidators, who had now completely renounced political struggle, the proletariat's leading role in the revolution, its class positions and defence of its vital interests.

To counteract the Liquidators the Bolsheviks strengthened their bloc with the Plekhanov pro-Party Mensheviks and began publication in

Paris of the popular newspaper *Rabochaya Gazeta* (*Workers' Gazette*), the first issue of which appeared on October 30 (November 12), 1910. Lenin urged all Bolshevik groups in Russia and abroad to rally around the new paper and begin preparation for meetings and conferences that would re-establish and strengthen the Party.

"Zvezda". The Longjumeau Party school. The new upsurge of the revolutionary movement in Russia, Lenin pointed out, confronted the Bolsheviks with the all-important task of re-establishing the legal Marxist press. And the Bolsheviks accomplished that task, after surmounting numberless difficulties, by starting publication in St. Petersburg of a weekly newspaper, *Zvezda* (*The Star*). The first issue appeared on December 16 (29), 1910. N. Poletayev (Third Duma member), V. Bonch-Bruyevich, M. Olminsky, N. Baturin, Demyan Bedny, K. Yeremeyev and V. Shelgunov, an old associate of Lenin in the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, had an active part in organising and running the paper.

Lenin invited Gorky to contribute and *Zvezda* published seven of his famous *Tales of Italy*. "I am very very glad," Lenin wrote Gorky, "that you are helping *Zvezda*. We are having a devilish hard job with it—internal and external and financial difficulties are immense—but still we are managing so far."*

At the same time, in December 1910, Lenin arranged for the publication in Moscow of a legal Bolshevik magazine *Mysl* (*Thought*) as a means of intensifying the struggle against the legal Liquidator journals and providing a medium for the Marxist training of front-rank workers and intellectuals. Among the chief contributors were V. Vorovsky, M. Olminsky and I. Skvortsov-Stepanov. Lenin's articles in *Zvezda* and *Mysl* (there were more than fifty in all) set the policy of both publications. Lenin was in constant touch with the editors, criticised mistakes, particularly in the early issues of *Zvezda*, and under his leadership *Zvezda* became a militant Marxist paper that propagated the programme and tactics of the illegal proletarian party and served as the legal Bolshevik centre in Russia.

Among the Lenin articles it printed were the well-known "Certain Features of the Historical Development of Marxism" and "Differences in the European Labour Movement". *Mysl* carried Lenin's important article "Those Who Would Liquidate Us". In all of them Lenin gave an exceptionally profound and lucid description of the creative nature of revolutionary Marxism. Engels's classical formula that Marxism was not a dogma, but a guide to action, Lenin remarked, expressed the most profound and distinctive feature of Marxism, its intrinsic projection into the future, its creative revolutionary spirit. Some were inclined to overlook this aspect of Marxism, but to do so was to "turn Marxism into something one-sided, distorted and lifeless; we deprive it of its life blood; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 22.

the doctrine of historical development, all-embracing and full of contradictions; we undermine its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn of history".*

Like all his works, Lenin's articles of this period are outstanding examples of creative Marxism, illustrative of the constant development of Marxist theory, to which dogmatism and stagnation are utterly alien.

Of special significance in this context is "Differences in the European Labour Movement". In it, Lenin discloses the chief causes of the differences over theory and tactics within the international labour movement. For several decades there had been an incessant struggle between two basic deviations from Marxism: revisionism, opportunism, reformism, on the one hand, and anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-socialism, on the other. Both deviations, Lenin demonstrated, stemmed from the very nature of capitalist society.

The socialist movement attracts to its ranks, particularly in periods of rapid growth, ever new strata of the working people, whose training is inevitably accompanied by "waverings in the sphere of theory and tactics, by repetitions of old mistakes, by a temporary reversion to antiquated views and antiquated methods, and so forth".**

In countries where backward economic relationships hamper the development of capitalism and the proletarian class struggle, some supporters of the labour movement "assimilate only certain aspects of Marxism, only certain parts of the new world outlook, or individual slogans and demands".***

Another source of differences, Lenin pointed out, is the dialectical nature of social development, which proceeds in contradictions and through contradictions. And he emphasised that it is "Marxism, the theory of dialectical materialism, that is able to encompass these contradictions of living reality, of the living history of capitalism and the working-class movement".**** But that theory has to be mastered, one has to learn to apply it. Individuals or groups that have not mastered this theory "constantly exaggerate, elevate to a one-sided theory, to a one-sided system of tactics, now one and now another feature of capitalist development, now one and now another 'lesson' of this development".***** They accept, for instance, only "slow evolution" or "revolutionary leaps".

Differences in the labour movement are due also to some change of tactics by the ruling classes in general and the bourgeoisie in particular. In most countries the bourgeoisie devises two systems of rule, two methods —the whip and the carrot—of maintaining its domination: the method of direct, unconcealed coercion, and the method of "liberalism", of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 39.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 348.
*** *Ibid.*
**** *Ibid.*
***** *Ibid.*, p. 349.

individual concessions. And not infrequently these methods succeed each other or are applied in various combinations.

The growth of anarchism in the working-class movement is due to one-sided reaction by definite groups of socialists to the method of direct coercion. Anarchists of every variety reject "petty work", systematic, painstaking activities among the masses, especially utilisation of the parliamentary platform. In practice, this anarchist tactic amounts to waiting for momentous revolutionary events, "along with inability to muster the forces which create great events".

In some of the more developed capitalist countries the bourgeoisie resorts to a policy of "reforms against revolution". One-sided reaction to this "liberalism" and "bourgeois reformism" breeds opportunism in the movement. For the opportunists accept reforms, which are fully compatible with the capitalist system, as "partial realisation of socialism", bow to bourgeois "legality" and reject revolution for transition from capitalism to socialism.

Both Right opportunists and anarchists, Lenin wrote in conclusion, "hinder that which is most important and most urgent, namely, to unite the workers in big, powerful and properly functioning organisations, capable of functioning well under *all* circumstances, permeated with the spirit of the class struggle, clearly realising their aims and trained in the true Marxist world outlook".*

Today the Communist and Workers' Parties draw many lessons from this article, in which Lenin analysed the root causes of differences in the European labour movement. And the most important of these lessons is the need to master Marxism-Leninism, all the forms of struggle and organisation of the labour movement, apply them in various combinations and change them in good time, the need to wage an irreconcilable struggle against opportunism in all its forms and lay bare not only its class roots, but also the fallacious thinking that leads to departure from Marxism.

Lenin devoted much time and attention to the training of Party cadres. In the spring of 1911 he organised a Party school at Longjumeau, a little village near Paris. The students, eighteen in number, were workers drawn from Party organisations in the big industrial centres of Russia–St. Petersburg, Moscow, Sormovo, Yekaterinoslav, Nikolayev, the Dombrow mining area (Poland), Baku, Tiflis and others. Most of the students were Bolsheviks, but there were also pro-Party Mensheviks and one *Vperyod*-ist.**

Before the opening of the school Lenin discussed with the group the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels and in the school gave 29 lectures on political economy and 12 each on the agrarian question and the theory and practice of socialism in Russia. At the request of the students, he gave three additional lectures on the materialist interpretation of history and a talk on the political situation and position within the Party. His lectures often took the form of animated discussion in which all eighteen students participated, showering Lenin with questions and answering the questions put by Lenin. In the course of the discussion Lenin would tactfully, sometimes by a single word or remark, correct one or another of the students. He taught them to analyse problems and trained them in the habit of independent and systematic study.

The school was in session for four months. Three of the students, G. Orjonikidze, I. Schwarz and B. Breslav, left to take up illegal work in Russia before the end of the course and the rest followed when the school closed. In Russia they came to be known as "Leninists" and were proud of the name. The Longjumeau school, organised and directed by Lenin, was the forerunner of the Bolshevik Party schools and Communist universities founded in later years.

The Prague Conference. In May 1911, Lenin took steps to restore the Party Central Committee. All the Bolshevik members of the C.C. working in Russia had been arrested, and Lenin therefore decided to call a conference of C.C. members living abroad. It was held in Paris on May 28-June 4 (June 10-17), 1911, and greatly expedited the convocation of a general Party conference. It appointed an Organising Committee to prepare for an all-Russia Party Conference. It instructed Orjonikidze, a close associate of Lenin, and two other active Party workers, Schwarz and Breslav, to contact Party groups in Central and South Russia and the Urals and, together with them, convene a conference which would set up a Russian Organising Committee. The R.O.C. was formed at the end of September 1911, at a conference in Baku, and immediately started energetic activity in various parts of the country. Lenin spoke highly of its work in his article "The Climax of the Party Crisis", proudly describing it as the Russian Party centre.

In September 1911, Lenin attended a meeting of the International Socialist Bureau in Zurich at which he supported Rosa Luxemburg against the opportunist attitude of the German Social-Democrats in connection with the Reichstag elections. While in Switzerland he gave several lectures on "Stolypin and the Revolution", repeating the lecture in Paris, Brussels, Antwerp, Liège and London in October and November.

On December 14-17 (27-30), in Paris, he held a meeting of Bolshevik groups abroad, at which he delivered an extensive report on the position in the Party. The meeting approved the work of the R.O.C. in preparing a Party conference.

It was decided to hold the conference in Prague. The Czech comrades rendered valuable assistance in its organisation, providing the hall, arranging for the delegates to be put up with workers' families and, in general, displaying friendly concern for their safety and comfort. This was an expression of genuine proletarian solidarity.

The overwhelming majority of the delegates were workers. With one of them, Yevgeny Onufriyev (Stepan), a mechanic at the Obukhov

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 349.

** *Vperyod-ists*–Otzovists grouped around the newspaper *Vperyod*, published from 1910 to 1917.

Engineering Works in St. Petersburg and a member of the St. Petersburg Party Committee, Lenin shared a room in the home of a Czech worker. In his reminiscences, Onufriyev speaks of the great consideration and tact Lenin always showed. He would often return late at night and, not to disturb Onufriyev, would tiptoe across the room, quietly undress and go to bed. If he came earlier, he would drink a cup of tea and rest for ten or fifteen minutes, pacing the room with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat. Then he would tell his room-mate: "Well, Stepan, you go on with your reading and I'll do some work."

Lenin met many of the delegates before the conference. He questioned them about their families, earnings, worker sentiments, what they expected of the conference. He acquainted them with the notes he had drawn up for the conference. Onufriyev later wrote: "Listening to Lenin, you had the impression that he had travelled the length and breadth of Russia, had been inside her factories and peasants' huts, so thoroughly did he know the mood and vital needs of the people."

The Sixth All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. opened on January 5 (18), 1912, and held all its 23 sessions secretly because there were Russian police agents in Prague too, in a modest hall in the Social-Democrat People's House at 7, Gibern Street (the building is now a Lenin Museum).

Lenin directed all the work of the conference, was elected its chairman, delivered the reports on all key questions, drafted the conference resolutions. He was the heart and soul of this history-making assembly.

In his opening speech, Lenin warmly welcomed the delegates and outlined the basic tasks confronting them. In another speech, on the competence of the conference, he emphasised that all functioning Party organisations in Russia without exception had been invited to send delegates, and the invitation had been declined only by those who did not want to help the Party. On Lenin's proposal, the conference proclaimed itself the supreme Party assembly, empowered to elect its central bodies and re-establish the Party. It recognised the need to strengthen the unity of Social-Democratic workers of all the nationalities of Russia and instructed the Central Committee to strive for unity of all the nationality organisations affiliated to the R.S.D.L.P.

The conference heard Lenin's report on the situation in Russia and the tasks of the Party and adopted a resolution framed by him. The report and the conference resolutions gave a comprehensive analysis of the political situation, underscored the growth of the revolutionary movement against tsarism and confirmed anew the Party's basic task—a democratic revolution headed by the proletariat with the peasantry following its leadership.

An important feature of the Prague deliberations was the reports from Party organisations in Russia, to which Lenin attached the utmost importance, making copious notes throughout the five sessions at which these reports were heard. He was particularly interested in the number and composition of Party organisations, how long they had been in

existence, how they were popularising and circulating the Bolshevik newspapers *Sotsial-Demokrat* and *Zvezda* and the magazine *Mysl*, in propaganda activity among workers, and joint work with pro-Party Mensheviks. And he was gratified to learn that everywhere energetic work was being conducted among revolutionary-minded workers to strengthen the illegal Party organisations and groups, and that everywhere there was wide understanding of the need to combine illegal and legal forms of political activity. In his speech on the organisational question, Lenin emphasised able utilisation of the Duma platform and work in the trade unions and various legal workers' organisations, urging the establishment in each of these of an effectively functioning Party nucleus.

The resolution on "Liquidationism and the Liquidator Group", drafted by Lenin, declared that Liquidationism had long since been denounced by the Party as a "manifestation of bourgeois influence upon the proletariat". For four years, the resolution said, the Liquidators had not only advocated revision of the R.S.D.L.P. programme and tactics, but denied the "importance of the illegal Party", using the legal press to discredit and abuse it. Their activities were directed against the proletarian Party, and their conduct, the resolution declared, *"definitely placed them outside the Party"*.

The Conference thus expelled the Liquidators from the proletarian Party. That was a historic decision—it eliminated all vestiges of formal unity between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks and formalised the independent existence of the Bolshevik Party founded by Lenin in 1903.

The Prague Conference also condemned the crypto-Liquidators operating abroad—*Golos** supporters, Trotskyites, *Vperyod* supporters, etc. None of these had any contact with the revolutionary movement in Russia.

The conference declared in its resolution: "Groups abroad that refuse to submit to the Russian centre of Social-Democratic activity, i.e., to the Central Committee, and cause disorganisation by communicating with Russia independently and ignoring the Central Committee, have no right to use the name of the R.S.D.L.P."

Lenin reported on the activities of the International Socialist Bureau, devoting a large part of his speech to the struggle within the German Social-Democratic Party in which, he said, things were heading towards a split. Three distinct groups—centrist, opportunist and revolutionary—had taken shape in the party. Lenin sharply criticised the opportunism of some members of the German delegation on the International Socialist Bureau.

The Prague Conference adopted a number of important resolutions on international issues. It hailed the establishment of a republic in

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* *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* (*Social-Democrat Voice*)—organ of the Menshevik Liquidators, published from February 1908 to December 1911, first in Geneva and later in Paris.

China, emphasising the world-wide implications of the Chinese people's revolutionary struggle. It expressed complete sympathy with the liberation struggle of the Persian people, emphasised the common aims of the workers of Finland and Russia in the fight against tsarism and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. Expressed in all these conference resolutions was the great principle of proletarian internationalism.

One of the most important results of the Prague Conference was the election of a Central Committee which included Lenin, Goloshchokin, Orjonikidze and Spandaryan. The conference also empowered the Central Committee to co-opt other members, and at its first meeting, while the conference was still in progress, it co-opted J. Stalin and I. Belostotsky, and appointed A. Bubnov, M. Kalinin, Yelena Stasova, S. Shahumyan alternate members of the Central Committee, to act in the event of C.C. members being arrested. Later on, G. Petrovsky and Y. Sverdlov were co-opted on to the Central Committee and a Russian C.C. Bureau was set up.

Lenin wrote to Gorky: "We shall shortly send you the resolutions of the Conference. We have finally succeeded–in spite of the liquidationist scoundrels–in reviving the Party and its Central Committee. I hope you will be as glad of this as we are."*

The organisational principles of Bolshevism, the Party's policy and tactics in the new conditions of a revolutionary upsurge, found full expression in the Prague resolutions.

The conference had vast international significance, for it gave the revolutionary forces in the Second International parties a striking example of struggle against bourgeois agents in the socialist working-class movement.

Every action by the Left Socialists against the opportunists gratified Lenin. He welcomed the decision of the Thirteenth Italian Socialist Party Congress, held six months after the Prague Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., to expel Bissolati and his Right-wing reformist group. Commenting on the Italian Socialist Congress in an article for *Pravda*, he wrote:

"A split is something distressing and painful. But sometimes it becomes indispensable, and then all weakness, all 'sentimentality' ... is a crime. The leaders of the working class are not angels, saints or heroes, but people like anyone else. They make mistakes. The Party puts them right.... But when someone persists in an error, when, to defend an error, a group is formed that spurns all the decisions of the Party, all the discipline of the proletarian army, a split becomes indispensable. And the party of the Italian socialist proletariat has taken the right path by removing the syndicalists and Right reformists from its ranks."**

In the expulsion of the Bissolati group Lenin saw confirmation of the Prague Conference policy of energetically and consistently

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 22.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 172.

combating the opportunists, right up to an organisational break with them.

The Liquidators in Russia and their friends abroad–the Trotskyites, Bundists, *Vperyod*-ists, and the opportunist elements in the Polish and Latvian Social-Democratic parties–started a vicious campaign against the Prague Conference, seeking to discredit it and vindicate the Liquidators who had been expelled from the Party. They hypocritically vociferated that the Bolsheviks had engineered a "split", a "coup", and "usurped" power, etc. Trotsky out-shouted them all, and the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party gave him the use of their central organ for his slanderous attacks.

The small émigré opportunist groups–the Menshevik *Golos* group, the Trotskyites and *Vperyod* group–refused to submit to the Prague decisions. This placed them outside the revolutionary proletarian party. With these opportunists ousted from its ranks, the Bolshevik Party greatly strengthened its organisations, achieved close-knit unity, enhanced its fighting capacity and was in a position to give effective leadership to the new upsurge of the mass revolutionary struggle.

Both in Russia and abroad Lenin and the Bolsheviks directed their efforts to putting the Prague resolutions into effect. Bolshevik C.C. members reported back to local organisations on the conference, and its decisions were soon endorsed in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Nikolayev, Odessa, Kharkov, Poltava, Tiflis, Baku and other towns. The Conference Statement and the R.S.D.L.P. platform in the elections to the Fourth State Duma, drawn up by Lenin, were published in the Caucasus and in many other areas, and widely distributed throughout the country. They played a major part in reviving Party work and rallying Party organisations around the Leninist Central Committee and the Bolshevik election campaign.

Lenin and "Pravda". On April 4 (17), 1912, a bloody drama was enacted in the far-off Siberian taiga when tsarist troops opened fire on striking miners employed by the Lena Goldfields Co. This spurred the whole country to revolutionary action: Russia was swept by a wave of protest strikes. News of the Lena tragedy was carried by the Bolshevik *Zvezda* to every corner of the country, merging the numberless voices of protest from factories and mills into a single, powerful wrathful voice of Russia's working class. In Paris, Lenin discussed these events at a meeting of the R.S.D.L.P. group and outlined measures that would enable the Bolshevik Party to give leadership to the mounting mass revolutionary movement. Later he addressed meetings in Paris and Leipzig on the revolutionary upsurge in Russia.

The Lena shootings greatly increased the demand for *Zvezda*, which in March began to appear three times a week. The growth of the movement made fresh demands on the Party press. Meeting with members of the Social-Democratic Duma group during the Prague Conference, the Central Committee discussed publication of a daily workers' paper. In *Zvezda*, too, there were numerous articles and

letters from St. Petersburg workers suggesting that such a paper be founded and promising financial support. Their initiative was warmly supported by workers in every part of the country.

On April 10 (23), Bolshevik Duma member N. Poletayev obtained permission from the authorities to publish a daily paper, *Pravda* (*Truth*), and its publication was announced shortly thereafter. On the night following April 21 (May 4), the printing plant where *Pravda* was being put out was crowded with workers sent by Party organisations from all parts of the capital: they had come to bring copies of the first Marxist daily to the shops and working-class districts.

Lenin described the organisation of this workers' daily as "a great feat of the workers of St. Petersburg". *Pravda* was published on voluntary contributions from workers and enjoyed immense popularity: in 1912, there were 620 group contributions, in 1913, the number was 2,181, and in January-May 1914, 2,873. Lenin regarded these voluntary contributions as equivalent to Party membership dues. Without the assistance of the working class, *Pravda* would never have been able to survive for so long in conditions of brutal police repressions; 36 court suits were filed against its editors in the first year of publication alone, chiefly for failure to pay fines. All in all, the editors spent nearly four years (47.5 months) in jail, and 41 issues were confiscated. True, only a small part of the total edition fell into the hands of the police, for most of the papers were carried away by workers before the police could lay their hands on them. Besides, confiscated issues were wrapped in reactionary newspapers and mailed to Lenin and subscribers in Russia and abroad. Eight times the tsarist government suppressed *Pravda*, but it continued to come out under different names: *Workers' Pravda, Northern Pravda, Labour Pravda, For Pravda, Proletarian Pravda, Pravda's Path, Worker, Workingmen's Pravda.* Despite all difficulties, the Bolsheviks were able to put out 636 issues in the little more than two years of *Pravda's* existence. And this, Lenin said, was "conspicuous proof of the class consciousness, energy and unity of the Russian workers".

The anniversary of *Pravda*, April 22 (May 5), has since been celebrated as Workers' Press Day.

On June 10 (23), 1912, Lenin and Krupskaya moved from Paris to Cracow, Polish Galicia, then part of Austria-Hungary. To obtain a residence permit, Lenin had to appear and answer questions at police headquarters. Asked about his occupation and means of livelihood, he replied:

"I am a correspondent of *Pravda*, a Russian democratic newspaper published in St. Petersburg, and of *Sotsial-Demokrat*, a Russian newspaper published in Paris; that is the source of my earnings."

Questioned about his purpose in coming to Cracow, Lenin said: "I have come to Galicia to study agrarian relations, in which I am particularly interested, and also to study the Polish language."*

* *Leninsky Sbornik* (*Lenin Miscellany*) *II*, p. 471.



ПРАВДА

Годъ изданія первый.

ЕЖЕДНЕВНАЯ РАБОЧАЯ ГАЗЕТА.

№ 1. Воскресенье, 22 апрѣля 1912 г. ЦѢНА 2 коп.

ОТКРЫТА ПОДПИСКА
НА ЕЖЕДНЕВНУЮ РАБОЧУЮ ГАЗЕТУ
„ПРАВДА“.

Продолжается подписка на газету
„ЗВѢЗДА“
выходящую три раза въ недѣлю.

По независящимъ отъ издателя обстоятельствамъ объявленная продажа № 1 „Правды“ по повышенной цѣнѣ въ пользу семей убитыхъ ленскихъ рабочихъ не можетъ состояться.

Отъ редакціи.

Наши цѣли.

На грани.

Pravda No. 1, April 1912
Reduced



Lenin in Zakopane
Photo, 1914

The record of the interrogation bears the following note by the Police Commissioner of Pułwce District in Cracow:

"I have arranged for Ulyanov to be kept under secret surveillance and will duly report the results thereof."

The real reason why Lenin chose Cracow was that it offered better opportunities for directing *Pravda* and Party activity in Russia, notably in connection with the forthcoming Duma elections. He wrote to Gorky:

"You ask, why am I in Austria. The C.C. has organised a Bureau here (between ourselves): the frontier is close by, we make use of it, it's nearer to Petersburg, we get the papers from there on the third day, it's become far easier to write to the papers there, co-operation with them goes better. There is less squabbling here, which is an advantage. There isn't a good library, which is a disadvantage. It's hard without books."*

At first, Lenin rented a two-room apartment in a house on Żwierżyniec Street in the eastern, working-class suburb. But this was too far away from the railway station, to which Lenin had to make daily trips to post letters–to make sure that his articles reach *Pravda* in time, he used to send them with the evening express. On August 22 (September 4), 1912, the family moved to another address, not far from the railway station, on Lubomirski Street (now Andrżej Modrżewski Street), where they rented a modest two-room flat. The furniture consisted of three cheap iron beds, two deal tables, a few bookshelves and a few chairs.

In Cracow and Poronin, Lenin came into still closer association with the Polish labour movement. He had a sufficient command of the language to follow the press, notably socialist publications, and was of great help to the Polish Social-Democrats. Twice he addressed Socialist gatherings in Cracow. The first, on April 18, 1913, at the People's University was representative of the various trends in the Polish movement. Lenin's subject was: "The Russian Working-Class Movement and Social-Democracy", with special reference to the international implications of the revolutionary workers' movement in Russia. The second lecture, "The Russian Social-Democratic Movement and the National Question", was delivered on March 21, 1914, at a meeting of the Spunja students' society. There were many questions and a spirited discussion. The meeting, which took up three sessions, aroused wide interest among students and workers.

In April 1914, there was a significant interview with the Polish journalist Alfred Maykosen on the mounting danger of imperialist war.

"Would you welcome a conflict?" Maykosen asked Lenin.

"Certainly not," was Lenin's prompt reply. "Why should I want a conflict? I am doing–and will do–everything I can, everything within my power, to prevent mobilisation and war. I do not want to see

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 54.

millions of workers killing each other to pay for capitalist madness. There can be no two opinions on that score.

"It is one thing objectively to predict a war and, should it break out, take maximum advantage of the situation. But to want war–that is quite another thing."*

In Cracow, Lenin immediately resumed his work and was soon in close contact with *Pravda*, the Social-Democratic Duma group and local Party organisations. Correspondence with Russia increased rapidly reaching up to several hundred letters a month. Arrangements were made for illegal crossings of the frontier. On the Russian side this was handled by N. Krylenko, then living in Lublin, where he was a teacher of literature and history. Many comrades came from Russia to deliver messages and reports from Party organisations, discuss their problems and receive instructions and advice. With the revolutionary revival many Party members returned to Russia, and nearly all of them stopped over in Cracow to consult Lenin. Meetings of the Central Committee and other conferences were held at Lenin's flat. The files of the Central Committee Bureau Abroad were kept there too.

Lenin was *Pravda's* factual editor-in-chief. He wrote for the paper almost daily. His articles appeared under various pseudonyms: V. Ilyin, V. Frey, K. T., V. I., Pravdist, Statistician, Reader, M. N., and many more. Altogether, more than 280 of Lenin's articles and shorter notes appeared in the paper, all of them dealing with pressing problems of the movement and written in an Aesopian language that evaded the censor but was perfectly clear to the reader.

At first *Pravda* was reluctant to enter into polemics with the Liquidators. In a letter to V. Molotov, then *Pravda's* executive editor, early in August 1912, Lenin sharply criticised this conciliatory attitude towards the Liquidators: "You write, and as secretary, evidently, on behalf of the editorial board, that 'the editorial board in principle considers my article fully acceptable *including the attitude to the Liquidators*'. If that is so, why then does *Pravda* stubbornly and systematically cut out any mention of the liquidators, both in my articles and in the articles of other colleagues??"** One of the senior editors, M. Olminsky, objected that Lenin's articles against the Liquidators were "too angry in tone". Lenin wrote back: "Since when has an *angry* tone against what is bad, harmful, untrue ... harmed a daily newspaper?? On the contrary, colleagues, really and truly on the contrary. To write without 'anger' of what is harmful means to write boringly."*** Thanks to Lenin's vigorous intervention *Pravda* started a sharp polemic with *Luch* (*The Ray*), the Liquidationist newspaper.

During the Fourth Duma election campaign, in the autumn of 1912, the Menshevik Liquidators tried to prevent a discussion of political

* Józef Sieradzki, *Polskie lata Lenina*, Warszawa, 1960, S. 46.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 47.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 47.

platforms of the two groups at election meetings. They were afraid–and with good reason–to discuss a revolutionary programme for the R.S.D.L.P., knowing that they would be defeated. Lenin insisted that *Pravda* and its supporters make this the chief issue and intensify their campaign against the Cadets and Liquidators, thereby giving the paper a more militant spirit. He wrote: "Can you imagine the press organ of progressive democracy *not* being a militant organ in these militant times? Let us assume the very best: let us assume that *Pravda* is confident of an anti-Liquidator victory. But we must fight *just the same* in order that the *country* know what it's all about, *who* is disrupting the election campaign and *what principles* we are fighting for. *Luch* is waging a furious, hysterical campaign, shamelessly renouncing all its principles. *Pravda*–to spite it–is making a show of 'seriousness', is being squeamish and is not fighting at all!! Does that resemble Marxism? And is it true that Marx was able to combine a fight, a most passionate, selfless and relentless fight, with fidelity to principle??

"To refrain from fighting at election time is to ruin everything."*

Lenin attached great importance in the elections to the "Left bloc" tactic, i.e., temporary agreements with the Trudoviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Popular Socialists as a counterweight to the Menshevik tactic of alliance with the Cadets.

He was pleased with the results of the Bolshevik campaign: Bolshevik workers–A. Badayev, M. Muranov, G. Petrovsky, F. Samoilov, N. Shagov and R. Malinovsky–were elected from the workers' curia in all six industrial gubernias. The non-industrial gubernias returned seven Mensheviks.

And Lenin was gratified by the fact, also, that the Bolsheviks had polled over one million workers' votes, compared with less than a quarter of a million cast for the Menshevik Liquidators. In his letters to St. Petersburg he congratulated the contributors, editors and friends of *Pravda* on this election victory.

Lenin was unremitting in his efforts to improve *Pravda* and discussed its reorganisation with members of the Central Committee and the Bolshevik Duma group. He emphasised that *Pravda* was the most important organisational weapon for rallying and developing the revolutionary movement. Only through *Pravda* could the Party recruit the people and money needed to expand its illegal activity. The task, therefore, was to increase *Pravda's* circulation and worker contributions to its fighting fund.

Several former *Vperyod* supporters were invited to contribute to *Pravda*. Lenin wrote to Gorky, in this connection, that they should not be allowed to smuggle in anti-Marxist views. Marxism, he wrote, is a serious matter. If they appreciate that–all the better. "But if they haven't understood it, if they haven't learned anything, then don't hold it against me: friendship is friendship, but duty is duty. For attempts

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 162.

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to abuse Marxism or to confuse the policy of the workers' party, we shall fight without sparing our lives."*

Lenin also insisted on strengthening the *Pravda* editorial staff to ensure a consistent Bolshevik policy, effectively rebuff the overweening Liquidators, vigorously campaign for working-class unity from below and utilise every opportunity to help organise illegal work at local Party level. The reorganisation was carried out in the spring of 1913. Central Committee direction of the paper was strengthened. The conciliators were removed. Somewhat earlier, in January 1913, Concordia Samoilova was appointed executive editor. Lenin welcomed all these measures, which made *Pravda* a more authoritative voice of the working class.

In March 1913, *Pravda's* circulation reached 30,000-32,000, and on holidays as much as 40,000-42,000. But that was only a beginning, and Lenin pressed for an intensified campaign to increase circulation, suggesting factory competition as part of a special effort to win over every mill and factory from the Menshevik *Luch*. "A victory of Party principles is a victory for *Pravda* and vice versa,"** he wrote, stressing that the Bolsheviks must work to bring *Pravda's* circulation to 50,000-60,000, and subsequently to 100,000.

In this way, Lenin gave *Pravda*, which he regarded as the beloved child of the Bolshevik Party, his day-to-day care and direction.

On his instructions, *Pravda* comprehensively reported conditions in numerous factories, publishing in all over 17,000 items from its worker-correspondents, of which 10,000 dealt with strike struggles. *Pravda* trained and rallied around it a veritable army of worker-correspondents who courageously carried Lenin's ideas to the masses.

In its columns Lenin consistently advocated the hegemony of the proletariat in the coming revolution and alliance of the working class and peasantry. In a series of articles, "Big Landlord and Small Peasant Landownership in Russia", "Famine", "The Peasantry and the Working Class", he emphasised that the interests of 30,000 big landlords and tens of millions of peasants, doomed to misery and poverty, were irreconcilable. It would be absurd to believe, he wrote, that antagonisms accumulated over the centuries could be resolved peacefully, leaving the feudal landlords and the autocracy in full power.

In another article, "How Can Per Capita Consumption in Russia Be Increased?", he cited figures to show that in per capita consumption tsarist Russia was one of the most backward countries, "four times worse off than Britain, five times worse off than Germany and ten times worse off than America in terms of modern means of production".*** Economic backwardness, the result of a reactionary social system, increased Russia's economic and political dependence on the Western imperialist powers.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 70.
** *Ibid.*, p. 96.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 292.

The backwardness could be done away with, and living standards improved, only if the rule of the Black-Hundred landlords was destroyed, the landed estates abolished, the land turned over to the peasants and Russia placed under the rule of her people. Lenin's *Pravda* articles awakened in the workers and peasants a sense of responsibility for the country's future and prepared them for the new revolution against the autocracy and the bourgeoisie, who were responsible for all the suffering. Russia's salvation, Lenin wrote, lay in a people's revolution.

In one of these articles, "Civilised Barbarism", Lenin searchingly exposed capitalism which had become an obstacle to social progress, and was retarding the development of science, technology and culture. At every step, Lenin remarked, life is posing problems mankind is fully capable of solving *immediately*, but capitalism is the hindrance. Capitalism could be likened to a rich glutton who is rotting alive through overeating but will not let what is young live on. But the laws of history are inexorable: the young is growing and will assert itself despite everything.

In other articles of this period, "Backward Europe and Advanced Asia" and "The Working Class and Neo-Malthusianism", he disclosed the reactionary nature of the whole policy of the imperialist bourgeoisie which, in its fight against the workers and peasants, was prepared to stoop to every species of savagery and crime to keep alive the moribund system of capitalist slavery. Lenin was deeply convinced of the triumph of the coming revolution and instilled this confidence in the Party and working class. He wrote: "We are fighting better than our fathers did. Our children will fight better than we do, and *they will be victorious*.... We are already laying the foundation of a new edifice and our children will complete its construction."*

In his articles "Democracy and Narodism in China", "Big Achievement of the Chinese Republic", "The Awakening of Asia", and others, published in *Zvezda* and *Pravda*, Lenin urged world working-class support for the national liberation movement of the Asian peoples awakened by the Russian revolution of 1905-07. "Everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength. The bourgeoisie there is *as yet* siding with the people against reaction. *Hundreds* of millions of people are awakening to life, light and freedom. What delight this world movement is arousing in the hearts of all class-conscious workers, who know that the path to collectivism lies through democracy! What sympathy for young Asia imbues all honest democrats!"**

The Chinese people were in the van of the democratic movement in Asia. Lenin had a high regard for Sun Yat-sen, the revolutionary democrat who led the national liberation movement in China, and though he pointed to certain errors in his political views, he spoke highly of his militant, republican and democratic spirit, his heartfelt sympathy

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 236-37.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

with the toiling and exploited people, his implicit faith in their strength and the justice of their cause. Lenin was confident that, whatever the fate of the Chinese Republic, which was menaced by all kinds of "civilised hyenas", no power on earth could crush the heroic democratic spirit of the masses in Asian and semi-Asian countries.

Led by Lenin, the Bolsheviks were the most consistent and resolute opponents of colonialism. Lenin described Italy's 1911-12 military campaign in Africa and her seizure of Tripolitania as a typical colonial war of twentieth-century "civilised" states. It was, he wrote, "a perfected, civilised bloodbath, the massacre of Arabs with the help of the 'latest' weapons".* To put down the resistance of the coastal population, Italian troops, by way of "punishment", beat up nearly 3,000 Arabs, hanged some 1,000, killed whole families.

Under the peace treaty, Tripolitania passed from one foreign oppressor to another–from Turkey to Italy. This, Lenin pointed out, did not end the war, for the Arab tribes in the heart of the country would not submit to the new yoke. However, Lenin also pointed out that the path to freedom would be a hard one. The imperialist freebooters, he wrote, would for a long time to come "civilise" the Arabs by bayonet, bullet, noose, fire and rape,** rejoicing in their suppression of a backward and unarmed people. But Lenin was always sure that freedom would be won. He was a genuine friend of the Arabs and other oppressed African peoples.

He regarded the struggle for colonial freedom as a component part of the world proletarian struggle against imperialism.

The Party's legal activity in Russia centred around *Pravda*. But *Pravda* was, at the same time, an important channel through which illegal organisational work was conducted. For it was through *Pravda* that Lenin and the Central Committee communicated their directives to local Party organisations, and it was through the same channel that these organisations kept the Central Committee and Lenin in touch with the movement. Local Party leaders met at the *Pravda* offices to exchange experience in building the Party under illegal conditions, and members of the *Pravda* staff helped front-rank workers build new Party organisations in the factories, legal societies, trade unions, insurance societies, etc. *Pravda* was in the centre of the struggle for the Party and the Party spirit.

It raised aloft the Party banner and energetically combated the Liquidators, Trotskyites, Otzovists and all other opportunists. By rallying the legal workers' organisations around the illegal Party nuclei, by patiently and consistently campaigning for political working-class unity, *Pravda* directed the working-class movement towards the new revolution.

Lenin's *Pravda* enjoyed the deep esteem of the workers and the Bolsheviks came to be known as Pravdists. Lenin wrote in later years:

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 337.
** *Ibid.*, p. 338.

"The Pravdists, who championed loyalty to the Party's revolutionary principles, encouraged the incipient revival of the working-class movement (especially after the spring of 1912), combined underground and legal organisation, the press and agitation, and rallied about themselves the overwhelming majority of the class-conscious workers."* *Pravda*, Lenin emphasised, "had the support of hundreds of thousands of workers, who by their modest contributions were able to overcome both the oppression of tsarism and the competition of the Mensheviks, those petty-bourgeois traitors to socialism."**

Lenin made a special effort to enlist the Party's best literary forces and make *Pravda* a mass workers' paper of a new type. He was in regular correspondence with its editors, most of the contributors, knew many of them personally and could accurately gauge their literary abilities.

As a result, the foundation was laid for a mass Bolshevik Party which could not be destroyed either by provocation or persecution during the hard days of the imperialist war. *Pravda* trained a new generation of revolutionary workers, hundreds of thousands of proletarians who were to play a decisive part in carrying out the Great October Socialist Revolution and assuring victory in the civil war.

Among those who helped to bring *Pravda's* message to the workers were I. Vareikis, I. Kabakov, G. Kaminsky, M. Khatayevich, M. Artyukhin, who joined the Party in 1913-14.

The standard-bearer of Marxism-Leninism, the Party's potent ideological weapon, *Pravda* continued and multiplied the traditions set by Lenin in *Iskra*, *Vperyod* and *Proletary*. And the *Pravda* tradition was further enriched in the Soviet press after the October Revolution.

In organising and conducting *Pravda*, in using it to carry out revolutionary policy and for the political education of the masses in the difficult conditions of tsarism, Lenin and his associates set a signal example for the progressive, Communist, revolutionary press of the world. That has been emphasised by leaders of Communist Parties in many countries.

"Prosveshcheniye". The Party's legal press was not confined to *Pravda*. On Lenin's instructions the Bolshevik monthly *Prosveshcheniye* (*Enlightenment*) was started in 1911, the first issue appearing in St. Petersburg in December of that year. Right up to the time it was closed, in July 1914, the magazine played an outstanding part in the Marxist internationalist education of Russia's front-rank workers.

Lenin asked Maxim Gorky to take charge of its belles lettres section, and was very happy when Gorky agreed. "It really will be splendid," he wrote, "if little by little we draw in fiction writers and set *Prosveshcheniye* going! Excellent! The reader is new, proletarian; we shall make the journal cheap; you will let in only democratic fiction, without

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 333.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 351.

moaning, without renegade stuff. We shall consolidate the workers. And the workers now are fine. Our six deputies in the Duma from the worker curia have now begun to work *outside the Duma* so energetically that it is a joy to see. This is where people will build up a real workers' party!"*

From Paris, and later from Cracow, Lenin directed *Prosveshcheniye*, editing its articles and carrying on a regular correspondence with M. Savelyev, M. Olminsky, A. Yelizarova and other members of the editorial board. He himself contributed 26 articles, among them "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", "Critical Remarks on the National Question", and "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination".

"The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", written for the thirtieth anniversary of Marx's death, effectively exposes the calumny of bourgeois science that Marxism is a sort of "sect". "There is nothing resembling 'sectarianism' in Marxism, in the sense of its being a hidebound, petrified doctrine, a doctrine which arose *away from* the high road of the development of world civilisation," Lenin wrote. "On the contrary, the genius of Marx consists precisely in his having furnished answers to questions already raised by the foremost minds of mankind. His doctrine is . . . the legitimate successor to the best that man produced in the nineteenth century, as represented by German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism."**

But, Lenin explained, Marx and Engels did not simply take over the materialism of the eighteenth-century French thinkers and Feuerbach, just as they did not simply adopt the Hegelian dialectics, that chief acquisition of classical German philosophy. They advanced philosophical thought by evolving dialectical and historical materialism, a harmonious and integral world outlook that is irreconcilably opposed to all manner of superstition, reaction and defence of the bourgeois system. And Lenin emphasised that the philosophy of Marxism had given the whole of mankind, and not only the working class, potent weapons of knowledge.

The classical English economists Adam Smith and David Ricardo by their investigations of the capitalist economic system laid the foundations of the labour theory of value. Taking this achievement of classical political economy as his starting-point, Marx substantiated and consistently developed this theory and formulated a new economic doctrine, of which the theory of surplus value is the corner-stone. Marxian political economy provides a profound and thoroughly scientific explanation of the inevitability of capitalism's collapse.

Marx and Engels always highly appreciated the great utopian socialists Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier and Robert Owen, who condemned capitalist society and foresaw some of the features of the future society.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, pp. 83-84.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 23-24.

But theirs was a socialism without class struggle, without an understanding of the historic mission of the proletariat and therefore unrealisable. It was a utopian socialism of which Lenin wrote that it "could not indicate the real solution. It could not explain the real nature of wage-slavery under capitalism, it could not reveal the laws of capitalist development, or show what *social force* is capable of becoming the creator of a new society".* Only the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels, which is a component part of Marxism, was able to do that.

The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true, Lenin emphasised, and expressed his unshakable confidence that Marxism would help the working class abandon all the prejudices of bourgeois society, acquire knowledge and organise to destroy the old, capitalist society and build a new, socialist society.

In "The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx", Lenin pointed to three periods of world history since the appearance of the "Communist Manifesto" in 1848–from the revolution of that year to the Paris Commune of 1871; from the Paris Commune to the first Russian revolution of 1905, and the period following that revolution.

"Since the appearance of Marxism," Lenin wrote, "each of the three great periods of world history has brought Marxism new confirmation and new triumphs. But a still greater triumph awaits Marxism, as the doctrine of the proletariat, in the coming period of history."** These words, based on scientific prevision, have been vindicated with amazing accuracy and force. The Great October Socialist Revolution opened a new era in human history, the era of the collapse of imperialism and the assertion of communism, the era of the triumph of Marxism.

In 1913, the *Marx-Engels Correspondence (1844-1883)* was published in Stuttgart in a four-volume edition compiled by August Bebel and Eduard Bernstein. In October-November 1913, Lenin made a profound and creative study of the voluminous correspondence (1,386 letters) of the founders of scientific communism and compiled a synopsis, which was first published in the U.S.S.R. in 1959. The synopsis was drawn up for an article for *Prosveshcheniye*, and an announcement of its forthcoming publication appeared in *Proletarskaya Pravda* in December 1913. This unfinished article was published only in 1920 in *Pravda* on the hundredth anniversary of Engels's birth.

Lenin drew on this synopsis in his other writings, notably his famous article "Karl Marx", begun in Poronin shortly before the outbreak of World War I, completed in Switzerland in November 1914 and published a year later, in abridged form, in the *Granat Encyclopedia*. "Karl Marx" is a concise but surprisingly complete account of the teaching of the great founder of scientific communism. In explaining the essence of that teaching, Lenin emphasised the remarkable consistency and integrity of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 27.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, p. 585.

Marx's views which, in their sum-total, present "modern materialism and modern scientific socialism, as the theory and programme of the working-class movement in all the civilised countries of the world".*

With *Pravda* firmly established in St. Petersburg, Lenin set the Party another goal—publication of a legal workers' daily paper in Moscow. He discussed this in the article "The Results of Six Months' Work", published in *Pravda* in July-August 1912. Collections for the paper, *Nash Put* (*Our Path*), began among Moscow workers in January 1913 in response to an appeal of the Party Central Committee. The first issue appeared on August 25 (September 7), 1913, and immediately won wide popularity among Moscow workers. It was suppressed by the police, however, on September 12 (25). Ten of Lenin's articles appeared in its sixteen issues.

Lenin closely followed the political and educational activities of the magazine *Rabotnitsa* (*Woman Worker*), published legally in St. Petersburg from February 26 to June 26, 1914. Among its leading contributors were Nadezhda Krupskaya, Inessa Armand, Ludmila Staël and Anna Yelizarova.

Lenin devoted much attention also to another legal Bolshevik publication, the weekly journal *Voprosy Strakhovania* (*Social Insurance*), founded in St. Petersburg in October 1913. It skilfully combined the campaign for centralisation of the sick-benefit societies, workers' control over these societies, etc., with militant propaganda of the three "uncurtailed" Bolshevik slogans.**

During his stay in Poland Lenin wrote and published about 400 articles in the legal and illegal Party press, not counting numerous letters.

The combination of legal and illegal forms of press propaganda enabled the Bolsheviks to train hundreds and thousands of class-conscious fighters for democracy and socialism. In later years Lenin frequently referred to this Bolshevik experience of building up a new type of periodical press for the workers, pointing to its immense international significance and insisting that it be ably utilised by the Communist and Workers' Parties of other countries.

Lenin and the Duma group. Following the elections to the Fourth Duma, Lenin worked for close contact between the Bolshevik Duma members and the C.C. Bureau abroad. Membership in the Duma, he pointed out, was a militant and responsible post. It was the duty of working-class representatives to speak on behalf of Russia's millions, use the Duma platform to disseminate revolutionary ideas and hold aloft the great banner of the Bolshevik Party. Lenin carefully followed every phase of Bolshevik activity in the Duma, correcting the group when they made a false step and teaching them on their own mistakes and successes.

He advised the Bolshevik deputies firmly and boldly to declare, in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 50.

** The three basic revolutionary slogans: democratic republic, confiscation of landed estates and eight-hour day.

their very first statement, that Russian Social-Democracy was a detachment of the great international army of the socialist proletariat and that the time was drawing near when an end would be put to capitalism, and millions of proletarians, solidly united, would build a socialist society free of poverty and exploitation. The Duma group, Lenin said, must openly associate itself with the resolute working-class protest against war voiced by the Basle International Socialist Congress. The workers demand peace, the Duma deputies must declare, they are against interference in the Balkan war, they demand freedom and equality for all the Balkan nations.

In their statement, the Bolshevik deputies must show up the intolerable state of affairs in Russia, the appalling condition of the working class, the poverty that reigns in the rural areas, the rightlessness of the people, the police tyranny. They must declare that Russia needs political freedom like the air she breathes. The Duma members must especially emphasise in their first statement the leading role of the proletariat in the liberation movement, for it is the proletariat that is leading all the democratic forces in the battle for freedom, setting an example, infusing a new spirit and sentiment throughout the vast country.

Lenin's draft statement was the subject of a long and stormy debate between the Bolshevik and Menshevik Duma members. The Bolsheviks were able to uphold all their basic positions. In accordance with Lenin's instructions, nearly all the fundamental points of the Party's minimum programme were incorporated in the Social-Democratic statement, which was read from the Duma platform, practically in full, on December 7 (20). Published in *Pravda* on the following day, it became widely known among the workers, to whom, in fact, it was addressed and played no small part in extending the working-class struggle against tsarism.

At first the Social-Democrats made up a single group in the Fourth Duma—seven Mensheviks and six Bolsheviks. Exploiting their accidental majority of one, the Mensheviks ignored the elementary rights of their Bolshevik colleagues, though they represented the vast majority of Russia's workers. They prevented the Bolsheviks from speaking on major issues and tried to keep them out of the Duma committees. The Cracow Central Committee meeting, on Lenin's suggestion, unanimously decided to demand equality for the two parts of the Duma group. However, in carrying out that decision Lenin and the Central Committee met with resistance from some of the Bolshevik deputies and Stalin, though at Cracow they had all voted for Lenin's proposal. Stalin approved of the Bolshevik Duma members refusing to write for the Menshevik paper *Luch* and rejected the Menshevik plan to merge *Luch* with *Pravda*. But in defiance of the Cracow decision, he objected to the demand for equality, pleading, with no justification whatever, that the Bolshevik six were not strong enough to operate such a firm policy.

The Mensheviks turned down the equality demand, and the six Bolsheviks, on instructions from Lenin and the Central Committee, set up

a Duma group of their own. This proved to be an important factor in uniting the Russian workers under the banner of the Bolshevik Party.

Lenin patiently taught the Bolshevik deputies how to make the most of the Duma platform for revolutionary purposes. They frequently visited Lenin in Cracow to consult with him and attended Central Committee meetings at which all aspects of Duma activity were discussed. One of the Bolshevik Duma six, A. Badayev, recalls how painstakingly Lenin explained that the task of the worker deputy was "constantly to remind the Black Hundreds from the Duma tribune that the working class was strong and powerful and that the day was not far off when a new revolution would wipe out the Black Hundreds together with their Ministers and government. Of course, the deputies could table amendments or even introduce a bill, but all their actions must have one object: to denounce the autocracy, expose the monstrous tyranny of the government, drawing attention to the downtrodden condition of the working class and its inhuman exploitation. That was what the workers expected of their Duma members."*

All the important Bolshevik Duma speeches were drawn up by Lenin or with his close co-operation. In April 1913, he sent G. Petrovsky the draft of a speech on the national question, a month later, in May, he drew up another speech, on the government's education policy, for A. Badayev, and a statement on the 1913 budget. In June, he drafted a speech for N. Shagov on the government's agrarian policy.

In 1914, Lenin prepared two bills on national equality (one of which was published in March in *Pravda*) and drafted speeches on the government's national policy and the Ministry of Agriculture estimates. All these speeches exposing the reactionary policy of the landlords and capitalists met with lively and sympathetic response among the workers.

Lenin closely followed the illegal extra-Duma activity of the Bolshevik group, carried out in pursuance of Party decisions. The deputies conducted extensive propaganda and organisational work among the masses, reporting back to the workers at factory and area meetings, organising strike relief and contributing to *Pravda*. They were frequent speakers also at illegal meetings of Party organisations, helped them in their work, and formed new Party nuclei. They performed a host of other assignments of the Party Central Committee, such as the mailing of confiscated issues of *Pravda* to undercover addresses.

In his appreciation of this work, Lenin wrote that the Bolshevik deputies were "deputies excelled, not in high-flown speech, or being 'received' in bourgeois, intellectualist salons ... but in ties with the working masses, in dedicated work among those masses, in carrying on modest, unpretentious, arduous, thankless and highly dangerous duties of illegal propagandists and organisers".**

In this way, under Lenin's leadership, a new type of proletarian-Party

* A. Badayev, *The Bolsheviks in the State Duma*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1954, p. 182.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 173.

parliamentarian was being trained. The Bolshevik deputies were executors of the Party's will; its decisions, by which it was guided in all its activity, were binding on them. Unity within the parliamentary group was based on its submission to the will of the Party.

When one of the six, Malinovsky, relinquished his Duma mandate this aroused widespread anger and indignation in the Party. At that time the Party had no evidence that Malinovsky was a police agent, but when that was established several years later, Lenin drew some very important lessons. In his famous *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder* he said that in Russia the rapid change from legal to illegal work, which necessitated particular secrecy with regard to the Party's general staff, its leaders, sometimes led to highly dangerous developments. "The worst," he wrote, "was that in 1912 the agent-provocateur Malinovsky got on the Bolshevik Central Committee. He betrayed scores and scores of the best and most loyal comrades, caused them to be sent to penal servitude and hastened the death of many of them. That he did not cause still greater harm was due to the correct relationship between legal and illegal work."*

Lenin repeatedly pointed to the vast importance of the Bolsheviks' "parliamentary" experience for the entire international communist movement, stressing that the Communist Parties must be exceptionally exacting with regard to their parliamentary groups. He worked out the following guiding principles: complete subordination of parliamentary groups to the control and directives of the Central Committee; parliamentary groups should consist mainly of revolutionary workers; parliamentary speeches should be carefully analysed in the Party press and at Party meetings from the standpoint of fidelity to communist principles; members of parliament should be required to engage in mass propaganda; members of parliament who display opportunist tendencies must be expelled from the group. These principles were fully endorsed by the international communist movement.

The Cracow and Poronin Central Committee meetings. Towards the close of December 1912 the Central Committee met together with Party functionaries at Lenin's home in Cracow. Called the "February" Conference for purposes of secrecy, it was attended by members of the Central Committee, Bolshevik Duma deputies, and representatives of the illegal Party organisations of St. Petersburg, Moscow Region, South Russia, the Urals and the Caucasus.

The arrival of Party activists from Russia was a great occasion for Lenin. He was in his element, animated and elated. All free time was spent in long talks with the delegates and making the acquaintance of those he did not know.

The meeting reviewed the experience of 1912, after the Prague Conference. Lenin delivered a speech on this question, giving a profound analysis of the 1912 strike struggles. He pointed out that they signified

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 396.

not merely transition from decline to revival, but the launching by the working class of a mass offensive against the capitalists and the autocracy. The strike movement–in which economic and political struggles were closely interconnected–was once more broader in scope than in any other country in the world, including even the most developed. About one million had been involved in political strikes. Russia had entered the phase of maturing revolution. This was the beginning of a new revolutionary upswing, much more powerful than on the eve of the 1905 revolution.

And Lenin also pointed out that the revolutionary strikes in the summer of 1912 had been followed by unrest and mutiny in the army and navy (the mutiny of sapper units in Turkestan, unrest among naval ratings in Sevastopol and Kronstadt). These mutinies, Lenin stressed, were evidence of mounting ferment and discontent among the masses, especially the peasantry which made up the bulk of the armed forces. On the Russian working class devolved the momentous task of awakening and training the masses for revolutionary action, of giving leadership to the mighty onslaught that would destroy the Romanov monarchy and win freedom and a democratic republic. The resolution adopted on Lenin's report defined the basic tasks of the Party and working class in the situation of mounting revolutionary upsurge.

On Lenin's proposal the meeting declared that the only correct organisational pattern, in the conditions obtaining in tsarist Russia, was "an illegal Party as the sum-total of Party nuclei surrounded by a network of legal and semi-legal workers' associations",* and that the diversity of forms of cloaking these illegal nuclei, and maximum flexibility in adapting activities to local and other conditions were the earnest of the vitality and effective functioning of the illegal Party organisation.

Lenin addressed the meeting on another important issue "On the Attitude to Liquidationism and on Unity". He showed that the August conference of 1912, convened on Trotsky's initiative and advertised as a "conference of R.S.D.L.P. organisations", had in fact been a Liquidationist conference, since the delegate body had been made up chiefly of a group of Liquidators expelled from the Party and with absolutely no ties with the workers in Russia. Resolute struggle against the Liquidators continued to be one of the Party's chief tasks.

The meeting adopted a resolution drafted by Lenin on the Bolshevik position on unity. It urged Social-Democratic worker unity from below–in the factory nuclei, shop committees, district groups, city organisations, the various legal societies, etc. The Lenin tactic of united front from below holds a firm place in the strategy and tactics of the Communist Parties.

Other resolutions, also framed by Lenin, dealt with the Social-Democratic Duma group, the insurance campaign, Social-Democratic organisations in the non-Russian areas, and reorganisation of the *Pravda*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 458.

editorial board. The Cracow resolutions, which set out the Party's policy on all the major issues, were approved by the Central Committee and published, together with a statement on the meeting, in a pamphlet widely circulated to Party organisations. They did much to strengthen the Party, promote closer unity in its ranks and help win over the majority of the working class.

In the spring of 1913, Nadezhda Konstantinovna's health became worse and her doctors advised her to spend a few months in the mountains. Early in May the family moved to Poronin, a small village near Zakopane, the well-known mountain resort. They rented a small cottage from a local peasant woman named Teresa Skupień–two rooms, kitchen and tiny attic which Lenin used as a study. They also spent the summer of 1914 in Poronin. "We live the life of country folk, early to bed and early to rise," Lenin wrote to his sister, Maria Ilyinichna. He would begin his day with a swim before breakfast, in the Dunajec, a mountain stream that ran near the Skupień cottage, then walk to the post-office to pick up mail, glance through it and answer urgent telegrams and letters. After breakfast he would work till seven in the evening with a brief interval for the midday meal. In the evenings Lenin would cycle to the railway station to mail his letters. When the weather was good he would take his work to the Golitsova Hrapa, a hill affording an excellent view of the snowcapped Tatra peaks. Sometimes he would take long walks in the mountains. Older Poronin inhabitants recall "Pan Ulyanov" dressed in a sports jacket, his pockets stuffed with newspapers. What surprised them was that he was the only vacationist to take an interest in their life, the harvest, wages, etc.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna's health did not improve in Poronin, and Cracow doctors suggested that she consult Professor Kocher, a specialist on thyroid disorders, in Berne, Switzerland.

In the last week of June, Lenin and Krupskaya left for Berne, stopping over at Vienna for a meeting with Party comrades. In Berne they were welcomed by G. Shklovsky, a Party comrade, and for a short while stayed with his family. The room they subsequently rented was small, dark and damp, but it had the important advantage of being cheap. Krupskaya was put in hospital, where she spent about three weeks. Lenin visited her in the mornings and spent the rest of the day in the libraries.

In Berne, Lenin wrote his "Theses on the National Question" and drew up notes for a lecture on the subject which he delivered in Zurich, Geneva, Lausanne and Berne. These lectures, Russian émigrés who attended them recall, attracted not only Bolsheviks, but members of other socialist émigré groups; the halls were always packed. On August 3, 1913, Lenin addressed the second conference of R.S.D.L.P. organisations abroad on the position in the Party.

Lenin and Krupskaya returned to Poronin early in August, in time for a meeting of the Central Committee with the Bolshevik Duma members. It was held on August 9 and discussed the position and tasks of the Party, the Duma Social-Democratic group, the Russian shop assistants'

and co-operative congresses, the organisation of a Party school, the position of *Pravda, Prosveshcheniye, Priboi* (the Party publishing house), *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Central Party Organ, and the founding of a Bolshevik newspaper in Moscow.

In Poronin, Lenin learned of the death of August Bebel and immediately sent a message of condolence to the German socialists on behalf of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee. It was published in *Vorwärts* on August 17. On August 8 (21), *Pravda* carried an article by Lenin paying tribute to Bebel as an outstanding leader of the German proletariat, prominent international Social-Democratic spokesman and active opponent of opportunism and reformism.

In the autumn, the Central Committee met together with Party functionaries. For purposes of secrecy it was called the "summer" conference, but has gone down in Party history as the "Poronin" conference. Most of the delegates travelled to Poronin as tourists and stayed at a boarding-house run by Guta Mostowy, a local peasant. Some of the meetings were held there, others at the Lenin cottage. The conference was directed by Lenin.

Lenin delivered the introductory speech and the report on the work of the Central Committee. The growth of the revolutionary movement and the organisational strengthening of the Party, he said, were clear proof that the Bolsheviks had adopted and followed a correct policy. The outstanding success in the elections to the Fourth Duma, the founding of *Pravda*, and the high level of the strike movement, were all the result of the Party's activities under the direction of its Central Committee. We can say with a clear conscience, Lenin told the meeting, that we have done our duty. The reports from local organisations are evidence that the workers are anxious to strengthen the Party and build up its organisations.

The resolutions on propaganda, organisational problems and the convening of a Party Congress, drafted by Lenin and approved by the conference, defined the Party's tasks and basic forms of activity in the new situation.

Lenin made a comprehensive report on the national question, which had acquired heightened importance in view of the spread of Black-Hundred chauvinism and the growth of nationalist tendencies among the liberal bourgeoisie and the top sections of the subject nationalities. This created a grave danger to the movement's militant internationalist unity, which the Bolsheviks had always championed and now, with the new rise of the revolution, were working to strengthen.

The resolution concretised the demands set out in the R.S.D.L.P. programme, formulated a number of new propositions, and called for discussion of a Bolshevik national programme at the next Party Congress.

Lenin regarded the resolution as a fundamental policy statement of the Party and repeatedly referred to it as an expression of the collective view of the Russian Marxists.



Bolshevik Deputies to the Fourth Duma in exile (*left to right*): G. Petrovsky, F. Samoilov, M. Muranov, A. Badayev, N. Shagov

Photo



Lenin
Photo, 1917

In his concluding speech Lenin declared that in view of the importance of its discussions and decisions, the Poronin meeting had the significance of a regular Party conference. The Central Committee Statement on the meeting contained this appeal to all Party organisations and members:

"The path has been mapped out. The Party has found its basic forms of work in the present transition period. Loyalty to the old revolutionary banner has been tested and proved in a new situation and under new conditions. The most difficult times are past, comrades. We are entering a new stage. Events of the utmost importance are on the way, and they will decide the fate of our country. To work then, comrades!"*

The fight for proletarian internationalism. Lenin and Krupskaya returned to Cracow on October 7 (20), 1913. By this time contacts with Russia had been greatly extended and strengthened and Lenin was able to give more operational leadership to the Party. Though away from Russia, he was the recognised leader of her working class. His tactics of combining legal with illegal activity and of promoting unity from below bore splendid fruit. Late in the summer of 1913, the Bolsheviks scored a brilliant victory in the elections to the St. Petersburg Metal-Workers' Union executive. The election meeting was attended by about 3,000 union members. The Liquidators polled about 150 votes; all the rest went to the Bolsheviks. Lenin received a congratulatory telegram from the metal-workers shortly after the results were announced.

Lenin made it a point to discuss preparations for political campaigns or important conferences of trade union or other labour organisations at joint meetings of the Russian and Foreign Bureaus of the Central Committee in Cracow or Poronin.

Parallel with this day-to-day guidance of the Party, Lenin continued, during October-December 1913 and the early months of 1914, to work on a comprehensive substantiation of the Party's theory and policy on the national question.

On his advice a number of prominent Party workers undertook a study of the problem. Lenin gave a positive appraisal of Stalin's article, "The National Question and Social-Democracy", published in *Prosveshcheniye* and re-published in later years under the heading, "Marxism and the National Question".

Lenin welcomed the appearance in *Prosveshcheniye* of P. Stučka's article "The National Question and the Latvian Proletariat". S. Shahumyan, with whom Lenin was in regular correspondence, wrote an important article in opposition to N. Jordania, the Menshevik leader who advocated "national-cultural autonomy", a theory that could only harm the labour movement. In this period Lenin wrote his classical "Critical Remarks on the National Question" and "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", both of which are a masterly theoretical analysis of the

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* *The C.P.S.U. in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenary Meetings*, Russ. ed., 1954, Part I, p. 308.

national question and of the tremendous part it plays in the working-class movement and in the destiny of the nations.

Lenin discussed the economic factors in the Bolshevik programme on the national question and formulated the famous Marxist proposition about two tendencies in the development of the national question under capitalism:

"Developing capitalism knows two historical tendencies in the national question. The first is the awakening of national life and national movements, the struggle against all national oppression, and the creation of national states. The second is the development and growing frequency of international intercourse in every form, the breakdown of national barriers, the creation of the international unity of capital, of economic life in general, of politics, science, etc.

"Both tendencies are a universal law of capitalism."*

The first tendency, Lenin wrote, is historically associated with the epoch of the triumph of capitalism over feudalism and stems from deep-rooted economic factors. The free development of capitalism requires conquest by the bourgeoisie of the home market, the merger into a single state of territories with populations speaking one and the same language, with removal of all obstacles to the development of that language and to its consolidation in literature. It is therefore the tendency of every national movement to form national states best suited to these requirements of modern capitalism. Deep-rooted economic factors thus make the national state the typical and normal type under capitalism. That applies to the whole civilised world.

The second tendency is typical of the higher, imperialist stage of capitalist development. The emergence and extension of international sea and rail routes, development of the world market, export of capital, etc., make for closer economic ties between nations and for international division of labour. And this tendency, Lenin believed, was expressive of the tremendous expansion of the forces of production. It led to liquidation of national isolation and the rise of the capitalist world system.

But, at the same time, Lenin pointed to the fact that the capitalist world system achieved these closer economic ties not through equal co-operation, but through savage rivalry, through oppression, coercion and subjection of colonial and semi-colonial nations, through brutal imperialist exploitation and robbery of backward countries. The second tendency, therefore, far from superseding the first, aggravated it and roused among the oppressed nations resentment and struggle against imperialism.

Lenin demonstrated that the Marxist national programme took both tendencies into account. The first, by championing equality of nations and languages and the right to self-determination up to and including secession and formation of independent states, and the second, by championing the great principle of proletarian internationalism and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 27.

urging uncompromising struggle against attempts to instil bourgeois nationalism in the working class.

It stands to reason that Lenin never believed national oppression could be fully ended under capitalism–only socialism offered a consistent and thorough solution. Prior to World War I, when a democratic revolution was on the order of the day in Russia, Lenin regarded the national question as part of the general question of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The overthrow of tsarism, elimination of the survivals of feudalism and complete democratisation, he said, were essential for solution of the national question, "insofar as it can, in general, be solved in the capitalist world, the world of profit, squabbling and exploitation".*

The demand he advanced for all the peoples oppressed by tsarism–and they made up more than half of Russia's population–was the right to self-determination, the right to independent statehood. Accordingly, he called on the working class to support these peoples in their fight for national liberation, against tsarism.

In all his writings on the national question Lenin stigmatised the tsarist policy of national oppression and attacked the Great-Russian chauvinism of the Black Hundreds, and especially the subtle, and therefore more dangerous, bourgeois nationalism of the Cadets. He disclosed the substance of bourgeois nationalism as an attempt to divide the workers along national lines, weaken their unity, undermine the proletarian class struggle and the cause of freedom and democracy. To the nationalism of the bourgeoisie Lenin always, firmly and consistently, counterposed the internationalism of the proletariat. He wrote: "Bourgeois nationalism and proletarian internationalism–these are the two irreconcilably hostile slogans that correspond to the two great class camps throughout the capitalist world, and express the *two* policies (nay, the two world outlooks) in the national question."**

In "Critical Remarks on the National Question", Lenin gave a comprehensive and profound Marxist criticism of the bourgeois nationalist programme of "cultural-national autonomy" and its supporters, who maintained that under capitalism there could be an integral national culture standing above classes. Lenin formulated–for the first time in the history of Marxism–the important proposition that there existed two cultures in every national culture. International culture, he said, was not non-national:

"The *elements* of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in *every* national culture, since in *every* nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But *every* nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of 'elements', but of the *dominant* culture. Therefore, the general 'national culture' *is* the culture

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 22.
** *Ibid.*, p. 26.

of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie."* The class-conscious worker, Lenin taught, takes from each national culture only its democratic and socialist elements, as a counterweight to the bourgeois culture and the bourgeois nationalism of each nation.

The important thing in the national question, Lenin teaches us, is to unite the workers of all nations, bring them closer together and achieve class unity in the struggle against bourgeois-landlord nationalism. And Lenin administered a stern rebuff to L. Yurkevich and other Ukrainian nationalists who, allegedly in the interests of promoting Ukrainian national unity, advocated weakening of the close ties the Ukrainian and Russian proletariat had formed within a single state. He wrote: "Given united action by the Great-Russian and Ukrainian proletarians, a free Ukraine *is possible*; without such unity it is out of the question."**

These prophetic words are inscribed in letters of gold on the granite plinth of the Lenin monument in Kiev, erected by the people of the Ukraine in token of their boundless affection for and gratitude to the great teacher of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and of the working folk of the whole world.

In his other article, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", Lenin deals with Rosa Luxemburg's erroneous proposal to delete the clause on self-determination from the Russian Marxists' Programme. Rosa Luxemburg's mistake lay in the fact that she regarded the right of nations to self-determination as a concession to the bourgeois nationalism of oppressed nations. Wholly concerned with the struggle against bourgeois nationalism in Poland, she was oblivious to Great-Russian nationalism, which at that time represented the principal obstacle to the development of democracy and proletarian struggle.

Demonstrating why it was necessary to retain this clause in the Party's Programme, Lenin explained that recognition of the right to secession must not be confused with the advisability or inadvisability of secession in any specific instance. All other conditions being equal, the revolutionary proletariat would favour a bigger state, for it offered a number of significant advantages compared with smaller states.

In his efforts to promote proletarian internationalism, Lenin was always guided by the writings and practical activities of Marx. "The Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association", drafted by Marx in October 1864, stressed the immense importance of fraternal alliance of the workers of the various countries in the fight for emancipation of all the working people. The Address contains this statement: "Past experience has shown how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts."***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 24.
** *Ibid.*, p. 31.
*** Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 384.

Time and again Lenin drew attention to the well-known Marxist thesis that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations. The freedom of the Russian nation demands a struggle against the oppression of all non-Russian nationalities. For only such a struggle can guarantee the really democratic and really socialist education of the masses and offer the best chances of national peace in Russia. Conversely, the slightest support by the proletariat of the privileges of "its" national bourgeoisie will inevitably breed distrust on the part of the proletariat of another nation, will inevitably weaken working-class solidarity and disunite the workers to the joy and delight of the bourgeoisie.

The proletarian parties are internationalist, but they must not, Lenin explained, confuse the nationalism of oppressing and oppressed nations. We are categorically opposed to the nationalism of all oppressing nations, of all imperialist powers. But "the bourgeois nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed *against* oppression, and it is this content that we *unconditionally* support".* Guided by Lenin's teachings on the national question and developing them further, the Communist Parties support the national liberation struggle of the Asian, African and Latin American nations against imperialism and feudalism, for this struggle serves the cause of national freedom and victory over the forces of imperialist reaction, the cause of social progress.

Lenin's works on the national question written in these years of revolutionary revival are an outstanding contribution to the ideological treasure-house of creative Marxism. They continue to serve as a reliable guide for all Communist and Workers' Parties.

For Party and working-class unity. The increasing scope of the revolutionary struggle accentuated the need for stronger working-class political unity.

The Liquidators and Trotskyites sought to cover their defection with hypocritical shouts about "unity" of the R.S.D.L.P. which, they alleged, was being undermined by Bolshevik "splitting" activities. It was necessary, therefore, to expose the real splitters and make clear to the workers the conditions needed to consolidate the forces of the working class and its party.

Without unity, Lenin taught, the working class cannot successfully wage its struggle. And real, genuine unity presupposes, first and foremost, unity of the working-class party. Unity implies discussion in which opinions are heard and weighed, the views of the majority of organised Marxists ascertained and formulated in a decision that gives integral, comprehensive and accurate answers to pressing problems, and, further, faithful fulfilment of that decision. Unity is inconceivable without the Marxist minority submitting to the majority, without respect for and wholehearted implementation of the will of the majority.

In the conditions of tsarist Russia, the revolutionary proletarian party

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 412.

can exist only as an illegal organisation; there is no other way. For that reason, Lenin emphasised, the only possible conception of unity is unity achieved from below, by the workers in their underground party organisations. He who wants unity must join the illegal proletarian party. The workers' cause needs unity of the Marxists, not unity of the Marxists with the enemies and distorters of Marxism.

In criticising the Liquidator theory of a "broad section" as a substitute for the party, Lenin further developed his thesis on the relation of party to class, of the role of organisation.

"The party is the politically conscious, advanced section of the class, it is its vanguard. The strength of that vanguard is ten times, a hundred times, more than a hundred times, greater than its numbers.

"Is that possible? Can the strength of hundreds be greater than the strength of thousands?

"It can be, and is, *when the hundreds are organised.*

"Organisation increases strength tenfold."*

And it is in its ability to organise, Lenin taught, that the political consciousness of the vanguard manifests itself. Organised, it acquires a single will, and this single will of the front-rank thousand, of hundreds of thousands, of a million, becomes the will of the class.

Lenin devoted much time and effort in 1913-14 to exposing Trotsky's anti-Party August bloc. The Trotskyite group sought to instil in Russia the ideology and policy of Centrism, that is, of subjecting the proletarian revolutionary elements to the petty-bourgeois reformist elements within one common party. The unprincipled bloc formed by Trotsky in 1912, at the August conference of Liquidators, Bundists, Caucasian Mensheviks, and *Vperyod*-ists, was an anti-revolutionary bloc directed against the Bolsheviks. The open Liquidator attacks against the "underground", that is, against the revolutionary proletarian party, met with no support among the workers, and Trotsky then decided, on the advice of the Liquidators, to operate under a "non-factional" signboard.

Lenin exposed Trotsky's Centrism, his political adventurism, in a number of articles. One of these, "Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity", is of especial importance for a proper understanding of Lenin's fight against Trotskyism. It was meant chiefly for the younger generation of workers, who in 1914 made up nine-tenth of the Party and who had no knowledge of the long struggle of conflicting trends in the Russian and European Marxist movement.

Lenin was particularly incensed by the unprincipledness and duplicity of Trotsky who, for all his verbal fireworks, was defending the Liquidators and reformists and preaching Liquidationist ideas. Lenin called Trotsky a "Balalaikin"** for his phrase-mongering and a Judas*** for his

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 406.

** *Balalaikin*—a character in M. Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Modern Idyll*—a liberal phrase-monger, adventurer and liar.

*** *Judas Golovlyov*—a character in Saltykov-Shchedrin's novel *The Golovlyov Family*, a pious hypocritical type.

unprincipledness and duplicity. He considered Trotsky "the worst splitter" in the Russian Social-Democratic movement.

The unprincipled and anti-revolutionary August bloc, made up of heterogeneous groups, began to fall apart under the blows dealt by Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

What worried Lenin was that the Lettish Social-Democratic organisation, composed largely of workers, had joined the August bloc in 1912. Through I. Hermanis, I. Rudis-Gipslis, P. Stučka and other Lettish Bolsheviks, with whom he was in close touch, he urged withdrawal from the bloc. In May 1913 he drafted a platform for the Fourth Lettish Social-Democratic Congress, and made a trip from Cracow to Berlin on December 26-27, 1913 (January 8-9, 1914), to meet the Lettish Bolsheviks and discuss preparations for the Congress, which was to open in Brussels a few days later. Lenin was invited to the Congress as an honorary guest and representative of the C.C., R.S.D.L.P.(B.). It was arranged that on the eve of the Congress he would address the delegates, who had come illegally from various parts of Latvia, on the national question.

It was clear that the Bolsheviks would have a majority, but only of one vote. Lenin's pre-Congress meeting with the delegates was therefore regarded as a test of strength in preparation for the decisive battle.

As soon as Lenin appeared on the second-floor landing of the Colos Café, where the meeting was to be held, he was surrounded by a large group of delegates. One of them, a tall, elderly worker from Riga, warmly embraced him and other delegates came up to shake hands. Lenin was already acquainted with many of them and they brought messages of good wishes from mutual friends.

Lenin's explanation of the Bolshevik theory and tactics on the national question was followed with the closest attention and punctuated with applause and cries of approval. Lenin spoke of the need for the working people of Latvia and the Baltic provinces generally to unite with the Russian working people, with all the peoples of Russia, in the fight for a brighter future. The Marxist party, he stressed, always true to its great revolutionary goal, stood out as the force that inspired, guided, organised and led the working class and working people at every stage of the struggle for fraternity among the nations. He called on the Lettish Marxists to work for genuine, not fictitious, Party unity and safeguard the Party's ranks against vacillators and traitors.

In his speech at the Congress, Lenin criticised the Central Committee of the Lettish Social-Democratic organisation for its opportunist stand, exposed the Trotskyite August bloc and called on the Letts to break with the Liquidators. He had to overcome strong conciliatory tendencies, but was able to persuade the Congress to withdraw from the August bloc. And this, in Lenin's opinion, was the strongest blow dealt Trotsky's coalition, one that put an end to Trotskyites' attempts to start a Centrist party in Russia.

The Brussels I.S.B. meeting. Early in May 1914, Lenin and Krupskaya again went to Poronin. Shortly before there was a meeting of the Central

Committee, attended also by Duma member G. Petrovsky, to discuss the Party's participation in the Second International Congress and International Women's Conference, and preparations for the next Party Congress, all of which were scheduled to meet in Vienna in August.

Now that they had been dislodged from all key positions in the Russian working-class movement, the Mensheviks were determined to take revenge at the I.S.B. meeting and the Vienna International Congress. The Second International leaders hastened to help them. In December 1913, when the "Russian question" was discussed at a meeting of the I.S.B. in London, Kautsky declared that in Russia "the old party has ceased to exist".

Lenin was deeply incensed by this statement, which he described as "monstrous". The liquidators immediately seized on this statement of Kautsky's and used it in their campaign against the Bolsheviks. *Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta*, the St. Petersburg liquidationist paper, came out with the report that the I.S.B. had, "with full knowledge of the facts", discussed the differences in Russia and had sternly censured the "Leninists" while granting full remission of sins to the liquidators and giving them its blessing to continue their "exploits" in demolishing the Party.

Lenin exposed this opportunist line of the I.S.B.: "We are being lectured on unity with the liquidators of our Party—an absurdity. It is we who are bringing unity into being, by rallying the workers of Russia *against* the liquidators of our Party."* Lenin urged the Bolsheviks in Russia and abroad to organise a campaign of protest against Kautsky's statement, and such a campaign was organised.

On the eve of the First World War the International Socialist Bureau arranged a conference in Brussels, attended by representatives of the Menshevik Organising Committee, the Menshevik Caucasian Regional Committee, the Trotskyite *Borba* group, the Menshevik Duma members, the Plekhanov Unity group, the *Vperyod* group, the Bund, the Social-Democratic organisations of Latvia, Lithuania and Poland and the Polish Social-Democratic opposition, the P.S.P. Left.

Lenin decided against attending the conference. On his proposal the Bolshevik Central Committee delegated Inessa Armand, M. Vladimirsky and I. Popov. Inessa Armand read in French a statement of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee drawn up by Lenin, which convincingly demonstrated that there was no "factional chaos" in Russia, as the Russian opportunists and their Second International patrons had tried to make out. What was taking place in Russia, the statement emphasised, was a struggle between the Marxists and the Liquidators, in which a genuine workers' Marxist party was being forged, a party that already had the support of the overwhelming majority of Russia's class-conscious workers. Outside this workers' unity there were only "general staffs without armies", in Russia itself and abroad.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 134.

Liquidationism, the statement further said, was a trend supported by intellectuals who had renounced all association with the illegal party and were seeking to replace it by an open, legally-existing amorphous party. And Lenin drew the conclusion, formulated in the statement, that the differences with the Liquidators concerned more than organisational matters, more than the question of how to build the Party—the very existence of the Party was at stake. On this issue there could be no reconciliation, agreement, or compromise. The only way to build and strengthen the Party was through resolute struggle against the Liquidators.

After spokesmen of the various "trends" and groups had had their say, Kautsky submitted a resolution on the "reunification" of the R.S.D.L.P. The resolution was out of order, for the conference had been called for the express purpose of exchanging views, no more. The Bolsheviks and the Lettish Social-Democratic representatives therefore declared they would have no part in the voting; all the rest voted for the Kautsky resolution.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks refused to submit to the decisions of the opportunist Second International. On the pretext of establishing "peace" in the R.S.D.L.P. its leadership was planning to liquidate the independent Bolshevik party, the proletarian party of a new type. That plan was exposed and foiled.

Lenin insisted that the minutes and resolutions of the Brussels Conference be published so that they be brought to the knowledge of broad sections of the workers in Russia and Western Europe. He availed himself of every opportunity to explain to the Western workers the essence of Bolshevism and the vast importance for the world socialist labour movement of the Bolshevik struggle against opportunism and revisionism.

In mid-July 1914, Lenin presided over another conference in Poronin of Central Committee members and Party functionaries from Russia. They discussed the activities of the Duma group and preparations for the Party Congress, which were proceeding against the background of a mounting revolutionary movement in Russia. The powerful May Day strikes and demonstrations were followed by the general strike in Baku. In St. Petersburg the police opened fire on a mass solidarity rally of workers from the Putilov Plant. The working class retaliated by a fresh wave of strikes and demonstrations against tsarist tyranny. Barricades were thrown up in St. Petersburg, Baku and Lodz. The proletariat was preparing for decisive battle.

As Lenin had pointed out, a revolutionary crisis was maturing in Russia. Meanwhile, the tsarist government, in alliance with Anglo-French imperialism, was making frenzied preparations for war against Germany. The government hoped that war would put an end to the revolutionary movement. There were wholesale arrests of Bolsheviks and Party sympathisers. On July 8 (Old Style), the St. Petersburg secret police raided the *Pravda* offices and arrested many of its staff.

The Black-Hundred press called for the arrest of the Bolshevik Duma group.

The years of the new rise of the revolution preceding the First World War were one of the most important periods in Lenin's life and activity. Looking back on this period, Lenin remarked that the Bolsheviks had won the battle against the opportunists. The Bolshevik Party had been "restored by the January 1912 Conference, strengthened by the elections, in the worker curia, to the Fourth Duma, consolidated by the Pravdist papers of 1912-14, and represented by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group in the Duma".* Under Lenin's leadership, the Bolsheviks, not only restored their organisation, but converted it into a mass working-class party, into the strongest political force of the Russian revolutionary movement.

Surmounting tremendous difficulties, the Bolshevik Party won over the majority of the working class, isolated the Liquidators, Trotskyites, nationalists and all other agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement and welded the political unity of the great bulk of the Russian proletariat. This was an outstanding success, and it was achieved because Lenin had always armed the Party with the theory and tactics of creative, revolutionary Marxism. Of particular importance was his elaboration of Bolshevik theory and policy on the national question, his emphasis on proletarian internationalism as a key factor in the development of the world working-class and national liberation movements.

Despite the formidable difficulties created by illegality, Lenin saw to it that there were regular meetings of the Party Central Committee, C.C. conferences with Party functionaries and Duma Bolshevik members, and general Party conferences. He always insisted on, and practised, collective leadership. The Party worked consistently to unite and organise the working class, safeguard Party unity and secure firm discipline in its ranks.

By his indefatigable activities, both on the theoretical and practical fronts, by his militant internationalist policy, Lenin thwarted the conspiracy of the opportunist Second International leaders against the Bolshevik Party and prepared it for the trying ordeals of the imperialist war.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 198.



Chapter Eight

FIDELITY TO PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM

We must not be deceived by the present grave-like stillness in Europe. Europe is pregnant with revolution.

LENIN

The summer of 1914.... Imperialism had plunged mankind into a devastating, predatory war that was to bring incalculable misery and suffering, death to tens of millions of men at the front and measureless grief to their families. The war spread with avalanche-like speed, involving the whole world. It was a war between two blocs of imperialist powers for the re-division of colonies and spheres of influence, for the plunder and enslavement of other peoples. One of the blocs, the Quadruple Alliance, was headed by German imperialism; its other members were Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. The other, the Entente, was headed by the British and French imperialists; tsarist Russia was one of its members. Later, Japan, Italy, the United States and other countries entered the war on the side of the Entente.

The outbreak of war found Lenin in Poronin. All the Bolsheviks living there gathered at his house to discuss the situation. Lenin told them it was imperative to devise new forms and methods of Party work to conform with war-time conditions, and re-establish regular contact with Russia as soon as possible. He felt sure that the war would

accentuate all the contradictions of capitalism, intensify the class struggle in all countries, create and aggravate a general political crisis and thereby hasten the new revolution in Russia. That was an objective inevitability.

Lenin arrested. Lenin was falsely accused of espionage and on July 25 (August 7) his house was searched. One of the gendarmes seized his notes on the agrarian problem, mistaking the statistical tables for a secret code. Lenin was ordered to appear before the military authorities at Nowy Targ, the county seat, on the following day. It was obvious that he would be arrested and tried by a military tribunal. He immediately warned the other Bolsheviks and wired a protest to the Cracow police. When he came to Nowy Targ, he was arrested and put in jail. There were many local peasants in the jail. Lenin won their respect by giving them legal advice and helping to obtain their release. Questioned by the police, he replied with dignity that he was a correspondent and staff member of the St. Petersburg *Pravda* and had been a member of the Russian Social-Democratic Party for the last twenty years.

News of his arrest by the Austrian authorities appeared in Russian newspapers and caused much alarm to his relatives and Party members. There was all the more reason for alarm because Russian troops were near Cracow and if the city was captured by the Russian army, Lenin would easily fall into the hands of the tsarist police. In fact, the latter were already anticipating that. The Police Department notified General Alekseyev, commander at the South-Western front, that according to information in possession of the Ministry of the Interior, V. I. Ulyanov, better known as Lenin, was being held in custody in Cracow. Lenin, the police dispatch said, was one of the top leaders of the R.S.D.L.P., "with long years of participation in the revolutionary movement . . . a member of the Party's Central Committee and the founder of a distinct trend within the Party". He was wanted by the police, and General Alekseyev was asked to "be good enough to order Lenin's arrest" and place him "at the disposal of the Petrograd* Police Department".

There were many strong protests from Polish progressives–the Social-Democratic leaders Ganiecki and Bagocki, Dr. Dłuski of Zakopane, a veteran of the Narodnaya Volya, the well-known writers Jan Kasprowicz, Wladyslaw Orkan and others.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna appealed to the Austrian M.P.s Victor Adler and Hermann Diamant, who knew Lenin as a member of the International Socialist Bureau. They brought pressure to bear on the Austrian authorities. The espionage charge was so preposterous that even the Cracow police had to admit they had "no incriminating evidence to support the charge of espionage against Ulyanov". That was the ignominious end of the foul reactionary attempt to vilify and calumniate this great champion of the working class and the people.

* St. Petersburg was renamed Petrograd in August 1914 following the outbreak of the war.

Upon his release on August 6 (19), Lenin immediately returned to Poronin by peasant cart, without waiting for a train. A week later the family moved to Cracow, where they obtained the necessary papers for the journey to neutral Switzerland, and left Poland.

The journey to Vienna, in a freight car, took several days. In the Austrian capital Lenin met Victor Adler, who told him about his conversation with an Austrian Minister. The Minister had asked: "Are you sure that Ulyanov is an enemy of the tsarist government?" "Oh yes, a more confirmed enemy than Your Excellency."

On August 23 (September 5), Lenin, Krupskaya and her mother arrived in Switzerland and took up residence in Berne. At first they rented a room, and then moved to a small flat with a tiny garden on the city's outskirts, near the Bremgarten Forest.

Lenin's Manifesto on the war. The war had exacerbated and brought to the fore the deep-rooted contradictions in the socialist labour movement and showed that most of the leaders of the socialist parties and of the International were openly betraying the working class and the anti-war decisions of the socialist congresses.

On August 4, 1914, acting in contravention to the will of the International, the Social-Democratic group in Germany voted with the bourgeois-landowner majority in the Reichstag in favour of giving the Kaiser government war credits amounting to 5,000 million marks. Thus, Südekum, Scheidemann, Haase, Legien, Kautsky and other leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party and the Second International rejected the class struggle and proletarian internationalism in favour of "civil peace" and social-chauvinism, becoming obedient tools of German imperialism.

Most of the official leaders of other socialist parties likewise came out in defence of their imperialist fatherlands. Emile Vandervelde, leader of the Belgian socialists and President of the International Socialist Bureau, Jules Guesde, Albert Thomas, and Marcel Sembat, leaders of the French socialists, accepted portfolios in the bourgeois, reactionary governments of their countries; in Britain the same road was taken by MacDonald and Hyndman. Plekhanov and Axelrod, Menshevik leaders in Russia, became ardent defencists. The Second International shamefully collapsed and disintegrated.

During this momentous crisis in the world working-class movement, the banner of proletarian internationalism was held aloft by the Bolshevik Party headed by Lenin. It alone set a worthy example of fidelity to socialism, leading the struggle of the working class of Russia against imperialism and the imperialist war and honorably discharging its revolutionary duty. For Lenin and all other Bolsheviks the resolutions on the war, adopted by international socialist congresses, were not scraps of paper; they were a guide to action.

As soon as war was declared, the Bolshevik Central Committee issued an appeal to the working people of Russia with the militant slogan: "Down with war! War against war!" Lenin was the first to call upon

the working people of the whole world to rise to the sacred struggle against the instigators and organisers of the imperialist shambles and showed them the only possible, revolutionary way out of the reactionary war.

On August 24-26 (September 6-8), 1914, the local Bolshevik group in Berne held a meeting at which Lenin set forth his views on what should be the Bolshevik attitude to the war. The meeting approved his theses, "The Tasks of Revolutionary Social-Democracy in the European War", which it adopted as the resolution of the "Social-Democratic Group". Handwritten copies were made of the theses and sent to Bolshevik groups in other countries and in Petrograd. On October 3 (16), it was reported to Lenin that the Central Committee members in Russia, the Duma group and Party organisations in St. Petersburg and other towns had approved and aligned themselves with his theses on the war. The Bolshevik Party took a firm, consistently internationalist stand on the war.

Lenin used the theses adopted in Berne for a manifesto. After a reply was received from Russia it was decided to issue the manifesto in the name of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. and to call it "The War and Russian Social-Democracy". It gave a profoundly Marxist assessment of the war as an imperialist, predatory and unjust war of aggrandisement on both sides. "Seizure of territory and subjugation of other nations, the ruining of competing nations and the plunder of their wealth, distracting the attention of the working masses from the internal political crises in Russia, Germany, Britain and other countries, disuniting and nationalist stultification of the workers, and the extermination of their vanguard so as to weaken the revolutionary movement of the proletariat—these comprise the sole actual content, importance and significance of the present war."*

As has already been mentioned, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had done everything in their power to prevent war from breaking out. But insofar as the forces on their side had not been strong enough and war was unleashed, Lenin advanced the slogan: Turn the imperialist war into a civil war. During war, he maintained, revolution signified civil war.

The Central Committee Manifesto stated that "from the standpoint of the working class and of the toiling masses of all the nations of Russia, the defeat of the tsarist monarchy . . . would be the lesser evil".** It would undoubtedly facilitate the people's victory over tsardom and, in its turn, this would enable the working class to move resolutely towards socialism, towards liberation from capitalist slavery and imperialist wars. Lenin's point of departure was that the policy of defeat of one's own imperialist government should be pursued not only by the Russian revolutionaries, but also by the revolutionary Marxists

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 27.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

of all the belligerent states. In a reactionary war the revolutionary class cannot avoid desiring the defeat of its own government. Lenin taught that this was imperative in order to turn an imperialist war into a civil war.

He particularly denounced the shameful part played by the German Social-Democrats, the strongest and most influential party in the Second International. Its support of the imperialist war and betrayal of revolutionary Marxism and the socialist cause predetermined, in effect, the collapse of the Second International. For many years it had been considered the custodian and interpreter of the great theoretical heritage of the founders of scientific communism and had set the tone in the international socialist movement. The socialists of every country had faith in that party and in many cases had emulated it. And even after it had voted for war credits, the vast majority of the socialists did not fully appreciate the depths to which it had fallen and its betrayal of international proletarian solidarity.

To the treacherous position of the German Social-Democratic leaders, Lenin opposed the genuine internationalist policy of the Bolshevik Duma representatives, who refused to vote for war credits, walked out of the Duma in token of protest and branded the policy of the European governments as imperialist. The Bolshevik Party, Lenin said, had not been daunted by the sacrifices and losses it had suffered as a result of its anti-war stand.

He urged revolutionary Marxists to found a Third International that would be genuinely proletarian and free of opportunists and social-chauvinists, for only after a complete break had been made with these elements would it be possible to educate the working class in a truly internationalist spirit and prepare it for socialist revolution. Insofar as the bourgeoisie was using wartime legislation for mass repressions against the proletariat, Lenin put before revolutionary Marxists the task of building up illegal Party organisations in all countries and conducting illegal propaganda.

In these difficult days of rampant chauvinism, betrayal and defection by the Social-Democratic leaders, Lenin was confident that the great principles of proletarian internationalism would in the end prevail. The working masses would overcome all obstacles and found a new International.

There was the pressing practical problem of printing the Central Committee Manifesto, and this, even in "neutral" Switzerland, was by no means easy. To prevent failure the undertaking had to be carried out in the strictest secrecy. Moreover, there were difficulties in obtaining paper and finding a printshop, while the Central Committee's exchequer contained only 160 francs (about 40 rubles!) and the Committee of Bolshevik Organisations Abroad had only a little more than that. But all these difficulties were overcome.

By decision of the Central Committee Bureau Abroad, the Central Party Organ, *Sotsial-Demokrat*, resumed publication in Geneva.

No. 33 of the newspaper appeared on October 19 (November 1), 1914. It carried the Central Committee's Manifesto on the War as its editorial. This issue, printed in 1,500 copies, was circulated among the Bolshevik groups abroad and smuggled into Russia via Switzerland. It played an important role in the Party's activities during the war.

Taras Kondratyev, a Petrograd Bolshevik worker who organised illegal activity in the first Petrograd district, recalls the overwhelming impression this issue of the paper made in Bolshevik organisations in the capital. It arrived there, Kondratyev writes, early in November and "infused a fresh spirit in the movement, heartened and inspired us, fired us with an indomitable will to carry on the work no matter how difficult. We now knew for a certainty that what we had been doing had been right. Though we had been groping in the dark, cut off from the Party centres, we had taken the right, though hard and thorny road. The issue was read by so many people that in the end it was just a mass of tattered newsprint."*

The Manifesto was also put out as a separate pamphlet. The Bolshevik Party and the international labour movement thus received a clear programme of effective struggle against the imperialist war, tsarism and the bourgeoisie, a programme of struggle for the socialist revolution.

Consolidating the Bolshevik forces. In Switzerland Lenin worked persistently to weld together the Bolshevik Party forces. This was particularly difficult in wartime conditions. The tsarist government began persecuting Bolshevik organisations and their committees with unprecedented fury. Members of illegal Party organisations were arrested and exiled in their thousands. During the war, the Petrograd committee alone was taken into custody more than thirty times. All Bolshevik newspapers and other periodicals were closed. Most of the trade unions and many cultural and educational societies were dispersed. Tsarism took ruthless revenge against the revolutionary working class. Lenin's contacts with Russia, which had been broken by the war, were re-established with considerable difficulty, in a roundabout way. Mail from Russia reached Switzerland very rarely.

Lenin and Krupskaya found themselves in straightened material circumstances. "We shall soon lose all our old means of subsistence," Nadezhda Konstantinovna wrote to Lenin's sister, Maria Ilyinichna Ulyanova, on December 14, 1915. In a letter to A. Shlyapnikov, written at the close of September and the beginning of October 1916, Lenin, who was accustomed to living extremely modestly, had to admit: "Speaking of myself personally, I must say that I need some sort of earnings, or things will be just hopeless, they really will. Prices are devilishly high and we have nothing to live on." He asked assistance in getting his Russian publishers to pay the royalties due to him and send him some books for translation. "If this is not organised I really will not be able to hold out, this is absolutely serious, absolutely, absolutely."*

* *Krasnaya Letopis* No. 5, 1922, p. 236.

The Bolshevik group in the Fourth State Duma (A. Badayev, M. Muranov, G. Petrovsky, F. Samoilov and N. Shagov) vigorously opposed the imperialist war. They were arrested in November 1914 and tried in February 1915.

In his article "What Has Been Revealed by the Trial of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Duma Group", Lenin spoke with pride of the fact that the trial had shown how broadly the Bolsheviks, for the first time in the history of the international socialist movement, had made use of the parliamentary tribune for the revolutionary cause of the proletariat and the scope of Bolshevik illegal anti-war activities among the proletarian masses. The prosecutor read out Lenin's theses on the war, found in the possession of the Duma deputies, and illegal leaflets issued by the Bolshevik groups and committees denouncing the imperialist war and advocating proletarian internationalism. In the first two months after the outbreak of the war, the Bolshevik Duma members toured practically the whole of Russia, addressing numerous workers' meetings, which adopted anti-war resolutions couched in the spirit of Lenin's Manifesto.

The tsarist government wanted to pass the death sentence on the defendants. Not all of them spoke at the trial with the courage expected of them. Lenin condemned as impermissible for a revolutionary Social-Democrat the conduct of Kamenev, who was tried together with the Bolshevik deputies. Kamenev pleaded in court that he did not agree with the Central Committee on its attitude towards the war and, to prove that, asked that Jordansky, a Menshevik supporter of the war, be summoned as a witness. That was not merely cowardice; it was an outright retreat from the Bolshevik Party's policy on a crucial issue. The five Bolshevik deputies and other defendants were exiled to Siberia.

But the persecutions, difficulties and privations failed to break the will of the Bolshevik Party, which had been created and trained by Lenin.

From the very beginning of the war, Lenin lost a great deal of weight, grew pinched and became grimly solemn. He worked with indomitable energy to get the Party activities going properly and unite the Bolshevik groups abroad. He toured the Bolshevik organisations in Switzerland, flaying in his lectures the Mensheviks, Bundists and Trotskyites and explaining the meaning of the Central Committee Manifesto.

At first Lenin refused to believe the rumour that Plekhanov had become a defencist. When he learned that Plekhanov, who had moved from Paris to Switzerland, had addressed a meeting in Geneva and was to address another one in Lausanne on September 28 (October 11), 1914, he decided to attend it. Plekhanov's speech was indeed a plea for support of the war. Though there was a large audience, Lenin was the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 236.

only one to ask for the floor. On mounting the platform he did not offer to shake hands with Plekhanov, and in his speech referred to him as the "reporter" and not as "comrade". This was immediately noted by the audience. In the ten minutes at his disposal, Lenin could only set out the chief points of the Bolshevik Manifesto and the chief arguments against the defencists.

To enable him to deal with the problem in greater detail, it was decided to arrange a lecture on "The Proletariat and the War" in the same hall, the Lausanne People's House, on October 1 (14). The hall was packed long before the lecture was due to begin. Lenin was in buoyant, fighting spirits. He showed up the social nature of the war as an imperialist war of aggrandisement on both sides. With great satisfaction he announced that the St. Petersburg and several other Party organisations in Russia had issued leaflets against the war. The Bolsheviks in Russia were doing what genuine socialists everywhere should be doing–criticising their "own" government, exposing their "own" bourgeoisie, denouncing their "own" Ministers and tearing the mask first of all from their "own" opportunists. The lecture was followed with rapt attention and was an undoubted success.

Equally successful was the lecture in Geneva on the following day, "The European War and Socialism", later repeated in Clarenz and Zurich. Lenin also spoke in Berne, giving a critical analysis of Martov's lecture on the war.

Lenin's chief aim was to develop Party activity in Russia herself. He succeeded in arranging regular correspondence with members of the Central Committee in Petrograd, in re-establishing the C.C. Bureau there and in establishing contact with the Party organisations in Russia and with individual revolutionaries, who were opposed to the war. A. Shlyapnikov, resident in Stockholm as representative of the St. Petersburg Committee and the Central Committee, kept Lenin in regular contact with the organisations in Petrograd and other parts of Russia. Every letter sent to Russia, every article contributed to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, breathed Lenin's optimism and deep faith in the revolutionary strength and ability of the working class to wage a courageous struggle against the war.

In November 1914, Lenin wrote: "The work of our Party has now become 100 times more difficult. And still we shall carry it on! *Pravda* has trained up thousands of class-conscious workers out of whom, in spite of all difficulties, a new collective of leaders–the Russian C.C. of the Party–will be formed."*

"About forty thousand workers have been buying *Pravda*," Lenin wrote somewhat later, "far more read it. Even if war, prison, Siberia and hard labour should destroy five or even ten times as many–this section of the workers *cannot* be annihilated. It is alive. It is imbued with the revolutionary spirit, is anti-chauvinist. It *alone* stands in the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 175.

midst of the masses, with deep roots in the latter, as the champion of the internationalism of the toilers, the exploited and the oppressed. It *alone* has held its ground in the general debacle. It alone is leading the semi-proletarian elements *away* from the social-chauvinism of the Cadets, the Trudoviks, Plekhanov and *Nasha Zarya*, and *towards* socialism."*

Bolshevik activity abroad, and even more so in Russia, aroused the fury of the imperialists and their ideological servitors. A slander campaign was launched against the Bolsheviks not only by the Russian bourgeoisie, but also by the Anglo-French bourgeoisie and the "socialist" press, which accused them of "anti-patriotism". Lenin emphatically rejected this slander. His brilliant article "The National Pride of the Great Russians", published in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, explained what patriotism meant and how it should be combined with internationalism. He wrote:

"Is a sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian class-conscious proletarians? Certainly not! We love our language and our country, and we are doing our very utmost to raise *her* toiling masses (i.e., nine-tenths of *her* population) to the level of a democratic and socialist consciousness. To us it is most painful to see and feel the outrages, the oppression and the humiliation our fair country suffers at the hands of the tsar's butchers, the nobles and the capitalists. We take pride in the resistance to these outrages put up from our midst, from the Great Russians; in *that* midst having produced Radishchev,** the Decembrists and the revolutionary commoners of the seventies; in the Great-Russian working class having created, in 1905, a mighty revolutionary party of the masses; and in the Great-Russian peasantry having begun to turn towards democracy and set about overthrowing the clergy and the landed proprietors. . . . We are full of national pride because the Great-Russian nation, *too*, has created a revolutionary class, because it, *too*, has proved capable of providing mankind with great models of the struggle for freedom and socialism."***

True defence of one's country, Lenin taught, did not mean following the example of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in supporting the tsar and the bourgeoisie, which had plunged into world war with the object of seizing and pillaging other nations. True defence of one's country meant using all revolutionary means to fight the monarchy, the landowners and the capitalists of one's country, who were the worst enemies; it meant fighting the predatory war. By advancing a slogan calling for the defeat of the tsarist autocracy in the war and selflessly struggling against the reactionary social system and the anti-popular government, which was oppressing dozens of nations, the Bolsheviks came forward as a powerful internationalist force and,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 176.

** *A. Radishchev* (1749-1802)–outstanding Russian author and revolutionary enlightener.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 103.

at the same time, as a truly patriotic organisation in their own country. The loftiest mission of the proletariat, led by the Bolsheviks, was to build socialism and effect the transition to communism. These objectives of the revolutionary Marxists, Lenin explained, did not run counter to the correctly understood national interests of the working people of Russia. "The interests of the Great-Russians' national pride (understood, not in the slavish sense)," he wrote, "coincide with the *socialist* interests of the Great-Russian (and all other) proletarians."*

Lenin called upon Marxists to educate the working class in a spirit of consistent democracy, complete equality and fraternity, in a spirit of proletarian internationalism and socialist patriotism.

On February 14-19 (February 27-March 4), 1915, he presided over a conference in Berne of R.S.D.L.P. organisations abroad and delivered an address on "The War and the Tasks of the Party". The conference resolutions on major issues, framed by Lenin, set out concrete measures for converting the imperialist war into a civil war: voting against war credits and resignation of socialists from bourgeois governments; no agreements with the bourgeoisie; total rejection of the "national peace" policy; building of illegal organisations wherever martial law has been introduced and repeal of constitutional liberties impeded legal activity; support of fraternisation at the front; support of every revolutionary proletarian mass action. This was a platform for rallying all the genuinely revolutionary internationalist elements in the world labour movement.

Krupskaya's mother, Yelizaveta Vasilyevna, who had accompanied Lenin and her in exile in Siberia and in emigration, died in March 1915. This wonderful, non-Party Russian woman always had the good of her son-in-law and daughter at heart and made herself useful to the Party. Among other things she kept house for the family, attended to the people who called upon Lenin, tailored sleeveless jackets in which illegal literature was hidden, and drew the "skeletons" for illegal letters. While living in Switzerland she yearned to return to Russia, but shortly before her death said she would go home together with her son-in-law and daughter. In her old age she broke with religion and in her will asked to be cremated without religious rites. Her request was fulfilled by Lenin and Krupskaya and her ashes were buried at the Bremgarten Cemetery.

In pursuance of the Berne decisions, the Bolshevik organisations in Russia developed extensive illegal revolutionary activity in the working-class centres, the navy and the army. This work was directed by Lenin. As soon as he learned that controversies had arisen in Party organisations over tactics on pressing issues, he wrote his "Several Theses", in which he gave concise answers to all the cardinal questions of the revolutionary movement and defined the proletarian party's concrete tasks in Russia in conditions of the imperialist war. The basic Bolshevik

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 106.

slogans, he explained, remained the same: democratic republic, confiscation of the landed estates and the eight-hour day. But now to these should be added an appeal for international workers' solidarity against the war, for socialism and the revolutionary overthrow of the warring governments.

The principal task in the next stage of the Russian revolution, Lenin explained, was the establishment of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry and the utilisation of that dictatorship for a transition to the socialist revolution. "The imperialist war," Lenin wrote, "has *linked up* the Russian revolutionary crisis, which stems from a bourgeois-democratic revolution, with the growing crisis of the proletarian socialist revolution in the West. This link is so direct that no individual solution of revolutionary [problems] is possible in any single country—the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution is now not only a prologue to, but an indivisible and integral part of, the socialist revolution in the West."* His reply to the question of what the proletarian party would do if in the present war it were brought to power by a revolution was: "We would propose peace to *all* the belligerents on the condition that freedom is given to the colonies and *all* peoples that are dependent, oppressed and deprived of rights."**

After its initial victories, the tsarist army began to sustain defeat on all the major fronts. Its retreat from Galicia in the spring of 1915 was soon followed by the loss of Poland, part of the Baltic provinces and of Byelorussia. Millions of refugees fled to the interior of the country. The staggering burden that the war put on every working-class family and the soaring prices caused mounting discontent with the tsarist government and the bourgeoisie, which was battening on war contracts.

The Bolsheviks led the working-class fight against the rising cost of living. They organised protest meetings, drawing new sections of the population into the movement, and showing them the direct connection between the high prices and the war policy of the tsarist government and the bourgeoisie. Already in August-September 1915, the political character of the economic strikes became more and more pronounced.

In the autumn of 1915 Lenin centred his attention on the elections of the so-called "workers' groups" of the Central and Petrograd War Industry committees. These were set up by the imperialist bourgeoisie for the purpose of helping tsarism prosecute the war. In an attempt to bring the working class under their influence and induce them to take part in the "national defence" effort, the bourgeois leaders, working hand in glove with the Menshevik defencists, and with the consent and approval of the Duma and the tsar, decided to bring workers' representatives into these committees. It was hoped that this would divert the workers from the class struggle. Lenin and the Bolsheviks, who were opposed in principle to the imperialist war, were therefore against any worker participation in the committees. They explained the position

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 379.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 403-04.

to the workers. Bolshevik propaganda had its effect: only an insignificant number of workers succumbed to Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary persuasion and took part in the elections.

Lenin was therefore fully justified in stating, in his article "Socialism and War" (1915), that the proletariat was the only class in Russia "that has not been infected with chauvinism". The Russian working class refused to conclude a "class peace" with the bourgeoisie, and did not follow the social-chauvinists. It supported the policy of the Bolshevik Party, which never wavered in its internationalist duty, steadfastly holding aloft the banner of internationalism.

The Bolsheviks were also active in the navy and the army. Their job was an extremely difficult one—courts-martial were functioning everywhere. The tsarist government retaliated to the strike movement by sending thousands of workers to the front. This was soon to become a regular practice. The objective was to suppress the revolutionary movement, but this had the reverse effect. Revolutionary, Bolshevik ideas penetrated into the very midst of the army. The ruling classes were thus objectively helping to convert the army from a weapon of the tsar into a weapon of the people against the tsar.

In the autumn of 1915, the St. Petersburg Bolshevik Committee established close contact with the Central Collective of the Kronstadt Military Organisation, the co-ordinating centre of Bolshevik groups on ships of the Baltic Fleet. Bolshevik committees in Petrograd, Moscow, Riga, Kiev, Kharkov and other major cities issued illegal leaflets calling on the soldiers and sailors to join with the working class against tsarism and to fraternise with enemy soldiers at the front.

The landowner-bourgeois press and military authorities tried to drive a wedge between the army and the working class by putting all the blame for the reverses at the front on the striking workers. The Bolsheviks exposed this provocation.

Lenin attached the greatest importance to Bolshevik work among the troops. The army, he said, had absorbed the flower of the popular forces; in it were concentrated millions of peasants, most of them poor peasants, and a large section of the workers. By their persevering work in the tsarist army, the Bolsheviks were forging a fighting alliance of the working class and the peasantry and preparing the masses for the second revolution.

The Bolsheviks proved to be ready for the struggle against the war and the overthrow of the imperialist government in their own country, because they had built up an efficient organisation capable of leading the masses against the imperialist war and imperialism. Lenin noted with a feeling of pride the enormous illegal work carried out by the St. Petersburg Committee during the war. "To Russia, and indeed to the entire International, this is indeed a model of Social-Democratic work during a reactionary war and in most difficult conditions."*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 401.

Lenin musters the internationalist forces. Headed by Lenin, the Bolshevik Party was the organised, leading force able to bring to light and expose all the manoeuvres of the social-chauvinists, Centrists and other opportunist parties of the bankrupt Second International. It was the only party that could initiate the mustering of all Left socialist groups in the working-class movement under the banner of revolutionary Marxism and undertake to organise a new proletarian International that would be free of opportunism. From the very outset of the war Lenin worked with his usual energy and perseverance to create a solid nucleus of the new, truly militant, revolutionary organisation of the world proletariat.

His militant appeals to combat the imperialist war and break with the social-traitors did not, at first, meet with wide support in the international working-class movement. But that did not discourage him in any way. He embarked upon a relentless struggle against the opportunists, the supporters of Kautsky in particular. "The opportunists are an open evil," he wrote in October 1914. "The German 'Centre' headed by Kautsky is a concealed evil, diplomatically coloured over, contaminating the eyes, the mind and the conscience of the workers, and more dangerous than anything else. Our task now is the unconditional and open struggle against international opportunism and those who screen it (Kautsky). And this is what we shall do in the Central Organ. . . . This is an international task. It devolves on us, there is no one else. We must not retreat from it."*

Lenin saw the danger of Kautskyism chiefly in the fact that while justifying the "middle", Centrist and, essentially, opportunist line of the socialist parties, it styled itself before the working class as the "Marxist centre" in the International. Kautsky screened his defencist stand with regard to the imperialist war with internationalist slogans and references to Marx, even though they concerned a different epoch and wars of a different nature.

"Kautskyism," Lenin wrote, "is not fortuitous; it is the social product of the contradictions within the Second International, a blend of loyalty to Marxism in word, and subordination to opportunism in deed."**

Kautsky's Centrist stand was supported by L. Trotsky, Y. Martov, N. Chkheidze and others in Russia, Henriette Roland-Holst in the Netherlands, R. Grimm in Switzerland, J. Longuet and A. Pressemanne in France, T. Barboni in Italy, Kh. Rakovski in Rumania, and so on.

In the socialist parties, side by side with the social-chauvinist and Centrist trends, there was a third trend represented by Left, internationalist elements. With unflagging attention Lenin kept an eye on the stand of each Left group, on the activities of each genuinely Left socialist leader. He corresponded with many of them, helping them with advice, patiently and in a comradely way pointing out their errors in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 162.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 312.

a number of issues, explaining why and how opportunism had to be combated and drawing them closer to him.

An abridged text of the Central Committee Manifesto on the War was published in the Swiss *La Sentinelle* in November. Lenin at once sent this important document to the International Socialist Bureau and to French, German, British and Swedish Social-Democratic newspapers.

He welcomed the stand of the Italian Socialist Party, which in the early period of the war did not succumb to chauvinism, condemned the treacherous conduct of the German Social-Democrats and expelled a group of social-chauvinists and renegades (Mussolini and others). This stand was supported by the overwhelming majority of the Italian working class. In Switzerland, where Lenin took an active part in the socialist movement, a Left socialist nucleus was gradually being formed.

A conference of Italian and Swiss socialists met in Lugano, Switzerland, on September 27, 1914, and at Lenin's request discussed his theses on the war. A number of the principles contained in these theses were incorporated in the conference resolution. The Lugano decisions, though not consistently internationalist and revolutionary, nonetheless represented a first step towards a revival of international proletarian contacts.

The imperialist war was opposed also by the revolutionary socialists of Bulgaria, the *Tesnyaks*, led by Dimitr Blagoyev, and by the Serbian Social-Democrats. When Lenin learned that the latter had voted against war credits, he publicly declared that they had discharged their proletarian internationalist duty. He soon established direct contact with the Bulgarian and Serbian revolutionary Social-Democrats and helped them follow a consistent internationalist line.

He was in regular correspondence with D. Wijnkoop, Anton Pannekoek and other Left-wing socialists in Holland grouped around the newspaper *De Tribune*. He also established contact, through Alexandra Kollontai and A. Shlyapnikov, with leaders of the Left-wing socialists in Norway and Sweden. In the war years the Swedish Left-wing socialists were a fairly strong body—they published three daily newspapers and had thirteen members in Parliament.

Lenin was especially gratified at the news that Eugene V. Debs, leader of the American socialist Left wing, had come out in active opposition to the imperialist war. The U.S. Government sentenced this outstanding labour leader to ten years' imprisonment for his anti-war activities.

Lenin closely followed the rise and development of the Left opposition in the German Social-Democratic Party. He enthusiastically welcomed the news that the revolutionary socialists in Germany—the International group, the forerunner of the Spartacus League, headed by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin, Franz Mehring, J. Marhlewski, Leo Jogiches (Tyszka) and Wilhelm Pieck—had taken a firm stand against the war. Liebknecht, Lenin said, had set an example to all internationalists by voting in the Reichstag against war credits.

Lenin was fully aware that the Left forces in the West were still extremely weak and that their campaign against chauvinism and for internationalism was still feeble, disunited and not always sustained. But he was not discouraged. "No matter that we are few, we will be followed by millions," he said to his associates. He had unswerving faith in the inevitable victory of proletarian internationalism throughout the world labour movement.

A conference of socialists of the Allied countries (Britain, France, Belgium, Russia) met in London on February 14, 1915. The Bolsheviks were not invited, but Lenin drew up a draft statement of the Bolshevik Central Committee and M. Litvinov was instructed to read it at the conference. The statement demanded that socialists resign from the bourgeois governments of Belgium and France, that socialists in the Allied countries abandon the "civil peace" slogan, refuse to vote for war credits and refuse to support Russian tsarism. The conference chairman prevented Litvinov from reading the statement to the end. Litvinov handed it to the chairman and walked out of the conference in protest, declaring that the Bolsheviks would have no part in this social-chauvinist forum.

Two international conferences were held in Berne in 1915. These were an International Women's Conference (end of March) and an International Socialist Youth Conference (beginning of April). At both these conferences the Bolsheviks submitted draft resolutions; the one for the Women's Conference was framed by Lenin, and the other, for the Youth Conference, was drawn up under his direction. Neither of the resolutions was adopted but they played a definite part in bringing Bolshevik policy to the knowledge of the many young people and women who were anxious to find a correct way out of the imperialist war.

The appeal of the Women's Conference called on working women to extend a hand of friendship to each other across the battle fronts, across the mountains of corpses and the oceans of blood and tears. The toil-hardened hands of the workers and peasants, the appeal said, must be joined in an unbreakable bond of international solidarity. The appeal was widely circulated in many countries.

The Youth Conference elected an International Socialist Youth Bureau, which started publication of a magazine, *Jugend-Internationale*. Lenin gave this Bureau and its magazine all the assistance he could, contributing several articles to the magazine.

The discussions in the press, at meetings and at Lenin's own lectures, his correspondence and talks with Left-wing socialists of various countries, and the debates at the Women's and Socialist Youth conferences, made it plain to Lenin that in the West the Left forces were still strongly influenced by the Centrists on basic issues of war, peace, revolution and socialism. He knew that unity of the Left on a platform of revolutionary Marxist theory and tactics could be achieved only by carrying on a resolute struggle against Kautsky's falsification of Marxism and by painstaking explanatory work.

Kautsky and the other Second International revisionists contended that the new developments in capitalism made the basic propositions of Marx's *Capital* "obsolete". It was, therefore, essential not only to safeguard revolutionary Marxism against renewed revisionist distortions, but to develop it further by analysing the new features of social development and the new experience of the proletarian class struggle. Lenin wrote:

"The world's greatest movement for liberation of the oppressed class, the most revolutionary class in history, is impossible without a revolutionary theory. That theory cannot be thought up. It *grows out* of the sum-total of the revolutionary experience and the revolutionary thinking of all countries in the world. Such a theory *has developed* since the second half of the nineteenth century. It is known as Marxism. One cannot be a socialist, a revolutionary Social-Democrat, without participating, in the measure of one's powers, in developing and applying that theory, and without waging a ruthless struggle today against the mutilation of this theory by Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co."*

"Philosophical Notebooks". During the First World War Lenin elaborated and further developed every facet of revolutionary Marxism–the theory of socialist revolution, Marxist economics and Marxist philosophy–in their indissoluble unity. He made an exhaustive study of materialist dialectics which, he said, is the living soul, "the theoretical foundation" of Marxism, the algebra of proletarian revolution. Only by taking materialist dialectics as a starting-point is it possible to make a profound Marxist analysis of the principal features and contradictions of imperialism, reveal the predatory nature of the First World War, provide theoretical substantiation for proletarian strategy and tactics, and expose the opportunism and social-chauvinism of the Second International leaders as well as dogmatism and sectarianism in the revolutionary socialist movement.

The task was not only to safeguard the purity of Marxist dialectics and expose revisionist attempts to replace it by vulgar evolutionism, sophistry and eclectics. It was also necessary to advance the science of materialist dialectics, in the light of the new conditions of history and the new experience of the liberation movement, as an effective instrument of understanding the world and remaking it by revolution.

The years 1914 and 1915 were devoted to re-reading Hegel, Aristotle, Feuerbach and other philosophers, and also works on natural science. Lenin's copious notes and comments, unfinished essays and other materials were subsequently published under the title *Philosophical Notebooks.*

Lenin evidently intended to use them for a book on materialist dialectics, but, unfortunately, was unable to carry the work to completion. But even uncompleted, the *Philosophical Notebooks* are an organic continuation of his chief philosophical work, *Materialism and Empirio-*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 354.

Criticism, and constitute a new step in the creative development of Marxist philosophy. For in the *Notebooks* Lenin dealt with a wide range of philosophical problems, with special accent on Marxist dialectics.

He comprehensively showed, for the first time in the history of science, the diversity of features, aspects, elements and categories of dialectics as the most profound theory of development. Schematicism and dogmatism, Lenin said, is alien to dialectics. And while dialectics expresses the most general laws of every process of development, it requires a concrete analysis of reality and the multitude of forms in which reality is revealed to us.

For the first time in the history of Marxism, Lenin formulated and substantiated, in the *Philosophical Notebooks*, the key proposition that the very essence, the kernel, of dialectics is the study of the unity of opposites. "In brief, dialectics can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites. This embodies the essence of dialectics. . . ."* Lenin enriched and concretised Marxist dialectics by his analysis and interpretive integration of the new types and kinds of contradictions in the imperialist era, of the new ways in which opposites are transformed into one another, of the transition, the growing over, of one phenomenon into another.

The struggle of opposites, the rise and settlement of contradictions, Lenin pointed out, are the source of uninterrupted development in the material world, the conditions necessary for its progress. He denounced the attempts of the opportunist Second International leaders to "purge" reality of contradictions and struggle. The central axis of dialectics is constant development through struggle of antithetical forces and tendencies, through struggle between the old and the new. Hence, Lenin emphasised, the basic conclusion to be drawn from dialectics is that the new, the growing, the progressive, is invincible, that its victory over the old, obsolescent and reactionary is inevitable. The old is negated by the new, but this should be understood from the standpoint of materialist dialectics, which precludes bald negation as leading to an interruption in development, to a break in the connection between the old and the new.

Marxist dialectics regards "negation as a moment of connection, as a moment of development, retaining the positive".** Without this there can be no progress either in nature or society.

Lenin's analysis of all the laws and categories of materialist dialectics as a philosophical science is remarkable for its profundity, militant materialist spirit, close link with reality and organic connection with the policy of the proletarian party. His masterly application of the Marxist dialectical method in analysing the new era in history became the basis of his new discoveries, which gave the proletariat a clear, flexible, comprehensive, and far-seeing theory and tactics on the questions of revolutionary transformations of society.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 223.
** *Ibid.*, p. 226.

Against social-chauvinism. In 1915, Lenin wrote a number of important articles: "The Collapse of the Second International", "Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International", "Socialism and War", "The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War", "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe". In 1916, he wrote his classic *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, his splendid articles "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution", "The 'Disarmament' Slogan", and his programmatic studies of the national question. A bare listing of these works illustrates the tremendous scale of Lenin's activities. They cover a wide range of problems and comprehensively and profoundly expound Bolshevik policy as opposed to the opportunist stand of the Second International.

Lenin disclosed the roots of the disgraceful conduct of most of the European Social-Democratic leaders. He showed that the collapse of the Second International was the collapse of opportunism, which had risen and grown in the period of capitalism's so-called "peaceful" development, and, in the years preceding the war, became the dominant trend in the International. The ideas underlying social-chauvinism, opportunism and opportunist policy were renunciation of the class struggle and proletarian dictatorship, of socialist revolution in favour of bourgeois reformism and class collaboration in capitalist society, the preachment of bourgeois nationalism, blind faith in the bourgeois parliamentary system and legality, and refusal to support the revolutionary actions of the proletariat against its "own" bourgeoisie.

Their economic basis was that the imperialist bourgeoisie bribed "labour leaders", threw sops to the labour aristocracy and created a privileged position for part of the workers with the purpose of diverting them from the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. "An entire social stratum, consisting of parliamentarians, journalists, labour officials, privileged office personnel, and certain strata of the proletariat, has sprung up and has become *amalgamated* with its own national bourgeoisie, which has proved fully capable of appreciating and 'adapting' it."* This stratum of workers grafted with its bourgeoisie, this "labour aristocracy", constituted the chief support of the Second International.

Lenin also revealed that the bourgeoisie was able to buy over part of the workers because of its high monopoly profits derived from the exploitation and rapine of colonial and other nations. In his "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", he wrote: "A handful of wealthy countries–there are only four of them, if we mean independent, really gigantic, 'modern' wealth: England, France, the United States and Germany–have developed monopoly to vast proportions, they obtain *super*profits running into hundreds, if not thousands, of millions, they 'ride on the backs' of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 250.

other countries. . . ."* The organisation, at the expense of these superprofits, of "bourgeois labour parties" was an inevitable and typical feature of all imperialist countries. And these parties "are working hand in glove with the imperialist bourgeoisie *precisely* towards creating an imperialist Europe on the backs of Asia and Africa. . . ."**

Reading these lines now, nearly half a century after they were written, millions of people throughout the world ask themselves: are not the reactionary Right-wing socialist leaders doing the same thing today? Are they not trying to help the imperialist bourgeoisie halt the rapid process of the collapse of colonialism and suppress the national liberation movement? But all such attempts are in vain, for there is no stemming the tide of history; the historical process is irreversible.

Lenin conclusively proved that during the imperialist war the opportunists and chauvinists owed their greater strength to their alliance with the bourgeoisie, the governments and general staff. Before the war that alliance had been secret; now there was no secret.

Kautsky tried to justify his betrayal of socialism by pleading that revolutionary tactics would have unpleasant "practical consequences"– the government would smash legal labour organisations, confiscate their funds and arrest their leaders. In fact, a German Social-Democratic M.P. made the following cowardly statement at a workers' meeting in Berlin: "All of us would have been arrested if we had not voted for war credits on August 4." There were shouts from the audience: "Well, and what if you had?" Lenin approved of this reaction of the Berlin workers, adding that in the absence of any other event that would fire the revolutionary sentiment of the working masses and stir them to revolutionary action, the arrest of an M.P. for a courageous speech in parliament would have been a useful thing indeed.

The burden of exposing the treachery of the opportunists, their manoeuvring and their shameful deals with the bourgeoisie devolved on Lenin. This earned him the blind hatred of his political adversaries. In December 1916 he wrote to Inessa Armand:

"Such is my fate. One battle after another against political stupidity, vulgarity, opportunism, etc.

"It has been going on since 1893. And so has the hatred of the philistines on account of it. But still, I would not exchange this fate for 'peace' with the philistines."***

Lenin was never at odds with his crystal-clear conscience and consistent principles as a revolutionary and Communist.

He convincingly showed the need for an organisational as well as ideological break with the opportunists. "The *whole* struggle of our Party (and of the working-class movement in Europe generally)," he wrote, "must be directed against opportunism. The latter is not a current

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 115.
** *Ibid.*, p. 110.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 259.

of opinion, not a tendency; it (opportunism) has now become the organised tool of the bourgeoisie within the working-class movement."* He said that any struggle against imperialism that was not linked up with the struggle against opportunism was merely an empty sound or deceit. He urged the Lefts in Germany and other countries to defy the opportunist leaders and build a new type of fighting organisation, genuinely revolutionary working-class parties.

He wrote that the Bolsheviks, the Russian internationalists, were not making any claim to interfere in the internal affairs of their Left comrades. "We understand," he pointed out, "that they alone are fully competent to determine their methods of combating the opportunists, according to the conditions of time and place. Only we consider it our right and our duty to express our frank opinion on the state of affairs."** Lenin and the Bolsheviks led by him based their relations with the Left groups in other countries on equality and on principles of proletarian internationalism.

Lenin on the nature of wars in the imperialist era. The opportunist Social-Democratic leaders tried to dupe the workers by giving a "Marxist" slant to government and bourgeois press propaganda about the war being fought in defence of freedom and national existence. In every belligerent country the social-chauvinists tried to prove that their particular country and its allies were waging a just war. The Centrists headed by Kautsky maintained that the socialists of all the belligerent powers had an equal right to "defend the fatherland". Lenin denounced this as a most infamous defence of imperialism, as a shameful attempt to justify the "right" of workers to kill each other "in defence of the fatherland", in defence of imperialist war profits.

Both the avowed social-chauvinists and the Kautskyites slandered the revolutionary internationalists and their country and tried to sow confusion, vacillation and disbelief in their ranks, and isolate them from the Bolsheviks. In the neutral and some other countries, the Lefts recognised that the war was an imperialist one and declared their loyalty to the proletarian class struggle, but did not appreciate the need to turn the imperialist war into a civil war. They were not clear about the question of the types of wars engendered by imperialism.

Lenin gave them timely assistance. In the pamphlet *Socialism and War* and in other works he made the question of war clear from the standpoint of genuine Marxism and further developed Marxist theory on wars and on the attitude of socialists to them.

Socialists, he wrote, have always condemned war between nations as brutal and barbarous. But inasmuch as wars account for centuries of human history, Marxists must carefully study and disclose the causes underlying them and devise ways and means by which the working class

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 197.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 326.

and the working people generally can effectively oppose imperialist wars.

In his research on the subject, Lenin proved that war is the continuation of politics by other means. Every war must be seen as the continuation of the peacetime policy of the state and its ruling classes.

In the imperialist era, Lenin taught, the two main types of war are:

1) Unjust, imperialist wars for the conquest and enslavement of other countries and peoples, the destruction of socialist states, and the suppression of socialist, democratic and national liberation movements. Wars of this type must be resolutely opposed by every possible means, up to and including revolution and the overthrow of one's own imperialist government;

2) Just wars waged to defend the people from foreign attack and from attempts to enslave them, or to liberate the working people from feudal and capitalist slavery and colonial and dependent countries from imperialist oppression, or to defend the socialist state against imperialist attack. The working people should give every possible support to wars of this type.

Some of the Left socialists in the West believed that in the imperialist era Marxists should, in general, be opposed to the defence of the fatherland. In justification of that position they cited the proposition proclaimed by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*: "The working men have no country." Lenin came out against this vulgar, non-historical approach to Marxism. He wrote:

"The whole spirit of Marxism, its whole system, demands that each proposition should be considered (α) only historically, (β) only in connection with others, (γ) only in connection with the concrete experience of history."*

This implies that the proletariat must define its attitude towards defence of the fatherland in context with the concrete historical situation. The first consideration should always be: which class calls for defence of the fatherland, and for what purpose? In a situation of a mounting national liberation movement and the need to uphold national independence, defence of the fatherland becomes the most vital task of the people, and the working class should be the first to rise in defence of the country's freedom and independence. History has proved that the working class is the genuinely patriotic class. Defence of the fatherland in a national liberation war, Lenin stressed, fully accords with the spirit of Marxism.

It is quite another matter, however, when in an imperialist war the bourgeoisie exploits the slogan of "defence of the fatherland" to deceive the masses and conceal its self-seeking and predatory interests. In this situation it is quite natural for the working class not only to reject the slogan, but to expose its imperialist nature, wage a struggle against the imperialist war, a struggle to liberate all working people from

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 250.

exploitation and oppression. That, Lenin declared, accords with the interests of the entire international proletariat.

National interests do not run counter to the international interests of the working class. On the contrary: only a correct understanding of its international tasks enables the working class to accomplish its national tasks. Emphasising the significance of this community of fundamental international tasks of the workers of all countries, Lenin wrote: "The international unity of the workers is *more important* than the national."* For only through firm, ever-expanding and ever-strengthening unity can the working class and the working people generally attain their cherished goal of peace and socialism.

In connection with the first imperialist war Lenin advanced a number of profound ideas on the prospects of excluding wars from the life of society. First and foremost, he emphasised that as a social system socialism strives to end wars and establish lasting peace on earth. "An end to wars, peace among the nations, the cessation of pillaging and violence–such is our ideal,"** he wrote in 1915. He pointed out that as distinct from bourgeois pacifists, Marxists understand the "inevitable connection between wars and the class struggle within the country"; they understand that "war cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished and socialism is created".

In providing theoretical grounds for the thesis that war is inevitable under imperialism, he based himself on the following facts. First, by its very nature imperialism is a source of war, and as long as imperialism exists the economic basis and the threat of war will remain. Second, during the First World War imperialism was the only social system with undivided sway in the world, and the question of war and peace was decided by the imperialist, financial-industrial oligarchy in secret from the peoples. In that period the working class and other peace-loving forces were disunited and weak and were unable to prevent imperialist predatory and other criminal wars.

Epoch-making events that have radically changed the balance of political, economic and military forces in the world in favour of the peace camp, have taken place since these major theoretical propositions were formulated by Lenin. Today, in addition to imperialism, there is the rapidly growing world socialist system.

The new world balance of power brought the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the confident, Leninist conclusion that world war can be averted.

The slogan of "disarmament" was relatively widespread among pacifist and socialist circles in Europe and the United States during the First World War. It was used by the social-pacifists to oppose the Bolshevik slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war. Under the circumstances, Lenin, naturally, could not support the slogan of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 247.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 293.

disarmament because it weakened the struggle of the working class against world imperialism.

In principle, he explained, socialism desired disarmament. "Disarmament is the ideal of socialism. There will be no wars in socialist society; consequently, disarmament will be achieved,"* he said. Peace, disarmament and socialism are interconnected and inseparable.

It was for the attainment of these great humanistic ideals that he worked to consolidate all the internationalist elements during the imperialist war, resolutely combated chauvinism and summoned the working class and the labouring masses to socialist revolution and the establishment of their own power.

The situation during the imperialist war, Lenin said, gave the working class the alternative: "... either we allow ourselves to be killed in the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, or we systematically prepare the majority of the exploited, and ourselves, for seizure–at the price of less sacrifice–of the banks and expropriation of the bourgeoisie in order to put an end to the high cost of living and war."**

Socialist revolution, he repeatedly explained, entails certain sacrifices, but they are a drop in the ocean compared with the oceans of blood mankind sheds in imperialist wars.

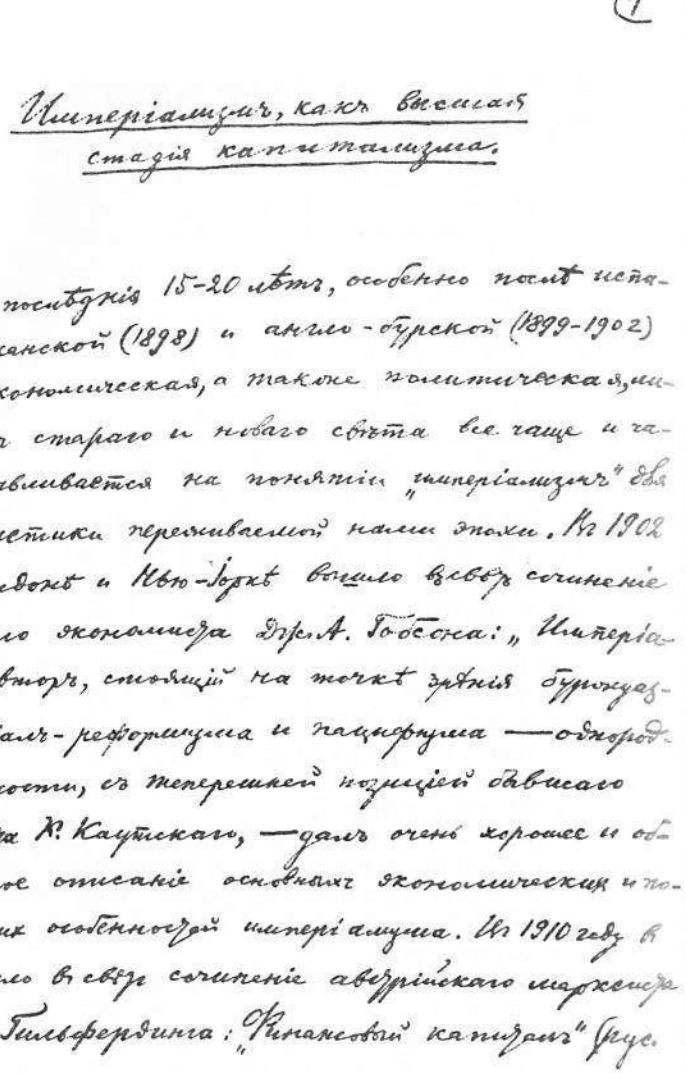
During the imperialist war, he pointed out, society took the latter path of development, the path of the socialist revolution. The correct slogan in the situation created by the imperialist war was not disarmament but the armed struggle of the working class and working people in general against imperialism, i.e., the slogan that the imperialist war should be turned into a civil war.

But Lenin foresaw that after the socialist revolution had triumphed in one or several countries, the victorious proletariat would have to raise the question of world disarmament. Indeed, when Soviet power was established he considered it necessary to put forward and implement a programme of disarmament.

"Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism". Early in 1916, Lenin began working on a book about imperialism for Parus, a newly established legal publishing house in Petrograd. An analysis of the economic and political essence of imperialism was required to enable the working class to further its revolutionary struggle. Without this analysis it was impossible to provide the revolutionary movement with correct leadership.

Lenin had noted the new phenomena in capitalist development in works written long before the war. In his first works, written during the war, particularly in the resolution "On the Nature of the War", which the Berne Conference of R.S.D.L.P. groups abroad (early in March 1915) adopted as its resolution, he gave a definition and political assessment of imperialism. In the summer of 1916, he completed his classical

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 95.
** *Ibid.*, p. 161.



Империализм, как высшая
стадия капитализма.

За последние 15-20 лет, особенно после испа-
но-американской (1898) и англо-бурской (1899-1902)
войны, экономическая, а также политическая, ми-
ровая литература старого и нового света все чаще и ча-
ще останавливается на понятии „империализм" для
характеристики переживаемой нами эпохи. В 1902
году в Лондоне и Нью-Йорке вышло в свет сочинение
английского экономиста Дж. А. Гобсона: „Империа-
лизм". Автор, стоящий на точке зрения буржуаз-
ного социал-реформизма и пацифизма — одного-
рой, в сущности, с теперешней позицией бывшего
марксиста К. Каутского, — дал очень хорошее и об-
стоятельное описание основных экономических и по-
литических особенностей империализма. В 1910 году в
Вене вышло в свет сочинение австрийского марксиста
Рудольфа Гильфердинга: „Финансовый капитал" (рус.

First page from Lenin's manuscript *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (*Reduced*)

Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, which is an outstanding contribution to the treasure-store of creative Marxism. In it he makes a comprehensive investigation of imperialism.

It is the result of immense scientific research, in the course of which Lenin made a thorough study of a vast quantity of factual data on the development of social relations in different countries in the epoch of imperialism. He utilised hundreds of books, articles, pamphlets and statistical handbooks published in different countries and in many languages on economics, technology, domestic and, in particular,

foreign policy, the labour movement, and the colonial and many other problems. His notes for the book, subsequently published under the title *Notebooks on Imperialism*, form a volume of nearly 50 quires. In *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* we again see Lenin as a brilliant scholar, a scrupulous researcher and great revolutionary.

In it he traces the development of world capitalism over the course of half a century after the publication of Marx's *Capital*. Basing himself on the laws of the emergence, development and decline of capitalism, discovered by Marx and Engels, he was the first to give a profound scientific analysis of the economic and political substance of imperialism as a *special, the highest*, and, at the same time, *last stage of capitalism*, showing that under imperialism all the contradictions of capitalist society inevitably become aggravated. He characterises imperialism as monopoly imperialism and, at the same time, as parasitical, decaying and dying capitalism, disclosing the conditions that will bring on its end and demonstrating that capitalism will inevitably and necessarily be superseded by socialism.

Lenin gives the following classical, scientifically and theoretically precise and profound definition of the substance of imperialism: "Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed."*

His proposition that at this stage there is a swing to reaction all along the line is of immense importance for a characterisation of the new imperialist epoch. Monopoly capital establishes its dictatorship over society, suppressing not only the working class but also the democratic liberation movement and abolishing the already curtailed bourgeois-democratic rights and freedoms. In particular, national oppression heightens and the monopolies show an increasing desire for annexations, i.e., for transgressions against the national independence and sovereignty of peoples.

Monopoly rule, Lenin explained, signifies a sharp intensification of the exploitation of the working class and an exacerbation of the contradictions between labour and capital, of the contradictions leading to the proletarian revolution. It worsens the condition of the working class and leads to the ruin of the bulk of the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie, to increased dissatisfaction among them. This creates the objective conditions for cementing the alliance between the working class and the labouring peasants. That alliance is the principal force in the struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Furthermore, subjection of all the nations to a handful of "Great Powers", the sharp intensification of colonial oppression, the brutal

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 266-67.

exploitation of the hundreds of millions in the colonial and dependent countries must inevitably result in the growth of the national liberation movement and make for a united front of struggle of the proletariat of the capitalist countries and the colonial and dependent peoples against imperialism. Lenin's scientific analysis of the contradictions of capitalism at its last stage brought him round to the conclusion that *imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution.* The revolutionary transition to socialism had now become a vital necessity.

Lenin showed that during the war imperialism had taken a new step towards greater concentration of finance capital, towards the *growing-over of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly capitalism.* This increased still more the material prerequisites for a revolutionary transition to socialism. The gigantic expansion of the productive forces and socialisation of production under monopoly capitalism had come into irreconcilable contradiction with the capitalist relations of production. These relations, Lenin noted, constituted "a shell which no longer fits its contents, a shell which must inevitably decay if its removal is artificially delayed, a shell which may remain in a state of decay for a fairly long period (if, at the worst, the cure of the opportunist abscess is protracted), but which will inevitably be removed."*

Imperialism, Lenin showed, was able to hold on chiefly because of the support of the opportunists and the split in the working class engineered by them. At the same time, he pointed out, the tendency under imperialism was towards a sharper mass struggle against oppression by monopoly capitalism.

In "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism" (1916), he wrote: "On the one hand, there is the tendency of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists to convert a handful of very rich and privileged nations into 'eternal' parasites on the body of the rest of mankind, to 'rest on the laurels' of the exploitation of Negroes, Indians, etc., keeping them in subjection with the aid of the excellent weapons of extermination provided by modern militarism. On the other hand, there is the tendency of the *masses,* who are more oppressed than before and who bear the whole brunt of imperialist wars, to cast off this yoke and to overthrow the bourgeoisie. It is in the struggle between these two tendencies that the history of the labour movement will now inevitably develop."**

This law of social development in the era of imperialism, discovered by Lenin, has been fully confirmed by history.

In his work Lenin showed the utter scientific groundlessness and exposed the reformist substance of Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism" theory, which endeavours to whitewash capitalism. He refuted Kautsky's thesis that the creation of international monopoly alliances weakens the contradictions within the world capitalist system and eliminates crises and wars. Ridiculing this tale of Kautsky's, he noted: "Are not the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 22, p. 303.
** *Ibid.,* Vol. 23, p. 116.

international cartels which Kautsky imagines are the embryos of 'ultra-imperialism' ... an example of the division *and the re-division* of the world, the transition from peaceful division to non-peaceful division and vice versa?"*

He foresaw the possibility that monopoly capital would unite on a world scale not only in the form of international monopolies but also in the *form of agreements between entire states.* "In this sense," he wrote, "a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists ... but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty."**

Are not the present imperialist plans of "integrating" capitalist economy, of setting up blocs of the "Common Market" type spearheaded against the world socialist system and the international working-class movement, against the less developed countries, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America? At the same time, facts prove that class solidarity of the monopolist bourgeoisie with regard to the forces of socialism and democracy cannot, as Lenin foresaw it, remove the basic, the most deeply-rooted inter-imperialist contradictions. To remove these contradictions there must be a transition to socialism on a world scale.

In the Party Programme drawn up in the period of the Second R.S.D.L.P. Congress, Lenin had formulated a damning indictment of Russian capitalism. During the First World War he formulated, with supreme scientific precision and revolutionary passion, an indictment of world imperialism, which was dragging mankind into the abyss of new devastating wars and economic disaster.

"Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" represents a new, Leninist stage of the development of Marxian economic theory.

Lenin's brilliant analysis of the fundamental laws of capitalism at its last stage has been confirmed by the reality of modern capitalism, which is characterised vividly and profoundly in the new Party Programme adopted at the Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* is a sharp militant weapon in the struggle against the latest bourgeois and social-reformist "theories" of "people's capitalism", against the attempts to give state-monopoly capitalism out for socialism.

The theory of socialist revolution. On the basis of his own study of imperialism Lenin further developed the Marxist *theory of socialist revolution,* its content, its motive forces and conditions and forms of development, in the new epoch. He proved that the war had accelerated the growth of the requisites for revolution and that as a whole the world capitalist system had matured for the transition to socialism.

In *Grundsätze des Kommunismus* (*Principles of Communism*) (1847), Engels had replied in the negative to the question of whether it was possible to accomplish a socialist revolution in one country. Proceeding

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 22, p. 273.
** *Ibid.,* Vol. 21, p. 341.

from the fact that the world market and large-scale industry had levelled "social development in all civilised countries", Engels drew a conclusion that Marx also agreed with, namely, that "...the communist revolution ... will take place simultaneously in all civilised countries, i.e., at least, in England, the United States, France and Germany". Later Marx and Engels analysed the objective and subjective prerequisites of the proletarian revolution in different capitalist countries, and the maturity of the capitalist system as a whole for the transition to socialism, and concretised and specified their views on the prospects and course of the socialist revolution. However, living as they did in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism, they neither raised nor could raise the question of the possibility of socialism being triumphant in one country.

One of Lenin's greatest services was that in creatively developing the teachings of Marx and Engels in the new historical conditions, in the epoch of imperialism, he came to the key conclusion that socialism can be victorious first in one country that does not necessarily have to be at a high level of economic development. He drew this conclusion on the basis of the law, discovered by him, of the uneven economic and political development of capitalism in the imperialist era; this development inevitably leads to the uneven maturing of the socialist revolution in different countries. Lenin first formulated this conclusion in August 1915 in the article "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe".

"Uneven economic and political development," he wrote in this article, "is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone."*

In September 1916, in the article "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution", he amplified his views on the prospects for socialist revolution in the imperialist era and on the conditions for its victory.

"The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in different countries. It cannot be otherwise under commodity production. From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously *in all* countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois."**

Lenin's theory that socialism can be victorious first in one country is a model of creative development of revolutionary Marxism and was the greatest discovery of Marxist science.

He demonstrated the unsoundness of the stand of those who continued to cling to the old formulation of this issue by the founders of scientific Marxism. He exposed the anti-Marxist substance of Trotsky's slogan of a socialist "United States of Europe" and criticised Pyatakov, who defined the socialist revolution as the "united action of the proletarians of *all* countries".

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 342.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 79.

Lenin's theory that socialism can be victorious in one country gave the working class a clear perspective in its struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism. It provided the working class and the Marxist party of each country with the possibility of showing initiative in overthrowing the bourgeoisie of their country by revolution.

In the years of the imperialist war Lenin continued to develop his *theory of the revolutionary situation*, which was to be of immense significance for the practical activities of the Marxist parties. Popular revolutions do not take place at the whim of one or another party. The masses rise to struggle under the influence of factors deeply rooted in their objective conditions of life. Capitalism itself creates the conditions that make mass revolutionary action inevitable; capitalist development impels the masses to struggle. Lenin showed that revolution cannot be "made to order", that it grows out of objectively maturing crises. And these crises he called revolutionary situations.

"To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: 1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the 'upper classes', a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for 'the lower classes not to want' to live in the old way; it is also necessary that 'the upper classes should be unable' to live in the old way; 2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; 3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in 'peacetime', but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis *and by the 'upper classes' themselves* into independent historical action.

"Without these objective changes, which are independent of the will, not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes, a revolution, as a general rule, is impossible. The totality of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation."*

But, Lenin further emphasised, for a revolutionary situation to turn into a revolution these objective factors must be accompanied by a subjective factor: the ability and readiness of the revolutionary class to carry out revolutionary mass actions strong enough to overthrow the old government and establish their own. Only concrete historical conditions in a given country could produce this coincidence of objective and subjective prerequisites, Lenin believed. There was no such thing as introducing revolution from "without".

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 214.

The fundamental duty of Marxists in the imperialist war, in Lenin's view, was to reveal to the masses the existence of a revolutionary situation, awaken the class consciousness and militant determination of the proletariat, help it pass to revolutionary actions and create the organisations needed for that. It was the duty of the Marxist party to do its utmost to facilitate the development of the revolutionary movements that had already begun on the basis of a revolutionary situation, and to strengthen the alliance of the working class, as the leading force of the revolution, with the broadest sections of the working people, primarily with the peasants. Lenin held that leadership of the working-class revolutionary struggle by its Marxist party, was the *decisive* condition for the victory of the socialist revolution.

Lenin always regarded socialist revolution in any country as a component of the world socialist revolution. He therefore held that it was the sacred duty of all Marxist parties and groups to strengthen the unity and solidarity of the world revolutionary socialist movement and to be guided always and everywhere by the great principle of proletarian internationalism.

Such are the cardinal tenets of Lenin's theory of socialist revolution. On the basis of this theory and tactics the Bolsheviks developed their work in Russia and rallied the Left forces in the West.

Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences. Early in June 1915, Lenin and Krupskaya moved from Berne to Sörenberg, a remote mountain village, where they spent the summer in the inexpensive Marienthal Hotel. Here, too, Lenin did not interrupt his theoretical studies and organisational work. The table and window-sills of his room were stacked with books from the Berne and Zurich libraries. In Sörenberg he wrote "The Collapse of the Second International", "Socialism and War" mentioned above, and a number of other articles. Nadezhda Konstantinovna recalled that they used to get up very early and spend the morning in the garden, each working in his own particular nook. Dinner was at twelve, as everywhere else in Switzerland, and after that they would sometimes take a walk in the mountains with Inessa Armand. They would come back with baskets filled with alpine roses, berries and mushrooms.

Lenin intensively prepared for the conference of socialist internationalists, now clearly necessitated by the growth of the international labour movement. The impact of the war–the millions killed on the battle-fields, the dislocation of industry, etc.–was making itself increasingly felt in the summer of 1915. The fraternisation at the firing lines, and the strikes and demonstrations in a number of countries were indications that the masses had started a revolutionary struggle. In several countries the Left socialists were displaying more boldness and energy. The need, an urgent one, was to unite the Left internationalist forces around revolutionary tactics. Lenin, through his extensive correspondence with Left socialists, worked to bring about closer cohesion and unity of policy. He suggested drafting a joint declaration prior to the conference.

The First International Socialist Conference was held on August 23-26 (September 5-8), 1915, in the Swiss village of Zimmerwald and was attended by thirty-eight delegates from eleven countries. Lenin arrived in Zimmerwald two days before the conference was due to open and had a meeting with the Russian and Polish delegates. Then, on August 22 (September 4), he met in private with all the Left delegates and read a report on the nature of the world war and on the tactics of revolutionary internationalists. He was very active at the conference, taking the floor several times, corresponding with delegates during the sittings and talking with them during the recesses, showing them that it was necessary to wage a determined struggle against social-chauvinism. At the conference itself he organised the Zimmerwald Left, composed of eight delegates. There was a sharp ideological struggle between this close-knit group of internationalists, revolutionary Marxists headed by Lenin, and the Kautskyites and pro-Kautsky delegates, who made up the Right wing. Their spokesman was Georg Ledebour, the German Social-Democrat.

One of the first to speak in the general debate was Vasil Kolarov, representative of the *Tesnyaks*, the Bulgarian socialists. He described their experience during the Balkan war, dealing in detail with cases of mutiny in the army. Lenin followed his speech with keen attention, seeing in the Bulgarian experience added confirmation that the Bolshevik proposals on work in the army were fully realisable.

The Left submitted a draft resolution on the war and the tasks of the Social-Democrats, and also a draft Manifesto. Both were rejected by the conference majority, but on the insistence of Lenin and other Left delegates, a number of basic propositions of revolutionary Marxism were incorporated in the Manifesto.

It concluded with these stirring words:

"Never before in world history has there been such a noble and pressing task, the accomplishment of which must be our common cause. No sacrifices are too great, no burden too heavy for the achievement of our goal–peace among the nations.

"Working men and working women! Mothers and fathers! Widows and orphans! Wounded and maimed! To all of you who suffer from the war and through the war; to all of you, across frontiers, across smoke-filled battle-fields, across destroyed towns and villages, we address this appeal–

Workers of All Countries, Unite!"

However, the Manifesto was inconsistent, and left much unsaid. It did not include the proposition that imperialism was the eve of socialist revolution, did not explain the causes of the Second International's collapse, the need to break with opportunism, etc.

Even so Lenin considered it right to sign the Manifesto. He was guided by the important tactical principle of revolutionary Marxism–

the principle of avoiding sectarianism. He wrote: "It would be sectarianism to refuse to take this step forward *together* with the minority of German, French, Swedish, Norwegian, and Swiss socialists, when we retain full freedom and full opportunity to criticise inconsistency and to work for greater things. It would be poor war tactics to refuse to adhere to the mounting international protest movement against social-chauvinism just because this movement is slow, because it takes 'only' a single step forward. . . ."*

Lenin called the Zimmerwald Conference the first step in developing an international movement against the war. The Left group organised its bureau. But in this group, too, the correct and fully consistent position on the question of war, peace and revolution was held only by the Bolshevik Party, with Lenin at its head.

The conference lasted four days. The delegates carried back with them to their respective countries its Manifesto, the statements of the Zimmerwald Left drawn up by Lenin or with his participation and his pamphlet *Socialism and War*, supplemented by the Manifesto of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee on the War, the Berne Bolshevik conference resolutions and the Poronin resolution on the national question. Lenin's writings exerted a powerful influence on the further growth of the Left socialist movement in Europe and the United States.

Lenin felt the strain of the conference, at which he had to wage an uncompromising struggle against the Kautskyite forces. It took several days of complete rest and fresh mountain air before he could resume his work with his customary energy. Early in October 1915, he and Krupskaya returned to Berne from Sörenberg.

The building of closer contacts with Left socialist groups in other countries continued. In November 1915, Lenin received from the United States a leaflet put out by the Socialist Propaganda League. After having convinced himself that the leaflet had been issued by an internationalist organisation with a strongly Left-inclined programme, he sent the League a letter and the statements of the Zimmerwald Left. He warmly welcomed the League's appeal to Socialist Party members to work for a new International, for genuine revolutionary socialism and against opportunism, particularly its defencist variety.

But he considered it his duty to tell the American Lefts that the Bolsheviks could not agree with several points of their programme. For instance, the Socialist Propaganda League was opposed to the centralist principle of proletarian party organisation, alleging that it was incompatible with inner-party democracy. In our press, Lenin wrote, we always champion inner-party democracy, but, at the same time, we never oppose centralism in the party; we are for democratic centralism.

In February 1916, Lenin sent a letter to the French internationalists, pointing to their inconsistency in the struggle against opportunism, their reluctance to break with the opportunists. What we have now, Lenin said, are two mutually opposed working-class tactics and policies on

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 387.

the war, and they cannot be reconciled. At the same time, Lenin warned the French Lefts against the danger of anarcho-syndicalism and expressed the confidence that they would learn to conduct revolutionary work among the masses in the new conditions. "I have faith in the French revolutionary proletariat," he wrote. He asked the French comrades to put out a leaflet giving the full translation of his letter. This was done in 1916, and the leaflet played a big part in uniting the French Left.

Lenin sent similar letters to the Left socialists in Norway, Sweden, Holland, Britain and other European countries. This comradely criticism of their position on fundamental programmatic, tactical and organisational issues was of valuable assistance to the internationalist groups in the war period and did much to forge their ideological and political unity on the basis of revolutionary Marxism and proletarian internationalism.

In January 1916, Lenin took an active part in organising the German-language magazine *Vorbote* (*Herald*), the organ of the Zimmerwald Left. It published his "Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International", and the theses "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination".

On February 10 or 11, the family moved from Berne to Zurich, where they rented a room at 14 II Spiegelglasse in an old neighbourhood near the centre of the city. The flat belonged to a shoemaker named Kammerer. The room was anything but convenient. There was always an unpleasant smell from the sausage factory in the yard, so that the window could be opened only late in the evening. A much better room could have been rented for the same money, but Lenin and Krupskaya liked the Kammerers and the fact that the flat was an "international community": two of the rooms were occupied by the shoemaker and his family, one by the wife and children of a German soldier, another by an Italian, a third by Austrian actors, and the fourth by Lenin and Krupskaya. One day, when the women were gathered around the kitchen range, Mrs. Kammerer exclaimed: "The soldiers should turn their guns against their own governments!" After that Lenin would not hear of moving. He lived in the house until his departure for Petrograd in April 1917. By decision of the Zurich Municipality there is a plaque under the window of his room with this inscription: "*Lenin*, the leader of the Russian Revolution, lived here from February 21, 1916, to April 2, 1917."

In Zurich, Lenin worked energetically to prepare for the second International Socialist Conference. It met in the Swiss village of Kienthal in April 1916 and was attended by forty-three delegates from ten countries. This time the Zimmerwald Lefts numbered twelve, and acted as a more closely-knit group, on several issues mustering as many as nineteen votes.

The changed international situation since the first, Zimmerwald Conference, and the mounting mass discontent against the war found

reflection at Kienthal in the conduct of the delegates. Lenin was especially interested in the speeches of the German delegates, who emphatically declared there would be major revolutionary upheavals in Germany if the war dragged out into the autumn.

There was a heated debate on the Bolshevik Central Committee proposals, notably on the attitude to be adopted towards the International Socialist Bureau. Lenin convincingly argued that the I.S.B. had become a tool of the Anglo-French social-chauvinists and that internationalists should not adhere to it. The important thing was to look forward, not backward: there had to be a split with the Second International, it was inevitable, in fact it had already taken place in a number of countries. That was the only way to save the honour of proletarian socialism and revolutionary internationalism. The Zimmerwald Left supported Lenin's proposals.

Its campaign, directed by Lenin, forced the Right wing to vote for a compromise resolution sharply criticising the I.S.B., demanding the resignation of its Executive Committee and expulsion from the party of socialists who had joined bourgeois governments. The resolution, however, did not call for an immediate break with the I.S.B. and the founding of a new International. On the contrary, it even permitted national Zimmerwald affiliates to demand the convocation of the I.S.B.

The second important issue at Kienthal was proletarian tactics on the question of peace. The discussion centred around the Bolshevik Central Committee proposals which directly linked the problem of a democratic peace with that of the socialist revolution. The Bolshevik proposals were supported by Left delegates from other countries.

The conference adopted an appeal to "the peoples being ruined and killed by the war". It called on workers of town and country not to believe the imperialist governments and their press that "the war must be continued to end all wars".

"*Never,*" the appeal said, "*has war killed war.* On the contrary, it awakens a desire for revenge; violence breeds violence.

"Thus, after every sacrifice you make, your tormentors will demand more sacrifices. It is a vicious circle from which the bourgeois pacifists will never extricate you.

"There is only one way to prevent war: the conquest of political power by the working class and the abolition of capitalist property.

"A 'durable peace' can only be the result of a socialist victory."

The conference concluded late at night on April 30, and Lenin and the other delegates greeted the dawn of May Day 1916 in the Berne Alps.

Back in Zurich, Lenin immediately sent word to Russia that the Central Committee was preparing a detailed report on the Kienthal Conference for circulation among Bolshevik organisations in Russia and other countries. Meanwhile, Lenin wrote, "the adoption of the Manifesto is a step forward.... A resolution was adopted criticising pacifism, and another sharply criticising the International Socialist Bureau. On the

whole, despite a multitude of shortcomings, this *is* a step towards a break with the social-patriots."*

The Kienthal Conference did not adopt the Bolshevik slogans of converting the imperialist war into a civil war, defeat of one's "own" imperialist government, and the founding of a third International. But it did help to cement the internationalist forces on the ideological basis of Marxism-Leninism.

In his *Fils du peuple* (*Son of the People*), Maurice Thorez describes how he, then a farm-hand in the Creuse Department, learned of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences and the policy advocated by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. His landlord, an elderly, revolutionary-minded stonemason named Ménager, told him about Zimmerwald and Kienthal. "In 1915 and 1916, from these villages hidden in the Swiss mountains there came, through the acrid smoke of battle, the voices of a small army of genuine socialists led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks, who were true to the ideas of proletarian internationalism and revolution."**

Antonio Gramsci, a leading Italian Marxist, was one of those who carried to the masses the revolutionary ideas of Zimmerwald and Kienthal. And it was through Gramsci "that Togliatti learned of the appeals of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Left and together with Gramsci began to study the theory and practical activities of the Russian Bolsheviks".***

The vitalising influence of Lenin's ideas was felt by many other socialist internationalists during the years of imperialist war. Subsequently, they formed the Communist Parties which, under Lenin's leadership, joined together to found the Communist International.

The right of nations to self-determination. A close study of the national and colonial question is still another aspect of Lenin's work in the years of the First World War. The imperialist war, and indeed the whole era of imperialism, made this one of the pressing problems of socialist revolution, especially the question of the right of nations to self-determination. An international discussion on the subject developed in 1915-16 in which, besides the Bolsheviks, German, Dutch and Polish socialists took part.

In January-February 1916, Lenin drew up his theses "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", which were approved by the Bolshevik Central Committee and circulated among Bolshevik organisations abroad and Left groups in the West. They represented a new Bolshevik programmatic declaration on the national and colonial question, in which the national question was treated as an inseparable, component part of the question of socialist revolution, its reserves and allies and its direct support of the anti-imperialist struggle of the colonial and oppressed nations.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 356.
** M. Thorez, *Fils du peuple*, Moscow, 1951, p. 26.
*** Marcella e Maurizio Ferrara, *Conversando con Togliatti*, Roma, 1953, p. 38.

In the summer of 1916, Lenin wrote his famous articles "The Junius Pamphlet" and "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up". The first was a reply to Rosa Luxemburg's pamphlet (Junius, the Latin for junior, was her pen-name) *The Crisis of Social-Democracy*. In both articles Lenin reviewed the international discussion on the national question and criticised the erroneous views expounded by Rosa Luxemburg, Anton Pannekoek and others, who maintained that the demand for national self-determination should be abandoned in the imperialist era. Lenin amplified and substantiated the Bolshevik theory and tactics on the national question in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

The self-determination slogan, he wrote, must be regarded in relation to three main groups, or types, of countries. The first was the highly developed capitalist countries of Western Europe and the United States. Each of these "great" nations oppressed other nations in the colonies and at home. The proletariat of these dominant bourgeois nations must advocate freedom of secession both for the colonies and for the oppressed nations within these "great" powers. The proletariat must combat the great-power chauvinism of its own nation.

The second group comprised Eastern Europe–Austria, the Balkans and, particularly, Russia, where bourgeois-democratic national movements had developed in the twentieth century, and where the national struggle had become more acute. In these countries, the proletariat could not accomplish its tasks in regard to carrying through bourgeois-democratic reforms, and in regard to a socialist revolution, unless it consistently championed the right of nations to self-determination. It was especially important, in this respect, to unite, merge, the class struggle of the working people of the oppressor and the oppressed nations against their common enemy, the landowners and bourgeoisie.

The third group comprised the semi-colonial countries: China, Persia, Turkey and all the colonies with their aggregate population of about 1,000 million. These countries were on the eve of momentous bourgeois-democratic movements and revolts against imperialism. The Marxist parties and groups must demand immediate liberation of the colonies and resolutely support the most revolutionary elements of these bourgeois-democratic national liberation movements and help them in every way to fight the oppressor imperialist powers.

This grouping of countries in relation to the right of nations to self-determination in the imperialist era is a model of a profound scientific and, at the same time, historically concrete approach to the solution of one of the most complicated problems of the ideological and political struggle.

Lenin gave a clear and lucid answer to the question of how to educate the working class in an internationalist spirit, both in the big, oppressor nations and in the small, oppressed nations. The approach cannot be the same, because, from the standpoint of the national question, the position of the working class is not the same. There is the economic

difference that in the oppressor countries part of the working class gets the crumbs from the superprofits the bourgeoisie receives by exploiting the working people of the oppressed nations. Lenin wrote: "To a *certain degree* the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of *their own* bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations."* There is also the political difference that in the oppressor nations the workers enjoy a privileged position, compared with the workers in the oppressed nations, in many spheres of political life. Lastly, there is this difference: the workers of the oppressor nations are trained by the bourgeoisie in a spirit of contempt for the workers of the oppressed nations.

For that reason, Lenin believed, the internationalist education of the proletariat in the oppressor nations should centre around the demand for the right of colonies and oppressed nations to secession. On the other hand, the socialists in the oppressed nations must advocate and implement unity of the workers of the oppressed and oppressor nations. Without that it would be impossible to uphold an independent proletarian policy and class solidarity with the proletariat of other countries. The socialists of the oppressed nations must under all circumstances combat national narrow-mindedness, egoism, insulation and aloofness.

The internationalist education of the working class, Lenin explained, would remain a cardinal task even after the proletarian revolution. The proletariat will not become a saint, nor will it be guaranteed against errors and shortcomings, by the fact alone that it has performed the social revolution. "National antipathies will not disappear so quickly: the hatred–and perfectly legitimate hatred–of an oppressed nation for its oppressor *will last* for a while; it will evaporate only *after* the victory of socialism and *after* the final establishment of completely democratic relations between nations."**

Lenin subjected to comprehensive and profound criticism the erroneous views held by the Polish, Dutch and German Left socialists and the Bukharin-Pyatakov group, all of whom were opposed to national self-determination, arguing that it was unfeasible under imperialism. Of course, Lenin explained, under imperialism national self-determination could be achieved only by overcoming immense difficulties. But that did not at all imply that revolutionary socialists should reject an immediate and most resolute struggle for this demand–that would only play into the hands of the bourgeoisie and the reactionaries. On the contrary, what they should do is raise the oppressed peoples against every variety of national and colonial oppression, for full implementation of the right of nations to political self-determination.

Of exceptional importance to this day is Lenin's proposition that, under imperialism, the winning of political independence does not mean that a nation has acquired economic independence. "Finance capital is

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 56.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 22, p. 353.

such a great, such a decisive, you might say, force in all economic and in all international relations, that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject, to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence."* Nations oppressed by imperialism, Lenin taught, must seek not only political, but economic independence. But colonial and semi-colonial, the small and weak nations cannot hope to obtain genuine economic aid from the imperialist powers. On the contrary, under the guise of "economic aid" the colonialists try to tighten their stranglehold on these nations.

Lenin held that only socialism will usher in an era of genuine liberation for the oppressed peoples. He put forward the programmatic proposition that when the working class comes to power in the developed capitalist countries it will not only give all the colonial and dependent peoples the right of self-determination up to secession, but will also make the maximum effort to establish closer ties with the backward peoples of Asia and Africa who have taken the road of independent development, extend disinterested aid to them and help them "to pass to the use of machinery, to the lightening of labour, to democracy, to socialism".**

The opponents of national self-determination claimed that the "national state" slogan was no longer valid under imperialism. Lenin conceded that, historically, it was an old slogan. But in the East, in the colonies with their total population of 1,000 million, new, bourgeois-democratic national movements had arisen in the imperialist era, and liberation wars were being fought there. Even in Western Europe, the possibility of national wars, for example, by small nationally-oppressed or annexed states against imperialist powers, was not excluded. And, certainly, large-scale national movements in Eastern Europe were more than probable. Under certain conditions, Lenin believed that in Europe it was possible to convert the imperialist war into a great national war.

Much of what Lenin wrote in 1916 was confirmed in the Second World War, when the nazi armies overran nearly the whole of Europe and its peoples rose in a great national liberation war. The Soviet Union and its Armed Forces played the decisive part in defeating Hitlerism, in liberating the nations from nazi oppression and saving European and world civilisation.

Does the right to national self-determination apply to a socialist society? The Polish comrades siding with Rosa Luxemburg replied in the negative. Their argument was that socialism would abolish all national oppression and the demand for national self-determination would therefore be pointless. That line of reasoning, Lenin said, was wrong.

"The aim of socialism," he explained, "is not only to end the division of mankind into tiny states and the isolation of nations in any form, it is not only to bring the nations closer together but to integrate

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 259.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 67.

them. . . . In the same way as mankind can arrive at the abolition of classes only through a transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through a transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede."*

These are some of the key propositions on the national and colonial question Lenin elaborated during the First World War. They have become part of the treasure-store of scientific communism.

The summer of 1916 was spent in the mountains because of Nadezhda Konstantinovna's health. They stayed at a modest boarding-house, the Tschudiweise, in the little village of Flums, not far from Zurich. They chose it because it was cheap, probably the cheapest in all Switzerland, two and a half francs a day per person. This was important because Lenin and Krupskaya had to practise the utmost economy. Their material position was especially difficult in the second half of 1916.

In fine weather they would take walks in the mountains, and during these walks, Nadezhda Konstantinovna recalled, Lenin spoke of the problems uppermost in his mind. One of these was the role of democracy in the development of the proletarian class struggle. Early in September they returned to Zurich, to their room in the Kammerer's flat.

Many of the Left socialists who had opposed the right of nations to self-determination were now repudiating the struggle for democracy under imperialism. This time they argued that since imperialism was itself a negation of democracy, it followed that democracy was "unrealisable" under imperialism and all the talk about democratic rights and republican form of government was meaningless. The only thing that could be opposed to imperialism was socialism. Such was the "arch-revolutionary" reasoning of the Lefts. Their views were shared by the Pyatakov-Bukharin group and Radek, who supported that group. Lenin vigorously opposed this theory, qualifying it as "imperialist economism", the same kind of ugly caricature of Marxism as the Economism of 1894-1902. He qualified "imperialist economism" as a striking manifestation of dogmatism and sectarianism in the world socialist movement.

In the articles "The Nascent Trend of Imperialist Economism", "Reply to P. Kievsky (Y. Pyatakov)", "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism", written in the autumn of 1916, Lenin explained in detail that though imperialism signified, politically, a sharp turn from democracy to reaction, an attempt to abolish democratic freedoms and institutions, it inevitably engendered and accentuated democratic tendencies among the masses. And it was not a matter of indifference to the proletariat and the working people what kind of state they live in. The more democratic the state is, the easier it is for the proletariat to conduct a broad, open, organised and united struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie. Naturally, capitalism and imperialism will not be overthrown even by the most "ideal" democratic

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 146-47.

reforms. That requires a socialist revolution and proletarian dictatorship. But the working class cannot carry out the socialist revolution unless it has prepared for it by a comprehensive, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy. The struggle for democracy is part of the struggle for socialism. "One must be able to *unite* the struggle for democracy with the struggle for the socialist revolution, *subordinating* the former to the latter. This is the entire difficulty, the entire essence," Lenin wrote in December 1916.

The socialist proletariat must lead the masses in the fight for their freedoms and rights and utilise all the democratic institutions and movements to prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie. "To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc.–to imagine all this is to *repudiate social revolution*.... Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is."*

In his articles written in 1916 Lenin consistently upheld and developed the cardinal revolutionary Marxist principle that proletarian dictatorship is an objective law of development common to all countries in their transition from capitalism to socialism. "... Whoever expects that socialism will be achieved *without* a social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a socialist."**

He formulated and substantiated the all-important proposition that different nations will pass to the dictatorship of the proletariat and to socialism in different ways. This has been fully confirmed by the development of a number of countries after World War II. "All nations," Lenin wrote, "will arrive at socialism–this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life."***

He trenchantly criticised Bukharin's semi-anarchist views that the state must be "blown-up", since the proletariat is hostile to any form of state. This was a gross distortion of the Marxist theory of the state, for unlike the anarchists, the Marxists hold that the bourgeois state can be used in the fight for the emancipation of the working class. Marxists advocate the "break-up" of the old state machine in the course of the proletarian revolution and the creation of a proletarian state (proletarian dictatorship). Revolutionary Marxism is "recognition of the fact that

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 355.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 95.
*** *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

the *state* will exist until victorious socialism develops into full communism".*

Lenin's attacks on the question of the state were concentrated on the Second International opportunists, notably the Kautskyites. In the closing months of 1916 and the early months of 1917 he worked on this question, studied everything Marx and Engels had written on the state, giving his own comments to their basic ideas and demonstrating, first and foremost, that on this question too the opportunists had openly renounced the views of the founders of scientific communism.

Writing to Inessa Armand after re-reading Engels's *The Housing Question*, Lenin remarked that he could not calmly bear the attacks on Marx and Engels. "No, these were real people! We must learn from them. We must not leave that basis. It was from *that* basis that both the social-chauvinists and the Kautskyites departed."** The materials he collected made up a notebook, *Marxism on the State*, and served as the basis for his masterly study *The State and Revolution*.

A revolutionary situation had arisen in Europe. Fearing that it might develop into a revolution, the capitalists tried to conclude an imperialist peace. The social-chauvinists and Kautskyites took a pacifist position, seeking to reassure the peoples with the prospect of a democratic peace granted by the imperialist governments. Soon after the Kienthal Conference, the entire Zimmerwald Right in major European countries–France, Germany, Italy–slid into social-pacifism, which had been rejected at Kienthal, and openly aligned themselves with the social-chauvinists and reformists against the revolutionary internationalists, who supported the Zimmerwald Left. Robert Grimm, one of the leaders of the Socialist Party of Switzerland and chairman of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences and of the International Socialist Commission, which was set up by these conferences, joined forces with the social-patriots in his country. He screened his defection with abuse at the social-patriots of other countries and hypocritic sympathy for Karl Liebknecht.

Lenin publicly branded the desertion of the Centrist majority in the Zimmerwald Association to social-chauvinism and relentlessly exposed Grimm's sneaking "tactics". Zimmerwald, he said, was obviously bankrupt and the name was being used to cover something utterly rotten in European socialism. He called upon the Left internationalists to form a genuinely revolutionary working-class International and to organise in all countries proletarian parties of a new type, parties that would break with both the social-chauvinists and Centrists and head the revolutionary struggle of the working class for socialism.

February revolution. Lenin returns to Russia. While he was in Switzerland Lenin gave much of his attention to the local working-class movement, notably to the Swiss socialist youth. All the Bolsheviks, including Lenin, were members of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 323.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 281.

Swiss workers heard Lenin speak at their rallies and meetings. He had direct contact with Fritz Platten and other Swiss Left socialists, attended many of their conferences and helped them in their struggle against the social-chauvinists and Centrists. He drew up special theses on the subject, entitling them "Tasks of the Left Zimmerwaldists in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party". At the Congress of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party in Zurich, on October 22 (November 4), he greeted the congress on behalf of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee.

On January 9 (22), 1917, he gave a lecture on the Russian Revolution of 1905 at a meeting of young workers in the Zurich People's House. He closed the lecture with the words: "We must not be deceived by the present grave-like stillness in Europe. Europe is pregnant with revolution."*

Only a few weeks after Lenin pronounced these prophetic words a revolution broke out in Russia. In February 1917, the tsarist autocracy was overthrown. The revolution was victorious because its leader and chief motive force was the working class, which, rising in armed revolt against the tsar, carried with it the millions of peasants clad in army uniform. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin's leadership, displaying intrepidity in the struggle against tsardom and sustaining the heaviest losses in that struggle, had inspired and organised the militant alliance between the workers and peasants in the revolution.

Lenin learned of the revolution in Petrograd from the Swiss papers of March 2 (15). He was beside himself with joy. Together with the Bolshevik émigrés he was elated over the victory of the workers and soldiers in Russia and was proud that they had been the first to begin the breakthrough of the world imperialist front. The revolution stirred the entire world. Lenin at once got down to appraising it and defining the new tasks of the proletariat and its Bolshevik Party.

In letters written on March 3 (16) and 4 (17) to Alexandra Kollontai in Christiania (Oslo), through whom contact with the Bolsheviks in Russia was maintained, he outlined the course the Party must follow in view of the establishment of a bourgeois Provisional Government. The chief thing now, he said, was to keep strengthening the working-class revolutionary party. It would be the greatest misfortune for the Bolsheviks to agree to "unity" with the Mensheviks. "*On no account* a repetition of something like the Second International! *On no account* with Kautsky! Definitely a *more revolutionary* programme and tactics. . . ."** The immediate task was to extend activities, to organise the masses, rouse new strata in preparation for the conquest of power by the Soviets of Workers' Deputies. Finish off reaction! Not the slightest confidence in, or support for, the new bourgeois government; build a broader base for a higher stage of the revolution.

In his *Letters from Afar,* Lenin closely analysed the revolutionary

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 23, p. 253.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 35, p. 296.

events in Russia and substantiated the tactics of the Bolshevik Party. He assessed the February-March revolution, which overthrew tsardom, as the first stage of a revolution that must grow into a socialist revolution.

Lenin felt like a caged lion, was impatient to return to Russia. But how to get to Russia, to revolutionary Petrograd? Communication between neutral Switzerland and belligerent Russia was controlled by Britain and France. They allowed, even facilitated, the passage of war supporters to Russia, but did not let through Bolsheviks and internationalists. Some other route had to be found. Krupskaya recalls: "Ilyich had no sleep. . . . Once in the middle of the night he said: 'You know, I could travel with the passport of a mute Swede.' I laughed: 'It won't work, you might talk in your sleep. You might see the Cadets in your dreams and you would be muttering, "What scum, what scum!" and then everyone would know you're not a Swede.' "

There was a suggestion that they travel via Germany, by exchanging Russian political emigrants for German war prisoners. Lenin seized on the idea and, after weighing all the pros and cons, set about putting it into effect. With the help of Swiss socialists, notably Fritz Platten, the secretary of the Swiss Socialist Party, permission to pass through Germany was obtained after much delay.

When the news came through, the social-patriots in the Allied countries raised an incredible clamour. It was monstrous, they cried, to pass through Germany and enter into intercourse with the government of the bloodthirsty Kaiser. Lenin contemptuously swept aside all these hypocritical arguments. In what way, he asked, was the imperialist government of a "hostile power" better or worse than that of one's "own" country or of the "Allied powers"? Would it be right, from the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, to "yield" to British or Russian imperialism, stay away from Russia in the interests of that imperialism and remain abroad with folded arms at a time of revolution? Would it not be wiser to take advantage of the permission of another government to pass through its territory and take part in the revolution, in the struggle against the war, against all the imperialist powers? Lenin thus convincingly exposed the fallacy of the basic argument against travelling to Russia via Germany.

Certainly, he said, we shall be slandered, we shall be hounded, but there is no other route to Russia. And though it is difficult to combat slander, it can be combated and must be. To do that, the whole trip must be so arranged as to give us documentary evidence and facts to refute all the slander.

To that end Lenin arranged that a declaration be drawn up and signed by Social-Democrats of various countries. It read in part: "We, the undersigned French, Swiss, Polish and German internationalists, consider it not only right, but the duty of our Russian comrades to avail themselves of this opportunity to reach Russia." In token of their full agreement with the course of action taken by Lenin and his comrades,

the declaration was signed by P. Levi (P. Hartstein) (Germany), H. Guilbeaux, F. Loriot (France), F. Platten (Switzerland) and M. Bronski (Poland), all of whom were then prominent Left socialists. When Lenin arrived in Stockholm it was signed by the Left socialists Hansen (Norway), C. Lindhagen, Fr. Ström, Carleson, K. Kilbom and T. Nerman (Sweden). A communiqué that the party was passing through Sweden was published in the socialist newspaper *Politiken*.

Under the agreement Platten had reached with German representatives, permission to pass through Germany was granted to all émigrés irrespective of party affiliation or attitude towards the war.

Krupskaya recalls: "When we received the letter from Berne that all the arrangements had been completed and we could start on our way to Russia, Ilyich said: 'Let's catch the first train.' We had only two hours to pack and I hesitated. We had to wind up our 'household', return the books to the library, pay up our rent, etc. 'You go and I'll follow tomorrow.' 'No, we'll go together.' The 'household' was wound up, the books packed, letters destroyed, some clothes and other essentials packed and we took the first train out."

In bidding Lenin farewell his landlord, the shoemaker Kammerer, said:

"I hope you won't have to work so much in Russia, Herr Ulyanov."

"No, Herr Kammerer, I shall probably have to work much more in St. Petersburg," Lenin replied.

Lenin and Krupskaya left Switzerland on March 27 (April 9) together with thirty other émigrés, among them nineteen Bolsheviks (Mikha Tskhakaya, Inessa Armand, G. Usiyevich and others) and six Bundists.

Shortly before his departure from Switzerland Lenin had prepared a leaflet entitled "To Our Comrades in War-Prisoner Camps", in which he told the two million Russian war prisoners in Germany and Austria of the revolution and of the tasks in the coming struggle for socialism in Russia. Furthermore, he wrote a "Farewell Letter to the Swiss Workers". On March 26 (April 8), it was discussed and approved at a meeting of Bolsheviks departing for Russia. In it, they conveyed their deep gratitude to the revolutionary workers of Switzerland, with whom they had worked as fellow socialists, and comprehensively explained the historic tasks confronting the Russian proletariat.

At Gottmüdingen, the German frontier station, the Russians were put in a separate carriage, three doors of which were sealed and the fourth, back door, left open. Two German officers were installed in the last compartment as representatives of the German Command and a chalk line was drawn across the corridor to indicate the boundary between the Russian revolutionaries and the German officers. Only Fritz Platten, who accompanied the group, was allowed to cross the line without permission of the Russian passengers.

In Stuttgart the party was met by Janson, a member of the German trade union executive. He had come on the instructions of the opportunist trade union leadership to try to enter into conversation with the Russian

political leaders. He was vigorously rebuffed by Platten, who acted on Lenin's instructions.

The German press had strict orders not to publish any reports about the Russian émigrés until they had left German soil. The authorities feared that such reports might lead to demonstrations of sympathy.

On March 30 (April 12), the train reached Zashnitz on the Baltic seaboard. All the passengers were put on a Swedish cargo vessel that took them through the mine fields to the Swedish port of Trelleborg, from where they travelled by train to Stockholm.

In Sweden Lenin and his comrades were given a warm welcome by the Bolsheviks living there and by the Swedish Left Socialists. Lenin decided to spend only one day in Stockholm. During his short stay in the Swedish capital he set up a Bureau Abroad of the Central Committee, R.S.D.L.P., attended a meeting of Swedish internationalist Social-Democrats and a banquet in honour of the Russian comrades. He conversed in German with Fr. Ström, speaking of the coming socialist revolution in Russia, the prospects of the world revolutionary movement, bourgeois democracy, the dictatorship of the proletariat and other important problems.

On March 31 (April 13), warmly thanking the Swedish comrades for the hospitality and attention accorded to them, the group left Stockholm and two days later arrived at Thorneo, the Finnish frontier station. Their sudden appearance on the very threshold of the revolution (Finland was then part of Russia) highly annoyed the Allies. The British officers stationed at the Swedish-Finnish frontier gave vent to their spite –they took Lenin into a separate room and subjected him to a humiliating search.

"Ilyich remained calm throughout the procedure," Mikha Tskhakaya wrote later. "When he noticed that the gendarmes were disappointed at not having found anything suspicious and were obliged to set us free, Ilyich burst out laughing. He hugged me and said: 'Our ordeals are over, Mikha. We are on our own soil and we'll show them,' here he shook his fist, 'that we are worthy masters of the future.' "

Lenin's activities during the First World War were of inestimable value and significance. He gave a profound analysis of imperialism as the last stage of capitalist society. In these difficult days, when the Second International's betrayal of socialism had plunged the world labour movement into deep crisis, it was Lenin who saved and upheld revolutionary Marxism and dealt crushing blows at social-chauvinism and Centrism. It was Lenin who laid the foundations for the new, Third International and raised aloft the banner of proletarian internationalism. Lenin appeared before the world as the recognised teacher and leader of the international proletariat.

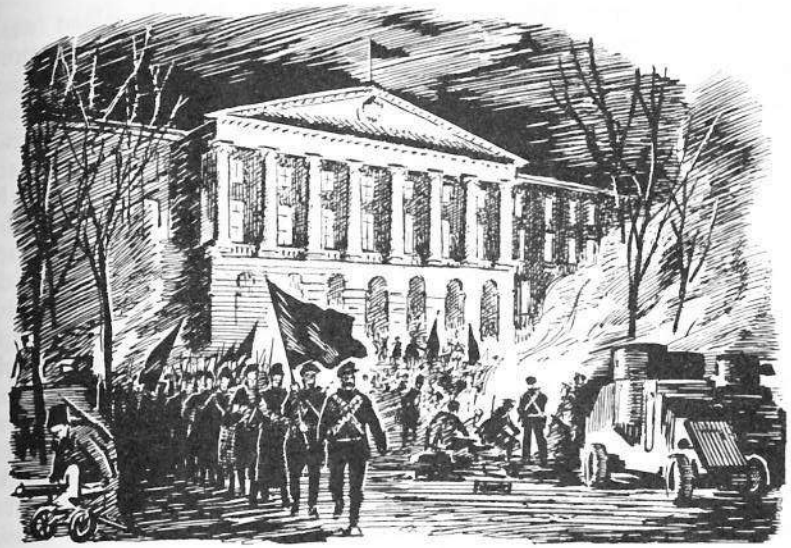
He armed the world labour movement with a new theory of socialist revolution–the theory that its victory was possible first in one country. He gave the movement the only correct theory and tactics on war, peace and revolution, on the national and colonial question, the proletarian

struggle for democracy and reforms in the imperialist era, on proletarian dictatorship and the different forms of transition from capitalism to socialism. Like the rays of the rising sun, Lenin's teaching illumined the path of the working class in its fight for victory of the socialist revolution.

The tasks he put before the working class were unparalleled for their revolutionary audacity and scientific profundity and conception. The difficulties involved in their accomplishment were incredible. But Lenin was the leader of the working class, a class ordained by history to refashion the world. He was the embodiment of its might, power, and organisation and boldly guided it in surmounting all the difficulties of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

Under his leadership the Bolshevik Party, from the very first day of the war, steered a consistent proletarian internationalist course, adopted an uncompromising attitude towards "its own" social-chauvinists and Centrists, fought selflessly to turn the imperialist war into a war against the oppressors, and led the workers and peasants of Russia to victory over tsarism, a victory that paved the way to socialist revolution.

The devoted and intensive struggle for the interests of the working class waged by Lenin and the Bolsheviks during the trying years of the imperialist war stands out as a model to the Communist and Workers' Parties of the capitalist and colonial countries, for the revolutionary liberation movement the world over.



Chapter Nine

INSPIRER AND LEADER OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

> From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism.
>
> *LENIN*

In the small hours of April 3, 1917, a train carrying Lenin and a group of political emigrants crossed the Finnish frontier from Sweden. As soon as he was in Finland Lenin literally pounced on the Petrograd newspapers, which had been almost unobtainable in Switzerland. When the frontier inspection and formalities had been completed, the train proceeded on to Petrograd.

"Little by little the car filled with soldiers, until it was packed tight," Nadezhda Krupskaya recalls. They stood up on the seats the better to be able to see and hear the man who was speaking in such understandable terms against the predatory war. Their faces grew tense as they listened with growing interest."* Lenin talked to the soldiers on how to put an end to the war and how the peasants could obtain land, and questioned them about the mood in the army. The discussion lasted all through the night.

* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 346.

On the evening of April 3, a moving reunion took place at the Beloostrov Station,* where Lenin was awaited by a large delegation of Petrograd and Sestroretsk working men and women, by Maria Ulyanova, his sister, by members of the Central Committee's Russian Bureau and other leading figures on the Central Committee and the Bolsheviks' Petrograd Committee, and the editors of *Pravda*, all of whom had come down from the capital to welcome Lenin. A group of workers with banners met Lenin as he stepped out of the train. They lifted him shoulder-high and carried him into the station building, where he made a short speech of greeting. The workers' welcome at Beloostrov made a deep impression on Lenin. His face was radiant and he was extremely moved.

Arrival in Petrograd. The news that Lenin would arrive in the capital that evening had reached Petrograd earlier in the day, and though it was the Easter holiday and there were no newspapers and the factories were closed, the good news spread to all parts of the city and to every ship and regiment. Workers, soldiers and sailors started preparing for the meeting. The Kronstadt Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) alerted all ships, and the sailors mustered a detachment to provide an escort for the leader of the revolution. News of Lenin's return reached the Moscow Bolsheviks on the evening of April 3. That day a city conference of the R.S.D.L.P. had opened in Moscow. The sudden announcement that Lenin was on his way to Petrograd was received with enthusiasm by the 400 delegates to the conference, and a telegram of welcome was approved amid a storm of applause.

That night a guard of honour composed of soldiers and sailors formed up on the dimly lighted platform of the Finland Railway Station in Petrograd. As Lenin stepped out of the train, the Kronstadt sailors presented arms and a military band played the *Marseillaise*. The workers of Petrograd presented him with flowers and showed their pleasure at his homecoming. Amid hurrahs and handclapping I. Chugurin, Secretary of the Vyborg District Party Committee, whom Lenin had known at the Longjumeau Party school, stepped forward and handed Lenin Party Card No. 600 of the Vyborg District Bolshevik organisation.** Lenin greeted the soldiers and sailors, and the guard of honour escorted him into the

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* Near Petrograd.

** This Party Card has never been found and may no longer exist. The following Party cards issued to Lenin are kept in the Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.: Party Card No. 527, issued by the Kremlin Subdistrict Committee of the Moscow Party organisation in 1920; Party Card No. 224332 (1920 type), issued in 1920 by the Zamoskvorechye District Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), Moscow; Party Card No. 114482 (1922 type), issued to Lenin on May 6, 1922. The latter two cards bear Lenin's signature.

In the spring of 1927, the 1922-type Party cards were replaced by the new issue of 1926. Party Card No. 0000001 and a record card bearing the same number were filled in on March 16, 1927, by the Zamoskvorechye District Committee, in the name of Lenin, founder and leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Since then Party Card No. 1 has been reserved for Lenin, and will remain so for all times.

station building, where members of the Central Committee, the Petrograd Committee and leaders of the district Bolshevik organisations had assembled. The Mensheviks Skobelev and Chkheidze, representing the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, were also present. Lenin paid little attention to Chkheidze's "welcome" and, almost before he had finished, began addressing the Petrograd Bolsheviks, the factory delegations and the soldiers and sailors. He then went out into the square.

The square and the streets adjoining the station were thronged with thousands of Petrograd workers and soldiers. Countless banners waved in the glare of searchlights. Many of them bore the words: "Welcome to Lenin." The band struck up the *Internationale*. Amid a steady roar of cheering, workers and soldiers lifted Lenin on to an armoured car. Standing on the car, he greeted the revolutionary proletariat of Russia and the army rank-and-file who had carried out the victorious revolution against tsarism. The proletariat of the whole world, said Lenin, was watching with hope the bold steps taken by the Russian workers. He ended his first speech to the workers and soldiers of Petrograd with a stirring call: "Long live the socialist revolution!"

People thronged round the armoured car as it bore Lenin to the Kshesinskaya Palace, where the Central and Petrograd committees of the Bolshevik Party had their headquarters. Here another meeting took place attended by Petrograd workers and soldiers, who welcomed their leader with great enthusiasm. Lenin spoke several times during the meeting and was listened to by thousands of working men and women, soldiers and sailors.

On the night of April 3, Lenin's friends and comrades, members of the Bolshevik Central and Petrograd committees and active workers of the Petrograd Party organisation, met at the Kshesinskaya Palace to celebrate Lenin's arrival. Someone made a speech of welcome. When he had finished, Lenin stood up quickly and, seeing that there were other comrades who also wanted to welcome him, said: "I think, comrades, we have done enough congratulating each other on the revolution!" He then delivered a 90-minute speech in which he expounded his views on the current situation. He was listened to with close attention. The discussion that followed went on till morning.

At dawn Lenin said good-bye to his friends and comrades and he and Krupskaya went to live at a flat belonging to his sister Anna and her husband Mark Timofeyevich Yelizarov (48/9, Shirokaya St., Flat 24, Petrogradskaya Storona. Now 52, Lenin St.). Lenin and his wife lived there until the July days.

April 4 was Lenin's first working day in revolutionary Petrograd. It was a very full day; yet, busy though he was, Lenin managed to visit Volkovo Cemetery, where his mother and sister Olga were buried.

The same day Lenin attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, at which the question of the emigrants' return to Russia was discussed. Lenin described the circumstances of their journey back to Russia through Germany and

proposed that the journey be approved by the meeting, and that steps be taken accordingly to get a corresponding number of interned Germans set free, particularly the prominent Austrian socialist Otto Bauer. The next day Lenin's account of the journey "How We Got Back" was published in *Pravda* and in *Izvestia*, the Soviet's official newspaper, so that it would reach a broad section of the public.

Lenin's return from abroad was of tremendous importance to the Bolshevik Party and the people of Russia. It was vitally important not only to the Russian but also to the world revolutionary liberation movement as a whole. The February revolution had radically altered the situation in Russia. The task to which the Party had given priority from the outset–the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy–had been carried out. Now the Bolshevik Party and the working class were confronted with new and even greater tasks. As soon as he arrived in Petrograd Lenin took direct control over the Central Committee and *Pravda*. Welcomed enthusiastically by the whole Party, the workers' leader took the helm of the revolution.

The April Theses. Since the February revolution the Bolshevik Party, having emerged from underground, had been mustering its forces, working out its tactics and extending its activities in a highly complex situation. To lead the struggle of the working class and the rest of the working people under the new conditions effectively, the Bolsheviks had to make a correct, Marxist appraisal of the February revolution, elucidate its class character, take into account the changes in the balance of class forces and define the specific features of the new historical situation.

The February revolution had occurred in the midst of the imperialist war and in the course of a few days it had made Russia the freest of all the belligerent countries. But had this changed the character of the war, which the Provisional Government that had seized power after the revolution was continuing to wage? Should this government be supported? How could the war be ended and peace achieved? How, in what direction, would the revolution develop?

The workers and peasants, who had shown splendid courage during the February revolution, were smashing the old tsarist state machine and establishing the Soviets of Workers,' Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, set up in response to the Bolsheviks' appeal on February 27, initiated the formation of Soviets throughout Russia. It had to be explained to the masses what the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies were, what class significance they had and what part they were destined to play in the revolution.

The Constitutional Democrats and the Octobrists, the bourgeois parties which had retained the strong organisations they had possessed in the days of tsarism, were making every effort to restrain the revolution, divert it into bourgeois channels and get the people to support the imperialist war. By deception the bourgeoisie had succeeded in evoking

"defencist" sentiments among wide sections of the population. The bourgeois parties were actively assisted by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who held that after the overthrow of the monarchy the country should have a *long* period as a bourgeois parliamentary republic, within the framework of which the material basis for the transition to socialism would be created and the working class would receive the political and cultural preparation that was needed for this. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders regarded the Soviets as bodies for controlling the activity of the Provisional Government.

The Bolshevik Party was the only party that had not hauled down its socialist colours. It was explaining to the masses the class nature of the Provisional Government as a bourgeois government and exposing its imperialist policy and the conciliatory tactics of the petty-bourgeois parties. Making good use of the freedoms that had been won, the Bureau of the Bolshevik Central Committee renewed publication of *Pravda*, the first issue of which came out on Sunday, March 5. It called on the local Bolshevik organisations to set up trade unions and factory committees, and institute on their own initiative an eight-hour working day and form a Red Guard and Workers' Militia.

The Bolsheviks were carrying on vigorous agitation and propaganda as well as organisational work among the people, making it their slogan that the revolution should be extended, that the revolutionary forces must be consolidated round the Soviets to fight the counter-revolution. They continued the struggle to get the landed estates transferred to the peasants and to satisfy all the democratic demands that were being made by the revolutionary people.

However, as Lenin showed, the tactics pursued by the Central Committee's Russian Bureau and the local Party organisations aimed at completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and establishment of a democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry, no longer corresponded to the new conditions of the class struggle that had arisen since the February revolution. This was so because the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution was in the main completed, state power had been transferred from the tsar and the landowners to a new class, the bourgeoisie, and the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry had also emerged in the shape of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The main defect of these tactics was that they condemned the revolution to marking time and offered the working class and the poorest sections of the peasantry no prospect of a transition to socialist revolution.

The gigantic new tasks were not understood immediately by the whole Party. The immense significance of the Soviets as organs of state power remained unrevealed until Lenin came on the scene.

In March and early April 1917, some of the Bolshevik committees and organisations, the Central Committee's Bureau and the editors of *Pravda*, and a number of leading Party workers adopted an incorrect position with regard to the Provisional Government and ways of withdrawing

from the imperialist war and achieving peace. Instead of calling for transfer of all state power to the Soviets, they advocated "control by the masses" over the actions of the Provisional Government and "pressure by the masses" on this bourgeois government to make it abandon the imperialist aims of war, annexation, attempts at counter-revolution in internal politics, and so on. This position created the false impression among the workers and peasants that power should remain in the hands of the bourgeois Provisional Government, that this imperialist government could solve the problem of achieving a democratic peace, of handing over the landed estates to the peasants, and other fundamental issues of the revolution.

This does not mean, of course, that the tactics of "pressure by the masses" on bourgeois governments are under all conditions incorrect and misguided. In modern times, for instance, the Marxist-Leninist parties and the working class in a number of capitalist countries are effectively applying such tactics. But in the historical situation that arose following the February revolution in 1917, the imperialists had complete control of the whole world. The bourgeois Provisional Government of Russia expressed the interests and will not only of the Russian, but also of the British and French imperialists, the most powerful in the world. Under "pressure by the masses" it could never do anything but pay lip service to the idea of abandoning the imperialist war, the plunder of its own and other peoples, and a policy that strengthened the rule of the capitalists and landowners. In this situation the tactics of "pressure by the masses" on the bourgeois government of Russia were wrong because they blunted the political awareness of the working class, made it more difficult to liberate the masses from the influence of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, who were urging them to trust the bourgeoisie and its false and empty promises, and hindered the preparation of the proletariat for the fight against imperialism and for real freedom, peace and socialism.

The editorial board of *Pravda* (at that time it included Kamenev, Molotov, Stalin and others) published on March 21 and 22 the first of Lenin's "Letters from Afar" with substantial cuts. They omitted a number of passages in which Lenin was at his sharpest in criticising the Provisional Government and the leaders of the petty-bourgeois defencist parties and firmly opposed any support of the Provisional Government.

Kamenev took up a semi-Menshevik stand in March-April. In articles published in *Pravda* he urged that the policy of the Bolsheviks should be to give conditional support to the bourgeois Provisional Government and exert pressure on it to begin peace negotiations at once. In his appraisal of the war Kamenev wobbled into a position of defencism. In his article "On Lenin's Theses", published in *Pravda* on April 12, 1917, Kamenev argued against Lenin and drew an opportunist picture of Russia making the transition to a socialist revolution several decades later. Throughout the period of preparation for the October Revolution,

even after the All-Russia (April) Party Conference had approved Lenin's political platform, Kamenev continued to maintain his opportunist line against the transition to socialist revolution.

Stalin adopted an incorrect stand on some extremely important matters of principle. Like Kamenev, he supported the tactics of the Soviets exerting pressure on the Provisional Government over the issue of peace; he also misjudged the role of the Soviets and failed to understand their historical significance as a new form of state. Stalin said it might be possible to bring the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks together on the basis of Zimmerwald-Kienthal, although this international association was defunct. Stalin's position impeded the Party's drive against defencism and for revolutionary education of the masses in a spirit of preparation for a socialist revolution. In mid-April, Stalin renounced his incorrect views and came into line with the Party, which at the April Conference had adopted Lenin's course towards the socialist revolution.

The Party waited impatiently for Lenin's authoritative opinion in defining the further paths of development of the revolution and the struggle of the working class. The Bolsheviks knew that Lenin would show them the only true path.

On the morning of April 4, Lenin delivered a report "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution" at a meeting in the Taurida Palace of the Bolshevik delegates to the All-Russia Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. These were Lenin's April Theses, which armed the Party with a *scientifically-based plan of struggle for the transition from the bourgeois-democratic to the socialist revolution.* Lenin repeated his report at a joint meeting of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, who had taken part in the above-mentioned Conference of Soviets.

Lenin's Theses defined, first and foremost, the attitude to be adopted by the Party to the war, the most vital of all the issues facing the peoples of Russia and the whole world. The war that Russia was waging, even under the Provisional Government, wrote Lenin, continued to be a predatory, imperialist war because of the bourgeois character of that government. Bound up as it was with the banks and dependent financially and diplomatically on the more powerful British and French imperialists, the capitalist class could not wage any other kind of war but an imperialist one. It was therefore impossible to end the war unless the power of capital was overthrown, unless state power passed to the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry which supported it. Only such a government could give the people peace, bread and freedom and set the country on the path to socialism. Hence the Bolshevik slogans: "No support for, not the slightest confidence in the Provisional Government!" and "All power to the Soviets!"

In the April Theses Lenin proclaimed the goal as victory of a socialist revolution: "The specific feature of the present situation in Russia," he wrote, "is that the country is *passing* from the first stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class-consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—to

its *second* stage, which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants."*

This proposition is the basic and central theme that runs all through Lenin's Theses.

As far back as 1905, Lenin had regarded the Soviets not merely as instruments of armed uprising but also as the embryo of a new, revolutionary form of government. Mindful of the experience of the Paris Commune and the Russian revolutions of 1905 and February 1917, Lenin saw in the Soviets the political form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "Not a parliamentary republic–to return to a parliamentary republic from the Soviets of Workers' Deputies would be a retrograde step–but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom,"** Lenin wrote in his Theses.

Marx had spoken of a new form of state power "of the type of the Paris Commune". Marx and Engels said that the working class could not simply take over the old state machine ready-made and rule by means of it; it must replace that machine with a new one and convert its political supremacy into an instrument for the socialist reconstruction of society. The parliamentary republic, they said, constitutes progress as compared with absolutism, but does not abolish the domination of capital; it merely makes it easier for the working class to fight for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Kautsky, Plekhanov and other opportunists of the Second International distorted the teachings of Marx and Engels on the state, ignored their ideas that it was necessary to create a new, higher type of democratic state, and instead advocated the bourgeois political form of democracy, the parliamentary republic, as the best form of state for the transition to socialism. Exposing these opportunists, Lenin showed that life had produced a new "higher type of democratic state", in comparison with the parliamentary democratic republic, and that a republic of Soviets would be a state of that type.

This was a great advance in Marxist theory, a discovery that was to be of the greatest importance in ensuring the victory of the socialist revolution in October 1917, in setting up Soviet power and building socialism in the U.S.S.R., and in evolving the political forms of the dictatorship of the working class in the People's Democracies of Europe and Asia, and in Cuba, the island of freedom.

The April Theses formulated the economic platform of the proletarian Party. Lenin held that the Party could not set itself the aim of immediately "introducing" socialism and carrying out changes for which neither the economy nor the people were prepared. In the economic sphere he stood for carrying out at once the revolutionary measures that

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 22.
** *Ibid.*, p. 23.

the situation actually demanded, that were absolutely essential to combat the impending economic catastrophe and famine, and that would be comprehensible to and within the reach of the masses. Such measures were: first, nationalisation of all the land in the country along with confiscation of the landed estates and placing of the land at the disposal of the local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies; conversion of the large estates that were confiscated into model farms under the control of the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies; second, the immediate amalgamation of all the banks in the country into one national bank, to be placed under the control of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies; and third, the setting up of workers' control over the production and distribution of products. These measures, if executed in a revolutionary way, Lenin pointed out, would be an important step towards socialism.

In his Theses Lenin formulated the Party's tactics in the struggle for a socialist revolution with the utmost clarity. These tactics were based on a Marxist analysis of the complex and contradictory situation. The specific feature of the February revolution was that in the course of its development a dual power had come into being. Alongside the bourgeois Provisional Government there existed the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, in which the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries had a majority. The Petrograd Soviet, which enjoyed the confidence of the local Soviets, had voluntarily conceded power to the Provisional Government and undertaken to support it, while remaining in the role of an observer and supervising the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

The great mass of the people, who were taking part in political life for the first time and had no experience of politics, were temporarily disorientated and could not immediately distinguish friend from foe. They still had defencist sentiments and followed the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, taking a trustful attitude towards the promises of the bourgeois government.

Lenin uncovered the deep socio-economic causes of the unreasoning trust that the broad sections of the working class and the urban and rural poor had for the capitalists, the worst enemies of peace and socialism. Russia, he pointed out, was a petty-bourgeois country. The revolution had immediately drawn into the movement a huge number of philistines and small proprietors, people who stood midway between the capitalists and the workers. "A gigantic petty-bourgeois wave has swept over everything and overwhelmed the class-conscious proletariat, not only by force of numbers but also ideologically; that is, it has infected and imbued very wide circles of workers with the petty-bourgeois political outlook."*

But the Bolshevik Party, said Lenin, should not drift with the current; it should be able to resist it and uphold its class, proletarian line.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 62.

Lenin put forward the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" but explained that in the circumstances then prevailing this slogan did not imply a call for the overthrow of the bourgeois Provisional Government by force. This government, Lenin wrote, should be overthrown because it was unable to give the people peace, or bread, or full freedom. But it could not be overthrown immediately and "generally, it cannot be 'overthrown' in the ordinary way, for it rests on the '*support*' given to the bourgeoisie by the *second* government, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and that government is the only possible revolutionary government, which directly expresses the mind and will of the majority of the workers and peasants". Armed action against the imperialist Provisional Government would have meant action against the Soviets too, against the majority of workers and soldiers. We, Lenin said, are not Blanquists, not conspirators, and we have no wish to rule with a minority of the working class against the majority. The majority of the working class, the majority of the working people, must be won over to our side. The anti-popular, imperialist nature of the Provisional Government must be exposed; this government must be deposed by depriving it of the confidence and support of the workers and soldiers, and power must be concentrated entirely in the hands of the government of the Soviets. We must criticise and unmask the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, isolate them from the masses, and in this way win a majority in the Soviets. Under these conditions the struggle of classes and parties within the Soviets, once they had become sovereign institutions of state power, the transfer of power from one party to another, from the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the Bolsheviks, would proceed peacefully, by means of fresh elections that would make the Soviets more democratic.

By this profound analysis of the historical situation obtaining at the time, Lenin *proved the possibility of a peaceful transfer of power to the proletariat.* He armed Marxists with yet another convincing argument against the false allegations of the enemies of the proletariat, who claim that the Communists have always, under all circumstances, favoured the forcible seizure of power by the working class.

Concerning matters within the Party, Lenin called for the immediate convocation of a Party Congress and amendment of the Party Programme. In his opinion the new programme should give an assessment of imperialism and imperialist wars, expound the teaching of Marxism on the state, and advance the task of setting up a Soviet republic.

Lenin proposed that the Party's name be changed from Social-Democratic to Communist Party, as Marx and Engels had called the proletarian party they had founded, since the official Social-Democratic leaders throughout the world had betrayed socialism. This name was scientifically correct because the ultimate aim of the party of the proletariat was to build a communist society. "It is time to cast off the soiled shirt and to put on clean linen," wrote Lenin.

In the sphere of the international working-class movement, Lenin proposed as a practical task the creation of a third, Communist International.

Lenin's April Theses are an outstanding document of creative Marxism. They set the Party on a new and truly Marxist revolutionary course and armed it with new programmatic and tactical slogans that had tremendous mobilising power. With these theses Lenin launched the Party on the high road of consistent class struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution. They were based on Lenin's brilliant proposition concerning the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

Lenin's April Theses provided an ideological rallying point for the Bolshevik Party on the eve of the Seventh (April) Conference. They roused tremendous enthusiasm in the ranks of the Party and the working class and inspired the workers to fight for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

At a meeting of the Bolshevik group of the All-Russia Conference of Soviets on April 5 a miner from the Donets coalfield said: "Everything that Comrade Lenin suggests here is right. We've got to take over the factories and mills. We've got no bosses at our mine now. There're ten thousand workers at our mine and now we're working on our own, without a boss. We've set up a guard over the mine and we're running everything according to the rules.... But we haven't got any speakers and there's no one to explain what's going on. When the men get together, they ask me, as a Bolshevik, to explain it all to them. But I can only tell them one thing: 'Hold on tight, lads.' That's what I always say. There's nothing else I can tell them. So I now ask you, comrades, to send us some of the more educated comrades, who can give all our miners a better explanation about politics and how things will go on. Yes, Comrade Lenin is right in everything he said."

This was a convincing answer from a Bolshevik worker to his leader's appeal.

Lenin's theses were published in *Pravda* on April 7. The open Party discussion that followed lasted nearly three weeks and Lenin's position quickly won over leading Party workers and Party organisations. Kamenev, however, attacked Lenin's theses in *Pravda.* He dogmatically asserted that the Party ought to aim not at transition to a socialist revolution but at completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and setting up of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

Lenin rebuffed Kamenev in a pamphlet called *Letters on Tactics* and the article "The Dual Power". He showed how dangerous dogmatism was to Party activity and stressed the creative nature of Marxist theory. "It is essential to grasp the incontestible truth," he wrote, "that a Marxist must take cognisance of real life, of the true facts of *reality*, and not cling to a theory of yesterday, which, like all theories, at best only outlines the main and the general, only *comes near* to embracing life in all its complexity.

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

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

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

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

The April Theses incensed the enemies of the revolutionary proletariat. A slanderous campaign was launched against the Bolsheviks. Provocatory inventions and lies of the lowest kind were put about by the bourgeois press, primarily against Lenin. The fact that Lenin and other Bolsheviks had come to Russia through Germany was used to suggest that the new arrivals might be helping the German imperialists. The effect of this agitation was that some people started shouting in the streets for physical violence against Lenin. The Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary press trumpeted that a new enemy of Russian revolutionary democracy had appeared in the shape of "anarchist counter-revolution" from the left, a danger that was supposed to stem from Lenin and the Bolsheviks. The bourgeois politicians bolstered this Menshevik thesis with the false charge against Lenin and the Bolsheviks that they were calling for "anarchy" and "civil war".

Plekhanov declared the April Theses to be anarchism and Blanquism. "Lenin has only just arrived, he doesn't know Russia," bawled Dan. Lenin is "destroying Marxism" with his Theses, announced Tsereteli, making play with a quotation from Engels's *The Peasant War in Germany*, which stated that a class that seized power prematurely would perish. Chkheidze prophesied complete isolation for the Bolshevik leader: "Lenin alone will remain outside the revolution, and we shall all go our own way." History has played a malicious joke on this Menshevik "prophecy".

The Petrograd City Conference of Bolsheviks opened on April 14. It elected Lenin as its honorary chairman. Lenin delivered a report to the conference and summed up the debate on the current situation and the attitude to be adopted towards the Provisional Government. His speeches made a deep impression. Most of the delegates came out in support of Lenin's Theses and the resolution on the attitude towards the Provisional Government, moved by Lenin, was passed by an overwhelming majority. It called on the Bolsheviks of Petrograd to take energetic action and to prepare for a socialist revolution in Russia.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 45-46.

Lenin's tactics were thus approved by the Petrograd Party organisation, the largest in the country.

The Petrograd City Conference was interrupted by a mighty political demonstration of the Petrograd workers and soldiers protesting against the imperialist policy of the Provisional Government. It was sparked off on April 20 by a note sent by P. Milyukov, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Allied Powers, declaring the government's readiness "fully to observe the obligations undertaken in respect of our allies", and its "desire to continue the world war until a decisive victory is achieved". From April 20th to 21st the capital was at fever pitch. More than 100,000 demonstrators, indignant at the Provisional Government's trickery, marched with slogans demanding: "All Power to the Soviets!" "Down with the War!" "Down with Milyukov!" "Down with Guchkov!" Defencist sentiments were being cast aside and the universal cry was for peace. Demonstrations were also held in other cities.

This mighty demonstration of protest by the Petrograd workers and soldiers was a wonderful confirmation, and an unexpectedly rapid one at that, of the correctness of Lenin's tactics for the Party as a whole, the correctness of Lenin's slogan "No Support for the Provisional Government!" Petrograd and all Russia, Lenin wrote, had passed through a serious political crisis, the first since the revolution. Supported once again by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Petrograd Soviet, the Provisional Government preserved its tottering power. The most unpopular ministers, Milyukov and Guchkov, were forced to resign. A coalition Provisional Government was formed, which included six socialists from the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties who openly linked their policy with the policy of the bourgeoisie.

During the April demonstration a small group of members of the Petrograd Bolshevik organisation headed by Bagdatyev, advanced a slogan calling for the immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government. Since this slogan ran counter to the Party's line on the peaceful development of the revolution, on the gradual winning of a majority in the Soviets, the Central Committee, at Lenin's suggestion and on his initiative, corrected these lone figures who wanted to rush on ahead. The Central Committee explained that it was essential that the majority of the people be firmly rallied round the revolutionary proletariat, that unless this condition were observed an attack on the Provisional Government would be sheer recklessness.

The Party approves Lenin's political line. The Petrograd Conference was soon to be followed by the All-Russia Party Conference. Lenin prepared enthusiastically and with great care for this conference, the first legal Party conference to be held in Russia. On April 10, he wrote an important work *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*, which he regarded as a draft platform for the proletarian party. He also prepared for the conference "Draft Changes in the Theoretical, Political and Some Other Parts of the Programme" of the Party. In the main hall of the Kshesinskaya Palace on April 23 Lenin conducted a preliminary

meeting of the delegates who had arrived for the conference. At the request of those present Lenin gave an analysis of the development of the Russian revolution. He devoted a considerable part of his speech to the current situation, particularly the political crisis that had arisen between the 19th and 21st of April over the Provisional Government's note on the subject of the war.

The Seventh All-Russia Conference of Bolsheviks opened in Petrograd on April 24 with an introductory speech by Lenin, who was warmly welcomed by the delegates.

"The great honour of beginning the revolution," he said, "has fallen to the Russian proletariat. But the Russian proletariat must not forget that its movement and revolution are only part of a world revolutionary proletarian movement. . . ."*

All the work of the conference proceeded under Lenin's direct leadership. He delivered reports on the current situation, on the agrarian question, and on the revision of the Party Programme, developing and illustrating in concrete terms the brilliant propositions formulated in the April Theses. "The basic question of every revolution," he explained, "is that of state power."** The bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia had decided this question. But since power had, in fact, passed to the bourgeoisie, and to the landowners who had become bourgeois, the February revolution had not given the people bread, peace or freedom. To withdraw from the imperialist war, to win real freedom, and secure bread and land, it was necessary to transfer all power to the workers and the poorest strata of the peasantry, united in the Soviets.

In his speeches at the conference Lenin gave a profound explanation of the world historical significance of the Soviets and showed that, in the conditions then obtaining, the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" was the Party's principal slogan, whose aim was to put an end to the power of the bourgeoisie and establish working-class dictatorship. The conference approved Lenin's policy of peaceful development of the revolution.

The conference passed a resolution, moved by Lenin, on the nationalities question, demanding the right of nations to self-determination, including the right to secede and form independent states. Only recognition of this right, said Lenin, would ensure complete solidarity of the workers, solidarity of all the working people of the various nations. At the same time he considered that the question of the right of nations to free secession must not be confused with the question of the advisability of a given nation seceding. "The party of the proletariat must decide the latter question quite independently in each particular case, having regard to the interests of social development as a whole and the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism."***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 227.
** *Ibid.*, p. 38.
*** *Ibid.*, pp. 302-03.

Lenin resolutely opposed the anti-Party stand taken by Kamenev and Rykov, who echoed the Mensheviks in alleging that objective conditions for a socialist revolution did not exist in Russia. Lenin proved the unsoundness of Rykov's claim that socialism should come to Russia from other countries with a higher level of industrial development, and remarked: "This is not Marxism; it is a parody of Marxism." He also sharply criticised Pyatakov's national chauvinist views on the nationalities question.

The conference unanimously approved Lenin's policy of developing the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

In his report on the agrarian question Lenin proved the necessity of nationalising all the land. This measure, he said, would free peasant landownership of its semi-feudal fetters, and abolish the landed estates, which were the material mainstay of the power of the feudal landowners. Moreover, since it meant abolition of private ownership of land, land nationalisation would in practice deal a heavy blow at private ownership of all the means of production in general. Referring to the resolution Lenin advised the delegates to mention first that the Bolshevik Party was fighting for immediate and complete confiscation of all the landed estates and vigorously campaigning for the handing over of all the land to the peasants, and then to mention the nationalisation of the land, for the carrying out of which a state law would have to be passed. What matters for us, he said, is revolutionary initiative, and the law must be its result. The peasants must be told: *"If you wait until the law is written, and yourselves do not develop revolutionary initiative, you will have neither the law nor the land."** The conference approved all Lenin's proposals on the agrarian question and its decisions played an enormous part in rallying the peasantry round the working class.

Lenin paid particular attention to the reports from the local Party organisations, especially those which dealt with the activity of the Soviets. "This may be," he said, "the most important material the conference has provided, it is material that enables us to test our slogans against the actual course of events. The picture it gives prompts us to draw optimistic conclusions."** In a number of regions and towns the local Soviets had moved further ahead in carrying out revolutionary measures than the Soviets of Moscow and Petrograd. This confirmed that Lenin was right in his policy of calling for preparation "on an All-Russia scale of forces for the second stage of the revolution".

The conference passed a resolution on rallying the internationalists. The resolution admitted the need to bring together and unite groups and trends that really stood for internationalism on condition that they broke with the policy of petty-bourgeois betrayal of socialism. An analogous resolution was subsequently passed at the Sixth Party

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 285.
** Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks). Petrograd City Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(Bolsheviks). April 1917. Minutes, Russ, ed., Moscow, 1958, p. 145.

Congress. On the basis of these decisions many internationalists were admitted to the Bolshevik Party in Petrograd, Moscow and local Party organisations.

On the basis of Lenin's report the conference passed a resolution on the revision of the Party Programme and indicated on what lines it was to be carried out. The conference instructed the Central Committee to draw up a draft of the Party Programme within two months and submit it for approval by a Party Congress. It also instructed the Central Committee to take the initiative in forming a Third International.

The All-Russia (April) Conference of Bolsheviks was of tremendous importance in the work of the Party and the development of the socialist revolution in Russia. It indicated the only sure way of dealing with the tasks that faced the revolution–transfer of all state power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout Russia. In importance, this conference was equal to a Party Congress. It elected a Central Committee headed by Lenin.

Later, Lenin delivered a long report summing up the results of the April Conference at a general meeting of the Petrograd Bolshevik organisation. Between five and six thousand people attended the meeting, which was held in the great hall of the Naval Cadet Corps. Like the rest of the Party, the Petrograd Bolsheviks approved the conference decisions unanimously and under the leadership of the Central Committee headed by Lenin set to work energetically among the people.

Close to the people. The April Conference launched a new stage in Party activity. Armed with Lenin's instructions on all the problems of the socialist revolution, the Party started a tremendous political and organisational drive among the workers, peasants and soldiers.

Lenin was at the centre of all the various activities of the Party and its Central Committee. He received comrades from the local Party organisations, and gave them detailed instructions; he talked to workers and soldiers and to peasant messengers who came from the villages. He also gave a considerable part of his time to the daily direction of the work of the Party's Central Organ–*Pravda*. Here he held brief conferences on current matters concerning Party work and nearly every day wrote articles that gave clear and simple explanations of political events and the intrigues of the class enemy, and indicated to the working people the only sure way of achieving victory over capitalism, of achieving a socialist revolution. In the ninety days between his return to Russia and the July Days he wrote more than 170 articles, pamphlets and draft resolutions for Bolshevik conferences and the Central Committee, as well as appeals to the workers and soldiers, and to all the working people of Petrograd. His work on *Pravda*, writing articles for the workers and soldiers, and being in their company afforded Lenin genuine pleasure. He worked with joyful zest, infecting everyone with his extraordinary energy and faith in the victory of the socialist revolution.

At that time meetings of workers and soldiers were being held in Petrograd every day. At these meetings the Bolsheviks fought veritable political and ideological battles with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. On April 10, Lenin talked to a meeting of the men of the Izmailovo Regiment and the 2nd Artillery Brigade of Guards about revolutionary state structure. On April 15, he spoke to soldiers of an armoured battalion and other units.

The May Day demonstration in Petrograd in 1917 was the first free demonstration to be held in Russia and it was the finest and grandest demonstration that had ever taken place in the whole international history of this holiday. Meetings were held in all the squares. Lenin addressed a meeting on the Field of Mars. He spoke of the way the overwhelming majority of the socialist parties had betrayed the cause of international solidarity of the working people of all countries, and called upon the Russian working class to create a new and genuinely proletarian International. He ended his speech with the words: "Down with the war! Long live peace and the struggle for a proletarian socialist republic!" In the evening he addressed a meeting of the workers of the Okhta Gunpowder Factory. During May, Lenin spoke at meetings attended by thousands of workers at many of the enterprises of Petrograd.

In order to whip up support for the Provisional Government among the Putilov workers, the Socialist-Revolutionaries had arranged a meeting for May 12 at which the Socialist-Revolutionary leader Chernov, the "peasant minister", was to speak. The local Socialist-Revolutionaries were tying themselves in knots to ensure success for the chief orator of their party, and the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party was immediately informed of this by the Putilov Bolsheviks. The meeting was attended by tens of thousands of workers. In his speech Chernov used every argument he could think of to justify the war and called on the workers to make more guns for the front and to support the Provisional Government. At that time defencist sentiments were still prevalent among the workers at this factory.

When Chernov had finished, Lenin mounted the rostrum. His arguments were diametrically opposed to Chernov's. Instead of waging war, said Lenin, it was essential, by all means, to conclude a peace without annexations and indemnities, to stop the bloodshed, and to overcome the poverty and famine that Russia and all the peoples were enduring.

Workers' recollections of Lenin's speeches have been preserved. Pyotr Danilov, an old Putilov worker-Bolshevik, tells of the tremendous effect Lenin's speech had on the workers at the Putilov (now the Kirov) Works.

"What Chernov said," recalls Pyotr Danilov, "was like a trickle of water running under our feet. But what Lenin said gripped us and fired our imagination. Fear vanished and all our tiredness dropped away. It was as if not just Ilyich alone was speaking. It was as if the whole

forty thousand workers sitting or standing there were speaking, expressing their innermost thoughts. It was as if everything the workers had pent up inside them was coming out in the one voice of Ilyich. Everything that each man had thought about, struggled with by himself, everything he couldn't find the words for or the opportunity to express clearly and fully to a comrade, everything suddenly took shape and came out.... That meeting did great things for history. It got the Putilov masses moving and the Putilov masses moved into the revolution."*

After Lenin's speech the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik organisations at the Putilov Works dwindled rapidly and the workers went over to the Bolsheviks.

Vasily Yemelyanov, who used to work at the Semyannikov Works, recalls another meeting which was held in April and addressed by Lenin. "Lenin told us why the revolution had taken place, what the proletariat had to do to put an end to the imperialist war, how to set about the new job and many other things.

"When he finished speaking, the applause was terrific. I had attended meetings at the very beginning of 1917 and heard various speakers, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, and all kinds of parties, but I had never heard a speaker like Lenin. His words brought people together and showed every worker what to do and how to do it. When he finished, many had tears in their eyes. And the men who had St. George medals and Gold Crosses tore them off and handed them in as contributions to the Party funds, for the proletariat's fight against the bourgeoisie.... And, of course, three thousand future fighters armed themselves at that meeting with Lenin's weapon-like words.... Inspired by Lenin, we were all burning with the desire to plunge into the fight."**

Under Lenin's leadership the Party steadily and persistently overcame the difficulties in its path and won over from the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries factory after factory, regiment after regiment, village after village. The majority of the working people, however, still supported the compromising parties. The bulk of the peasants still believed in the Socialist-Revolutionaries. This became apparent at the First All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, which was held from May 4 to May 28, 1917. The Bolsheviks took an active part in the work of the Congress, exposed the imperialist policy of the Provisional Government and the false and hypocritical conduct of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Lenin addressed an open letter to the Congress delegates, moved a draft resolution in the name of the Bolsheviks and made a speech on the agrarian question.

The atmosphere at the Congress in which the Bolshevik leader had to speak was far from favourable. Most of the delegates had been indoctrinated beforehand by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and were

* *Workers' Stories of Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1934, pp. 37, 38.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 40.

inclined to support the coalition Provisional Government.* The socialist ministers who spoke were given prepared ovations and an impressive defencist majority was built up at the Congress. The majority was also strengthened by the speeches of prominent socialist members of the Second International–Thomas, Vandervelde and others, who declared that the workers and peasants of Britain, France and Belgium wanted to go on with the war in order to smash the Germans and so obtain "peace for all time". The Congress passed the Socialist-Revolutionaries' resolution calling for war "to a victorious conclusion".

On the main question, the agrarian question, the Socialist-Revolutionaries used their best speakers, who urged the peasants to ignore the Bolsheviks' call for immediate seizure of the landed estates. Don't encroach on the landowners' property rights whatever you do, they said. When the time comes, the "master of the Russian land", the Constituent Assembly, will be convoked and then the land question will be settled. It was in this situation that Lenin had to make his speech. A. Kuchkin, who took part in the Congress, recalls:

"At first, there were some interruptions from the Right-wing benches, but they were not heard for long. The delegates, particularly the peasants, watched Lenin's face and gestures with close attention. He paced to and fro on the platform, his voice rang out strongly, and his clear, precise words were understood by all.

"Lenin ended his speech and there was a roar of applause from the majority of the Congress. The applause was a surprise even to many who applauded–they had been so carried away by Lenin's speech."**

Lenin called for the establishment of a strong government of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, for the organised take-over of the landed estates by the peasant land committees without waiting for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, for the nationalisation of all the land, for the independent organisation of agricultural workers and the poorest peasants, and for the creation, on the basis of the big landowners' estates, of model state farms under the direction of the Soviets of Agricultural Workers. His speech left its mark. It did not influence the decisions of this particular Congress, but the delegates from the provinces went away with it in their minds and carried it to all parts of Russia. Lenin's speeches on the agrarian question were published as a separate pamphlet and widely circulated in the rural areas and the army.

Lenin considered that the Party's first big success in the struggle for the masses was the Bolshevik victory in the factory committees of Petrograd. The First Petrograd Conference of Factory Committees was held between the end of May and the beginning of June, and the

* The first coalition government was formed on May 5 (18), 1917. In addition to representatives of the bourgeoisie it included the Socialist-Revolutionaries Kerensky and Chernov, Pereverzev, who was close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks Skobelev and Tsereteli, and the "Popular Socialist" Peshekhonov.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 512.

proletariat of the capital sent their best people to attend it. The conference was arranged by the workers themselves and its programme was drawn up at the factories. For two days the delegates debated the vital question of the economic situation and general dislocation in the country and the question of workers' control over production. On May 31, the conference was addressed by Lenin, who linked the question of control with the question of state power. The great majority of the Petrograd workers supported Lenin on one of the key questions of the revolution—workers' control.

The First All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The First All-Russia Congress of Soviets met at the beginning of June. Out of a total of 1,090, the Bolsheviks had only 105 delegates at the Congress. The bulk of the delegates belonged to the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary bloc and the groups supporting it.

The report on the first question on the agenda "The Provisional Government and Revolutionary Democracy" was delivered by the Menshevik Lieber, who spoke on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet. He was followed by Tsereteli, Minister of Post and Telegraph Services in the coalition government and leader of the Mensheviks. Tsereteli made a long speech rejecting the Bolsheviks' proposal to set up a Soviet government. Supporting Lieber's thesis that it was necessary to consolidate the bloc of all democratic parties and form a coalition government, he stated: "At the present moment there is not a single political party in Russia that is prepared to say: 'Hand over the power to us, get out, and we will take your place.'"

Whereupon a firm and resolute voice rang out from the middle of the silent hall:

"There *is* such a party!"

The voice was that of Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik Party. People who were present relate that his words came like a thunderbolt, and caused a great stir in the hall and confusion on the platform. The hall hummed with voices. Tsereteli, the smooth flow of his oratory interrupted by Lenin's unexpected retort, hurriedly rounded off his speech. Lenin went to the rostrum. He made a forceful speech on the attitude to be adopted towards the Provisional Government. Referring to Tsereteli's assertion that there was not a single party in Russia that would consent to assume full power, Lenin exclaimed once again, from the rostrum: "I reply: 'Yes, there is.' No party can refuse this, and our Party certainly doesn't. It is ready to take over full power at any moment."*

Lenin showed in his speech that the so-called "revolutionary democracy" the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were defending was, in fact, not revolutionary but the bourgeois democracy recognised by all bourgeois governments. Under the conditions of the Russian revolution, when the creative initiative of the masses had given rise to

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 20.

the Soviets, the programme of bourgeois democracy was past history, for a real democracy of the masses had come into being in the shape of the Soviets. The April Conference of the Bolsheviks had produced a real programme for the solution of all the urgent problems that were worrying the people. The answer to economic dislocation was genuine control by the workers. This was not socialism, but it was a measure that would have important practical results in restraining the capitalists who were waging the imperialist war.

Explaining the Bolshevik standpoint on the nationalities question and condemning the chauvinist policy of the Provisional Government with regard to Finland and the Ukraine, Lenin stated that the politically-conscious proletariat following the Bolshevik Party did not want to oppress and would never oppress any people. "We want a single and undivided republic of Russia with a firm government. But a firm government can be secured only by the voluntary agreement of all peoples concerned."*

Lenin argued passionately with the Congress delegates that the Soviets must take power into their own hands. "You have gone through 1905 and 1917. You know that revolution is not made to order, that revolutions in other countries were made by the hard and bloody method of insurrection, and in Russia there is no group, no class, that would resist the power of the Soviets. In Russia, this revolution can, by way of exception, be a peaceful one."**

The impression made by Lenin's speech was so powerful that when his time was up, nearly the whole Congress demanded an extension. In the second part of his speech Lenin warned the Congress of Soviets that it was a question of advancing or retreating. During a revolution it was impossible to mark time; power must be transferred to the revolutionary proletariat, supported by the poorest strata of the peasantry.

To weaken the effect of Lenin's speech the Congress "bosses", the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, immediately sent their best speakers—Kerensky, Skobelev (Minister of Labour), Chernov (Minister of Agriculture), and the Menshevik leader Dan—to the rostrum. Throughout eight sittings they all tried to refute Lenin, using unworthy polemical devices to do so. Their efforts became almost comic when the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky tried to teach Lenin "Marxism". Lenin's speech on the attitude to be adopted towards the Provisional Government was supported by speeches from the Bolshevik delegates N. Krylenko, V. Nogin, B. Shumyatsky and others. When the debate was over, fearing a swing in the voting, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries announced an interval, during which delegates from local organisations were heavily briefed. Then a stratagem was used. The matter was put to the vote in the form of a joint draft

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 22-23.
** *Ibid.*, p. 23.

resolution, which was passed by a majority of the Congress. The resolution approved the setting up of the coalition government and opposed the transfer of power to the Soviets.

Lenin's second speech to the Congress, which he made on June 9, dealt with the question of the war. He said that because of the foreign policy supported by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, the revolutionary workers and the toiling peasantry had been placed in an unbelievably muddled situation. As working classes, they had no interest in plans of conquest. It was only because of the trickery practised by the bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, that large numbers of them had taken up a defencist standpoint. The masses did not yet understand that the war was a continuation of the imperialist policy of the bourgeoisie of various countries. Withdrawal from the war could only be achieved by the victory of a socialist revolution.

The Congress delegates, particularly the soldiers, listened eagerly to every word Lenin had to say about war and peace. Many of them gradually began to shake off the prejudices against the Bolshevik line that had been drummed into their heads by the slanderous articles in the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois newspapers.

The First Congress of Soviets showed up the open retreat of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders from the revolution. By rejecting the Bolshevik proposals on war and peace, and the transfer of power to the Soviets, by approving the policy of the Provisional Government, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik majority were turning the Soviets into an appendage of the Provisional Government.

The June demonstration. Meanwhile disturbances had begun in the working-class districts of Petrograd on account of increasing economic dislocation, the rising cost of living, discontent with the policy of the Provisional Government, and indignation over the activities of the counter-revolutionaries, who were becoming more and more arrogant.

On June 8, members of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee held a joint meeting with representatives of all Petrograd districts and many of the military units in the city. The overwhelming majority at the meeting came out in favour of channelling this broad movement of the masses into an organised and peaceful demonstration. The Bolshevik Central Committee thereupon published in *Pravda* a call for a peaceful demonstration on June 10.

The Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik majority in the presidium of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets banned the demonstration planned by the Bolsheviks and accused them of a "conspiracy" to overthrow the Provisional Government and the Soviets. Refusal to abide by this decision would have meant taking a stand against the Congress of Soviets. The Bolshevik Central Committee on Lenin's suggestion decided late at night on June 9 to call off the demonstration. Early in the morning on June 10, the whole organisational and agitational apparatus of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Party Committee and the district

organisations was sent out to the factories and barracks to restrain the masses from demonstrating and explain to them the situation that had arisen. This task was fulfilled, although the masses were seething with indignation and openly expressed their dissatisfaction over the conduct of the Congress of Soviets. This was an instance of the flexibility of the Bolshevik leadership and the Party's rapidly growing influence among the workers and soldiers.

The Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik leadership of the Congress of Soviets and the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet decided to hold their own demonstration on June 18, hoping to conduct it under their slogans calling for compromise. The day was chosen with the knowledge that Kerensky had decided on this date for the launching of an offensive at the front; the organisers of the "procession" counted on gaining the support of the masses for the Provisional Government and its military plans.

The Bolsheviks launched a tremendous campaign in connection with this demonstration, Lenin himself taking a most energetic part in the preparations. He formulated slogans and conducted a personal check to see that all the necessary placards and banners had been repaired. He demanded that the Bolshevik slogans should overshadow all the rest, that there should be Bolshevik speakers everywhere encouraging the people with shouts of "Down with war, long live peace!" and "All power to the Soviets!" Lenin himself entered his name on the list of speakers for the Field of Mars. A real leader of the proletariat, Lenin directed all the preparations for this great peaceful battle against the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries for influence over the masses. The Bolshevik Central Committee appealed to all working people, all the workers and soldiers of Petrograd to rally in a united demonstration of the forces of the revolution against the counter-revolution.

On June 18, half a million workers and soldiers marched through the streets of Petrograd under Bolshevik slogans. This was a big advance for the Bolshevik Party towards creating a political army of the revolution.

"The demonstration," Lenin wrote, "in a few hours scattered to the winds, like a handful of dust, the empty talk about Bolshevik conspirators and showed with the utmost clarity that the vanguard of the working people of Russia, the industrial proletariat of the capital, and the overwhelming majority of the troops support slogans that our Party has always advocated."*

The June demonstration showed manifestly that the Bolsheviks were becoming the party of the masses in the capital—the centre of the Russian revolution. This Bolshevik victory was all the more significant since it had been won at the height of a slander campaign, even more vicious

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 109.

than in tsarist days, against the Bolshevik Party, and particularly against Lenin. The bourgeois and Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik newspapers were trying to pin on the Bolsheviks the monstrous charge that they were–"working for Wilhelm II".

This unscrupulous lie evoked an angry protest from the politically-conscious workers and soldiers. In their speeches and reports at meetings and conferences the Bolsheviks exposed this charge as a scurrilous libel. They were listened to with the greatest attention by the workers and soldiers. Resolutions expressing complete trust in Lenin and other émigré Bolsheviks who had returned from abroad after the February revolution were often carried amid loud applause by the thousands attending the meetings.

More and more letters came to Lenin and *Pravda*, from workers, peasants and soldiers expressing their sympathy and trust in him. One of these letters, for instance, says: "Comrade Lenin! Like many soldiers on active service I am constantly hearing talk about you and your actions as a fighter for freedom and a true friend of the proletariat." In another letter we read: "Comrade Lenin, friend, remember that all of us, soldiers, are ready to a man to follow you anywhere, and that your idea really expresses the will of the peasants and workers."

In the Kshesinskaya Palace, between June 16 and 23 the Central Committee of the Party held an All-Russia Conference of Bolshevik Party Army Organisations at the front and in the rear. Lenin addressed the conference on June 20 and spoke on the current situation. He called on the Bolshevik military organisations to spare no effort in preparing the forces of the proletariat and the army for the next stage of the revolution, and to be on the alert for any attempts the counter-revolutionaries might make to disarm the revolutionary workers and disband the revolutionary regiments, particularly in Petrograd. But he warned against hasty decisions and premature actions. Lenin also delivered a report on the agrarian question, after which the resolution of the April Conference was approved.

The July days. By the end of June the pressure of work was beginning to tell on Lenin's health. Overstrain and constant lack of sleep were giving him headaches and insomnia. He went for a few days' rest to Bonch-Bruyevich's country-house at the village of Neivola, near Mustamäki on the railway line to Finland. But his holiday was interrupted by disturbances in Petrograd.

News of the reckless offensive which Kerensky had launched on June 18 and subsequent rumours reaching the capital about the failure of this offensive, about fresh lives sacrificed at the will of the imperialists, touched off an explosion of indignation among the workers and soldiers. The hypocrisy of the Provisional Government and the subservient conduct of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who played up to the bourgeois government were fully revealed.

On July 3, masses of workers and soldiers came out into the streets of Petrograd demanding the transfer of all power to the Soviets. The

situation was critical in the extreme. Armed action would have been premature at the time, for a revolutionary crisis had not yet matured and the army and the provinces were not yet prepared to support the Petrograd workers. The bourgeoisie was making ready to crush the movement and drown it in the blood of the working people.

Late at night on July 3, the Central Committee together with the Petrograd Party Committee and the Military Organisation passed a decision instructing the Bolshevik organisations to take part in the demonstration of workers and soldiers on July 4 in order to lend it a peaceful and organised character.

To be able to direct the demonstration more effectively, members of the Bolshevik Central Committee moved during the night from the Kshesinskaya Palace to the Taurida Palace, where the columns of workers and soldiers were converging. Representatives of regiments and factories came to the palace for instructions and advice in a steady stream. Early in the morning the Bolshevik agitators began to distribute the Central Committee's appeal for a peaceful demonstration in all districts of the capital.

At about 1 a.m. the columns of the 1st Machine-Gun and 180th Infantry Reserve regiments and a huge group of workers from the Putilov Works arrived at the palace. The workers and soldiers demanded of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets that it take over power and declare the Provisional Government deposed. But the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks refused point-blank to accept this demand; they were scheming with the government to have the demonstration suppressed. The military cadet school units and counter-revolutionary Cossack regiments were concentrated round the Taurida Palace.

At this critical moment early in the morning on July 4 Lenin, who had not recovered his strength, arrived in Petrograd. As soon as he learned what was happening in the city, he fully endorsed the measures taken by the Party's Central Committee and took direct charge over the activities of the Party.

At about midday a grandiose demonstration began, with more than 500,000 workers from all districts in Petrograd and soldiers of the Petrograd Garrison taking part. Perfect order reigned in the city. The demonstrators marched first to the Kshesinskaya Palace, where brief meetings were held. When a column of several thousand Kronstadt sailors marched past the Kshesinskaya Palace, they shouted for Lenin to speak. They were told he was unwell and could not address them, so they asked if he could just show himself. Presently he came out on the balcony. The sailors welcomed him with a great cheer. Leaning on the balcony rail, Lenin watched the demonstrators and smiled a greeting. Then he made a short speech, in which he welcomed the Kronstadt sailors on behalf of the Petrograd workers and expressed his firm belief that the slogan of "All power to the Soviets!" would win, no matter what unexpected turns the revolution might take in its historical path. He urged the sailors and workers to show restraint, firmness and vigilance.

From the Kshesinskaya Palace the demonstrators' columns moved on to the Taurida Palace, the headquarters of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets and the Petrograd Soviet. Most of their banners and streamers bore the slogans: "All power to the Soviets!", "Down with the capitalist ministers!" and "Bread, peace, freedom!"

The mighty July demonstration of soldiers and workers terrified the bourgeoisie and its Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary hangers-on, as well as the counter-revolutionary generals and the Anglo-French imperialists. The demonstrators were fired upon and the streets of Petrograd ran with blood. On the night of July 4, a conference of members of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee, presided over by Lenin, passed a decision to stop the demonstration and called upon the demonstrators to disperse peacefully to the factories, barracks, and ships. The Bolshevik Party managed to withdraw its main forces out of range of the counter-revolution.

In the days that followed, mass searches and confiscation of arms were carried out among the workers. Revolutionary regiments were disarmed, arrests were made among the soldiers. The British ambassador in Petrograd Buchanan demanded that the Provisional Government should disarm all Petrograd workers, reintroduce capital punishment at the front and deal summarily with the participants in the July demonstration. An attack was immediately launched on the Bolshevik Party, and on Lenin. On the night of July 4, the premises of Bolshevik organisations were raided.

Early in the morning on July 5, military cadets wrecked the *Pravda* editorial office. Lenin, who had called there just before they raided the place, nearly fell into their hands. The Trud printing plant, which had been bought with money contributed to the Bolshevik Party by the workers, was also raided.

An unbridled campaign of slander was launched against Lenin. Alexinsky, an *agent provocateur* and slanderer of the worst kind, had told the Petrograd Journalists' Committee on July 4 that he possessed documentary evidence confirming the charge that Lenin was a German spy. This statement was so fantastic that Chkheidze, the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets, on his own behalf and on behalf of Tsereteli, a member of the Provisional Government, telephoned all the big Petrograd newspapers asking them not to print Alexinsky's libel. Only *Zhivoye Slovo* (*Living Word*), a tabloid catering for the most backward sections of the city's population, published Alexinsky's slanderous allegation. The frantic attempts to smear Lenin grew even more violent, and incitement to murder Bolsheviks took an even more threatening form. Lists containing the names of those who were to be killed were being circulated among the soldiers.

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party issued a proclamation to the population of Petrograd, to all honest citizens completely refuting the slander against Lenin, and took steps to protect the great leader of the working class.

Early in the morning on July 5, Yakov Sverdlov came to Lenin's flat in Shirokaya Street with the news of the raid on the *Pravda* office and urged Lenin to go into hiding at once. Taking off his overcoat and giving it to Lenin as a partial disguise, Sverdlov took him to the flat of M. Sulimova, a secretary to the Bolshevik Central Committee military organisation. But this flat was also liable to be searched. For greater safety Lenin and Krupskaya, on July 6, moved to a flat belonging to the worker V. Kayurov in the Vyborg District. From here they moved to the premises of the Vyborg District Party Committee. They were fugitives.

But now, though forced to hide from the Provisional Government, just as he had from the tsarist authorities, Lenin went on with his Party work. On July 5, he wrote five articles exposing the slanderous allegations of the reactionary press and Alexinsky. The next day they were all printed in the *Listok Pravdy (Pravda Newssheet)*. In the afternoon on July 6, he took part in a session of the Executive Commission of the Petrograd Committee of Bolsheviks, which was held in the watch office of the Russian Renault (now Red October) Works, and which discussed the question of a general strike. Lenin was firmly opposed to strike action and drafted an appeal to the workers of Petrograd calling on them not to be misled by the provocations of the counter-revolution and to resume work as from July 7. In the evening on July 6, Lenin went into consultation with members of the Bolshevik Central Committee in the Vyborg District to discuss the situation. It was suggested to him that he should remain underground.

Lenin spent the night of July 6 at the flat of the worker N. Poletayev, a former deputy of the Third Duma. On July 7, he took refuge with S. Alliluyev, a Bolshevik of long standing and a worker at the city power station. "Of course, it was the workers who looked after people like me," Lenin wrote later. Alliluyev recalls that Lenin was calm, wrote encouraging notes to his comrades, reassured and cheered those who had lost heart, and himself laughed heartily when he was told of the current gossip in Petrograd that the chief instigators of the uprising, secret agents of Kaiser Wilhelm, had escaped by destroyer or submarine to Germany.

On July 7, the Provisional Government issued warrants for the arrest and indictment of Lenin and a number of other Bolsheviks. The Constitutional-Democrat and Menshevik newspapers demanded that Lenin should appear in court. Certain Bolsheviks, who did not fully understand the situation, also considered that Lenin should not remain in hiding, that he ought to appear in court. If he did not, they said, it would be bad for the Party's prestige.

Lenin discussed the matter with his wife and sister Maria at Alliluyev's flat on July 7. He was so indignant at the monstrous slander against him that he decided on the spur of the moment to appear in court and expose the slanderers. He even asked his comrades to inform the presidium of the Central Executive Committee of his decision.

The same day a group of Party comrades visited him and the matter of Lenin's appearance in court was further discussed. In his reminiscences published in *Pravda* on March 28, 1924, G. Orjonikidze described the debate: "Nogin rather tentatively spoke in favour of Lenin's appearing and putting up a fight at a public trial. This opinion was shared by a considerable number of the Moscow comrades. Vladimir Ilyich with characteristic clear-headedness argued that there would be no public trial. Stalin was firmly against any appearing before the authorities. 'The-officer-cadets wouldn't take him to the prison, they'd kill him on the way,' he said. Ilyich also seemed to be against the idea, but hesitated because of what Nogin had said."*

A decision was taken to send V. Nogin and G. Orjonikidze to the Taurida Palace to negotiate with Anisimov, a member of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee and the Petrograd Soviet, about the conditions under which Lenin might be detained in prison. Anisimov would not agree to Lenin's detention in the Peter and Paul Fortress, where the garrison was pro-Bolshevik. The only possible place was a solitary-confinement prison known as "Kresty", where the officer-cadets were in charge. Orjonikidze categorically demanded that Anisimov give him a full guarantee that Lenin's life would be in no danger in this prison. As Orjonikidze later reported, Anisimov said that all necessary measures would, of course, be taken but that he "didn't know whose hands he himself would be in tomorrow". To this Orjonikidze replied indignantly: "We will not give up Ilyich to you."

That evening there was a meeting at Alliluyev's flat attended by Nogin, Orjonikidze, Stalin, Yelena Stasova, and others. When Orjonikidze and Nogin reported the results of their visit to Anisimov, everyone present felt indignant and extremely anxious and profoundly aware of his responsibility for Lenin's life. A decision was taken not to allow Lenin to appear in court and at the same time to find a safer hiding-place for him. This was the only correct decision, for there could be no fair trial in Russia at that time. The counter-revolutionary militarists were at work. If Lenin had fallen into their murderous clutches, he would have been killed on the spot. Only two days before, officer-cadets had brutally murdered the worker Voinov merely for distributing Bolshevik newspapers. What would have happened to Lenin if they had got hold of him can easily be imagined.

Events proved that the members of the Central Committee were perfectly right in the action they took to save Lenin's life. Every hour the situation in Petrograd was growing more critical. The Red Guard detachments were being disarmed, the revolutionary regiments of the Petrograd garrison were being dispatched forcibly to the front. The Bolshevik newspapers had been closed down. Arrests and searches were becoming more and more frequent.

* *Pravda* No. 71, March 28, 1924.

On the night of July 6 a detachment of officer-cadets was sent to the Yelizarovs' flat to arrest Lenin. He was not there so they searched his room and seized various papers. Two days later they came again. Although they were told Lenin was not at home, they searched every possible hiding-place—under the beds, in the cupboards, behind the curtains, and so on. They ordered hampers and chests to be opened and plunged their bayonets through the contents. After a fruitless search they retired, taking with them Krupskaya, M. Yelizarov, in whom one of the cadets thought he detected some resemblance to Lenin, and the maid. The same night, after the over-zealous detectives had received a dressing-down from their chief for bringing in the wrong man, the prisoners were released.

It was becoming dangerous for Lenin to remain in Petrograd. The Party Central Committee decided to move Lenin to the Sestroretsk District and shelter him not far from Razliv Railway Station, at the house of Nikolai Yemelyanov, a worker at the Sestroretsk Factory and an old member of the Party. Razliv Station was near the Finnish frontier and, if necessary, Lenin could be taken off into the heart of Finland.

On July 8, Lenin asked Alliluyev to obtain a map of the city to help him decide which would be the safest streets to use for reaching Primorsky Station in case he had to leave for Finland by way of Sestroretsk. The map was obtained and Lenin studied it closely. On the evening of the 9th, he began preparing for the somewhat risky journey to Sestroretsk. Having shaved his beard and clipped his moustache, he put on a brownish-red overcoat and a grey cap. In this garb he bore some resemblance to a Finnish peasant. At about 11 p.m., Lenin, accompanied by Stalin and Alliluyev, started off in the direction of Primorsky Station to catch the last train, which was usually occupied by a mixed crowd of late travellers.

At the appointed spot Lenin and his companions were met by Nikolai Yemelyanov, whom the Central Committee had entrusted with the task of hiding Lenin. Yemelyanov had bought tickets in advance and for safety's sake took Lenin to the train by way of some stationary trucks standing in a siding. Lenin mounted the steps of the carriage. His comrades gave him farewell glances and soon the train moved off. Lenin reached Razliv Station without mishap and a few minutes later was in Yemelyanov's cottage.

Lenin at Razliv. The Sixth Party Congress. Lenin was temporarily accommodated in the loft of a barn, which had been used for storing hay. A bed was made in the hay and a table and two chairs were provided for work. Since the Yemelyanovs' yard and garden were well screened by trees and lilac bushes, Lenin was sometimes able to go outside for a breath of fresh air, though he still had to be careful.

Meanwhile the hazards in Sestroretsk and Razliv were increasing. Detectives were combing the area for Lenin. The summer residents, most of them petty-bourgeois folk, were chattering maliciously about "Lenin's

escape", and it was dangerous for him to remain at the Yemelyanovs. To provide Lenin with a more secure hiding-place Yemelyanov rented a mowing plot on the shore of Lake Razliv, five or six kilometres from the station, in a marshy, wooded locality.

Lenin and Zinoviev, who had come with him, were rowed across the lake, and pretending to be Finnish mowers, they took up their quarters in a kind of tent built of branches and thatched with hay. The tent was next to a hayrick, in which a nest had been made to serve as a "bedroom" on cold nights. In a dense thicket near the tent a small space was later cleared for Lenin to work in. Lenin used to refer to this jokingly as "my green study". In this nook there were two logs, one to serve as a desk, the other as a stool. Not far away was the "kitchen"–a pot hanging from a crossbar supported by two forked branches. Food and newspapers were brought across the lake by Yemelyanov's wife and sons. He demanded a huge number of newspapers–every paper, in fact, that was then published in Petrograd. In order not to arouse suspicion by such large purchases of newspapers Yemelyanov's sons arranged among themselves what papers each should buy. They also maintained a watch. A. Tokareva, a Petrograd working woman, kept him supplied with food and clean linen.

The Provisional Government's detectives were scouring the country for Lenin. There was a big price on his head. Holiday-makers sometimes came across the lake to gather mushrooms in the marshes and Lenin had more than once to transform himself quickly into a typical Finnish mower. But while keeping strictly to the security arrangements, Lenin managed to go for walks, enjoy the sunshine, go swimming in the lake late in the evening, and sometimes do a little fishing.

Today the tent on the shore of Lake Razliv is preserved just as it was in 1917. Close by stands a granite memorial with an inscription carved upon it: "Here in July and August 1917, in a tent made of branches, the leader of the October Revolution hid from pursuit by the bourgeoisie and wrote his book *The State and Revolution.* In memory of this we have built here a tent of granite. Workers of the city of Lenin.* 1927."

Lenin worked hard, reading and writing, although neither living nor working conditions were easy. From his hiding-place Lenin continued to direct Party activities. All this time the Party heard the confident voice of its leader and felt his wise, cautious and yet firm guidance. At Razliv Lenin wrote his theses entitled "The Political Situation", the booklet *On Slogans,* and the articles "Constitutional Illusions" and "Lessons of the Revolution". In these writings Lenin gave a profound analysis of the changes in the political situation following the July events and outlined the tactics the Party should adopt in the new conditions.

The July events, Lenin wrote, were a turning-point in the development of the revolution. Dual power was a thing of the past. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie had organised and consolidated its ranks, and

* In 1924, Petrograd was renamed Leningrad (city of Lenin).

had, in effect, seized all power in the state. It had placed that power in the hands of a gang of militarists. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had completely betrayed the cause of the revolution and deserted to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. Under their leadership the Soviets had in practice handed over power to the military clique and become a helpless appendage of the bourgeois Provisional Government. All hope of peaceful development of the revolution, Lenin pointed out, had disappeared.

The Bolsheviks were not to blame, he said, because the peaceful course of the revolution had been thwarted during the July days. The blame for this lay upon the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who had sealed their policy of agreement with the bourgeoisie by going over completely to the camp of the counter-revolution. The revolution had entered upon a non-peaceful and extremely painful course. The power of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie could now be overthrown only by force. Lenin called upon the Bolsheviks to act as they had done under tsarism in 1912-14, combining illegal forms of struggle with legal forms and marshalling their forces for an armed uprising.

The radical change in the internal political situation demanded that the Party change its tactical slogans. In his article "The Political Situation" and the pamphlet *On Slogans* Lenin proved the necessity of temporarily withdrawing the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" This slogan had been correct during the period of peaceful development of the revolution (up to July 4), when state power was in the balance and was shared, by voluntary agreement, between the Provisional Government and the Soviets. Now the slogan was no longer correct because the present Soviets, being dominated by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, had failed. To call for the transfer of state power to these Soviets would in fact amount to deception of the people; it would sound like an act of Quixotry or sheer mockery.

At the same time Lenin explained that the temporary withdrawal of the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" did not mean that the Bolshevik Party had given up the idea of a Soviet Republic as a new type of state. He was convinced that with a fresh upsurge of the Russian revolution Soviets possessing full power would appear, but not the present kind of Soviets dominated by Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not organs of compromise with the bourgeoisie, but Soviets as organs of revolutionary struggle against it. With the victory of the socialist revolution the Bolsheviks would build the whole state on the model of the Soviets.

Though forced to remain in hiding, Lenin maintained close contact with the Party's Central Committee through G. Orjonikidze, V. Zofa, A. Shotman and E. Rahja, who had been specially assigned to this task. They made their journeys with great care so as not to give away Lenin's whereabouts to anyone who might be shadowing them.

Lenin would question his comrades at great length about what was happening in the city in his absence, about the mood of the workers and

soldiers, and what was being done in the Bolshevik organisation, the Petrograd Soviets, and so on.

Lenin saw clearly that the socialist revolution would triumph, that the day was not far off when the workers' power would be established in the country, and this profound conviction spread to the Party and lent it wings at a time of great difficulty. Orjonikidze recalls: "We had just been given a thorough beating, yet there he was prophesying a victorious uprising within a month or two." According to Orjonikidze, when Lenin was told that a certain Bolshevik had said that power might indeed soon pass to the proletariat and that Lenin would be the head of the government, Lenin had remarked in all seriousness: "Yes, that is what will happen."

Lenin's *The Political Situation, On Slogans, Lessons of the Revolution* and other writings formed the basis of the decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, which met in Petrograd between July 26 and August 3, 1917. The Congress unanimously elected Lenin its honorary chairman. Lenin directed the work of this historic Congress from his hiding-place and took part in working out and drafting its most important resolutions. His booklet *On Slogans* was circulated among the delegates.

One of the first questions to be discussed was whether Lenin should appear in court. Ten delegates took part in the debate. In Orjonikidze's report on the matter and in all the speeches there was a sense of anxiety and great responsibility for Lenin's safety. The speakers approved Lenin's action in refusing to appear for trial by rabid counter-revolutionaries. "On no account should we give up Comrade Lenin," Orjonikidze stated. The persecution of Lenin, Dzerzhinsky said, was persecution directed against the Party, against revolutionary democracy. The Bolsheviks must state quite firmly that they would not give up Lenin. Skrypnik, one of the delegates, maintained that it should be stated in a Congress resolution that the Congress approved the conduct of its leaders, protested at the slandering of the Bolshevik Party and its leaders, and would not allow them "to be subjected to class-prejudiced trial by a gang of counter-revolutionaries". Some of the delegates (Stalin, Volodarsky, Lashevich, Manuilsky and others), though opposing Lenin's appearance in court under the circumstances then obtaining, considered it as a possibility, provided the trial was "honest", "just", and guaranteed Lenin's personal safety, or provided there was an "objective" jury with representatives of the revolutionary parties taking part in the investigation. "At the present moment," said Stalin, "it is still not clear who holds power. There is no guarantee that if they are arrested they will not be subjected to crude violence. It would be a different matter if the trial was organised democratically and a guarantee was given that they would not be torn to pieces.... While the position is still unclear, while there is still an undercover struggle going on between the official government and those who actually hold power, there is no point in the comrades' appearing before the authorities. On the other hand, if a government that can

guarantee our comrades protection from violence, and that has some semblance of honour comes to power ... they will appear."*

This presentation of the question was ambivalent because it was based on an incorrect appreciation of the internal situation and reflected the constitutional illusions that were shared by some of the Bolsheviks.

The unanimous resolution of the Sixth Congress stated that at a time when the counter-revolutionary forces were brazenly interfering in legal proceedings "there are absolutely no guarantees not only of impartial legal procedure but even of elementary safety for those who are brought to trial". The Congress issued a firm protest against the outrageous persecution of the leaders of the revolutionary proletariat by prosecutors, spies and police, sent its ardent greetings to Lenin and expressed the hope of seeing him once again with the party of the revolutionary proletariat.

The Congress approved Lenin's proposal for the temporary withdrawal of the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" and called on the party to fight for the complete abolition of the dictatorship of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and for the seizure of state power by the proletariat and the poorest peasantry by means of an armed uprising. In complete accordance with the Leninist doctrine the Congress stressed that the alliance of the working class and the peasantry was an important condition for the victory of the socialist revolution. These revolutionary classes, the Congress resolution "On the Political Situation" stated, take state power "in order to direct it, in alliance with the revolutionary proletariat of the advanced countries, towards peace and the socialist transformation of society".

The Congress firmly rebuffed N. Angarsky, Y. Preobrazhensky and K. Yurenev, whose speeches expressed disbelief in the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia. The Congress also criticised and rejected the anti-Leninist scheme of the development of the revolution in Russia put forward by Bukharin and based on rejection of the alliance between the working class and the poorest peasants. The Congress upheld Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution and Lenin's proposition on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, Russia.

Besides the resolution "On the Political Situation" the Congress passed the following resolutions: "On the Economic Situation", "The Election Campaign in the Constituent Assembly", "The Tasks of the Trade Union Movement", "On Youth Leagues", "On Propaganda", etc. It also passed the Party Rules.

By a secret ballot the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) elected a Central Committee headed by Lenin, with twice the original number of members. The Congress nominated Lenin as the Bolshevik Party's first candidate for the Constituent Assembly.

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* Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks). August 1917. Minutes, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1958, pp. 27-28.

All Congress decisions were aimed at preparing the working class and the poorest peasants for an armed uprising, for the victory of the socialist revolution. This is what gives it its main significance for the history of the Party and the revolution.

On the instructions of the Congress the Central Committee issued a manifesto "To All Working People, to All Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants of Russia", which expressed the unshakable conviction that the imminent clash between the socialist proletariat and the imperialist bourgeoisie would bring victory to the forces of socialism. "Our Party is entering this struggle with banners unfurled. It has kept a firm grip on them. It has never lowered them to the oppressors and the dirty slanderers, to the betrayers of the revolution and the servants of capital. It will continue to hold them high, fighting for socialism, for the brotherhood of the peoples. Because it knows that the new movement is in the ascendant and the mortal hour of the old world is near."

As soon as the Congress was over the Central Committee sent out Lenin's pamphlet *On Slogans* to four hundred Party organisations. The Congress decisions were also soon published.

Lenin goes to Helsingfors. When the hay-making season was over Lenin found it difficult to keep up the pretence of being a mower. Hunters were beginning to appear in the area and there were rumours in the town that Lenin was masquerading as a fitter at the Sestroretsk Factory. Kerensky's detectives were again combing the districts around Petrograd. Dogs were being used. Hundreds of volunteer detectives from bourgeois circles came forward. One newspaper announcement stated that 50 officers of a shock battalion had sworn to catch Lenin or die in the attempt.

A new and safer refuge had to be found. The Central Committee passed a decision to arrange with the Finnish Bolsheviks for Lenin's removal to Finland. Orjonikidze discussed the matter with a delegate of the Sixth Party Congress A. Shotman, who together with the Finnish worker Eino Rahja, a Bolshevik, immediately set about making the necessary arrangements. N. Yemelyanov obtained an identity card and a pass made out in the name of the Sestroretsk worker Konstantin Petrovich Ivanov. Lenin was photographed in make-up and a wig. The photograph was stuck in the card which had the actual stamp of the Sestroretsk Militia Committee.

After investigating all the possible ways of getting into Finland, the comrades suggested to Lenin that he should make the journey on the foot-plate of a locomotive, as a fireman. When he agreed, they arranged with Hugo Jalava, an engine-driver they knew well, to get him taken across the frontier.

Late in the evening of August 8, Lenin left his tent. Ahead of him lay a walk of some ten kilometres to the next station on the Finnish line. He was accompanied by some of his comrades. On the way they strayed off the path and came to a river, which they had to ford. They made their way on through a forest, parts of which were on fire. The going

was dangerous because peat was burning underfoot and there was the risk of floundering into a swamp. Nevertheless they had to avoid the fires. This, too, was dangerous, because the frontier was near and there was a grave risk of running into officer-cadets. Eventually, hungry and utterly exhausted, they came out in the middle of the night at Dibuny Station, which was guarded by a party of cadets. Lenin managed to hide in the bushes at the bottom of the embankment. Yemelyanov went out to reconnoitre and buy tickets, and was immediately stopped by the cadets. When a train came in, Lenin and Rahja slipped quickly into one of the end carriages and travelled safely as far as the station of Udelnaya, where Lenin spent the night at the flat of a Finnish worker, E. G. Kalske.

The next day, accompanied by Rahja and Shotman, he went back to the station. Before getting into the train, Lenin handed Shotman a blue-covered notebook and asked him to look after it well. In a note to Kamenev, written soon after he went into hiding and discovered by the officer-cadets when they searched the Yelizarov flat, Lenin had said: "...if they do away with me, please publish my notebook *Marxism on the State.*" Lenin attached great importance to his blue-covered notebook, in which he had brought together and analysed the ideas of Marx and Engels on the state and formulated a number of highly important propositions about the destruction of the bourgeois state machine during the socialist revolution, about the dictatorship of the proletariat, and about proletarian democracy, socialism and communism. Lenin's work exposed the views of the opportunists of the Second International and the anarchists on the socialist revolution and the state. It has since become widely known under the title of *Marxism on the State.*

Engine-driver Hugo Jalava took Lenin aboard his engine as a fireman and Lenin worked hard throwing logs into the fire-box. The going was good as far as the frontier station of Beloostrov, but at the frontier the guards began checking the passengers' documents. The train crew's documents might also be checked, but the experienced Jalava knew how to deal with the situation. Pretending the engine needed a filling-up, he uncoupled it and drove it off to the pumps and did not return until the station bell had rung three times. He then quickly recoupled the engine, gave a sharp blast on the whistle and put on steam.

In a few minutes Lenin was in Terijoki and had recovered his notebook from Shotman. Soon afterwards he arrived in the village of Jalkala, about twelve kilometres from Terijoki. Here he put up at the house of a Finnish worker, P. Parviainen, that stood aside from the village on the edge of the woods. According to Eino Rahja's reminiscences, Lenin did not live in the cottage itself but in one of the outhouses. "For some reason Vladimir Ilyich took a fancy to the place and said he wanted to live there. We scrubbed the floor, put in a table, a bed, a lamp, everything he needed, and he was able to work there. He couldn't have worked in the cottage because the children would have disturbed him.

I think that was the reason he was prepared to live even in a chicken shed. He just had to be able to work."*

In Jalkala, Lenin worked hard, writing and reading, and in his spare time helped the master of the house with the ploughing and mowing, went to the forest to gather mushrooms and bilberries, bathed in Kafi Lake, and went rowing and fishing. His friends were Parviainen's little children, for whom he showed great affection. Lenin always enjoyed being with children.

Jalkala provided only a brief refuge for Lenin. With the Russian frontier so close, it was dangerous to stay longer. Lenin lived there while a suitable lodging in Helsingfors was being found for him. It was not long before two Finns arrived from Helsingfors to take Lenin deeper into Finland. They were young workers, members of a Helsingfors amateur dramatics society. They made Lenin up as a Finnish pastor. With them Lenin took the train from Terijoki, to the little town of Lahti, 130 km from Helsingfors, and put up at a flat belonging to a Finnish worker. Lenin made another day's stop at the station of Malmi (a suburb of Helsingfors), at the country-house of a deputy of the Finnish Diet Viik. With his assistance Lenin set about getting in touch by post with the Bureau Abroad of the Bolshevik Central Committee in Sweden.

In Helsingfors, Lenin lodged with a Finnish Social-Democrat Kustaa Rovio, who was at the time acting chief of the Helsingfors police. Nothing could have been better for Lenin from the point of view of secrecy and protection. Rovio's flat consisted of one room and a kitchen and it was vacant because Rovio's wife was in the country at the time. While he was in Helsingfors Lenin also lived at the flats of the Finnish workers Usenius and Blomqvist. Rovio kept Lenin in touch with Petrograd through engine-driver Jalava, who lived in the Vyborg District, not far from the flat where Krupskaya was in hiding.

"We made a working arrangement," Rovio recalls. "In the evenings I would wait for the mail train at the station, buy all the newspapers and take them to Lenin. He would read them through immediately and write articles till late at night and on the next day give them to me to dispatch to Petrograd. During the day he prepared his own food."**

Very few Bolsheviks knew Lenin's whereabouts. But his articles appearing in the newspapers *Proletary* and *Rabochy* (*Worker*), which the Bolsheviks were bringing out to replace the banned *Pravda*, were read by the whole Party in the joyful knowledge that its leader was at his post and safe from danger.

When on August 20, the day of the elections to the Petrograd City Duma, the bourgeois press again carried slanderous allegations against Lenin, he published a very important and instructive article in *Proletary*, entitled "Political Blackmail". In this article he pointed out that one

* *Krasnaya Letopis* No. 1 (58), 1934, p. 84.
** *Lenin in October*, Reminiscences, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1957, p. 264.

must understand the tricks used by the imperialist bourgeoisie in persecuting the revolutionary parties and their leaders in order to prevent them carrying on their political work. The political enemies of the revolutionary proletarian party could not operate without blackmail, lies and slander. They were too base.

The frenzied hatred of the bourgeoisie, Lenin wrote, was the best proof that slandered and persecuted revolutionaries were performing true and honest service to the proletariat. Bolsheviks who had been roughly handled by the political blackmailers, wrote Lenin, could apply to themselves the fine words of the Russian poet Nikolai Nekrasov. They were words that Lenin often recalled later:

We hear the voice of approbation
Not in the dulcet sounds of praise
*But in savage cries of irritation.**

A revolutionary who had been slandered by the bourgeoisie, Lenin taught, must counter the blackmailers with the trust of his own Marxist party and not retire from public life, till the case was "heard" by a bourgeois court. We must rely on the judgement of the proletarians, the judgement of our own proletarian party, he urged.

In his article Lenin wrote with great pride and gratitude of the Bolshevik Party: "We believe in it, we see in it the intelligence, the honour and the conscience of our era." Lenin's inspiring words contain the highest appreciation of the historic services rendered by the Communist Party to the Russian and international working-class movement, of its Marxist theoretical maturity, its selfless dedication to the cause of the socialist revolution and its splendid moral qualities as collective political leader of the working people.

On the eve of his departure from Helsingfors, Lenin had a conversation with O. Kuusinen, a member of the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party of Finland. Lenin advised the Left-wing Finnish Social-Democrats to press in the Diet that Finland break off relations with the Provisional Government of Russia. Do not allow Kerensky and the Mensheviks, he said, to sow doubts in your ranks as to whether a consistent struggle against any intervention by the Provisional Government in Finnish affairs is correct revolutionary policy. You were right to defy Kerensky's order and refuse to recognise the legality of the dissolution of the Diet. Our Bolshevik Party stands for recognition of Finland's independence, said Lenin, and this will be easy to reach agreement on when power passes into the hands of the revolutionary working class in Russia.

Regarding the prospects of socialism, Lenin pointed out that since Finland had no natural stocks of coal and iron it would evidently not be able to build socialism alone, but that in close co-operation with the future Soviet Russia it would undoubtedly be possible for Finland to do so.

* From Nekrasov's poem "Blessed Is the Gentle Poet".

Towards the end of the conversation Lenin mentioned that he would be returning the next day to Petrograd. When O. Kuusinen, realising that the trip might be dangerous, asked whether it could not be postponed, Lenin replied resolutely: "No, we can't wait any longer; the situation is now ripening at tremendous speed for the decisive clash in the struggle for Soviet power." He then referred to the report in the Russian newspapers he had just received concerning the debate at a session of the Petrograd Soviet, during which Dubasov, an officer who had recently returned from the front, had declared that he was not a Bolshevik, but, knowing the true state of affairs at the front, he could say with certainty that the army was unable to fight and would not fight. Lenin regarded this statement by a non-Party officer as a signal that the revolutionary situation in Russia was rapidly reaching crisis point.

Nadezhda Krupskaya visited Lenin twice in Helsingfors, using the identity card of a Sestroretsk working woman Agafya Atamanova. "Ilyich was ever so glad to see me," she recalls. "Obviously, he had been feeling desperately lonely, living there underground at a time when it was so important for him to be in the centre of preparations for the struggle. I told him all the news, and stayed in Helsingfors for two days."*

While he was in Finland, Lenin worked hard on the theoretical problems of Marxism. In this period he wrote his outstanding works *The State and Revolution* and *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*, and *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?*, in which he developed the Marxist teaching on the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat, formulated the fundamental principles of the internal and foreign policy to be adopted by the proletarian government and outlined the first steps and immediate measures it should take.

"The State and Revolution". In his book, *The State and Revolution*, written between August and September 1917, Lenin for the first time comprehensively and systematically expounded Marx's teaching on the state, which had been distorted by Kautsky and other opportunists. It was extremely important to examine and interpret this teaching correctly because with the socialist revolution maturing in Russia the question of the role of the state had become an urgent theoretical and practical issue.

Bourgeois ideologists, echoed by opportunists in the socialist parties, put forward numerous theories of the state intended to justify the rule of the exploiting classes and to gloss over the real class nature of the bourgeois state. In their opinion, the bourgeois state was an institution above classes, whose function was to reconcile the interests of the various classes of society. Lenin rejected this and insisted that it was Marxist doctrine that had for the first time provided a genuinely scientific explanation of the origin of the state and revealed its true nature.

The state in the proper sense of the term, so Marxism teaches, is a machine for the suppression of one class by another. Like other instruments for ensuring the exploiting classes' domination over the people,

* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, pp. 371-72.

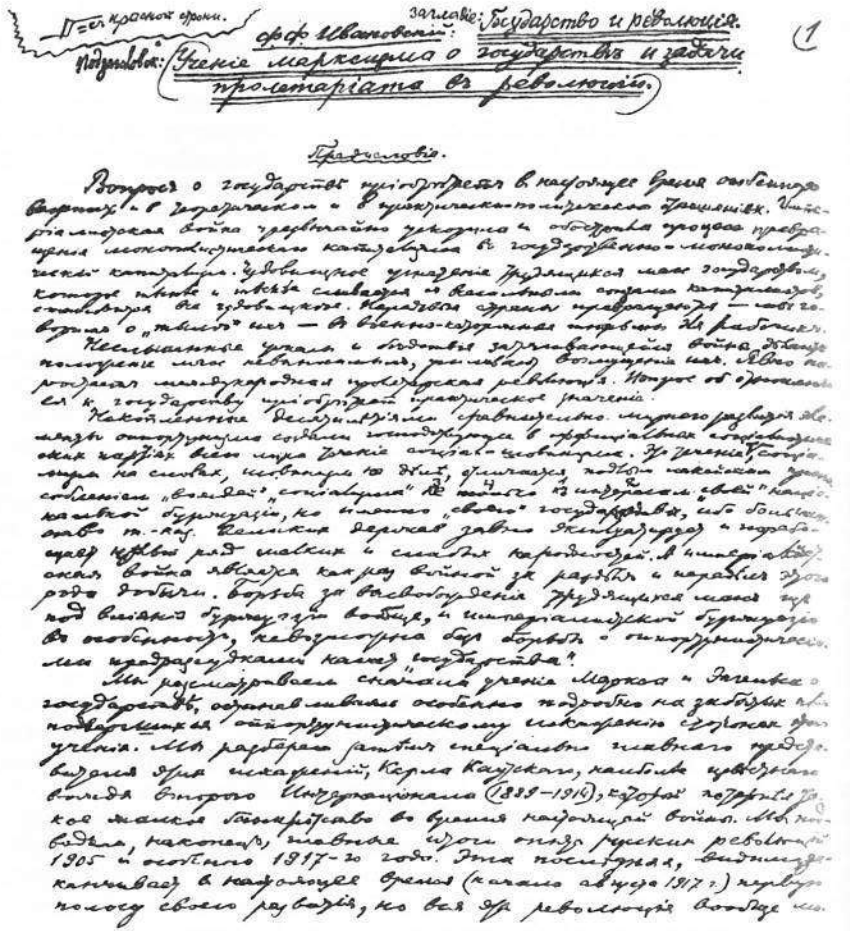
the state came into being when private ownership appeared and society split up into antagonistic classes. Not only in slave-owning and feudal societies, but also in capitalist society is the state an instrument for oppressing the working people, who form the overwhelming majority of the population. In the epoch of imperialism, Lenin wrote, the bourgeois state machine, the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie", is greatly intensified; there is an unprecedented increase in its bureaucratic and military apparatus, which is directed against the revolutionary proletariat, the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples, and so on. All former revolutions, said Lenin, expounding the fundamentals of Marxist doctrine on the state, improved the bourgeois state machine. All kinds of bourgeois states arose, but they were all essentially the same. They were all dictatorships of the bourgeoisie. The proletarian revolution must smash this dictatorship, destroy and replace it with a proletarian state machine–the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The proletariat," Lenin wrote, "needs state power, a centralised organisation of force, an organisation of violence, both to crush the resistance of the exploiters and to *lead* the enormous mass of the population–the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletarians–in the work of organising socialist economy."* The essence of Marxism is the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*."**

In *The State and Revolution* Lenin gave a comprehensive substantiation of the vital Marxist proposition on the law-governed nature and inevitability of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the working class and revealed its essence. He stressed the great organisational function of the proletarian state in the building of socialist society. The dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin emphasised, is the state only of the transitional period between capitalism and socialism, and it differs radically from the state of the exploiters, whose main and determining function is coercion and suppression. The essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the coercion which the masses apply to the exploiters, but their creative activity. The dictatorship of the proletariat expresses the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population and sets as its aim the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, the building of socialist society. Lenin speaks with exceptional clarity and persuasion, in this work, of proletarian democracy as the highest type of democracy, contrasting it with formal, limited, hypocritical bourgeois democracy.

Again and again Lenin draws Marxists' attention to the fact that "the transition from capitalism to communism is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*".***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 404.
** *Ibid.*, p. 412.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 413.



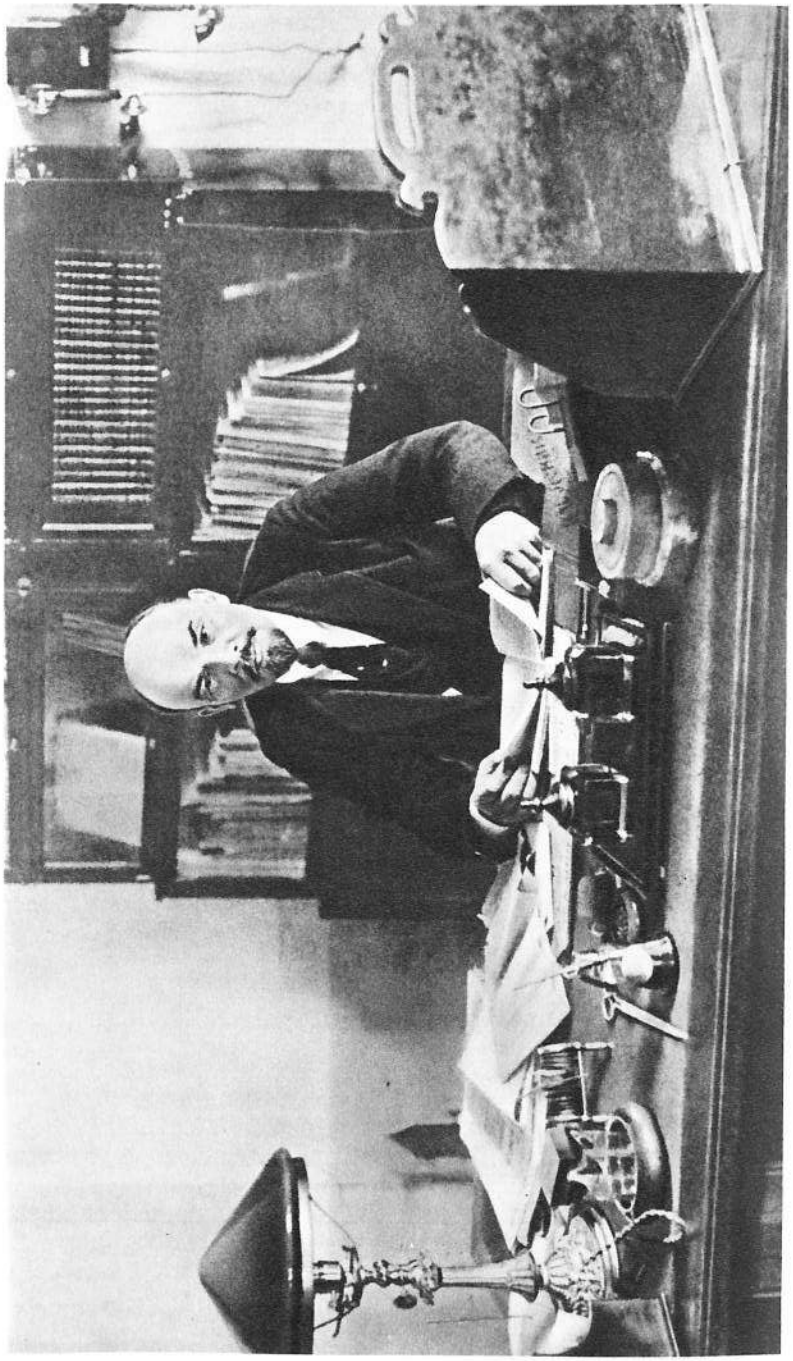
First page from Lenin's manuscript *The State and Revolution*
(*Reduced*)

Lenin showed the decisive role of the Communist Party not only in winning but in consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the building of socialism and communism. The party of the proletariat is the organising and directing force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of assuming power and *leading the whole people* to socialism, of directing and organising the new system, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the working and exploited people in organising their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie."* This formula of Lenin's brilliantly

* *Ibid.*, p. 404.



Lenin disguised
Photo, August 1917



Lenin in his study in the Kremlin
Photo, 1918

defines the tasks of the Communist Party, its great goal and its programme for a whole historical period.

Lenin's doctrine, as expounded in *The State and Revolution*, on socialism and communism, on the two basic phases through which communist society passes in its development, on the conditions under which the state withers away, is a great contribution to Marxist theory. He showed that socialism and communism inevitably replace capitalism and develop on the same type of economic basis–social ownership of the means of production, which excludes exploitation of man by man. The difference between socialism and communism is determined by the degree of their economic, political and cultural maturity. Socialism is the first, the lower phase of communism. The level of development of social production at this stage is such that society can put into effect, as yet, only the principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." At this stage of development society still bears the traces, the birthmarks of the old society from which it emerged.

Since people have different qualifications, unequal talents and working capacity, and different family backgrounds, it is natural that, given equal pay for equal work, their incomes are in fact unequal. But this is inevitable in the first phase of communist society; society cannot leap straight from capitalism to communism without passing through the socialist stage of development. "From capitalism," said Lenin, "mankind can pass directly only to socialism, i.e., to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual."* Accounting and control by society and the state of the measure of labour and the measure of consumption are therefore of the greatest importance under socialism.

Under communism, i.e., in the higher phase of communist society, which develops through the consolidation of socialism, the basic principle is: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." This is possible, Lenin pointed out, only in the higher stage of development of society, when the essential differences between mental and physical work have been overcome, when work becomes man's primary need and when, on the basis of an enormous increase in the productive forces and the all-round development of the individual, material and spiritual wealth flows in a broad stream and there is abundance in society.

In *The State and Revolution* Lenin went deep into the question of the economic basis of the withering away of the state. The withering away of the state depends on the rapidity of development of the higher phase of communism; he emphasised that this was bound to be a long and gradual process. The state would be able to wither away completely when people had become accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of the community and when their labour was so productive that they would voluntarily work according to their abilities. The state would

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 84-85.

finally wither away, Lenin explained, only when there was complete communism.

Lenin formulated the profound idea that "politically, the distinction between the first, or lower, and the higher phase of communism will in time, probably, be tremendous".* He considered the further development, the perfection of socialist democracy to be the political prerequisite for the withering away of the state. He attached tremendous importance to extensive realisation of the principles that all posts connected with state or social administration should be filled by election, that all administrative personnel should be replaceable, and that control and supervision should be exercised by *all* working people.

"The State and Revolution" was a great contribution to the theoretical knowledge of the Bolshevik Party. The brilliant ideas which Lenin developed in this work guided our Party in achieving victory in the October Revolution, in building socialism; they guide the Party today in tackling the great tasks of the full-scale building of communist society.

Salvation from the impending catastrophe lies in socialism. By the autumn of 1917, in the fourth year of the imperialist war, the economic position of Russia had taken a sharp turn for the worse. Railway transport was disorganised. The flow of raw materials, coal and metal to the factories dwindled inexorably. Output of metal and coal dropped steeply every month, there was a catastrophic fall in the production of consumer goods. The disorganisation of the economy was leading inevitably to famine. The tsarist autocracy and the bourgeoisie, wrote Lenin, had brought the country to the brink of disaster.

Far from taking any measures to avert the impending economic disaster, the bourgeoisie deliberately aggravated the situation. They counted on being able to throw all the blame for the catastrophic state of affairs on the revolution and hoped that economic disaster would lead to the destruction of the Soviets and strengthen the power of the bourgeoisie and the landowners. This programme was formulated with cynical frankness and insolence by the millionaire Ryabushinsky, who said "the gaunt hand of famine" would seize the revolution by the throat and throttle it. The capitalists deliberately sabotaged production and adopted a policy of closing down factories and throwing workers out into the streets. Mass unemployment increased, the prices of bread soared. Many provinces in the central part of Russia were gripped by famine. In Petrograd and Moscow the bread ration in September 1917 was cut to 200 grams per day, and stocks of flour were sufficient only for ten days. Tens of millions of people were in danger of starvation in both town and country. An army of ten millions was enduring terrible privations in the trenches. There was no end to the sufferings of the people.

The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik ministers in the government, supported by their parties, "helped" matters by making more and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 470.

more concessions to the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie; they were afraid to encroach on the profits and property of the landowners, capitalists, bankers, and merchants who were to blame for the internal economic chaos and starvation and the defeat of the armies at the front.

On the extreme Right wing of the Mensheviks stood Plekhanov. He was taking an active part in the so-called Assembly of State, which had been formed in August 1917 by merchants, industrialists, landowners, bankers, former members of the tsarist Duma, and the bourgeoisie's docile Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, to cover the counter-revolutionary coup that was being prepared by Kornilov. At this Assembly Plekhanov made a speech that was a disgrace to a Marxist; he called for abandonment of the revolution and the class struggle and for an "agreement" with Ryabushinsky and other counter-revolutionary bosses of the "merchant-industrialist class".

"Russia is now undergoing a capitalist revolution," Plekhanov stated in defiance of the facts, "and when a country is undergoing a capitalist revolution, the seizure of power, of complete political power by the working class is utterly inappropriate."* Further Plekhanov declared: "And if the proletariat does not wish to injure its own interests, and the bourgeoisie does not want to injure its own interests, both classes should *bona fide* seek ways of economic and political agreement."**

Plekhanov, who in the past had done much to spread Marxism in Russia, failed to apply the teachings of Marxism to the revolutionary situation of 1917, the greatest revolutionary situation in history. Confronted by the titanic tasks of the socialist revolution, he turned out to be a pitiful political bankrupt. And the revolution tossed him out of its path.

Only Lenin and the Bolsheviks were able to arrive at a correct assessment of the historical situation and transform the theory of Marxism into living revolutionary action.

On the day of the opening of the Assembly of State, the Moscow proletariat in response to a call from the Bolshevik Party declared a 24-hour strike of protest, in which over 400,000 people took part. This strike dealt a powerful blow at the plans of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. But the danger of conspiracy against the revolution continued to grow.

At this anxious and difficult time the Bolshevik Party elaborated, and offered to the people, effective measures for combating the impending catastrophe, and acted as the Party of true patriots of Russia. Lenin gave the Party a programme for preventing disaster and renovating the country economically in his pamphlet *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*, which he wrote in Helsingfors in the middle of September 1917. Control, supervision, accounting and regulation of production and consumption by the state, these were the first essentials

* *Assembly of State*, Russ. ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1930, p. 236.
** *Ibid.*, p. 237.

in the fight against ruin and famine. All the belligerent imperialist countries had long ago adopted extensive controls. But these controls were everywhere exercised in a reactionary and bureaucratic fashion.

To this type of control Lenin counterposed control by the workers over production and distribution. As priority measures to combat the impending catastrophe he proposed: nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and enterprises belonging to the capitalist monopolies; nationalisation of the land; abolition of commercial secrecy; compulsory amalgamation of separate capitalist enterprises into syndicates; organisation of the population into consumers' societies to achieve an equal sharing of the burdens of the war and also control by the poor over consumption by the rich.

These measures, aimed at curbing the imperialists and saving the revolution, would evoke a great political and spiritual upsurge among the people, enormously increase the country's power to defend itself, and save it from subjugation by the Western imperialists. At the same time, Lenin added, these measures, if they were carried out in a revolutionary and democratic manner, would speed the country's advance. "It is *impossible* in twentieth-century Russia, which has won a republic and democracy in a revolutionary way, to go forward without *advancing* towards socialism, without taking *steps* towards it."*

Lenin pointed out that owing to the profound crisis in the life of the peoples caused by the imperialist war, mankind was confronted with the following alternative: either it must perish or it must entrust its fate to the working class with the aim of achieving a swift transition to a higher, socialist mode of production. And on this basis he formulated his famous proposition:

"The revolution has resulted in Russia catching up with the advanced countries in a few months, as far as her *political* system is concerned.

"But that is not enough. The war is inexorable; it puts the alternative with ruthless severity: either perish or overtake and outstrip the advanced countries *economically as well*."**

In the pamphlet *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It* Lenin's brilliant proposition on the possibility of socialism being victorious first in one capitalist country alone was further developed as applied to Russia. Lenin resolutely exposed the disastrous policy of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were still asserting that Russia was ripe only for a bourgeois and not for a socialist revolution. These short-sighted politicians completely failed to understand that the war had accelerated the growth of the capitalist monopolies and their transformation into state-monopoly groupings in all the bourgeois countries, including Russia. And state-monopoly capitalism, wrote Lenin, "is a complete *material* preparation for socialism, the *threshold* of socialism".***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 358.
** *Ibid.*, p. 364.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 359.

In the second half of September all the newspapers, from the Constitutional-Democrat *Rech* (*Speech*) to the Menshevik *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*), and all the bourgeois and conciliatory parties, were discussing a question that had now become a matter of moment–the possibility of the transfer of state power to the Bolshevik Party. They were all of the opinion that the Bolsheviks were "brave only in words" and would never dare to take full power alone, and that if they did it would be theirs only for a very short time. The bourgeoisie and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik yes-men tried to sow doubts among the people about the Bolsheviks' intentions, and to frighten the Bolsheviks themselves with talk of what were supposed to be the insoluble tasks of government.

"Don't try to scare us, gentlemen, you won't succeed!" was Lenin's reply in his splendid article 'Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" The Bolsheviks and the advanced workers were ready to take over administration of the country immediately and to maintain their Soviet power to the last, using it to liberate the working people of all exploitation. The transfer of state administration to the proletarians and semi-proletarians, Lenin wrote, would produce such unprecedented revolutionary enthusiasm among the masses, and so increase the strength of the people in the fight for the new life and the revival and development of the economy that much that had seemed impossible would become possible for the toiling millions as soon as they began working for themselves instead of being forced to work for the capitalists and landowners. The main thing was to inspire the oppressed and the working people with faith in their strength.

Lenin developed the important proposition that while resolutely breaking up the apparatus of oppression of the bourgeois state machine it would be necessary to preserve the "accounting and registering" apparatus set up by capitalism. This apparatus, he taught, need not and should not be smashed. It must be taken out of capitalist control and put under the control of the proletarian Soviets; it must be made much wider, more versatile and comprehensive. Lenin also advanced the important thesis that the victorious proletariat should draw the bourgeois intelligentsia into the work of socialist construction.

A Bolshevik government, wrote Lenin, would be unshakable. Even its opponents were obliged to admit that the Bolsheviks' demands were just, that their programme expressed the fundamental interests of the toiling masses and the oppressed nationalities. Regarding the question of peace, he wrote that the proletariat "truly represents the *whole* nation, all live and honest people *in all* classes, the vast majority of the petty bourgeoisie",* because everyone knew for certain that only the proletariat, when it came to power, would immediately offer a just peace to all the belligerent nations and secure such a peace.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 99.

The opponents of the socialist proletariat were doing all they could to create the impression that Lenin and the Bolsheviks were launching an "experiment" which had no solid basis, which contradicted the course of history and was therefore doomed to failure.

Lenin firmly denounced these assertions as completely untenable. It was true of course, he said, that the sense of justice alone, the feelings of the masses outraged by exploitation could never by itself set them on the true path to socialism. But in their preparations for the socialist revolution the Bolsheviks were guided by profound and objective laws of social development. Concluding his article Lenin wrote of this as follows: "But now that, thanks to capitalism, the material apparatus of the big banks, syndicates, railways, and so forth, has grown, now that the immense experience of the advanced countries has accumulated a stock of engineering marvels, the employment of which is being *hindered* by capitalism, now that the class-conscious workers have built up a party of a quarter of a million members to systematically lay hold of this apparatus and set it in motion with the support of all the working and exploited people—now that these conditions *exist*, no power on earth can prevent the Bolsheviks, *if they do not allow themselves to be scared* and if they succeed in taking power, from retaining it until the triumph of the world socialist revolution."*

In "The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It", and "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" Lenin put forward several propositions that were of truly programmatic importance. The measures to be undertaken by a proletarian government in building the new, socialist life that Lenin mapped out on the eve of the October Revolution have since been adopted with great success in the U.S.S.R. and all socialist countries. This is quite natural because these measures are in line with the principal objective laws characteristic of all countries that take the path of socialist revolution and building socialism.

On August 25, General Kornilov, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, started an army revolt. A puppet of the landowners and the bourgeoisie, he withdrew an army corps and Cossack units from the front and marched on Petrograd. The command was given that this force should enter the city "not later than September 1" to "restore order", in other words, to strangle the revolution. The revolt was inspired by the Constitutional-Democratic Party. At this point the revolution was in grave danger. In an article "Rumours of a Conspiracy" and a letter "To the Central Committee" Lenin devised tactics for the Bolsheviks in their fight against Kornilov's attempted coup. We, he wrote, are fighting, and shall go on fighting, against Kornilov, just as Kerensky's troops are fighting him, but we do not support Kerensky, we expose his weakness and vacillation, we expose the whole Provisional Government as accomplices in the Kornilov plot. The Bolsheviks joined the "Committee of National Resistance to the Counter-Revolution" that was set up by the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 130.

Central Executive Committee. The C.E.C. sent out a telegram to local Party organisations that gave the essence of Lenin's tactics against Kornilov. "For the purpose of repulsing the counter-revolution we have technical co-operation and exchange of information with the Soviet while maintaining complete political independence."* The Bolsheviks mobilised the masses to fight Kornilov. In a few days the counter-revolutionary revolt was crushed. In this period of struggle against Kornilov the masses again became active, a fact that was reflected in the work of the Soviets, many of which, though still not breaking with their Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, came out against the Kornilov revolt.

On September 1 (14), Lenin wrote his famous article "On Compromises", in which he refuted the ignorant and philistine conception that the Bolsheviks are opposed in principle to all forms of compromise (a conception the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did all they could to encourage). He showed the real attitude of the working-class Marxist party towards compromises. "The task of a truly revolutionary party is not to declare that it is impossible to renounce all compromises, but to be able, *through all compromises*, when they are unavoidable, to remain true to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary purpose, to its task of paving the way for revolution and educating the mass of the people for victory in the revolution."**

Pointing out further that, thanks to the rout of the Kornilov revolt, the Russian revolution had taken a sudden and original turn enabling it to develop peacefully, Lenin proposed that the Bolsheviks could offer the petty-bourgeois democratic parties a voluntary compromise, that the Bolsheviks could agree to again return to the pre-July demand of all power to the Soviets and formation of a government of Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks accountable to the Soviets.

The compromise in this case would be, Lenin wrote, that the Bolsheviks, while not claiming participation in this government, would abandon an immediate demand for the transfer of power to the proletariat and the poorest peasantry, and also abandon revolutionary methods of fighting for this demand. This would all, of course, be conditional on whether full democracy was observed in the formation and work of the Soviets and whether the Bolsheviks were given full freedom to agitate for their views and for influence in the Soviets. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, on the other hand, having formed a government accountable to the Soviets, would at once gain the full opportunity of carrying out the programme of their bloc with the support of the great majority of the people.

"In my opinion, the Bolsheviks, who are partisans of world revolution and revolutionary methods, may and should consent to this compromise

* Correspondence Between the Secretariat of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) and Local Party Organisations. (March-October, 1917.) Russ. ed., Moscow, 1957, Part 1, p. 31.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 305.

only for the sake of the revolution's peaceful development—an opportunity that is *extremely* rare in history and *extremely* valuable, an opportunity that only occurs once in a while."*

Lenin warned the Bolsheviks, however, that the specific political situation that made it possible to compromise with the petty-bourgeois parties would last only a very short time. By September 3 (16), in a corollary to the article "On Compromises", Lenin reached the conclusion: "... perhaps it is already too late to offer a compromise. Perhaps the few days in which a peaceful development was *still* possible have passed *too*."** The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries categorically rejected the Bolsheviks' proposal.

After the rout of the Kornilov revolt the composition of the Soviets began to change and there was a swing-over to the Bolshevik position. On August 31 (September 13), the Petrograd Soviet went over to the Bolsheviks. It was followed on September 5 (18) by the Moscow Soviet. After their victories in the Soviets of Moscow and Petrograd, the Bolsheviks made great gains in other city Soviets. Demands for the transfer of power to the Soviets came pouring into Petrograd from all sides. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, Lenin wrote, did everything possible to "turn the Soviets (particularly the Petrograd Soviet and the All-Russia Soviet, i.e., the Central Executive Committee) into useless talking shops which, under the guise of 'control', merely adopted useless resolutions and suggestions which the government shelved with the most polite and kindly smile. The 'fresh breeze' of the Kornilov affair, however, which promised a real storm, was enough for all that was musty in the Soviet to blow away for a while, and for the initiative of the revolutionary people to begin expressing itself as something majestic, powerful and invincible".***

In the articles "One of the Fundamental Issues of the Revolution", "The Russian Revolution and Civil War", and "The Tasks of the Revolution", written in the first half of September, Lenin again returned to the question of the possibility of peaceful development of the revolution in Russia in the event of all power at the centre and in the provinces being handed over to the Soviets.

The concentration of all state power in the Soviets, Lenin pointed out, was the only means that could make the further development of the revolution *gradual, peaceful and calm*. In his article "The Tasks of the Revolution" Lenin also drew up a programme for a new government that would be accountable to the Soviets. It contained the following points: immediately offer peace to all the belligerent nations on democratic terms; confiscate and nationalise the landed estates and make them the property of the working people; nationalise the banks and the key branches of industry; introduce workers' control over production and consumption on a nation-wide scale; ensure Russia's safety from a

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 306-07.
** *Ibid.*, p. 310.
*** *Ibid.*, pp. 369-70.

repetition of "Kornilov" attempts. This Soviet government would speedily convoke the Constituent Assembly, in the legislative activity of which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks saw the practical realisation of the economic and social demands in their programmes.

When he proposed to the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties the formation of a Soviet government with the above programme, Lenin had in mind not only the changes that had taken place in the Soviets but also the fact that in September serious internal dissension had arisen in these parties, Left-wing opposition to the Right-wing leaders had come to the surface, and voices were being raised among the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Internationalist Mensheviks in favour of transferring power to the Soviets. Lenin advanced his proposals not just to the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders, but mainly to the "rank and file", to the masses, and not only to the Bolshevik-minded, "but particularly to those who follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, to the non-party elements, to the unenlightened".

However, the Right-wing Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, who were at the same time leaders of the Central Executive Committee, rejected the Bolshevik proposals for a "Left-wing coalition" and continued their policy of collaboration with the counter-revolution. By so doing they cleared the ground for the bourgeoisie to unleash civil war against the revolutionary proletariat, and made an uprising by the workers, soldiers and peasants inevitable. As Lenin noted, by the middle of September the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" no longer meant peaceful development of the revolution, but was *"equivalent to a call for an uprising"*.

The outstanding importance of "The Political Situation", "On Slogans", "On Compromises", "One of the Fundamental Issues of the Revolution", "The Russian Revolution and Civil War", "The Tasks of the Revolution" and other articles, written in the period from the end of the July events and the middle of September, is that here Lenin, besides dealing with other important matters of principle, continued the work he had begun earlier on a problem, which is of the greatest importance to the Marxist parties, concerning peaceful and non-peaceful forms of revolution, concerning peaceful and non-peaceful ways for the socialist proletariat to gain state power.

Lenin's call for insurrection. In the middle of September Lenin wrote a letter to the Central Committee and the Petrograd and Moscow Committees "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power", and a letter to the Central Committee "Marxism and Insurrection". On the basis of a penetrating and comprehensive analysis of the international and internal situation he set the Party the task of preparing and organising an armed uprising in order to seize power. "The Bolsheviks," Lenin wrote, "having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals, can and *must* take state power into their own hands."* The

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 19.

Bolsheviks had behind them not only the majority of the working class but also the majority of the people. This was proved by the fact that the Soviets had taken power in many parts of the country after the rout of the Kornilov revolt.

Lenin warned the Party he did not as yet raise the question of the "day" or "moment" of the uprising in the narrow sense, but the Bolsheviks must go ahead with the practical preparations. The country and the revolution were in grave danger. The Russian bourgeoisie, in full accord with the British imperialists, was preparing to give up Petrograd to the Germans, was actually going to the length of criminally betraying its country for the sake of maintaining power over the people. At the same time, Russia's "allies", the British and French imperialists, as reported in the press, had begun negotiations for a separate peace with Germany "at the expense of Russia". Only the Bolshevik Party, if it took power and immediately offered the nations peace, could thwart the plans of international imperialism and save the country and the revolution.

The people, Lenin pointed out, had no more patience with the "leadership" of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. They had justified respect for the firm Bolshevik leadership the Party had demonstrated during the rout of Kornilov. The victory of the Bolsheviks was assured because the people were near to despair and the Bolsheviks were offering them a sure way out of the war, sure salvation from devastation and famine.

In his letter "Marxism and Insurrection" Lenin showed that the Marxist treatment of insurrection as an art had nothing in common with Blanquism and conspiracy. Taking the views of Marx and Engels on armed insurrection a step further, he wrote that to be successful an insurrection must rely on the advanced class, on a revolutionary upsurge of the people and on that crucial moment in the development of the revolution when the activity of the advanced sections of the people is at its height and vacillation among the enemies and among the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution is strongest. If all these conditions are present, to refuse to treat insurrection as an art is a betrayal of Marxism and the revolution. In this letter Lenin outlined his brilliant plan for the organisation of the uprising.

Lenin held that under the new conditions the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" had acquired a new substance because the Soviets themselves had changed. This slogan now meant transfer of power to the Soviets by means of insurrection, the direct establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the organisation of this dictatorship and giving it state form.

Lenin's letters were discussed at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on September 15. At this meeting, some of the members of the Central Committee, particularly Kamenev, offered such strong opposition to the proposals in Lenin's letters concerning armed insurrection that the question of whether to destroy the letters had to

be put to the vote. Six members voted for the proposal to preserve only one copy of the letters, four voted against, and six abstained. It was decided to hold another meeting shortly to discuss the tactical problems raised in the letters.

Between September 14 and 22, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik Central Executive Committee held an All-Russia Democratic Conference for the alleged purpose of putting a stop to irresponsible personal rule* and setting up a government accountable to the democratic bodies. At first Lenin thought it necessary to make use of the conference platform to show the masses the disastrous results of the policy of compromise with the capitalists conducted by the petty-bourgeois parties. He acknowledged the possibility of securing the fullest possible representation for the Bolsheviks at this conference and of sending workers' delegations to it who would demand the transfer of all power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. But when it transpired that the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders had rejected the demands that they should break with the bourgeoisie, and had been trying to rig the conference in their favour, Lenin decided that participation of representatives of the Bolshevik Party was a mistake. Lenin saw clearly that the principal aim of the Democratic Conference was to divert the people's attention from the mounting wave of revolution, to lure the Bolsheviks up the blind alley of an All-Russia "talking shop" and so isolate them from the masses, who were ready to take direct and effective action.

The Bolsheviks, wrote Lenin, having read their declaration were to withdraw from this dummy conference, leaving one or two, or perhaps three, of their 136 delegates as a "communications service", and send out all the others to the factories and the barracks. When the Democratic Conference was over, Lenin insistently demanded that the Bolsheviks should boycott the Pre-parliament, which had been set up by the conference. He argued that this body carried no weight as a parliamentary tribune, whereas the means of propaganda, agitation and organisation outside parliament were of decisive importance.

The Party Central Committee discussed Lenin's proposal on the Bolsheviks' withdrawal from the Pre-parliament and accepted it in spite of the opposition of Kamenev and other capitulators. The Bolsheviks must go to the Soviets, said Lenin, to the trade unions, to the masses in general, and rouse them to the struggle.

With the revolutionary crisis developing in Russia at such speed Lenin decided he could not remain any longer in Helsingfors. From so far away it was difficult to direct the Party at this critical revolutionary time. The mail arrived late from Petrograd, the morning papers did not come till the evening of the following day. Lenin told his host Rovio that he wanted to move, and asked him to get him a wig and arrange accommodation in Vyborg.

* The reference is to the bourgeois Provisional Government, headed by the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky.

Well before the end of the month Lenin was in Vyborg. He was provided with lodgings by a member of the staff of the local workers' paper *Työ* (*Labour*) Juho K. Latukka, who lived in Talikkala, a working-class district of the town.

As usual Lenin set to work immediately. Latukka recalls that Lenin kept to a strict timetable. At seven in the morning he was at his desk and all through the day he maintained regular hours for dinner and supper, for discussion and for his afternoon rest. Only the hour for going to bed was irregular. "That must depend on how productive the day has been, so that nothing is left undone," he used to say.

Soon after his arrival in Vyborg, Lenin sent I. Smilga, Chairman of the Regional Army, Navy and Finnish Workers' Committee, a very important secret letter setting out a number of practical tasks connected with military preparation of the Baltic Fleet and Finnish troops for the forthcoming overthrow of Kerensky. Smilga immediately informed P. Dybenko, Chairman of the Central Baltic Fleet Committee, Dybenko's assistant N. Izmailov and the whole presidium of the organisation of what was in the letter. The Bolsheviks of the Baltic Fleet and the troops stationed in Finland set about fulfilling Lenin's instructions.

Lenin stressed the need for the Party to take a serious attitude to armed insurrection. From Vyborg he sent articles and letters to Petrograd, urging the Central Committee and other responsible Party bodies to abandon their naïve and dangerous hopes that "Kerensky would be swept away" by a spontaneous "wave", and to start resolute preparations for an uprising. In a long article "The Crisis Has Matured" Lenin noted fresh changes that had occurred in the internal political situation at the beginning of October, and that called imperatively for an immediate armed uprising.

The growing peasant revolt, the mounting strength of the national liberation movement in the country, the refusal of the Finnish troops and the Baltic Fleet to obey the Provisional Government, the readiness of the soldiers of the Northern Front to support the Bolsheviks, the unwillingness of the soldiers of the other fronts to fight for the imperialist aims of the Russian and foreign bourgeoisie, all these things proved irrefutably that a nation-wide revolutionary crisis had matured, that a great turning-point had arrived, compelling the Party of the proletariat to take energetic revolutionary action against the bourgeois Provisional Government. "The whole future of the Russian revolution is at stake," Lenin wrote. "The honour of the Bolshevik Party is in question. The whole future of the international workers' revolution for socialism is at stake."* The Bolsheviks, he wrote, must not let themselves be swayed by constitutional illusions, by "faith" in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. The Bolsheviks had no right to wait for the Congress of Soviets to be held on October 20 because this would

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 82.

mean letting the moment slip, losing weeks and weeks, even days decided everything.

All the time he was in Vyborg Lenin was longing to get to revolutionary Petrograd. More than once he asked the Central Committee to allow him to come to the capital. On October 3, the Central Committee passed a decision "...to suggest to Ilyich that he come to Petrograd to ensure regular and close contact".* Unfortunately, there are no documents confirming the exact date of Lenin's arrival in Petrograd from Vyborg. The recollections of his contemporaries on this matter are contradictory. Some maintain that Lenin arrived in Petrograd at the end of September, and state the day as being either the 22nd or the 29th. Others consider that Lenin arrived at the beginning of October. The only official document that has been preserved is the Central Committee decision mentioned above. Judging by this decision, Lenin must have arrived in Petrograd soon after October 3. According to certain sources, on October 7, Lenin in disguise and accompanied by Eino Rahja took the train to the station of Raivola. There he boarded the tender of locomotive No. 293** driven by Hugo Jalava, an engine-driver with whom he was already acquainted. After crossing the frontier safely, he got out at the station of Udelnaya. Nadezhda Krupskaya had a secret apartment ready for him at the house of Margarita Fofanova, one of her colleagues in the cultural commission of the Vyborg District Duma.

Lenin set about preparing the Party for organising the uprising with tremendous energy and persistence. On October 8, he wrote his famous "Advice of an Onlooker". In this article and others Lenin builds the statements made by Marx and Engels into a comprehensive and integral Marxist doctrine on insurrection and develops this doctrine as applied to the epoch of imperialism. Pointing out that "armed uprising is a *special* form of political struggle, one subject to special laws", and that it must be treated as an art, Lenin reminds the Bolsheviks in his "Advice of an Onlooker" of the basic rules of armed insurrection formulated by Marx and Engels and states them specifically as follows:

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

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

"3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the *offensive*. 'Defence 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.

* Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), August 1917-February 1918, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1958, p. 74.

** In 1957, locomotive No. 293 was ceremonially presented to the Soviet Union by the Government of Finland.

"5) You must strive for *daily* successes, however small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain *'moral superiority'*."*

Guided by these rules and taking into account the concrete circumstances existing in Russia at the time, Lenin wrote, the Bolsheviks must organise an attack on Petrograd and carry it out as swiftly and unexpectedly as possible, simultaneously both from within and without, from the working-class districts of the capital, and from Finland, Revel and Kronstadt; the *whole* fleet must be brought into the operation and a gigantic superiority of forces created over the counter-revolutionary forces of Kerensky. It was essential, he said, to combine the three main forces: the fleet, the workers and the army units, so as to occupy without fail and hold at all costs the telephone exchange, the telegraph, the railway stations and, above all, the bridges. It was also essential to select the most resolute elements–the shock detachments, the young workers and the best of the sailors–and form them into small units for occupying key-points and for taking part in all important operations.

In his letter to the Bolsheviks participating in the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, Lenin described the international and internal conditions enabling the Bolsheviks to seize power immediately and demanding of them that they take swift and resolute revolutionary action. He emphasised that the Russian revolution now depended not on resolutions and voting at congresses but on insurrection. "It is *in the vicinity of Petrograd* and in Petrograd itself that the insurrection can, and must be decided on and effected, as earnestly as possible, with as much preparation as possible, as quickly as possible and as energetically as possible."** Lenin ended his letter with the words: "Delay would be fatal."

Historic meetings of the Central Committee on October 10 and 16. On October 10, at G. Sukhanova's flat, a meeting of the Central Committee of the Party took place which was presided over by Lenin and which played a vital part in preparing the Party for armed uprising. Most of those who attended had not seen Lenin since the July days. When he came into the room, everyone rose from their seats and surrounded him in loud and friendly welcome. They were amazed at Lenin's strange appearance. He had neither beard nor moustache and was wearing a grey wig, which he kept smoothing down with both hands.

The report to the meeting on the current situation was made by Lenin. He pointed out that politically the ground for seizure of power by the Soviets was fully prepared but that since the beginning of September there had been impermissible indifference towards the question of insurrection among the leading Bolshevik circles. Technical preparations for the uprising must now be the major aspect of the Party's activities. *The Central Committee adopted the historic resolution*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 180.
** *Ibid.*, p. 187.

proposed by Lenin in which it was stressed that an armed uprising was inevitable and the time for it was fully ripe, and that the whole work of the Party should be subordinated to the tasks of organising and carrying it out. For the political direction of the uprising a Political Bureau of the Central Committee was formed with Lenin at its head. Only Kamenev and Zinoviev opposed the uprising.

This historic meeting of the Central Committee ended late at night. It would have been a long way for Lenin to return on foot to the Vyborg District, so he spent the night at Eino Rahja's flat. Out of consideration for his host Lenin refused to take a bed, and went to sleep on the floor with some books for a pillow.

After the Central Committee meeting of October 10, Lenin devoted himself to further work on the plan for an armed uprising and had meetings with Central Committee members. At H. Jalava's flat on October 14, Lenin discussed the practical problems of the uprising with leading Party workers.

Between the 12th and 15th of October, Lenin met O. Pyatnitsky, a member of the Moscow Party Committee, on several occasions and talked with him about preparations for the uprising in Moscow.

On October 16, an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee was held on the premises of the Lesnovsko-Udelninskaya District Duma, of which Mikhail Kalinin was the chairman. Lenin made a report defending the Central Committee's resolution on armed uprising. Again Zinoviev and Kamenev opposed the resolution. They both condemned the uprising, on the plea that the Bolshevik forces were still too small and greatly outnumbered by the forces of the counter-revolution; instead they demanded that the Party should wait for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. They counterposed their tactics to what they called the conspiratorial tactics of Lenin and the Central Committee. Dzerzhinsky, Kalinin, Krylenko, Sverdlov, Stalin and others criticised the position of Kamenev and Zinoviev. Nearly everyone present stated his opinion and the debate went on till morning. The question was put to the vote. By nineteen votes to two, with four abstentions, the Central Committee passed the following resolution, proposed by Lenin: "The 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 intensive 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 suitable means for launching the attack."*

After the meeting the Central Committee assembled alone and passed a decision: "The Central Committee has resolved to organise a Revolutionary Military Centre composed of the following members: Sverdlov,

* Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), August 1917-February 1918, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1958, p. 104.

Stalin, Bubnov, Uritsky and Dzerzhinsky. This centre is part of the Revolutionary Committee of the Soviet."*

On October 16, a plenary meeting of the Petrograd Soviet endorsed by a vast majority the decision of the Executive Committee and Soldiers' Section on the creation of a Revolutionary Military Committee of which the Revolutionary Military Centre set up by the Central Committee formed the core.

On the basis of the historic decisions passed by the Party Central Committee on October 10 and 16, preparations by Bolshevik organisations for the armed uprising were launched in all parts of the country. In many towns and districts revolutionary military committees were set up to give direct leadership in the working people's struggle for the establishment of Soviet power.

But a number of responsible Party members, including certain members of the Central Committee, seemed still to be underestimating the importance of the military side of the uprising. On the night of October 17, Lenin met the leaders of the Military Organisation of the Central Committee (the "Voyenka") V. Antonov-Ovseyenko, N. Podvoisky and V. Nevsky at the flat of D. Pavlov, a worker, and heard their views on the progress of preparations for the uprising and gave them some very important advice and instructions.

Lenin paid special attention to the selection of Red Guard commanders with regard to their military qualifications, skill with weapons, knowledge of street-fighting tactics, and so on. When it turned out that Podvoisky had no knowledge of any of his commanders from this standpoint, Lenin shook his head reproachfully and said: "Well, there's a chairman of our Military Organisation for you! How will you direct the uprising if you don't know what kind of commanders you have?"

But when Podvoisky listed the commanders of machine-gun and Guards regiments who had unconditionally come over to the Bolsheviks in the past few days, Lenin exclaimed with great satisfaction: "What tremendous forces the revolution has! Now the main thing is to lead them to victory, but victory cannot be achieved without a knowledge of warfare."

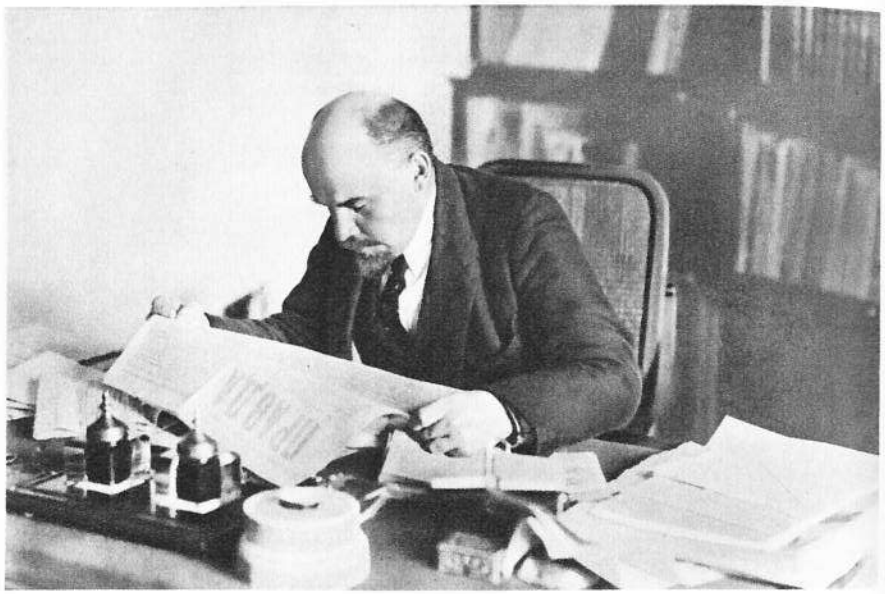
Lenin went on to say that the directing force of the uprising in a socialist revolution was the working class. The Red Guard detachments that had been formed at many enterprises in all districts of the capital and consisted of workers should become the chief military force, the force on which the success of the uprising depended. In saying this, Lenin had no intention of belittling the importance of the revolutionary military units.

It was long after midnight when this discussion between the leaders of the "Voyenka" and the leader of the revolution ended. "I went back as if on wings," Podvoisky recalls. "Lenin's words were drumming in my head like hammers: 'You have the masses before you. You must

* Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.), p. 104.



News from the front
Drawing by N. Zhukov



Lenin reading *Pravda*
Photo, 1918

organise military leadership for them. Give them all the arms you can—that's what you must do.' "

That same night the entire Bolshevik Military Organisation immediately set about putting Lenin's instructions into effect.

Before the assault. On October 18, just when preparations for the armed uprising were in full swing both at the centre and in the provinces, Kamenev, acting on his own behalf and on behalf of Zinoviev, gave an interview to the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*), in which he stated his disagreement with the decision on the armed uprising that the Party was preparing. He thus betrayed to the enemy the secret decision taken by the Party Central Committee. This was a monstrous piece of treachery, which might have caused irreparable harm to the cause of the revolution.

At the same time Trotsky, though making no open declaration against the Central Committee's decision on armed uprising, continued to foster constitutional illusions in the Party and urged that the uprising should be postponed until the Second Congress of Soviets opened, which would in fact have meant wrecking the uprising altogether. Lenin vigorously attacked this flabby attitude. To wait for the Congress, he wrote, would be downright idiocy or downright betrayal.

On learning of the Bolsheviks' decision, the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Central Executive Committee immediately resolved to postpone the Congress of Soviets till October 25, in order to upset the plans of the Bolsheviks, allow the Provisional Government to take the initiative and make better preparations for crushing the forces of the revolution.

The enemy, forewarned, acted at once. By order of the commander of the Petrograd Military Area, all street manifestations and meetings were banned. The order instructed commanders of military units to arrest all persons appearing in barracks and calling for armed action, and to suppress any armed action by the masses immediately by force of arms. On the night of October 18, the Provisional Government met in secret to discuss the question of the "Bolshevik action".

The whole bloc of Constitutional Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks unanimously demanded the severest repressive measures against the Bolsheviks. On October 19, the Minister of Justice ordered the public prosecutor to issue immediately a fresh warrant for Lenin's arrest. Just as after the July days, Kerensky's detectives began a mass search for the leader of the Bolshevik Party.

With anger and contempt Lenin branded Kamenev and Zinoviev as strikebreakers of the revolution and demanded that their conduct should be condemned and they themselves should be expelled from the Party: "I should consider it disgraceful on my part if I were to hesitate to condemn these former comrades because of my earlier close relations with them. I declare outright that I no longer consider either of them comrades and that I will fight with all my might, both in the Central

Committee and at the Congress, to secure the expulsion of both of them from the Party."*

This was Lenin's uncompromising attitude. But his attitude to these strikebreakers was not supported by everyone. Stalin, for instance, without consulting the Central Committee and other members of the *Rabochy Put* (*Workers' Path*) editorial board, published a letter from Zinoviev in the October 20 issue of the paper containing a completely unsupported denial of Lenin's charges against him. Stalin published an editorial note asserting that with Zinoviev's statement (in *Rabochy Put*) and Kamenev's (in the Petrograd Soviet) "the question may be regarded as settled. The harsh tone of Comrade Lenin's article does not alter the fact that basically we still share the same views". Stalin thus exhibited a conciliatory attitude to the strikebreakers of the October Revolution.

On October 20, Lenin's letters about Kamenev and Zinoviev were discussed at a meeting of the Central Committee. Lenin was not present. Most of the Central Committee members (Stalin, Sverdlov, Sokolnikov and others) who were present did not support Lenin's proposal. By five votes to three it was decided to "accept Kamenev's resignation" from the Central Committee, and by six votes to "charge Kamenev and Zinoviev not to issue any statements against the Central Committee's decisions and the line of work it has adopted".** A proposal that no member of the Central Committee should make any statements against Central Committee decisions was also accepted.

In a letter to Sverdlov, written after this meeting, Lenin expressed his disagreement with the Central Committee decision on Kamenev and Zinoviev. He wrote: "In the case of Zinoviev and Kamenev, if *you* (+ Stalin, Sokolnikov and Dzerzhinsky) demand a compromise, table a proposal *against* me to refer the matter to the Party Tribunal (the facts are clear–Zinoviev also deliberately *sabotaged*): that will be a postponement."*** This letter is a striking illustration of Lenin's great loyalty to principle, of his unswerving struggle to maintain a correct, consistently revolutionary Party policy.

Having exposed and isolated the opponents of the armed uprising in its own ranks, the Party went ahead even more energetically with practical preparations for the uprising. In all districts of Petrograd and in many other towns, fresh contingents of the workers' guard and revolutionary committees were formed; the Red Guard, the principal fighting force of the October Revolution, was trained and armed.

Meanwhile the counter-revolutionaries, too, were mustering their forces. Endeavouring to forestall the uprising of the revolutionary forces, the counter-revolutionaries were the first to attack. Early in the morning of October 24, the Provisional Government attempted to

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 217.

** Minutes of the C.C. R.S.D.L.P.(B.), August 1917-February 1918, Russ. ed., 1958, p. 107.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 5th Russ. ed., Vol. 34, p. 434.

suppress the Central Organ of the Bolshevik Party, *Rabochy Put*. On the instructions of the Revolutionary Military Centre, the Red Guards and soldiers of the Lithuanian Regiment and the 6th Reserve Battalion of Engineers took the newspaper office under their protection and mounted guard over the Smolny Institute. The Bolshevik paper came out only a few hours late.

For many weeks Lenin had zealously prepared the Party and the working class for the uprising, worked out its basic rules and plans, checked up to see whether the Party organisations were ready for it in practice, and had kept a close watch on the development of the revolutionary situation in the country as a whole. He had worked hard to determine the "moment" for the uprising, the correct choice of which he considered to be decisive. Lenin insisted that the Provisional Government must be overthrown before the Second Congress of Soviets, so as to anticipate the enemy, who were expecting the Bolsheviks to attack on the day the Congress opened.

While still in hiding, Lenin learned from E. Rahja and M. Fofanova that government forces were raising the bridges over the Neva. He immediately wrote a note to the Central Committee, asking permission to come to the Smolny. Soon afterwards Lenin wrote his historic letter to the Central Committee members demanding that the uprising be launched immediately.

"I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.

"With all my might I urge comrades to realise that everything now hangs by a thread; that we are confronted by problems which are not to be solved by conferences or congresses (even congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed people.... We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, having first disarmed the officer-cadets (defeating them, if they resist), and so on.... History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything."*

Lenin sent Fofanova with this letter to the Vyborg District Party Committee to be passed on to the Central Committee. The same evening he himself decided to go to the Smolny at once. With the help of Eino Rahja, who was attached to Lenin as a messenger, he found an old overcoat and cap and tied a handkerchief round his cheek. In this effective disguise he set off. The note he left for Fofanova read as follows: "Gone where you didn't want me to go. Till we meet again. Ilyich." It was by no means a safe journey. On the way he and Rahja were stopped more than once by patrols of officer-cadets. Lenin might easily have been arrested. But Lenin had the invaluable qualities of a revolutionary leader

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 234-35.

of the proletariat. In moments of danger he was particularly daring, brave and resourceful. All the hazards of the journey to the Smolny Institute were successfully overcome.

Lenin's last spell of hiding was over. Throughout this exceptionally difficult period in his life and work the workers, the rank-and-file Party members had risked their own lives to protect his. They had given him every care and attention. Lenin deeply appreciated this warmth of affection that sprang straight from the heart of the working class.

Now at last Lenin was at the headquarters of the revolution–the Smolny. The leader of the Party had taken the whole course of the armed uprising under his firm and resolute control.

Leader of the uprising. On that historic night the Smolny was a magnificent spectacle. It was brilliantly illuminated and humming with activity. Red Guards and representatives from the regiments and factories came from all parts for instructions. The Revolutionary Military Committee was in continuous session on the second floor. From time to time fresh guards were mounted at the doors and gates. Messengers from the Red Guards and revolutionary regiments came and went continuously. In the great Assembly Hall workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors had gathered as delegates to the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Armoured cars, lorries and motor-cycles roared across the square in front of the Smolny Institute. Field-guns and machine-guns were mounted at the gates, the whole building was guarded by sentries. More and more contingents of workers, young and old, marched in and placed themselves at the disposal of the Revolutionary Military Committee. The bonfires blazing in the square lent a fantastic glow to the whole scene.

Soon after Lenin's arrival at the Smolny, dispatch-riders rode off to the factories, districts and military units with orders to begin the uprising. The workers' Red Guard detachments, sailors and regiments of Petrograd moved into action. A planned and lightning-swift drive to block all the streets leading to the centre of the city and seize key-points and government offices was launched. By the following morning of October 25 (November 7) all the bridges across the Neva, the central telephone exchange, the telegraph office, the Petrograd Telegraph Agency, the wireless station, the railway and power stations, the State Bank and other important buildings had been occupied by Red Guards, sailors and soldiers. With the exception of the Winter Palace, where the Provisional Government had taken refuge, and the Petrograd Military Area Headquarters, the whole city was in the hands of the armed proletariat and the revolutionary troops. Lenin insisted that the Red Guards, sailors and soldiers occupy the Winter Palace. The uprising was already victorious.

On the morning of October 25 an appeal "To the Citizens of Russia!" written by Lenin, was published on behalf of the Revolutionary Military Committee. It stated: "The Provisional Government has been deposed. State power has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd

Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies–the Revolutionary Military Committee, which heads the Petrograd proletariat and the garrison."* The same morning this appeal was published in the Bolshevik newspaper *Rabochy i Soldat (Worker and Soldier)*. Telegrams about the victory of the revolution in Petrograd were sent out all over Russia and to all fronts.

At 2.30 p.m. an extraordinary meeting of the Petrograd Soviet opened in the great Assembly Hall of the Smolny. The chairman's announcement that the meeting would be addressed by Lenin and Lenin's appearance in the hall roused jubilation and prolonged tumultuous applause from the deputies. It was a long time before the cheering and clapping died down. "The workers' and peasants' revolution, about the necessity of which the Bolsheviks have always spoken, has been accomplished....

"From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism."**

Amid a roar of applause from the whole hall Lenin proclaimed: "Long live the world socialist revolution!"

By an overwhelming majority the Petrograd Soviet passed a resolution written by Lenin which stressed the extraordinary solidarity, organisation, discipline and complete unanimity demonstrated by the masses "in this exceptionally bloodless and exceptionally successful uprising"; it expressed unshakable confidence that the Soviet Government, the government of workers and peasants, would advance steadfastly towards socialism, that the workers of the towns in alliance with the poorest peasantry would show firm, comradely discipline and maintain the absolute strict revolutionary order essential to the victory of socialism.

On the evening of October 25, the historic shot from the revolutionary cruiser *Aurora* was fired and the assault on the Winter Palace began. It ended a few hours later in complete victory for the insurgent workers, soldiers and sailors.

Thanks to the great feat of the working class and the peasants of Russia, accomplished under the leadership of Lenin's party, October 25 (November 7), 1917, had become the glorious day of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia.

It was past three in the morning on October 26 (November 8) when the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets received the news of the capture of the Winter Palace, the last stronghold of the counter-revolution. The anouncement of the successful storming of the palace and the arrest of the ministers of the Provisional Government was greeted with a thunderous "hurrah!" and shouts of joy and approval. Amid a storm of applause the Congress adopted the proclamation "To the Workers, Soldiers and Peasants!" written by Lenin, which announced the transfer of all state power in the capital and the provinces to the

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 236.
** *Ibid.*, p. 239.

Soviets. The Soviet state, a state of workers and peasants, was born. The Congress called upon the workers and peasants, and particularly the soldiers in the trenches, to defend their state from any encroachments by the imperialists.

Lenin was not present at the morning session of the Congress. He was at the Revolutionary Military Committee directing the final operations of the assault on the Winter Palace and planning the first steps to be taken by the Bolshevik Soviet Government. He had not slept for forty-eight hours. Only after the capture of the Winter Palace and the arrest of the ministers of the Provisional Government, and after he had satisfied himself that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries would not walk out of the Congress of Soviets that had just opened, did Lenin leave the Smolny and go for a very short spell of sleep and rest at the flat of Bonch-Bruyevich, who lived not far away. A room had been prepared for Lenin but for a long time he could not fall asleep. Taking care not to disturb anyone, he got up, quietly seated himself at a table and began to draft the Decree on Land, which he had thought out in advance, while still in hiding.

On October 26 (November 8), Lenin was almost entirely occupied with questions relating to the defence of revolutionary Petrograd and the mopping up of centres of counter-revolutionary resistance that had formed in the city. In the afternoon, a Central Committee meeting in which Lenin took part discussed the question of the composition, structure and title of the new government of the new Russia. Since the representatives of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who had been invited for talks, refused to take part in the government, the Central Committee decided to form a government composed entirely of Bolsheviks.

Lenin's first decrees. The second and last session of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets began in the evening on October 26 (November 8).

John Reed has left us this description of Lenin in those historic days. "It was just 8.40 when a thundering wave of cheers announced the entrance of the presidium, with Lenin—great Lenin—among them. A short, stocky figure, with a big head set down in his shoulders, bald and bulging. Little eyes, a snubbish nose, wide, generous mouth, and heavy chin, clean-shaven now, but already beginning to bristle with the well-known beard of his past and future. Dressed in shabby clothes, his trousers much too long for him. Unimpressive, to be the idol of a mob, loved and revered as perhaps few leaders in history have been. A strange popular leader—a leader purely by virtue of intellect; colourless, humourless, uncompromising and detached, without picturesque idiosyncrasies—but with the power of explaining profound ideas in simple terms, of analysing a concrete situation. And combined with shrewdness, the greatest intellectual audacity."*

* John Reed, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, New York, 1934, p. 125.

The first declaration of the newly born Soviet state was a declaration of peace. The report on peace was delivered by Lenin himself, the leader and inspirer of the October Revolution.

"When Lenin appeared on the platform," A. Andreyev, a Congress delegate recalls, "the audience stood up and moved towards him. For a long time he was unable to begin his speech because of round after round of applause and shouts of: 'Long live Lenin!'

"The conference hall was an incredible sight. Shouts of joy mingled with the applause. Besides the delegates, the hall was packed to overflowing with workers, soldiers and sailors from all over the building. People climbed on to window-sills, ledges and chairs just to catch a glimpse of Lenin standing on the platform. Workers and sailors kept tossing their hats and caps into the air, rifles were raised aloft. Standing thus, the Congress listened to Lenin's report on peace."*

Having pointed out that the question of peace was the most urgent and painful question of the day, Lenin read out his draft of the famous Decree on Peace submitted for consideration of the Congress by the Bolshevik Party. The declaration (decree) called upon the peoples and governments of all the belligerent countries to start immediate open negotiations for the conclusion of peace without annexations or indemnities.

"The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war over the issue of how to divide among the strong and rich nations the weak nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the terms indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception."**

At the same time, Lenin's declaration stated that the Soviet Government did not regard its peace proposals as an ultimatum, that it was prepared to consider any other peace terms, and insisted only that they be presented as quickly as possible by any of the belligerent countries. The Soviet Government proposed the immediate signing of an armistice for a period of not less than three months in order to conclude the peace negotiations, and also to convene conferences of the peoples' representatives with full powers to ratify the terms of peace. It was also stated that the Soviet Government renounced the secret diplomacy and secret treaties of the tsarist and Provisional governments with the imperialist powers of Western Europe.

The declaration ended with an appeal to the proletariat of Britain, France and Germany to help the Russian proletariat by all-round, resolute and supreme action "to conclude peace successfully".

When Lenin's report had been discussed the Congress unanimously passed its first historic decree—the Decree on Peace. After a fresh burst of applause had greeted the results of the voting, the delegates, all

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1957, Part 2, p. 19.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 250.

standing, sang the *Internationale* and joined in another tremendous ovation for Lenin, the author of the Decree on Peace, the leader of the victorious proletarian revolution.

The fundamental significance of Lenin's Decree on Peace lies in the fact that it indicated the true path for the peoples of Russia and all other countries, the path of struggle for withdrawal from the imperialist war, for peace, freedom and independence; it also laid the foundation of the whole peaceful foreign policy of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government, the policy of coexistence between a socialist state and the capitalist states. The Decree on Peace opened the way to a new type of international relations that the world had never known before.

Lenin addressed the Congress on yet another important question of the agenda, the question of the land. He said that the Provisional Government and the compromising parties (Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries) that had taken part in it had committed a crime by postponing on various pretexts the settlement of the land question, that all their measures had been directed against the peasants and forced them to revolt, that the bourgeois Provisional Government had wished to drown the peasants' revolt in blood, but had itself been swept away by the armed uprising of the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers.

During his speech Lenin read out the draft of the Decree on Land, written by him and submitted to the Congress by the Bolshevik Party for approval. By this decree the landed estates were to be abolished forthwith without any compensation and turned over to the volost* Land Committees and the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

Lenin proposed including in the Decree on Land a "Peasant Mandate on the Land" by which *"private ownership of the land is abolished for ever"*. All land should be given over to the use of the working people and could neither be bought nor sold. Lands (estates) on which high-level scientific farming was practised were to be converted into model farms and turned over for "exclusive use to the *state or to the communes*, depending on the size and importance of such lands". The Peasant Mandate instituted land tenure on an equalitarian basis, i.e., the land should be distributed among the working people "in conformity with a labour standard or a subsistence standard",** depending on local conditions.

Explaining the necessity of including the "Peasant Mandate", which had been drawn up by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, in the Decree on Land, Lenin said: "Does it matter who drew them up? As a democratic government, we cannot ignore the decision of the masses of the people,

* *Volost*—the lowest territorial administrative unit in pre-revolutionary Russia. It was part of a *uyezd*, which in turn was part of a *gubernia*.

** *Labour standard*—the amount of land a family could farm by itself; *subsistence standard*—the amount of land needed to provide a harvest sufficient to keep a family at subsistence level.

even though we may disagree with it. In the fire of experience, applying the decree in practice, and carrying it out locally, the peasants will themselves realise where the truth lies.... Experience is the best teacher and it will show who is right. Let the peasants solve this problem from one end and we shall solve it from the other. Experience will oblige us to draw together in the general stream of revolutionary creative work, in the elaboration of new state forms. We must be guided by experience; we must allow complete freedom to the creative faculties of the masses."*

The Congress greeted Lenin's proposal with loud applause. The Decree on Land was passed with only one vote against and eight abstentions. Life had fully confirmed Lenin's brilliant scientific insight. Subsequently the peasants themselves abandoned the "labour" and "subsistence" standards, according to which the land was distributed among the farms, and in response to the call of the Communist Party voluntarily adopted collective forms of farming on the nationally-owned land.

Lenin's Decree on Land was of the greatest importance in the Bolshevik Party's campaign to win over completely the Russian peasantry to the support of the working class and in consolidating the victory of the socialist revolution. Later Lenin was to say:

"That is exactly how the Russian proletariat *won the peasantry* from the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and won them literally *a few hours after* achieving state power; a few hours after the victory over the bourgeoisie in Petrograd, the victorious proletariat issued a "decree on land", and in that decree it entirely, at once, with revolutionary swiftness, energy and devotion, *satisfied* all the most urgent economic needs of the *majority* of the peasants. It expropriated the landowners, entirely and without compensation."**

At the same session the All-Russia Congress of Soviets formed a workers' and peasants' Soviet Government—the Council of People's Commissars—with Lenin at its head.

The Congress elected the All-Russia Central Executive Committee consisting of 101 people and laid it down that this body could be augmented with representatives of the Peasants' Soviets, the army organisations, and also representatives of the groups that had withdrawn from the Congress.

It was past five in the morning on October 27 (November 9) when to shouts of "Long live the revolution!", "Long live socialism!" and the strains of the *Internationale* the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets concluded its work. The Lenin decrees on peace and land and on the formation of a Soviet Government which the Congress adopted played a key role in strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat and building socialism. The Congress delegates immediately left for the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 260-61.

** *Ibid.*, Vol. 30, p. 265.

provinces to help spread the workers' and peasants' power throughout Russia.

In the period of preparation for and carrying out of the October Socialist Revolution *the whole world saw Lenin as a brilliant theoretician of Marxism, as the wise leader of the Communist Party and supreme organiser of revolution.*

During the revolution Lenin's genius reached its peak. With great scientific foresight he determined the correlation of class forces in Russia and in the international field, and gave the Party and the working class clear tactical slogans based on the laws of social development. Under his leadership, the Bolshevik Party was able to merge into a single mighty revolutionary stream the socialist movement of the working class, the nation-wide movement for peace, the struggle of the peasants for land, and the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples of Russia, and to direct these forces towards the overthrow of capitalism.

Cautiously yet firmly, teaching the Party and the people and learning from the Party and the people, Lenin led them to the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Lenin on the international significance of the October Revolution. Lenin saw the historic significance which the October Socialist Revolution held for the whole world primarily in the fact that it overthrew the political power of the bourgeoisie and the landowners, smashed their state machine, established a dictatorship of the proletariat, based on the alliance of the working class and toiling peasantry, over one-sixth of the globe, and affirmed the power of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which constituted genuinely popular rule and a higher form of democracy. "This epoch-making change has been made," Lenin wrote. "The era of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism has come to an end. A new chapter in world history–the era of proletarian dictatorship–has been started."* The October Revolution showed that it was impossible to put an end to capitalism and start building socialism without putting an end to the bourgeois state, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, without replacing it by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin pointed out that the October Revolution had for the first time in history liquidated the capitalists' and landowners' "sacred rights" to private ownership of the means of production. For the first time in history the working class, all the people of toil, had become masters of their country. All its riches, the land and its mineral deposits, the factories and the railways had become the property of the working people.

Lenin saw a great achievement of the October Revolution in the fact that it had proclaimed and put into practice in Russia a policy of genuine national equality, had proclaimed the right of the previously

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 700.

oppressed peoples to their national sovereignty, had unfolded before them broad opportunities for economic, political and cultural development, for the strengthening of brotherly friendship on the basis of socialism.

The October Revolution had created the most just political and social system on earth, a system based on genuine equality, on real freedom. Its great and humane ideas inspire the working people, all progressive humanity in the struggle for a bright future.

Lenin regarded the October Revolution as an inspiring example of the workers' and peasants' most resolute and dedicated struggle against the imperialist war, and for peace among the nations. *"The first Bolshevik revolution* has wrested *the first hundred million people* of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and the imperialist world. Subsequent revolutions will save the rest of mankind from such wars and from such a world."*

The socialist revolution in Russia shook the edifice of world capitalism to its foundations; the world had split up into two opposing systems.

A state that proclaimed the great slogan of peace and put into effect entirely new principles in relations between peoples and countries had entered the international arena for the first time. Humanity had gained a reliable bastion in its struggle against wars of aggression, in its efforts to ensure peace and international security.

Lenin regarded the leadership given by the Communist Party as a cardinal factor in the victory of the October Revolution. It was the Party, headed by Lenin, that was always in the vanguard of the working class, that armed the movement with a scientifically based programme of struggle, correct strategy and tactics, and political slogans that could be understood by the broad masses of the people. It was the Party that forged the alliance of the working class and the toiling peasantry and converted it into the invincible force of the socialist revolution. The Party struck a crushing blow at the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and exposed their complete desertion to the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The people realised the counter-revolutionary nature of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks and became convinced that the Bolshevik Party was the only party that kept its word, that it was the only party that was waging a selfless struggle to abolish all forms of oppression and exploitation and to save the country from the catastrophe that threatened it.

The October Socialist Revolution, Lenin pointed out, had a tremendous revolutionising effect on the working class of Europe and of the whole world, and raised the international working-class movement to a higher level. The proletarians, the working people, progressive men and women all over the world acclaimed the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia. There was not a single working-class organisation

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 695.

in the world, said Lenin, where the Soviet decrees on peace, on land, on the nationalisation of the banks, and the other decrees of October were not greeted with enthusiasm. The graphic example of the new socialist life being built in Russia fired the hearts of the working people in all countries. The October Revolution conclusively proved the Marxist truth that the principle of proletarian internationalism is a law of the development of the international working-class movement, the prerequisite of all its victories.

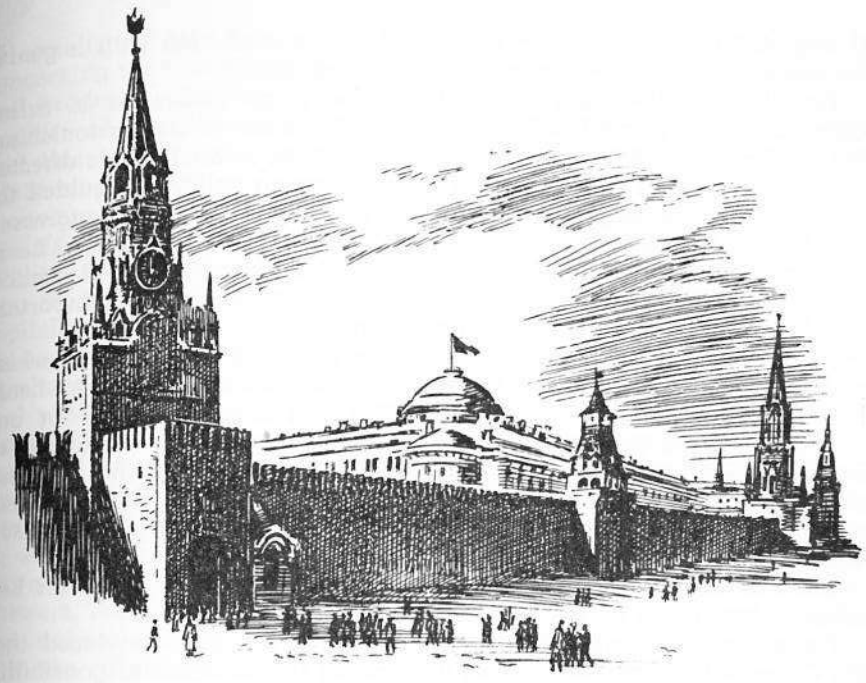
The socialist revolution in Russia delivered a very powerful blow at the colonial system of imperialism. As Lenin said on many occasions, the First World War and the October Revolution awakened the East and made it once and for all part of the general flood of the world revolutionary movement. By setting up a Soviet republic on the junction between Europe and Asia, between the West and the East, the October Revolution rallied to its banner the proletarian-revolutionary socialist movement of the West and the national liberation movement of the peoples of all countries oppressed by imperialism.

The socialist revolution in Russia opened up a new era in the history of mankind–the era of the collapse of capitalism and the assertion of a new, socialist society. It "has charted the road to socialism for the whole world and has shown the bourgeoisie that their triumph is coming to an end".*

The ice is broken, the way clear, the path blazed–was the terse and vivid phrase that Lenin used to define the international significance of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 44.



Chapter Ten

THE GREAT FOUNDER OF THE SOVIET STATE

> Victory will belong only to those who have faith in the people, those who are immersed in the life-giving spring of popular creativity.
>
> *LENIN*

A new period in the life and work of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin began with the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Now that he was at the helm of the proletarian state, it was his task to lead the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet people in the struggle to accomplish the historic tasks of the dictatorship of the working class, to build socialism.

A new type of statesman. Lenin was a statesman of the new, proletarian, socialist type. It was the first time in history that a Communist Party leader, a leader of the working class, a revolutionary Marxist, who evolved government policy on a scientific basis, who had a profound knowledge of life and understood the innermost thoughts and aspirations of the people, had taken the helm of state. Lenin had boundless faith in the creative abilities of the working people and he relied on them. He was very close to the workers and peasants and enjoyed their unlimited trust and support. Lenin's brilliant command of

theory, his political wisdom and insight were combined with a genius for organisation, iron will power, courage and daring.

Lenin's versatility and his tireless energy as leader of a ruling Communist Party and head of the Soviet Government were astonishing. He took in all aspects of the life of the Republic of Soviets. He directed political, economic and cultural work and foreign policy. He guided the work of public organisations, took an active part in congresses, conferences, meetings, spoke at factories and visited villages. Lenin combined an immense amount of organisational work with theoretical study and his writings at this time dealt with some of the most important problems involved in socialist construction.

When they started building an entirely new way of life the workers and peasants of Russia were faced with enormous difficulties. As Lenin had foreseen, the proletarian revolution had first triumphed in one country, and the Soviet people had to build socialism in conditions of hostile capitalist encirclement. The bitter resistance of the deposed exploiting classes, Russia's age-old technical and cultural backwardness, and the state of economic dislocation in which the country found itself were grave obstacles to the fulfilment of their task.

But the greatest difficulty of all was that the path to socialism had never been trodden before.

Lenin was undaunted by these difficulties. He was convinced that the Communist Party, which had undertaken the immense responsibility of ruling the country, of reorganising the lives of millions of people on the basis of socialism, would honourably fulfil its historic mission. He knew that the people were behind the Bolsheviks, and in this he saw an inexhaustible source of strength for the Party and the Soviet state. He showed that the initiative of the people, the creative energy of the workers and peasants would find the most suitable forms and methods for governing the state, building a socialist economy and developing culture. The intelligence of tens of millions of creators, he said, would produce something infinitely higher than the greatest vision of genius. Only the collective experience of the people could point conclusively to the specific measures needed to bring about the socialist transformation of the country.

In working out the programme for the building of socialism, the main outlines of which he had drafted before the victory of the October Revolution, Lenin proceeded from the principles laid down by Marx and Engels. "Let us consult Marx," Lenin liked to say, when the Party was confronted with a difficult problem. At the same time Lenin repeatedly pointed out that for all their brilliant powers of prevision, the founders of scientific communism could not have foreseen all the intricate problems that were bound to emerge in the epoch of the building of a new society. At the outset of the socialist reorganisation of society, we, Lenin said, could not know "the forms of transformation, or the rate of development of a concrete reorganisation".

Guided by the practical experience of the struggle for the victory

of socialism, Lenin tirelessly developed the ideas of Marx and Engels concerning the transitional period, concerning socialism and communism, and produced creative solutions to the problems of the theory and practice of socialist construction as they arose. It must be stressed that this is true not only of Lenin's new conclusions and propositions concerning the general problems of scientific communism. The socio-economic measures evolved and put into practice by the Party under Lenin's direction were also a massive contribution to Marxism. Lenin studied the creative abilities of the people, the process of consolidation of the new system, discovered the laws of the transition from capitalism to socialism, carefully noted everything progressive that the working people created, generalised from their experience, and on this basis planned the building of a socialist society.

Always regarding revolutionary theory as a guide to action, "as the basis of actions to be undertaken", Lenin pointed out that after the conquest of power by the working class, in the period of building socialism and communism the practical activity of the bulk of the people and the organisational role of the Party acquired particular significance. It was a remarkable fact, he stressed, that the tasks of the socialist reconstruction of society, which had previously been dealt with on an abstract, theoretical plane, were now being tackled for the first time by the proletariat of Russia and its Party directly, on a practical basis.

In the epoch of building socialism and communism there is a shorter time lag between the theoretical study of the problems involved in building the new society and their practical solution. It must be understood, Lenin wrote soon after the establishment of Soviet power, that "the whole thing now is *practical work*; that the historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, vitalised by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice...."* Lenin's whole activity is a splendid example of the indissoluble unity between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice.

Defeat of the Kerensky revolt. Soon after the victory of the October armed uprising Lenin, who was utterly absorbed in his work, took up permanent residence in the Smolny, where the leading bodies of the Party and the Soviet Government had their headquarters. Lenin and his wife were allotted a room on the first floor. Lenin's study and the offices of the Council of People's Commissars were on the floor above, and it was here that the Council's meetings and most of the conferences of the Party Central Committee were held. At the Smolny, Lenin wrote many of the historic decrees and appeals of the Soviet Government, received numerous delegations of workers, peasants and soldiers from the front, as well as Party and Soviet officials, who came to see him from all parts of Russia.

From the Smolny Lenin guided the vast activity of the Party and the Soviet Government in building the socialist state and the new life, in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 413.

defending the gains of the revolution from its internal nad external enemies. As Krupskaya recalled later, the tempo of the work was tremendous. "No wonder that, when late at night he came behind the partition that divided our room in the Smolny, Ilyich could not fall asleep; he would get up again to ring someone up on the telephone and issue some urgent orders, and when he did fall asleep at last he would talk business in his sleep. . . ."*

In the days immediately following the uprising Lenin's attention was concentrated on beating off the furious onslaught of the counter-revolutionary forces which, as soon as the Second Congress of Soviets was over, made an attempt to wrest state power from the working class. Kerensky, who had escaped from Petrograd in an American embassy car and joined the headquarters of the Northern front in Pskov, sent Cossack units against the capital under the command of General Krasnov.

Thus it was the bourgeoisie and the landowners who started the civil war against Soviet power.

On October 27, Krasnov captured Gatchina, creating a direct threat to Petrograd. At this critical moment Lenin took charge of the defence of the revolutionary capital himself. He went straight to the headquarters of the Petrograd Military Area and demanded a detailed report on the situation at the front. When Podvoisky, who was in command, asked whether this visit meant he was distrusted, Lenin replied firmly: "No, it's not distrust, the government of workers and peasants simply wishes to know how its military authorities are functioning."

Under Lenin's direction, a plan for the defeat of the Kerensky-Krasnov bands was drawn up and put into effect. Lenin closely followed the operations of the army command, summoned representatives of the factories and districts to his office in the Smolny and issued instructions and directives to Party and Soviet organisations. On the night of October 28, Lenin visited the Putilov Works to check up personally on the making of guns and an armoured train for the front. In those stressful times Lenin's characteristic ability to achieve absolute concentration of all the country's strength and resources at the critical moment showed itself to the full.

On October 19, the Soviet Government crushed the counter-revolutionary revolt of the military cadets in Petrograd. The next day Red Guard units smashed Krasnov's detachments at Pulkovo. The first anti-Soviet revolt was defeated.

Rout of the capitulators and saboteurs. The enemies of the revolution had staked heavily on undermining Soviet power from within, by using the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and also opportunist elements in the Bolshevik Party itself. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries acted as direct agents of the deposed exploiting classes in their struggle against Soviet power. Seeking to divert Russia from the path of socialist revolution and establish a bourgeois-parliamentary

* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 415.

system, they demanded the formation of a new, so-called "all-Socialist government" from representatives of various parties–"from the Bolsheviks to the Popular Socialists"–in which they would play the decisive part. Moreover, they refused to recognise the legality of the Second Congress of Soviets, categorically demanded that the proletariat should be disarmed, that no resistance should be offered to the Kerensky forces, and that the troops of the Petrograd garrison be put at the disposal of the counter-revolutionary City Duma, etc.

The Mensheviks' and Socialist-Revolutionaries' proposal to form an "all-Socialist government" was supported by Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov and their not very numerous supporters, who at the very height of the struggle with the counter-revolutionary rebels came out against the line of the Bolshevik Party. Still insisting that the victory of the socialist revolution was impossible in Russia, they demanded concessions of principle to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and agreement with them at all costs, and maintained that if this was not done the Bolshevik Party would not be able to retain state power. When the various parties and organisations met to discuss the question of forming a government and the Socialist-Revolutionaries proposed making Avksentyev or Chernov head of the government instead of Lenin, Kamenev and Ryazanov actually considered it possible to continue negotiations with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and did not categorically insist on Lenin's candidature. This supine and treacherous policy was extremely dangerous for the only recently victorious dictatorship of the proletariat.

At a meeting on November 2, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party resolutely condemned these capitulators. A resolution on the opposition within the Central Committee, proposed by Lenin and passed by the Central Committee, stated that the opposition had abandoned all the principles of Bolshevism and embarked on the path of sabotaging the dictatorship of the working class. In spite of the Central Committee's decision, the opposition kept up their line against the Party's policy. In the Bolshevik faction of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee Kamenev and Zinoviev got a resolution passed on the negotiations concerning the organisation of government that ran counter to the Central Committee's decision in that it admitted of the Bolsheviks having only half the posts in the government. With the support of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries they then got this resolution passed at a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

Lenin treated these actions by the opposition as an unheard-of breach of Party discipline, as an attempt to demoralise the Party ranks. He drew up an ultimatum from the Central Committee to the opposition minority demanding that they should adhere strictly to the Central Committee decisions and carry out its policy. Though the ultimatum was signed by the majority of the Central Committee members, the opposition paid no attention to this warning. Refusing to submit to Party discipline, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Milyutin, and Nogin announced their resignation

from the Central Committee; the three last also abandoned their posts as People's Commissars.

This treacherous conduct by a handful of saboteurs roused Lenin's indignation. He wrote the message from the Central Committee "To All Party Members and to All the Toiling Classes of Russia", published in *Pravda*, in which the Central Committee branded them as strikebreakers of the revolution and emphasised that the desertion of a few cowards would not for one minute shake the Party or the unity of the masses supporting it.

"Let the working people, therefore, remain calm and firm!" Lenin wrote. "Our Party, the Party of the Soviet majority, stands solid and united in defence of their interests and, as before, behind our Party stand the millions of the workers in the cities, the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the villages, prepared at all costs to achieve the victory of peace and the victory of socialism!"*

The capitulators were immediately replaced by people devoted to the cause of the working class. Proposed by Lenin, Yakov Sverdlov, one of the leaders of the Party, was elected to replace Kamenev as Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Four new appointments were made to the Council of People's Commissars: G. Petrovsky as People's Commissar for Internal Affairs, P. Stučka as People's Commissar for Justice, M. Yelizarov as People's Commissar for Railways, and A. Shlikhter as People's Commissar for Food. Lenin wrote later that the opportunist elements with their waverings towards agreement with the reformists, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries would have brought disaster on the revolution in Russia if they had not been removed from all responsible posts and kept in check by proletarian distrust, vigilance and supervision. In a period of revolution, he emphasised, not the slightest wavering within the Party was permissible.

The Central Committee's message "To All Party Members and to All the Toiling Classes of Russia" stressed that at the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets the Bolshevik Party had won a majority and that only a government formed by this party expressed the will of the Congress and was a Soviet Government; the Congress had approved the Bolshevik composition of the Council of People's Commissars. Nevertheless, contrary to the allegations of the bourgeois hacks who were shouting in chorus about Bolshevik "intractability" and "intolerance", the Bolsheviks stated they would agree "to share power with the minority in the Soviets, provided that minority loyally and honestly undertake to submit to the majority and carry out the programme, *approved by the whole* Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, for gradual, but firm and undeviating steps towards socialism".** On these conditions the Bolsheviks again invited the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to enter the government. After considerable vacillation, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, afraid of losing their influence over the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 307.
** *Ibid.*

peasantry, entered the Council of People's Commissars in December 1917. And it was they, not the Bolsheviks, who broke up this coalition by walking out of the government after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and going into opposition against Soviet power.

The Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary and Left Socialist-Revolutionary parties continued to exist for a time. But all these petty-bourgeois parties disgraced themselves by collaborating with the deposed exploiter classes and the imperialist interventionists, by taking an active part in armed struggle against the people, against the Soviet Republic. When the civil war was over, the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders joined the counter-revolutionary underground or emigrated; many rank-and-file members of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionary parties broke with their politically bankrupt leaders, and some of them, particularly those who were workers, later joined the Communist Party.

The fact that only one party, the Communist Party, remained in the country is thus explained by the specific development of the revolution in Russia. Only the Communist Party acted as the true champion of the interests of the working people, as their leader; only this party gained indisputable authority among the people and earned the trust and affection of the whole nation.

In principle, Lenin was far from treating the one-Party system as an essential feature of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He emphasised, however, that even if several parties existed, the dictatorship of the proletariat presupposed that the leading role should belong to one party—the Communist Party, which should hold the majority of posts in the government. An essential condition for the participation of the representatives of other parties in the government was that they should acknowledge the dictatorship of the proletariat and the necessity of the transition to socialism.

Lenin's conclusions have been confirmed by the experience of the socialist revolutions in several countries, where in addition to the Communist Party other democratic parties exist and co-operate closely with the Communists in building socialist society.

Creation of the new state machine. Having consolidated the victory they had won in October, the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government channelled the energies of the people into the great tasks of creating the new state and social system. In his speeches and appeals Lenin called upon the working people to manage the affairs of state themselves, to rally round the Soviets, to reinforce them, to show initiative and act independently. "Socialism," Lenin explained, "cannot be decreed from above. Its spirit rejects the mechanical bureaucratic approach; living, creative socialism is the product of the masses themselves."*

The historic decrees of Soviet power played an exceptional role in organising the masses. The most important of them were written by

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 288.

Lenin or drawn up at his suggestion and with his participation. By promulgating laws that correspond to the aspirations and needs of the people, he said, the new government is planting milestones on the road to the new way of life.

One of the immediate tasks confronting the party and the working class after the victory of the October Revolution was to destroy the old bourgeois-landowner state machine and set up a new Soviet state machine in its place. The central bodies of administration, the people's commissariats, were set up under Lenin's direct guidance. He drew up their programmes and selected the leading personnel.

It was desperately hard work to build the new state. The proletariat had no qualified personnel of its own. The workers and peasants, who had only just broken free from the yoke of exploitation and tyranny, had no experience of government. The difficulties were multiplied by the fact that the bourgeois intelligentsia, the top civil servants and officials, made every attempt to sabotage the measures undertaken by the Soviet Government. The counter-revolution relied on the Bolsheviks' being unable to find people to operate the state machine. But this proved to be wishful thinking. The Party sent its best forces into the Soviet government apparatus and enlisted thousands upon thousands of men and women from the common people in the work of building up the Soviet state.

Lenin urged the people at all costs to get rid of the "old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice" that only the so-called "upper classes", the rich and their hangers-on, were fitted to rule the country. He insisted that the rank-and-file workers and peasants were fully capable of performing organisational work provided they were literate, had a knowledge of human nature and practical experience. "Difficulties may crop up at the start," he said, giving the ordinary people confidence in their strength, "due to inadequate training. But the art of practical government, which has been monopolised by the bourgeoisie, must be mastered."*

On one occasion, some working men who had been appointed to posts in one of the People's Commissariats came to Lenin and told him they were getting poor results. Could they go back to their factory? Lenin listened attentively and said: "I have never governed a state either, but the Party and the people have entrusted me with this work and I have got to justify that trust. I recommend you to do the same."

Lenin's appeals drew an eager response from the workers and peasants. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party they coped with the task of building up the Soviet state and steadily mastered the art of government. Lenin saw the strength of the genuine people's Soviet state primarily in the stability of its social foundations, in the dedicated support of the working people, in their high level of political consciousness. "The bourgeoisie," he said, "admit a state to be strong only when

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 342.

it can, by the power of the government apparatus, hurl the people wherever the bourgeois rulers want them hurled. Our idea of strength is different. Our idea is that a state is strong when the people are politically conscious. It is strong when the people know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously."*

The Soviet Government at once initiated measures designed to satisfy the vital needs of the workers and peasants and improve their condition. It consolidated the gains of the October Revolution and was a powerful instrument in effecting radical socio-economic changes. In the course of a few weeks, as Lenin wrote in one of his articles, the survivals of serfdom–landed estates, the social-estates, the inequality of women, and national oppression–were eliminated from all spheres of social life; the church was separated from the state, and the schools from the church.

The Party and the Soviet Government paid enormous attention to the carrying out of the Decree on Land. Lenin's "Reply to Inquiries from Peasants", which was published in the newspapers and came out as a leaflet, explained that all the landed estates were being handed over to the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, which were fully authorised organs of state power, that the volost Land Committees should immediately take over the landed estates, keeping a strict account of and safeguarding the property on them now that it had become the property of the whole people.

The "Reply to Inquiries from Peasants" was handed out to soldiers returning to the villages from the front, and to the peasant messengers who came to the Smolny to see Lenin. On receiving this document signed by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and addressed to the very volosts from which they themselves came, the peasants would be fully satisfied by this "title deed from Lenin himself".

Lenin warmly received the peasant messengers who tramped all the way from their villages to see him. "I can well remember," writes N. Gorbunov, who was secretary to the Council of People's Commissars at the time, "Lenin's characteristic attitude, when he sat down facing a peasant so close that their knees touched, smiling cordially and bending forward a little as if to hear better, and how he used to question them in a business-like way, find out all they knew, and give them instructions."**

"I can't go back home till I've seen Comrade Lenin," said a grey-bearded old man from Chernigov Gubernia. "I must see him and I must tell my own folk afterwards that I've seen him. That's what the people of my village sent me here to do. 'Be sure and find out from Lenin himself what to do and how to do it,' they told me."

When he had spoken with Lenin his face was transformed with happiness. "Thank you," he said. "Now I will tell them all about it at home."

After they had seen Lenin the peasants would go away saying: "That's a government! That's our own, real peasant government!" "We've got a

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 256.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 61.

clever man in charge now! And he knows us peasants." They acquired a deep and sincere trust in the Communist Party and Soviet power, which had at last brought fulfilment of the peasants' long-cherished dreams.

Lenin considered the alliance of the working class and the toiling peasantry to be the unshakable foundation of Soviet power. "In the Russian Republic," he wrote, "the entire organisation and administration of the state from top to bottom must henceforth be based on such an alliance."* If this alliance was firm, said Lenin, nothing would stop the transition to socialism.

In his speeches at the Extraordinary and Second All-Russia Congresses of Soviets which were held in November and December 1917, Lenin demonstrated the utter bankruptcy of the policy of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and criticised the vacillation of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. He explained that the agrarian question could not be solved independently of the other tasks of the socialist revolution; the handing over of the land to the toiling peasantry free of charge could not be carried out unless the peasants supported the workers. Lenin's rousing speeches made a tremendous impression on the peasants; his clear explanation of the problem was immediately understood, and thanks to their sound principles and flexible tactics, the Bolsheviks succeeded in isolating the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. The peasant congresses endorsed the policy of the Soviet Government and declared in favour of uniting the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

In a country possessing so many nationalities as Russia the fate of Soviet power depended to a great extent on how the problem of nationalities was handled. Lenin regarded the abolition of national oppression as one of the most urgent tasks of the socialist revolution.

In "The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia", published on November 3, 1917, the Council of People's Commissars proclaimed the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia, their right to free self-determination up to and including secession and formation of independent states, the abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and restrictions, and the free development of the national minorities and ethnographical groups inhabiting the territory of Russia. That the Soviet Government recognised this right in practice was shown by the decision of the Council of People's Commissars, in answer to the Finnish Government's request, on recognition of Finland's independence. Lenin personally presented this decision of the Council of People's Commissars to the head of the Finnish Government. The Soviet state announced its "complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general and in the small countries".** The Soviet Government annulled the robber treaties

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 328.
** *Ibid.*, p. 424.

concerning Persia, Turkey and China, which tsarist Russia had concluded with other imperialist powers.

Having given the peoples of Russia the right to self-determination, the Bolsheviks explained that it was essential for the working people of all nations to be united in the struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution, that the principle of self-determination must be subordinated to the principles of socialism. They resolutely exposed the bourgeois-nationalist circles in the border regions who tried to exploit the principle of self-determination to further their own class aims, to divide the workers and peasants of the different nationalities, to fight the power of the working people. We give all peoples, said Lenin, the right to arrange their lives in their own way, and hold out to the working people of all nations a brotherly hand for common struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Lenin's national policy gained Soviet power the confidence of many millions of working people of the formerly oppressed nationalities, brought the peoples of Russia together, and laid the foundations of a multi-national socialist state.

Introduction of socialist economic reforms. As soon as the October Revolution dawned, the working class of Russia set about building a socialist way of life. *In his speeches and articles Lenin emphasised the creative, constructive character of the socialist revolution.* He pointed out that whereas bourgeois revolutions began with ready-made forms of capitalist relationships which had taken shape under feudalism, and their basic task was to sweep away, to cast off all the fetters of the old society, the socialist revolution began without having any available ready-made forms of socialist relationships and the basic task of the proletarian revolution was to build up a new, socialist economy.

"The organisation of accounting, the control of large enterprises, the transformation of the whole of the state economic mechanism into a single huge machine, into an economic organism that will work in such a way as to enable hundreds of millions of people to be guided by a single plan—such was the enormous organisational problem that rested on our shoulders."*

Despite the slanderous assertions of the bourgeoisie and its hangers-on that the people were capable only of destroying, that they would not create, every step taken by Soviet power bore witness to its immense constructive work, to the keen political awareness of the masses and their creative energy.

At the end of October, Lenin drafted regulations on workers' control, introducing at all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural, and other enterprises control by the workers and employees of these enterprises over production, trade and finances. In the debate on the draft regulations some people spoke in favour of introducing workers' control only at the large enterprises and giving priority to the creation of state

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 90-91.

organs that would regulate control on a nation-wide scale. Lenin was against this. He pointed out that it was essential to introduce control at all enterprises, and that the main thing was to free the initiative of the working masses, and to draw them into the management of industry.

On November 14, 1917, the Soviet Government passed the "Regulations on Workers' Control" which had been formulated on the basis of Lenin's draft. The setting up of workers' control over social production and distribution of products played a great part in safeguarding the enterprises from destruction by the capitalists, and in training the workers to manage production when industry was nationalised. The regulations provided broad scope for the creative, organising powers of the working class, its ability to build a new socialist economy and get production going by its own efforts.

When they encountered opposition from the capitalists, or ran into other obstacles, the workers often appealed to Lenin for help. He was approached by delegations from the Putilov, Nevsky and Metallichesky works in Petrograd, from the Kiev Arsenal Works, from the Nadezhdinsk Plant in the Urals and others. Lenin listened attentively to their requests and suggestions, questioned them about the mood of the workers, the situation at the factories, explained to them how to effect control over production and run the factories properly, and urged them to act boldly, in a revolutionary manner, and put a stop to sabotage by the capitalists. He strove to give the workers a clear understanding of the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat and pointed out that now that power had passed into the hands of the working class it was responsible for the fate of the country.

Lenin liked to chat with the workers. He was able to share some of his innermost thoughts with them, and their ideas and reasoning always interested him very much. They gave him a yardstick by which to check his own deductions and plans. And for the workers these meetings and conversations with Lenin were a splendid school, which strengthened their faith in the invincibility of Soviet power.

"I left the Smolny," a railway worker who visited Lenin in those days recalls, "feeling sure that the revolution was in safe hands and that there was no one else in the world like Ilyich, no one who knew the working man's heart like he did."*

Starting out from the idea that a national economy based on public ownership ought to be a planned economy, Lenin proposed setting up an economic centre for the whole country. The first proletarian organ for regulating the country's economy was the Supreme Economic Council, a body formed by, and responsible to, the Council of People's Commissars. Lenin guided the work of the Supreme Economic Council and took part in the meetings of its presidium.

* *About Ilyich.* A collection of articles, reminiscences, papers and other materials, Russ. ed., Leningrad, 1924, p. 45.

Lenin considered the nationalisation of the banks an important step towards socialism. On his instructions the seizure of the private banks was carried out unexpectedly, before the publication of the decree, so that the bourgeoisie had no chance of withdrawing their money. Nationalisation of the banks was accompanied by socialisation of share capital and the big investments belonging to the bourgeoisie. The Soviet state turned the banks, formerly the financial stronghold of the bourgeoisie, into an apparatus of socialist accounting and control.

Having established workers' control over production and created bodies for the management of the economy, the Soviet Government began the nationalisation of industry. By the spring of 1918, a considerable number of the larger enterprises in Petrograd and Moscow, the Urals and the Donets coalfield had been taken over by the Soviet state. The railways became the property of the whole people. With Lenin's participation the Decree on the Nationalisation of the Merchant Fleet was drawn up and passed by the Government. Foreign trade became a state monopoly and all foreign and internal loans contracted by tsarism and the bourgeois Provisional Government were annulled, thus freeing Russia from the stranglehold of foreign capital.

The Soviet Government conducted a policy of expropriating the big capitalists. With regard to medium- and small-scale industry the intention was to transform it gradually into socialist industry. Partial compensation for firms that were nationalised was considered. However, sabotage by the capitalists and their violent resistance to socialist reforms compelled the Soviet Government to accelerate nationalisation of industry, and to do so by confiscating capitalist property.

Lenin stressed the socialist character of Soviet nationalisation. Not a single factory, he wrote later, was "appropriated" by separate bodies of workers; they were all made the property of the Soviet state and put at its disposal, thus becoming the property of the whole nation. He resolutely countered the anarcho-syndicalist moods current among some trade union workers, and attempts to hand over the management of nationalised enterprises to the corresponding trade unions. He demanded ruthless struggle "against the syndicalist and chaotic attitude to nationalised enterprises".*

Socialist nationalisation brought with it a fundamental change in the character of the production relations. Exploitation was abolished, the workers began to work for their own benefit, for the benefit of their own state. "For the first time after centuries of working for others, of forced labour for the exploiter," Lenin wrote, "it has become possible to *work for oneself* and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technology and culture in one's work."**

Suppress the resistance of the exploiters. The bourgeoisie and the landowners, with the servile support of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 319.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 407.

Revolutionaries, refused to submit to the will of the majority of the people and put up savage resistance to the measures taken by the Soviet Government. Egged on by international imperialism, they resorted to every means, including armed action against Soviet power, to strangle the revolution and restore the old regime. The victorious proletariat had to crush this resistance by the deposed exploiting classes. We are against civil war, Lenin explained. But civil war continues, the overthrown exploiters are waging war against the workers and peasants. How can we stop taking measures to put down an enemy that has not stopped its counter-revolutionary actions.

Lenin emphasised more than once that it was sabotage and terrorism on the part of the bourgeoisie that compelled the Soviet Government to take stern retaliatory measures, including even terrorism. After the revolution, he said, even the bourgeois newspapers were not suppressed, and there was no question of terrorism. The Soviet Government released many of the ministers of the Provisional Government and even General Krasnov, who had fought against the Soviets. It was only when the capitalists began to offer furious resistance that the Soviet Government took systematic and resolute measures to crush it.

Newspapers calling for open resistance or disobedience to the workers' and peasants' government were banned. The Soviet Government took decisive measures to check the counter-revolutionary sabotage organised by the Constitutional Democrats, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. At the end of November, the Council of People's Commissars passed Lenin's "Decree on the Arrest of the Leaders of the Civil War Against the Revolution". The revolts of the upper strata of the Cossacks on the Don and in the Urals were crushed by force of arms. "When a revolutionary class," said Lenin, "is fighting the propertied classes that offer resistance, the resistance must be crushed. And we shall crush the resistance of the propertied classes, using the same means as they used to crush the proletariat—no other means have been invented."*

A workers' and peasants' militia was set up in the first days of Soviet power to maintain revolutionary public order. Unlike the police, which in the capitalist countries stands above the people, the Soviet militia, as Lenin emphasised, expresses the people's interests and serves the people.

At Lenin's suggestion, a special body, the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, was set up in December 1917. It was headed by Felix Dzerzhinsky, a Bolshevik of long standing and one of the finest leaders of the Party. The work of the Extraordinary Commission was directed by the Party Central Committee and the Soviet Government.

Lenin's decrees on the judiciary laid the foundation of the new People's Courts, which became an instrument for protecting the working people and for educating them in the spirit of socialism.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 354.

The historic decree on the organisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, passed by the Council of People's Commissars on January 15, 1918, was drawn up under Lenin's direction.

Lenin described the first months after October as a time when Soviet power marched triumphant across the land. In a few weeks, Soviet power was established in the central regions, in the Urals and over nearly the whole of Siberia, the Transbaikal and the Far East of Russia. Lenin kept a keen eye on the course of the socialist revolution in the national areas, where the Russian working class rendered fraternal aid to the working people of other nationalities in their struggle for liberation. By March 1918, Soviet power was victorious almost throughout the Ukraine and in Byelorussia, the Baltic provinces, Turkestan and Baku.

The tremendous pace of work began to tell on Lenin; he became extremely overtired. Krupskaya urged him to go away to the country for a few days. With great reluctance he agreed, only doing so because he hoped in calm surroundings away from the city to be able to write the articles he could not find time to tackle in the Smolny. On December 23, the Council of People's Commissars took a decision to grant Lenin a few days' leave. Lenin spent them with his wife and sister Maria at a sanatorium in Finland. Here he wrote notes under the title of "From a Publicist's Diary (Themes To Be Worked Out)", the articles "How to Organise Competition", "Some Are Frightened by the Collapse of the Old, Others Fight for the New", and the draft decree on the consumers' communes. These articles and notes, which were published some time later, show that as early as December 1917 Lenin was working hard on the problems of building socialism. In his splendid article "How to Organise Competition" he formulated several ideas and propositions that he afterwards developed in his pamphlet *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government* and other works: on socialist competition and the development of the initiative of the workers and all working people in creative, organisational work, on the setting up of nation-wide control over the production and distribution of products, and also on democratic centralism in state and economic construction.

Pointing out that in the course of the revolution, in the fight to reform society along socialist lines in the face of bourgeois opposition, the strength of the working class and the peasantry was growing, Lenin wrote: "Victory will be on the side of the exploited, for on their side is life, numerical strength, the strength of the mass, the strength of the inexhaustible sources of all that is selfless, dedicated and honest, all that is surging forward and awakening to the building of the new, all the vast reserves of energy and talent latent in the so-called 'common people', the workers and peasants. Victory will be theirs."*

By December 28, Lenin was back in Petrograd.

Lenin and Krupskaya celebrated the first Soviet New Year with the workers of the Vyborg District. The party was organised in the huge

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 403.

hall of the Mikhailov Artillery School. Lenin, who was joyfully greeted by all present, made a short speech. He talked about how the workers should organise their lives under Soviet power. When he concluded, he was given a tremendous ovation. Four workers grasped the legs of the chair on which he was sitting, picked it up and lifted him shoulder high. Then there was a concert and dancing. Lenin had tea and chatted, and presently he and Krupskaya withdrew quietly, so that their departure should not spoil the general fun. For long afterwards Lenin retained warm memories of that New Year's eve spent with the workers.

The next day, January 1, 1918, Lenin spoke at the Mikhailov Riding Hall, from which the first echelons of the socialist army were leaving for the front. On his way back from the meeting the car in which he was driving was fired upon by terrorist counter-revolutionaries. The Swiss Communist Fritz Platten, who was with him, pulled Lenin's head down quickly. Platten was slightly wounded; Lenin, fortunately, escaped unharmed. The attempt on Lenin's life roused the greatest indignation among the working people. In letters and telegrams, at meetings and conferences workers and peasants poured shame on the enemies of the people, demanded stern measures against them and expressed their love for Lenin and their confidence in the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government.

The Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. The Third Congress of Soviets. One of the central issues that confronted the Party at the time was that of the Constituent Assembly. The elections to the Assembly had been held in the middle of November on the basis of old lists of candidates nominated by various political parties before the October Revolution. At this time a considerable number of people could not grasp the full scope and significance of the October Socialist Revolution and the elections had given the Socialist-Revolutionary Party a majority, most of the seats being filled by Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were open enemies of Soviet power. By the end of November 1917, however, a split had occurred in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and the bulk of the working peasants had turned their backs on its Right wing. The composition of the Constituent Assembly did not, therefore, reflect the true relation of class forces in the country. Nevertheless, Lenin considered it essential to convene it because many peasants and also the backward sections of the urban working population still believed in a bourgeois parliament, and they had to be shown in practice that the Constituent Assembly did not voice the interests of the working people and would not satisfy their demands.

Early in January 1918, Lenin wrote the historic "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People", which later formed the basis of the Soviet Constitution. The representatives of Soviet power were to read out this Declaration in the Constituent Assembly and propose that it be adopted by the Assembly. "Russia," the Declaration stated, "is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, belongs to these Soviets."

The Declaration defined the fundamental tasks of Soviet power to be: the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, socialist organisation of society, and complete elimination of the division of society into classes. It confirmed the basic decrees of the Soviet Government, formulated the principles of the peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet state, and declared that the "Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics".*

The Constituent Assembly opened in the Taurida Palace on January 5, 1918. The counter-revolutionary majority in the Assembly refused even to discuss the "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People", whereupon the Bolsheviks announced that they did not wish to serve as a cover for the criminal actions of the enemies of the people and walked out of the Assembly. The next day the Council of People's Commissars and then the All-Russia Central Executive Committee passed a decree written by Lenin on the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. This decision was warmly approved and supported by the workers, soldiers and peasants of Russia. Exposing the bourgeoisie and the traitors to socialism who were slanderously accusing the Bolsheviks of violating democracy, Lenin said that the Constituent Assembly did not express the real will of the people of Russia and was an instrument of the counter-revolution. It was in order to establish genuine democracy, to go through with the struggle against the bourgeoisie that the Soviet government had dissolved the anti-popular counter-revolutionary Constituent Assembly. To relinquish the sovereign power of the Soviets for the sake of maintaining bourgeois parliamentarism, Lenin emphasised, would mean the collapse of the socialist revolution.

To the Constituent Assembly the Bolsheviks counterposed the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets as the only supreme organ of power expressing the will of the workers and peasants. The Congress opened on January 10, 1918. Lenin delivered a report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars. This was the Soviet Government's first report-back to the people. When the chairman gave Lenin the floor, V. Antonov-Saratovsky recalled later, the overwhelming majority of the delegates rose to their feet. There was something supreme in the enthusiasm with which these people with living, practical experience of the revolution welcomed their beloved leader. The breath of revolution swept through the hall. Cheers and shouts of "Long live Comrade Lenin!" were heard on all sides. The delegates listened intently to every word of the report. "We were all spellbound by an amazing sense of intimacy towards Ilyich. It was as if magnetic currents were passing from him to us, and from us to him. When the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries began to shout protests against Lenin's speech, the Congress forced them to keep quiet."**

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 423.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 142.

In his speech Lenin analysed the reasons for the victory of Soviet power and its successes in the struggle against the counter-revolutionary forces, and emphasised that there was no other way to socialism except through the dictatorship of the proletariat. Noting that Russia had entered the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, he substantiated the correctness and revolutionary expediency of the measures carried out by the Soviet Government in the period under review and set out the practical tasks to be undertaken in the organisation of the new socialist economy. Lenin said with pride that history had assigned the Russian working class "the honour of being the vanguard of the international socialist revolution". He ruthlessly criticised the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and also the sceptics in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party who had maintained that the victory of the socialist revolution in one country, in Russia, was impossible. At the same time he pointed out that the final victory of socialism was inseparably linked with the development of the liberation movement of the working people in other countries.

Lenin stressed the immense and decisive significance of the victory of Soviet power in Russia for the further development of the world socialist revolution; he showed the great advantage of the new-born system of socialism compared with the historically obsolete system of capitalism. "Our socialist Republic of Soviets," Lenin said, "will stand secure, as a torch of international socialism and as an example to all the working people. Over there—conflict, war, bloodshed, the sacrifice of millions of people, capitalist exploitation; here—a genuine policy of peace and a socialist Republic of Soviets."*

With great enthusiasm the Third Congress of Soviets endorsed the policy of the Soviet Government and adopted Lenin's "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People". The programme of building a socialist society proclaimed in the Declaration became a law approved by the supreme organ of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Third Congress of Soviets, Lenin said, confirmed the organisation of the new state power created by the October Revolution, and outlined the stages of socialist construction in Russia.

Efforts to withdraw from the war. Having proclaimed a policy of peace and friendship among the peoples, the Soviet state launched an energetic campaign for cessation of the war and the conclusion of a general democratic peace. Lenin regarded withdrawal from the war and the achievement of lasting peace as what was most needed in the struggle for socialism. "What, for example, could be more conclusive and clear than the following truth: a government that gave Soviet power, land, workers' control and *peace* to a people tortured by three years of predatory war would be invincible? Peace is the chief thing."**

The Soviet Government appealed on several occasions to the governments of the Entente jointly to begin negotiations with Germany and her allies for an armistice and the conclusion of peace, but its proposals were rejected.

"It was the Anglo-French and the American bourgeoisie," Lenin wrote later, "who refused to accept our proposal; it was they who even refused to talk to us about a general peace! It was *they* who betrayed the interests of all nations; it was they who prolonged the imperialist slaughter!

"It was they who, banking on the possibility of dragging Russia back into the imperialist war, refused to take part in the peace negotiations and thereby gave a free hand to the no less predatory German capitalists who imposed the annexationist and harsh Brest Peace upon Russia!"*

Since France, Britain and the United States refused to enter into any peace negotiations, the Soviet Government, which was anxious to bring Russia out of the war, decided to begin talks with the countries of the Austro-German bloc. The deposed exploiting classes of the capitalists and landowners, the reactionary military and also the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to prevent peace negotiations with Germany and provoke a German offensive against the still weak Soviet Republic. The General Headquarters of General Dukhonin, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army, sabotaged the Soviet Government's instructions to begin negotiations for an armistice.

On the night of November 8, Lenin got in touch with G.H.Q. by telephone. Dukhonin refused to carry out the directions of the Council of People's Commissars. This created a very dangerous situation. The army commanders were under the control of G.H.Q.; many army organisations led by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were hostile to Soviet power. There was no time for delay. Then and there, over the telephone, Lenin, knowing that the army wanted peace, unhesitatingly took a bold decision. He informed Dukhonin that the Council of People's Commissars had removed him from his post and appointed Lieutenant Krylenko Commander-in-Chief. Lenin then sent out a radio appeal to the soldiers to take the cause of peace into their own hands, to enter into armistice negotiations with the enemy through their own representatives and not allow the counter-revolutionary generals to wreck the great cause of peace. The further course of events fully confirmed the correctness of Lenin's decision. The army supported Soviet power. The counter-revolutionary General Headquarters was disbanded. Whole divisions, army corps and even armies entered into negotiation with German units and concluded an armistice.

Official negotiations between the representatives of the Austro-German bloc and the Soviet delegation began on November 20, 1917, at Brest-Litovsk and led to the signing of an armistice. On December 9, the peace conference opened in Brest-Litovsk. The German delegation, having first hypocritically declared its agreement with the basic

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 472.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 36.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 65.

principles of the Soviet declaration concerning the conclusion of peace without annexations and indemnities, soon threw off the mask and arrogantly began to impose on Soviet Russia a predatory "peace" treaty, under which Poland, Lithuania, a part of Latvia, Estonia and Byelorussia, all of which had been seized by the Germans, would be placed under German control, while the Ukraine would become a state dependent on Germany.

The Party and the Soviet Government were now faced with a question of the utmost urgency. Were they to sign this harsh and humiliating peace or to wage war?

For Lenin, who always faced up to the truth fearlessly, the answer was clear. He knew the situation. The Soviet Republic had, in fact, no army, because the old army was disorganised and the Red Army was only just being formed; the majority of the soldiers and working peasants, who were utterly sick of fighting, were longing for peace and would not support a war. Lenin knew that in this situation to continue the war would mean disaster to Soviet power. It was, Lenin stated quite plainly, a question of life and death for the Soviet state. For the sake of saving the Republic of Soviets–the home and basis of the world liberation movement of the working people–it was necessary to conclude peace with imperialist Germany, no matter how painful that might be.

Lenin's line was opposed by the "Left Communists" and Trotsky. The "Left Communists" (Bukharin, Bubnov, Lomov, Osinsky, and others) called for a "revolutionary war" against Germany and demanded that negotiations be broken off. They stated that the signing of a peace treaty would undermine the revolutionary movement in the West and lead to the restoration of bourgeois rule in Russia. Trotsky, who claimed that the Germans were incapable of launching an offensive, suggested declaring the war over, demobilising the army, but not signing any peace treaty. This policy would also have been disastrous for Soviet Russia because it would have opened the door to the Germans and led to continuation of the war. Both the attitude of the "Left Communists" and Trotsky's position were determined in the final analysis by their disbelief in the possibility of socialism being victorious in one country, in Russia, if the pace of the world revolution slackened.

On January 8, 1918, Lenin submitted to a conference of responsible Party workers his "Theses on the Question of Immediate Conclusion of a Separate and Annexationist Peace". In these theses he shattered the arguments of the supporters of a "revolutionary war" and proved the necessity of concluding an immediate peace with Germany. He explained that Soviet Russia was not in a position to wage war. By concluding peace, the Soviet Government was gaining a necessary breathing-space to consolidate Soviet power and go on with socialist construction. As for the "Left Communists" who counted on a revolution in Germany, it was impossible, Lenin pointed out, to have a revolution just when you wanted it and policy could not be shaped on that basis.

At this conference, 32 votes were cast in favour of a "revolutionary

war", 16 in favour of Trotsky's position ("neither peace nor war"), and 15 for the signing of a peace treaty on the terms proposed by Germany.

The situation in the Party was extremely difficult. At a meeting of the Central Committee on January 11, the majority favoured Trotsky's point of view. The Petrograd Committee, the Moscow Regional Bureau and a number of other, local Party committees did not at once take up a correct position. Even among the rank-and-file Communists there were at first strong feelings against Soviet acceptance of these predatory peace terms. Lenin suffered deep anxiety.

Nadezhda Krupskaya later wrote of Lenin that he was "a man of intense feeling, who took everything that concerned the cause very closely to heart". At moments of great anxiety, he would pace about the room quietly, sometimes on tiptoe, his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, or sit absolutely still, absorbed in his thoughts; sometimes he did not sleep for several nights running. But Lenin had great will power and exceptional endurance. He was an optimist by nature, and during the critical period of Brest, as at all such times, he was unshakable. With characteristic courage, vision and adherence to principle he firmly upheld his line; he was sure that the Party and the working class would support him. And, indeed, the Party organisations and workers quickly grasped the situation and resolutely declared their support of Lenin's position.

In spite of Lenin's instruction to conclude peace if the Germans raised the matter as an ultimatum, Trotsky, who was leading the Soviet peace delegation at Brest, announced on January 28 (February 10) that Soviet Russia refused to sign any annexationist treaty, but was ending the state of war and completely demobilising its army. This was a disgraceful betrayal of the interests of the Soviet Republic, and the German army took advantage of it. On February 18 (New Style), it launched an offensive. The same day, at an evening session of the Central Committee, after a hard struggle (7 votes to 5, with one abstention) Lenin's proposal to send a telegram immediately to the German Government, informing it that the Soviet Government agreed to sign the peace treaty, was accepted. The telegram, in the name of the Council of People's Commissars, was sent at once. The German imperialists, however, deliberately delayed their answer and continued to advance.

The Soviet Republic was in grave danger. The interventionists had to be repelled and the republic defended. On February 21, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars issued a call to the people, written by Lenin: "The Socialist Fatherland Is in Danger!" This stated that *"all the forces and means of the country are placed entirely at the service of revolutionary defence"*. It declared it to be the duty of all Soviets and revolutionary organisations *"to defend every position to the last drop of blood"*. The first contingents of the Red Army were sent to the front. Hard fighting developed at Pskov, Revel (Tallinn) and Narva.

And it was here, in fierce engagements with the enemies of the socialist fatherland, that the Red Army was born.

At the same time Lenin waged a ruthless struggle in the press against the "Left Communists" and Trotsky. He exposed the danger of "revolutionary phrase-making". He castigated and held up to merciless ridicule the "Left" phrase-mongers as people who refused to reckon with objective conditions in the present situation. Lenin wrote: "We must fight against the revolutionary phrase, we have to fight, we absolutely must fight so that at some future time people will not say of us the bitter truth that 'a revolutionary phrase about revolutionary war ruined the revolution'."* Lenin explained that by opposing the signing of the peace treaty the "Left Communists" were pushing the Party into a dangerous venture, were walking into the trap set by the Anglo-French bourgeoisie, which wanted to see Soviet power strangled by the German imperialists, and thus endangering the very existence of the socialist republic.

On February 23, new and even harsher German peace terms were received. Germany now laid claim to the whole of Latvia and Estonia and demanded recognition of the treaty the bourgeois Ukrainian Central Rada** had made with the powers of the Quadruple Alliance, under which the Ukraine became virtually a colony of Germany. The Soviet Republic was to demobilise its army completely, conclude unprofitable economic agreements with Germany, and so on. Such were the results of the adventurist policy of Trotsky and the "Left Communists". Lenin pointed out that they had "actually *helped* the German imperialists and *hindered* the growth and development of the revolution in Germany".***

At a meeting of the Central Committee on February 23, Lenin categorically demanded immediate acceptance of the German peace terms and warned that if the policy of revolutionary phrase-making continued, he would withdraw from the Government and the Central Committee. Lenin was furious and his face was grimly resolute as he paced the room. "I shall not tolerate it for another second," he declared.

A sharp debate ensued. Sverdlov, Zinoviev and Sokolnikov spoke in favour of concluding peace. Stalin, who at previous meetings of the Central Committee had been supporting Lenin, began at this critical moment to waver and at first took an incorrect stand. In his first speech he maintained that the German peace terms "need not be signed, but we must begin peace negotiations". "Stalin is not right when he says we need not sign," Lenin said. "These terms must be signed. If you don't sign them, you will sign the death warrant of Soviet power in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 29.

** *Central Rada*, a bourgeois nationalist organisation set up in Kiev in April 1917 at a congress of Ukrainian bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties and groups. After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the Rada declared itself the supreme organ "of the Ukrainian People's Republic" and embarked upon open opposition to Soviet power.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 80.

three weeks." Stalin then spoke a second time agreeing that the decision could not be postponed. "What it amounts to is that we must sign these terms at once,"* he admitted. Trotsky stated that he did not agree with Lenin but considered it impossible to wage war without unanimity within the Party. Bukharin, Uritsky and Lomov spoke against signing the peace treaty.

Lenin's inexorability, his firm stand decided matters. Seven members of the Central Committee (Lenin, Zinoviev, Sverdlov, Smilga, Sokolnikov, Stalin and Stasova) voted for immediate acceptance of the German terms, four (Bubnov, Bukharin, Lomov and Uritsky) voted against, and there were four abstentions (Dzerzhinsky, Joffe, Krestinsky and Trotsky). It was decided to sign the peace treaty. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee, which assembled on the night of February 23, passed a similar resolution. In accordance with this resolution the Council of People's Commissars resolved to accept the new peace terms.

In spite of the Central Committee's decision to conclude peace, the "Left Communists" persisted in their disorganising, splitting activities. They started publishing their own factional organ and, to make matters more complicated still, resigned from responsible posts. Trotsky announced his resignation from his post as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. The "Left Communists", who headed the Moscow Regional Bureau claimed that in the interests of the international revolution it was expedient to consent to the possible loss of Soviet power, which, according to them, was becoming purely formal. Lenin called this statement "strange and monstrous". He emphasised that preserving and strengthening the Soviet Republic were the best way of helping the world liberation movement of the working people.

The treaty with Germany was signed by the Soviet Government on March 3, 1918. "It is incredibly, unprecedentedly hard to sign an unfortunate, immeasurably severe, infinitely humiliating peace when the strong has the weak by the throat,"** wrote Lenin. He fully realised the tremendous responsibility he was taking upon himself by deciding to sign the harsh Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. But he did not yield for a moment to doubt or hesitation. Despite the malicious, slanderous clamour set up by the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois parties, despite the furious attacks of the opposition, he remained absolutely unshaken. Lenin believed profoundly in the strength of the working class, in the invincibility of Soviet power. His articles and speeches united the masses, fired them with energy and new strength.

On March 6-8, the Extraordinary Seventh Party Congress was held in Petrograd. It was the first congress of the Bolshevik Party since the victory of the October Revolution. Lenin delivered the Central Committee's political report. He gave a profound analysis of the development of the revolution in Russia, the relation of class forces inside the country

* *Minutes of the C.C. R.S.D.L.P.(B.)*, August 1917-February 1918, Russ. ed., 1958, pp. 212, 213.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 51.

and in the international arena, and proved the necessity of concluding the Brest Treaty. The great difficulty of the Russian revolution, Lenin explained, was that it had to tackle its constructive tasks in conditions of capitalist encirclement, in the face of obvious hostility on the part of international imperialism. Such a situation demanded of the Communist Party and the Soviet state exceptional efforts, a flexible foreign policy and manoeuvring in international relations, in order to prevent the imperialist powers from uniting against Soviet Russia, and to maintain peace as long as possible. In the circumstances that had arisen it was necessary to retreat temporarily and agree to the conclusion of a harsh peace with German imperialism. By concluding peace the Soviet Republic would gain a breathing-space, during which it would be able to consolidate its position and advance to socialism.

Lenin emphasised that the first and most urgent task of the Party, of Soviet power, of all workers and peasants was to improve the discipline and self-discipline of the working people, to ensure revolutionary order, to start a campaign against the chaos, disorganisation and economic ruin that were the aftermath of the war, to form an army, and to organise universal military training. By a majority of votes the Congress passed Lenin's resolution on war and peace, which approved the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

The Congress also heard Lenin's report on revision of the Party Programme and changing the name of the Party. Lenin proposed calling the Party the Communist Party. This title, he said, "clearly expresses the fact that we are moving towards complete communism". Even then, in the first months of Soviet power, with clear insight into the future he set the Party and the people a practical task, towards whose fulfilment all the thoughts and efforts of the people of the Land of Soviets must be directed. This task was the building of communism. "As we begin socialist reforms," Lenin said, "we must have a clear conception of the goal towards which these reforms are in the final analysis directed, that is, the creation of a communist society that does not limit itself to the expropriation of factories, the land and the means of production, does not confine itself to strict accounting for, and control of, production and distribution of products, but goes farther towards implementing the principle 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.' "*

Lenin paid great attention to the question of the Party Programme. After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the Party could not confine itself to merely amending and adding to the old Programme, as provided for by the Seventh (April) All-Russia Party Conference and the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.). The Bolshevik Party had become the ruling party; the country had entered the period of transition to socialism. The first Programme had been fulfilled. Now a new Programme was needed that would formulate the tasks the Party

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 127.

must perform in building a socialist society. "In place of the old Programme," said Lenin, "we must now write a new Programme of Soviet power...."* For the Congress Lenin had written the "Outline for a Draft Programme", which was handed out to the delegates. It formulated the aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the tasks of the Party in the political, economic and international fields.

The Congress passed a resolution renaming the Party, which was henceforth to be called: the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). A special commission headed by Lenin was elected to draw up a new Programme. Lenin's "Outline for a Draft Programme" formed the basis of the commission's work.

At the end of February, the Council of People's Commissars, on Lenin's suggestion, passed a decision on moving the Government from Petrograd to Moscow. The Central Committee of the Party and the Council of People's Commissars headed by Lenin arrived in Moscow on March 11, 1918, and Moscow became the capital of the Soviet state.

On the day of his arrival in Moscow Lenin wrote his splendid article "The Chief Task of Our Day", which was programmatic in character and, as Krupskaya pointed out, also gave one a good idea of Lenin's frame of mind at the time. As an epigraph to the article he used the words of his favourite poet Nekrasov:

Thou art wretched, thou art abundant,
Thou art mighty, thou art impotent,
*Mother Russia!***

Lenin wrote with pain of the humiliating Treaty of Brest and the extremely critical position the country was in, pointing out that "we must courageously look the bitter, unadorned truth straight in the face". But, he emphasised, we must march on unswervingly along the path of the socialist revolution, without losing heart over defeats, we must cast aside all dejection, grit our teeth, muster all our forces, strain every nerve and tense every muscle to bring us through the severest trials to complete victory.

Lenin's article with its profound patriotism and passionate love for the socialist motherland was an ardent appeal to the people to work, tirelessly forging the economic and defensive might of the Soviet state, building brick by brick a solid foundation for a socialist society. It inspired confidence in the people's ability, in spite of all difficulties, to build such a society.

"Our natural wealth, our man-power and the splendid impetus which the great revolution has given to the creative powers of the people are ample material to build a truly mighty and abundant Russia."*** And the Soviet people under the leadership of the Party of Lenin created the mighty Soviet Union.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 136.
** From Nekrasov's poem *Who Lives Happily in Russia?*
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 161.

On March 14, the Fourth Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets was convened in Moscow to ratify the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. Two reports were delivered, one by Lenin, the other, against ratification, by the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Kamkov. The Congress passed Lenin's resolution on the ratification of the peace treaty with Germany, the names of those for and against being recorded.

Thus in an exceptionally complex international and internal situation the Communist Party succeeded in extricating Russia from the imperialist slaughter, and thwarted the first and extremely dangerous attempt by the reactionary forces of the world to crush the Russian revolution–to smash the Soviet Republic with the armed forces of Germany. Soviet power, the power of the workers and peasants, born of the Great October Socialist Revolution, saved the country from the national disaster to which it had been condemned by the exploiting classes, and rid the peoples of Russia of the threat of being enslaved by foreign capital. Thanks to withdrawal from the war, the working class and the peasants of the Land of Soviets gained the peaceful breathing-space they so badly needed to consolidate Soviet power and push ahead with the socialist revolution. *The greatest credit for this was due to Lenin. His wisdom, loyalty to principle and strength of will made effective the only correct policy in the vital question of war and peace.*

The conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty is a striking instance of the flexibility of Lenin's tactics, of his ability to retreat when necessary in order to gain time and build up strength for victory in battles to come. Lenin assessed the treaty as an example of reasonable political compromise between a socialist country and capitalist countries, as a compromise arrived at in the interests of peace and preserving the gains of socialism. "It was indeed a compromise with the imperialists", Lenin wrote later, "but it was a compromise which, under the circumstances, *had to be made.*"* At the same time, by concluding the peace of Brest, the Communist Party showed the correct way of combining the national and international tasks of the working class.

Lenin wrote that among the particularly formidable difficulties facing the proletarian revolution in Russia was the fact that, owing to the Brest Treaty, it was compelled to pass through a period of sharp divergence from the patriotism of the petty-bourgeois masses, the philistine patriotism that would acknowledge nothing except immediate gains for the fatherland, as understood in the old way, and which saw only that Russia was to cede a part of her territory and consent to great sacrifices and humiliation. In fact, it was the Bolsheviks who were the true patriots of their socialist country, for they accepted these sacrifices in the interests of preserving the main thing–Soviet power, the first socialist state ever created in history, the Republic of Soviets, which had become the true fatherland of the working people.

Soviet, socialist patriotism is in organic harmony with proletarian

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 388.

internationalism. Lenin always regarded the working class of the Soviet land as one of the contingents of the world army of socialism. He pointed out that the socialist revolution in Russia was a component part of the world liberation movement of the working people, and that national tasks must be accomplished in direct relation to the overall tasks of the movement.

When deciding the question of the Brest peace the Bolsheviks were guided by the principles of proletarian internationalism, which, as Lenin wrote, demands, first, subordination of the interests of proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of this struggle on a world scale, and, secondly, ability and readiness on the part of a working class that has defeated the bourgeoisie to make great national sacrifices if that is in the interests of the development of the international liberation movement of the working people. The Communists of the Land of Soviets displayed exemplary loyalty to their internationalist duty. They were not deterred by the enormous sacrifices that had to be made to preserve the world's first socialist republic, the very existence of which is a great stand-by for the proletarians of all countries in their struggle against capitalism.

The whole course of development of the world liberation movement since the conclusion of the Brest Treaty has confirmed the correctness of Lenin's wise policy, the power of his scientific foresight. Every day the Soviet Republic grew stronger, and the contradictions of imperialism grew more intense. The revolutionary crisis in the West mounted rapidly and led to revolutions in a number of countries. The revolution in Germany in November 1918 enabled the Soviet Government to annul the rapacious Treaty of Brest.

Leninist principles of foreign policy. One of Lenin's great services was that in this struggle for peace he formulated the principles of the foreign policy of a socialist country.

In determining the principles of Soviet foreign policy, Lenin started out from the fact that the socialist revolution cannot be victorious simultaneously in all countries, that a period "of the coexistence side by side of socialist and capitalist states"* is historically inevitable. Lenin thus regarded the coexistence of states with different social systems as an objective law that could operate throughout the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale.

Lenin held that the foreign policy of a socialist state should aim at furthering the development of the international liberation movement of the working people, the key factor in which is the successful building of a socialist society in the countries where the dictatorship of the proletariat is established. *As Lenin conceived it, the basis of the foreign policy of a socialist state and, indeed, the only correct and reasonable principle in international relations during the period when there are two social systems is the principle of peaceful coexistence of socialist and capitalist*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 39.

states, which presupposes that both sides repudiate the use of force, of war, as a means of solving international conflicts, and that peaceful business relations are established between them. Peaceful coexistence with other peoples–that is the essence of the Soviet state's foreign policy plans, Lenin declared in an interview he gave to foreign journalists.* He sharply criticised the "Left Communists" who denied the possibility, or even necessity, of peaceful coexistence between socialist and capitalist countries.

The persistent efforts of the Soviet state to achieve peace, its peaceful foreign policy, as Lenin frequently pointed out, stem from the very nature of the socialist system, to which aggression, the seizure of foreign territory, and the subjugation of other nations are fundamentally alien. Lasting peace is essential for building socialism and communism. Lenin exposed the untenability of the position of the "Left Communists", who failed to understand the necessity of agreement with capitalist countries, of establishing peaceful relations with them. Lenin wrote that such views were obviously wrong. Since the socialist state existed on the same planet as the capitalist states, it could and should trade with them, and conclude economic and other agreements with them. Otherwise the socialist republic "could not exist at all, without flying off to the moon".

Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems does not, of course, mean reconciliation with capitalism, does not mean that Communists should give up their ultimate aim–the victory of socialism throughout the world. Peaceful coexistence, as Lenin understood it, presupposes unremitting ideological, political and economic struggle between the two systems, expansion of the class struggle of the working people in the capitalist countries in all its forms, and development of the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against imperialism. Defining the tasks of the Communist Party of the Soviet Republic, Lenin wrote: "Support of the revolutionary movement of the socialist proletariat in the advanced countries in the first instance.... Support of the democratic and revolutionary movement in all countries in general, and especially in the colonies and dependent countries."** The following, very important directive given by Lenin should also be kept in mind: "...the interests of the world revolution demand that Soviet power, having overthrown the bourgeoisie in our country, should *help* that revolution, but that it should choose a *form* of help which is commensurate with its own strength."***

Communists have never considered that the path to revolution lies necessarily through war. Arguing against the "Left Communists" and exposing their adventurist and, in fact, provocative attitude, Lenin

* Cf. V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 365.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, pp. 157-58.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 72.

wrote in his article "Strange and Monstrous": "Perhaps the authors* believe that the interests of the world revolution require that it should ge *given a push*, and that such a push can be given only by war, never by peace, which might give the people the impression that imperialism was being 'legitimised'? Such a 'theory' would be completely at variance with Marxism, for Marxism has always been opposed to 'pushing' revolutions, which develop as the class antagonisms that engender revolutions grow more acute. Such a theory would be tantamount to the view that armed uprising is a form of struggle which is obligatory always and under all conditions."**

Lenin was always emphatically opposed to the idea of "exporting revolutions". Only "madmen or provocateurs" could imagine that revolution could be produced in other countries to order, by agreement, he pointed out. Revolutions must never be imposed on peoples from without. "We know," Lenin said, "that revolutions cannot be made to order, or by agreement; that they break out when tens of millions of people come to the conclusion that it is impossible to live in the old way any longer."*** Lenin unmasked the false allegations of the bourgeoisie and the Right Socialists that the Bolsheviks wanted to introduce their system in other countries by force; he stressed that in the field of international relations, as in the question of nationalities, the Communist Party proceeded from the right of nations to self-determination****. While opposing the "export of revolutions", Lenin also resolutely condemned the "export of counter-revolution", interference by the imperialists in the internal affairs of the Soviet Republic and of other peoples engaged in revolution. He pointed out that every people was free to decide its way of life, to choose the course of its development, to set up one or another socio-political system.

In Lenin's opinion, it was not war but the example of the Land of Soviets, its successes, that would be the decisive factor in the further development of the world revolutionary process. "A Socialist Soviet Republic in Russia," he wrote, "will stand as a living example to the peoples of all countries, and the propaganda and revolutionising effect of this example will be immense."*****

Thus, as Lenin saw it, peaceful coexistence creates the most favourable international climate for the entire process of world revolution, and accelerates the development of the international liberation movement; it completely accords with the principles of proletarian internationalism. Peaceful coexistence, the struggle against unjust wars, the prohibition of world wars with their terrible loss of life and destruction promote the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of mankind.

* Reference is to the "Left Communists", authors of the resolution adopted by the Moscow Regional Bureau of the R.S.D.L.P. on February 24, 1918 (see p. 355 of the present volume).
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, pp. 71-72.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 480.
**** *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 174.
***** *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 448.

The principle of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems advanced and substantiated by Lenin has become the general line of the foreign policies of the Soviet state and other socialist countries.

Lenin devoted much attention to the foreign policy problems of the Soviet Republic. He considered that after Soviet Russia had withdrawn from the war the chief aim of her foreign policy should be to make the peace she had won more secure. The Soviet Government immediately took steps to establish business relations with the capitalist countries. On Lenin's initiative a plan for development of trade and economic relations between Soviet Russia and the United States was worked out. The Soviet Government declared its readiness to pay for goods purchased in the U.S. with agricultural produce and raw materials, and also to grant the United States concessions on equal terms with other countries.

Evidence of Soviet Russia's desire for peace was provided when the design for the State Seal came up for discussion by the Council of People's Commissars. Part of the design was a sword, which had been included as a symbol of strength and militancy. Lenin was absolutely opposed to this. "Why a sword?" he asked. "We have no need of conquests. We are against them; we do not attack, we are defending ourselves against internal and external enemies; our war is defensive, and the sword is not our emblem." The Council of People's Commissars examined the design and passed a resolution, one of the points of which was to "take the sword out of the drawing".

It was finally decided that the emblem of the Land of Soviets should be the hammer and sickle–symbol of peaceful creative labour.

Lenin's study and flat in the Kremlin. When they arrived in Moscow, Lenin and Krupskaya lived for a time in the Hotel National, after which they moved into the Kremlin, where the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars had taken up their quarters in what had formerly been the Office of Law. A red flag was mounted over the Kremlin.

Lenin's study was quite a small room. Everything on the desk had a place and purpose of its own. On the writing pad, which was always there, Lenin made notes, wrote instructions and jotted down the names of anyone who had asked to see him. Sometimes he also made notes on the pages of the calendar. Behind the desk stood an ordinary wooden armchair with a cane back and seat; in the conference room there was a similar armchair. In front of the desk stood another table with big leather armchairs on both sides of it for visitors.

On each side of the desk there were revolving bookstands, which Lenin used to call "whirligigs". One of them was for papers concerning Party conferences and congresses, and for reference books and dictionaries. The other contained files and papers that might be needed for the business of the day; Lenin also used it to keep books that he intended looking at in the near future. On two bookstands behind the

desk lay files of Russian and foreign newspapers, while a shelf by the window contained Russian newspapers for the current month.

The walls of the study were lined with bookcases, which contained nearly 2,000 books. Part of Lenin's library was kept in a room next door to the Council of People's Commissars' anteroom. Altogether the library consisted of more than 10,000 books, pamphlets, magazines and other publications, including over 1,000 books in English, French, German and other foreign languages. Among them were the works of Marx and Engels, of Plekhanov, Bebel, Lafargue, Mehring, Rosa Luxemburg, Hegel, Feuerbach, Holbach, Campanella, Saint-Simon, and the Russian revolutionary democrats Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, and Pisarev; there were also books on history, on questions of political economy, the world economy, and the economy of Russia, on engineering, the natural sciences, military science, and other branches of knowledge. A large section of the library consisted of Russian and foreign *belles lettres*.

Lenin's study contained many geographical maps and atlases which he used constantly in his work. Over the sofa hung a portrait of Marx, which had been presented to Lenin by the workers of Petrograd, and a bas-relief of Stepan Khalturin. The study also contained a tall ornamental palm-tree, of which Lenin was very fond, and which he took care of himself. As Lenin wished, there were no curtains in the windows or over the doors; he did not like curtains and never allowed the blinds to be lowered. Till the last day when he worked there the furnishings of Lenin's study remained almost unchanged. Lenin got used to his study and firmly refused to move to a larger and better room.

One of the doors of the study led into the corridor, another to what was called the "booth", a switchboard connected with the offices and flats of the People's Commissars and members of the Central Committee, and also with the headquarters of the Red Army, with Petrograd, Kharkov and other cities. A third door led into the conference room of the Council of People's Commissars; everyone Lenin received entered the study through the conference room and this door. Lenin's flat was at the end of the corridor adjoining the Council of People's Commissars.

The flat where he and his wife lived together with his sister, Maria Ulyanova, consisted of four rooms. Lenin's small room served him both as a study and a bedroom. There was a desk by the window and an iron bedstead covered with a plaid by the wall; the plaid had been given to Lenin by his mother Maria Alexandrovna in 1910, when they last saw each other in Sweden, and Lenin treasured it. A similar simplicity was to be found in the rooms occupied by Krupskaya and Maria Ulyanova, and also in the dining-room. Sometimes they ate in the kitchen. Lenin, in particular, often had dinner, supper and tea there. While sitting over his tea in the kitchen, he liked to chat with Olimpiada Zhuravlyova, the maid; at one time she had worked at an

iron works in the Urals and Lenin used to say of her that she had a strong "proletarian instinct".

In 1918, nearly the whole corridor linking Lenin's study with his flat was occupied by telegraphists, who worked day and night sending and receiving telegrams and taking down long-distance telephone calls. At the end of 1918, the telegraph was moved to another building, and a guard post was set up outside Lenin's flat, which was manned by trainees of the First Moscow Machine-Gun Courses of Officers of the Red Army (later, the First United All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviets Military School) stationed in the Kremlin. As he walked down the corridor from his flat to his study Lenin would greet the sentries and sometimes stop to chat with them.

Lenin lived and worked in the Kremlin until the spring of 1923, when illness compelled him to move to Gorki. Lenin's flat and study in the Kremlin have been preserved to this day in their original state, as a museum. Thousands of people, from all parts of the Soviet Union, as well as our friends and guests from abroad, visit them with love and respect.

Here are some of the entries in the Visitors' Book:

"Everything here speaks of his simplicity, his great modesty and unremitting work for the people, which will always remain as an example to each of us," write the workers of Moscow's Krasny Proletary Tool Works.

"We leave Lenin's study and flat with a feeling of reverence," states a group of young visitors. "It is as if the image of a very great and very modest man has come to life before our eyes. We should like to express heartfelt gratitude to our Party and Government for their careful preservation of the sacred relics of the revolution."

"We are struck by the simplicity we have seen in the study of the great Lenin," write members of an Indonesian parliamentary delegation. "The main thing is that a great humanity can be seen in this simplicity."

Australian dockers and seamen who visited the study afterwards wrote in the Visitors' Book:

"We Australians associate ourselves with the citizens of the U.S.S.R. and pay tribute to this great man whose works will lead all humanity along the path of liberation from exploitation and deliverance from war."

Lenin's activity after moving from Petrograd was directly connected with Moscow. The life and daily needs of the capital were always in his field of vision. On his initiative many matters connected with town planning and supply in Moscow were discussed by the Council of People's Commissars. It was not possible at the time to launch a large-scale housing programme and Lenin pointed out that proper use should be made of the old buildings, that the workers should be moved to flats where the rich had lived, and that the workers themselves should take part in the distribution of housing reserves. At the same time he thought of the city's future. When examining the plan of the reconstruction of Moscow, which was being drawn up at the time, he gave the architects much useful advice, which was prompted by his concern for the needs of ordinary people. He supported the idea of promoting housing construction in the south-west direction, in the region of Vorobyovy Hills (now Lenin Hills), and took a keen interest in questions of tree-planting in the city, the municipal economy, transport and the building of an underground railway. He also stressed that examples of ancient architecture, everything of value, everything created by the Russian people's artistic genius should be preserved and cared for.

"Listening to Lenin," Academician I. Zholtovsky, the architect, who discussed these matters with Lenin, recalls, "I could picture clearly to myself what a beautiful city the future Moscow was to be."*

Lenin was elected a member of the Moscow Party Committee and a deputy of the Moscow Soviet, and, though he was so heavily engaged in affairs of state, conscientiously carried out his duties in these capacities. He took an active part in the work of the Moscow Party Committee, in the city and gubernia Party conferences, the meetings of the Party and Soviet activists, and maintained close ties with his constituents.

Lenin's vivid oratory. Since the spring of 1918, when Lenin had suggested it, it had become customary in Moscow for members of the Central Committee and people in responsible positions to speak regularly (on Fridays) at public meetings. Lenin was always interested to know what questions were asked and what suggestions the workers put forward. He himself often addressed meetings and workers' conferences, sometimes twice or three times a day.

Thousands and tens of thousands of workers and Red Army men saw Lenin on the rostrum and heard his fiery appeals. As soon as the chairman mentioned Lenin's name there would be a roar of applause and loud shouts of "Long live Ilyich! Hurrah!" Lenin would step quickly up to the rostrum, and put his watch and notes on it. But he would not speak from the rostrum. He would simply come nearer to the audience, right to the edge of the platform. His manner was natural and unaffected; he never posed. His voice was loud, expressive and well modulated. He spoke quickly, but audibly and clearly.

Lenin usually spoke either entirely without notes or with only a brief outline of his speech in his hand, at which he rarely glanced. But one could see that his speech or report was not made on the spur of the moment but had been carefully considered. Before every speech, writes Krupskaya, Lenin was tense and concentrated; he avoided discussion on other subjects and one could tell by his face that he was thinking out what he was going to say.

Lenin's way of speaking was plain, without any verbal frills or affectation; there was nothing artificial or theatrical about it, no specially prepared catchwords or phrases to create an effect. His

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 320.

speeches won the listener with something else–their great truth, profundity, knowledge of the life and needs of the people, their irrefutable logic, unshakable conviction and ardour, their faith in the power of the people, the simplicity and clarity of their exposition. They always contained something new and Lenin would carefully explain this new idea, giving the reasons for it and not hesitating to repeat his idea over and over again.

His speeches, like his articles, were never abstract. His theoretical propositions were always bound up with life and supported by practical considerations and arguments. Lenin based himself on the simple facts and examples of life that were known to the people, and in this way he led his listeners on to an understanding of the theoretical propositions, policy and slogans of the Party. For every kind of audience he had his own special approach, arguments and method of expounding his ideas. While he was actually speaking he could sense what interested his audience or what they could not understand. He was always able to judge from the degree of attention he received, from the questions and comments, from the remarks of other speakers at a conference, what mood his audience were in, and to clarify obscure points, win their attention and communicate with them. He did not steer round awkward, worrying issues or try to gloss over them. On the contrary, he put such issues squarely, in concrete terms. He made use of all the rich resources of the Russian language and loved to quote popular sayings and proverbs and recall the characters of literature. He had a hearty dislike of distortions of the Russian language, of the affected use of foreign words, and when he noticed that some speakers had a tendency towards this abuse, he wrote a short article called "On Cleansing the Russian Language".

Lenin was often asked why his speeches were so easy to understand, and on one occasion he replied: "I know only that whenever I took the floor, I always thought of the workers and peasants as my listeners. I wanted them to understand me. No matter where a Communist is speaking, he ought to think of the people, he ought to speak for them."*

The people saw that Lenin was speaking of the things that really mattered, that deeply concerned his listeners and himself, and it was this that convinced them more than anything. Every worker, every peasant who listened to Lenin thought to himself: "Yes, he understands us. He is one of us." Lenin's vivid oratory reached deep into the consciousness of the masses, fired them with enthusiasm and the desire to act, and armed them with confidence in victory over the enemy. "I can remember it as if it were now," writes A. Panyunin, a worker at the Dynamo Plant, describing Lenin's speech on June 28, 1918, in the Simonov District of Moscow, "the way he spoke I was ready to throw myself straight into battle after hearing his fiery words. Hungry, barefoot, ragged, but filled with enthusiasm and understanding, we drank in his every word."*

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 471.

Lenin gave every ounce of his energy to his work. His only form of recreation were his walks in the Kremlin and the trips he took with his wife and sister to the Vorobyovy Hills and the country round Moscow. He was fond of visiting new places and would think while he drove along, enjoying the fresh air. One of his favourite spots was a wood on the bank of the River Moskva, near Barvikha.

"We would choose an out-of-the-way spot on a hill," his sister recalls, "with a good view of the river and the surrounding fields, and would pass the time there till evening.... Sometimes, when we were driving through a village, a bunch of fair-headed peasant children would come rushing up to our car begging to be taken for a ride. Vladimir Ilyich, who was very fond of children, would ask Gil (Lenin's chauffeur–*Ed.*) to pull up and the car would fill to overflowing with noisy jubilant youngsters. After driving a mile or so, we would let the children get out and they would run shouting and laughing back to their village.

"This kind of recreation was a bit primitive, but it was impossible to arrange any other at the time and we always came home refreshed and satisfied and with happy memories."**

"The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government". The establishment of Soviet power over almost the entire territory of Russia and her withdrawal from the war launched a new stage in the development of the Soviet state. Thanks to the peace which had been achieved, notwithstanding its onerous terms and instability, the Soviet Republic was able, as Lenin wrote, to concentrate its energies on the organisational, constructive tasks of the socialist revolution.

Lenin always attached enormous importance to equipping the Party and the working class with a clear understanding of the aims and prospects of further advance. When the country gained a peaceful breathing-space, therefore, he paid special attention to drawing up a plan of socialist construction.

In the second half of March 1918, Lenin began work on an article about the tasks confronting the Soviet Government. He drew up a plan and dictated the first version to his stenographer. In April, he wrote "Theses on the Tasks of the Soviet Government at the Present Moment", which were published as an article called "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government". The first version of this article, which treats of some questions in greater detail than the final text, is also of great importance. In 1962, part of Chapter IV, Chapters V-IX and the beginning of Chapter X of this version were brought to light and deciphered. They were published together with the previously known chapters–the end of Chapter X and Chapters XI-XIII–in Volume 36 of Lenin's *Collected Works*.

* *We Heard Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1935, p. 14.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 334.

"The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" was the first big work Lenin had written since the October Revolution; it is an outstanding piece of Marxism. It outlines a plan of socialist construction, examines the most important problems of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, and works out the principles of the economic policy of the Soviet state. Many extremely important basic propositions that Lenin formulated in "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" are still significant today, under the conditions of socialist society and the full-scale building of communism.

After the proletariat had taken political power, Lenin pointed out, the Communist Party's main task was that of administering the country. This he defined as the chief link in the historical chain of events, which has to be grasped in order to hold the whole chain and thoroughly prepare the transition to socialism.

"We, the Bolshevik Party," Lenin wrote, "have *convinced* Russia. We have *won* Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the working people. Now we must *administer* Russia."*

The chief difficulty of the socialist revolution lay in the economic sphere. Planned socialist production and the distribution of products had to be organised, a rise in the productive forces had to be achieved and conditions created in which it would be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist or make a come-back. This was the essence and chief condition of the complete victory of the socialist revolution. In the first version of "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" Lenin pointed out that after the dictatorship of the working class has been established the main thing is the reorganisation and development of the economy on socialist lines, direction of the national economy.

The transition to socialism, Lenin taught, demands above all organisation of the strictest nation-wide accounting and control of the production and distribution of products. Without this it is impossible to ensure the planned economy that is in the very nature of socialist society, and a steady rise in the productivity of labour. Lenin particularly emphasised the significance of control and accounting in the campaign against the petty-bourgeois elements, against the survivals of capitalism in people's minds, in their attitude to work and to social property.

Besides the organisation of nation-wide accounting and control Lenin considered the raising of labour productivity on a nation-wide scale an equally important factor in the transition to socialism. "In every socialist revolution," he wrote, "after the proletariat has solved the problem of capturing power, and to the extent that the task of expropriating the expropriators and suppressing their resistance has been carried out in the main, there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system superior to capitalism, namely, raising the productivity of labour, and in this connection (and for this purpose) securing better organisation of labour."**

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 242.
** *Ibid.*, p. 257.

The first requirement for raising the productivity of labour, Lenin pointed out, is to provide a material basis for large-scale industry: development of fuel and iron production, the engineering and chemical industries. Other important conditions for higher productivity of labour are the raising of the educational and cultural level of the population, the improvement of the discipline of the working people, their skill, their dexterity and labour productivity, and better organisation. *Proceeding from the socialist principle of distribution in accordance with the quantity and quality of work, Lenin emphasised the enormous significance of the workers having a material interest in the results of their labour, in the growth of social production.* In this connection he called attention to the necessity of introducing payment by the piece and a system of bonuses.

Lenin taught that an essential condition for the victory of socialism is the building up of a new, conscious sense of labour discipline, educating the people to take a communist attitude to their work. Measures of compulsion must be used in the case of those who try to give society as little as possible while grabbing as much as possible for themselves. The chief slogans of the day, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, should be: "Keep regular and honest accounts of money, manage economically, do not be lazy, do not steal, observe the strictest labour discipline."* The carrying out of these slogans by the mass of the working people and by the Soviet state was, in Lenin's opinion, the most important condition for overcoming economic disruption and for building up a socialist economy.

Lenin considered socialist competition a powerful means of drawing the masses of the people into the work of building the new society and of raising labour productivity. Exposing the lie spread by the bourgeoisie, who alleged that the socialists denied the importance of competition, he wrote that, in fact, only socialism, by abolishing exploitation and the enslavement of the masses, opened the road for competition on a really mass scale, enabled millions of working people to show what they could do, and enabled them to develop their ability and initiative, only socialism made it possible to discover talent among the people, that enormous untapped well of talent which capitalism choked and sullied. Lenin proposed organising socialist competition, making it public, keeping the people informed in detail, through the press, about all the achievements of the best enterprises and villages, studying the reasons for their success, the methods and results of their management, and on the other hand, exposing those who "persist in the 'traditions of capitalism', i.e., anarchy, laziness, disorder and profiteering".

One of Lenin's great contributions to the theory and practice of scientific communism was his elaboration of the principle of democratic

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 243.

centralism as the basic principle of economic management under the conditions of building socialist and communist society.

Democratic centralism, as Lenin conceived it, meant combining centralised planned administration of the economy with broad participation of the masses in economic management and granting of adequate powers to the local bodies. It had nothing in common with the bureaucratic centralism of the bourgeois-landowner state. Despite the assertions of the anarchistic revisionists, the centralism of the socialist economy did not exclude democracy. On the contrary, it was based on the broadest democratic foundation. "Centralism, understood in a truly democratic sense," Lenin wrote, "presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal."* Lenin's principle of democratic centralism in economic management found its practical application in the system of Economic Councils.

Lenin went on to explain that any large-scale machine industry, which forms the production foundation of socialism, and the processes of work organised on the lines of such an industry, calls for absolute and strictest unity of will directing the joint labour of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. Such unity of will presupposes one-man management in industry, personal responsibility of definite persons for executive functions, for the job entrusted to them, and demands strict, conscious discipline and unquestioning obedience to the will of the managers of production during work. One-man management, Lenin emphasised, must be combined with a collegiate attitude, with active participation of the masses in discussing and solving the basic problems of managing production, with their control of the work of enterprises.

In "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" and a number of his other works and speeches Lenin paid much attention to the question of the specialists needed for the building of socialism. He considered that the heart of the problem was to create a new intelligentsia that would have its roots in the people and spring from a working people's environment. At the same time, Lenin stressed the necessity of enlisting the old, bourgeois specialists in socialist construction.

Lenin gave the first Marxist analysis of the question of the attitude of the victorious proletariat and its party to the bourgeois intelligentsia. He considered employment of the old specialists an essential part of the general task of converting the whole great store of culture, the science and technical knowledge accumulated by capitalism, from a tool of the bourgeoisie into a tool of the proletariat. The working class, he explained, could and must re-educate the bulk of the old intelligentsia, and draw engineers and technicians, agronomists, teachers,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 208.

doctors, men of science and culture, and also former capitalists with experience of running large enterprises into the service of the people. This was essential in the interests of economic and cultural construction, and also for training the new proletarian intelligentsia. Lenin taught Communists to be tactful with the old intelligentsia, to value and be considerate towards every specialist, even though he might still be ideologically alien to communism, as long as he worked conscientiously, and with a sound knowledge of the job.

Lenin pointed out that success of the socialist transformation of Russia presupposed the strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the development and perfection of Soviet organisation. He advocated developing socialist democracy to the utmost, drawing the working people into the practical work of governing the country, and cementing the ties between the Soviets and the masses of the people. Socialist democracy, Lenin explained, meant that every citizen should be so placed that he could take part in discussing state laws and in electing his representatives to governing bodies and in putting laws into effect.

Lenin's theses on the immediate tasks of the Soviet Government were approved by the Party Central Committee and printed in *Pravda* and *Izvestia of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee*, and also published as a separate pamphlet. On April 29, 1918, in accordance with the Central Committee's decision, Lenin delivered a report on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government at a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, which in its turn approved the propositions put forward by Lenin. Lenin summed up these propositions in "Six Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government", which with a few small additions were endorsed at a meeting of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on May 3, 1918, and sent out by the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to all districts with instructions to make them the "basis of the work of the Soviets of Deputies".

Lenin's plan of socialist construction was received with hostility by the "Left Communists", who opposed the introduction of labour discipline, one-man management in the enterprises, the introduction of the cost-accounting principle and the employment of bourgeois specialists. In "'Left-wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality", published in May 1918, Lenin showed that the "Left Communists" were the defenders and mouthpiece of the petty bourgeoisie, that they had failed to understand the essence of the transition from capitalism to socialism, the nature and tasks of the proletarian state, the specific features of Russia's economy at that time.

Lenin explained that in Soviet Russia there were five different socio-economic formations: 1) the patriarchal, i.e., largely natural peasant economy; 2) small commodity production, mainly peasant economy producing for the market; 3) private capitalism—industrial and trading enterprises belonging to capitalists, and kulak farms; 4) "state

capitalism"–Soviet joint-stock companies with private capital participating, concessions, etc.; 5) the socialist formation–factories, the land, banks and railways that had become the property of the Soviet state, state farms and artels of the working peasants. This multiplicity of formations in the country's economy had to be eliminated and the undivided supremacy of the socialist formation achieved by means of consistent and gradual reorganisation of the economy, by restricting and squeezing out the capitalist elements in town and country, and by socialist reform of small commodity production.

At that time small commodity production was predominant in Russia's economy and the petty-bourgeois element constituted the greatest danger to the proletarian state. Under these conditions, Lenin pointed out, the main task was to subordinate the petty bourgeois to the control and accounting of the Soviet socialist state. To achieve this aim and organise large-scale production as rapidly as possible Lenin considered it expedient to utilise various forms of state capitalism, to allow some degree of compromise, to come to an agreement with capitalists who were prepared to work under the control of the socialist state. He put forward the idea that after the dictatorship of the proletariat had been established state capitalism could, in certain circumstances, serve as one of the ways of bringing about the gradual socialisation of enterprises that had remained the property of capitalists. Lenin did not rule out the possibility of the working class buying out the means of production owned by the bourgeoisie.

State capitalism under the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin said, is capitalism which is allowed within definite limits by the proletarian government, which bases itself on the commanding heights of the economy, and is under the strict control of the socialist state.

The question of state capitalism under the dictatorship of the working class, which had been raised by life itself, by building socialism in a backward, petty-bourgeois country, was a new question, which had not and could not have been posed by the founders of scientific communism. Lenin's treatment of this question is an example of his creative approach to revolutionary theory. He sharply criticised the "Left Communists", who in this matter, too, adopted a dogmatic position and refused to see the fundamental distinction between state capitalism under the dictatorship of the proletariat and state capitalism under bourgeois rule.

In Soviet Russia state-capitalist enterprises never became widely developed and did not play an important part in the economy of the transition period, because the bourgeoisie, counting on restoring the bourgeois-landowner system with the help of foreign imperialists, declined to work under the control of the Soviet Government. The possibility of utilising state capitalism in building socialism was, however, confirmed in practice by the experience of the countries of people's democracy.

In his article "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality", Lenin particularly stressed the significance of the "*dictatorship* of the proletariat in the *economic* sphere". A proletarian revolutionary, he wrote, condemning the "Left Communists", "could never at such a moment 'forget' this core of the proletarian revolution, which is directed against the economic foundations of capitalism".*

Lenin firmly opposed Bukharin's proposal at the Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) that the new Programme of the Party should include a description of communist society, in which no state would exist. "To proclaim the withering away of the state prematurely would distort the historical perspective,"** he pointed out. In his speech at the first All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils on May 26, 1918, Lenin put forward the fundamental thesis on the tremendous importance of the economic and organisational functions of the proletarian state, of the organs of economic management, and emphasised that their role in the work of communist construction would steadily increase. The more firmly the foundations of the socialist system are laid, Lenin said, the higher is the role of the organs of management of the national economy. Of all the state institutions they alone retain their durable position, which will become even more durable as the necessity for a purely administrative apparatus, for an apparatus engaged solely in administration, becomes less and less. The state's administrative apparatus "is doomed to die; while the apparatus of the type of the Supreme Economic Council is destined to grow, to develop and become strong, performing all the main activities of organised society".***

Lenin pointed out that the aim of socialist production was to ensure the well-being and all-round development of members of society through constant and rapid growth of the national economy on the basis of the highest techniques and achievements of science. "Socialism alone," he said, "will make possible the wide expansion of social production and distribution on scientific lines and their actual subordination to the aim of easing the lives of the working people and of improving their welfare as much as possible. Socialism alone can achieve this."****

First steps towards building the economy. Lenin's plan of socialist construction opened up boundless horizons before the Party and the working class and inspired the Soviet people to wage a selfless struggle against all difficulties and all enemies in order to create a mighty and abundant Russia, to bring the victory of socialism.

Lenin considered it a matter of primary importance to carry through the nationalisation of large-scale industry, above all heavy industry, and to go over from workers' control to working-class, state management of production. On June 28, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars passed a decree on the nationalisation of all large-scale industry.

Every day Lenin dealt with questions concerning the management of industry and selection of managerial personnel, giving much attention to

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 351.
** *Ibid.*, p. 148.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 408.
**** *Ibid.*, p. 411.

the composition of the management staffs of the main enterprises and persistently working to establish the principle of one-man management. When talking with workers' delegations and speaking at enterprises, he pointed out that production must be socialised in practice, that the factories must be taken over in practice.

In a letter to a conference of representatives of nationalised enterprises of the machine-building industry Lenin urged them to concentrate all their energy on organising labour processes correctly, on raising the productivity of labour. He recommended sending experienced workers from the best factories to other factories to help them organise work, establish firm discipline and order, accounting and control in order to save raw materials. Lenin warmly supported the initiative of the workers of the Bryansk Metal Works in Bezhitsa, who had introduced regulations for the maintenance of strict labour discipline, and said these regulations ought to be applied to other enterprises as well.

Lenin taught that "... only large-scale, planned construction, which aims at evenly utilising economic and business values, deserves to be called socialist".* Even at this stage Lenin worked out the basic principles of socialist planning.

In April 1918, he wrote the "Draft Plan of Scientific and Technical Work", in which he set the country's economic administrative organs and scientists the task of drawing up as rapidly as possible "a plan for the reorganisation of industry and the economic progress of Russia". The plan, wrote Lenin, must provide for rational distribution of industry from the point of view of proximity of raw materials and maximum economy of social labour, and also concentration of production. Proceeding from the fact that the socialist national economy must be built on an advanced technical basis, he drew particular attention to the electrification of industry and transport and the utilisation of electricity in farming. Thus in the very first months of Soviet power Lenin set the electrification of the national economy as a task of programmatic importance.

These instructions of Lenin's determined the direction of the whole activity of the Communist Party in building a socialist economy and formed the basis of all the long-term plans for the development of the national economy of the land of Soviets.

The "Draft Plan of Scientific and Technical Work", like the whole of Lenin's plan for tackling the building of socialism, graphically illustrated the scientific approach of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government to the problems of creating a new society. In the light of this, the assertions of the defenders of capitalism that the Soviet system was not a constructive but a destructive system, that "in the Bolshevik movement," as Professor E. J. Dillon, an "expert" on Russia who had lived there for 37 years, wrote in 1918, "there is not the vestige of a constructive or social idea",** can only be regarded as despicable

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 36.

** E. J. Dillon, *The Eclipse of Russia*, London-Toronto, 1918, p. 388.

slander. Such assertions were refuted by the whole creative activity of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, which even then, in spite of incredible difficulties, set about broad-scale economic construction.

As early as December 1917, Lenin had a talk with a prominent expert in power engineering A. Winter, who told him his ideas about setting up a big peat enterprise near Moscow, on the Shatura peat bogs, and building a large district power station on the basis of it. Lenin listened very attentively and thoughtfully to what Winter told him and immediately appreciated the practicability and importance of such a project. At his suggestion the Council of People's Commissars passed a decision in the spring of 1918 on the building of the Shatura Power Station and allocated funds for extracting Shatura peat.

As early as January 1918, Lenin instructed G. Graftio, author of the Volkhov hydropower project–a project which had been shelved by the tsarist government–to draw up at once an estimate of the cost of his project. In July, the Council of People's Commissars passed a resolution on the construction of the Volkhov Hydropower Station. The first builders of the Volkhov Station had to grapple with many difficulties; they were short of people, equipment and money. "But we," G. Graftio recalls, "looked cheerfully to the future because we knew that at the hardest times we could always depend on help and support from Vladimir Ilyich."*

Other power projects were drawn up. A programme for the development of the Ural-Kuznetsk Coalfield was worked out; a broad programme of railway building was drafted; preparatory work was begun on the construction of the Volga-Don Canal and the building of irrigation systems in Turkestan for the development of cotton-growing. Even in those days Lenin with his usual foresight stressed the enormous importance of the raw-material and power resources of the eastern regions of the country. He gave great attention to the task of switching industry over to peaceful production, organising the repair and production of agricultural machines and equipment, and output of consumer goods. Measures were taken to develop trade between town and country, to organise state and co-operative trade, and to institute a stable financial and monetary system.

The struggle for grain is a struggle for socialism. The Party and the Government made tremendous efforts to snatch the country out of the jaws of economic ruin and starvation. Lenin went into every detail of the organisation of food supplies and exercised personal supervision over the freighting of grain to Petrograd. His loyal assistant in this work was Alexander Tsyurupa, who was appointed People's Commissar for Food at the end of February 1918. Lenin valued Tsyurupa highly and had great respect for him. Tsyurupa was a splendid organiser and a practical man, who knew the countryside well. Lenin was also very

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 164.

fond of him as a man and a friend. Later on, in 1921, Tsyurupa became Vice-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.

An extremely serious food crisis developed in the spring and particularly the summer of 1918. The workers of Moscow, Petrograd and other cities sometimes went for weeks on end without their bread ration; the working peasantry of the provinces that did not grow grain were also starving. The acute food shortage was caused mainly because the kulaks had hidden their grain and refused to sell it to the state at fixed prices. The reactionary forces hoped to bring about the fall of Soviet power through starvation. The fate of the revolution depended on grain.

Lenin wrestled with the problem of providing the cities with bread and found a solution in the form of new, proletarian methods of combating the famine. In May 1918, Lenin initiated and participated in the drawing up of decrees on the food situation which confirmed that the state grain monopoly was inviolable, and called for ruthless measures to stop profiteering and hoarding, and the strictest control and proper distribution of all grain stocks. The whole matter of food supplies was centralised under the People's Commissariat for Food, which was given emergency powers. Persons who concealed grain surpluses were declared enemies of the people and tried by revolutionary tribunals.

As always at times of crisis, Lenin appealed to the working class. He proposed forming food detachments from among the politically conscious workers and sending them to the countryside to rouse the rural poor to fight the kulaks. On May 10, Lenin received a representative of the Putilov workers, A. Ivanov, a marker in the boiler department, who drew a detailed and harrowing picture of the famine in Petrograd. During their conversation Lenin read him the Government's decree on the "food dictatorship" and gave him a copy of it to show to the Putilov workers. Lenin asked him to tell the working people of Petrograd that the Soviet Government had adopted resolute measures to improve the food situation and emphasised that the workers must take an active part. In Ivanov's presence Lenin wrote a note to A. Tsyurupa to give every encouragement to the organisation of food detachments from among the Petrograd workers.

Soon afterwards the papers published Lenin's letter to the Petrograd workers "On the Famine", in which he called upon the proletariat to organise a mass crusade against the grain profiteers, against the kulaks, against all who violated state regulations concerning the collection, transporting and distribution of grain. The kulaks, he said, were the mainstay of the counter-revolution. Either the working class, in alliance with the poor peasants, would crush the resistance of the kulaks and force them to obey the demands of the proletarian state, or the bourgeoisie and the kulaks would overthrow Soviet power. Lenin visited the working-class districts of Moscow, spoke at conferences and meetings, explaining the tasks of the food detachments, and sent out telegrams

to the local Soviet organs and to enterprises, giving instructions on the organisation and work of the food detachments.

It was not only the food question that was being decided in the fight for grain; the point at issue was the victory of the socialist revolution in the countryside, and hence the fate of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "It may seem that this is a struggle only for grain; in fact, it is a struggle for socialism," said Lenin. During the confiscation of the landed estates and the redistribution of the land the class struggle between the kulaks and the working peasantry flared up with fresh intensity. By its extensive organisational work the Bolshevik Party paved the way for the further development and deepening of the socialist revolution in the countryside, which reached its peak in the summer and autumn of 1918. The workers who were sent to the villages brought with them the ideas of socialism, rallied the rural poor and led their struggle against the kulaks. Close alliance with the rural poor, concessions to the middle peasants and agreement with them, ruthless suppression of the kulaks—such was Lenin's conception of what the policy of the working class should be. On June 11, 1918, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, on Lenin's suggestion, passed the decree on the formation of Poor Peasants' Committees.

The workers' crusade to the countryside and the activity of the Poor Peasants' Committees were of decisive importance in achieving the victory of the socialist revolution and consolidating Soviet power in the countryside, in defeating the counter-revolutionary kulaks and winning over the middle peasant to Soviet power. Fifty million hectares of kulak land passed into the hands of the poor and middle peasants. The dominance of the kulak elements in the volost and village Soviets was eliminated. The alliance between the working class and the working peasantry was strengthened. The Poor Peasants' Committees rendered great assistance in overcoming the food difficulties, and in supplying the cities and the Red Army with grain.

In the spring of 1918, when he was drawing up the plan of socialist construction, Lenin made it one of the Party's chief tasks to achieve "a gradual but steady transition to joint tillage and large-scale socialist agriculture".* It is worth mentioning in this connection that even then Lenin, basing himself on the fundamental ideas of Marx and Engels, was pointing out that co-operation could and should play an important part in the building of socialism because after the victory of the socialist revolution and the winning of power by the working class "the position of the co-operatives is radically and fundamentally altered".** Later, reasoning from the proposition about the socialist nature of co-operation under the dictatorship of the proletariat, with social ownership of the basic means of production, Lenin evolved his brilliant co-operative plan for bringing the peasants on to the path of socialism, for the voluntary

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 153.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 5th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 161.

amalgamation of small peasant farms into large collective economic units.

Having abolished private ownership of the land, the Soviet Government carried out a series of measures to reorganise agriculture along socialist lines. State socialist farms were set up on the best of the landed estates. A particular case was the Lesniye Polyany cattle-breeding state farm set up on Lenin's initiative at the village of Maltsevo-Brodovo not far from Moscow, which Lenin visited in the summer of 1918. Lenin regarded the state farms as strongholds of socialist reform of the countryside and raising of the productive forces of agriculture. The first agricultural communes and artels received support and encouragement from the Party and the Government. At Lenin's suggestion a special fund was instituted which issued grants and loans to the collective farms.

Culture for the people. The October Revolution, said Lenin, had opened the road to a great cultural revolution. Questions of cultural construction began to figure prominently in Lenin's work as soon as Soviet power was established. In a talk with A. Lunacharsky, the People's Commissar of Education, on the tasks of the Commissariat of Education he stressed the necessity of a serious, statesmanlike approach to the work of public education and widespread development of political and educational work among the people. Acting on Lenin's instructions, the People's Commissariat of Education took over the administration of the country's educational establishments and began to reorganise the schools. In June 1918, the decree on the organisation of public education in the Soviet Republic was passed by the Council of People's Commissars and published over Lenin's signature.

Lenin considered it most important to win over the teachers to Soviet power. He made many speeches to teachers, explaining to them the policy of the Communist Party in the field of public education. The Soviet school, he said, must become a means of enlightening and educating the people, must serve the cause of building socialist society.

The work of abolishing illiteracy among adults was begun. The doors of the institutions of higher learning were opened wide to the workers and peasants.

Lenin was responsive to the cultural aspirations of the working people. "Pokrovsky. Build a school. Lenin" was his terse instruction written on the letter, in which the peasants of a remote northern village complained that they had tried in vain to get the uyezd and gubernia authorities to build them a school and appealed to Lenin for help. "Also," the letter said, "we send you greetings and may you lead the proletariat well and give the bourgeois a sound beating. We have also organised a Committee of Poor Peasants for ourselves. It is a good thing, may the Lord give you good health. They say it was your idea."*

* *About Ilyich*, Articles and Reminiscences by Village Correspondents, Russ. ed., Leningrad, 1934, pp. 77, 78.

Lenin also helped the Putilov workers, who decided to organise an art studio for children at the works. When the Putilov delegates told Lenin that the Department of Public Education had advised them to postpone the project, Lenin turned to the other people in his study and said: "Do you hear what the Putilov workers want? They want to produce their own working-class intelligentsia and they are told: 'Wait a year or so!' No delay whatsoever, the studio must be organised!"*

The Soviet state made persistent efforts to enlist scientific and technical personnel in the work of socialist construction. Lenin warmly welcomed the decision of the Academy of Sciences to co-operate with the Soviet Government in the work of studying the country's natural resources. On April 12, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars passed a resolution that the Academy of Sciences' proposal should be taken up and finances provided for its work. The Soviet Government allotted what were then large funds for scientific research, new research institutes, laboratories and experimental stations and factories were organised in the very first year of the socialist revolution.

Attaching great importance to the further development, study and propagation of Marxist theory, Lenin supported the proposal made by leading personnel of the People's Commissariat for Education on the setting up of a Marxist scientific centre—the Socialist Academy of Social Sciences. Under his guidance, a government resolution on the Academy was drafted. Lenin defined the Academy's principal tasks as: publication of Marxist literature, bringing together Marxist scholars, organising social research, elaboration of current philosophical and economic problems, and teaching the social sciences from a Marxist point of view.

The Soviet state made great artistic treasures the property of the whole people. Lenin initiated measures for the nationalisation of invaluable art collections (one of them was the Tretyakov Gallery), and also for the protection of artistic and historical monuments. Soon after the Government's removal to Moscow Lenin gave instructions for restoring the most important historical buildings of the Kremlin. His was the plan of "monument propaganda", which meant the improvement of Soviet towns and cities, above all Moscow and Petrograd, by installing memorials, bas-reliefs and other sculptures, whose purpose would be to propagate the ideas of socialism, show the heroism of the working people's struggle for freedom from their oppressors, and commemorate the great men of culture.

"In the old days," Lenin said, "human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation."**

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 75.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 481-82.

Consolidation of Soviet power. The creation of the Red Army. In the field of state organisation Lenin considered the consolidation of Soviet power in the provinces one of the most important problems at that period. He kept a close eye on the work of the local Soviets and warmly supported their initiative and progressive undertakings. He praised A. Todorsky's book *A Year with a Rifle and a Plough*, published by the Vesyegonsk Uyezd Executive Committee. This was a very lively description of the experience of building the new life in the uyezd, particularly the experience of enlisting the help of capitalists to get a sawmill and tanning factory working. When receiving delegations from the provinces, he talked to them of the necessity of consolidating the new worker-peasant organs of power and strengthening their ties with the people, and stressed that the working people had the right of recalling their deputies. In his articles and speeches Lenin pointed out that the Soviet Government had no intention of belittling the significance of the local authorities and limiting their rights and independence. At the same time he resolutely opposed the parochial attitude, separatism and regional narrow-mindedness, which he regarded as the resistance of the petty-bourgeois element to centralised proletarian state administration. He considered parochial tendencies to be extremely dangerous to the Soviet state.

Lenin emphasised that rapid and accurate fulfilment of all the laws and instructions of the Soviet Government played an important part in organising and regulating the activities of the organs of Soviet power. When the chairman of the Archangel Gubernia Executive Committee refused to carry out a directive from the Soviet Government, Lenin gave him a reprimand. "If we are to teach the workers and peasants discipline conscientiously, we must begin with ourselves first,"* he wrote.

Lenin himself set a personal example of strict observance of all laws and regulations, making no exception for himself. This was illustrated in May 1918, when Lenin gave a strict reprimand to V. Bonch-Bruyevich, administrative manager to the Council of People's Commissars, and N. Gorbunov, the secretary, for what Lenin called the arbitrary and illegal raising of his, Lenin's, salary.

In order to inculcate and strengthen revolutionary, Soviet legality, Lenin told the Commissariat of Justice to publish the Collected Instructions and Enactments of the Soviet Government, to draw up and put into effect measures for organising and improving the work of the people's courts. He demanded ruthless action against embezzlement of public funds and bribery, profiteering and rowdyism, swindling and parasitism. "'He who does not work, neither shall he eat'–this is the *practical* commandment of socialism. This is how things should be organised *practically*,"** he wrote. Lenin proposed stern measures against bribery.

* *Leninsky Sbornik* (*Lenin Miscellany*) XXXIV, p. 23.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 414.

He wrote to the People's Commissar for Justice D. I. Kursky: "It is essential immediately, with demonstrative speed, to introduce a Bill stating that the penalty for bribery (extortion, graft, acting as an agent for bribery, *and the like*) shall be *not less than* ten years' imprisonment and, in addition, ten years of compulsory labour."*

Lenin foresaw that the peaceful breathing-space might be shortlived and considered it most important to strengthen the defence potential of the Soviet land.

"The Russian Soviet Federative Republic," stated a resolution, written by Lenin and passed by the Fourth Congress of Soviets, on the ratification of the Brest Treaty, "having unanimously condemned predatory wars, from now on deems it its right and its duty to defend the socialist fatherland against all possible attacks by any of the imperialist powers."**

One of the important planks in the Bolshevik Party's pogramme had been the demand for the replacement of the standing army by a people's militia. However, experience of the revolution in Russia, and the fact that the Soviet Republic, encircled by hostile capitalist states, encountered furious armed resistance by the landowners and the bourgeoisie, decided the new approach to the problem taken by Lenin and the Party. In order to defend the gains of the socialist revolution from encroachments by internal and external enemies the Party recognised the need to create a strong and well-equipped army of the Soviet state. We are defencists as from November 7, 1917, Lenin stated, we are for the defence of the socialist fatherland; therefore "we tell ourselves: a firm and strong army and a strong rear are needed for the defence".***

One of Lenin's great services to the people was that he was the first Marxist to work out the question of the armed forces of the proletarian state, to put the organisation and building up of a Soviet army on a scientific basis. Lenin showed that a Soviet army is an army of a new type. Unlike the armies of the imperialist states, which are the mailed fist of the exploiting classes, instruments for the enslavement of their own people and the peoples of other countries, the Soviet army is an army for the liberation of the working people, an army founded and educated on the principles of proletarian internationalism.

In March 1918, Lenin presided at a conference of army workers, which discussed questions of army organisation. At first the Red Army was recruited from volunteers. But by the spring of 1918, in view of the necessity of repulsing the interventionists and whiteguards, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government began making preparations for the creation of a regular centralised army on the basis of compulsory military service. On May 29, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee passed a resolution on compulsory enrolment of the working people in the Red Army. Thanks to the enormous work of the Party and the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people, by the autumn of 1918

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 331.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*. Vol. 27, p. 201.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 379.

a firm foundation for a regular people's army, the Red Army, had been laid.

Founder of the Soviet Constitution. The Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets opened on July 4, 1918. It was the scene of a sharp struggle against the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who attempted to discredit the Soviet Government's policy, came out in defence of the counter-revolutionary parties, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, demanded that the campaign against the kulaks be abandoned, demanded freedom of private trade in grain and that the Poor Peasants' Committees be abolished; they also called for repudiation of the Brest Treaty.

In the Council of People's Commissars' report Lenin hit back at the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and exposed and refuted their slanderous allegations. He stressed that the correctness of the action of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government "in concluding the Brest peace has been shown by the whole course of events". During the peaceful breathing-space the workers and peasants had overcome enormous difficulties and taken a great step forward in socialist construction. Lenin explained the necessity for the emergency measures that the Soviet Government had adopted in combating the famine, and showed that the Communist Party was steadily carrying out a policy of alliance between the working class and the rural poor and all the working peasantry. After keen debates on the reports of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars the Congress passed by a majority vote the resolution proposed by the Communist group expressing "full approval of the foreign and home policy of the Soviet Government". The resolution tabled by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries was rejected.

On July 6, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, defeated at the Congress, started an anti-Soviet revolt. With the object of provoking war between Germany and Soviet Russia they murdered the German Ambassador Mirbach in Moscow. The Congress was adjourned and on Lenin's instructions energetic measures were taken to put down the revolt. Within twenty-four hours all armed action by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries was suppressed. Their criminal action roused the deepest indignation among the working people and rallied them even closer round the Bolshevik Party. "The worker and peasant masses," said Lenin, "have been rallying ever closer and more solidly around the Communist-Bolshevik Party, the authentic spokesman of the will of the masses."* When it resumed its work on July 9, the Congress of Soviets approved the resolute measures taken by the Soviet Government to deal with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' criminal adventure.

The Congress adopted a resolution on the food problem, passed a decision on "Organisation of the Red Army", and completed its work with an act of great significance. It approved the first Constitution of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 535.

the Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republics, which was drafted on the basis of Lenin's instructions and with his participation. Lenin headed the commission of the Party Central Committee that was entrusted with the task of making the final draft of the Constitution for submission to the Fifth Congress of Soviets. On Lenin's suggestion a "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People" was included in the Constitution as the preamble, an article on equality of nationalities and races in the Soviet Republic was added, and certain other articles were formulated.

In a speech headed "What Will the Soviet Constitution Give the Working People", which he made at a meeting in the Khamovniki District of Moscow, and in several other speeches and works, Lenin described the world-wide significance of the Soviet Constitution. He pointed out that the Constitution had not been invented by a commission, that it was not the work of lawyers; it was a record of the experience of organisation and struggle by the proletariat against the exploiters; it gave legislative confirmation to the great gains of the working people of Soviet Russia: establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, alliance of the working class and the working peasantry, public ownership of the basic means of production, and the institution of genuine democracy, democracy for the whole people. Lenin stressed the fundamental difference between the Soviet Constitution and the constitutions of countries ruled by exploiters. All constitutions that had previously existed, he said, stood guard over the interests of the ruling classes. But the Soviet Constitution "serves and will always serve the working people and is a powerful instrument in the struggle for the implementation of socialism".*

Clearly stating what the Russian Revolution has achieved, the Soviet Constitution reflects the ideals of the proletariat, of the working people of the whole world. "Our Constitution," said Lenin, "will always win the sympathy of the working people. The word 'Soviet' is now understood by everybody, and the Soviet Constitution has been translated into all languages and is known to every worker. He knows that it is the Constitution of working people, the political system of working people who are calling for victory over international capital, that it is a triumph we have achieved over the international imperialists."**

The great Lenin steered the Soviet ship wisely and steadily through the storms and stress of the first months of proletarian dictatorship. Everything he did bore the inspiration of creative work, of bringing new forms of life into being. He devised the plan for starting socialist construction and led the people in their struggle to carry it out. At that early stage Lenin had already determined the basic elements in the plan for building socialism in Russia: the creation of large-scale industry, the switch-over from small farming to large-scale socialist agriculture, the realisation of a cultural revolution.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 5th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 535.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 157.

Under the leadership of Lenin and the Communist Party, the working people of Soviet Russia accomplished tasks that were of historic importance to the whole world. They built a new, proletarian state, brought the country out of the war, and laid the corner-stone of a socialist economy. For the first time in history the working class succeeded not only in winning state power, but also in retaining it firmly in its grasp.

Not long before the October Revolution the bourgeois-monarchist paper *Novoye Vremya* (*New Times*) wrote: "Let us suppose for a minute that the Bolsheviks win. Who will govern us then? Perhaps the cooks, those connoisseurs of the cutlet and the beefsteak? Or perhaps the firemen? The stablemen or the stokers? Or perhaps the nursemaids will run off to a session of the State Council when they are not too busy washing out the nappies? Who will there be? Who are these statesmen? Perhaps the mechanics will direct the theatres, the plumbers take care of diplomacy, the carpenters administer the postal and telegraph services?... Is that how it will be? No! Is it possible? To so mad a question the Bolsheviks will receive a decisive answer from history."

History has indeed answered, and answered well! The very first months of Soviet power showed that the working people, the workers and peasants, can rule a country, direct a national economy and create a new culture successfully, better and more intelligently than dukes, counts, capitalists and landowners.

Lenin's plan for starting socialist construction and its realisation by the Soviet people have been of world-historic importance. The socialist revolutions in Europe and Asia have confirmed that the measures envisaged in this plan form an essential stage in the realisation of the general laws of building socialism. This experience will not be forgotten, Lenin wrote of the Soviet people's first steps towards socialism. "It has gone down in history as socialism's gain, and on it the future world revolution will erect its socialist edifice."*

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 413.



Chapter Eleven

LENIN HEADS DEFENCE OF THE WORLD'S FIRST SOCIALIST COUNTRY

> Nobody can ever vanquish the people most of whose workers and peasants have come to know, feel and see that they are defending their own, Soviet power, the power of the working people, that they are defending a cause, the triumph of which will enable them and their children to enjoy all the benefits of culture, all the creations of human labour.
>
> *LENIN*

The policy of the Soviet Government showed that the Bolshevik Party wanted peace. It did its utmost to establish normal relations with the capitalist countries, and to prevent a civil war. But Lenin's plan of peaceful socialist construction was thwarted by the imperialists.

In December 1917, Entente representatives in Paris made a plan for attacking the Soviet Republic. They reached an understanding as to the areas of future Allied operations on Russia's territory. It is vitally necessary for the Entente Powers to overthrow the Bolshevik regime

as soon as possible; it is their duty to unite their efforts for the purpose, said a memorandum prepared by Allied General Headquarters.*

Internal and external enemies of Soviet power. After the international imperialists' hope that the Russian revolution would be strangled by the German armies had been shattered, the Entente Powers launched an open military intervention against Soviet Russia, that is, they interfered impudently in the domestic affairs of the Soviet people. It was "export of counter-revolution" camouflaged with specious talk about democracy, "liberation" of the Russian people from "anarchy" and "Bolshevik tyranny", and "delivering Russia from the Germans", etc. The Entente bosses revealed their true aims in secret documents. They wanted, by armed force, to saddle the Soviet people with the old system and to divide Russia into spheres of influence in order to continue plundering her. To be sure, they were aware that the bulk of the people of Russia supported Soviet power and did not wish the bourgeois-landowner system restored. So they said that the Russian people were unable to "restore order" if "left to themselves".** The imperialist powers wanted to recover the factories and other enterprises that had belonged to foreign capitalists before the revolution. They wanted to continue getting interest on money lent to the tsarist and, later, the bourgeois Provisional Government.

In March 1918, the first contingents of British, U.S. and French troops landed at Murmansk. In April, Japanese and British troops occupied Vladivostok. At the end of May the Czechoslovak Corps, formed before the October Revolution out of Czech and Slovak prisoners of war, who had been soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army, to fight against Germany, raised a revolt in the Middle Volga region and Siberia against the Soviet Republic. The revolt had been organised by the Entente with the help of Czech bourgeois leaders. Operating jointly with the Czechoslovak Corps, the counter-revolutionaries occupied the Volga region, the Urals and a large part of Siberia. Simultaneously, the British invaded Transcaucasia and Central Asia. The German imperialists, in violation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, seized the Baltic Provinces, Byelorussia, and the Ukraine, and invaded the Don area. The occupying forces set up a reign of terror in whatever regions they captured, returned the land to the big landowners and the factories to the capitalists, plundered the country and shipped considerable wealth out of Russia.

By the summer of 1918, the Soviet Republic was in a ring of fire. The breathing-space was over. The Soviet people had to break off their constructive work and take up arms to repel their enemies. The revolution had to defend itself. Speaking at a joint meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet, the factory committees and trade unions of Moscow on July 29, 1918, Lenin said: "We are in a war, and on the outcome of that war hangs the fate of the revolution.

* Historical and Diplomatic Archives. (This and all subsequent references to these archives concern documents from the German archives captured during the Second World War.)

** *Ibid.*

That should be the first and last word in our propaganda work, in all our political, revolutionary, and construction activities."* He gave a profound analysis of the situation, showing that two forces—world imperialism and domestic counter-revolution—had joined hands to fight the Soviet Republic.

The external enemies were the British, French, U.S., Japanese, and German imperialists, who wanted not only to restore landowner and capitalist rule in Russia and suppress the socialist revolution, but also to enslave the peoples of Russia. Operating in alliance with the foreign imperialists were the internal enemies—the capitalists, landowners and kulaks, who viciously hated Soviet power and who, with interventionist backing, made a desperate attempt to re-establish the old order. The Russian revolution, said Lenin, showed again with absolute clarity that when their rule and property are hanging in the balance, the exploiting classes forget all about their talk of patriotism and love of independence, sell out their country and come to terms with any foreign reactionary forces against their own people.

International imperialism was the leading force in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet Republic. The General Headquarters of the Entente stated in its documents in so many words that "the Russian anti-Bolshevik forces lack organisation and solidity" and that "the armies of Denikin or anyone else, Bolshevised as they are to a greater or lesser degree, are absolutely incapable of sustained and regular operations".** It was only owing to tremendous support from the Entente and to its guidance that the Whites were able to carry on an armed struggle against the Soviet Republic for a relatively long time, that is, for almost three years. The Entente supplied them with arms, equipment, money and military advisers. The strategic plans of the Whites were drawn up by the Allied General Headquarters and were carried out under the direction of its officers.

That is why Lenin said that international imperialism was to blame for starting and dragging out the civil war in Russia.

The U.S.A. was one of the principal architects, in fact the inspirer, of the anti-Soviet intervention, in which it took an active part. "At this very moment," wrote Lenin, "the American multi-millionaires, these modern slaveowners, have turned an exceptionally tragic page in the bloody history of bloody imperialism by giving their approval—whether direct or indirect, open or hypocritically concealed, makes no difference—to the armed expedition launched by the brutal Anglo-Japanese imperialists for the purpose of throttling the first socialist republic."***

U.S. bourgeois historians have been at great pains to whitewash the American monopolists, to conceal their complicity in that infamous crime and mask the role which the United States actually played in the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 31.

** Historical and Diplomatic Archives.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 62.

anti-Soviet intervention. But the facts expose them and bear out Lenin's conclusion. In August 1918, the U.S. Government issued a declaration justifying the Allies' military operations in Russia. In October a "commentary" was prepared in the U.S.A. on President Wilson's "Fourteen Points"; it was in effect a programme for the destruction of the Soviet system and the dismemberment of Russia. France and Britain co-ordinated with the U.S.A. all their plans for anti-Soviet intervention. The American forces, along with the British, were the mainstay of the occupation regime in northern Russia. About 9,000 U.S. men and officers took part in the anti-Soviet intervention in Russia's Far East.

Voicing the designs of world imperialism, Winston Churchill announced a "campaign of 14 Powers" against Soviet Russia. He said that the "Bolshevik infant must be strangled at its birth". But the imperialists did not realise that the "Bolshevik infant" possessed the titanic strength of a Hercules. And just as the infant Hercules strangled with his own hands the two terrible serpents which his enemy had slipped into his cradle, so the young Soviet Republic crushed the monsters of international and domestic counter-revolution, thus demonstrating that the Soviet system is invincible.

The struggle against the interventionists and Whites. The Communist Party came forward as a great patriotic and internationalist force. It roused the working class and all working people of Soviet Russia to a revolutionary, patriotic war against the invaders and bourgeois-landowner counter-revolutionaries. It was, as Lenin put it, a war for the socialist fatherland, for the Soviet Republic, the vanguard of the world army of socialism.

The Party Central Committee, headed by Lenin, became a military headquarters, a collective body directing the defence of the country. Lenin guided all the vast and manifold activities of the Central Committee and the Soviet Government aimed at defeating the enemy. It was under his leadership that the Party worked out its domestic and foreign policy during the war, and solved important questions related to the Soviet armed forces, to army supplies, etc. He helped to draw up strategic military plans and map out their implementation. During the civil war Lenin proved himself not only a political leader, but also an outstanding strategist, a man conversant with the art of war.

Lenin worked under an incredible strain during the foreign military intervention and the civil war. On arriving at his office early in the morning, he began his daily work, as V. Bonch-Bruyevich, administrative manager of the Council of People's Commissars, later recalled, by going quickly through the documents pertaining to the military situation, and then marking on the map the positions and movements of the Red Army and enemy units. He carefully studied General Headquarters communiqués and reports, as well as operational and politico-military information from the battle fronts. He was briefed exhaustively on the war situation and the Red Army operations. Furthermore, he kept in constant touch with the commanders of the various fronts and armies. The rapidly

changing situation called for a prompt resolution of countless problems. Day by day Lenin did an enormous amount of work to ensure execution of Party and Government directives. He set an example of efficient leadership not only by attending to all the more important matters concerning the conduct of the war as a whole, but also by looking deeply into all that transpired on the home and war fronts.

At the same time he addressed numerous meetings, conferences and congresses to explain the country's internal and international position and the military situation to Communists, workers, peasants and Red Army men, to reveal the sources of the strength and invincibility of Soviet power, to describe the tasks facing the country, and to inspire the people to heroic deeds on the battle fronts and at home. He put forward the slogan: "Everything for the front! Everything for victory!"

In the summer of 1918, the Soviet Republic was in an exceptionally difficult position. The interventionists had seized three-quarters of its territory. The Eastern front, where the Whites had succeeded in capturing Syzran, Samara, Simbirsk and Kazan, became the decisive front. Lenin said that the fate of the revolution was being decided there. Acting on a proposal he made, the Central Committee decided in the latter half of July to reinforce the Eastern front. Lenin held that the situation could be improved by sending Communists and class-conscious workers to it. He broke down the parochialism and indiscipline of Zinoviev, Chairman of the Petrograd Defence Committee, and certain other Petrograd leaders obstructing C.C. directives by dispatching experienced Party functionaries and Petrograd workers to the Eastern front. He instructed the Supreme Military Council to plan and effect at an early date the transfer of "the *largest possible* number of troops" from the Western to the Eastern front. He kept in constant touch with the Eastern front, and gave advice and instructions. Thanks to the steps taken by the Central Committee, the Soviet forces on the Eastern front checked the enemy advance and then took the counter-offensive.

Lenin also followed operations on the other fronts. He gave specific instructions to the command of the Northern front on the defence of Vologda and Kotlas against the Whites and the interventionist troops. He also devoted a great deal of attention to the defence of Tsaritsyn,* to the plan for beating off the offensive of Krasnov's Don Army and Denikin's "Volunteer" Army. He regarded the speedy suppression of the kulak revolts as a most important task. In the telegrams he sent to the various localities, he insisted that the most resolute action be taken against the "kulaks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionary scum hobnobbing with them", and proposed organising the peasant poor and confiscating with their help the grain and other property of the kulaks involved in the revolts.

Dastardly attempt on Lenin's life. The foreign imperialists and internal counter-revolutionaries resorted to the most infamous methods in their

* Later renamed Stalingrad, and now Volgograd.

struggle against the Soviets. They conspired to overthrow the Soviet Government and to assassinate Lenin and other leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet state. On August 30, 1918, Lenin addressed a meeting at the Michelsohn (now Vladimir Ilyich) Works. Later, as he was walking to his car, Fanny Kaplan, a Socialist-Revolutionary terrorist, fired on him, inflicting two serious wounds.

Lenin's life hung on a thread. One of the bullets had lodged in his left shoulder and the other perforated the top of his left lung. He lost much blood and his pulse was very weak. The heart was somewhat displaced and there was danger of blood poisoning. The doctors had their work cut out to save his life. Lenin himself remained cool. He reassured his relatives, comrades and doctors. He kept saying with a smile: "It's all right. This sort of thing can happen to any revolutionary."

The dastardly attempt on Lenin's life stunned the country. The Party, workers, peasants and Red Army men, all of the Soviet people, followed the information on Lenin's condition in the newspapers with anxiety. Letters and telegrams poured in, in which the working people wished him a speedy recovery. "The workers ask you to live, they demand it," said a letter from the workers of the Tula Arms Factory. "We shall help you to recover quickly, great champion and leader of the poor," wrote the delegates to the Perm Gubernia Congress of Labour Communes and Poor Peasants' Committees. "It is the inflexible desire of the poor of the world to see their Vladimir Ilyich back in their ranks."

Resolutions expressing indignation were passed at the factories, in the villages, on the war and home fronts. The people demanded that the terrorists and bourgeois-landowner counter-revolutionaries be shown no mercy. The workers and peasants rallied even more closely round the Party and the Soviet Government.

Fortunately, Lenin had a strong constitution and quickly recovered from his wounds. As soon as he felt a little better he asked to be kept informed, if only in brief, of all important matters, and when the doctors insisted that he should "forget all about work", he replied: "Not at a time like this." A week after he was wounded, he began sending telegrams with instructions on military matters.

Deeply angered by the criminal attempt on Lenin's life, the Red Army men fought even more valiantly against the enemies of the Soviets, displaying extraordinary bravery and heroism. At this time the Red Army pressed forward on the Eastern front. It freed Kazan and Simbirsk. "Dear Vladimir Ilyich," wrote the men of the First Army, "we have avenged one of your wounds by taking your home town, and shall take Samara to avenge the other," to which Lenin replied: "The capture of Simbirsk, my home town, is the best and most effective cure for my wounds. It has infused me with new energy and vigour. I congratulate the Red Army men on their victory and thank them on behalf of the working people for all their sacrifices."

On September 16, the doctors allowed Lenin to resume work. He attended a Central Committee meeting and next day presided over a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars. The press carried the last bulletin on the state of his health, to which Lenin added the following: "In view of this bulletin and the fact that I feel quite well, I very earnestly request that the doctors not be bothered with telephone calls and questions." On September 23, for the first time since his recovery, Lenin went for a walk in the Kremlin grounds and was filmed for a newsreel. He was annoyed when he saw that he was being filmed, and did not stop objecting to it until he was told that the workers wanted to see how he was convalescing. The newsreel was enthusiastically received all over the country. The audiences rose and broke into prolonged applause the moment Lenin appeared on the screen. Many people wept with joy.

Lenin immersed himself in work, giving his attention to the more important and pressing matters. But before long he felt that the strain was too great for him, and on the insistence of his doctors he agreed to go for a rest to a place called Gorki, in the vicinity of Moscow. Lenin and his wife moved into a small room in a wing of the big house.

Lenin spent about three weeks in Gorki. Gradually, he regained his strength and his high spirits. He rejoiced at the good news from the fronts. He also rejoiced at the growing revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries, particularly in Germany, where there was a severe political crisis. On his proposal, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet and the factory committees and trade union organisations of the capital held a special meeting devoted to the events in Germany. At the meeting a letter was read from Lenin, who proposed taking steps to help the German workers.

"The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky". Lenin regarded the absence of revolutionary proletarian parties in the West European countries and the fact that the working-class movement there was dominated by reformists as the greatest danger to the revolutions maturing in those countries. He was deeply angered by the articles Kautsky published against Bolshevism at that time, and especially by the book *On the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, which distorted Marxism and denied the necessity for proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Considering it essential to rebut attempts at distorting and vulgarising Marxist theory, Lenin, in October and November 1918, wrote his work, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. He exposed Kautsky's revisionism and treachery and the monstrous theoretical confusion, the falsifications and subterfuges that were piled high in Kautsky's book.

Lenin disproved the allegations of the revisionists of Marxism that the dictatorship of the proletariat means destruction of democracy and is therefore unacceptable. He stressed that it is wrong to set "dictatorship in general" against "democracy in general". The essence of any state in a society of antagonistic classes is the dictatorship of the

economically dominant class, which uses political power to safeguard the economic foundations of its rule and suppress its class enemies. But while the dictatorship of the exploiting classes has been, and continues to be, forcible suppression of the overwhelming majority of the population, of the working people, the force employed by the dictatorship of the working class is directed against the exploiters, who are a negligible minority of the population. The main task of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin emphasised, is not violence but the establishment of a new, socialist system.

Just as there is not, and cannot be, an abstract dictatorship, there is not, and cannot be, "pure democracy", democracy in general. " 'Pure democracy' is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the workers," wrote Lenin. History knows of bourgeois democracy, which succeeded feudalism, and proletarian, socialist democracy, which succeeded bourgeois democracy. Bourgeois democracy is a historical advance compared with feudalism. The working class, led by its Marxist parties, and all the genuinely popular forces in the capitalist countries must resolutely defend democratic rights against the onslaught of reaction. But we must not forget the limited character of bourgeois democracy, which under capitalism remains, and cannot but remain, a narrow, curtailed and hypocritical democracy for the rich, for the exploiters.

In his writings and speeches, Lenin unmasked American democracy, stressing that "nowhere is the power of capital, the power of a handful of multi-millionaires over the whole of society, so crude and so openly corrupt as in America".* The persecution of internationalists, the lynching of Negroes, bloody reprisals against strikers by mercenary bands armed by the capitalists, the oppression and strangulation of small and weak peoples, and support for the most reactionary forces throughout the world are all indications that the highly-vaunted American democracy is in fact a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, wrote Lenin.

In our day the ideologists of imperialism seek to deceive the people with fairy-tales about what they call the "free world". They extol "Western democracy", claiming that it has entered a new era, the era of "normalisation and prosperity", that there are no antagonistic classes and no class struggles in the U.S.A., Britain and other capitalist countries, and that the bourgeois state has established "social harmony" and shows equal concern for all its citizens. In reality, however, bourgeois democracy in its present stage of development has the same old characteristics of which Lenin wrote, that is, unlimited power of capital, exploitation of, and lack of rights for, the working people. What is more, the reactionary forces in the United States and other capitalist countries are assaulting the gains of bourgeois democracy,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 486.

trampling underfoot the constitutional rights of the people, and resorting to fascist methods of rule.

Lenin upheld proletarian, socialist democracy as the antithesis of bourgeois democracy. To be sure, the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be "pure democracy" either. In the period of transition from capitalism to socialism the working class cannot grant freedom to the exploiting classes, to the counter-revolutionaries, who would use such freedom to restore capitalism. But while restricting democracy for a mere handful of exploiters, the dictatorship of the proletariat impels unprecedented development and the expansion of democracy for the vast majority of the population, for the working people. It is the highest type of democracy. Unlike bourgeois democracy, which confines itself to a formal proclamation of political rights and freedoms, socialist democracy actually guarantees the exercise of the social and political rights granted to all working people.

Lenin revealed the genuinely democratic essence and tremendous significance of Soviet power, pointing out that it draws the masses of people into the "constant and unfailing, moreover, decisive participation in the democratic administration of the state".* Soviet power, he wrote, gave the proletariat and the entire working people in Russia an amount of freedom and democracy hitherto unprecedented and impossible in any bourgeois republic by taking away from the bourgeoisie their palaces and mansions (without which freedom of assembly is sheer hypocrisy), by taking away from the capitalists the printing plants and newsprint (without which freedom of the press for the working majority is a lie), and by replacing the bourgeois parliamentary system with the democratic organisation of the Soviets, which are infinitely nearer to the people and more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois parliamentary system.

"Proletarian democracy," Lenin stated, "is *a million times* more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic."**

In *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin thoroughly analysed the historic experience of the October Socialist Revolution. Exposing Kautsky's falsehoods, he restored the facts and the real meaning of the revolutionary changes effected by the Soviet state; he defined and substantiated the policy of the Bolshevik Party. He spoke with the greatest pride of the Bolsheviks' loyalty to proletarian internationalism. He wrote that the Russian Communists' tactics "were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one country *for* the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*".*** What Lenin had in mind was not, of course, "export of revolution" from the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the revolutionising effect that its example and its

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 465.
** *Ibid.*, p. 248.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 292.

achievements had on the emancipation movement of the working people of the world. The proletarian masses in all countries, he wrote, realised "more and more clearly every day that Bolshevism has indicated the right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism *can serve as a model of tactics for all*".*

In 1918, the Soviet people celebrated the first anniversary of the October Revolution. On November 6, the Sixth All-Russia Congress of Soviets met in session. In the report he made on the anniversary of the revolution, Lenin described the progress which the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia had achieved in building a new life. Next day he spoke at the inauguration of a temporary monument to Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, attended the unveiling of the Freedom Obelisk in Sovetskaya Square, and then started for Red Square with a column of working people. There he delivered a speech at the unveiling of a memorial plaque to the fighters of the October Revolution. In the evening, Lenin attended a meeting and concert of staff workers of the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission. The news of the German revolution, which had broken out on November 9, elated Lenin. The days when the first anniversary of the October Revolution was celebrated were among the happiest in Lenin's life, wrote Nadezhda Krupskaya.

Building up the Red Army. In the autumn of 1918, the international situation changed radically. The Austro-German bloc lost the war to the Entente forces and had to surrender. The revolution in Germany led to the overthrow of the monarchy. A bourgeois revolution took place in Austria-Hungary. In the circumstances Lenin called for the annulment of the predatory Brest Treaty, which the All-Russia Central Executive Committee revoked on November 13, 1918. The course of events clearly showed that Lenin had been absolutely right in saying that the day would come when the Brest Treaty would be null and void. The working people of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic Provinces, supported by the Red Army, rose up to expel the German invaders and re-establish Soviet power.

In analysing the lessons to be learned from the defeat of the German imperialists, Lenin drew the highly important conclusion that the imperialists, who start wars of conquest with an eye to attaining world dominion and strangling the freedom of other nations, inevitably fail. He commented on German imperialism as follows: "It swelled out fantastically over three-quarters of Europe, became distended and then burst, leaving behind it an awful stench."**

At the same time Lenin disclosed the reactionary role played by the U.S. imperialists. "The American multi-millionaires were, perhaps, richest of all, and geographically the most secure. They have profited more than all the rest. They have converted all, even the richest, countries into their tributaries. They have grabbed hundreds of billions of dollars. And every dollar is sullied with filth: the filth of the secret treaties between Britain and her 'allies', between Germany and her vassals, treaties for the division of the spoils, treaties of mutual 'aid' for oppressing the workers and persecuting the internationalist socialists."* Lenin described the American imperialists as the gendarmes of Europe. "They are crushing the revolution in Austria, they are playing the gendarme, they are issuing an ultimatum to Switzerland: 'You'll get no bread from us if you don't join the fight against the Bolshevik Government.' They tell Holland: 'Don't you dare allow Soviet ambassadors into your country, or we'll blockade you.' Theirs is a simple weapon—the noose of famine. That is what they are using to strangle the peoples."**

What Lenin said rings true today, too, when U.S. monopoly capital has become the biggest world exploiter, the main bulwark of modern colonialism, and American imperialism is the centre of international reaction and acts as the *world* gendarme.

Reporting on the international situation to the Sixth Congress of Soviets, Lenin warned that after defeating the Austro-German bloc the Entente would expand its intervention against the Soviet Republic. And, indeed, as soon as an armistice was signed with Germany, the Allied General Headquarters drew up plans for a speedy intervention. The imperialists of Britain, France and the United States increased their aid to the White armies, and sent large forces to Soviet Russia. The invaders dispatched their navy to seize the Black Sea ports and landed troops in southern Russia and Transcaucasia.

Lenin pointed out, on more than one occasion, the incredible difficulties the young Soviet Republic had to cope with in its liberation war against the combined forces of the Whites and international imperialism. He wrote that the intervention and the civil war had brought Russia's workers and peasants "misery, privation, sacrifice, intense want, such as have never been experienced in the world before". Suffice it to say that at the beginning of 1919 the population of Moscow, Petrograd and many other cities were issued half a pound of bread a day on ration cards of the first category, three-eighths of a pound on cards of the second category and one-eighth on cards of the third.

As the breathing-space in the spring of 1918 was very brief, the bulk of the work on building up the Red Army had to be carried out at a time of bitter combat against enemies. There was an acute shortage of officers and of arms, ammunition and equipment, while the imperialists and the bourgeois-landowner counter-revolution had an ample supply of everything. For many months the enemy held such major food, raw material and fuel areas as the Ukraine, the Urals, Siberia and North

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 293.
** *Ibid.*, p. 157.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 64.
** *Ibid.*, p. 209.

Caucasus. A superhuman effort had to be made to overcome the famine and ensure the functioning of the transport system and the war industry. "There is not a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars or of the Defence Council that does not share out the last millions of poods of coal or oil,"* said Lenin. Truly titanic measures were needed to supply the population and the army with bread.

The enemies counted on the early downfall of the Soviet government. But they miscalculated. The Soviet people, led by the Party and the Government headed by Lenin, found the forces and the means to surmount the unprecedented difficulties and clear the way to victory.

On a proposal by Lenin, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee proclaimed the Soviet Republic an armed camp. The country's entire political, economic and cultural life was reorganised to meet wartime requirements. "Once things have led to war," Lenin said, "everything must be subordinated to the war effort; the entire internal life of the country must be subordinated to wartime needs; the slightest hesitation on this score is inexcusable."**

To mobilise all the country's forces and resources, a Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence, with Lenin at its head, was set up on November 30, 1918. An emergency body of the dictatorship of the proletariat, brought into being by wartime needs, it co-ordinated and directed the activities of the military and civilian departments and institutions in the capital and elsewhere, and ensured unity on the war and home fronts. From December 1, 1918, to February 27, 1920, the Defence Council met over 100 times. Lenin presided over all of its meetings, except two.

To defeat the interventionists and Whites, it was above all necessary to increase the numerical strength of the Red Army. In October 1918, Lenin called for the speedy raising of an army of three million. He followed the progress of the mobilisation day by day and did much for the arming and equipping of the new divisions; he devoted a great deal of attention to the training of Red Army reserves through the universal military training system. He looked through and approved the Red Army Man's Manual, the first to be introduced. The steps taken by the Party and the Government ensured proper organisation of the Army units, and consistent centralisation of the control and leadership of Red Army operations.

Lenin kept close contact with the Red Army rank and file; he often addressed the men leaving for the front, and spoke with front-line soldiers. A. Ovtsinov, a seaman, says in his recollections:

"In Sormovo they began building a heavy special-duty armoured train on instructions from Lenin. The orders said that its crew was to be recruited from volunteer seamen. I volunteered for service on the train. When we were ready for combat, we were summoned to Moscow.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 362.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 133.

The moment the train drew in at the North Station, two cars pulled up near it, and Lenin stepped out of one of them. He climbed into the train, greeted us and talked with us for a long time. Our beloved leader told us about the situation in the country and the difficulties caused by the war. He called on us to hold high the battle standard of the Soviet soldier, to brave all difficulties and fearlessly fight the enemy, scorning death. The seamen swore to Lenin that they would defend the young Soviet Republic, and no matter where the fortunes of war took us, we remembered Lenin's behest and our oath."*

Lenin knew the Red Army needed good officers. November 24, 1918, was proclaimed Red Officer's Day. Military trainees paraded in Red Square, then marched to Sovetskaya Square, where Lenin addressed them from the balcony of the Moscow Soviet. In building up the new army, he said, it is necessary to select leaders from among the people. "Only Red officers will have any respect among the soldiers and will be able to strengthen socialism in our army. Such an army will be invincible."**

Lenin often visited military academies, schools and student groups; he familiarised himself with their work, looked through the manuals used by the future officers, and spoke to trainees. He visited the General Staff Academy twice, and also the training centres for heavy artillery officers in Moscow, cavalry and machine-gun training centres, and maintained close contact with the First Moscow Machine-Gun Courses of Officers of the Red Army in the Kremlin. Lenin associated closely with many military leaders, taking a deep interest in their life and careers.

Splendid army leaders and heroes of the civil war came from the ranks of the Communist Party, from among the workers and peasants, men such as M. Frunze, V. Blücher, S. Budyonny, K. Voroshilov, S. Vostretsov, G. Kotovsky, S. Lazo, A. Parkhomenko, I. Uborevich, Y. Fabritsius, I. Fedko, V. Chapayev, N. Shchors, P. Eideman and I. Yakir.

In addition to the training of Red Army commanders, Lenin considered it necessary for the Soviet Armed Forces to use military experts and officers of the old army, but to keep them under the vigilant control of army commissars and Party groups. The course of the war proved this decision to be correct. Though some of the ex-officers who had volunteered for service in the Red Army or had been called up turned out to be traitors, most of them were loyal to the people. V. Vatsetis, V. Gittis, A. Yegorov, S. Kamenev, D. Karbyshev, A. Kork, P. Lebedev, A. Nikolayev, A. Stankevich, M. Tukhachevsky, B. Shaposhnikov and many other prominent Soviet generals and military experts had served in the old army. Lenin took part in selecting prominent

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 281.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 195.

military experts and appointing them to key posts in the Red Army, and helped them in their work.

Lenin assigned the army commissars, political departments and Party groups, which exercised Party leadership in the army, a leading role in consolidating the army, educating it politically and raising its efficiency. The Party sent its foremost men to the army as members of front or army military councils, army commissars of divisions, brigades or regiments, or members of political departments. He maintained close contact with political workers, taking a keen interest in their activities. He demanded that they be equal to any occasion and that they inform the Party C.C. and the Government on the situation at the front and in the army in good time. He stressed that where political work was conducted with particular care there was no laxity among the troops, and army organisation and morale were higher and victories more numerous. "Keep an eye on political work," "Do not slacken political work," he told the military councils.

The civil war tempered the old Party leaders, Lenin's associates and pupils, and developed new leaders, who subsequently tackled the job of postwar rehabilitation and the building of socialist society, such as A. Andreyev, A. Bubnov, K. Voroshilov, S. Gusev, F. Dzerzhinsky, A. Zhdanov, R. Zemlyachka, M. Kalinin, S. Kirov, S. Kosior, L. Krasin, G. Krzhizhanovsky, V. Kuibyshev, D. Manuilsky, A. Mikoyan, A. Myasnikov, G. Orjonikidze, G. Petrovsky, P. Postyshev, Y. Rudzutak, Y. Sverdlov, N. Skrypnyk, J. Stalin, M. Frunze, A. Tsyurupa, N. Shvernik, Y. Yaroslavsky and many others.

Trotsky was then the Chairman of the Republic's Revolutionary Military Council. While giving due credit to his gift for organisation, Lenin never considered him to be a real Bolshevik and criticised his Bonapartist airs and over-confidence. Maxim Gorky wrote about his talks with Lenin:

"Yes, I have often heard the praise he lavished on his comrades. Lenin was able to speak well of even those whom, it was rumoured, he did not like very much. He gave due credit to their energy.

"I was very surprised to hear him speak so highly of Trotsky's organisational abilities. Vladimir Ilyich noticed my surprise.

" 'Yes, I know there are rumours about our strained relations. But you must give credit where credit is due. He managed to organise the military specialists.'

"After a pause he added in an unhappy, softer voice:

" 'But he isn't one of us all the same! He is with us, but not one of us. He is ambitious. And there is something evil about him, something of Lassalle.' "*

Lenin considered the leadership which the Party gave to be the source of the strength and invincibility of the Soviet Armed Forces. He said with pride that the Bolsheviks had created an army "led by

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 390.

a vanguard of experienced Communists" and that the Red Army was in the firm hands of the Party. The decision on the policy of the military department, passed by the Central Committee on December 25, 1918, emphasised that "the policy of the military department, like that of all the other departments and institutions, is conducted strictly in line with the general directives given by the Party as represented by its Central Committee, and under its direct control".

Lenin held that a high degree of political consciousness and iron discipline on the part of the Red Army men and the mastering of "modern techniques and modern methods of warfare" by the officers were essential if the Red Army was to accomplish its tasks. Military victory comes to those who are better organised and more disciplined and who use superior armaments, he wrote.

Lenin indignantly exposed the calumnies of the bourgeoisie and social-traitors about "Red militarism". The imperialists of the whole world, he wrote, attacked the Soviet Republic, and to repel them we organised an army which, for the first time in history, knew what it was fighting for. This is what was condemned as "Red militarism"! Only fools or political swindlers trying to mislead the masses would accuse the Bolsheviks and the Soviet Government of militarism, Lenin stressed.*

Everything for the front! Everything for victory! Of the utmost importance along with the formation of a strong army, was the all-round consolidation of the Soviet home front. "To wage the war *in earnest*," wrote Lenin, "we need a strong and organised rear. Even the best of armies, even people most sincerely devoted to the revolutionary cause will be immediately exterminated by the enemy, if they are not adequately armed, supplied with food and trained."**

The Communist Party and the Soviet Government succeeded in a short time in placing the country's economy on a war footing. In the incredibly difficult conditions of extreme economic dislocation and hunger, the Party and the Government, led by Lenin, devised and carried out a series of emergency measures known as the policy of War Communism. The Soviet state nationalised not only large-scale industry, but also medium-sized and even a considerable number of the small-scale enterprises. A surplus-requisitioning system was established, under which the peasants were obliged to deliver all surplus produce to the Soviet state. At the end of 1918, universal labour service was introduced. Private trade was prohibited and rationing introduced. Staple food products were distributed according to rigid quotas, on a class principle. The acute shortage of food and manufactured goods compelled the Soviet state to abandon for a while the principle of distribution according to labour and adopt what was in substance equalised distribution, in order to provide the Red Army and the urban population with a regular, albeit very meagre, ration.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 66.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 77.

In conditions of foreign military intervention and civil war in Russia, War Communism was the only feasible policy. It enabled the country to mobilise and make proper use of its meagre resources, and to meet the requirements of the front. That policy, wrote Lenin, fulfilled its historical task; it saved the dictatorship of the proletariat in a ruined and backward country. He regarded War Communism as a temporary measure necessitated by war and economic dislocation; after the war the New Economic Policy was introduced.

In the face of formidable difficulties, the Communist Party and the Government organised the smooth operation of the home front. The Defence Council headed by Lenin directed the war economy of the republic; it ensured the manufacture of arms, ammunition and military equipment and the supply of food to the Red Army and the industrial centres, and took steps to improve the operation of the railways and combat the fuel shortage. The Council gave special attention to the war industry. Important decisions were taken on Lenin's initiative concerning the manufacture of machine-guns, rifles, cartridges, shells, arms repair, the collection of used cartridge and shell cases, and the work of the defence plants in Tula, Izhevsk and other towns.

Lenin was always kept informed on the work of the munition factories and saw to it that they were supplied with materials, fuel and skilled personnel. He encouraged the initiative of munition workers to increase output. When, in July 1919, a conference of metalworkers in Tula decided to increase arms output tenfold, Lenin sent the conference a telegram hailing that decision and asking to be informed "every month, by mail or messenger, of the actual results achieved by you in keeping with your decisions".

Lenin attached great importance to safeguarding internal security and strengthening revolutionary order. He called on the Extraordinary Commission and the working people to be more vigilant, to suppress counter-revolutionary subversion and espionage with a firm hand, to expose conspiracies and prevent sabotage.

Lenin saw the mainspring of strength for prosecuting the struggle against the interventionists and the internal counter-revolution in the political consciousness, high level of organisation and heroism of the working class and the determination of the working people to defend at all costs the freedom and independence of the Soviet Republic and the great gains of the October Revolution.

"Victory in war," he wrote, "goes to the side whose people has greater reserves, greater sources of strength and greater endurance.

"We have more of all these qualities than the Whites, more than the 'all-powerful' Anglo-French imperialism, this colossus with feet of clay. We have more of them because we can draw, and for a long time will continue to draw, more and more deeply upon the workers and working peasants. . . ."*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 74-75.



Lenin addressing the Vsevobuch troops in the Red Square
Photo, 1919



Lenin
Frame from a newsreel, 1919

Thanks to its correct Leninist policy, the Party was able completely to overcome the vacillation of the petty-bourgeois sections of the population, and created an indestructible politico-military alliance of the working class and the working peasantry. The peasants rallied round the proletarian core and fought shoulder to shoulder with the workers in the Red Army or partisan units against the interventionists and Whites. The working peasantry not only delivered produce under the surplus-requisitioning system, but often sent food to the famine-stricken workers of central Russia over and above the fixed quota. In February 1919, for example, a conference of the peasant poor in Sarapul Uyezd, Vyatka Gubernia, sent 80,000 poods of grain to the workers of Moscow and Petrograd. After he had received the conference delegation accompanying the train bringing the grain to Moscow and Petrograd, Lenin wrote to the Moscow Soviet: "It is so outstanding an achievement that it deserves special mention."

Lenin considered the fighting alliance, the friendship and mutual assistance of the peoples of Soviet Russia to be a cardinal factor in defeating the enemy. The Central Committee welcomed the wish of the independent Soviet republics to conclude a politico-military alliance, and on Lenin's suggestion adopted a decision on the military unity of the Soviet republics, providing for a single command, strict centralisation in the use of all forces and resources, and unification of Red Army military supplies and the railway transport system. The proposal of the Central Committee was fully endorsed by the supreme bodies of the Soviet republics. The R.S.F.S.R., the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Byelorussia concluded an alliance for the entire period of the socialist defensive war against the interventionists and White counter-revolutionaries.

Lenin gave much of his time to the organisation and the operations of the non-Russian units of the Red Army. When the Second Ukrainian Soviet Army sent him, as a gift, one of the French tanks it had captured from the Denikin troops, he wrote in reply: "This gift is dear to all of us, dear to the workers and peasants of Russia, as evidence of the heroism of their Ukrainian brothers, and is dear also because it bears witness to the complete collapse of the Entente which seemed so strong."*

Communists were sent to where the situation was most difficult on the war and home fronts. Lenin closely followed the course of the Party mobilisations. He took part in the distribution of the Party forces, and was in close touch with the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee, which was in charge of the matter. When a Party official asked him what he was to make of his assignment to the Eastern front, Lenin replied: "Make of it what it is—a Central Committee decision. *This is a time of war.* Everyone *should be where things are hardest.*"

Lenin worked indefatigably to strengthen the Party. A re-registration of the R.C.P.(B.) membership was carried out in 1919 to rid the Party

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 385.

of all the alien elements that had wormed their way into its ranks. At the same time Lenin called for reinforcing the Party with the most advanced workers and peasants devoted to the revolution. We open our doors wide into the Party, he wrote, only to sincere supporters of communism, who are undaunted by difficulties and are prepared to make sacrifices and to give all their energies to the working-class cause. "We do not want any make-believe Party members," Lenin stressed. "Not if they give them away." When more than 200,000 people joined the Party in response to its call during Party Week, in the autumn of 1919, at a particularly dangerous time during the civil war, Lenin assessed this as striking proof that the most reliable source of the Soviet power's strength and solidity lay in the innermost sections of the proletariat, in the genuine representatives of the working people.

"The mass of the working people are with us," he wrote. "That is where our strength lies. That is the source of the invincibility of world communism. More new workers from among the masses for the ranks of the Party to take an independent part in building the new life—that is our method of combating all difficulties, that is our path to victory."*

The Soviet Republic and the world proletariat. During the civil war Lenin wrote many letters to the workers of Western Europe and America, explaining the essence of the October Revolution and the liberative character of the Soviet people's struggle, and calling on them to act against the anti-Soviet imperialist intervention. On August 20, 1918, Lenin wrote his "Letter to the American Workers". In this compelling document he branded American and Anglo-French imperialism, and explained the tactics of the Bolsheviks and the great revolutionary changes carried out by the Soviet state.

Despite the flood of lies and slander that the bourgeois press directed at the Bolsheviks, the truth about Soviet Russia reached the hearts and minds of the working people of the whole world. A powerful mass movement in support of Soviet Russia developed in all countries. The men of the interventionist armies would not fight against the Soviet people. The workers went on strike, refused to load munitions for the Whites and set up Councils of Action under the slogan of "Hands off Russia!"

The revolutionary upsurge in the West and the mounting protest movement in the capitalist countries against the anti-Soviet intervention proved to be a serious obstacle to the plans of the Entente, which wanted to send large armies to Russia and strangle Soviet power mainly with its own forces. Not only were the imperialists unable to send to Russia large reinforcements, but they had to recall most of the troops already dispatched because a revolutionary ferment had started in their ranks.

The revolutionary sentiment among the foreign soldiers was promoted by the heroic efforts of the Bolshevik organisations behind the lines

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 65.

of the intervention armies. In February 1919, the secretary of the French group of Communists in Moscow, Jeanne Labourbe, daughter of a famous fighter of the Paris Commune and herself an ardent revolutionary, arrived in Odessa to carry out underground work. She helped the Odessa Bolshevik Committee to set up a Foreign Collegium, which conducted extensive agitation among the French and other foreign troops. In March, the interventionists arrested Labourbe and shot her and other Bolsheviks. Lenin knew Jeanne Labourbe personally and paid high tribute to her valour. He said that her name was for the proletariat of France "a slogan of struggle against French imperialism, for non-intervention in Russian affairs".* In April 1919, the sailors of the French squadron mutinied. They demanded an immediate cessation of the anti-Soviet intervention, and asked to be sent back to France.

As a result of defeats suffered in engagements with Soviet troops and the growth of revolutionary ferment in the ranks, interventionist units were hastily evacuated from the Ukraine and the Crimea in April 1919. The same happened later with the interventionist forces of Britain and the United States. As Lenin wrote, the attempt by the Entente to crush the Soviet Republic with its own forces, characteristic of the first stage of the international imperialist intervention in the internal affairs of the Soviet country, ended in failure.

"The victory we won in compelling the evacuation of the British and French troops," he said, "was the greatest of our victories over the Entente countries. We deprived them of their soldiers. Our response to the unlimited military and technical superiority of the Entente countries was to deprive them of it through the solidarity of the working people against the imperialist governments."**

The formation of international detachments, which fought selflessly in Russia against the interventionists and Whites, was a vivid manifestation of proletarian internationalism. The finest sons of the working people of other countries—Hungarians, Poles, Czechs and Slovaks, Serbs and Croats, Chinese, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Germans, French, British, Americans, and others—joined the Red Army or formed their own units and gave fraternal aid to the Soviet people in their civil war for freedom and socialism. Lenin took an interest in the organisation of the international detachments, in their composition and numbers. In the autumn of 1918, the international detachments were reorganised into regular units of the Red Army.

At a meeting of the Warsaw Revolutionary Regiment about to leave for the front, Lenin said that by defending in concert the gains of the first socialist revolution against exploiters, oppressors and plunderers, the revolutionaries of various nations were practising international brotherhood.

Founding of the Communist International. For a number of years Lenin had been urging unification of the Left elements in the socialist

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 172.
** *Ibid.*, p. 211.

parties and the setting up of a new, Third International. He put an accent on this task in 1918, when the rising tide of revolution brought about the appearance of Communist Parties and organisations in the capitalist countries. He launched preparations for a congress of Communist Parties, noted what parties should be represented, and formulated the basic propositions in its resolutions.

The First Congress of the Communist International was held in Moscow early in March 1919. Fifty-two delegates from thirty countries took part. At first, before the decision to found a Third International was taken, the Congress functioned as a conference. On the proposal of a number of delegations the conference was opened by Lenin. His appearance on the rostrum was greeted with a storm of applause. The Congress delegates and guests expressed their recognition of the great services Lenin and the Bolshevik Party had rendered to the international working-class movement. The overwhelming majority supported Lenin's proposal to found the Third Communist International immediately.

At the Congress, Lenin delivered a report on bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. He stressed that the Communist Parties should proceed in their work from the basic premise that a socialist revolution was inevitable and that the bourgeois state would be replaced by the dictatorship of the working class, a state of a new type. The dictatorship of the proletariat, he said, "is absolutely necessary for all the working people". It is only through proletarian dictatorship, he said, that the country could achieve socialism.

By showing the essence of Soviet power to be the historically evolved form of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, Lenin demonstrated the international significance of its basic principles, which underlie all other political forms of the dictatorship of the working class. Such Leninist principles of the proletarian political system as the participation of the masses in governing the country, abolition of the privileged officialdom and the old army, and democratic centralism are the basic features not only of the Soviets, but also of the political systems of all the People's Democracies of Europe and Asia, irrespective of their specific national and historical features.

The First Congress of the Communist International unanimously approved Lenin's theses on bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Congress adopted the platform of the Communist International and addressed a manifesto to proletarians of the world, which Lenin signed on behalf of the R.C.P.(B.). In his summing up, Lenin emphasised that the Congress decisions embodied the gains the international proletarian masses had won through their struggle. He said that the founding of the Third International was a historic event, because it would provide the international proletariat with leadership in the struggle for the realisation of the age-old ideals of socialism.

The fraternal parties founded the Communist International because they realised that unity of the world communist movement was essential. They were convinced that, as Lenin wrote, victory of the socialist

revolution required complete trust, the closest fraternal alliance and the greatest possible unity of action by the working class of all countries.*

Lenin closely followed the development of revolutionary events in the West. When Soviet power was set up in Bavaria, he sent a message saluting the Bavarian revolutionary government. He gave it advice that was, in effect, a concrete programme of action for the proletarian party that had taken power. He wrote of the necessity of setting up Soviets in the towns and villages, arming the proletariat and disarming the bourgeoisie, and of immediate measures to improve the condition of the workers, farm labourers and small peasants.

The working people of Soviet Russia enthusiastically welcomed the proclamation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in March 1919. In a radio message to Béla Kun, leader of the Hungarian Communists, Lenin pointed out the need for applying Marxism and the Russian experience creatively, and stressed that the Soviet Hungarian Government should practise proletarian dictatorship. In May, Tibor Szamuelly, Commissar for Military Affairs in the Hungarian Soviet Government, came to Moscow. He was warmly welcomed by Lenin. Addressing the troops of Vsevobuch** during their parade in Red Square on May 25, Lenin spoke of the victory of the revolution in Hungary and introduced Tibor Szamuelly to the people of Moscow. It was with Szamuelly that Lenin sent to Hungary his letter, "Greetings to the Hungarian Workers", in which he explained the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

When the imperialists launched their intervention against Soviet Hungary, the Hungarian Soviet Government appealed to Lenin for help. True to her internationalist duty, Soviet Russia did all she could. Lenin issued a directive to the Revolutionary Military Council and High Command to maintain contact with Soviet Hungary. Unfortunately, in view of the situation that had arisen on the civil war fronts, the Red Army was unable to carry out this task. The imperialists, making use of the treacherous conduct of the Hungarian Right Socialists, crushed the Hungarian Soviet Republic. This was a heavy blow to the international working-class movement. But Lenin prophesied that the victory of reaction in Hungary would be only temporary and that it would open the eyes of hundreds of thousands of workers and spur them to fresh struggle, which would result in their complete victory.

The fact that Lenin called for Soviet assistance for the German proletariat, which had raised a revolution, and for Soviet Hungary, is deeply significant. Despite the specious claims of the falsifiers of Leninism, this assistance was not "export of revolution" but an effort to combat "export of counter-revolution" by the imperialist powers. It was not a matter of imposing revolution on Germany. The revolution had already begun there. It was a matter of assisting the German

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* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 103.
** General Military Training.

people to throw off the rule of their own imperialists and of helping them against the Anglo-French imperialists if the need should arise.* The question of helping Soviet Hungary also arose due to the interference of the imperialists in her affairs, and it was the Hungarian Soviet Government that had asked for this assistance. Lenin believed that helping peoples who had risen to combat "export of counter-revolution" was the internationalist duty of the socialist state and of the working people in all countries.

Drawing on the experience of the revolutions in Russia, Hungary and other countries, in a number of articles and speeches, Lenin developed the proposition regarding the variety of forms of transition to socialism in different countries, explaining that the means of winning power could not be the same in different countries, at different times and in different international situations. "Marx," Lenin had written as early as 1918, "did not commit himself, or the future leaders of the socialist revolution, to matters of form, to ways and means of bringing about the revolution. He understood perfectly well what a vast number of new problems would arise, that the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, that the situation would change *radically* and *often* in the course of revolution."**

Lenin denounced the slanderous allegations of the bourgeoisie and the Right Socialists that a proletarian revolution must of necessity involve civil war, that it is bound to bring chaos and dislocation in its wake. He pointed out that the sole purpose of such allegations was to scare the people away from revolution. It was not the revolution but the imperialist war that had brought about such disasters as the destruction of industry, unemployment and starvation. As for the civil war in Soviet Russia, its instigators were the internal counter-revolution and international imperialism. If the landowners and capitalists had not offered such furious and desperate resistance, if they had not joined forces with the bourgeoisie of the whole world, Lenin pointed out, the revolution in Russia would have taken more peaceful forms.

Time and again, Lenin exposed the false accusations of terrorism that were spread against the Bolsheviks by the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, the revisionists. He sharply rebuffed Kautsky, who was slanderously alleging that Soviet power was based on terrorism.

The bourgeoisie, Lenin wrote, regarded terrorism as a just and legitimate weapon when it was used by themselves against the feudals. In the interests of a handful of exploiters, the bourgeoisie employed terrorism against the revolutionary workers, massacred the fighters of the national liberation movement in the colonial countries, and persecuted progressive people who opposed the war. But when the victorious proletariat adopted defensive violence against the exploiters, in the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, the bourgeoisie and their yes-men called it "monstrous and criminal". Did this not show the hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie, the underhand tricks it used to deceive the working people!

Even some bourgeois liberals, Lenin pointed out, realised and admitted the falsity of the accusations that the Soviet Government was "terrorist and undemocratic". He cited a letter from Stuart Chase published on June 25, 1919, in the American magazine *The New Republic*. The Allied Powers, Chase wrote, refused to recognise the Soviet Government on this pretext, but recognised Mannerheim's terroristic government in Finland and had supported the "new order" of Kolchak, who shot and hanged many thousands of workers and peasants.

"The world bourgeoisie," Lenin wrote, "supports the Mannerheims and Kolchaks in an attempt to stifle Soviet power, alleging that it is terrorist and undemocratic. Such are the facts. And Kautsky, Martov, Chernov and Co. are only echoing the bourgeoisie with their stories of terroism and democracy."*

Soviet power would not have lasted two months if it had not replied to bourgeois terrorism with ruthless counter-measures. It was not Soviet power that should be accused of terrorism but the bourgeoisie which forced it to take recourse to violence. We shall be the first, said Lenin, to take steps to reduce violence to the very minimum as soon as we have done with the basic source of terrorism, the onslaught of world imperialism, military plots and White revolts.

The ruling classes, Lenin noted, do not surrender their power voluntarily, and the greater or lesser degree of intensity of the class struggle, the greater or lesser extent to which the working class adopts violence during the transition from capitalism to socialism, depend not so much on the proletariat as on the resistance offered by the exploiters, and on the use of violence on their part. In countries where the bourgeoisie does not offer such furious resistance, he said, the task of the proletariat is easier; it is able to work without the violence that the imperialists and the internal counter-revolution forced upon the Soviet state.

In Lenin's opinion, the non-peaceful form of socialist revolution was typical of the historical situation and the balance of forces then prevailing in the world. But Lenin also granted that in certain circumstances power could be won by the proletariat by peaceful means. This was evident from the early stage of the socialist revolution in Hungary, in 1919, where, as Lenin noted, the "bourgeois government resigned voluntarily" and where the transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat was "incomparably easier and more peaceful" than in Russia. This, Lenin stressed, was a particularly important point for the working people of other countries, whom the bourgeoisie and the Right Socialists were trying to scare with the horrors of a savage struggle in the event of a socialist revolution.**

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* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 102.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 343.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 31.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, pp. 388, 387, 271.

Lenin recalled Marx's proposition that in some countries a situation may arise when it would be advantageous for the bourgeoisie to agree to sell the basic means of production and for the working class to agree to "buy" them. Such "transition to socialism (the transition which undoubtedly would be the most advantageous to 'the people', abstractly speaking)," Lenin wrote, "presumes an absolutely secure victory of the proletariat, the absolute hopelessness of the position of the capitalists, the absolute necessity for them to display the most scrupulous obedience and their readiness to do so."*

Lenin's propositions are particularly important in our time when a *realistic* possibility has arisen for the peaceful development of revolution in *a number* of capitalist countries in view of the formation of the world socialist system, the greatly increased appeal of socialism, and the powerful growth of the international working-class movement and the national liberation struggle.

But the peaceful transition of power to the working class, as the experience of the Hungarian revolution has shown, presupposes, in Lenin's opinion, a broad development of the working people's struggle against the reactionary forces, and resistance to the reformists who seek conciliation with the bourgeoisie and the landowners. No matter by what means the working class takes power, its revolutionary aim is to transform capitalist society into socialist society. In spite of the contentions of the reformists and revisionists, capitalism cannot grow peacefully into socialism. In all cases the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the transfer of the basic means of production to the people is an essential requisite for the transition to socialism. "Marxism," Lenin emphasised, "which recognises the necessity for the class struggle, asserts that mankind can reach the goal of socialism only through the dictatorship of the proletariat."**

On March 12, 1919, soon after the First Congress of the Communist International, Lenin went to Petrograd to attend the funeral of M. Yelizarov. During the two days he spent in Petrograd, he delivered a report to the Petrograd Soviet on the foreign and home policy of the Council of People's Commissars, spoke at meetings in the People's House and at a session of the First Congress of Agricultural Workers of Petrograd Gubernia, and also visited the Palace of Labour.

On March 16, Yakov Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, died. His untimely death was a sad loss to the Party. Speaking at an extraordinary session of the A.R.C.E.C., Lenin described Sverdlov as an outstanding figure of the Communist Party and the Soviet state and a splendid organiser of the proletarian masses. In conclusion he stressed that the strength of the socialist revolution lay in its inexhaustible sources, and that the revolution replaced leaders who gave their lives for its victory by advancing "groups of people to

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 360-61.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 355.

continue their work, follow their path, and bring to completion what they began".

At Lenin's suggestion, M. Kalinin was elected Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Lenin said that Kalinin had been active in the Party for twenty years, that he possessed extensive experience and knew how to approach the working people, for he himself came from the peasantry and had been a worker. Kalinin, he said, would successfully carry out the Party policy with regard to the peasantry.

The Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). The Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) opened in Moscow on March 18. Lenin delivered the Central Committee's report on its activities and spoke on the main questions discussed at the Congress—the Party Programme, work in the countryside and the military situation.

The Congress adopted the new Party Programme worked out by a commission under Lenin's guidance. Lenin drafted the main sections of the Programme. The new Programme defined the tasks of the Communist Party for the whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism and equipped the Party and the working class ideologically for the struggle in building a socialist society. Lenin stressed that the Party Programme had a scientific foundation, proceeded from reality and served as a guide to action. It had tremendous international impact; it showed that the socialist revolution in Russia was not an exceptional phenomenon but had been engendered by the general laws of historical development.

Lenin criticised Bukharin's proposal to delete from the general section of the Programme the definition of simple commodity production and pre-monopoly capitalism. He explained that this definition was necessary, because the policy of the Party with regard to the capitalist elements and the working peasantry could not be correctly framed unless the many economic systems of the transitional period were taken into consideration.

At the same time, Lenin pointed out that if the Programme of the Communist Party was to have any international significance it had to "take into account the class factors which are characteristic of the economy of all countries".* It should be borne in mind that "pure imperialism, without the fundamental basis of capitalism, has never existed, does not exist anywhere, and never will exist".** Even in the most developed capitalist countries pre-monopoly capitalism and small-scale commodity production exist side by side with monopoly capitalism. For this reason, socialist, bourgeois-democratic and national liberation revolutions and peasant and general democratic movements merge in the world revolutionary process which is destroying imperialism. It also follows that in order to define correctly the policy of the Communist Party with regard to the democratic movements, to substantiate the need

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 189.
** *Ibid.*, p. 165.

for alliance between the working class and the non-proletarian masses, and to show the need for the proletariat to support democratic and national liberation movements, the Programme must contain a description not only of imperialism, but also of pre-monopoly capitalism.

At the same time Lenin pointed out that the basic questions of the Communist Party's home and foreign policy, the strategy and tactics of the world communist movement, should be regarded, first of all, from the viewpoint of the general development of society in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, of the transition from capitalism to socialism. The Programme gave an exposition of the substance of imperialism and described its tendencies, which make "the collapse of capitalism and the transition to the highest type of social economy inevitable".*

Later developments have fully confirmed Lenin's analysis of capitalism and its highest stage, imperialism, set out in the Second Programme of the Communist Party. For this reason, the Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U. saw fit to reproduce the pertinent propositions of the Second Programme in the Third Programme of the C.P.S.U.

The political section of the Second Programme contained a description of the Soviet political system and charted the development of socialist democracy. Lenin stressed that it was essential to draw all citizens into the administration of social affairs. He associated this task with the improvement of the living standard, a considerable reduction in the working day and with a rise in the general cultural standard. "Transition *through* the Soviet state to the gradual abolition of the state," he wrote, is effected "by systematically drawing an ever greater number of citizens, and subsequently *each and every* citizen, into the direct and *daily* performance of their share of the burdens of administering the state."**

Speaking of the Party's tasks with regard to the national question, Lenin resolutely opposed Bukharin's and Pyatakov's chauvinistic dominant-nation proposal to exclude from the Programme the point about the right of nations to self-determination. Only the granting of the right of self-determination to all nations, said Lenin, would secure the right kind of mutual relations between the working people of different nations, their trust of one another and the voluntary and equal union of the peoples. This principle would at the same time help to consolidate the international position of the Soviet land, promote the solidarity of the working people of other countries with Soviet Russia and support the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries in their struggle against imperialism. The Congress backed Lenin and rejected the anti-Bolshevik views held by Bukharin and Pyatakov.

The economic section of the Party Programme stated that it was necessary to develop to the utmost the country's productive forces on

* *C.P.S.U. in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenary Meetings*, Russ. ed., 1954, Part 1, p. 411.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 156.

the basis of a single state plan, improve socialist labour discipline and encourage the initiative and activity of the masses in economic development.

The agrarian section of the Programme, which was also formulated by Lenin, envisaged a series of measures for the socialist reorganisation of agriculture: the creation of state farms, full support of associations for the joint cultivation of the land and of agricultural co-operatives. During the civil war, Lenin devoted much attention to this question. He headed the commission that drew up the Law on Socialist Agrarian Measures and Measures for the Transition to Socialist Agriculture, which was adopted by the Government in February 1919. In his reports to the Eighth Party Congress, and in his speeches at the meetings and Congresses of Peasant Representatives, he explained the necessity for collectivising agriculture and the ways of doing it.

Lenin demonstrated that there was no escape from poverty for the small-scale farms. Only by uniting them and going over to large-scale social production with the use of machines and scientific farming methods could the productivity of agricultural labour be raised and the well-being of the peasantry assured. "That is the way," Lenin wrote, "to improve agriculture, economise forces and combat the kulaks, parasites and exploiters."*

The voluntary principle should be the basic principle of the collective farms, Lenin stressed. The peasants should not be forced to join collective farms but should be drawn into collective production gradually, by showing them the practical advantages of collective farming over individual farming. They must be convinced not merely by propaganda and agitation, but by seeing that collective and state farms are run better and give more assistance to the local peasant population. The collectivisation of agriculture, Lenin pointed out, could not be realised spontaneously, without preparation. The Party and the Government must organise and direct it; the agricultural associations and co-operatives should be given full state support.

Lenin considered the creation of the necessary material and technical basis an essential condition for putting the bulk of the peasantry on the path of collective farming. "If tomorrow," he said at the Eighth Party Congress, "we could supply one hundred thousand first-class tractors, provide them with fuel, provide them with drivers—you know very well that this is sheer fantasy at present—the middle peasant would say: 'I am for the Kommunia' (i.e., for communism)."**

Lenin's propositions were the core of his subsequent co-operative plan, a concrete plan for the reconstruction of agriculture on socialist principles.

Questions of cultural development and of raising the living standard held a prominent place in the Party Programme. The Programme envisaged better supply of products, improvement of housing, reduction

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 175.

** *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 214.

of the working day without a reduction in wages, public health measures and an extension of social security.

The Second Party Programme drawn up by Lenin and passed by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) had a world-wide impact. It was the world's first Programme of a governing Communist Party, defining the tasks and the ways of building socialist society. It constituted a new important advance in the development of revolutionary theory, and is a credit to, one might even say a scientific feat of, the Soviet Communist Party and, above all, its creator, Vladimir Lenin.

The Programme was imbued with the spirit of proletarian internationalism and the idea of the unity of the national and international tasks of the working class. Lenin and the Party always regarded socialist construction in Soviet Russia as a great international task of the Soviet people, conforming to the interests of the working class of the whole world. "We are certain," Lenin said, "that in a number of countries, where we have many more allies and friends than we know, the mere translation of our Programme will be the finest reply to the question of what the Russian Communist Party, one of the detachments of the world proletariat, has done. Our Programme ... will be the document on the strength of which the workers will say: 'Here are our comrades, our brothers; here our common cause is becoming reality.' "*

The Second Party Programme was adopted at a time when war raged in the country and Soviet power depended for its survival on the outcome of the savage battles against the interventionists and Whites. In these circumstances, the Programme was a striking expression of the deep faith Lenin and the Party had in the ultimate victory of the Soviet people, the revolutionary potentialities of the new system, and the heroism of the people.

The decision of the Eighth Congress concerning Party policy in the countryside and its attitude towards the middle peasants was of utmost importance to the future of socialism in Russia. Already in the autumn of 1918, when the middle peasants had begun to swing over to the side of Soviet power, Lenin had expressed the idea that it was necessary to secure the support of the middle peasants and to pass from a policy of neutralisation of the middle peasant to a policy of a stable alliance with him. Taking into account the experience of the class struggle under conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he advanced a new political slogan—"To come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while not for a moment renouncing the struggle against the kulak, and at the same time firmly relying solely on the poor peasant."** On Lenin's initiative the question of the attitude to be adopted towards the middle peasants was discussed at the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). In his report on work in the countryside Lenin set the Party's course towards an alliance with the middle peasant.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 222.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 28, p. 191.

As a result of the granting of land and material assistance to the poor peasants, many poor farms rose to the level of middle farms after the revolution. The middle peasant, Lenin said, now constituted the majority of the peasant population. The working class could not retain power and build socialism without the support of the majority of the peasants, without participation of the middle peasants in socialist construction. Lenin emphasised that the middle peasants must not be confused with the kulaks and measures intended for dealing with the kulaks must not be applied to them. "*Coercion applied to the middle peasants,*" he said, "*would cause untold harm.*"* Lenin urged that the middle peasant's confidence should be won, that his needs should be attended to, and that he should be convinced that the policy of the proletarian government was correct.

Lenin's report to the Eighth Party Congress and the resolution he wrote on the attitude towards the middle peasants enriched Marxist theory on the agrarian question and was a big contribution to the policy of the Communist Party in the countryside in the period of the transition from capitalism to socialism. Since middle peasants exist in all countries, the theoretical propositions and practical directives set out by Lenin on the proletariat's attitude towards middle peasants after the working class wins power are of the utmost importance.

Lenin was greatly interested in the speeches made by provincial delegates to the Congress. When the chairman wanted to close the debate he supported the delegates' objections, and the debate was continued. He suggested that F. Panfilov, a peasant delegate, should be allowed to continue his speech after the time limit had expired. Panfilov described the situation in the countryside saying in particular that people who did not know the countryside or the needs of the peasantry were sometimes sent there as agitators. Panfilov recalls that during the interval Demyan Bedny took him to see Lenin. "Thank you, old man," Lenin said, "you have given us a lot of material." As always at congresses and conferences, Lenin mixed with the delegates during the intermissions, chatting with them about the situation in their localities and questioning them in detail about the life and mood of the middle peasants and the activities of the Communists in the villages.

The military situation and military policy of the Party was one of the chief items on the agenda of the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). The Leninist line of the Central Committee on this score was set out in the Party Programme adopted by the Congress and in the C.C. theses on the military question. The C.C. line at the Congress was opposed by the so-called "Military Opposition" which consisted of the former "Left Communists" V. Smirnov, G. Safarov, G. Pyatakov and others. The "Military Opposition" objected to the employment of veteran military experts in top posts in the Red Army, to centralisation and to strict army discipline. These incorrect views were shared at the time

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 210.

by many Party workers not involved in any opposition groups, such as K. Voroshilov, F. Goloshchokin, A. Myasnikov and others. The theses put forward by the "Military Opposition" through V. Smirnov were backed by the majority of the military section at the Congress.

In a forceful speech at a plenary sitting, which dealt with the military question, Lenin demonstrated that the theses of the "Military Opposition" were incorrect, and denounced them strongly. He also severely criticised the speeches made by Goloshchokin and Voroshilov. Lenin paid tribute to the heroism of the Tenth Army and Voroshilov, but stressed that violation of C.C. directives, the contempt which the commanders at the Tsaritsyn front showed for the knowledge and experience of veteran military experts, and lack of discipline, had led to big losses there. Pyatakov and Bubnov had made the same mistakes in the Ukraine, Lenin said.

"The old-time guerrilla mentality has a strong hold on you," Lenin declared to the advocates of the opposition theses. "Since you come to the rostrum and speak to the Congress about it, you are going against the Party line and against the Party Programme. You defend the old-time guerrilla mentality. By proposing theses which are aimed completely against the military specialists, you are violating the general Party tactics. That is the source of the differences."

Priority, Lenin said, must now be given to the building of a regular army. The guerrilla methods must be completely eradicated and iron discipline introduced in the army. He laid special emphasis on the need for strengthening the proletarian nucleus and communist influence in the army. The Congress took Trotsky to task for violating the principle of class selection in army mobilisation, and for belittling the role of Party leadership in the army. The resolution on the military question passed by the Congress laid the foundation of the military policy of the Communist Party.

The Eighth Party Congress ended on March 23. In closing it, Lenin made a short speech, which he concluded with the following words:

"The seed sown by the Russian revolution is springing up in Europe. This imbues us with the absolute and unshakable conviction that no matter how difficult the trials that may still befall us, and no matter how great the misfortunes that may be brought upon us by that dying beast, international imperialism, that beast will perish, and socialism will triumph throughout the world."*

Decisive victories of the Red Army. The year 1919 was a year of terrible trial and stress for the Soviet state. The counter-revolution had hurled enormous forces against the Soviet Republic. By the spring of 1919 the armies of the Whites and interventionists numbered more than one million men. The high command of the Allied Armies decided to strike a concerted blow with all the anti-Soviet forces and considered it necessary to "undertake a general offensive from all the frontiers of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 224-25.

Russia and directed concentrically *towards the very heart of Bolshevism –Moscow*".*

The enemy attacked on six fronts simultaneously. More than once the whiteguard armies, well armed by the Entente, came near to the vital centres of the Soviet Republic, creating a mortal threat to the revolution. In April 1919, Kolchak's armies were within 85 or 100 kilometres of Kazan, Simbirsk and Samara. In the first half of October, Denikin's troops seized Orel and entered Tula Gubernia, creating a threat to Moscow, the capital of the Soviet state. Twice, in May and October, General Yudenich broke through to the outskirts of Petrograd.

In this critical period Lenin's outstanding role in organising the country's defence was particularly evident. He wrote the important Party documents that became the programme for mobilising the Party and the people to defeat the enemy. Among them were the "Theses of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Connection with the Situation on the Eastern Front" and the letter of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to all Party organisations entitled "All Out for the Fight Against Denikin!"

Lenin called upon Communists and Soviet officials, upon all workers and peasants to brace themselves, to organise their work in a revolutionary manner, so that the Soviet Republic would actually become a united armed camp. Lenin set the Party and the Soviet organisations the task of explaining the situation to the people, of ensuring successful mobilisation, of carrying on agitation among the mobilised men and training them as quickly as possible. Every worker in the front-line areas, he pointed out, must be armed, the work of supplying the Red Army must be given maximum assistance, political work in the army must be intensified, and military discipline and military vigilance raised to the highest degree.

Lenin was in daily touch with the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic and General Headquarters. He directed and checked their activities, the carrying out of the strategic and military directives of the Central Committee and the Soviet Government, and dealt with the problems of preparing and executing major military operations.

More than once he sharply criticised the activities of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, deplored the slackness in its work and delays in adopting important decisions and measures. "To keep on reassuring is bad tactics. It's like playing a game of reassurance with one another," Lenin wrote to the Revolutionary Military Council on September 16, 1919. "Apparently our R.M.C.R. 'gives orders', without being interested or able to follow up *fulfilment*. This may be our common vice, but in military affairs it simply means destruction." "The *sleepy* tempo of work must be made into a *lively* one,"** Lenin said, demanding that the Revolutionary Military Council should take energetic measures to improve the situation at the fronts.

Since he systematically received official military information and was

* Historical and Diplomatic Archives.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 421.

directly linked by a thousand threads with the army in the field, Lenin was thoroughly conversant with the situation on the various fronts and in the armies. Lenin's writings, speeches and military correspondence contain a penetrating assessment of the situation and of the prospects of developing military operations, and reflect his ideas and precepts on the basic questions of strategy and tactics in the conduct of the war. Lenin's numerous telegrams and letters to the Commanders and the Revolutionary Military Councils of the fronts and armies, to the C.C. representatives and local Party and Soviet bodies vividly illustrate with what profound knowledge he directed the defence of the Soviet state.

Lenin used to say he did not consider himself expert in military affairs, and Stalin took advantage of this to claim that Lenin really knew little or nothing about the art of war and did not leave us "a worthwhile heritage of guiding propositions on military questions". But Stalin could not have been farther from the truth. He belittled Lenin's role in building up the Red Army and organising the defeat of the interventionists and Whites. It stands to reason that Lenin was not a military specialist in the specific sense of that word. With his usual modesty, he used to say: "I do not claim in the least to know the science of war." But he had thoroughly studied military literature and had a good knowledge of the history of wars. Even professional soldiers were surprised to see how well Lenin grasped the most complicated and specific questions of warcraft.

Lenin developed revolutionary theory in the new historical conditions, and contributed greatly to the Marxist teaching on wars and armies, laying the foundations for the Soviet science of war and the Soviet art of war. He worked out the questions on the character of wars in the imperialist epoch, the importance of socio-economic and moral factors, the decisive role of the masses in modern war, the means and forms of the armed struggle of the proletariat, defence of the socialist homeland, the development of the armed forces of the proletarian dictatorship, and many others.

Lenin tackled the problems of the war from the point of view of creative Marxism. His writings and military directives formulated the basic principles of new, Soviet military science, which conforms to the nature and tasks of the army of a socialist state, an army of a new type. He decided questions of military strategy proceeding from the policy and the tactics of the Communist Party, taking into account at the same time the specific laws of war. "Strategy," he said, "is subordinated to politics, and the two are most intimately connected." Skilfully applying the Marxist dialectical method to the problems of military leadership, he based the strategy of the Red Army on an all-round assessment of all factors, on an analysis of the balance of forces and potentialities both of the Red Army and the enemy.

Lenin regarded the ability to determine the main military task and concentrate on carrying it out as the most important element of correct strategic leadership. Being thoroughly conversant with the political and



Lenin in the Red Square, November 7, 1919
Photo



Lenin, Demyan Bedny and F. Panfilov, delegate to the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), during the Congress

Photo, 1919

military situation, he was able to see in time the importance of a particular front and where to direct the main attack. In a situation where the country was surrounded by enemies on all sides, when forces were lacking for simultaneous active operations on all fronts, this ability to determine the area of the main attack was of vital importance, since forces could be concentrated where they were most needed.

Lenin's instructions to defend the Volga and to regain the Urals and Siberia determined the strategy of the Soviet forces in their campaign against Kolchak. When at the height of the Red Army offensive on the Eastern front Vatsetis, the Commander-in-Chief, and Trotsky suggested halting the offensive at the Belaya River and transferring troops to the Southern front, the Party Central Committee on Lenin's initiative firmly rejected the proposal. Lenin insisted that the command of the Eastern front should not slow up its offensive in the Urals, but, on the contrary, should exploit the success and reach the planned objectives.

By the autumn of 1919, Soviet troops had liberated the Urals and reached the vast Siberian plain. "Dear Comrade, our true and tested leader!" the Red Army men of the Eastern front wrote to Lenin. "You ordered us to take the Urals by winter. We have carried out your order. The Urals are ours. We are now marching into Siberia.

"This is not the first time we have engaged a stronger enemy on your orders and have always been victorious, strong in our faith in the justice of our struggle and the triumph of the revolution."

On August 24, Lenin wrote his "Letter to the Workers and Peasants in Connection with the Victory over Kolchak", in which he called upon the Soviet people not to rest content with the successes that had been achieved but to muster all their forces, crush and destroy the enemy, and drive Kolchak and the foreign interventionists from Siberia. Lenin pointed out the main lessons that all workers and peasants should draw from the experience of fighting Kolchak if they wanted to crush their enemies and prevent any repetition of the disasters of the Kolchak affair. It was essential, he wrote, to have a powerful Red Army, to lay in large state stocks of grain, to observe strict revolutionary order and the laws and instructions of the Soviet Government, not to forget that the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries had been Kolchak's accomplices and, above all, to consolidate in every way the alliance of the working class and the labouring peasantry.

Lenin's letter gave fresh impetus to the Soviet offensive on the Eastern front. Partisan warfare flared up with new force in Kolchak's rear. Lenin, who attached tremendous importance to underground work and the spreading of the partisan movement in the enemy's rear, followed with deep concern the operations of the partisan detachments in Siberia against Kolchak's troops. A large group of Party workers was sent to Siberia to help the Party underground organisations. On the instructions of the Central Committee, the partisan detachments combined into large units, which operated in contact with units of the Red Army.

Lenin devoted much attention to the Petrograd front, where a critical situation had developed due to Yudenich's offensive in the summer of 1919. On his suggestion, the Central Committee passed a decision to consider this front to be "first in importance". The defence of Petrograd was placed under the direct control of the Defence Council. Lenin personally checked the deployment of reinforcements there. He issued a directive ordering a rapid and crushing offensive against Yudenich. By August 1919, the Red Army had defeated Yudenich's troops and driven them into Estonia.

Lenin also took part in drawing up the strategic plans against Denikin, who in the summer of 1919 launched his campaign against the Soviet state. He closely followed the course of the battles in the south. Denikin's troops were making a frantic drive to reach the capital in the hope of gaining a quick victory. Reports of the fall of Moscow and Petrograd were frequent in the bourgeois press. September and October 1919 were the most critical months of the foreign military intervention and civil war. In those grim days the qualities that were typical of Lenin, his fearlessness in struggle, his endurance, firmness, foresight and ability to inspire the masses in the struggle against the enemy, all of which stemmed from deep faith in the invincibility of the Soviet system, showed themselves to the full.

The Central Committee of the Party took a number of important measures to reinforce the Southern front. Lenin personally supervised the transfer of troops, guns and ammunition. "The Central Committee's directive is to rob all fronts in favour of the Southern," he wrote to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Fifth Army, which was stationed on the Eastern front, and to the Command of the Turkestan front, suggesting that they urgently consider measures that would enable them to release as many units as possible for dispatch to the Southern front. On October 25, Lenin received representatives of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Communists, who had formed a detachment for the Southern front and asked that they should all be sent to the same army. Lenin gave his consent and wrote to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern front: "I warmly recommend the comrades and request you to see to it that they do not get scattered but are posted correctly and that their wishes are considered. I ask you earnestly to acknowledge this letter and inform me to what post and how the comrades have been assigned."

Thanks to the enormous organisational work of the Central Committee and Lenin personally and to the heroic efforts of the working class and the devotion of the Red Army men, the tide turned on the Southern front in the second half of October; the Red Army went over to the offensive against Denikin's troops. Underlying Lenin's strategy was the idea of resolute offensive operations as the chief means to victory. When the Soviet troops on the Southern front made their first advances, Lenin pointed out that their minor and partial offensive must be developed into a mass onslaught that would bring complete victory.

Lenin demanded of army leaders that they should know all types of

weapons, all the ways and means of fighting, and taught them to show their ingenuity in various forms of military operation. He set military science new problems that had arisen from practical experience and suggested to the military men many important and valuable decisions. For example, it was on his instructions that a force of destroyers was sent from the Baltic Sea by way of the Mariinskaya Water System to the Volga; this force joined the Volga river flotilla and helped greatly in the fight against the Whites. When ways of liquidating the breakthrough of Mamontov's cavalry corps on the Southern front were being considered, Lenin drew the Revolutionary Military Council's attention to the possibility of using low-flying aircraft against the White cavalry. He also supported the proposal of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern front to create the First Cavalry Army as a mobile strategic force.

In December 1919, the Red Army struck crushing blows at Denikin's army, liberating Kharkov, Kiev and the Donets coalfields, and launched a vigorous offensive in the direction of Rostov-on-Don. On December 28, Lenin wrote his "Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine in Connection with the Victories over Denikin". He called on them to rally all their forces to rout Denikin's army and complete the liberation of the Ukrainian workers and peasants from the oppression by landowners and capitalists.

Theoretical problems of the transition period. While organising the struggle against the interventionists and Whites, Lenin did not interrupt his intensive work on theoretical questions. He re-read the works of Marx and Engels again and again, studied political and economic literature and the history of socialism, followed the most important foreign newspapers and periodicals, wrote articles and pamphlets of great theoretical importance, and delivered speeches and lectures. "I would enter Ilyich's study," Krupskaya wrote later, "and see him re-reading Marx and Engels. This would be at some complicated and crucial moment in the country's life. I was always astonished at Ilyich's ability to study theory at the height of a battle. He searched theory for a solution of the practical problems."

Lenin paid much attention to the work of the Yakov Sverdlov Communist University, the first higher Party school. He participated in drawing up its curriculum and programme, and stressed that all instruction should be kept close to real life and practice. He frequently addressed the students of the University. In July and August 1919, he delivered two lectures on the state.

Lenin's attention at the time was focussed on the transition period from capitalism to socialism, on the dictatorship of the proletariat. In June 1919, he wrote his famous article, "A Great Beginning", dealing with the communist *subbotniks*. In the autumn, he drafted the detailed plan of a booklet to be called "On the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and wrote the article "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat". His booklet, *The Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, was

published in December 1919. In the spring of 1920, he wrote the articles, "From the Destruction of the Ancient Social System to the Creation of the New" and "From the First *Subbotnik* on the Moscow-Kazan Railway to the All-Russian May Day *Subbotnik*".

In these articles Lenin summed up the creative work of the people under the leadership of the Party, and the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and developed the Marxist teaching on the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. He elucidated the cardinal questions of the building of the new society. He emphasised the international significance of the experience of the dictatorship of the working class in Russia and considered it necessary to make that experience available to the Communists of other countries. The dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, Lenin wrote, had certain distinguishing features, because it had been established in a petty-bourgeois and economically backward country. But the basic forms of the social economy and the main class forces in Russia before the proletariat gained power had been the same as in any capitalist country, so these specific features would not affect the main issue.

Life has fully corroborated Lenin's thesis. The contentions of the reformists and revisionists that Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a purely Russian theory applicable only to Russia, do not therefore hold. The Marxist-Leninist teaching on the transition period from capitalism to socialism and on the dictatorship of the proletariat is a guide to action for the whole international communist movement.

Lenin wrote that this period is bound to combine the features and properties of both socio-economic formations and to be a period of struggle between the defeated, but not yet defunct, capitalism and the burgeoning communism. The social economy in this period has three basic divisions–socialist, capitalist and small-commodity production, which are respectively represented by three definite classes, the proletariat, which has become the ruling class, the bourgeoisie, and the petty bourgeoisie (mainly the peasantry), wavering between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

Since these classes still exist in the transition period, class struggle, contrary to the assertions of the reformists and revisionists, does not disappear, but changes its forms. With political power in its hands, the working class, far from ceasing the class struggle, uses the machinery of state to continue it.

One of the aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the attitude of the working class to its enemy, the bourgeoisie. Once in power, the working class must crush sternly, rapidly and resolutely the resistance of all exploiters–the capitalists, landowners and their lackeys. "Whoever does not understand this," Lenin said, "is not a revolutionary, and must be removed from the post of leader or adviser of the proletariat."* He stressed that use of violence is necessitated by the task of suppressing

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 388.

the resistance of the exploiting classes, and that once this has been accomplished, proletarian power would renounce "all extraordinary measures".*

Another aspect of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the attitude of the working class to its ally, the working peasantry. Developing Marx's teaching, Lenin reached the following important conclusion: "The dictatorship of the proletariat," he wrote, "is a specific form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of the working people (petty bourgeoisie, small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these strata, an alliance against capital, an alliance whose aim is the complete overthrow of capital, complete suppression of the resistance offered by the bourgeoisie as well as of attempts at restoration on its part, an alliance for the final establishment and consolidation of socialism."** The special feature of this alliance lies in the fact that the leading role in it belongs to the working class.

After gaining power the proletariat must overcome completely the wavering of the peasants and finally win them away from the bourgeoisie, draw them into socialist construction and set them on the path of large-scale socialist production. In order to do this, the working class must take into account the dual nature of the peasantry, it must distinguish between the landless and the property-owning peasant, the hired peasant worker and the peasant trader, the peasant who labours from the peasant who profiteers.

Lenin resolutely rebuffed the defenders of capitalism and all types of revisionists of Marxist teaching, who were distorting the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, claiming that it meant nothing but violence. "The essence of proletarian dictatorship," he taught, "is not in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its chief feature is the organisation and discipline of the advanced contingent of the working people, of their vanguard, their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, abolish the division of society into classes, make all members of society working people and remove the basis for all exploitation of man by man."***

Lenin foresaw that the economic role of the proletarian state would keep increasing in the course of socialist construction.

"It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution," he wrote, "that we should be engaged primarily on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie. . . . But simultaneously with this task, another task comes to the forefront just as inevitably and ever more imperatively as time goes on, namely, the more important task of positive communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society."****

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 328; cf. p. 223.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 381.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 388.
**** *Ibid.*, p. 419.

Like Marx and Engels, Lenin believed that the dictatorship of the proletariat is historically transient, that it must not and would not exist for ever. The working class needs the dictatorship to create socialist society and to abolish all exploitation of man by man. "This objective," Lenin explained, "cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism.... That is why Marx spoke of an entire period of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the period of transition from capitalism to socialism."*

Since there are no exploiting classes under socialism, the need for dictatorship of the proletariat vanishes, for, as Lenin pointed out, one of its functions is to suppress the resistance of the exploiters as a class. Speaking of acute class struggle (class "war") in the transition period, Lenin said that the solution of the problem of "who will beat whom" in favour of socialism, and the removal of the danger of capitalist restoration, means that this "war had come to an end, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat had ceased".**

Another reason why the dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary in the transition period is the existence of petty-bourgeois sections which vacillate between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and are unable to take the socialist path without the guiding influence and effective organisational assistance of the working class that holds power. Lenin wrote: "What is needed to enable the proletariat *to lead* the peasants and the petty-bourgeois groups in general is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of one class, its strength of organisation and discipline, its centralised power."*** It follows that after the peasants and the other petty-bourgeois sections have embarked upon the socialist path, the dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer necessary in this respect too.

In the years of Soviet power, Lenin developed his propositions on the functions of the state under socialism and during the period of the transition to communism, which he set out in his book, *The State and Revolution*. The socialist state, he wrote, "is organising large-scale production... on a national scale, is distributing labour-power among the various branches of production and the various enterprises, and is distributing among the working people large quantities of articles of consumption belonging to the state".****

It is one of the main tasks of the socialist state in all its stages of development to protect socialist property. "The workers and peasants," Lenin wrote, "must realise that the land and factories belong to them and they must be as careful of them as of their own property."***** He considered it a very important function of the socialist state to control the measure of labour and the measure of consumption and thereby carry through the principle of socialism–from each according to his

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 388.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 99.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 389.
**** *Ibid.*, Vol. 30, pp. 108-09.
***** *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 225.

ability, to each according to his work. At the same time, the socialist state plays a big part in guiding cultural development and educating the masses in the communist spirit. Last but not least, the socialist state ensures the defence of the gains of socialism from external enemies.

Lenin's teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the socialist state, has been developed in the new Party Programme, passed by the Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U., in its proposition on the development of a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the entire people, of proletarian democracy into socialist democracy of the whole people, and on the functions and trends of development of the socialist state in the period of full-scale communist construction.

"A Great Beginning". Lenin's genius and his close grasp on life, his creative approach to Marxism and his extraordinary scientific foresight enabled him to see far into the future.

In the early years of Soviet power the foundations of socialist society were only just being laid in our country. The first weak shoots of communism were only just appearing. But Lenin had the wonderful gift of discerning the new. He saw, appraised and supported all that was new and progressive. He observed these shoots and demonstrated their significance. After analysing them, he formulated fundamental propositions on socialism and communism and on the laws governing the emergence and development of the communist system. His article, "A Great Beginning", was particularly important in this respect.

On May 10, 1919, the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway held the first mass *subbotnik*. After their working day was over, they repaired four locomotives and sixteen carriages without pay, and also unloaded several thousand poods of freight; what was more, their labour productivity was more than two and a half times the usual. *Subbotniks* were soon being held at other enterprises in various towns. They were the response of the working class to the call issued by the Party Central Committee "to put your shoulder to the wheel in a truly revolutionary way". The *subbotniks* were a vivid demonstration of the selfless labour of the proletariat in the rear and strikingly showed the creative bent of the governing working class and its devoted struggle to preserve and consolidate the gains of the socialist revolution.

In his article, "A Great Beginning", Lenin described the communist *subbotniks* as an event of great importance–as the "*actual* beginning of *communism*". They showed what socialism and communism were and how the new society was to be built. "The communist *subbotnik* organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway," wrote Lenin, "is one of the cells of the new, socialist society, which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capital and from wars."*

The proletariat, Lenin pointed out, represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour than capitalism. Therein lies the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 424.

essence and source of its strength, and the guarantee of the inevitable victory of communism. The capitalist organisation of labour is maintained by the discipline of hunger, the worker's dread of losing his job. "The communist organisation of social labour, the first step towards which is socialism, rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the working people themselves who have thrown off the yoke both of the landowners and capitalists."* Lenin considered the *subbotniks* very important chiefly because they indicated the beginning of a change that was more difficult to make, more tangible, more radical and more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, because they betokened a victory over the inertia, lack of discipline, petty-bourgeois egoism and conservative habits which the workers and peasants had inherited from capitalism. The *subbotniks*, Lenin wrote, demonstrated the conscious and voluntary initiative of the workers in adopting a new labour discipline, in developing labour productivity and in creating a socialist economy.

Lenin considered the development of the productive forces to be the rock-bottom problem in socialist construction and in the subsequent transition to communism. He stressed that a tremendous step forward in the development of the productive forces was necessary to bring about the complete abolition of classes, the elimination of the essential distinctions between town and country, between manual and mental labour, and to make it possible to realise the principle of communism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." In order that the productive forces can reach a level that makes the transition to communism possible, Lenin explained, the productivity of labour must be higher than under capitalism. "In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labour unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished by Socialism creating a new and much higher productivity of labour."**

This conclusion was a new and important contribution to the Marxist teaching on communism. From it follows the idea of economic competition between the two systems: socialism and capitalism. Moreover, Lenin considered that it was not only a matter of deciding the question of "who will beat whom?" within the country, but also of starting a competition between the two systems on a world scale in order to surpass world capitalism in the economic field.

Transition to communism, Lenin said, is impossible, unless we raise the productivity of labour. "*Communism,*" Lenin wrote, "*is the higher productivity of labour compared with that existing under capitalism, of voluntary, class-conscious and united workers employing advanced techniques.*"***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 420.
** *Ibid.*, p. 427.
*** *Ibid.*, (Italics ours.–*Ed.*)

In connection with the *subbotniks*, Lenin revealed the essence of communist labour and showed in what way it differs from labour under socialism. Socialism, he explained, presupposes social labour under the strict control and supervision of the state, which defines the amount of labour and its remuneration. Under communism, which develops as socialism becomes consolidated and which is the higher phase of the new society, labour will be unpaid work for the good of society performed without any thought of remuneration. Work will be an essential requirement of the healthy body. Communist *subbotniks* were the first embryos of such work.

In "A Great Beginning" Lenin defined good operation of factories, care and honesty in the extraction and distribution of every pood of coal, iron, grain and other products, cleanliness in the houses and streets, public catering establishments, children's nurseries and kindergartens, as shoots of communism. He considered it the prime duty of the Party and the Government to study these shoots carefully and to tend them. He was quite sure that, given the support of the socialist state, "the shoots of communism will not wither; they will grow and blossom into complete communism".*

Lenin's idea of Russia's electrification. In the fierce battles of 1919 against the White armies of Kolchak, Yudenich, Denikin, and Miller, the Red Army defeated the main forces of the domestic counter-revolution and the interventionists. Soviet troops liberated the Urals, Siberia, the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and a considerable part of Turkestan. The Soviet land won a breathing-space.

In his reports to the Eighth All-Russia Party Conference and the Seventh Congress of Soviets, in December 1919, Lenin described the situation and pointed out that the breathing-space should be employed to the utmost for economic development.

Lenin noted the improvement in the international position of the Soviet Republic. The Entente countries had officially lifted their blockade of Soviet Russia. The Soviet-Estonian peace treaty had been signed, followed by treaties with Latvia, Lithuania and Finland. In this connection, Lenin stated that a big part in ensuring the victories of the Soviet state had been played by the correct foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, as a result of which the imperialist 14-Power campaign launched by the Entente against Soviet Russia had collapsed. In spite of their dependence on the imperialist powers, nearly all the small countries had refused to take part in this campaign, because they knew that the White generals, inspired by the Entente, were out to restore the Russian Empire and continue the policy of national oppression, while the Bolsheviks had proved in practice that they respected the independence and sovereignty of all peoples.

Lenin exposed the predatory nature of the policy pursued by the imperialist powers vis-à-vis the small countries. While paying lip-service

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 431.

to the freedom and independence of the small nations, the imperialists enmeshed them in financial, political and diplomatic dependence, dragging them into their military blocs and alliances, and trampling underfoot their national dignity and sovereignty.

"The Entente," he said, "has already had its paws on each of the small countries. They know that when the French, American or British capitalists say, 'We guarantee your independence', that means in practice, 'We shall buy from you all the sources of your wealth and shall hold you in bondage.' "*

To the foreign policy of imperialism, a policy of violence, intimidation and plunder, socialism counterposes a fundamentally new type of international relations. The Soviet state has always pursued a policy of peace, equality, respect of independence and sovereignty of all countries, and friendship and co-operation between the peoples. This, Lenin said, won the Soviet Republic the sympathy of all peoples and millions of allies in all countries. "It means," he said, "that our peace policy is approved by the vast majority of people all over the world."**

During the years of the foreign military intervention, the Soviet Government, on Lenin's initiative, repeatedly made peace proposals to the Entente Powers. The Seventh Congress of Soviets reaffirmed the unswerving Soviet desire for peace and once again proposed to Britain, France, the United States of America, Italy and Japan, either jointly or separately, to begin peace negotiations at once.

"The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic," said the Congress resolution written by Lenin, "wishes to live in peace with all peoples and devote all its efforts to internal development in order to establish the smooth running of production, transport and government affairs on the basis of the Soviet system; this has so far been prevented by the intervention of the Entente and the starvation blockade."***

Lenin described as a specific feature of the breathing-space in the early months of 1920 the fact that the military tasks had not yet been completed. The remnants of Denikin's army, under the command of General Wrangel, were entrenched in the Crimea. In the West, bourgeois-landowner Poland was threatening a campaign against Soviet Russia. In these circumstances it was impossible to demobilise the army. Moreover, during the winter of 1919-20 there was acute dislocation of the economy, the overcoming of which required intense effort. For this reason, Lenin emphasised the need to consider the specific problems of each period, and pointed out that the Party and the Soviet Government were compelled to resolve the economic problems by means of War Communism, by military methods. Hence, among other things, the various decrees on the use of Red Army units on the labour front.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 176.
** *Ibid.*, p. 390.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 231.

In this period Lenin emphasised the need to combat dislocation, restore the transport system, alleviate the fuel shortage, and overcome the food difficulties. He gave much attention to cultural development and the work of the state apparatus. At his suggestion the Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was reorganised into the Council of Labour and Defence.

While dealing with the pressing economic problems, Lenin looked far ahead and pointed to the need for large-scale economic development and conversion to up-to-date industrial techniques. He suggested drawing up the first long-term plan for the development of the country's economy—the state plan for the electrification of Soviet Russia. This plan, he wrote to G. Krzhizhanovsky, who was in charge of the electrical engineering department of the Supreme Economic Council, "must be provided right away", in order to "carry away the mass of workers and politically conscious peasants with a *great* programme for the next 10-20 years."* At Lenin's suggestion the Soviet Government set up a State Commission for the Electrification of Russia, which was instructed to draw up a plan for the economic development of Russia on the basis of the country's electrification. G. Krzhizhanovsky was made its chairman. About two hundred distinguished experts were enlisted to do the work. The commission carried out its work on instructions from Lenin who took part in it. He said its purpose was to ensure the economic independence of Russia, the creation of a new technical basis, a large-scale machine industry. He kept a close eye on the commission's work, read all its papers and helped it with his advice.

The Ninth Party Congress met from March 29 to April 5, 1920. It discussed the report of the Central Committee, matters of economic development, the trade union movement, etc. In the Central Committee's report and his speeches on economic development and on co-operation, Lenin set out the tasks of the Party in this field. He stressed the decisive importance of the political awareness and firmness of the working class, of its willingness to make sacrifices, and emphasised the need for stringent discipline, unity of purpose and maximum effort in peaceful labour.

Lenin sharply criticised the anti-Party "Democratic Centralism" group led by Sapronov, Osinsky and others, which was attacking the Central Committee line and rejecting the principle of one-man management in production established by the Soviet Government. He showed that though this group had demagogically called itself a group of "Democratic Centralism", its views had in fact nothing whatsoever in common with the Marxist, Bolshevik conception of democratic centralism. Taking cover behind "Left" phrase-mongering, the "Democratic Centralists" in effect opposed Party and state discipline, organisation, and firm leadership, and drifted into anarchy.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 435.

The Congress repulsed the "Democratic Centralism" group and in the resolution on the current tasks of economic development endorsed Lenin's propositions on the forms and methods of economic management. Having outlined the immediate tasks in the sphere of industry and transport, the Ninth Congress confirmed the need for a single economic plan and, guided by Lenin's precepts, endorsed its basic principles.

On the last day of the Congress a group of delegates proposed that the closing session be devoted to a celebration in honour of Lenin's approaching fiftieth birthday. The proposal was met with tempestuous applause. Lenin, however, disapproved. He could not bear laudatory expressions about himself, and after two speeches left the hall. But the speeches continued. With great enthusiasm the Congress passed a resolution on the publication of Lenin's Collected Works.

During and after the Congress, Lenin spoke to the delegates and other comrades who attended it. In his memoirs, S. Budyonny fondly described his first encounter with Lenin.

"At last," he wrote, "my dream was coming true. In a minute, maybe, I would see Lenin. What was he like, this Lenin, whom all the ordinary people trusted so deeply, and whom they loved as their own father?

" 'What will I say to Lenin that will come from all the army men? How shall I greet him?' I wondered in a fever, and grew shy.

"In the meantime, Lenin approached us. He cast a penetrating glance at us. He proffered me his hand.

" 'So this is Budyonny?' he asked quickly, narrowing his clever eyes and examining me closely.

" 'Well, how are things, Comrade Budyonny?'

"I was confused and blurted out against my will:

" 'Good, thank God, Vladimir Ilyich!'

" 'In Russian that means very good. That's fine,' Lenin said. 'So you said "Thank God",' he repeated, and laughed loudly and contagiously.

"My timidity vanished at once and I felt at ease."*

In the ensuing conversation Lenin questioned Budyonny exhaustively about the mood of the army men and the state of political work in the units, and told him about the internal and international situation. He spoke of the labour enthusiasm of the workers, and warned Budyonny of the danger of an attack by bourgeois-landowner Poland on the Soviet country, adding that the republic had to be prepared to repel it.

Lenin considered Budyonny's rise as giving striking evidence that the Red Army was a genuinely popular army and that the revolution had brought up gifted generals from among the people.

"The main thing is," Lenin told Budyonny in December 1920, "that the time has come when men from among the ordinary folk are beating

* *Pravda* No. 53, February 22, 1963.

the bourgeois generals. Let the imperialists feel this. You have given them a good lesson."*

Faith in the working class. Against the personality cult. On April 22, 1920, the Communist Party and the whole Soviet people joyfully celebrated the fiftieth birthday of their leader and teacher. Lenin received many letters and telegrams containing touching congratulations and good wishes. On April 23, the Moscow Party Committee held a special meeting to mark the date. Speeches were made by Gorky, Lunacharsky, Olminsky, Stalin and others. Lenin did not arrive until the meeting was nearly over. Responding to insistent requests, he made a short speech entirely dedicated to the Communist Party. Lenin stressed the big role and responsibility of the Bolshevik Party in view of the world-wide importance of the Russian revolution and the fact that Russia's working class had become the vanguard of the international liberation movement of working people and was blazing the trail for mankind to a happy future. Lenin made a note of the war victories, but warned the Party against complacency. Complacency was a danger, he said, which every Communist, and the Party as a whole, should appreciate, and doubly so because still more difficult tasks, the creative tasks which "constitute the substance of the socialist revolution", lay ahead. Lenin hoped that the Bolsheviks would never be a party of complacent people. Such was his "jubilee" speech.

Lenin denounced the personality cult, which is alien to Marxism. He regarded the working people as the true makers of history and stressed the guiding role of the Communist Party. He was convinced that socialism would be victorious, because he had deep faith in the people and, above all, the political consciousness and organisation of the working class. He said:

"Perseverance, persistence, willingness, determination and ability to test things a hundred times, to correct them a hundred times, but to achieve the goal come what may—these are qualities which the proletariat acquired in the course of the ten, fifteen or twenty years that preceded the October Revolution, and which it has acquired in the two years that have passed since this revolution, years of unprecedented privation, hunger, ruin, and destitution. These qualities of the proletariat are a guarantee that the proletariat will conquer."**

While denouncing the personality cult, Lenin pointed out that Marxism did not at all deny the important role of the leaders of the working class. He criticised those who refused to accept this and demagogically opposed the masses and parties to the leaders. "Political parties," Lenin wrote, "as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders." The proletariat, too, needed "thoughtful, experienced and

* See S. M. Budyonny, *The Travelled Path*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1958, p. 280.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 518.

knowledgeable political leaders", Lenin pointed out, stressing the importance of "party organisation and of party leaders worthy of the title".* Lenin noted that to deny the necessity of working-class leaders and of the prestige of correct leadership was tantamount to denying organisation, party allegiance and party discipline.

However, only those who lean on the people, on the Party, who are conscious that they are doing the will of the people and are responsible to them, who always uphold the principle of collective leadership, can be real working-class leaders.

In Lenin's opinion it is wrong to associate the achievements of the Party and the people with the name of one man. He put down all the victories over domestic and external enemies, all the successes in socialist development to the heroic struggle, the devoted labour of the working class, the people, under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Lenin objected strongly to any adulation of his own personality, to praise of his services, and was always annoyed to see such things. In September 1918, Lenin summoned a few leading comrades and told them roughly the following:

"I note with deep dissatisfaction that my person is being glorified. This is annoying and harmful. All of us know that personalities have nothing to do with it. It would be awkward for myself to prohibit that sort of thing. There would also be something ridiculous and pretentious about it. It is up to you to put the brakes on unobtrusively."**

Or this other fact. In 1920, the commission collecting material on the history of the R.C.P.(B.) and the October Revolution decided to begin collecting exhibits for a Lenin Museum. Lenin categorically forbade this and told Olminsky, who had reported the decision to him: "You can't imagine how unpleasant I find the constant promotion of my personality."***

Lenin's extraordinary modesty was evident at all times. To the cameraman who had been taking pictures of him on Vsevobuch Day he said: "Take fewer pictures of me and more of those who are going to listen to me, the comrades who are going off to the front." Lenin's modesty is also illustrated by the following. He knew several languages, he wrote and spoke at Comintern congresses and chatted to the delegates in German, English and French, read Polish and Italian, and could understand Czech and Swedish. But in a questionnaire, in answer to the question, "What languages do you know?" he replied: "English, German, French–badly, Italian–very badly."

Lenin never broke the accepted rules and considered that they applied to him as much as to anyone else. When he asked the library of the Rumyantsev Museum (now the Lenin State Library) to send him Greek dictionaries, philosophical dictionaries and some books on philosophy, he wrote: "If it is against the rules to lend reference books, would it

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 416.
** *Izvestia* No. 38, February 14, 1960 (from A. Lunacharsky's Remembrances).
*** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

be possible to have them for an evening or a night, when the library is closed? *I shall return them before morning.*"

During the famine of the civil war, peasants, Red Army men and people in the provinces, concerned for Lenin's health, sent him food parcels containing white flour, bacon, eggs and fruit, but, though on a short supply himself, Lenin re-addressed them all to hospitals and children's homes, and to needy comrades.

Lenin's close contact with the working people gave him a profound understanding of their needs. The supply problem was particularly acute at the time. Lenin was quick to respond to reports from the provinces and from workers about food distress, and took immediate action. He did not tolerate an irresponsible or callous attitude to this matter. In a telegram to the Food Commissar for Simbirsk Gubernia, dated January 6, 1919, he wrote: "A committee of 42 organisations of starving workers of Petrograd and Moscow is complaining of your inefficiency. I demand maximum energy on your part, a non-formal attitude to your work, and all-round assistance to starving workers. For failure to do this I shall be compelled to arrest the whole staff of your establishments and bring them to trial."

Lenin showed particular concern over food supplies for children. In 1919, the hardest year of all, decrees which he initiated were passed providing for free meals for children. "We, adults, will go hungry," he said, "but we shall give the last pinch of flour, the last lump of sugar and the last piece of butter to the children. It is better for the burden of these hard times to be borne by adults; the children must be spared in every possible way."*

Lenin was very attentive to the requests of Red Army men. One of the trainees of the Kremlin Military School, Grigory Nikolsky, told Lenin that the local authorities were not giving his family assistance. Lenin at once sent a telegram to the Ryazan Gubernia Executive Committee: "Immediately investigate the case of trainee Grigory Nikolsky. Is his family being given the assistance it is entitled to by the Pecherniky Volost Executive Committee?... Report findings to me."

Lenin immediately answered all complaints addressed to him by working people. For example, on March 28, 1919, he received a telegram from a peasant woman who complained that her grain had been requisitioned even though her family of three had no bread-winner: her husband was a prisoner of war and had been one for over four years. The next day Lenin wired the Gubernia Executive Committee and told them to investigate the complaint and inform him of the results of the investigation and of what action had been taken.

How responsive he was to letters from the working people is also illustrated by the fact that when Nadezhda Krupskaya went away for two months in June 1919 on the ship *Red Star*, which was making a propaganda cruise on the Volga and Kama, Lenin wrote to her: "I read

* N. A. Semashko, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1933, p. 28.

the letters addressed to you asking for assistance and shall try to do what I can."*

The working people had a warm affection for Lenin and showed touching solicitude for him. One day a Red Army man came to the Kremlin and handed in for Lenin half of his loaf of bread. "Let him have something to eat," he said. "These are hungry times."

At the beginning of 1919, Ivanov, a peasant from the Milinovo Volost, Sudogda Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia, visited Lenin. Lenin's office seemed cold to him (Lenin always preferred a moderate temperature in his room). When Ivanov returned home, he told the volost executive committee in his report that Lenin had approved of the executive committee's policy and had sent them greetings and hearty thanks. Ivanov also noted that Lenin was working in a poorly heated room. The Milinovo Executive Committee thereupon passed a resolution to "send Comrade Lenin a carload of firewood and, if necessary, have our own smith instal an iron stove in his office".**

The Party and all the working people of the Soviet country made the most of the breathing-space in 1920 to heal the grave wounds inflicted by the war, to restore factories and transport, and to revive agriculture.

The Soviet people celebrated May Day with great political and labour enthusiasm. That day an All-Russia *subbotnik* was held. Lenin himself took part in it by helping the Kremlin Military School trainees to clear building materials out of the Kremlin. After the *subbotnik* he made a speech at the laying of the foundation stone for a memorial to Karl Marx in Theatre Square (now Sverdlov Square). A monument to the founder of scientific communism rises today on the spot where Lenin laid the first stone. It was unveiled at the time of the historical Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U. held in 1961, and stands as a token of deep respect and of the gratitude that the Communist Party and the Soviet people feel to the great leader and teacher of the working class and all the working people of the world.

That same day, Lenin spoke at the laying of the foundation stone for a monument of Liberated Labour. Later, always fond of spending holidays with the workers, he visited the proletarian districts, spoke at meetings in the Zamoskvorechye and Bauman districts, at the opening of the Zagorsky Workers' Palace in the Blagusha-Lefortovo District, and at a meeting of workers of the Prokhorov (Trekhgornaya) Textile Mill in Krasnaya Presnya District.

In the morning the workers of the factory had held a *subbotnik*, from which they returned at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Lenin, who arrived some 40 minutes before the meeting, waited until the workers had had their lunch and a rest. He talked to them, asked them about the *subbotnik*, and inquired how many of the women participated in public affairs, how many Party members there were at the factory, etc.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 37, p. 454.
** *Pravda* No. 44, February 26, 1919.



Lenin and Kalinin

Photo, 1920



Lenin
Frame from a newsreel, 1920

Speaking at the meeting, Lenin stressed the need to restore the economy and said he was sure the workers would win on the labour front just as they had won in the civil war.

As rightly noted by Krupskaya, "all this inclination towards the workers was associated in Lenin with the appreciation of the role Lenin was sure the working class would play. It was connected with all the hopes he put into the working class".

That day he was gay and smiling and wore a scarlet ribbon in his buttonhole; he was in a festive mood, very erect and looked young in spite of his fifty years. His speeches, vivid, full of invincible faith in the victory of the Soviet people, cheered and inspired the working people to new victories in the name of communism.

"'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder". While directing the Communist Party and the Soviet state, Lenin devoted much attention to the problems of the international working-class and communist movement.

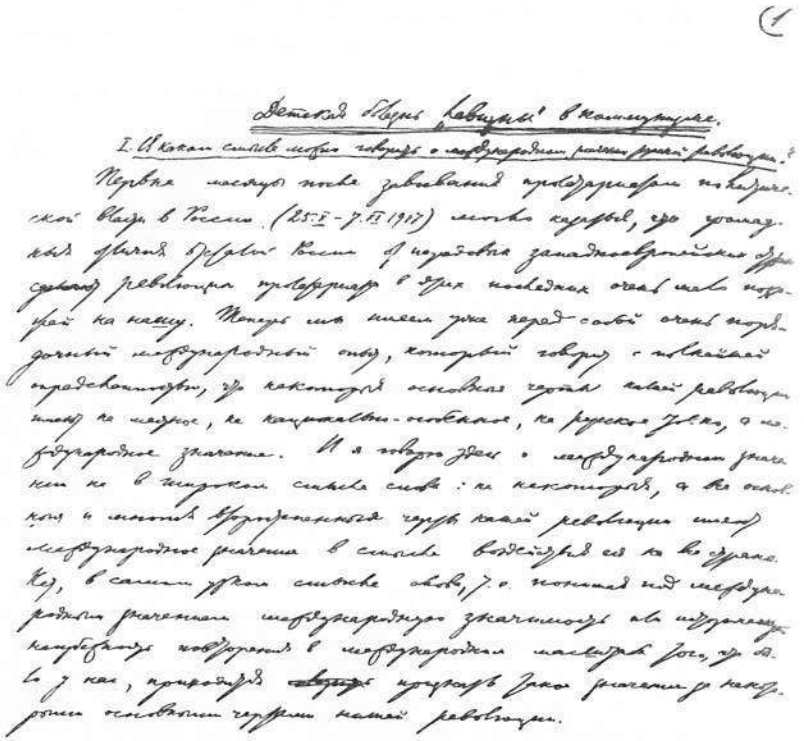
The Communist Parties grew and gained strength in the fierce struggle against opportunism. Lenin saw the worst danger for the working-class movement in Right opportunism, reformism and revisionism. "Opportunism," he said, "is our principal enemy. Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working-class movement is not proletarian socialism, but bourgeois socialism. Practice has shown that the active people in the working-class movement who adhere to the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeoisie itself. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not remain in power."* Opportunism, Lenin emphasised, must be stamped out in all parties. That was the main task. Lenin also tirelessly exposed the Centrists, who did not want to break with the avowed opportunists, and who were ready to pay lip-service to the dictatorship of the proletariat but were unwilling to fight for it in practice.

In May 1920, a delegation of British workers visited Soviet Russia. In a conversation with this delegation and in his "Letter to the British Workers", which he gave them to take back to Britain, Lenin branded the reactionary trade union leaders as "faithful servants of the capitalists" and showed that on all sorts of specious pretexts they supported the imperialist policy of the British Government, condoned Britain's intervention against the Soviet Republic, maligned the Soviet system and opposed the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

He explained that sincere supporters of the liberation of the workers from the capitalist yoke would not oppose the founding of a Communist Party, which alone was capable of educating the workers in a non-bourgeois, non-petty-bourgeois manner, and really exposing the social-traitors.

The talk with Lenin made a deep impression on the members of the delegation. In a letter to Lenin, Ben Turner, a prominent member of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 494.



First page from Lenin's manuscript
"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder
(*Reduced*)

Labour Party and leader of the delegation, wrote: "It has been to one a wonderful example of determined and scientific attempts to build a Workers' Republic. That you will succeed I am sure. That you succeed in making the New Socialist State is my heartfelt wish."*

While striking telling blows at reformism, Lenin at the same time came out resolutely against "Left" opportunism, against dogmatism and sectarianism in the Communist Parties. The "Lefts" misunderstood the role and tasks of the Communist Parties in relation to the masses and refused to work in the reactionary trade unions and in bourgeois parliaments. They rejected the possibility of compromises and agreements with other parties. Lenin's great service to the international working-class movement was that, having very early detected "Left" opportunism in the young Communist Parties, he revealed its harm and danger to the socialist revolution. He demonstrated that dogmatism

* *Kommunist* No. 3, 1960, p. 7.

and sectarianism were liable to do grave damage not only to a party, but also to the world communist movement as a whole if they were not combated with due firmness.

During April and May 1920, Lenin wrote his brilliant book, *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, in which he thoroughly criticised the mistakes of the "Lefts" and showed that "Left doctrinairism", masked by pseudo-revolutionary phrases, was a departure from the theory and practice of Marxism towards anarcho-syndicalism and that it was prompting the Communist Parties to follow a policy of isolation from the working masses, a policy fatal for them. But Lenin did not stop there. Having summed up the rich revolutionary experience of the Russian Bolsheviks and the international working-class movement, particularly after the First World War, he took Marxist theory a stage further and worked out important solutions for the strategy and tactics of the proletarian parties in the new historical situation, in the era of the general crisis of capitalism, in the conditions that arise because of the existence of two systems.

Lenin pointed out in the beginning of his book that the Russian revolution had an immense international impact not only because it exercised a big revolutionising influence on the world-wide liberation movement of working people, but also because it gave evidence of the general objective laws governing socialist revolution, which applied equally to all countries. "Experience has proved," he wrote, "that on certain very essential questions of the proletarian revolution, *all* countries will inevitably have to go through what Russia has gone through."*

Hence the world-wide significance of the fundamentals of Bolshevik strategy and tactics. Bolshevism had a practical history which in wealth of experience and the variety and rapid succession of the different forms of the revolutionary movement had no equal anywhere else in the world. To ignore this experience was a big mistake; it meant a departure from internationalism. Lenin regarded it as the object of his book to examine the Russian experience in connection with certain current problems of international communist tactics, and to apply to the tasks and policy of the Communist Parties of other countries "whatever is of general application and validity, that which in general is obligatory in the history and the present tactics of Bolshevism".**

The experience of Bolshevism showed above all that without a revolutionary Marxist party the proletariat cannot win power, cannot retain it, consolidate it, and use it to achieve the complete victory of socialism. In its turn, the party cannot carry out the tasks confronting it without rigid, truly iron discipline in its ranks and without the fullest and devoted support of the working class.

Describing the principal stages in the history of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin showed that it had grown up, matured and hardened in relentless

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 383.
** *Ibid.*, p. 397.

struggle against enemies within the working-class movement, first and foremost against the undisguised opportunists and reformists who had gone over completely to the side of the bourgeoisie, and also in the struggle against petty-bourgeois and semi-anarchist (or dilettante-anarchist) revolutionism, masked by "Left" phrase-mongering.

Lenin examined from all angles the "Left-doctrinaire" sectarian mistakes committed by some of the fraternal Communist Parties, and in his criticism of them indicated ways of correcting them. In this connection he reached the important conclusion that a party of the proletariat should deal correctly with its own mistakes. "The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes," Lenin wrote, "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 working *people*. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the hallmark 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*."*

Lenin's book revealed how fundamentally wrong was the "Left" Communists' position on the question of a proletarian party. Certain German "Lefts", who styled themselves the "opposition on principle", had gone to the length of declaring political parties in general a bourgeois category and on these grounds were demanding the abolition of the parties of the working class. Lenin wrote in this connection: "Repudiation of the Party principle and of Party discipline—such is the opposition's *net result*. And this is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat *in the interests of the bourgeoisie*."**

Lenin regarded it as the principal task of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries to overcome bourgeois influence over the masses, to win over the majority of the working class, the majority of the working people, to convince the broadest sections of the people of the rightness of communism. This is a very difficult task, particularly in the developed countries of Western Europe and America, where the backward sections of the working people are more deeply steeped in bourgeois prejudices than they were at one time in Russia, but it is feasible all the same. And in order to carry it out, it is necessary to work among the masses and not fence oneself off from them by artificial and childish "Left" slogans.

Lenin denounced the "Lefts' " assertion that Communists should not work in reactionary, social-reformist trade unions. The development of the working class, he explained, did not and could not proceed anywhere in the world other than through the trade unions and their close contact with the party of the proletariat. "You must be capable of every sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 406-07.
** *Ibid.*, p. 394.

patiently, in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most ultra-reactionary—in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found."*

Just as resolutely, Lenin repudiated the sectarian arguments of those who considered that Communists should not take part in bourgeois parliaments. He pointed out that millions of working people in the capitalist countries still believed in bourgeois parliamentarism. For this reason ". . .participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is *obligatory* for the party of the revolutionary proletariat *specifically* for the purpose of educating the backward strata of *its own class*, for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden, ignorant rural *masses*".** This, of course, did not go to say that under certain conditions a boycott of bourgeois parliamentary elections may not prove useful.

Lenin also showed that the "Lefts' " contention that a revolutionary proletarian party cannot and ought not make any compromises with other parties was absolutely groundless. There were different kinds of compromises, he taught. A compromise reached not in the interests of the working class but against it is one thing. Treacherous, strikebreaking compromises of that kind, which the reformists readily conclude, are impermissible for a party of the revolutionary proletariat. A compromise that strengthens the revolutionary positions of the working class is another matter; Marxists should not reject such compromises. But when entering into agreements with other parties, Communists should not cease their struggle against bourgeois and reformist ideology and policy. In all compromises, since they are dictated by circumstances, the party of the revolutionary proletariat must uphold its loyalty to its principles, to its class, to its ultimate aim.

Subjectivism in appraising events, the lack of an objective approach to the prevailing situation and the conditions of the struggle, and a desire to skip stages of advance, Lenin indicated, are the distinctive features of "Left" opportunism. These features, he said, prompted the "Lefts" to reckless, unconsidered action.

Lenin taught that the policy and tactics of the Party must be based on a sober, strictly objective assessment of *all* the class forces of a given state and other states, and also on the assessment of the experience of the revolutionary movement on a world scale. He scathingly criticised the dogmatism of the "Lefts" for their refusal to consider the changing situation, to develop and apply revolutionary theory creatively, and to make the most of arising opportunities in the interests of the working class and the liberation movement of all working people. Communist Parties, Lenin pointed out, have to be flexible to the utmost in their tactics. They must have command of all the means of struggle, of "*all* forms or aspects of social activity", to impart new content to

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 403.
** *Ibid.*, p. 408.

old forms and devise new forms of work, combine illegal methods of struggle with *all* the legal methods, and be ready "to pass from one form to another in the quickest and most sudden manner" whenever the situation and the conditions of struggle change.

Lenin developed the proposition about the relation of the international to the national elements in the working-class movement, about the common objective laws governing socialist revolution and the distinctive features of the revolutionary movement in the various countries. The basic principles of communism, he wrote, are the same for the entire international working-class movement. But when making what are actually the same preparations for victory over the bourgeoisie, the working-class movement of every country does so *in its own way*. The struggle of the proletariat in every individual country has had and must inevitably have its own *specific peculiarities*, depending on its economy, its policy, its culture, the national composition of its population, religious divisions, historical traditions, and so on.

Therefore the tactics in different countries and under different conditions must on no account be copied mechanically. Unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement calls for an application of the basic principles of communism which can *"correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state differences".*

In all countries, Lenin wrote, communism is becoming steeled and is growing stronger. The roots of communism are so deep that persecution does not weaken, but strengthens it. The bourgeoisie may work itself into a frenzy and try to kill off hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of known or prospective Communists. Life will assert itself all the same. "Communists should know that the future in any case belongs to them. . . ."**

"'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder" is one of the most outstanding creations of Lenin's genius and constitutes an invaluable contribution to the treasury of Marxism-Leninism. It is a model of creative Marxist theory employed in accomplishing the cardinal strategic and tactical tasks of the Communist Parties in all countries. The ideas Lenin set forth in it are of the utmost importance for the world communist movement. They are used by the Marxist-Leninist parties, and help them in the struggle for peace, for democracy, for socialism and communism.

Second Congress of the Communist International. The Second Congress of the Comintern opened in Petrograd on July 19, 1920. It continued its work in Moscow from July 23. Lenin drafted the principal Congress resolutions–the theses on the basic tasks of the Communist International, on the national and colonial questions, the agrarian question, and also on the conditions for affiliation to the Comintern. On the opening day Lenin arrived in Petrograd. He placed wreaths on the graves

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 437.
** *Ibid.*, p. 445.

of the fighters for the revolution on the Field of Mars and later spoke at a meeting dedicated to the founding of a memorial to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

Just as the Congress began, an incident occurred that made a deep impression on everyone. Lenin, who had been sitting on the platform and scanning the hall, suddenly stepped down and walked up the aisle towards the back rows, where he saw an old comrade-in-arms, V. Shelgunov, a Petrograd worker revolutionary who had gone blind. They warmly embraced each other. "I don't think they said a word to each other," recalled I. Olbracht, a delegate to the Congress. "Yet the humanity of that meeting was wonderful."* All the delegates rose and showed their appreciation with long applause.

At the Congress, Lenin delivered a report on the international situation and the fundamental tasks of the Comintern, took part in the work of a number of commissions, delivered the report of the commission on the national and colonial questions, and also addressed the Congress on other matters. His reports and speeches contained a deep-going analysis of the international economic and political situation following the First World War and the Great October Socialist Revolution and advanced extremely important propositions concerning the general crisis of the world capitalist system.

Lenin believed that the transition from capitalism to socialism was the chief trend of the epoch ushered in by the October Revolution. In describing the historical impact of the establishment of Soviet power by the workers and peasants of Russia, Lenin wrote in 1919:

"It is not difficult to see today that this was not a 'gamble', not an 'act of folly' on the part of the Bolsheviks, but the beginning of a world-wide change of two eras in world history–the era of the bourgeoisie and the era of socialism."**

The First World War and the October Revolution ushered in the general crisis of capitalism. Lenin described this crisis as the period of the world-wide collapse of capitalism, the period of birth of socialist society. He defined the main features of the general crisis of capitalism–the division of the world into two systems, aggravation of economic contradictions and class struggle in the capitalist countries, and crisis of the imperialist colonial system.

The point of departure for the Communist Parties, Lenin pointed out, was the appearance of the socialist system in the Soviet Socialist Republic. All developments of world politics, he said, hinge on the struggle of the two systems.

"The Communist Parties, both in civilised and backward countries alike, can present and settle political questions correctly only if they make this their starting-point."*** Lenin foresaw with brilliant insight how events would develop. He arrived at the important conclusion that

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 515.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 230.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 498.

they would lead to the transformation of "the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national one (i.e., existing in one country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (i.e., a dictatorship of the proletariat covering at least several advanced countries and capable of exercising decisive influence upon the whole of world politics)".*

Subsequent developments have completely confirmed Lenin's prediction.

Throughout the world, Lenin said at the Second Congress of the Comintern, the bourgeois system was in the throes of a deep-going crisis. It was up to the Congress, he went on, to determine the position of the Communists in the situation created by this crisis. The main task of the day was to unite the communist forces, establish Communist Parties in every country and invigorate those already in existence, purge them of opportunist and centrist elements, and step up revolutionary work in the thick of the working class, in the countryside and in the army.

Sharp discussions developed in the Congress commissions on the agrarian and the national and colonial questions. Many delegates had incorrect views, inherited from the Second International concerning these questions. Lenin took an active part in these debates, criticised erroneous propositions and helped the delegates to adopt a correct standpoint.

Lenin's theses on the agrarian question, which the Congress adopted, stressed the necessity for an alliance between the working class and the labouring peasantry, maintained the idea of the leading role of the proletariat, and defined the tasks of the Communist Parties with regard to the various strata of the peasantry, both in the period of the struggle for the victory of the socialist revolution and after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin attached enormous importance to the discussion of the national and colonial question. The Great October Socialist Revolution had given a powerful impetus to the national liberation movements in China, India, Indonesia, and other colonial and dependent countries. "The period of the awakening of the East in the contemporary revolution is being succeeded by a period in which all the Eastern peoples will participate in deciding the destiny of the whole world, so as not to be simply objects of the enrichment of others. The peoples of the East are becoming alive to the need for practical action, the need for every nation to take part in shaping the destiny of all mankind."**

Lenin followed developments in the Asian countries very closely. The Chinese Communist Liu Tse-jung, who was at that time Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Chinese Workers in Russia, recalls a conversation he had with Lenin in November 1919:

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* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 466.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 160.

"He greeted me as warmly as he had the first time. Throughout our talk I was constantly aware of the fascinating charm of this great man. Lenin questioned me about China, about the Chinese revolution. I was young and still a long way from really understanding international politics, and I knew too little about events in China to be able to tell him anything new or interesting.

"But I brought away many valuable impressions from my talk with Vladimir Ilyich, from whom I heard a number of profound ideas concerning the future of China, the Chinese people's struggle against imperialism, and the importance of bringing together the peoples of China and Soviet Russia."*

The Indian national liberation movement gathered strength under the influence of the October Revolution. A meeting of Indian revolutionaries was held on February 17, 1920. It passed a resolution, which was sent to Lenin, expressing profound gratitude to Soviet Russia for carrying on the great struggle for the liberation of the oppressed classes and peoples. In his reply to the Indian Revolutionary Association, Lenin wrote:

"I am glad to hear that the principles of self-determination and liberation of oppressed nations from exploitation by foreign and local capitalists, proclaimed by the Workers' and Peasants' Republic, have found such a ready response among progressive Indians, who are waging a heroic fight for freedom." Calling for close alliance between Moslems and non-Moslems, for solidarity of the working people of the East in the common struggle against the oppressors, he concluded his greetings with the words: "Long live free Asia!"**

Lenin elucidated a number of important questions regarding the national liberation movement under new conditions in his report to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East in November 1919.

He branded the policy of plunder and oppression pursued by the imperialist powers in the colonial and dependent countries, and warmly welcomed the national liberation movement in the East. Proceeding from the experience of the Soviet state, which had successfully beaten off the armed attack of the powerful imperialist countries, he concluded that the difficult struggle for liberation of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries would be crowned with complete success. No matter how weak these peoples were, he said, or how invincible the power of the imperialist oppressors with their command of all the wonders of technology and military science seemed to be, the oppressed peoples' revolutionary war, if it really succeeded in awakening the millions of toilers and exploited, had such potentialities that the liberation of the peoples of the East became quite practicable.

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* *Recollections of Lenin by Contemporaries Abroad*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1962, p. 290.
** V. I. Lenin, *The National Liberation Movement in the East*, Moscow, 1957, p. 248.

Lenin set the Communist Parties and organisations of the peoples of the East the task of skilfully applying the general theory and practice of communism to the specific conditions of their own countries, where the bulk of the population were peasants and where the vestiges of medieval tyranny were yet to be destroyed. He urged that the communist teaching be translated into a language every people could understand, so that it would rouse to revolutionary activity the most backward peoples, who would merge with the workers of other countries in common struggle.

Lenin pointed out to the Communists of the countries of the East: "You will have to base yourselves on the bourgeois nationalism which is awakening, and must awaken, among those peoples, and which has its historical justification."* This nationalism has a progressive, democratic content, too, since it is directed against imperialist oppression and serves the oppressed nations' struggle for national independence. At the same time, Lenin warned that while supporting the progressive content in bourgeois nationalism, one must not lose sight of its social essence, its limited character, and that having driven out the imperialists, one must go on to fight for the liberation of the working people from social oppression.

Lenin's theses on the national and colonial questions for the Second Congress of the Comintern were a further development of these propositions. They formulated with exceptional clarity and depth the position and tasks to be adopted by the Communist Parties in the national-colonial question.

The whole policy of the Communist Parties in this field, he wrote, should be based on bringing together the proletarians and the toiling masses of all nations and countries for joint revolutionary struggle against imperialism, for the overthrow of the landowners and the bourgeoisie. It is the duty of the Communist Parties of the metropolitan countries to fight for the liberation of the colonial and dependent peoples from "their own" imperialist bourgeoisie, to foster among the workers of their country a genuinely fraternal attitude to the working people of the colonies. In the fight against imperialism and feudal relations, the Communists of the colonial and dependent countries must support the revolutionary national liberation movements, and enter into agreements and alliances with the bourgeois democrats in their countries, while maintaining the independence of the proletarian movement. At the same time, Lenin noted the contradictory attitude of the bourgeoisie of the colonial and dependent countries, its tendency towards conciliation with the imperialists and domestic reaction.

Communists, Lenin taught, must be in the front ranks of the fighters against colonial oppression. They must rally all anti-imperialist forces. But while expressing the interests of the working people, the Communists must not confine themselves only to solving national problems.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 162.

They must fight for a radical democratic solution of the agrarian question, for social progress. Lenin drew attention to the "need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries".* The Communists, he said, must expose the petty-bourgeois illusion about the possibility of going over to socialism without class struggle. They must marshal the masses under the banner of scientific communism.

Lenin argued that whereas the national liberation movements had previously culminated in the advent to power of the bourgeoisie, in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, after the emergence of a socialist system, these movements, led by the proletariat with the Communist Parties at their head, could, if successful, result in the establishment of genuinely popular government.

In this connection, Lenin in the report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions at the Second Congress of the Comintern, basing himself on the work of the R.C.P.(B.) in the Soviet Republics of Central Asia, formulated the cardinal proposition that after liberation from imperialism, after the establishment of the power of the working people, former colonial countries, where patriarchal, feudal and semi-feudal relations had predominated, could, with the aid of the victorious proletariat of the advanced countries, pass over gradually to socialism without going through the capitalist stage. This proposition has been brilliantly confirmed in practice, as is evidenced by the socialist transformations carried out by the peoples of Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The development of the Mongolian People's Republic, which did not pass through the capitalist stage and embarked on the socialist path long ago, also bears out Lenin's proposition.

Lenin emphasised once more that Communists in colonial and dependent countries should be able to adapt both the principles of Soviet power "and the Communist Party itself (its composition and its special tasks) to the level of the *peasant* countries of the colonial East".

"Therein lies the essence. We must give thought to it and *look* for *concrete* answers,"** Lenin wrote in his notes to the report on the prospects of social revolution in the East.

In Lenin's theses and speeches at the Second Comintern Congress the Marxist principles of proletarian internationalism were taken a stage further. He resolutely condemned recognition of internationalism in words and its substitution by petty-bourgeois nationalism in deeds.

Unlike nationalism, which merely pays lip-service to the equality of nations, proletarian internationalism demands subordination of the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of this struggle on a world scale. It demands unity, solidarity and fraternal assistance among the proletariat and the Communist Parties of all

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 149.
** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

countries. "Unless the proletariat," Lenin wrote, "and, following it, the mass of working people of all ccuntries and nations all over the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity, the victory over capitalism cannot be successfully accomplished."* Lenin considered the struggle against opportunist "distortions of the conception and policy of internationalism" to be the "first and most important task". This struggle, he stressed, takes increasing precedence as the victory of the socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a number of countries looms larger and larger.

Lenin's works and speeches contain brilliant definitions of the principles and character of the relations between countries that have embarked on socialist development. Already the Address on the Convocation of the First Congress of the Communist International, which Lenin helped to draft, stressed the necessity for a "solid bloc of the countries where the socialist revolution has already triumphed".**

Elaborating on this idea in the theses on the national and colonial questions for the Second Congress of the Comintern, Lenin wrote that it is necessary to strive for the closest possible political and economic alliance of the countries in which the proletariat has gained power. He explained that objective laws governing the world socialist system, especially the tendency "towards the creation of a single world economy, regulated by the proletariat of all nations as an integral whole and according to a common plan",*** requires the all-round economic co-operation of socialist countries.

The Congress adopted the conditions of affiliation to the Communist International, which Lenin had drafted. These were a striking expression of Lenin's teaching concerning the proletarian party of the new type. He pointed out that the principle of democratic centralism should be the basic principle of the Communist International. The Communist International and its Executive Committee had to take into account the diversity of conditions under which the different parties worked and fought. The relations between the Communist Parties should be built on the basis of the equality of the national detachments of the international working class, on the basis of proletarian internationalism, mutual trust and voluntary co-operation and co-ordination of effort in the interests of the common goals and tasks and the solidarity of the working people of all countries.

The Communists of the Soviet land and all other Communists have always considered it their internationalist duty to adhere strictly to jointly framed decisions and statements adopted by the Communist Parties. "We are proud," Lenin wrote in August 1920, following the Second Congress of the Comintern, "that we settle the great problems of the workers' struggle for emancipation by submitting to the international discipline of the revolutionary proletariat, taking due account of the experience of the workers in different countries, reckoning with their knowledge and their will, and thus giving effect in deeds (and not in words, as the Renners, Fritz Adlers and Otto Bauers do) to the unity of the workers' class struggle for communism throughout the world."*

Lenin exposed the slanderous allegations made by the bourgeois ideologists and the reformists about the "dictatorship of Moscow" in the international communist movement, describing them as malicious deception of the workers. Yet Lenin always regarded the Bolshevik Party as one of the advanced detachments of the world communist movement, whose leading role derived from the fact that it was a model of the proletarian party of the new type; it possessed tremendous experience of struggle that had international significance; under its leadership the working class of Russia had been the first in the world to carry out a victorious socialist revolution and to begin building a new society.

During the Congress, and after it was over, Lenin met many of the delegates. He talked to William Gallacher, Marcel Cachin, Antonin Zápotocký, Christo Kabakchiev and others, asked them about the working-class movement in their countries, and discussed with them questions concerning the building of Communist Parties. These meetings with Lenin, and the work with him at the Congress, made an indelible impression on the delegates and played a decisive part in their political development. Many of them later became leaders of Communist Parties and prominent figures in the international working-class movement.

At one of the Congress sessions the delegates resolved to express their thoughts about Lenin in writing. The album with these entries is kept at the Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, C.C. C.P.S.U.

"Theoretician and at once a man of action, Lenin is today the biggest figure in the international working-class movement," wrote Marcel Cachin.

"The Russian proletariat has every right to be proud of Comrade Lenin," we read in the hand of Antonín Zápotocký, "and can consider it their good fortune that in a revolutionary era, when there was the greatest need for this, they had Lenin."

"Lenin, simplest, most human, and yet most far-seeing and immovable," wrote John Reed.

The delegates of the colonial and dependent countries wrote that Lenin had awakened in the hearts of the peoples of the East new hopes and showed them the way to happiness. "The most noble representative of humanity," a delegate from India stated briefly and expressively.**

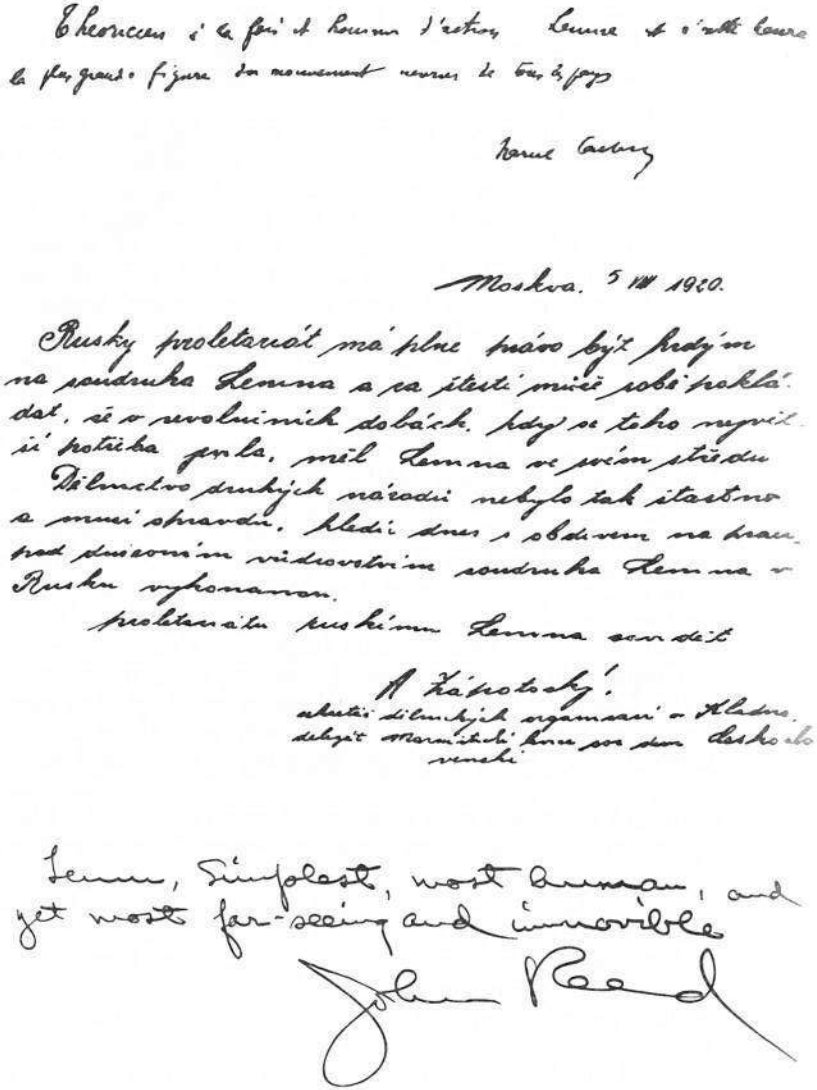
* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 468.

** *The Bolsheviks' Struggle for the Creation of a Communist International*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1934, p. 114.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 465.

* V. I. Lenin, *On the International Working-Class and Communist Movement*, pp. 361-62.

** *Istorichesky Arkhiv* No. 2, 1957, pp. 12, 10, 9.



Moskva. 5 IV 1920.

Ruský proletariát má plné právo být hrdý na soudruha Lenina a za štěstí může sobě pokládat, že v revolučních dobách, když se toho nejvíc žádala, měl Lenina ve svém středu.

Dělnictvo druhých národů nebylo tak šťastno a musí shánět. Hledí dnes s obdivem na hrdinu pod duchovním vedením soudruha Lenina v Rusku vykonaného.

proletariátu ruským Leninem sám dělá

A. Zápotocký.
účastní dělnických organisací v Kladně.
dělají všechno, co v jejich moci, aby se dnes dělo
vše

Lenin, Simplest, most human, and
yet most far-seeing and immovable

John Reed

Notes on Lenin made by Marcel Cachin, Antonín Zápotocký and John Reed

(*Reduced*)

These notes vividly expressed the feeling of warm sympathy and affection which the working people of the whole world had for the young Soviet state and Lenin. No matter what the bourgeoisie did in its effort to present Lenin in a false light, no matter what slanders the reactionary press tried to heap upon him, the growing influence of Leninism could not be prevented from going beyond the borders of the Soviet land. The truth about Lenin, about his noble ideas, got through to the working people of the capitalist countries everywhere.

The Communists, who came to Moscow for the Comintern congresses, told the workers of their countries about Lenin. When Marcel Cachin returned to Paris from the Second Congress, he told the workers about it. Over forty thousand people for whom the Paris circus building proved too small, thronged the neighbouring streets. They greeted Cachin with shouts of "Long live Lenin! Long live the Soviets!" The Italian Communist, Germanetto, wrote that already in the early twenties Lenin's name was known even in the remotest villages of Italy. In some workers' families newly-born babies were named "Lenin". Lenin became known far and wide in both East and West.

Defeat of the interventionists and the internal counter-revolution. The peaceful breathing-space which the Soviet Republic had won, turned out to be very brief. In the spring of 1920, the imperialists of France, Britain and America organised a fresh crusade against the Soviet land. This time they involved bourgeois Poland in their criminal adventure. The Soviet Government did its utmost to avert a conflict, but the ruling circles of Poland, at the will of their imperialist masters, rejected the Soviet peace proposals. At the end of April, the White Polish forces advanced deep into the Ukraine and occupied Kiev. International imperialism also relied on the tsarist general, Baron Wrangel, a hireling of the international counter-revolution, who in June 1920 likewise advanced from the Crimea and threatened the Donets coalfields and the Kuban.

The Communist Party and Lenin called on the Soviet people once again to concentrate on the military tasks and repulse the imperialists. "We are not defending the right to plunder other nations," said Lenin, "but are defending our proletarian revolution, and will defend it to the very end. The Russia which has been emancipated and which for two years has borne untold suffering for the sake of her Soviet revolution—that Russia we shall defend to our last drop of blood!"*

The Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) published its theses, "The Polish Front and Our Tasks". The strategic operations of the Red Army were worked out with Lenin's participation. M. Tukhachevsky was appointed to command the Western front. Communists were mobilised for the Western and South-Western fronts. Reinforcements, arms and clothing were sent there. Addressing Red Army men going to the Polish front on May 5, 1920, Lenin said: "... instigated by the Entente, the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 395.

Polish landowners and capitalists have forced a new war on us. Remember, comrades, that we have no quarrel with the Polish peasants and workers; we have recognised Poland's independence and the Polish People's Republic, and shall continue to do so.... Let your attitude to the Poles there prove that you are soldiers of a workers' and peasants' republic, that you are coming to them, not as aggressors but as liberators."*

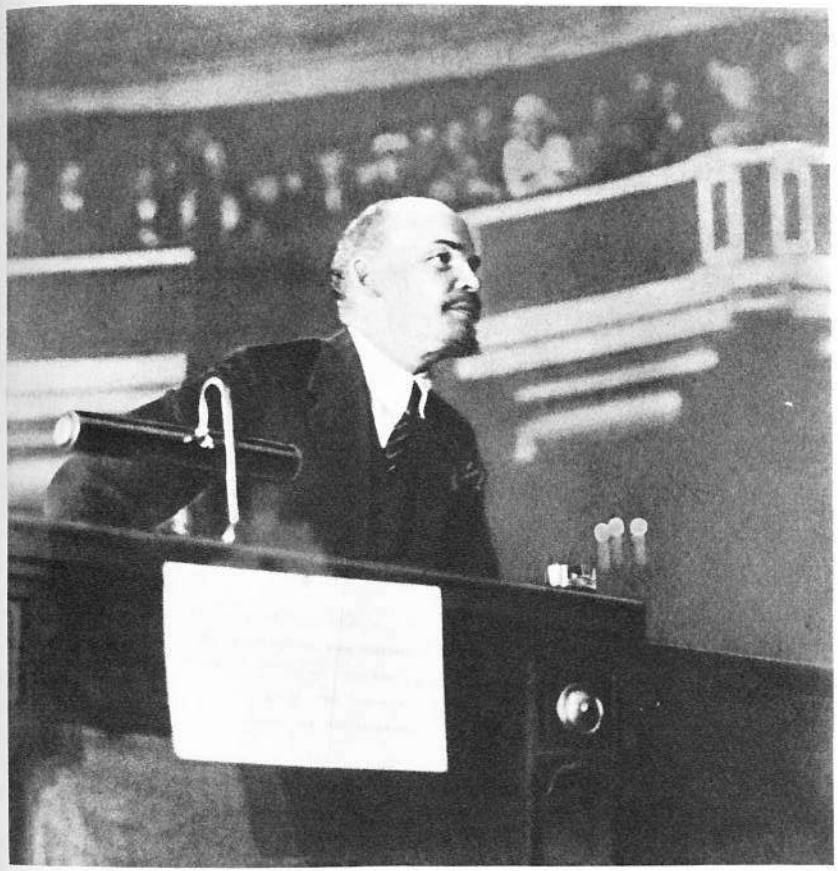
Early in June 1920, Soviet troops launched an attack in the Ukraine, which later developed into a general offensive. The invader was expelled from Soviet territory. Pursuing the retreating enemy, the Red Army continued its operations on Polish territory and approached Warsaw. While approving the offensive actions on the Western front, Lenin warned the Soviet Command against complacency and underestimation of enemy strength. "That is a most dangerous thing," he said, "which may lead to defeat in the war...."** Lenin's misgivings were confirmed. Owing to mistakes of a primarily military nature, and for various other reasons, units of the Red Army were defeated on the Vistula at the close of August 1920 and were compelled to retreat. Lenin held that one of the main reasons for the Soviet reverse was the fact that the Polish working class had been unable to support the Red Army, while the Polish peasants and the petty bourgeoisie, deceived by Pilsudski, succumbed to jingoist sentiments and sided with the ruling classes.

By the end of August the Polish advance was checked. There was a lull until September 19, when fierce fighting was resumed. A Soviet offensive was planned for the latter half of October. The Ninth All-Russia Party Conference was in session from September 22 to 25. In the C.C. Political Report and in his concluding speech, Lenin made an exhaustive analysis of the Polish war. He showed why the Red Army had suffered defeats and criticised the mistakes of the military authorities, particularly those of Trotsky. Lenin stressed that in spite of the defeats, the Soviet land was capable of carrying the war with Poland to final victory. However, in order to avoid a winter campaign and to spare the workers and peasants new hardships, Lenin pointed out, the country was prepared to offer Poland peace even on terms favourable to the latter. The conference backed Lenin's point of view and approved the text of the statement, drawn up by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee with Lenin's help, containing proposals for peace with Poland. On September 23, the statement was passed by a session of the Central Executive Committee. It was made public the following day by the Soviet delegation to the Peace Conference in Riga.

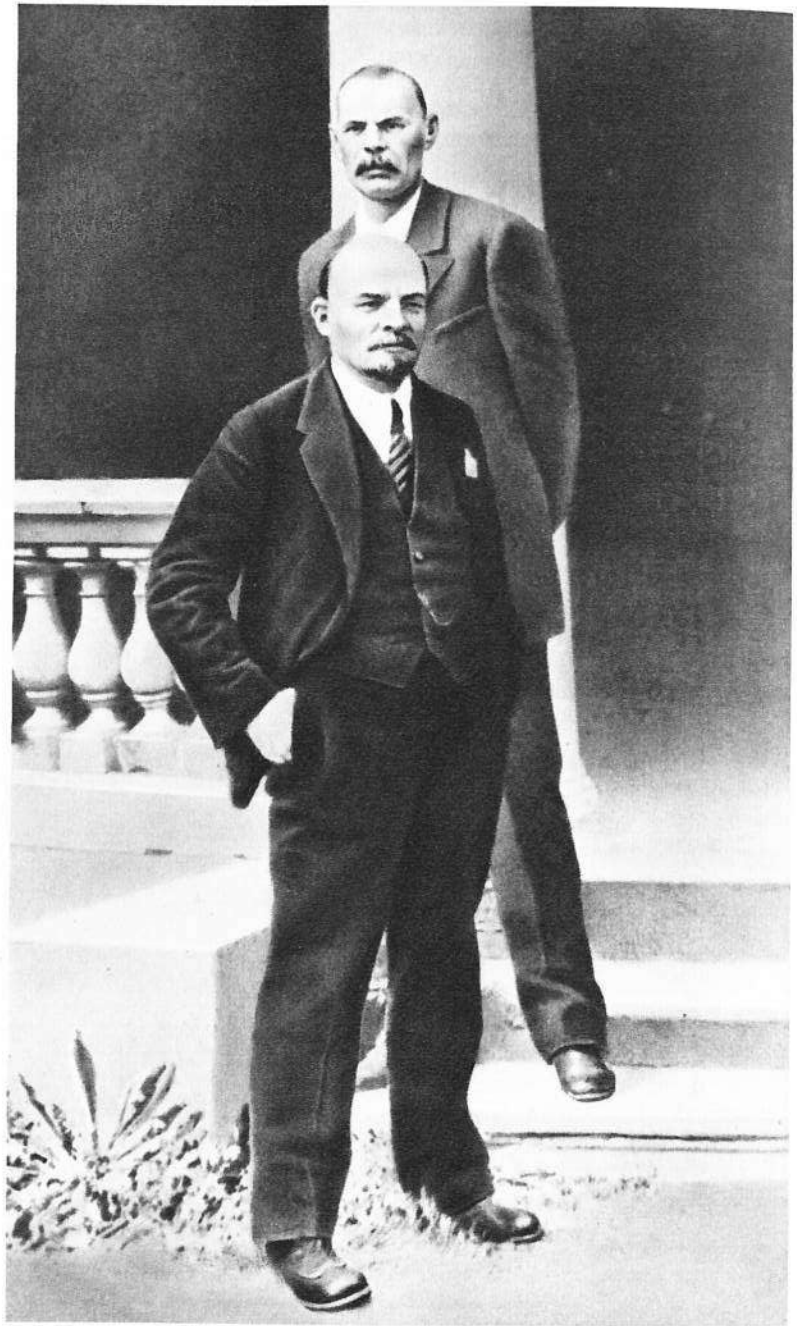
An armistice agreement containing provisional peace terms was signed by Poland and the Soviet Republic in October 1920.

Once the war with Poland was over, the main Soviet forces were

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 127.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 173.



Lenin at the Second Congress of the Communist International
Photo, 1920



Lenin and Gorky
Photo, 1920

massed to defeat Wrangel. On Lenin's suggestion, the Southern front was placed under the command of Mikhail Frunze. Lenin carefully followed the course of the Soviet offensive in the Crimea and urged the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern front to wipe out Wrangel's army as quickly as possible. At the time of the third anniversary of the October Revolution, units of the Red Army, displaying great heroism, forded Sivash Lake, took by assault the enemy's powerful fortifications on the Perekop Isthmus and swept into the Crimea. Wrangel's army was routed. Once again the Crimea became Soviet territory.

Soon afterwards the last groups of the interventionists and counter-revolutionaries were mopped up in Transcaucasia. Only the Japanese interventionists in the Far East remained, but they, too, were expelled in October 1922.

The intervention and the civil war were a stern test for the young Soviet state. For three years the imperialists, confident of success, organised one campaign after another against the world's first socialist republic. The bourgeois press maintained that the days of Soviet power were numbered. These hopes were candidly expressed by Robert Wilton, correspondent of *The Times*, when he wrote: "From an economic point of view the continuance of the present regime is an impossibility. From a political standpoint it is equally absurd."*

The imperialists' calculations, however, fell through. The Soviet people overcame all difficulties and won a complete victory over the combined forces of international imperialism and the bourgeois-landowner counter-revolution.

In the first open armed conflict between the two systems capitalism was defeated. The Soviet Republic stood its ground and was able to turn to peaceful socialist construction. At the cost of great sacrifices, the Soviet people and the Bolshevik Party honourably performed their internationalist duty, consolidated the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia, and upheld the mighty stronghold of the world liberation movement of the working people. We have a right to be proud of our services in the political and military field, said Lenin. "They have gone down in history as an epoch-making victory, whose overall influence is yet to be felt."**

In his speeches and writings of 1919 to 1921 Lenin revealed to the full the sources of the Soviet people's strength and the reasons for their victory.

The results of the civil war fully confirmed Lenin's propositions that the character of a war and its outcome depend primarily on the internal policy and system of the belligerent country, that in any war victory ultimately depends on the morale of the masses who have to shed their blood in the field of battle. The workers and peasants of Soviet Russia

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* Robert Wilton, *Russia's Agony*, New York, 1918, p. 321.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 159.

knew that they were waging a just war. Hence their unprecedented mass heroism and readiness to endure unheard-of hardships, which brought them their well-earned victory. Lenin emphasised the revolutionary patriotism of the Soviet working people, who "preferred to go hungry for three years than to abandon Russia to foreigners", and added that "without this patriotism we would not have managed to defend the Soviet Republic".

Lenin considered that the chief reasons for the Soviet Republic's victory were the strength of the Soviet social and political system; the working class's clear understanding and unswerving performance of its tasks; the alliance of the proletariat and the peasants; the military and political unity of the peoples of the Soviet country; the fine fighting qualities and high morale of the Red Army; the reliability of the Soviet rear; the correct home and foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government; and the solidarity and support of the working people of the whole world with Soviet Russia. All this shows, Lenin said, that "our cause is strong; that no matter what attempts are made to invade Russia and no matter what military moves are made against us—and in all probability many more will be made—all these attempts will go up in smoke as we know from our actual experience, which has steeled us".*

Lenin regarded the heroic Bolshevik Party, the Communist Party, as the inspirer and organiser of the Soviet people's victory. "It was only because of the Party's vigilance and its strict discipline, because the authority of the Party united all government departments and institutions, because the slogans issued by the Central Committee were adopted by tens, hundreds, thousands and finally millions of people as one man, because incredible sacrifices were made—it was only because of all this that the miracle which occurred was made possible. It was only because of all this that we were able to win in spite of the campaigns of the imperialists of the Entente and of the whole world having been repeated twice, thrice and even four times."**

A great historic service in the victory of the working people of the Soviet land over the combined forces of international imperialism and internal counter-revolution was rendered by the leader of the Party and the Soviet state, Vladimir Lenin, who directed the country's defence. In those critical years, when the fate of the peoples of the Soviet country hung in the balance, his political wisdom and genius for organisation showed themselves to the full.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 329.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 448.



Chapter Twelve

THE MAKER OF THE NEW, HUMANE SOCIETY

NEP Russia will become socialist Russia.
LENIN

After defeating the interventionists and the internal counter-revolution, the Soviet people embarked on a period of peaceful building of socialism. The tasks this involved were truly herculean. The foreign military intervention and the civil war aggravated greatly the dislocation caused by the preceding four years of imperialist war. In 1920, the output of large-scale industry dropped to nearly one-seventh of the 1913 figure, steel production to less than one-twentieth, and farm production to a little more than half the pre-war level. The railways were in a very bad state. The population was suffering privation and want, owing to the shortage of bread and other prime necessities.

Lenin compared the condition of post-war Russia to that of a man who had been beaten to within an inch of his life. His heart bled for the workers and peasants. Yet he was deeply convinced that the working folk would raise the country from the ruins, and build socialism.

Conversion to peace-time construction. As a result of the victory over the international and internal counter-revolution, the essential conditions were created for the rapid revival and development of the economy.

The exploiting classes–the landowners and capitalists–had been defeated. Soviet power took root all over the country. Party and government personnel gathered administrative experience. The socialist sector in the economy gained ground and a system of economic planning was created in the main, which made it possible to use the available resources for the cardinal economic tasks. The great creative energy latent in the people was aroused and their faith in the strength of the Soviet state, which had completely triumphed over the interventionists and the white-guard hordes, was reinforced.

Lenin gave pride of place in all Party and government affairs to socialist construction. He addressed meetings of activists in Party and government bodies, as well as meetings of workers and peasants, to explain the tasks confronting the Party and the people in the new conditions and to urge them to concentrate on economic rehabilitation.

Speaking at a sitting of the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, the Moscow Party Committee and the Moscow City Trade Union Council on November 6, 1920, Lenin said:

"On the occasion of these festivities, the occasion of this triumphant mood of ours, the occasion of the third anniversary of the establishment of Soviet rule we must become imbued with the labour enthusiasm, the will to work, and the persistence on which the speedy salvation of the workers and peasants, the salvation of the national economy now depends. We shall then see that our victory in the accomplishment of this task will be more effective and lasting than in all bloody battles of the past."*

On November 14, 1920, Lenin visited the peasants of the village of Kashino, Volokolamsk Uyezd, Moscow Gubernia, who had invited him for the opening of an electric power station built by the local agricultural co-operative. A rousing welcome was given to the distinguished guest in one of the village houses. The village band played the *Internationale*, after which the peasants installed Lenin in the seat of honour at a table set with simple peasant fare. A lively conversation ensued. The peasants told him how they had built the power plant and what difficulties they had had to overcome. They also spoke of their needs, complained that the surplus-requisitioning system made things hard for them and that they were not supplied enough manufactured goods. Lenin listened attentively, taking an interest in the most trifling details and amazing the peasants with his incisive questions and his straightforward answers. "He never asked an unnecessary question or missed an essential point," they commented afterwards.

After Lenin and Nadezhda Krupskaya, who had come with him, had been photographed with the peasants beside a lamp-post, an open-air meeting was held at which he said that the country's economy was gradually being put in order, that factories and mills would soon go into operation, that textiles, and even machines, would be available for the peasants. He urged them to maintain strong ties with the working

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 402.

class and to keep in step with it. "As we listened to him," Kashino people recall, "we had the feeling that each of us was warmed by the bright rays of the sun."*

After Kashino, Lenin went to the village of Yaropolets, where he attended a meeting of peasants, who had also decided to build a power station. Lenin made an indelible impression on the peasants. For his part, too, Lenin learned much from his talks with the peasants. They made an imprint on all his speeches at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, held late in December 1920.

Lenin's GOELRO plan. During the three months' breathing-space in early 1920, Lenin, as we have said, formulated the task of rehabilitating the country's economy on a new technical basis. After the war ended, he developed and substantiated the programme for the building of the foundations of socialist economy, showing the substance and role of the material and technical basis of the new society. He demonstrated the tremendous importance of electrification in the building of socialism and communism. Special note should be made in this connection of his speech at the Moscow Gubernia Conference of the Communist Party on November 21, entitled "Our External and Internal Situation and the Tasks of the Party", and his report on the work of the Council of People's Commissars to the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, on December 22, 1920.

Lenin advanced his famous formula: *"Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country."***

In this curt, yet unusually profound formula, Lenin defined the basic conditions, the political and economic factors for the building of communist society, and underscored that they were closely interconnected.

Communism, Lenin explained, presupposes Soviet power as the political instrument whereby the people could control all matters, for without popular control communism is inconceivable. This secures the political side of the building of communist society. As for the economic side of communist construction, the only way to secure it is the country's electrification, that is, the building up of the necessary material and technical basis.

Credit is due to Lenin for the fact that he did not confine himself to just outlining the general perspective of economic development and production. He gave it concrete shape by setting the task of building the material and technical basis of socialism and communism, of which, he pointed out, electrification was the pivot. Large-scale industry, primarily heavy industry, is the material and technical basis of socialism and communism, Lenin said. It is only on the basis of electrification that an industry conforming to the latest standards in technology and science can be created and developed. Without such a basis, he added, "we shall never be able to build socialism and communism".***

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 578.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 516.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 507.

It should be borne in mind that Lenin drew a distinction between the material and technical basis of socialism, and the material and technical basis of communism. The higher phase of communism presupposes a much higher level of development of the productive forces. The material and technical basis of socialism means the development of large-scale production based on electrification, primarily in industry, whereas the transition to communism presupposes electrification of the *whole* country.

Lenin considered heavy industry to be the key to the socialist reorganisation of agriculture and the main condition for the elimination of the economic roots of capitalism in the countryside. He pointed out that the production of tractors and agricultural machinery creates the material basis for the conversion from small peasant agriculture to large-scale, collective machine farming, and paves the way for the elimination of kulak farms. In charting the trend of development of socialist farming, Lenin wrote somewhat later in his plan for the brochure, *The Tax in Kind*:

"The small peasant–
collective farms–
electrification."*

In Lenin's opinion, the material and technical basis of socialism, once built, helps to eliminate the antithesis between town and country. "The organisation of industry on the basis of modern, advanced technology, of electrification which will provide a link between town and country," he said, "will put an end to the division between town and country."**

Lenin explained that the development of large-scale production based on electrification "will be the first important step along the path to the communist organisation of society's economic life".*** The material and technical basis of communism will grow from the material and technical basis of socialism, as its continuation and development, which will enable the country to achieve a level of production "conforming to the principles of communism"–to create an abundance of material and cultural blessings, to approach distribution according to needs and to transform gradually the socialist relations of production into communist relations of production. What is necessary is "electrification of the whole country, of all branches of industry and agriculture".

Lenin tied up the achievement of the world's highest productivity of labour and the task of catching up and surpassing the developed capitalist countries in the economic field, with the building of the material and technical basis of socialism, and then of communism. "The main thing is to strengthen Soviet Russia and make her unconquerable," Lenin stressed in his replies to the questions of delegates at the Eighth Congress of Soviets.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 320.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 335.
*** *Kommunist* No. 15, 1957, p. 14.

Lenin pointed out that the successful building of socialism in the Soviet land and the fulfilment of the electrification plan will have an immense international impact and serve as an example for the peoples of other countries when they embark on socialism. "If Russia is covered by a dense network of electric power stations and powerful technical installations," he said at the Congress, "our communist economic development will become a model for a future socialist Europe and Asia."* His penetrating words turned out to be prophetic.

Lenin's ideas about the building of the material and technical basis of socialism and the country's electrification became the core of the famous GOELRO plan, the first Soviet long-term economic development plan covering a period of 10 to 15 years. The plan for electrifying Russia, framed on the initiative and under the guidance of Lenin, set the imposing task of building a reliable economic foundation for socialist society, turning Russia from an agrarian country into an industrial one, and doubling within a decade the industrial output of pre-war 1913. The GOELRO plan provided for the building of 30 district power stations of an aggregate 1,750,000 kw and an annual output of 8,800 million kwh. It was planned to begin extensive industrial building on the basis of the electrification of key economic areas, with a stress on the decisive branches of heavy industry. It was also planned to set the stage for the transition of small-scale peasant farming to large-scale commonly operated farming.

Lenin said that the political programme of the Party adopted by the Eighth Congress has to be supplemented by a "second Party programme, a plan of work for restoring our entire economy and for raising it to the level of modern technical development".** He described the GOELRO plan as just such a second Party Programme.

Lenin's idea that the political and basic economic tasks were organically united, was reaffirmed in the new Programme of the C.P.S.U., passed at the Twenty-Second Party Congress.

The scope and audacity of the GOELRO plan will be doubly impressive if we recall the ruin, hunger and poverty that reigned in the country at the time of its launching. No wonder that in the prevailing conditions many people regarded Lenin's economic plan as a pipe dream. One of these was the well-known British writer H. G. Wells, who visited Moscow in the autumn of 1920 and had a talk with Lenin. On his return to Britain, Wells wrote his *Russia in the Shadows*, in which he called Lenin the "dreamer in the Kremlin".

Wells took a sympathetic view of Soviet Russia. Although he repeatedly emphasised in his book that he was not in agreement with Marxism, he conceded, in spite of the outrageous lies and slander spread by the bourgeoisie, that the people supported Soviet power and that the Bolsheviks had embarked upon a tremendous constructive and educational

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 558.
** *Ibid.*, p. 555.

effort. He was deeply impressed by Lenin, and declared that his meeting with "this amazing little man, with his frank admission of the immensity and complication of the project of communism and his simple concentration upon its realisation" had been "very refreshing". Speaking with Lenin, he came to realise that "communism ... could be enormously creative".* However, Lenin's plan for the electrification of Russia struck him as a "Utopia of the electricians".

"Can one imagine," he wrote, "a more courageous project in a vast flat land of forests and illiterate peasants, with no water power, with no technical skill available, and with trade and industry at the last gasp?... I cannot see anything of the sort happening in this dark crystal of Russia, but this little man at the Kremlin can; he sees the decaying railways replaced by a new electric transport, sees new roadways spreading throughout the land, sees a new and happier communist industrialism arising again."**

Yes, Lenin with his keen foresight visualised the Russia of the future and was deeply convinced that the "courageous" electrification plan was realistic and feasible for it rested on a scientific foundation and the great creative powers inherent in the Soviet system and the people freed from the yoke of exploitation. The enemies of socialism, the philistines and the opportunists, ridiculed and sneered at the GOELRO plan. Trotsky, Rykov and their supporters claimed it was unrealistic and tried to prevent first its adoption and then its implementation. Lenin gave a vigorous rebuff to these faint-hearts and defeatists.

On Lenin's suggestion the GOELRO plan was put on the agenda of the Eighth Congress of Soviets. From day to day he followed the compilation of a submission from the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia to the Congress, contributed his advice and directives, and saw to it that the plan was published in book form. Thanks to his help, it was printed in time to be distributed to the delegates.

The report on the plan was delivered at the Congress by G. Krzhizhanovsky, Chairman of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia. The ill-clad, half-starved delegates from different parts of the ruined country who filled the unheated, poorly lighted hall of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow listened with bated breath to the exposition of the fascinating and bold but feasible tasks and prospects of socialist construction delineated by Lenin's genius. The Congress unanimously approved of the plan and adopted a resolution drafted by Lenin expressing confidence that the workers and peasants would "exert every effort and shrink from no sacrifice to carry out the plan for the electrification of Russia at all costs, and in spite of all obstacles".***

The working people of Soviet Russia indeed spared no effort to carry out Lenin's plan of electrification. By the end of 1935 the power output

* H. G. Wells, *Russia in the Shadows*, London, pp. 138, 137.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 133, 134, 136.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 560.

target was surpassed nearly four times over. This marked the first step along the path of electrification of the entire country which Lenin charted and along which the Party is steadfastly leading the Soviet people.

Preparing for the New Economic Policy (NEP). The fight against the opposition. In the early months of 1921, the economic situation deteriorated sharply. Crop failure and the accompanying shortage of fodder and decline in cattle numbers meant greater want and destitution for the peasants. The food surplus-requisitioning system was causing serious discontent in the countryside. The food situation grew worse. Industrial enterprises that had been set going came to a standstill because of lack of fuel. Hunger, unemployment and general weariness bred dissatisfaction also among a part of the workers. Considerable difficulties arose in view of the army demobilisation. The class enemies took advantage of these difficulties to further their counter-revolutionary aims. Kulak revolts broke out in various parts of the country, and in a number of places the kulaks succeeded in involving in these anti-Soviet actions middle peasants who resented the surplus-requisitioning system. A glaring instance of the wavering of the petty bourgeoisie was the counter-revolutionary mutiny in Kronstadt, which was engineered by the Whites and the foreign imperialists with the assistance of the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists.

In his speeches and articles, Lenin probed the causes of the prevailing situation and, as always, produced a strictly objective appraisal of the facts.

It was objective difficulties related to conversion from war to peace in a war-ravaged peasant country that were the chief cause of the economic, social and political crisis. These difficulties were not, and could not have been, anticipated by the Party. The conversion from war to peace, Lenin said at the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), created a large number of tasks and difficulties which the Communists did not have the experience, training and resources to overcome. That added to the crisis. Serious errors were made in the autumn and winter of 1920 when distributing fuel and food. "Those were our *common* mistakes," Lenin said. "All of us, the Council of Labour and Defence, and the Council of People's Commissars, and the Central Committee made mistakes." But the main thing was, as Lenin wrote, that the policy of War Communism had ceased to conform to the new conditions.

"The reason for it was," Lenin said later, "that in our economic offensive we had run too far ahead, that we had not provided ourselves with an adequate base, that the masses sensed what we ourselves were not then able to formulate consciously but what we admitted soon after, a few weeks later, namely, that the direct transition to a purely socialist form of economy, to purely socialist distribution, was beyond our strength, and that if we were unable to effect a retreat so as to confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would face disaster."*

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 772.

Lenin was the first to see the danger and to advocate a sharp reversal in the policy of the Party. Already by February 1921 he concluded that it was necessary to initiate a new economic policy that would enable the country to overcome the economic and political difficulties, to ensure the restoration of all economic branches and the building of the economic foundation of socialist society. In outlining the tasks of the Party, Lenin always studied the prevailing facts thoroughly from various materials and personal observations. "Those who knew Lenin," Krupskaya wrote, "knew how well he examined life and seized upon every trifle." Lenin worked out this new economic policy on the basis of a profound analysis of the country's economic, social and political development in 1918-20. He made a very thorough study of the situation in the countryside. Time and again he spoke with peasant delegates and carefully read the letters sent in by peasants. "These are truly human documents," Lenin once said to V. Karpinsky, the editor of the newspaper *Bednota* (*The Rural Poor*), commenting on letters received by the newspaper from peasants. "No report will tell me anything of the kind."

His visits to villages in Moscow Gubernia supplied Lenin with a wealth of information. He took part in a conference of non-Party peasant delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, convened on his suggestion, and, in his own words, "derived very much indeed from their discussion of the most pressing issues of rural life". He sent his notes on the peasants' speeches to members of the Central Committee and the People's Commissars. In January and February 1921, he received peasants from Tver, Tambov and Vladimir gubernias, from Siberia and other places, nearly all of whom declared they firmly believed that the surplus-requisitioning system had to be abolished in order to give the peasants greater material incentives to promote agriculture. These talks gave Lenin an idea of the situation in the various localities and of the mood of the peasants.

"What makes Lenin great?" wrote O. Chernov, one of the peasants who visited Lenin at that time. "It is this: He listened to me not because he regarded me as some extraordinary personality, but because *through me he listened to all the peasants, and through me he sized up the whole complex situation in the villages.*"*

Lenin also sought the advice of Party leaders and statesmen as well as local Party and government workers in the matter of substituting a tax in kind for surplus requisitioning. All this was strikingly characteristic of the way he exercised his leadership; it showed the importance he attached to collective opinion and to practical experience, and how attentively he listened to the voice of the people in working out Party policy.

In the beginning of February 1921, Lenin wrote his "Preliminary, Rough Draft of Theses Concerning the Peasants", in which he formulated the basic principles to be followed in substituting a tax in kind for the food surplus-requisitioning system. Instead of the existing practice of

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 605.

requisitioning all the peasants' surplus produce, he proposed introducing a tax in kind, determined in advance, after paying which the peasant was free to dispose of the remainder of his produce at his own discretion. These theses of Lenin's, which outlined the transition to the New Economic Policy, were approved by the Central Committee and provided the basis for the pertinent draft resolution of the Tenth Congress of the Party.

The conversion from war to peace and then to NEP took place in a situation marked by bitter struggle against opposition groups, which took advantage of the existing difficulties and came out against the Party line, using the role of the trade unions as a pretext, although this issue had been thoroughly thrashed out by the Party. The initiator of this action against the Party was Trotsky, who wanted the "screws" of War Communism "tightened" and the trade unions "governmentalised" at once, that is, turned into appendages of the state machinery. Trotsky's factional activities were supported by Bukharin. Both the Trotskyites and the Bukharinites forced on the Party a discussion on the role of the trade unions. Lenin was against this, believing it would only divert the Party from its pressing tasks and thus play into the hands of the enemies. The Trotskyite-Bukharinite anti-Party lead was followed by other anti-Party groups: the "Workers' Opposition" (Shlyapnikov, Kollontai, Medvedev, and others) who propagated anarcho-syndicalist views, the "Democratic Centralism" group and others.

The planks of the various opposition groups were opposed by Lenin's platform set out in the "Draft Decision of the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party on the Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions", known as the Platform of Ten, signed by Lenin and a number of other C.C. members.

In his speeches, and in articles such as "The Party Crisis" and "Once More About the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Comrades Trotsky and Bukharin", written in January 1921, Lenin gave an exposition of opportunism, the anti-Party substance of the planks of the opposition groups, and the factional nature of their conduct. At the same time, he advanced and developed a number of fundamental propositions on the role of the trade unions in the system of proletarian dictatorship and on their tasks in socialist construction. These became the programme for the work of the Soviet trade unions.

Lenin emphasised that the essence of the differences with Trotsky on the trade union question lay in a divergence of views "on the methods of *approaching* the masses, of winning the masses, of *contact* with the masses". The Trotskyites wanted military methods, methods of compulsion against the masses, applied to the trade unions. The Party, on the contrary, held that persuasion should be the basic method in approaching the masses, that the trade unions, which were one of the "transmission belts" leading from the Party to the masses, should base their activities on this method. Only by persuasion could millions of working men and women be drawn into conscious creative activity,

which was the source of the strength and invincibility of the socialist revolution, of Soviet power; only on this condition was it possible to build socialism and communism.

"The greater the scope and extent of historical events," Lenin said, "the greater is the number of people participating in them, and, contrariwise, the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we arouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary."*

It was the duty of the trade unions, Lenin pointed out, to rally the workers to carrying out the economic and political tasks confronting the country, working for higher labour productivity and strengthening labour discipline, protecting the working people's interests, helping to improve their living conditions, and taking an active part in cultural and educational work and production propaganda.

The trade unions are not a state organisation, Lenin said, they are an organisation designed for education, "an organisation designed to draw in and to train; it is, in fact, a school: a school of administration, a school of economic management, a school of communism."** Being a school of communism in general, the trade unions should be, in particular, a school of management of socialist industry (and later, in increasing degree, of agriculture as well) for the whole mass of workers, and eventually for all working people. Their task is to enlist the masses of the working people to take an active part in the work of the economic bodies and government organs connected with the economy, in drawing up economic plans, production programmes, wage scales, etc., and to advance and train administrators from among the workers and the working people in general.

Lenin exposed the immense harm of the platform of the "Workers' Opposition", which denied the Party's leading role in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat and reduced to nought the role of the state in the building of a socialist economy. He showed that essentially there was nothing truly working-class in this opposition, and that it was really a mouthpiece of the petty-bourgeois element. Lenin sharply criticised its basic thesis that the administration of the country's economy be entrusted to an "all-Russia congress of producers united in trade unions, which would elect the central body in charge of the entire economy of the republic".

Lenin pointed out that by using the term "producers", which includes proletarians, semi-proletarians and small commodity producers alike, the "Workers' Opposition" had abandoned the Marxist position which calls for a clear-cut demarcation of class lines, and renounced the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the proletariat in relation to the non-proletarian working masses. Furthermore, he explained, economic development in the transition period could not be divorced

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 540.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 20.

from the class struggle against the capitalist elements, from the relations of the working class and the peasantry. And those are questions which only the proletarian state, guided by the policy of the Communist Party, could, and must, decide.

The "Workers' Opposition", playing up to the mood of the backward section of the working class, declared that it was the trade unions, and not the Party, that should lead socialist construction. Opposing this demand, Lenin in his speech at the Second All-Russia Miners' Congress laid the emphasis on the leading role of the Party: "If we say that it is not the Party but the trade unions that put up the candidates and administrate, it may sound very democratic and might help us to catch a few votes, but not for long. It will be fatal for the dictatorship of the proletariat.... To govern you need an army of steeled revolutionary Communists. We have it, and it is called the Party."*

Only the Communist Party can unite, educate and organise the working class and the working masses in general, stand firm in the face of the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillation of these masses, and direct the activities of the proletariat and, through it, of all other working people. The Communist Party, as the highest form of organisation of the proletariat, directs the efforts of the entire people, the activities of all government bodies, trade unions and other public organisations towards the common goal—the victory of socialism. "...The dictatorship of the proletariat," Lenin said, "would not work except through the Communist Party."**

It is not by chance, therefore, that the enemies of socialism, the revisionists and the opportunists, and also outright counter-revolutionaries, even when they do not wage an open fight against the power of the working class, are always opposed to the Communist Party playing the leading role in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This was most strikingly demonstrated by the Kronstadt mutiny, during which the Whites and their accomplices were not formally against the Soviets. Instead they mounted their attacks against the Communists, against the leading role of the Bolshevik Party, under the slogan "Soviets without Communists". Exposing these tactics resorted to by the class enemy, Lenin stressed that the leadership of the Communist Party is the prime condition for winning state power and giving effect to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

By their action the Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other opposition groups created an acute crisis in the Party at the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921. Serious differences of opinion arose in the Central Committee. A sharp struggle went on in the various organisations of the Party. Lenin personally led the fight against the various factions. Closely following the manoeuvres of the opposition, he showed how pernicious its views were for the Party and the working class. He was deeply

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 61, 62.
** *Ibid.*, p. 199.

confident that the Party rank and file would see for themselves who was right. And, indeed, the Party organisations endorsed Lenin's line by an overwhelming majority of votes. The opposition suffered a complete defeat in the discussion.

Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). The Tenth Party Congress took place between March 8 and 16, 1921, under Lenin's leadership. He made a report on the political activities of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.), and reports on the substitution of a tax in kind for surplus requisitioning, on the unity of the Party and the anarcho-syndicalist deviation, and spoke also about the trade unions and the fuel question. He drafted the principal resolutions. A sharp struggle ensued between the majority, which supported Lenin, and the opposition. Lenin considered it of the utmost importance to defeat all the anti-Party groups ideologically and organisationally. His energy, determination and optimism infected all the delegates.

Summing up the trade union discussion, the Tenth Congress adopted a resolution on the role and tasks of the trade unions based on Lenin's "Platform of the Ten". Lenin pointed out that this resolution defined the relations between the Party and the trade unions in the right perspective. It outlined measures for the reorganisation of all aspects of trade union work in conformity with Lenin's concept of the unions as "schools of communism".

Lenin noted that the discussion had revealed the maturity and strength of the Party, and at once exposed the true nature of the opposition as antagonistic to the Party line. He stressed that by their factional activities and their demagogic speeches the opposition groups were weakening and undermining the Party, and grinding the axe of the counter-revolution. The class enemies, Lenin pointed out, were pinning big hopes on the struggle within the Communist Party, on taking advantage of all sorts of deviations from the rigidly formulated communist line, and on using the opposition groups to disrupt the Soviet state. The enemies of Soviet power had realised that counter-revolution under a candidly White flag was hopeless, and were trying to make the most of the differences within the Russian Communist Party. For this reason, Lenin warned, the most trifling impairment of its unity and factionalism of any kind, in effect, helped the class enemies who were striving to restore the power of the capitalists and landowners.

Lenin pointed out that once the Communist Party has come to power, its ideological and organisational unity acquires particular importance; it ceases to be a purely inner-Party matter and becomes the basis of the solidarity of the working class and all other working people with the Party, this being an essential condition for the strength and stability of the socialist state and the victory of socialism. The tasks involved in building the communist society are very varied and complex. They can be realised only if the Communist Party, which is the leading and guiding force, stands firmly united. In order to perform its leading role,

the Communist Party must be completely united, welded together by a single will and iron discipline. It was in this that Lenin saw the main lesson to be drawn from the pre-Congress discussion.

The Congress adopted a resolution Lenin drafted on Party unity. Condemning all factional activity as impermissible and detrimental to the unity of the Party, it ordered the dissolution of all factional groups; non-compliance with this decision incurred immediate expulsion from the Party. Lenin regarded unity in the Party's leading body, the cohesion and firmness of the Central Committee, as the basic guarantee of the unity of the Party as a whole. Hence his insistence that no member of the Central Committee be permitted to engage in factional activity of any kind. On his motion, the Congress empowered the Central Committee to apply all Party penalties, not short of expulsion, to any of the C.C. members who engaged in factional activities.

Lenin's resolution on Party unity is a most important historical document. As the directive which the Party and all its bodies have followed in preserving the unity of its ranks, it played a cardinal role in the subsequent struggle against all anti-Party groups–the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinites, the national-deviators, and the anti-Party group of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, etc.

The Tenth Congress also carried a resolution submitted by Lenin on the syndicalist and anarchist deviation in the Party, which declared that the views of the "Workers' Opposition" and other groups of that sort constituted a direct threat to the dictatorship of the proletariat and in practice aided the class enemies of the socialist revolution. The Congress ruled that advocacy of anarcho-syndicalist views was incompatible with membership in the Communist Party and stressed the need of combating them uncompromisingly at all times.

The ideological and organisational defeat of the Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other opposition groups in the trade union discussion was highly important for the future of socialist construction, and for the successful conversion of the Party to the New Economic Policy. It was Lenin's firmness, his intolerance of opportunism and of the most trifling attempts to destroy or weaken Party unity, that played the decisive role in defeating the opposition.

In both the report on the activities of the Central Committee and the report on the substitution of a tax in kind for the food surplus-requisitioning system, Lenin gave a profound theoretical and political exposition of the need to go over to the New Economic Policy. The question of substituting a tax in kind for surplus requisitioning, he pointed out, was primarily a political question, since, essentially, it boiled down to the attitude of the working class to the peasantry. The key purpose of the New Economic Policy was to consolidate the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, to strengthen the dictatorship of the working class. The supreme principle of this dictatorship, Lenin emphasised, was the "maintenance of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry

in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and its political power".*

The forms of the alliance of the working class and the peasantry are shaped by concrete social and political conditions and the tasks confronting the Party at each stage of socialist construction. The politico-military alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, which was of prime importance in the defeat of the internal and external enemies of Soviet power and the defence of the gains of the socialist revolution, took shape, Lenin pointed out, in the crucible of the civil war. But when the war ended and the country applied itself to peaceful labour, the old form of this alliance proved inadequate. In order to revive the war-wrecked economy and build socialism, an economic alliance had to be established between the working people of town and country, and material incentives had to be given to the peasantry. Tax in kind instead of surplus requisitioning, which gave the peasant an opportunity to dispose of his surplus produce, to sell his products and exchange them for consumer goods, laid the economic foundation for this alliance.

That Lenin attributed a great historical role to the alliance of the working class and the working peasantry is seen from this statement. "Ten or twenty years of regular relations with the peasantry," Lenin said, "and victory is assured on a world scale (even if there is delay in the proletarian revolutions, which are maturing); otherwise 20-40 years of tormenting whiteguard terror."** Lenin's precept that not only a political but also an economic alliance of the working class and the peasantry was essential for the victory of socialism and the principles he laid down for a policy ensuring this alliance were a further development of the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat and the ways and means of building socialism and communism.

Lenin pointed out that substitution of a tax in kind for surplus requisitioning and the promotion of trade would encourage the peasants to expand the cultivated area and improve farming, increase the productivity of labour and put agriculture on the upgrade. This would improve supplies to the towns and provide food, fuel and raw materials for the restoration of big industry, which would, in turn, strengthen the position of the proletariat standing at the helm of the state.

True, Lenin pointed out, petty farming and small private industries, coupled with free private trade, would inevitably induce a certain revival of capitalism—rebirth of the bourgeoisie in the towns and development of kulaks in the countryside. This danger should not be slighted. Lenin stressed, however, that a certain stimulation of capitalism was sufferable, without damaging the pillars of the dictatorship of the proletariat—"sufferable, for it's a question of degree". Wielding political power and holding such commanding heights in the national economy as large-scale industry, the land, the banks, the railways and foreign trade, the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 490.
** *Ibid.*, p. 323.

working class had sufficient means for keeping the capitalist elements under control, curbing their itch for exploitation, preventing excessive development of bourgeois relations, and restricting and ousting the capitalist elements.

The restoration and development of large-scale socialist industry on the basis of agricultural advance would lead to the victory of socialist industry and commerce, and to the socialist reorganisation of the countryside.

Having heard Lenin's report, the Tenth Congress passed a resolution replacing the food surplus-requisitioning system with a tax in kind, which, in effect, amounted to the adoption of the New Economic Policy. The Party and the Government now reorganised the entire system of economic administration taking the necessary measures in industry, agriculture, finance, organisation of labour, and exchange between town and country.

In this way the Communist Party under Lenin's leadership effected the historic turn from War Communism to the New Economic Policy—a turn in which Lenin's wisdom and foresight, his creative approach to problems of socialist construction, and his courage, skill and ability to radically change Party policy and slogans if the changed conditions demanded it, found full expression.

The conversion to the New Economic Policy was not easy. It caused difficulties within the Party, too. Some Communists, who failed to grasp the substance of the policy, resigned from the Party. Lenin was well aware of the complexities, but considered it necessary to carry out the New Economic Policy firmly, and the Party supported the conversion.

The New Economic Policy. After the Congress, Lenin continued to work on the New Economic Policy. He explained its substance to the Party activists and the people, and directed its implementation. In March and April 1921, he wrote the pamphlet, *The Tax in Kind (The Significance of the New Policy and Its Conditions)*, and at the end of May he delivered a report on the tax in kind at the Tenth All-Russia Party Conference. He also dealt with the New Economic Policy in a number of important articles and speeches in the autumn of 1921, such as "The Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution", "The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism", and the report "On the New Economic Policy" delivered at the Seventh Moscow Gubernia Party Conference.

Lenin analysed the New Economic Policy from the standpoint of revolutionary strategy and tactics. The new policy, he explained, signified a transition from the direct and complete break-up of the old, capitalist economic system to its gradual elimination, a transition from the storming of a fortress to laying protracted siege to it. This did not mean that the Party had "abandoned its positions", that it regarded revolutionary methods to have been a mistake and had taken a reformist stand. It was essential to see the difference between the relation of reform to revolution before the capture of power by the working class and after the establish-

ment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "Before the victory of the proletariat," Lenin said, "reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. After the victory (while still remaining a 'by-product' on an international scale) they 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 some transition or another."*

War Communism, Lenin pointed out, was a necessity imposed by the extremely difficult conditions of the civil war. "It was not, nor could it be, a policy that corresponded to the economic tasks of the proletariat. It was a temporary measure."** It was impossible to go over at once from capitalism to the production and distribution of products according to communist principles. A number of transitional stages were needed "in order to *prepare*–to prepare by many years of effort–for the transition to communism".***

Lenin emphasised that the principle of distribution according to the quantity and quality of labour, the principle of material incentives in combination with moral stimuli, was one of the most important conditions of socialist and communist construction. "Not directly relying on enthusiasm," he said, "but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles, we must first set to work in this small peasant country to build solid gangways to socialism by way of state capitalism. Otherwise we shall never get to communism; we shall never bring scores of millions of people to communism. That is what experience, the objective course of the development of the revolution, has taught us."****

Lenin opposed all tendencies to equalise incomes and pointed out that neglect of the principle of material incentive was rank subjectivism which had nothing in common with Marxist policy. He called for realism in politics, for thoughtful consideration of the material conditions and the preparedness of the masses for the various socio-economic measures. The following proposition of the new Programme of the C.P.S.U. accords fully with that postulate.

"The C.P.S.U. being a party of scientific communism," it says, "proposes and fulfils the tasks of communist construction in step with the preparation and maturing of the material and spiritual prerequisites, considering that it would be wrong to jump over necessary stages of development, and that it would be equally wrong to halt at an achieved level and thus check progress."*****

The New Economic Policy was a further development of the plan for

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 704.
** *Ibid.*, p. 647.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 696.
**** *Ibid.*
***** *The Road to Communism*, p. 512.

the building of socialism which Lenin advanced in the spring of 1918. At that time the questions of the market, private trade and commodity-money relations in the transition period were not raised, but Lenin comprehensively dealt with them in 1921. He convincingly showed that the creation of a powerful socialist industry and the transfer of small-scale peasant farming on to the lines of large-scale collective production presupposed commodity production, trade and money.

It was a striking illustration of Lenin's creative approach to the theory and practice of building new society: while developing the ideas of scientific communism, he supplemented and specified the propositions he had advanced earlier, or replaced them with new ones on the strength of the new experience.

At the time of the conversion to the New Economic Policy, Lenin thought for a while that it was possible to establish direct exchange of products (commodity exchange) between socialist industry and the peasants through food distribution agencies run by the state, coupled with trading through co-operatives and in the markets, but only on a local scale. However, it was clear by the autumn of 1921 that exchange of products was unacceptable as the basic form of economic relations between the state and the small producers. It was clear that "nothing came of commodity exchange", that "instead of the exchange of commodities we got ordinary buying and selling, trade".* So Lenin, who always followed and studied developments closely, and always listened to the voice of the people, came to the conclusion that commodity circulation, ordinary trade, should be the basic form of economic relations between town and country.

Transition to the New Economic Policy meant, in his view, changing all the methods of economic management characteristic of the period of War Communism. He demanded that business principles be introduced at state enterprises, that the latter be operated without loss, that the principle of material incentives be consistently implemented so that the workers, peasants and intellectuals would take a personal interest in the results of their labour, in promoting production. What he had in mind were not only personal, but also collective incentives for factory and office workers, so that they would have a vested interest in the efficiency of their establishment.

When elaborating the New Economic Policy, Lenin believed–as he had believed when the economic plan was being drawn up early in 1918–that it was possible to make use of various forms of "state capitalism": concessions, mixed companies, etc., with a view to controlling private capital and to achieving the speediest possible economic revival.

However, it became clear in the next two or three years that the idea of state-capitalist undertakings would not work. The foreign capitalists were reluctant to put money into concessions, for they still harboured illusions that Soviet power would soon "collapse". What was more

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 96.

important, however, was that economic rehabilitation proceeded much faster than could have been foreseen in 1921. Hence it was no longer expedient to stimulate the concession form of state capitalism.

It was Lenin's firm conviction that the New Economic Policy was of international significance, for it was a phase through which, to one extent or another, all countries on their way to socialism would inevitably have to pass. He regarded the correct definition and implementation of measures essential for leading the peasantry, ensuring a durable alliance with it and gradually guiding it to the path of large-scale socialised farming, as one of the most difficult tasks facing the victorious proletariat in all countries. "This task which we are working on now, for the time being on our own," Lenin said, "seems to be a purely Russian one, but in reality it is a task which all socialists will face. Capitalism is dying; in its death throes it can still condemn tens and hundreds of millions of people to unparalleled torment, but there is no power that can prevent its collapse. The new society, which will be based on the alliance of the workers and peasants, is inevitable. Sooner or later it will come—twenty years earlier or twenty years later—and when we work on the implementation of our New Economic Policy, we are helping to work out for this society the forms of alliance between the workers and peasants."*

History has fully confirmed Lenin's word.

The experience gained through the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Republic is helping the Communist and Workers' Parties of the People's Democracies to build socialism. What is more, the practice of communist construction in the U.S.S.R. bears out Lenin's idea that some of the main principles and methods of economic management, typical of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, will survive in socialist society and also during the transition from socialism to communism. The new Programme of the C.P.S.U., the programme of communist construction, emphasises the need for an adequate combination of material and moral stimuli of labour and for the full use of commodity and money relations in conformance with the new content these have acquired in the socialist period.

In drawing up and carrying out the New Economic Policy, the Communist Party had to wage an unrelenting struggle against opportunist elements.

Refuting the demagogic assertions of the opposition that by going over to the New Economic Policy the Party was neglecting the rehabilitation and development of industry, Lenin pointed out that this policy was inseparably connected with the plan for the electrification and industrial development of the country. It was absurd and ridiculous to think, he said, that the Party had renounced its basic aim—the laying of a strong industrial foundation for the economy of the Soviet country. "... The only possible economic foundation of socialism is large-scale

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 177.

machine industry," Lenin said. "Whoever forgets this is no Communist."* It was precisely the New Economic Policy that created the conditions for systematic, unceasing work of restoring and developing large-scale industry. While criticising the "Lefts", Lenin at the same time vigorously rebuffed Bukharin, Sokolnikov, Preobrazhensky and the others who demanded major concessions to the capitalist elements within the country and the imperialist powers. He said that no matter how drastically the Party changed its policy, it must never lose sight of the general perspective and must always have a clear view of the road to socialism and communism, and march firmly towards its goal.

Leninist principle of collective leadership. Lenin held that successful achievement of the objectives of the New Economic Policy demanded further organisational and ideological strengthening of the Party, improvement of inner-Party work as a whole. He attached cardinal importance to the realisation of the Tenth Congress decisions concerning the fullest development of inner-Party democracy, the raising of the ideological and political level of Communists, and the qualitative improvement of the composition of the Party.

In conformity with the Tenth Congress decision on Party building, the Central Committee drafted a ruling on purging the Party, based on Lenin's suggestions and adopted in June 1921. In an article entitled "Purging the Party" Lenin urged the expulsion of elements who had lost contact with the masses, "let alone, of course, those who discredit the Party in the eyes of the masses", and "bureaucratic, dishonest or wavering Communists, and Mensheviks who have repainted their 'façade' but who have remained Mensheviks at heart".** He insisted on stricter rules of admission, and vigorously opposed Zinoviev's proposals, which would have made it easier for petty-bourgeois and hostile elements to infiltrate into the Party. Only in this way, he wrote, could the genuinely proletarian nature of the Party's membership and its leading role in the battle against the capitalist elements be ensured.

Lenin repeatedly stressed that to be strong and invincible the Party must deepen its ties with the broad mass of the people. Contact with the people, he wrote, meant:

> "Living in the *midst* of the people.
> Knowing the people's *mood*.
> Knowing *everything*.
> Understanding the people.
> Having the right approach.
> Winning the *absolute* trust of the masses.
> The leaders must not lose touch with the people they lead, the vanguard must not lose touch with the entire army of labour."***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 492.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 33, pp. 39, 41.
*** *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, p. 389.

Lenin considered it most important for the Communists to work directly at industrial enterprises and in the villages, and for the leading functionaries to report on their work and give topical talks at public meetings of the working people. He sharply condemned the "Communist conceit", bragging and arrogant high-handedness of those Party members who assumed that everything could be accomplished by simply issuing decrees, by mouthing generalities and by political phrase-mongering, and who neglected painstaking educational and organisational work among the masses. A Communist, Lenin said, must set an example to the non-Party people. He must be in the van of socialist construction, a model in labour, in the performance of public duties and in private life.

Lenin made it clear that full development of inner-Party democracy implies that members must take an active part in the life of the Party, in discussing and deciding all issues pertaining to its policy, and that the methods of collective leadership must be strictly observed.

Collective leadership, Lenin held, is the supreme principle of Party and government leadership, and he was guided by this principle in all his activities. He always attached great importance to Party congresses and conferences and plenary meetings of the Central Committee, regarding them as the embodiment of the collective thought and the vast political and organisational experience of the Party. He believed it was up to them to decide the fundamental issues of Party policy and prepared for them thoroughly. He regarded the Central Committee as the supreme collective leading body of the Party and the country in the interim between Party congresses. The Central Committee, he pointed out, united "the activities of all the Soviet and Party institutions and all organisations of the working class", co-ordinated and directed "the work of the entire Soviet Republic". "Not a single important political or organisational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guiding instructions of the Central Committee of the Party."*

In spite of his great prestige and authority, Lenin never took it upon himself to decide questions that came within the competence of the collective leading bodies and were subject to collective discussion and decision. Stressing the role of the Central Committee as the collective leader of the Party and the country, he wrote that only the collective decisions of the Central Committee, adopted by its Organising or Political Bureau or at its C.C. plenary meetings, were to be carried out by the Secretary of the Central Committee "otherwise the work of the Central Committee cannot proceed properly". Lenin strongly objected to any suggestion that he alone decided all questions in the Central Committee. "You are mistaken when you repeat (more than once) that I am the Central Committee," he wrote indignantly to A. Joffe. "This could have been written only in a state of great nervous tension and strain.... But how can you work yourself up to a point of making the *utterly impossible* assertion that I am the C.C.?"**

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 350, 398.
** *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, p. 208.

Lenin consulted with members of the Central Committee, the People's Commissars and other leading workers on all important matters. When presiding at meetings, he never insisted on his views being accepted without question but always listened attentively to the arguments of others. Everyone would frankly state his viewpoint. If there was the slightest divergence of views Lenin would put the question to the vote. If the majority of the Council of People's Commissars voted for a motion Lenin did not agree with, he would submit to the majority decision, or, if the issue was a major question of principle, refer it to a higher body.

Lenin never relied on his prestige alone, but sought to convince others that he was right. He would therefore return time and again to the same question in speeches and statements, or write repeatedly on the matter to comrades who disagreed with him, in order to adduce new proof to bear out his opinion.

Reorganisation of government bodies with stress on the economy. The structure of the machinery of state and the Party apparatus, Lenin said, should be consistent with the economic and political tasks, and should be tested in practice and continually improved. He pointed out that after the working class takes power, organisation, above all economic management, becomes the basic task of the proletarian state and the governing Communist Party, and stressed that from time to time the various systems of government and management would inevitably have to be reshaped.

"We must build our economic edifice as we go along," he said to the First Congress of Economic Councils, "trying out various institutions, watching their work, testing them by the collective common experience of the working people, and, above all, by the results of their work."* In November 1921, Lenin stressed again in reference to the building of government machinery that "we shall have to put the finishing touches to the work, re-do it, start from the beginning. Every step forward and upward that we take in developing our productive forces and our culture must be accompanied by the work of finishing and altering our Soviet system.... Much will have to be altered, and to be 'embarrassed' by this would be the height of folly (if not something worse than folly)."**

Whenever it was economically and politically desirable, and called for by the facts, Lenin broke up outdated forms of administration audaciously and paid no heed to various local parochial considerations.

It was on Lenin's initiative, and under his guidance, that the bodies of government, the entire work of the state and Party machinery, were reorganised to suit the new tasks after the civil war ended and the New Economic Policy was launched. This reorganisation was meant to advance principles of democratic centralism in administration and to improve management in economic and cultural development.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 409.
** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 701.

Lenin and the Party concentrated on the economic problems. In the first months of Soviet power Lenin had pointed out that after the victory of the socialist revolution, economic problems forged to the forefront because the building of the new society, and all the tasks involved in this, depended on their solution.

"The task of government, which is now the foremost task, has the peculiar feature that, probably for the first time in the current history of the civilised nations, matters hinge on a type of government in which the economy, rather than politics, will be pre-eminent,"* he wrote in the original version of the article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" in March 1918.

In many of his writings and speeches after the civil war Lenin developed this idea. He stressed that economic development and the management of production were of immense political importance and that the proletarian socialist state and the Communist Party should devote most of their efforts to it. "Under the bourgeois system," he said, "business matters were managed by private owners and not by state agencies; but now, business matters are our common concern. These are the politics that interest us most."** This proposition has a strong bearing on the struggle against the modern revisionists, who maintain that the Party should be no more than a moral factor, a kind of educational organisation, that it should not meddle in the practical business of socialist construction, and especially in economic matters.

"The economic development of the state should now be our main policy," Lenin emphasised in November 1920. He suggested a number of important organisational measures designed to invigorate economic management.

The Council of Labour and Defence was authorised to co-ordinate and guide the work of the economic commissariats. Lenin wrote to his deputies in the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence that they "must devote about nine-tenths of their work to the economic commissariats and one-tenth to the rest".

A planning centre, the State Planning Commission, was organised under the Council of Labour and Defence in February 1921 on Lenin's initiative. Lenin defined the purpose of the Planning Commission, and took a hand in guiding it. He had frequent conversations with G. Krzhizhanovsky, the Chairman of the Commission, wrote letters and notes to him, giving instructions and advice. Planning, Lenin stressed, should be realistic. It should be governed by the requirements of society and should reckon with the country's resources. It should act on the basic tasks devolving from the policy of the Party and the Government, and draw on foremost practical experience. The Statutes of the State Planning Commission, passed by the Government, said it was the purpose of the Commission "to work out a single nation-wide economic plan and to specify the means and sequence of its implementation".

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 5th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 130.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 430.

The work of the Economic Commissariats was also reorganised. The gubernia executive committees formed Economic Conferences (regions formed Economic Councils) to co-ordinate the work of their various local bodies. The local economic bodies were given broader powers. The country was zoned into economic areas.

The work of the Party bodies was also reshaped to facilitate Party control of the economy. Comrades who were conversant in economy were taken on the Central Committee staff. The institution of responsible travelling inspectors was introduced. "What we need," Lenin wrote, "is for the staff (of the C.C.) to rally local efforts, to check and to instruct."* The Party took thousands of Communists from the Red Army and gave them Party appointments in the economy. Party groups at the factories were reinforced. Lenin called on Party bodies and Party cadres handling economic affairs to study economic matters closely and to manage economy competently. He pleaded that they should handle the organisation of production at first hand rather than confine themselves to good resolutions. In order to manage, Lenin said, one has to be competent, one has to know, fully and accurately, all the conditions of production, one has to know the technique of the production in question at its most modern level, and one has to have a certain amount of scientific knowledge.**

The "Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence to Local Soviet Institutions" played an important role in economic development and the reorganisation of the work of government institutions. This document, written by Lenin, summed up the initial steps taken by the Soviet Government to implement the New Economic Policy, charted concrete ways of development for all branches of the national economy, and defined the tasks of government institutions.

Politics, Lenin wrote, is an endless chain with an endless number of links. It is the art of a communist politician to determine the basic link in good time, the one that is the most important at the moment, to single out the central task in the chain of tasks and to concentrate the main forces and main attention on its fulfilment. Lenin was a past master in this art.

In 1921 and 1922, Lenin considered the organisation and development of "home *trade* under proper state regulation (direction)"*** to be the main link, the central task. He pointed out that the economic bond between the working class and the peasantry could be strengthened and the country's agriculture and industry further developed only by promoting the exchange of goods between town and country. Lenin sharply criticised the scornful attitude towards trade taken by some members of the Party.

Conditions for the rehabilitation of agriculture were anything but

* *Leninsky Sbornik XX*, p. 331.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 428.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 701.

favourable. In 1921, a severe drought caused a crop failure in 34 gubernias; millions of people starved. Measures to deal with the famine became one of Lenin's most urgent concerns. In spite of the formidable difficulties, the Party and the Government coped with the famine and put agriculture in the stricken regions back on its feet.

Day in and day out Lenin dealt with questions connected with expansion of the cultivated area and raising crop yields, checked up on the implementation of measures to assist the peasant farms and worked to improve the functioning of the state farms. Time and again he stressed the need to make extensive use of the services of agronomists and to supply the farms with machinery. On his suggestion, steps were taken to start manufacturing tractors and importing them from abroad. Organised training of tractor drivers was begun. "Tractors," Lenin said, "are the most important means of effecting a radical change in the old farming methods and of extending the area cultivated."* In October 1921, he made a trip to the experimental farm of the Moscow Animal Husbandry Institute (Butyrsky Khutor), where he watched the testing of an electric plough, inspected the fields, farm buildings and the dairy, and then saw the new houses built for the workers and the workers' club.

Lenin always gave pride of place to industrial questions. He directed the elaboration of a general programme for the restoration and further development of industry as a whole, studied closely the situation prevailing in each branch, took an interest in the operation of the most important enterprises, and talked with workers and economic executives. The highly important "Instructions of the Council of People's Commissars Concerning the Implementation of the Fundamental Principles of the New Economic Policy", which defined the aims to be pursued in industrial organisation and management in the new conditions, were drawn up along the lines suggested by Lenin and with his personal participation. The factories and other enterprises were put on a profit-making basis of operation. The task was formulated to make them work with a gain. The factory administrations and the heads of various enterprises were given greater powers. At the same time, measures were taken to secure a more active participation of the working people in the management of production.

Lenin devoted a great deal of time to the rehabilitation of the Donets coalfields, which he called one of the main centres of the Soviet economy. Rehabilitation of large-scale industry, and hence real socialist construction, Lenin said, was out of the question until the Donets coal industry had been put back on its feet. At the Second All-Russia Congress of Miners Lenin conversed with the Donets miners about coal extraction and their living conditions. He thanked the workers of the Third International Mine, the Alexandrov-Grushevsk District, who had sent 480 tons of coal, extracted at *subbotniks*, to his address for Moscow workers.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 482.

He made a thorough study of the situation at the Baku and Grozny oilfields. The reports of experts of the Central Oil Industry Administration and other materials on this subject are literally covered with Lenin's notes, marginal comments and calculations. In the spring of 1921 he received a delegation of oil workers from Baku. Questioning them as to the situation in the oilfields, the workers' living conditions and their mood, he stressed that it was essential to restore the oil industry within a brief space of time and pointed to the need for a close alliance between the proletariat of Baku and the Azerbaijan peasantry.

"One could see," A. Nikishin, one of the members of the group, recalls, "that Lenin lived the life we lived, knew all about us and what we could do; he was aware of our weak points and told us about them. All of us were struck by his extraordinary simplicity and cordiality, and after spending five minutes with him we felt as if we had known him for a very long time and were having a heart-to-heart talk with an old friend."*

The Council of Labour and Defence, with Lenin presiding, repeatedly discussed the ore-mining industry and its development programme. With his usual foresight, he drew attention to the great economic importance of the Kursk Magnetic Anomaly, where vast reserves of iron ore had been discovered. On his suggestion, as far back as August 1920 the Council passed a decision to prospect this area, and later a Special Commission for surveying it was set up. Lenin took a constant interest in the commission's work, pointing out that "this matter must be pressed with the *utmost* vigour". The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. envisages the development of an iron and steel industry in the central European section of the U.S.S.R., working on the ore of the Kursk Magnetic Anomaly.

All work in the sphere of electrification proceeded under Lenin's direct supervision. He took a particular interest in the construction of the Kashira Power Station. The records of that time contain numerous directives, telegrams and notes from Lenin with instructions to supply the Kashira project with everything it needed. He took as keen an interest in the Volkhov hydropower project, the first Soviet hydropower plant. G. Graftio, then in charge of the construction work, recalls that even when ill Lenin asked for periodic reports on the progress made at the construction site. Preparations for projecting the great Dnieper Hydroelectric Power Station were also begun on Lenin's suggestion.

Lenin attached much importance to the building of rural power stations considering them to be, as it were, hubs of modern industry and culture in the countryside which would offer tangible evidence to the peasants that the Soviet country was making technical progress and forging ahead along the socialist path. He warmly supported a

* *Reminiscences of Azerbaijan Communists about Lenin*, Russ. ed., Baku, 1958, p. 52.

request from the peasants of the villages of Gorki and Siyanovo for electric lighting, and helped them obtain the materials needed. He also took a personal interest in the electrification of Yaropolets Volost, Volokolamsk Uyezd, Moscow Gubernia; he received a delegation of the local peasants, looked through the estimates they had drawn up and gave instructions to the Supreme Economic Council to render them every assistance. As a result, the construction of the Yaropolets power plant was speeded up and in 1922 it began to supply electricity to fourteen villages. "Ilyich's lamps", as the people affectionately called them, went on in more and more workers' townships and villages.

Lenin considered the development of electrical engineering a cardinal condition for the electrification of the country. On November 7, 1921, the fourth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, he visited the Elektrosila No. 3 Plant (now the Kirov Dynamo Plant), where a meeting had been scheduled. Before the meeting he dropped in at the offices of the works and talked to the managers, the Party and trade union functionaries, and to the workers, asking them what the plant was producing, about the fuel situation, about their work, their needs and living conditions, how much the workers were earning, what their food was like, and how the plant's specialists were working. He was especially interested in the part the plant was playing in the electrification of the country.

In his speech at the Dynamo Plant meeting he spoke about the bond between the workers and the peasants, about building up industry, about the country's electrification and the tasks of the plant, the Red Army, and the international situation. The workers, who gave him an enthusiastic welcome, listened with rapt attention, afraid lest they would miss a word, and after he had gone they discussed his speech for a long time, both in the meeting hall and later in the factory shops, recalling what he looked like.

Transport occupied an important place in Lenin's work as head of the Government. On his initiative steps were taken to reorganise and improve the transport facilities and measures were outlined for their radical technical reconstruction.

Lenin saw the guarantee of successful economic development in the enthusiastic labour and initiative of the people, who should not only know, but also feel, he said, that rapid and full economic rehabilitation, and hence their living standard, "depended entirely upon how quickly they fulfil our economic plans".*

He always paid much attention to enlisting women in the work of building the new life and to educating them politically. Addressing meetings and conferences of women workers and peasant women, he urged them to take an active part in the administration of the state and in economic construction. Our task, he said, is to bring politics within

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 552.

reach of every working woman. Whereas, in even the most democratic bourgeois countries, women do not enjoy full equality with men before the law, Soviet power gives women complete equality; this, Lenin pointed out, was something to be proud of. Yet it was only the beginning. For a woman to be completely free and truly equal to a man, she must be relieved of domestic chores through the establishment of a large network of socialist enterprises–catering establishments, kindergartens, crèches, etc. When this was done the millions of women would be able to take an active part in social production and political life.

Lenin paid the highest tribute to the role Soviet women played in the civil war and in economic rehabilitation. Proletarian women were "great heroines", he said.

"Think of the suffering and privation they are enduring," Lenin said in a conversation with Clara Zetkin. "Yet they stand firm because they want to defend the Soviets, because they want freedom and communism. Yes, our working women are wonderful, they are fighters for their class. They are worthy of the greatest admiration and esteem."*

Lenin was deeply concerned for the needs and requirements of the people. Noting that "every success achieved in economic development improves the condition of the workers and peasants",** he insisted that both central and local bodies pay special attention to these questions in order to follow closely the results achieved in this field. Hence the vigorous support he gave to every initiative aimed at improving social insurance and social security, housing construction, health services and health resort facilities for the working people.

To learn communism. In his speeches and writings Lenin advanced highly important propositions on the development of a socialist culture, on the essence of the cultural revolution and the ways of accomplishing it in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. The cultural revolution, Lenin said, represents a whole period of cultural development of the people, it implies profound changes in their thinking, ideology and spiritual life, their re-education in the spirit of socialism. While the transfer of power into the hands of the working class is the decisive pre-condition of the cultural revolution, the cultural advancement of the people is in its turn a prerequisite of the socialist reorganisation of society, the achievement of a labour productivity higher than that under capitalism, and the enlistment of the broadest masses in the administration of the state. The cultural revolution, Lenin pointed out, is effected under the leadership of the Communist Party and with the active participation of the working people themselves.

The proletarian, socialist culture does not spring up in a void. It emerges as a natural development of all the spiritual and intellectual wealth, the sum-total of knowledge created by humanity. Lenin levelled

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 478.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 387.

strong criticism at the erroneous views of the leaders of Proletkult (Proletarian Culture, a proletarian cultural organisation), A. Bogdanov and others, who treated the cultural heritage of the past with disdain and called for the creation of a special "proletarian culture" by artificial, so to speak laboratory, means. Lenin wrote: "It is not a matter of *inventing* a new proletarian culture, but of *developing* the finest specimens, traditions and achievements of the *existing* culture *from the standpoint* of the Marxist world outlook and the conditions of the life and struggle of the proletariat in the epoch of its dictatorship."*

Time and again Lenin said that the ideological work of the Communist Party and the Soviet state was a most important factor for successful socialist and communist construction. Speaking at an All-Russia Conference of Gubernia and Uyezd Political Education Departments, November 3, 1920, he stressed that the main thing was to "overcome the old habits, the old customs which we have inherited from the old system", to instil in the workers, peasants and the intelligentsia "the spirit of communism and arouse their interest in what the Communists are doing".**

Lenin stressed that all propaganda and agitation, all the ideological work of the Party, should be based on "the political experience of economic development". It is not enough to explain theoretically the meaning of communism; we must show *how* to build socialism and communism in practice. "Communism must be made comprehensible to the masses of the workers, so that they may regard it as their own affair."***

Lenin stressed that unity of ideological and organisational work is the key principle of Party leadership. Every propagandist and agitator should also be an economic and political organiser of the people's development. "Let us have less political fireworks, fewer general arguments and abstract slogans from inexperienced Communists who fail to understand their tasks; let us have more production propaganda and, above all, more efficient and capable application of practical experience to fit the development of the masses."****

Lenin proposed a plan for production propaganda that called for combining political education with the efforts of the working class and all other working people to restore and develop further the national economy. In his opinion, newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets, lectures and talks on questions of production, the cinema, popularisation of the achievements of the best enterprises and leading workers, etc., could play an important role in this respect.

Devotion to Party principles, Lenin stressed, was essential for the Soviet press. He followed the work of the publishing houses, newspapers

* *Leninsky Sbornik XXXV*, p. 148.
** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 522, 525.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 528.
**** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 130.

and magazines, criticised their mistakes, and encouraged valuable initiatives. He emphasised the need for the wide circulation of books and newspapers and the efficient functioning of libraries and reading-rooms, and pointed to the importance of the radio as a powerful means in the Party's political and cultural work. "A newspaper that needs no paper and to which distances are no obstacle", is how he described the radio. Thanks to his vigorous support, a powerful radio station was put into operation in Moscow in 1922. Lenin's dream had come true—the voice of the Soviet capital could now be heard by the whole country and all over the world.

Lenin attached great importance to the activities of the working people themselves in the advancement of culture. "He used to say," Nadezhda Krupskaya writes, "that it was not enough to provide the masses with books, club premises, etc., and was always asking to what extent they had been drawn into this work, to what extent they approached it creatively, whether they were interested in it and took part in it themselves.... I remember how he came to one of our meetings of local functionaries and after listening to them said that it was essential to give more thought to this work and get the masses to take part in it. They should not only be provided with the facilities but enlisted in the work. He stressed this idea in all his instructions concerning political education."*

The training and education of the youth was always one of Lenin's principal concerns. In October 1920, he delivered at the Third All-Russia Congress of the Russian Young Communist League his historic speech, "The Tasks of the Youth Leagues", in which he outlined the policy of the Party in the sphere of educating the rising generations of builders of communism and defined the aims and methods of Young Communist League work.

The young generation, Lenin said, is faced with the task of building a communist society on newly-cleared ground. Approaching the question from this angle, the tasks of the youth in general, and of the Young Communist League and other youth organisations in particular, could be summed up in one word: learn.

The Young Communists at the Congress were astounded. Grim battles were still being fought against Wrangel, and everybody expected Lenin to speak about the international and domestic situation, about the fight against the Whites and the bandits ravaging the country, and the requisitioning of surplus produce in the countryside. Instead they heard an appeal to study. The full meaning of this was not appreciated at first. Lenin felt and understood the mood of the Congress very well. And with his usual clarity and power of conviction he elaborated his view on the tasks of the youth, opening before the young people the fascinating vistas of the struggle to build communism.

* N. K. Krupskaya, *On Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1960, p. 228.

What was the youth to learn, and how was it to go about it? Lenin answered his own question: The youth should learn communism. But the only way to become a Communist is by enriching one's mind with the knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind. The transition to communism presupposes reorganisation of the national economy on the basis of the latest scientific and technological achievements. This requires knowledge and the ability to apply this knowledge in practice, the ability to transform communism from ready-made formulas and programmes learned by rote into living reality, the actual building of the new society.

To learn, Lenin told his young hearers, does not mean confining oneself within the four walls of a school. They should link every step in their training and education with the working people's struggle for communism. To be a member of the Youth League means devoting one's energies to the common cause. "Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist,"* he said. The Young Communist League, Lenin said, must be a shock group, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise. Every day, in every town and village, the young people should tackle some problem related to their common labour, however small, however simple. Only in the course of such work does a young man or woman become a Communist. "The Young Communist League must train everybody to conscious and disciplined labour from an early age."**

Closely connected with these ideas were the views Lenin expressed at the Congress on communist ethics. Exposing the dog-eat-dog morality of bourgeois society, a morality based on the selfish psychology of private proprietors and the principle that if you do not rob the next man, he will rob you, Lenin outlined the lofty and noble principles of communist ethics, which expressed the interests and ideas of the people. Our ethics, he said, are subject to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. They help destroy the old, exploiting society and rally all working people round the working class, which is building the new society.

*"The basis of communist morality," Lenin said, "is the struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism. That too is the basis of communist training, education, and teaching. That is the reply to the question of how communism should be learnt."****

While listening to Lenin's speech about the principles of communist ethics, many a Komsomol delegate thought that Lenin himself was an inspiring model of how a Communist, a man of communist society, should live and work. The distinctive features of Lenin's spiritual make-up were his loyalty to the communist cause, devotion to the struggle for the happiness of working people, love of country, internationalism,

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 516.
** *Ibid.*, p. 517.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 513. (The italics are ours.—*The Authors.*)

uncompromising attitude towards the enemies of communism, collectivism and labour for the benefit of all society. He was humane, respectful, sensitive and attentive to people; he loved life, he was versatile, morally pure, simple and modest, and always cheerful. Lenin was a man of great integrity. He did not tolerate egoism, ambition, envy, malice, vengeance and pettiness. Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote that he never distinguished the personal from the public. He was the same in his work and life—exacting to himself in small things and big. Krupskaya, his loyal friend and associate, recalled that even when settling purely personal matters, Lenin never failed to ask himself: "What will the workers say about it?"

The precepts set forth by Lenin concerning the tasks and character of the training and education of young people are to this day the guiding principles of the Soviet school system. It was the duty of the schools to help build communism, he said, to give the youth a broad general education, adequate polytechnical training, labour skills and to be "an instrument for the moulding of the human personality". As Marx and Engels had done before him, Lenin laid particular emphasis on combining school instruction with productive labour. He included in the Party Programme polytechnical education for all children up to seventeen years of age, with theoretical and practical instruction in all the main branches of production, as one of the basic tasks of the schools.

In his notes on Krupskaya's theses concerning polytechnical education, written at the end of 1920, he stressed the need to go over immediately to polytechnical education, or, rather, to carry out without delay a number of measures to that effect that were feasible at the time. Among these he included visits by schoolchildren to power plants, practical work with electricity, acquaintance with production processes, visits to state farms and factories, and organisation of small museums devoted to polytechnical education. Moreover, he pointed out, that polytechnical education should not be approached abstractly, but effected in close connection with the concrete tasks of the given stage of socialist construction.

The ideal future society, Lenin wrote, is inconceivable without combining education with productive labour by the young generation. Communism requires well-educated people, capable both of physical and mental labour. The transition to communism implies the education and training of people "with *all-round development and an all-round* training, so that they *know how to do everything*. Communism is advancing and must advance towards this goal, and *will reach* it, but only after very many years."*

Lenin was very fond of children. He liked playing with them. What is more, he knew how to win their hearts, how to talk with them. Children were also fond of him and sensed at once that he was a dear and understanding friend. Lenin regarded the children as the future. "Often, when he spoke to children," Krupskaya wrote, "he asked them

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 400.

half in joke and half seriously: 'You'll grow up a good Communist, won't you?' It was half a joke, of course, but it was his ardent desire that every child should grow up into a politically-conscious Communist and continue the cause for which the revolutionaries of all countries were fighting so courageously."*

Lenin, who attached immense importance to the education and communist training of the rising generation, always took all matters related to public education very seriously, Krupskaya wrote. Lenin looked deep into all matters connected with the work of the People's Commissariat of Education and the schools. He spoke frequently with educationalists, questioning them about the work of the schools, what knowledge they imparted and what was to be done to make this knowledge more extensive and lasting. Twice, in 1919 and 1920, he visited the experimental model boarding-school of the Chief Vocational Training Board of the People's Commissariat of Education and talked with the pupils and teachers.

Illiteracy was one of the principal enemies which he believed had to be done away with first of all. He wanted more schools for the children and a far-flung system of schools and courses for adults. He was convinced that illiteracy could be stamped out very quickly if the people took up the matter.

Lenin had a great regard for teachers. He pointed to the need to enlist the old teachers to carry out the new tasks, to awaken their interest by posing problems of pedagogy in a new way, to attend to the intellectual development and all-round training of teachers, and to provide the conditions essential for their work. "Our people's schoolteacher," he wrote, "should be raised to a standard he has never achieved, and cannot achieve, in bourgeois society."**

A veteran teacher from Vesyegonsk Uyezd, A. Vinogradov, described his meeting with Lenin as unforgettable. Lenin questioned him in detail about the mood of the teachers, their living conditions, their work, and their relations with the local bodies.

"Our teachers," Lenin said, "can always depend on the Soviet power for support. The doors are always open for teachers who want to come to us. Tell them about it, and give them my regards."***

Lenin considered the higher schools a key sector in the Soviet state's cultural work. To bring them within reach primarily of the workers and peasants, he devoted much attention to organising and consolidating workers' preparatory courses. At the same time he stressed the need for a complete revision of the curricula and the entire process of instruction in the higher schools, and above all improvement of instruction in the social sciences. On his initiative Institutes of Red Professors were founded in Moscow and Petrograd. He also proposed a comprehensive

* N. K. Krupskaya, *On Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1960, p. 297.
** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 810.
*** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1960, Part 3, p. 244.

plan for the advanced Marxist training of the best of the old college professors and instructors.

Concern for science and technology. Time and again Lenin stressed the great importance of science and technology for the building of socialism. Science, he said, must help the masses create a social system without exploiters; Lenin was convinced that "no forces of darkness can withstand an alliance of the scientists, the proletariat and the technologists".* Lenin believed that scientific development would greatly stimulate the growth of society's productive forces. He wrote that science should keep pace with economic and cultural developments and that its close bonds with life, with production, with the tasks of socialist and communist construction, were a necessary condition for its own fruitful growth.

He gave much attention to the requirements of scientific institutions and helped them with his guidance and advice. He held in high esteem the leading Russian scientists who dedicated their endeavours to the Soviet people, men like K. Timiryazev, I. Pavlov, I. Michurin, N. Zhukovsky, K. Tsiolkovsky, I. Gubkin, and M. Bonch-Bruyevich, to mention but a few, and saw to it personally that they were provided with everything they needed for their scientific work and a decent living.

Timiryazev sent Lenin a copy of his book, *Science and Democracy*, with this dedication: "To highly esteemed Vladimir Ilyich Lenin from K. Timiryazev, whose good fortune it is to be his contemporary and a witness of his great work." In his book Timiryazev urged men of science to join forces with the working people and exposed the slander spread by the imperialists against Soviet power and the Bolsheviks. After reading the book, Lenin replied to Timiryazev: "Dear Klimenty Arkadyevich! Many thanks to you for your book and kind words. I was simply delighted to read your remarks against the bourgeoisie and for Soviet power. I shake your hand very warmly and with all my heart wish you health, health and health again!"**

Lenin held that the socialist economy must be based on the latest achievements of science and the most advanced technology, and that the Soviet Government must constantly promote technical progress. "We must introduce more machines everywhere, and resort to machine technology as widely as possible,"*** he said. While raising the general productivity of labour, work must be made easier, he stressed, by shifting the burden of heavy labour onto the machines and leaving only the adjusting of machines to the worker. Lenin advocated the study and use of all the latest foreign methods in science, technology and technical organisation. He said it was useful to learn from the capitalists, wherever necessary, and to adopt the worthwhile and profitable things they had.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 402.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 445.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 511.

Lenin urged that developments in science and technology be tested and, if effective, introduced in production without the slightest delay. He gave the most vigorous support to important innovations such as coal-cutting machines, a new method of drilling oil wells, hydraulic extraction of peat, industrial use of shale, diesel traction on the railways, electrification of rail transport, radio research projects, electric ploughing, plant selection, etc.

Lenin was greatly interested in the work of F. Tsander, a follower of K. Tsiolkovsky, in the sphere of rocket engines for spaceships. He had a talk with the scientist and promised him his support. Tsander was deeply impressed by his talk with Lenin.

The scientists, engineers and inventors who met Lenin were greatly impressed by his knowledge and his quick grasp of complex scientific and technological problems. Once Lenin and Maxim Gorky went to the Central Artillery Department to see a certain invention. Having listened to the inventor, Lenin asked him highly pertinent questions with such ease as if he were examining him on political subjects. The experts who were present were astounded when they later learned that it was Lenin: "What? You don't say! How does he know so much about it? Why, we took him for an expert! Amazing!" On the way back Lenin said to Gorky:

"If we only could provide all these technicians with ideal conditions for work! In twenty-five years Russia would be the leading country in the world!"*

This dream has come true. The Soviet Union today leads the world in technology and science.

At the time of the New Economic Policy, when, owing to a certain growth of capitalist and petty-bourgeois sentiments, hostile ideas gained ground, political education became particularly important. Lenin called for vigilance, and for a determined offensive on bourgeois ideology. "We must overcome," he pointed out, "resistance from the capitalists in all its forms, not only in the military and political spheres, but also ideological resistance, which is the most deep-seated and the strongest."**

In March 1922, Lenin wrote a very important article, "On the Significance of Militant Materialism", which was published in the journal, *Pod Znamenem Marxizma (Under the Banner of Marxism)*. It was a sort of continuation of Lenin's major philosophical book, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, and his "Philosophical Notebooks".

In this article, Lenin defined the main tasks and purpose of the journal *Pod Znamenem Marxizma*, and formulated the chief trends that should govern philosophical work in the country, defining its goals and framing practical measures.

The idea that dialectical and historical materialism is of utmost importance for the transformation of nature, social life and men's

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 390.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 370.

minds was the main idea advanced. The Communists, Lenin wrote, should always defend Marxist philosophy and wage a systematic and irreconcilable struggle against all sorts of modern idealistic trends, revealing the reactionary substance of these fashionable philosophical teachings, which were peddled as the last word in bourgeois science. They should expose all, including the most subtle, defence of clericalism, mysticism and idealism by official scientists and by those who called themselves "democratic" and "socialist" writers.

Lenin considered close contact between Marxist philosophy and the natural sciences to be very important. It is essential, he wrote, to follow attentively the questions which the latest revolution in natural science poses, to sum up the achievements and discoveries of the natural sciences and to draw dialectico-materialistic conclusions from them. He made the reminder that the flux witnessed in modern natural science was likely to breed various reactionary schools, trends and tendencies, and insisted that the attempts to put an idealistic complexion on the greatest scientific discoveries should be exposed. By way of an example he mentioned the attempt of the idealists to take advantage of the discovery of radium, and of Einstein's theory of relativity, and the like.

At the same time, Lenin noted that natural science was progressing so rapidly, and that the flux in all its branches was so radical, that it was impossible to avoid philosophical conclusions. Natural scientists, he said, would find the answers to the philosophical questions posed by the revolution in natural science only in dialectical materialism. "Unless it stands on a solid philosophical ground no natural science and no materialism can hold its own in the struggle against the onslaught of bourgeois ideas and the restoration of the bourgeois world outlook," Lenin wrote. "In order to hold his own in this struggle and carry it to a victorious finish, the natural scientist must be a modern materialist, a conscious adherent of the materialism which is represented by Marx, i.e., he must be a dialectical materialist."*

Lenin attached great importance to a conclusive elaboration of dialectics, based on a generalisation of phenomena and processes of social life, and on the achievements of natural science.

He always devoted much attention to the struggle against religion. In his article, "On the Significance of Militant Materialism", he specified the tasks of atheistic work in Soviet society. He demanded that atheistic propaganda should be stepped up, using a variety of forms and methods of scientific education, backed by the achievements of modern science, exposing the roots of religion, and instilling a scientific, materialistic world outlook in the people. Lenin stressed that atheistic promotion work should proceed regularly and vigorously, but only through ideological media, observing strictly the principle of freedom of conscience and seeing to it that the feelings of religious people are not hurt. Yet they should be told patiently about the fallacy of religion.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 721.

Lenin believed that a close alliance between communist philosophers and non-communist materialists, especially modern natural scientists, was absolutely essential for the successful solution of all the philosophical problems. What he implied was an alliance between Communists and non-Party scientists, including those who did not hold dialectical materialist views. Lenin stressed that in the struggle against reactionary philosophical trends, against religious obscurantism, an alliance was necessary "in one shape or another, and to one degree or another", also with the progressive bourgeois scientists, although their inconsistency should be criticised all the same.

The fundamental propositions contained in Lenin's "On the Significance of Militant Materialism" are valid to this day.

Lenin attached great importance to the social sciences, and read all the pertinent literature. He was critical of a new edition of A. Bogdanov's *A Short Course of Economy*, saying that it did not contain a single word about the dictatorship of the proletariat, and highly appreciated M. Pokrovsky's *Concise History of Russia*.

"I congratulate you heartily on your success," he wrote to Pokrovsky. "I liked your new book, *Concise History of Russia*, immensely. It is nicely arranged, and the presentation is splendid. It is extremely interesting. I believe it should be translated into the European languages."* Lenin advised the author to supply the book with a chronological index, so it could be used as a textbook.

Soviet art and literature. Lenin regarded art and literature as powerful factors in the building of communism. He taught us that they should be closely linked with the life of the people, deeply depict reality, truthfully and with consummate artistry carry the progressive ideas of communism to the broad masses, educate the new man, and call the working people to struggle for a good future.

Lenin defined the principles of Party leadership in art and literature. It is imperative, he said, while directing the development of art and literature, to take into account all the complex, specific features inherent in them and to refrain from dictating from above, leaving ample scope for artistic initiative, individuality and imagination as regards both form and content. At the same time he emphasised that art and literature are components of the general cause of the proletariat, of Party work as a whole, and that it is necessary for the Party to exercise leadership over them. We Communists, he said, "should not look on with folded arms and permit chaos to prevail. We must systematically guide this process and shape its results".**

Lenin was implacably opposed to everything alien that prevented the young Soviet art and literature from developing. A fervent champion of truthful, realistic art, he rejected formalism which distorted reality and was alien and incomprehensible to the people. He was highly critical of those who tried to pass off the "most absurd affectations" as

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 488.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 455.

something new and to present "fantastic nonsense" as "true proletarian" art. The formalistic devices of the pretentious but ignorant proponents of the so-called "new art" had nothing in common with Marxist aesthetics. He declared it senseless to make a cult of the new merely because it was "new", and pointed out that this was largely due to hypocrisy and unconscious veneration of the vogues prevailing in bourgeois art.

He wanted artists to produce works of artistic merit, ideologically sound, comprehensible to the people and corresponding to their healthy aesthetic demands. In a talk with Clara Zetkin, Nadezhda Krupskaya and Maria Ulyanova, he said:

"Nor is it important what art can give to a few hundred or even a few thousand out of the total population of millions. Art belongs to the people. Its roots should go deep down into the midst of the broad working masses. It should be understood and loved by the masses. It should encompass the emotions, thoughts and will of the masses and uplift them. It should awaken and develop the artists among them."*

While waging an unremitting struggle against trends and influences alien to communism, Lenin gave his full support to progressive Soviet writers and artists.

He had the warmest attachment for Maxim Gorky, whom he held in high esteem as a great writer, and the founder of proletarian literature. After the October Revolution he enlisted Gorky's active participation in solving the problems of cultural development, calling him "an authority in matters of proletarian art". With comradely advice and friendly high-principled criticism he helped the writer to understand the policy of the Party and overcome his doubts, hesitation and morbid moods. In one of his letters to Gorky, Lenin advised him as an artist to observe and study the building of the new life "from below", in the factories, workers' townships and the villages.

Eye-witnesses recall how delighted Lenin always was when Gorky came from Petrograd to visit him. Many were the frank, heart-to-heart talks they had. Lenin gave every attention to Gorky's suggestions and requests, and showed a constant concern for the writer's health. He took a keen interest in Gorky's work, seeing to it that each new book was sent to him as soon as it came off the press, and wanted to know how the books sold.

Lenin had a very high opinion of the work of A. Serafimovich. In a letter of condolence to the author after his son was killed at the front in 1920, he wrote: "Your books, and what my sister** has often told me, have aroused a profound affection for you in me, and I very much want to say to you how *necessary* your work is for the workers and for all of us, and how essential it is now for you to be firm, in order to overcome your grief and force yourself to return to work."***

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 456.
** Maria Ulyanova.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 448.

He also liked Demyan Bedny's verse, which he considered truly proletarian, dear and comprehensible to the workers. At the same time, however, he noted the poet's shortcomings. "He is somewhat crude," he observed to Gorky. "He trails behind his readers, whereas he should be a little ahead."

Although he criticised the futuristic tendencies in the work of Vladimir Mayakovsky, Lenin voiced his approval of the poet when he took up a topical issue in the political life of the times and directed the barb of his satire against bureaucracy and endless meetings in the poem "Lost in Conference". Lenin's comment and advice played its part in Mayakovsky's development as an artist; the poet assumed a place of honour in Soviet poetry.

In the ideological education of the masses Lenin attached much importance to the cinema and the theatre. It was thanks to Lenin that the Bolshoi and Maly theatres in Moscow were able to continue functioning through the grimmest years of the civil war. Lenin had a deep admiration for the art of the actor. He attended a celebration at the Maly Theatre, dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the stage career of M. Yermolova, the distinguished Russian actress, at which the decision of the Council of People's Commissars was read awarding her the title of People's Artiste of the Republic.

With all his time taken up with work, Lenin was rarely able in those years to enjoy art. His visits to the theatre were few. The production he liked most was Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* at the Moscow Art Theatre. "By nature," wrote Krupskaya, "Lenin was a lyricist, despite his sobriety." He was very fond of poetry and music. "I know of nothing finer than the *Appassionata*; I could listen to it every day," he said once after hearing the pianist Dobrovein play Beethoven's sonatas at the home of Y. Peshkova. "It is wonderful, superhuman music. The proud, though perhaps naive, thought always occurs to me: What miracles man can perform!"*

Matters of statehood. Lenin worked tirelessly to perfect the machinery of state. He considered it of the utmost importance to develop Soviet democracy and above all, to enhance the work of the Soviets. On his initiative decisions were taken to give wider powers to the Soviets. The exemplary functioning of the local bodies, he stressed, was exceedingly important for the state as a whole.

Lenin devoted a great deal of attention to study and the summing up of experience. Hence the importance he attached to reports, especially economic reports, from local bodies. He drew up the report forms himself, checked whether they were submitted to the Council of People's Commissars in time, and studied them carefully. He instructed the local Soviets to pay more attention to practical questions of economic development and to everyday services to the working people. Indicative in this respect is a marginal note in his hand on an account of the

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 388.



Peasant messengers visiting Lenin

From painting by V. Serov

activities of the Moscow Soviet in 1920; opposite a passage reporting that the Executive Committee of the Soviet had discussed 8 economic and 46 organisational questions, he wrote: "Monstrous. It should be the other way about."* He frequently summoned people from the localities in order to talk with them, and made a point of ensuring that local functionaries visiting Moscow were supplied with all the information and instructions they needed for their work.

Although he believed that local organisations should enjoy wide powers, Lenin at the same time demanded that they be guided in their work by the interests of the state as a whole and strictly observe state discipline. He resolutely checked any tendency towards parochialism, such as, say, manipulations to reduce plans for a gubernia to less than it could fulfil, meeting local needs by neglecting those of the country generally, ignoring instructions from the centre, etc.

Time and again Lenin stressed the importance of strengthening the ties between the state apparatus and the people, of systematic, planned and extensive work to attract thousands upon thousands of non-Party workers and peasants to running the state and building the economy, meaning that they should be elected to various elective bodies, promoted to various offices and appointed to various committees, control and checking bodies.

Lenin himself was a wonderful example of how a leader maintained close and continuous contacts with the people. Meetings and talks with workers, peasants and intellectuals, appearances and speeches at mass meetings and gatherings, at congresses and conferences, and a copious mail connected Lenin by a thousand threads with the masses. He loved to mix with the people, to visit factories, towns and villages, for he wanted to see for himself how people lived, he wanted to know and feel the mood and spirit of the workers and peasants–those for whom he lived and laboured. Lenin heeded the voice of the people. He turned to them for advice and respected the experience of ordinary people. "He approached the worker, the poor and middle peasant, the Red Army man, as a comrade and an equal, never as a superior," Krupskaya wrote. "For him they were not 'objects of propaganda', but living people who had had experience, who had thought a lot, and whose requirements needed attention. 'He spoke to us seriously,' said the workers about him, appreciating his simple, comradely treatment."**

Defining the ways and means of improving the state machinery, Lenin wrote in a letter to the Presidium of the Fifth All-Russia Congress of the Government Functionaries' Union:

"The primary, immediate task of the present day, and of the next few years, is systematically to reduce the size and the cost of the Soviet machinery of state by cutting down staffs, improving organisation,

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* *Leninsky Sbornik XXXV*, p. 196.
** N. K. Krupskaya, *On Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1960, p. 138.

eliminating red tape and bureaucracy, and by reducing unproductive expenditure."*

Lenin considered it necessary to remodel the work of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence. In letters to his deputies, A. Tsyurupa, A. Rykov and L. Kamenev, and in his talks with them, in the "Resolution on the Work of Deputies (Deputy Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence)", written in April 1922, Lenin pointed out that it was necessary to concentrate attention on "checking the actual fulfilment of decrees, laws and resolutions", to relieve the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence of trifles, to reduce the number of sittings to a minimum, to enhance the responsibility and independence of the heads of People's Commissariats and departments, to reduce the personnel, improve the work of various institutions, and to root out red tape.

Lenin was an irreconcilable enemy of bureaucracy and red tape, and waged an unrelenting struggle against them. "The Soviet administrative machine," he wrote, "must operate efficiently, honestly and quickly." He favoured severe administrative action against incorrigible bureaucrats, their removal from office and prosecution of the worst offenders. The country would have to fight bureaucracy for many years still, Lenin pointed out, for to uproot it hundreds of measures were needed, all citizens had to be literate and cultured and take part in the administration of the state. He repeatedly emphasised the need to enlist the broad masses in work to improve the state apparatus and fight red tape, the need to show the people in practice how red tape could be done away with.

In particular, Lenin insisted that government workers and institutions give careful attention to communications and letters received from the working people. He regarded complaints from the latter concerning the poor work of one or another institution as control from below. Administrative bodies, he stressed, should be primarily concerned with meeting the vital needs of the working people, and should act immediately on their suggestions. Lenin issued a special order directing the administrative manager of the Council of People's Commissars to report to him all complaints received against government institutions as well as individuals, and carefully checked up on the fulfilment of the instructions he had issued on them. He would not countenance pressure being brought to bear on people who had sent in complaints to him.

Lenin reacted at once to complaints, about abuse of power and mismanagement. Here is a typical example. In July 1921, when he was ill, he received from a Red Army man who had come to Moscow, a letter informing him that some local officials in the Don Region were breaking the law and that the workers and peasants there felt very strongly about it. Lenin ordered steps to be taken at once to end such misconduct and gave his secretary these instructions: "Find the sender of the letter

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 444.

without delay, receive him, reassure him, and tell him that I am ill, but that I shall attend to the matter he has raised."

All of Lenin's activity is a splendid model of good organisation and discipline. He was always specific and efficient, exacting and at once considerate and solicitous.

The meetings of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars at which Lenin presided were a true school of Party and state leadership. He considered that thorough preliminary examination of the matter at hand was the prime guarantee of fruitful deliberation and a correct solution. Before each meeting he would make a detailed study of all the relevant material and discuss the issues in question with the heads of the government departments concerned, and other officials. As for the meetings themselves, he made a point of ensuring that they proceed in a business-like fashion, with the least possible waste of time. Opening the sittings punctually, he would see to it that the speakers did not exceed their allotted time. He had no patience with generalities unsupported by factual data and concrete suggestions, and insisted that all speakers be brief and to the point.

But in spite of his strictness in the chair, the atmosphere was never strained. On the contrary, discussion was free and comradely. It was collective work in the full sense of the word. Often enough there was laughter at meetings of the Council of People's Commissars, with Lenin laughing the heartiest, for he had a good sense of humour. But the outbursts of mirth subsided as the meeting settled down again to the business at hand.

For Lenin the adoption of a correct decision was only the starting point; the most important part was its implementation. "Any plan, even the very best, can be completely ruined by incompetent and stupid execution," Lenin pointed out time and time again.

Through his instructions and directives, both verbal and written, Lenin taught people to work efficiently and to see every undertaking through to the end. His letters and countless notes, many of them written on scraps of paper, contained the most valuable ideas, practical advice, and sometimes entire programmes of action. While busy with political matters of cardinal importance, he took a lively interest in hundreds of thousands of seemingly minor questions, for nothing was too trifling to claim his attention if it served a useful purpose. Concrete leadership was the hallmark of Lenin's style of work.

Most important for the proper functioning of the administrative machinery, Lenin pointed out, was to select the right people for the right jobs and to check up on the fulfilment of decisions, tasks and directives. Emphasising that the Party and government cadres should always bear this in mind, he said: *"To test men and verify what has actually been done*–this, this again, this alone is now the main feature of all our activities, of our whole policy."*

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 226.

Lenin demanded of the Party and government bodies and of all functionaries effective verification of the fulfilment of Party and government decisions, of "what has actually been done". In scores of cases he personally checked up on whether a decision or directive had been carried out, either by telephoning the persons concerned or inquiring by letter. He did not tolerate formal written replies to his enquiries. He demanded a determined struggle against those who gave false information about the fulfilment of an assignment and thus deceived the Party and the state.

He saw the guarantee of success in all cases in the proper placing and employment of personnel. "Study people, search for *able* workers," Lenin wrote, "this is now the essence; all orders and decisions without this are dirty bits of paper."* For him the main criterion was always a person's political qualifications. Whenever someone was recommended to him merely as a "good man", he would grow impatient. "What if he is a 'good man'," he would say. "I'd rather you told me what his political conduct is like." Of first importance, too, were the technical qualifications of a functionary, his conscientiousness, knowledge of the job entrusted to him, and his ability to organise the work properly. He believed that it was necessary judiciously to team up old, experienced cadres, tempered by struggle, with young people. He considered the promotion and training of new cadres to be one of the most important tasks. "We must keep the young ones moving," he said.

Lenin was a very good judge of people. He scrutinised them closely, listened to what they had to say, grasped the crux quickly, and was able to appraise a man from various insignificant trifles. He was well acquainted with the personal qualities of the functionaries and knew how to approach them. He had the knack of spotting their strong points and putting them to use to best advantage. He was the teacher and mentor of cadres. Those who met him personally were always the richer for meeting him, and carried away a new sense of confidence and certainty in the success of the work they were engaged in. "Those were difficult times," G. Krzhizhanovsky wrote. "But what a joy it was to forge ahead hand in hand with a leader like Vladimir Ilyich and be able at difficult moments to turn to him for wise counsel!"**

Lenin, Krupskaya wrote, was very strict to himself. But he was also strict to others. For the work entrusted to functionaries Lenin demanded a high sense of responsibility, initiative, self-reliance, the ability to grasp the situation as a whole and to see the political significance of the questions they dealt with, as well as a business-like, practical approach. Lenin was always sincere and outspoken. Irrespective of the rank of the person concerned, he sharply criticised incompetence, negligence and a formal approach to work; he would not tolerate intrigues and taught people to subordinate personal considerations to their work. Lenin told

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 539.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 565.

people the defects of their work candidly. "The State Bank is now no more than a game at a bureaucratic rewriting of papers," wrote Lenin to A. Sheiman, the Chairman of the State Bank. "That is the truth, if you want to know not the honeyed bureaucratico-communist lying (which everybody feeds you as a dignitary), but *the truth*."*

When A. Rykov, who was then Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, delayed submission of the draft theses on the basic principles of concession agreements and produced unsatisfactory material, Lenin wrote him the following: "I have looked through your material on the concession agreement and am deeply annoyed.... A serious matter has been submerged in bureaucratic garbage.... You have failed to fulfil the Council of People's Commissars' decision of February 2, 1921, which required the elaboration of *the main principles within three weeks*!... Stop this sabotage and get things moving *properly*, or I'll go to war against you at the Central Committee."**

When necessary, Lenin meted out strict punishment. Time and again, the Council of People's Commissars severely reprimanded various institutions or their heads for failure to fulfil the decisions of the Party and government in due time, or for poor organisation.

But although Lenin was highly exacting, there was nothing irritating or insulting in his treatment of people. When taking someone "to task", he never forgot to say a few encouraging words to him. Sharp in his reproof of defects, he encouraged good work. "Time and time again," wrote Maxim Gorky about him, "I noticed quite clearly marks of sincere admiration for the talent and moral fibre of people he had hauled over the coals the day before, admiration for their persevering hard work in the hellish conditions of 1918-1921."

Immersed though he was in his titanic task, Lenin took a paternal interest in the living conditions of the people around him, made a point of finding out their needs, and saw to it that they did not overwork themselves, that they had sufficient rest and attended to their health. "There was always more than enough work," Krupskaya wrote later, "but I have never heard Lenin say that he had no time when it concerned helping people." Yet in all this, as Gorky rightly pointed out, there was not a trace of the "selfish concern which some clever employer might display for honest and capable employees.

"No, it was the warm consideration of a true comrade, the affection one has for one's equals."***

Lenin frequently wrote letters or notes to various organisations asking that help be extended to someone, and his oral instructions and requests of this nature were even more numerous. Whenever he noticed someone looking ill or exhausted he would raise the alarm and have a doctor sent at once. And if doctors' orders went unheeded and the comrade in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. 36, p. 520.
** *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, pp. 212-13.
*** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 389.

question refused to take a rest, Lenin would get the Organising Bureau or the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to adopt a special decision granting the sick comrade leave of absence. The latter would then be obliged to submit to Party discipline.

Here are two of Lenin's notes, showing his touching concern for the welfare of his comrades:

"Comrade Tsyurupa! You look ill. You must take two months' rest at once. If you don't promise faithfully to do this, I shall complain to the C.C."

To the House Manager of the All-Russia Central Executive Commitee:

"Please see to it that a room in the First House of Soviets be given to Comrade Cecilia Samoilovna Bobrovskaya, whom I know well as an old Party worker. Her present living conditions are quite impossible, and her doctors have ordered that she be moved at once to one of the Houses of Soviets.

"Please notify my Secretariat when this has been done.

"Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

"*V. Ulyanov (Lenin)*

"P.S. I have known Bobrovskaya since *before* 1905 and I know that she is capable of suffering in silence indefinitely. Hence she must be helped without delay."

Here is another fact testifying to the extraordinary consideration Lenin showed to his fellow workers. Noticing that A. Khryashcheva, a member of the Collegium of the Central Statistical Board, never missed a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars which usually ended late, he wrote the following note to his secretary: "If Khryashcheva lives far away and has to walk here, that must be hard on her.... Tell her that on the days when there are no statistical matters to discuss, she may leave earlier, and in fact she need not attend at all." And evidently fearing that the comrade in question might take offence, he added: "But very tactfully and on a suitable occasion."

Lenin took an interest not only in the living conditions of functionaries, but also in their state of mind. Maxim Gorky came to see him one day and found him writing a letter. Lenin begged to be excused for a moment, and continued writing.

"I am writing to a comrade in the provinces," he explained. "He sounds dispirited, tired, no doubt. I must cheer him up. Good spirits are very important!"*

Lenin was sometimes visited by people who had lost faith in themselves and become discouraged by the difficulties and hardships. They invariably left him with their spirits revived and their faith restored. No one knew better than he how to inspire them with faith and self-confidence, vigour and enthusiasm.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1956, Part 1, p. 386.

Lenin showed the same solicitude and consideration for everyone. Here is one of many examples. While chatting with a peasant, I. Chekunov, in February 1921, he learned that the latter had lost his spectacles and had bought a very inferior pair at the market. Lenin at once wrote the following note to N. Semashko, the People's Commissar of Health:

"Comrade Ivan Afanasyevich *Chekunov*, a most interesting working peasant, who is propagating communist principles in his own way, is here in my office.

"He has lost his spectacles and paid 15,000 rubles for a useless pair. Could you possibly help him get good spectacles?

"I would be much obliged if you could help him and if you would ask your secretary to let me know whether you succeeded or not."

The few instances cited above give some idea of Lenin's style of work, Lenin's principles of Party and state leadership, his concern for people. These are the principles by which the Communist Party and the Soviet Government are guided in their activities, in their efforts to perfect the machinery of state.

From the first days of Soviet power Lenin attached great importance to the establishment of a system of state, Party and public control. The principles of control in the Soviet Republic, the substance and purpose of this control, which is an important and permanent element of Party policy, of its activities in building the new society, are set out exhaustively in Lenin's works. Lenin considered control a powerful means of drawing the masses into the administration of the state, an effective instrument of the Party and state in improving the government machinery, checking fulfilment of Party and Government directives and decisions and combating red tape and abuses. Lenin stressed that state control should combine with Party and public control. The purpose of control, he wrote, is: "*All* working people, both men and *particularly women*, should serve in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection."*

Lenin followed the work of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, which had sprung up in 1920 from the People's Commissariat of State Control. He criticised its defects and insisted that it improve its work. In his letter, "On the Tasks of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, Their Interpretation and Fulfilment", which he wrote in September 1921 to Stalin, then the People's Commissar of the Inspection, Lenin pointed out that "the basic approach of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is not what it should be".

"It is more the duty of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection," Lenin wrote, "to *be able to improve things* than to merely "detect" and "expose" (that is the function of the courts with which the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is in close contact but with which it is not to be identified).

"Timely and skilful rectification—this is the prime function of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 300.

"To be able to correct it is necessary, first, to make a *complete* study of the methods by which the affairs of a given office, factory, department, and so forth, are conducted; second, to *introduce* in good time the necessary practical changes and to see that they are actually put into effect."*

It was a serious defect, Lenin pointed out, that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection did not, to a sufficient extent, attract the working people to take part in control.

While sharply criticising the defects of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, Lenin strongly opposed Trotsky, who suggested abolishing it. "As regards the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, Comrade Trotsky is fundamentally wrong," Lenin wrote in a letter to the members of the Political Bureau on May 5, 1922. "We cannot at the moment dispense with the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. A lot of hard and systematic work has to be put in to convert it into an apparatus for investigating and improving all government work. We have no other practical means of investigating, improving and giving instruction in this work.... It will be impossible to combat departmentalism and red tape, it will be impossible to teach non-Party workers and peasants the art of administration, which is a task that at the present time we cannot shirk either in principle or in practice."**

Later, in some of the last articles he wrote, Lenin worked out a plan for the further reorganisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection based on the amalgamation of Party and state control.

Lenin set big tasks for the judiciary. He regarded socialist legality as a mighty instrument in the reorganisation of society along socialist lines, and as one of the most important principles of Soviet democracy. He took part in the framing of Soviet laws, stressing that the country needed legal standards that would promote socialist construction. Lenin demanded strict observance of socialist legality and protection of the rights, freedoms and interests of the working people. He insisted and proved that socialist legality should be the same for everybody. In his letter to the Political Bureau entitled "'Dual' Subordination and Observance of the Law", Lenin emphasised that there could be no such thing as Kaluga law, as distinct from Kazan law; there must be a unified code of laws for the whole of Russia, and in fact for the entire Federation of Soviet Republics. He was strongly in favour of setting up a prosecuting authority independent of local bodies, whose duty it would be to ensure the same interpretation of the law throughout the Republic. This letter served as a pattern for Party decisions and for Soviet legislation designed to strengthen socialist law.

Lenin called for strict measures against theft of people's property, against misappropriation, embezzlement and bribery, and was particularly intolerant of people with a Party card who committed these crimes. He denounced the attempts by Party and Government organisations to

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 42.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 353-54.



РОССИЙСКАЯ КОММУНИСТИЧЕСКАЯ
ПАРТИЯ (большевиков).

Пролетарии всех стран, соединяйтесь!

ПАРТИЙНЫЙ БИЛЕТ №114482

Фамилия Ульянов (Ленин)
Имя и отчество Владим. Ильич
Год рождения 1870
Время вступления в партию 1893
Выдан 3 Замоскворец-
Горкомом
(точное наименование организации, выдавшей билет).
Москва

Личная подпись

Место фотографическ. карточки.

М. П.

Секретарь Укома Райкома

1922 г.

Lenin's Party membership card

Photo



K. Timiryazev
Photo, 1917

exonerate such Party members and demanded that all loopholes for the governing Party to reduce the responsibility of Communists for violating Soviet laws be removed.

In a letter to the members of the Political Bureau on March 18, 1922, Lenin suggested "telling all gubernia committees that Communists would be *expelled from the Party* by the C.C. for the least attempt to 'influence' the courts in order to 'mitigate' the guilt of Communists". He saw to it that "the People's Commissariat of Justice be informed by a circular (with copies going to the gubernia Party committees) that the courts are obliged to punish Communists more *strictly* than non-Communists".

"It is the greatest shame and disgrace: the governing Party protects 'its own' scoundrels!" Lenin wrote when he learned that Party and government bodies let off Party members accused of various offences.

This letter by Lenin is a very important document. It shows how irreconcilably he treated those who disgraced the high calling of a Communist, and how concerned he was about the prestige of the Party and the interests of the people. Lenin stressed that Party members had no advantages or privileges over the rest of the working people, and that they had greater obligations.

The peace champion. The transition to peace and the restoration of the national economy took place in an extremely complicated international situation. The imperialists were unwilling to reconcile themselves to their defeat and were hatching plans for new military ventures against the Soviet land. World reactionaries were eager to obstruct the Soviet people's efforts to restore their shattered economy and did everything in their power to prevent the normalisation of relations which had begun between Soviet Russia and other states. Under these adverse conditions the Soviet Government, with Lenin at its head, resolutely and consistently pursued a policy of peace and the establishment of business ties with the capitalist countries. Lenin said: "What we prize most is peace and an opportunity to devote all our efforts to restoring our economy."*

Lenin vigorously advocated the concept that states with differing social systems could and should coexist peacefully. *He believed that the contradiction between the socialist and capitalist systems–the basic contradiction of our time–could and should be solved not by means of war, but by peaceful economic competition, in the course of which socialism would inevitably demonstrate its complete superiority over capitalism.*

The civil war was still on when Lenin told U.S. diplomats William Bullitt and L. Stephens, as R. W. Allan, correspondent of *The New York Times*, wrote, that "the Bolshevik principles can withstand the competition" with the ideas of bourgeois democracy, with the principles of capitalism, and it is essential for "the Soviet system to be afforded equal opportunities in this respect, and for the world to see that these opportunities are being afforded".**

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 115.
** *New York Times*, April 6, 1919.

Lenin said in a speech to the activists of the Moscow Communist Party Organisation on December 6, 1920, that peaceful competition between the two systems was a "duel between two modes, two political and economic systems–the communist and the capitalist. We shall prove that we are the stronger. . . . "Of course, the task is a difficult one, but we have said, and still say, that socialism has the force of example. Coercion is effective against those who want to restore their rule. But at this stage the significance of force ends, and after that only influence and example are effective. We must show the significance of communism in practice, by example."

"I am convinced," Lenin added, "that the Soviets will overtake and outstrip the capitalists and that our gain will not be a purely economic one."*

Lenin regarded peaceful coexistence and economic competition between the two opposite systems as a specific form of class struggle between socialism and capitalism. He described the concessions granted to the foreign capitalists as a token of coexistence and competition between the two systems. That, he said, was war on a new plane–"the war of guns and tanks yields place to economic warfare."**

Lenin explained that violence and armed struggle were necessary to suppress the resistance of the overthrown exploiting classes, to thwart their attempts to regain power, to crush the interventionists, and repel the assaults of the imperialists. Yet it was not violence but force of example, the achievements of the victorious proletariat, that would convince the peoples of the advantages of socialism and communism.

A few months later, in May 1921, Lenin again stressed the world-wide impact of socialist economic successes in Soviet Russia. He said, "We are now exercising our main influence on the international revolution through our economic policy. The working people of all countries without exception and without exaggeration are looking to the Soviet Russian Republic. This much has been achieved. The capitalists cannot hush up or conceal anything. That is why they so eagerly catch at our every economic mistake and weakness. The struggle in this field has now become global. Once we solve this problem, we shall have certainly and finally won on an international scale."***

Lenin was convinced that the successes of the socialist system would win fresh millions to the communist banner in the capitalist countries, that these successes would be an inspiration to them in their struggle against the exploiters and would induce them to choose the socialist system. The facts confirm Lenin's deductions. The world revolutionary process is now benefiting from the example of the socialist countries. No longer do the peoples judge communism by its basic slogans. They judge it now by the benefits it yields to society and the individual. The greater

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 457, 458.
** *Ibid.*, p. 459.
*** *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, p. 437.

the economic, cultural, scientific and technological achievements of the socialist countries, the greater is their revolutionary influence on the class struggle in the capitalist countries, and the greater the bearing they have on the victory of the working class over capitalism and on the national liberation movement.

The Soviet Government, Lenin pointed out more than once, guarantees absolute non-interference in the internal affairs of foreign states; it recognises the right of all nations to self-determination, independence and state sovereignty; it stands for equality of nations in international relations and maximum satisfaction of their progressive and just aspirations.

He attached particular importance to the establishment and promotion of friendly relations between the Soviet state and the Eastern countries. Early in 1921, treaties were signed with Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey. Lenin carefully followed the negotiations, had long talks with the Afghan mission and received the Turkish delegation.

On Lenin's suggestion, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs issued instructions to the plenipotentiary of the R.S.F.S.R. in Afghanistan, which, like the treaties themselves, clearly defined the principles of Soviet policy with regard to the Eastern countries and showed how radically this policy differed from that of the imperialist powers.

"...Our policy in the East," read the instructions, "is not aggressive. It is a policy of peace and friendship. You must systematically in all your work lay the emphasis on this fundamental principle, and, in particular, make it the main objective of all our efforts in Kabul to develop our friendship with Afghanistan. Friendship presupposes mutual assistance, and in keeping with our desire to do our utmost to promote the development and the prosperity of a friendly Afghan state, we are prepared in this peaceful sphere to render it every possible assistance."

The Soviet Government was anxious to establish diplomatic relations with China. The October Revolution and the just foreign policy of the Soviet Government in the East were warmly welcomed by broad sections of the Chinese population.

However, the reactionary Peking Government, under imperialist pressure, refused to sign a treaty with the R.S.F.S.R. Receiving the head of the Chinese mission on the eve of the latter's departure, Lenin expressed the hope that ties between China and Soviet Russia would be strengthened in spite of all obstacles. The People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs also sent a letter to Sun Yat-sen, head of the National Government in Canton, tendering fraternal greetings and proposing a resumption of trade between Soviet Russia and China. In his reply, Sun Yat-sen expressed the hope that friendly relations between Soviet Russia and China would be established as soon as the reactionaries in China had been dealt with. He ended his letter with best wishes to "my friend Lenin and to all who have done so much for the cause of human liberty".

Soviet foreign policy in the East was a powerful moral and political support to the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries in

their fight for freedom and independence. In this connection, Lenin pointed out that the Soviet Government was acting not only as a representative of the workers of all countries, but also as a representative of the oppressed peoples, that the Bolsheviks were creating a completely new type of international relations that would give all enslaved people the opportunity to free themselves from the imperialist yoke. "The events," he said, "are teaching the peoples to regard Russia as a centre of attraction."*

An example of the new and unprecedented type of relations between countries in which the people held the reins of government was the establishment, in 1921, of fraternal relations between Soviet Russia and Mongolia, whose working masses, with the help of the Red Army, had defeated the foreign interventionists and feudal reactionaries and set up a people's democracy. During the treaty negotiations in November 1921, Lenin received a delegation from the People's Party and the Government of Mongolia, headed by Sühe-Baatar, the leader of the Mongolian people. Lenin warned the delegation of the danger of imperialist encroachment on Mongolia, saying that the only correct thing the working people of Mongolia could do was to fight for state and economic independence in alliance with the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia.

Normal relations were gradually established with the capitalist countries. Lenin believed that economic ties and the development of mutually advantageous trade were principal factors in promoting peaceful coexistence between the two systems. He said that the capitalist countries, too, would gain from establishing and strengthening commercial relations with Soviet Russia, that they were impelled to do so by a force greater than the desire, the will, and the decision of any hostile government or class; this force, he said, was the general world-wide economic relationship.

"I see no reason why a socialist state like ours should not have unlimited business relations with capitalist countries," Lenin said in an interview with a foreign correspondent. "We do not object to using capitalist locomotives and agricultural machines, so why should they object to using our socialist wheat, flax and platinum? After all, socialist grain tastes the same as any other, doesn't it?"**

Lenin devoted a good deal of attention to the negotiations of a trade agreement with Britain, signed in March 1921. Somewhat later a temporary trade agreement was also concluded with Germany and trade talks were held with Italy. On Lenin's initiative, the Soviet Government took steps to establish trade and diplomatic relations with the United States of America. Replying to a U.S. newspaperman who asked him on what grounds peace with America could be established,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 453.
** *Kommunist* No. 15, 1957, p. 12.

Lenin said: *"Let the American capitalists leave us alone. We shall not touch them. We are even ready to pay them in gold for any machinery, tools, etc., useful to our transport and industries. We are ready to pay not only in gold, but in raw materials, too."**

In 1920, a U.S. businessman and journalist, Vanderlip, came to Soviet Russia to negotiate concessions, and was received by Lenin. Lenin later smilingly related that Vanderlip had told him that people in America had been so influenced by propaganda that they believed Lenin bore the brand of Satan and that he ought surely to have horns. Vanderlip added that he would have to tell them as an eye-witness that this was not true. By that time the more far-sighted and sober-minded U.S. capitalists realised that whatever nonsense the bourgeois press might write about the Bolsheviks, one could and should negotiate with them. However, at that time the United States rejected the Soviet Government's offer to establish trade relations.

Lenin wisely guided the foreign policy of the Soviet state. G. Chicherin, the then People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, writing about this aspect of Lenin's activities, tells us: "Vladimir Ilyich always made a most brilliant analysis of the diplomatic situation, grasping the essence of every question at once and giving it the broadest political elucidation. His advice (often he would even suggest the wording of a reply to a foreign government) might serve as a model of diplomatic skill and flexibility."**

Lenin's perspicacity and his profound understanding of the balance of forces on the international scene were clearly manifested during the international economic conference in Genoa in 1922. He was appointed chairman of the Soviet delegation to this conference. He intended to go to Genoa to present the Soviet position in person to Lloyd George and the other imperialist leaders, but pressure of other government duties and the unsatisfactory condition of his health prevented him from going. However, the Central Committee directives written by Lenin, and his letters and telegrams to Chicherin defined in detail the tasks and the behaviour of the Soviet representatives at the Genoa Conference.

Lenin pointed out that the Soviet delegation had a twofold mission: firstly, to fight for peace and economic co-operation among the nations, and, secondly, to secure the establishment of business relations between Soviet Russia and the capitalist countries. Accordingly, Lenin worked out a set of proposals, which the Soviet delegation submitted to the conference. A statement read by Chicherin at the first plenary sitting of the conference pointed out that the present historical epoch made "the parallel existence of the old system and the burgeoning new social system quite possible". The conditions for the peaceful coexistence of the two systems, it said, were: non-interference in internal affairs, non-aggression, complete equality, mutual advantage, resolution of conflicts

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 365. (Italics are ours.—*Authors.*)
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, pp. 166-67.

by peaceful means and economic, political and cultural co-operation. The proposal for a universal reduction of armaments was the most important point made in the Soviet declaration, which was worked out on Lenin's instructions.

The Russian delegation, Chicherin told the conference on April 10, 1922, intended "to propose a general reduction of armaments and to support any other proposals aimed at alleviating the burden imposed by militarism, provided the armed forces of all states be reduced and the existing rules of warfare be supplemented by a total prohibition of its most barbarous forms, namely, poison gases, aerial warfare, etc., and especially the use of weapons of destruction against the civilian population".

"Russia," he said, "is naturally prepared to effect a reduction of her own armaments on terms of full and unqualified reciprocity and on the provision of corresponding guarantees against any attack or intervention in her internal affairs."*

Thus, at the very first international conference in which the Soviet Government took part, its representatives, on Lenin's instructions, put forward the idea of disarmament as a practical task, a realistic way of securing lasting peace. This was the first time in the history of mankind that a state offered to effect universal disarmament, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. told the World Congress of Universal Disarmament and Peace in 1962, "and we are proud that it came from our socialist state, from Lenin, the head of its government".

Lenin's peace programme has been faithfully adhered to by Soviet foreign policy ever since.

The Soviet delegation at the Genoa Conference, wrote Lenin, should not insist on presenting this broad programme in the form of an ultimatum; it was necessary, he urged, to secure the agreement of all, there must be no subordination of the minority to the majority.

"If you do not want such a broad programme, let us consider something more modest. . . . We will agree to even the narrowest programme, but to nothing that goes against our interests. We will not submit to any ultimatums. If you wish only to 'trade' with us, very well, let us trade, but we will not buy a pig in a poke, nor enter into any deals before counting all 'claims' down *to the last kopek.*"**

The imperialist governments at the Genoa Conference demanded that the Soviet state pay all the debts of the tsarist government and return to the foreign capitalists the factories nationalised after the October Revolution. What they actually wanted was the restoration of private ownership of industrial enterprises, and the abolition of the state ownership established in Russia. Acting on Lenin's instructions, the Soviet delegation repelled the imperialist incursions on the sovereignty

* Documents on U.S.S.R. Foreign Policy, Vol. V, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1961, p. 193.
** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

of the Soviet state and rejected their groundless demands, which were aimed at the economic and political enslavement of the Soviet Republic, abolition of the Soviet power and reduction of Russia to a semi-colonial appendage of world capitalism.

Moreover, by pursuing a firm and at once flexible policy, the Soviet delegation was able to take advantage of the deep-going contradictions within the imperialist camp to prevent the capitalist states from forming a united front against the Soviet Republic. In the course of the conference, a Soviet-German treaty providing for restoration of normal diplomatic relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and Germany and the development of mutually advantageous economic relations, was signed at Rapallo, a suburb of Genoa.

The work of the Soviet delegation at the Genoa Conference was approved in a decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee drawn up by Lenin. Noting that the Treaty of Rapallo was founded on the principle of peaceful coexistence of the two systems–the capitalist and the socialist–Lenin drew the important conclusion that such peaceful, business-like relations based on equality between states with different social systems offered the only correct way out of the international difficulties, the chaos and hazards of war.*

Striking evidence of the peaceful policy of the Soviet state was Lenin's proposal to include in the agenda of the Third Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (Ninth Convocation) the question of reducing the Red Army "by one-fourth in view of the fact that a certain concrete, though small and none too reliable, step towards a truce has been made in Genoa".**

Characterising the general line of Soviet foreign policy, Lenin said in August 1922:

"Our path is the correct one: we stand for peace and agreement, but we are opposed to shackles and shackling terms in agreements. We must grip the helm firmly and steer our own course, submitting neither to flattery nor intimidation."

The socialist state, Lenin said, can and must, if necessary, make compromises with the bourgeois states in foreign policy. The important thing is that a compromise made by a socialist state should benefit socialism and respond to the common basic interests of the international liberation movement, the interests of progress and peace.

Lenin said he was sure that "if we continue the policy of peace, the concessions we may make (and we have to make them in order to avoid a war)", the basic line of Soviet policy will gain the upper hand in spite of all imperialist intrigues and will promote peace and increasingly closer contacts between the Soviet Republic and other countries.

The Brest Peace, Lenin pointed out on more than one occasion, was an edifying example of a good compromise made by the socialist state.

* Cf. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 356-57.
** *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, p. 488.

The Soviet state showed its readiness to seek a compromise with the bourgeois states at the Genoa Conference as well, when it agreed to recognise the pre-war debts of the tsarist government if the capitalist powers recognised the Soviet state *de jure* and granted a loan for economic rehabilitation.

A compromise implies reciprocal concessions. While recognising political concessions, Lenin noted that these should not be made "unless we receive in return more or less equivalent concessions from the international bourgeoisie to Soviet Russia, or to the other contingents of the international proletariat which is fighting capitalism".*

With the object of peaceful coexistence the socialist state is prepared to make certain concessions in its relations with the capitalist countries. It stands to reason, however, that these concessions should not affect the principles of communism, the foundations of proletarian power, and that they should not injure the sovereignty of the socialist state. For example, Lenin sharply opposed Chicherin's proposal to amend the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. for the sake of concluding an agreement with the United States. In a letter to the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee dated January 23, 1922, Lenin wrote: "I have just received two letters from Chicherin (of the 20th and 22nd). He raises the question of whether we ought not to agree, for substantial compensation, to a slight change in our Constitution, specifically, representation of parasitical elements in the Soviets, to please the Americans.

"This proposal of Chicherin's shows in my opinion ... that he must be dispatched at once to a sanatorium; any concessions in this respect, any postponements, etc., would, in my opinion, seriously jeopardise all negotiations."**

In view of the famine in Russia, Lenin considered it necessary for the country to take advantage of every possible opportunity to obtain food from abroad. But the Soviet Government repulsed the attempts of U.S., British, and French capitalists to undermine Soviet sovereignty and interfere in the domestic affairs of the Soviet Republic under the guise of "help to the hungry". Lenin referred indignantly to the "foul American traders" of the American Relief Administration, and pointed out that they should not be given freedom for "the least trace of interference—neither political, nor administrative". The Soviet Government also firmly rejected the demand of the International Aid Russia Committee of the Supreme Allied Council to control distribution of the food it sent and to dispatch a "committee of experts" to Soviet Russia. Lenin described this as an attempt to set up a "cloak and dagger committee" and was deeply annoyed by the Allied demand. "We cannot submit," he wrote to the Political Bureau, and suggested sending a reply "worded in the strongest terms".*** Such a note was, indeed, dispatched.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 332.
** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.
*** *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, pp. 309, 316.

Furthermore, Lenin pointed out that recognition by Communists of the need and possibility of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems did not imply abandonment or moderation of the struggle against bourgeois ideology. On the contrary, Lenin insisted on intensifying the Party's offensive against bourgeois ideology, on intensifying the dissemination of Marxist ideas and the communist education of the working people.

In Lenin's opinion peaceful coexistence depended not only on the attitude of the Soviet Government, but also on that of the capitalist governments. He spoke time and again about the wish of the imperialist powers to crush the socialist country militarily. Yet he listed the factors that prevented them from doing so: the strength of the Soviet system, the internationalist solidarity of the working people, the keen contradictions between the imperialists obstructing a compact against the socialist land, and the tendency of realistically-minded bourgeois groups to adjust relations with Soviet Russia. Peaceful coexistence of the two systems would be enduring only if the policy of peace were mutual. Lenin warned the imperialist governments that the Soviet Republic would never submit to *diktat* or pressure, that it was not afraid of threats. "We have been threatened with the guns of the Allied powers that rule almost the whole world. *We were not frightened by those threats. Please, gentlemen, European diplomats, do not forget that.*"*

Lenin reminded the Party and the working people of the need to strengthen the defensive might of the Soviet state, since there were influential parties, politicians and financial magnates in the capitalist countries who wanted war and were planning to launch a new attack against the Soviet Republic. "That is why we say that having started on our work of peaceful development we shall exert every effort to continue it without interruption. At the same time, comrades, be vigilant, safeguard the defence potential of our country, strengthen our Red Army to the utmost, and remember that we have no right to permit an instant's slackening where our workers and peasants and their gains are concerned."**

Lenin denounced unjust imperialist wars. He described world wars as a foul crime and a betrayal of civilisation and culture. He warned that the use of powerful technological gains for the annihilation of millions of people and the employment of the productive forces for war would inevitably "undermine the very foundations of human society".***

What Lenin said applies doubly to our time, when the scientific and technical revolution, actuated in the military field by the development of thermonuclear weapons, has created the threat of total destruction to entire countries and nations if the imperialists should start a new world war.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 215.
** *Ibid.*, p. 151.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 422.

Lenin never tired of urging vigorous struggle against imperialist wars. He stressed the need for "the greatest possible number of the simplest and most obvious decisions and measures that would certainly lead to peace, if not to the complete elimination of the war danger".* Lenin pointed out that the masses played the decisive role in the prevention of war.

He emphasised the need for broadening and deepening the struggle against the danger of another imperialist slaughter. "It is worth devoting one's whole life," he wrote, "to the struggle against this kind of war; it is a struggle in which one must be ruthless and chase to the furthermost corners of the earth all the sophistry that is uttered in its defence."** Speaking of the tasks of the Soviet delegation at the Hague International Peace Congress, convened in December 1922 to combat the danger of another world war, Lenin pointed out that it was necessary to defeat all arguments in support of war constructed by the ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie, to expose the imperialist war preparations, and to explain how to combat the threat of a new war most effectively.

Lenin said that the victory of socialist revolution in a few countries would create the possibility of preventing world wars.*** It will also be recalled that he suggested that the words "our conception of history presumes the inevitability of new world wars" be "definitely struck out" of the draft statement of the Soviet delegation to the Genoa Conference.****

Developments have borne out Lenin's conjecture. World war has ceased to be inevitable since socialist revolutions have triumphed in a number of European and Asian countries, a world socialist system has arisen, and a powerful peace movement has grown all over the world. In our time world war can be prevented. Acting on Lenin's ideas, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government have advanced a programme of general and complete disarmament under strict international control as the surest and most radical way of securing lasting peace. True to Lenin's principles, the Soviet Communist Party holds high the banner of peace and international friendship.

As a result of the vigorous and persevering efforts of the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries, and the Marxist-Leninist parties the world over, the idea of peace is now closely associated in the minds of millions of working people with the idea of socialism. The peoples are coming to realise more and more that none but the Communists are able to deliver present and future generations from a disastrous thermonuclear war. This is now a major factor of the growth of Communist influence. The standard of peace, which the Communists hold so high, is enabling them to attract the masses.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 386.
** *Ibid.*, p. 434.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 112.
**** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

Third Congress of the Communist International. The Third Congress of the Communist International was held in the latter part of June and the beginning of July 1921. Lenin was elected its honorary chairman.

In his theses and report on the tactics of the Russian Communist Party, Lenin explained to the delegates the essence of the New Economic Policy and the circumstances that necessitated its adoption. The New Economic Policy met with opposition at the Congress on the part of unstable, anarcho-syndicalist elements alien to Marxism-Leninism, who alleged that it would lead to the restoration of capitalism in Soviet Russia and hinder the further development of the world revolution. The Congress rejected these views and adopted Lenin's theses as well as a resolution fully endorsing the policy of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

The key item on the agenda of the Third Congress was the question of tactics. As Lenin pointed out, the changes in the world, such as the capitalist offensive against the working class, the defeat of the revolutionary actions of the proletariat in a number of countries in 1920-21, and the clear indications of a slowing down in the development of the world revolution, called for a radical modification of tactics on the part of the Communist Parties. By the time of the Third Congress, the number of Communist Parties had grown substantially: the Congress was attended by delegates from 48 parties. But this army of Communists, Lenin wrote, was still poorly organised and poorly versed in the art of revolutionary leadership. It was necessary to re-orient the work of the Communist Parties, placing the accent on struggle to win over the masses.

However, "Left" elements underestimated the need for systematic, persistent day-to-day work among the masses and instead preached the so-called "theory of offensive", the substance of which was that the Party should always adhere to offensive tactics regardless of whether the necessary objective conditions for revolutionary action existed or whether the Party had the support of the broad working masses.

Discussion of the question of tactics at the Congress centred on the theses drawn up by the Russian delegation, which took account of the opinions of other delegations. The theses had been drawn up in the spirit of Lenin's advice and with his participation. He had written detailed remarks on the original drafts, sharply criticising the Leftist position taken by Radek with the tacit approval of Zinoviev and Bukharin.

Lenin's speech at the Congress in defence of the theses on the tactics of the Communist International is a brilliant example of the art of polemics. He completely demolished all the arguments of the "Lefts", and showed that they use the pretext of struggle against Right opportunism and Centrism to preach dogmatism, sectarianism and adventurist tactics.

The tactics of the Communist Parties, Lenin said, had to be based on the fact that the first wave of revolution was on the ebb and the second had not yet risen. The Communists had to realise that the pace of

revolutionary development had slackened, they had to learn from the experience of defeats and prepare for the new revolutionary upsurge. *The principal task of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries was to win over the majority of the working class, of all working people, to the side of communism, and anyone who failed to understand this was seriously damaging the communist movement.* In 1920, Lenin described the Leftist mistakes as "infantile disorders" of communism. At the Third Congress he regarded "Left doctrinaire" tendencies and sectarianism with their adventurist tactics as having become the principal danger for the communist movement. "If the Congress is not going to wage a vigorous offensive against such errors, against such 'Left' idiocies, the whole movement is doomed. That is my deep conviction."*

Subjecting the notorious "theory of offensive" to annihilating criticism, Lenin pointed out that this "theory" was nothing but a petty-bourgeois view on revolution, which was fraught with disastrous setbacks for the Communist Parties and the working class, and which at the same time placed a dangerous weapon into the hands of the reformist, Right-wing opportunist elements. It was not a question of whether revolutionary action was permissible or not. This could not be questioned by a revolutionary party. It was a question of whether the conditions were ripe for revolutionary action, of whether such action was desirable and timely in a given situation. In order to win the revolution and to retain power, Lenin taught, the Party must have the majority of the working people behind it—meaning not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the exploited and the oppressed. And to gain the support of the majority of the working people, it is necessary to work out the right tactics in the fight to win the masses, to learn to lead the revolutionary movement.

Lenin's speech finally convinced the wavering delegates of the need for the Communist Parties to turn towards the masses. The theses on the tactics of the Communist International were adopted by the Congress.

On Lenin's initiative, the question of organisation, of the methods and content of the work of the Communist Parties, was included in the agenda of the Congress. O. Kuusinen was assigned the task of drafting the theses on this question. "This task," Kuusinen wrote, "was carried out partly on the personal advice of Comrade Lenin, and partly by drawing on the plentiful direction in articles he had previously written."** Lenin read the draft and made a number of remarks, suggesting among other things, that the draft deal in greater detail with the need for everyday revolutionary work on the part of every Party member, and with the work of the Communist Parties *"among the masses* of the proletariat, the unorganised as well as those organised

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 678.

** *Lenin and the International Working-Class Movement, Reminiscences*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1934, Vol. I, p. 56.

in yellow unions (including those in the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals*) *and also the non-proletarian* sections *of the working people*".** After the draft had been edited with the participation of the German Communist Wilhelm Könen, the theses were submitted for discussion to the Congress and adopted.

Many of the delegates at the Congress had never seen Lenin and now, after hearing him speak and having a chance to talk to him, were all struck by the fact that they had never met anyone like him before. The French Communist, Paul Vaillant-Couturier, wrote:

"Vladimir Ilyich was and still is the personification of ceaseless activity, and at the same time a Marxist from head to foot. Contact with him had the effect of a gust of wind sweeping into a stuffy room; it refreshed the mind burdened by prejudice and formal doctrines. . . .

"Lenin, the intellectual, could think like a worker. Lenin, the orator, spoke without rhetoric or bombast. The man who had shaken the whole world, whose mind was constantly absorbing all that constituted the living breath of that world, this man to the end of his life preserved a remarkable ability to feel and to think like a Chinese coolie or a Negro porter. The oppressed Annamite or Hindu were as much an open book to him as the Leningrad metal-worker, the Paris textile worker, the miner from New Virginia. Lenin was the perfect type of the new man; he was for us the prototype of the future."***

The Communist International declared united front tactics to be the principal means of winning the masses. "The purpose and aim of the united front tactics," wrote Lenin in 1922, "is to draw ever broader masses of workers into the struggle against capital, not stopping at repeated proposals even to the leaders of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals to wage this struggle jointly."**** At Lenin's suggestion and in line with his precepts the Executive Committee of the Communist International worked out the theses on the united working-class front and on the attitude to workers belonging to the Second, Two-and-a-Half and Amsterdam Internationals,***** as well as to workers supporting anarcho-syndicalist organisations.

The question of the united front came sharply to the fore in the beginning of 1922 in connection with the preparations for a conference of the three Internationals—the Second, the Two-and-a-Half and the Communist. Lenin held that this conference would give the Communists an opportunity to extend the struggle for working-class unity, and expose the erroneous political position of the Right-wing socialists.

* *The Two-and-a-Half International* was founded in February 1921 at a conference held in Vienna of Centrist parties and groups that had temporarily left the Second International under the pressure of revolutionary-minded workers. It rejoined the Second International in 1923.

** *Leninsky Sbornik* XXXVI, p. 258.

*** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, pp. 625-26.

**** *Leninsky Sbornik* XXXVI, pp. 461-62.

***** An international amalgamation of reformist trade unions founded at a congress in Amsterdam, July 1919.

Briefing the Comintern delegates to the conference, he pointed out that for the sake of reaching agreement discussion should be confined to the least controversial questions, "only those questions that have a direct bearing on the practical joint actions of the masses of workers". The representatives of the Communist International at the conference should display "supreme restraint", in order not to risk jeopardising a political cause of the utmost importance, without, however, sacrificing any of their basic principles.

Comparing the Social-Democratic parties to a closed shop, Lenin wrote that the Communists could not refuse to pay something, to make some concessions so as to gain admission to this "closed shop" where the masses following the reformists were to be found, and to address these masses. Moreover, he stressed that criticism of the policy of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals should be of an "explanatory nature", that the fallacy of reformist ideology and policy should be explained patiently and thoroughly to the socialist workers without frightening them away with harsh words. Only in this way would the Communists be able to win the majority of the workers and the working masses in general. It was for the sake of helping these masses to fight the capitalists that "we adopted united front tactics, and we shall pursue these tactics to the end".*

In January 1922, the First Congress of Revolutionary Organisations of the Far East was held in Moscow, attended by delegates from China, Japan, Indonesia and Mongolia. Lenin, whose health did not permit him to be present at the Congress, invited delegates to his home. As Sen Katayama, founder of the Communist Party of Japan, subsequently related, Lenin spoke to each of the delegations in turn, so that all of them heard each other's questions and Lenin's replies to them. He discussed with each delegation the specific questions of interest to the given country and problems relating to the Far East as a whole. Above all he stressed the need to unite the revolutionary forces of all countries in the struggle against imperialism.

Lenin, writes Sen Katayama, "was very attentive to everyone who spoke to him. He was also a very good listener. His answers satisfied and encouraged everyone. We all felt perfectly at ease with him. He was a fine conversationalist and all of us were interested in everything he had to say. Comrade Lenin gave many useful suggestions and advice to each delegation in this brief but extremely important talk with the Congress delegates".**

The Soviet people's efforts to restore their devastated economy and build a new society evoked the greatest admiration, sympathy, and support of working people the world over. "... We do not believe what is in the subsidised capitalist press, against Russia and you," an American worker, named S. Kane, wrote in a letter to Lenin. "We

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 334.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 629.

believe, that it is no more a Paradise in Russia, for the Parasites, Exploiters and other Crooks and Scoundrels, like here in this Country, but it dawns here sure. It takes a while, till the masses are Educated, where their Interests are. Ignorance of the masses is the great curse, whereby the Capitalist Scoundrels and their hirelings, are able to exist yet.

"Keep on, in the good work, for a free world for the Workers, we are, the workers, with you, and do our best, for the good cause."*

A movement to aid Soviet Russia in her fight against famine and economic dislocation had been started at that time among the workers in the capitalist countries. A number of groups of foreign workers came to Russia to help restore the national economy. Lenin deeply appreciated this tangible manifestation of proletarian internationalism and stressed the significance of the fraternal support which the workers of the whole world were rendering the Soviet country in building up its socialist economy.

Economic retreat ends. Lenin worked strenuously, with nearly no rest. Though he himself constantly urged his comrades to take proper care of their health, he brushed aside all appeals made to him to take a good rest himself, insisting that for the time being what he called "current repairs" would suffice. By the end of 1921, however, his health deteriorated. The years of underground work and emigration, extreme overwork and, especially, the effects of the wound in 1918, took their toll. On December 6, 1921, he was given a vacation and moved to Gorki. "I am devilishly tired. Insomnia. Going away for treatment," he wrote to Maxim Gorky.

On several occasions he went for a brief holiday to the village of Kostino (now the town of Kostino, Mytishchi District, Moscow Region), where he stayed in a peasant cottage. He rose early and went for walks. One of his favourite routes led to a grove of century-old oaks not far from the cottage. Sometimes he would take a shovel and clear the paths of snow around the house. Occasionally he went out shooting. But nothing could take his mind off his work. He went out of his way to meet and talk with the peasants. Every day he received a large package of newspapers, letters and documents of all kinds from Moscow. All this kept him busy, and the light in the window of his cottage would burn deep into the night.

At the end of December, the Eleventh All-Russia Party Conference and the Ninth Congress of Soviets were held. Lenin was unable to attend the conference, but came to the Congress and took an active part in it. He delivered a long report there on the work of the government, attended a conference of non-Party delegates, wrote the important "Mandate on Questions of Economic Management", which was adopted by the Congress. The "Mandate" defined the basic tasks of the central

* *Kommunist* No. 3, 1960, p. 4.

and local government bodies in carrying through the New Economic Policy, and served as a basis for a number of Congress resolutions.

On December 31, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee adopted a decision granting Lenin six weeks' leave, which was subsequently extended until the Eleventh Congress of the Party. But in all these months Lenin continued to examine all important matters. He wrote articles and drafted directives and decisions, took part in the meetings of the Political Bureau and Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee, gave instructions over the telephone, and met leading Party and government functionaries.

Lenin prepared vigorously for the Eleventh Congress of the Party. He took part in drafting decisions on the basic questions and drew up an outline for the Central Committee's political report. In submitting this plan to the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, Lenin asked that he be excused from attending it on grounds of ill health, adding that if his presence were required for elucidating the plan he would certainly appear at "two or three hours' notice". This is another of the many instances demonstrating Lenin's deep respect for the Central Committee as a collective organ of leadership.

The Congress opened on March 27, 1922. Lenin delivered the opening speech and the political report of the Central Committee. He said that the results of the first year of the New Economic Policy had fully confirmed its worth. Economic revival was making headway slowly but surely. The alliance of the working class and the peasantry had been strengthened. The bonds between industry and peasant agriculture were gradually becoming more solid. From this fact Lenin proceeded to draw important conclusions for the Party's policy. He advanced a new task—to halt the economic retreat and pass over to preparations for a decisive offensive against the capitalist elements. "For a year we have been retreating. On behalf of the Party we must now call a halt. The purpose pursued by the retreat has been achieved. This period is drawing, or has drawn, to a close."* The purpose was different from then on—"to regroup the forces" and start "preparations for an offensive *against private capial*". That, Lenin stressed, was the slogan of the day.

Lenin noted that a desperate struggle was going on between socialism and capitalism in which the question, "who will beat whom", was being decided, and expressed his deep conviction that the socialist element would prove the stronger and would inevitably beat the capitalist element. The New Economic Policy fully guaranteed, both economically and politically, the possibility of building the foundations of a socialist economy. The main thing now was to learn how to run the economy properly in order to defeat private capital. The fate of Soviet power, the fate of socialism itself, depended on it. Lenin denounced the panic-stricken speeches of the defeatist elements, who sought a revision of the New Economic Policy, a policy already adopted by the Party.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 280.



Lenin at a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)
Photo, 1922



Lenin in Gorki together with Krupskaya, Yelizarova, his nephew Victor and Vera, a worker's daughter

Photo, 1922

In the political report of the Central Committee and in his summing up, Lenin revealed and sharply criticised the shortcomings in the conduct of the New Economic Policy, the Party's guidance of the economy, and the work of the government machinery. He said that the Party is invincible when it is not afraid of criticism and self-criticism and does not cover up its shortcomings. "The proletariat," he said, "is not afraid to admit that certain things in the revolution went off magnificently, and that others went awry. All the revolutionary parties that have perished so far, perished because they became conceited, because they failed to see the source of their strength and feared to discuss their weaknesses. We, however, shall not perish, because we are not afraid to discuss our weaknesses and will learn to overcome them."*

At the same time Lenin always rejected the demagogic demand for "freedom of criticism" made by anti-Party elements. Criticism, he warned, should not take a form that would help the class enemies of the proletariat. This should always be borne in mind and practical steps should be taken to help rectify mistakes and shortcomings.

The Congress wholeheartedly approved the political and organisational policy of the Central Committee. It passed a decision on the "Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions in Conditions of the New Economic Policy" based on Lenin's theses written at the close of December 1921 and early January 1922. The Congress decisions regarding financial policy, work in the countryside, the consolidation and tasks of the Party, and others were also based on ideas contained in Lenin's report to the Congress, his speeches on questions related to the New Economic Policy, and his remarks on the drafts of Congress resolutions.

On April 2, 1922, Lenin delivered a short address at the closing of the Congress. Compared with the previous Congress the Eleventh Congress, he said, showed greater solidarity, unanimity and organisational unity, and refuted those who claimed that the Party was degenerating. The Party had been flexible in its tactics, showing that it knew both how to attack the enemy boldly, swiftly and resolutely and how to retreat in revolutionary order. Observing that the Congress had decided to stop the economic retreat, Lenin expressed the firm conviction that the Party would be able to build its work on new lines and reach its goal.

The day after the Congress closed, Lenin attended a Plenary Meeting of the newly formed Central Committee. The meeting elected the Political Bureau, the Organising Bureau, and the Secretariat of the Central Committee. J. Stalin was elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. The Plenary Meeting passed Lenin's proposal on the organisation of the work of the Central Committee Secretariat.**

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 311.
** See *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, p. 464.

First attack of illness. Recovery and return to work. Continuous ill health prevented Lenin from ending his leave of absence. He suffered from severe headaches which his doctors believed to be due to the bullets still lodged in his body since the attempt on his life in 1918. It was decided to remove one of the bullets (the doctors would not risk interfering with the other). On April 23, the operation was performed at the Soldatenkov (now Botkin) Hospital.

Early in May, Lenin received a moving letter from the peasants of Praviye-Lamki Village, Leviye-Lamki Volost, Morshansk Uyezd, Tambov Gubernia. Greeting "the great leader of the Russian working peasantry, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov-Lenin", on his fifty-second birthday, they wrote: "In your honour and to wish you good health we sang the *Internationale.*" They assured him that they were "ready at any moment to move in a solid wall to your assistance should anyone dare to raise a hand against our leader and the working class". The message ended with these words: "All of us who write are non-Party and we are not well educated and if this letter is not very well written, forgive us, for although we are non-Party we are Communists at heart and in spirit, we know that at the present time the government is a working people's government."

"I remember how Vladimir Ilyich's face brightened as he read this letter," his sister Maria wrote some time later. "He told me to remind him to answer it—and answer it he did."*

On May 20, on the insistence of his doctors, who felt that he was in need of a period of convalescence and medical treatment, Lenin moved to Gorki. On leaving, he asked the heads of the central institutions to keep him informed of the most important affairs, the fulfilment of the principal decisions, campaign plans and other matters. But shortly afterward his health deteriorated sharply. Sclerosis of the brain brought about his first severe attack of illness. His right hand and right leg were almost paralysed and his speech partially impaired. The best doctors were called to his bedside: F. Getier, A. Kozhevnikov, V. Kramer, P. Yelistratov, O. Ferster, V. Rozanov, M. Averbach, and others.

Toward the middle of June, his condition improved. In July, his doctors permitted him to receive his closest associates, read books, and later on, newspapers. He asked for books, resumed his correspondence and gradually began to take a hold on current affairs.

On October 2, 1922, he returned to Moscow and set to work. The following day he presided at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars, and on October 5, took part in a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee. His return to work was a source of great joy to the Party and to the working people generally. In letters of greeting to him, the workers and peasants begged him to take good care of himself and to follow doctors' orders.

* *Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives*, Russ. ed, Moscow, 1956, p. 167.

At the insistence of the doctors, his working hours were now limited: he was permitted to work from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m., provided he took a day-off in the middle of the week (besides Sundays) for a complete rest.

But Lenin chafed under these restrictions. L. Fotieva, his secretary, tells us that he would come to his office at 9.30 in the morning, and when the secretaries looked in to see what he was doing, he would smile and say: "I'm not working, I'm just reading."* At a quarter to eleven he would summon his secretary, listen to her report on documents received and issue a few instructions. By 11 o'clock, when his "legal" working day began, he would be working as intensively as usual. During the afternoon break, and sometimes at the end of the day as well, he would take a folder of papers home with him, returning them the next day with notes and comments. As a matter of fact, his so-called "rest days" differed but little from his working days.

"His mind worked constantly at high tension," wrote Nadezhda Krupskaya. "I remember when his last fatal illness was approaching the doctors insisted on a strict routine, ordering him to lie down for two hours after dinner. Ilyich at first submitted to their orders, but was sceptical about the doctors' demands. 'They can't prevent me from thinking,' he once said. And indeed, whether he was lying in bed, or out walking, or simply conversing on ordinary everyday subjects his mind was constantly occupied with the cause to which he had dedicated his whole life, all of his energies, his every living minute."**

For two and a half months after his return to work, before the second attack in December 1922, Lenin worked essentially at the same high pressure as before. The following brief secretarial note on his work from October 2 to December 16 has been preserved: "Wrote 224 business letters and notes, received 171 people (125 calls), and presided at 32 meetings and conferences of the Council of People's Commissars, Council of Labour and Defence, the Political Bureau and various commissions."***

In this period Lenin continued to study problems arising from the New Economic Policy, directed economic and cultural development, and handled numerous problems related to industry, agriculture, finance and trade, public education, the work of the government bodies and the foreign policy of the Soviet state.

Safeguard the foreign trade monopoly. In 1921, Lenin had laid the accent on trade and agriculture. Now that some progress had been made in these spheres he concentrated attention on developing industry, primarily heavy industry, as the basis for the building of socialism and building up the country's defence potential.

"... Unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it," he said, "we shall not be able to build up an industry at all; and without an

* L. Fotieva, *Pages from Lenin's Life*, Moscow, 1960, p. 144.
** *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Russ. ed., 1957, Part 2, p. 681.
*** L. Fotieva, *Pages from Lenin's Life*, Moscow, 1960, p. 152.

industry we shall go under as an independent country. We realise this very well.

"The salvation of Russia lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms–that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumer goods–this, too, is not enough; we also need *heavy* industry."*

Lenin considered that the financial aspect was the most difficult problem of socialist industrialisation. In the capitalist countries, he pointed out, heavy industry was usually developed with the help of loans. But the imperialists did not want to grant the Soviet country loans or credits. Nor did the foreign capitalists agree to lease concessions. The boycott of the Soviet Republic by the entire bourgeoisie and all the governments was still making itself felt. Lenin said that we had to make the change and achieve success single-handed. That, he stressed, "is where the special difficulty lies".** The Soviet people had only their own resources to rely on. In Lenin's opinion industrialisation could be financed by drawing on incomes from foreign and domestic trade, profits from light industry and taxation, primarily taxation of the Nepmen, and also by reducing the administrative apparatus and economising stringently.

He was delighted to note that thanks to the New Economic Policy the Soviet state had been able to accumulate its first 20 million gold rubles, which were to be used exclusively for the restoration and expansion of heavy industry. Lenin voiced his firm assurance that the Soviet people would overcome all difficulties and transform the once backward Russia into a mighty industrial power.

He attached great importance to the foreign trade monopoly as a lever of socialist development. He regarded it as a crucial economic factor, and pointed out that nothing but foreign trade monopoly, coupled with planned government regulation of imports and exports, could safeguard the as yet weak Soviet economy from an invasion of foreign capital, secure the rehabilitation and development of domestic industries and obtain the profits and gold necessary for the country's industrialisation. He stressed that the monopoly on foreign trade was particularly important in view of the New Economic Policy, and the fierce attacks made on it by the foreign imperialists and capitalist elements at home.

The issue became doubly acute because some leading Party and government officials came out with proposals to modify, even to repeal, the foreign trade monopoly. Sokolnikov, Bukharin and Pyatakov urged repeal of the monopoly, while Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev suggested modifying it. Replying to a letter which Lenin wrote to him and M. Frumkin*** on May 16, 1922, in which Lenin had demanded *"a formal ban* on all discussion, negotiation and committee work, etc., about

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 776.
** *Ibid.*, p. 785.
*** M. Frumkin was Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Trade.

modifying the monopoly of foreign trade",* Stalin wrote: "I have no objections to a 'formal ban' on measures to *mitigate* the foreign trade monopoly at the *present* stage. All the same, I think that *mitigation* is becoming indispensable."** Stalin doubted that a state monopoly on foreign trade could yield big enough profits.

A Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee on October 6, 1922, which Lenin did not attend, passed an incorrect decision providing for temporary permission "to import and export certain groups of commodities with respect to certain borders". In a letter to Stalin, who was Secretary of the Central Committee, Lenin objected to the decision and pointed out that "this wrecks the foreign trade monopoly". He noted that "the question was brought up at the Plenary Meeting hastily", that "there was no serious discussion worth mentioning", and suggested postponing the final decision until the next Plenary Meeting two months hence in order to collect the necessary facts and make a deep-going study of the question.*** All members of the Central Committee present in Moscow were consulted, and backed Lenin's proposal. Only a few persisted in their erroneous attitude. In a letter to the Political Bureau, Bukharin, for one, tried to justify his plan of abolishing the foreign trade monopoly. Stalin, too, wrote: "Comrade Lenin's letter has not made me change my mind about the decision of the C.C. Plenary Meeting of October 6 on foreign trade.... All the same, in view of Comrade Lenin's insistent proposal to delay implementation of the C.C. decision, I vote *for* a postponement with a view to the question being discussed again at the next Plenary Meeting in Lenin's presence."**** The Central Committee decided "to postpone a decision on the question until the next Plenary Meeting" by fourteen votes to one (Zinoviev's).

The Central Committee re-examined the question of the foreign trade monopoly at its Plenary Meeting on December 18. By that time Lenin had compiled considerable material and set up a commission to examine it. He sent people to investigate the work of Soviet trade representatives abroad, spoke with members of the Central Committee, with leading Party members and foreign trade officials, and wrote letters and notes to prevail on comrades who had not yet made up their minds on the issue to recognise the necessity of the foreign trade monopoly. Furthermore, he discussed the matter with the people who backed his point of view and solicited their support at the meeting.

On December 13, Lenin wrote a letter for the Plenary Meeting, in which he made a thorough study of, and repudiated, Bukharin's arguments against the foreign trade monopoly. He stressed, among other things, that no customs policy, however rigorous, could prevent

* *Leninsky Sbornik* XXXVI, p. 484.
** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.
*** See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 375-78.
**** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

the rich imperialist countries from breaking down the customs barriers of an economically weak country if the foreign trade monopoly were abolished. "In practice," he wrote, "Bukharin is acting as an advocate of the profiteer, of the petty bourgeois and of the upper stratum of the peasantry in opposition to the industrial proletariat, which will be totally unable to build up its own industry and make Russia an industrial country unless it has the protection, not of tariffs, but of the monopoly of foreign trade."*

In a letter to Stalin dated December 15, Lenin pointed out that he would firmly oppose delay in the solution of the foreign trade monopoly question by the C.C. Plenary Meeting. "Further hesitation with regard to this most important issue," he wrote, "is absolutely intolerable and will impair all other work."** Lenin attached so much importance to the foreign trade monopoly that he intended to put it on the agenda of the next Party Congress.

Lenin's letters and conversations, and his deep-going examination of the pertinent facts, convinced the members of the Central Committee that the foreign trade monopoly was essential. Stalin, too, changed his point of view. On December 15, he wrote to the members of the C.C. that "in view of the new facts accumulated over the last two months concerning the question of foreign trade . . . which speak in favour of maintaining the monopoly, I consider it my duty to declare that I am lifting my objections to the foreign trade monopoly which I communicated two months ago to the members of the C.C. in writing".***

The C.C. Plenary Meeting in December unanimously adopted a resolution over-ruling the decision of the previous meeting and reaffirmed the "unqualified necessity of maintaining and strengthening the monopoly on foreign trade". Subsequently, the 12th Party Congress reaffirmed the monopoly.

Lenin's stand in the question of foreign trade illustrates his loyalty to principle and shows how perseveringly he battled for decisions he considered to be correct and politically important. It also shows what immense importance he attached to the principle of collective leadership and to discussion of questions of policy at plenary meetings of the Central Committee and at Party congresses.

Founder of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Questions relating to the national policy of the Party occupied a prominent place in Lenin's activities. The transition to peaceful socialist construction brought out a number of new problems in this sphere. A major role in defining the national policy of the Party in the new conditions was played by its Tenth Congress decision on the national question, drafted by a commission headed by Lenin. The Congress decision charged the Party with the task of doing away with the inequality of the formerly

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 458.
** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.
*** *Ibid.*

oppressed peoples, drawing them into the work of building socialism, helping the working people of the non-Russian nationalities to develop and consolidate the Soviet system in their own areas, and ensuring the promotion of their economy and national cultures.

In the middle of April 1921, Lenin wrote his famous letter "To the Communists of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Daghestan and the Mountain Republic". To all intents and purposes, it was a directive to Communists of all the national republics and regions. In it Lenin drew the attention of the Caucasian Communists to the fact that their most important task was to preserve and consolidate Soviet power in order to advance to socialism. He believed that to fulfil this task successfully the Communists of the Caucasus had to study the specific features of their republics as distinct from the conditions of the R.S.F.S.R.; that they should not copy the tactics of the Party organisations of central Russia, and should adapt them to suit their own conditions.

The Caucasian republics, Lenin wrote, were peasant countries to an even greater extent than Russia. Hence a more cautious approach to socialism was required, a milder, more flexible attitude to the petty-bourgeoisie, to the intelligentsia and particularly to the peasants.

Lenin supervised the practical implementation of the Communist Party's national policy, directing the activity of the Party and state bodies in the Union and Autonomous Republics and concerning himself with the welfare of all the peoples of the Soviet land. He kept in constant touch with developments in the government, economic and cultural spheres in the Ukraine, in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkestan, Karelia, Yakutia, and other national republics and regions, and devoted a great deal of attention to the establishment of a federation of Transcaucasian Soviet Republics, which was essential at the time to unify the Transcaucasian peoples and, to use Lenin's expression, to secure "national peace" in Transcaucasia. At his proposal and on the basis of his suggestions, a circular letter of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) was sent to the Communist Party of Turkestan to elucidate national policy in the conditions of NEP.

Pointing to the need for winning the confidence and trust of the formerly oppressed peoples, Lenin emphasised the tremendous international significance of the correct solution of the national question in the Soviet land. "This is a question of world-wide importance, without exaggeration world-wide," he wrote. ". . . It will affect India, the East, it is not to be treated lightly, here one must be a thousand times cautious."*

The tasks of socialist construction that faced the country after the war called for the further consolidation and development of the union of Soviet peoples.

After the main forces of the interventionists and Whites were crushed at the end of 1919, Lenin set out important ideas concerning the

* *Leninsky Sbornik* XXXVI, p. 321.

relations of the Soviet Republics in a "Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine in Connection with the Victories over Denikin". He expressed these ideas in connection with the fact that the question of state relations between the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Russia was to be examined by the Ukrainian working people at the Congress of Soviets in the Ukraine.

The interests of socialism, he pointed out, require complete confidence and close alliance between the working people of different countries and nations. Capital is an international force. To defeat it, the workers need international alliance and fraternal international solidarity. The Communists, he said, oppose national enmity, national strife and national exclusiveness. They are internationalists and strive for close unity among the workers and peasants of all nations.

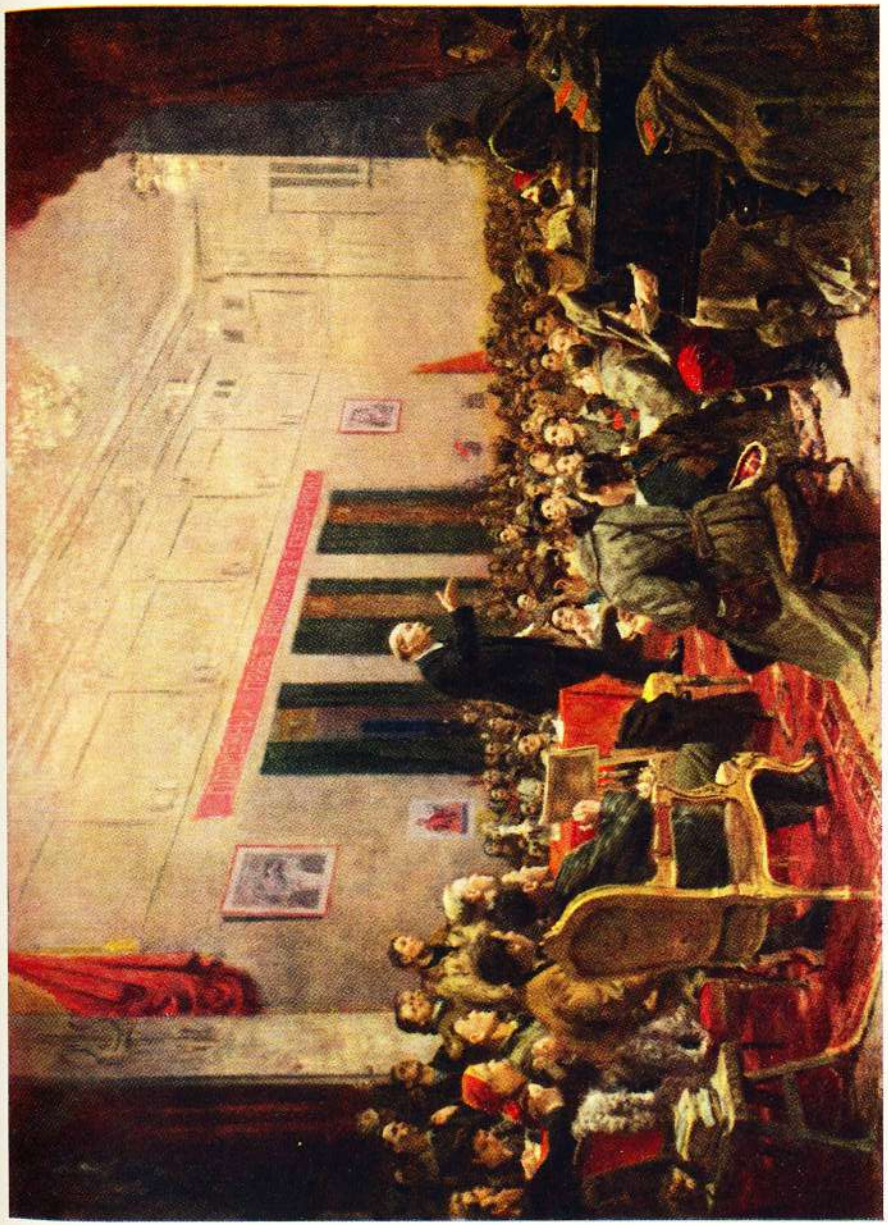
While striving for international unity, Lenin warned, Communists should, however, be cautious, patient and flexible with regard to the survivals of national mistrust. "We want a *voluntary* union of nations," Lenin stressed, "a union which precludes any coercion of one nation by another–a union founded on complete confidence, on a clear recognition of brotherly unity, on absolutely voluntary consent. Such a union cannot be effected at one stroke; we have to work towards it with the greatest patience and circumspection, so as not to spoil matters and not to arouse distrust, and so that the distrust inherited from centuries of landowner and capitalist oppression, centuries of private property and the enmity caused by its divisions and redivisions may have a chance to wear off."*

Lenin pointed out that "there must be a close military and economic alliance between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers" and that the imperialist powers would "crush and strangle us separately" unless such an alliance existed. "He who undermines the unity and closest alliance between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers and peasants," Lenin added, "is helping the Kolchaks, the Denikins, the capitalist bandits of all countries."** Lenin voiced the firm belief that under the leadership of the Communist Party the working people of the Ukraine and Russia would demonstrate to the world a model of the truly close unity of workers and peasants of different nations in the struggle for Soviet power, for the destruction of landowner and capitalist oppression, and for socialism.

Lenin's point of view triumphed. The people of the Ukraine proclaimed an independent and sovereign Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and established a close political and economic alliance with the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and all the other Soviet Republics.

In 1920-21, the Soviet Republics extended and strengthened their federal ties. The R.S.F.S.R., Ukraine, Byelorussia, and the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics concluded treaties with one another, which besides

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 293.
** *Ibid.*, p. 296.



Lenin addressing the Third Congress of the Young Communist League

From painting by B. Ioganson, V. Sokalov, D. Tegin, I. Faidysh-Krandiyevskaya, N. Chebakov

the unification of armed forces provided for economic co-operation. In the new situation, however, during the all-round development of socialism, relations along these lines between the Soviet Republics were no longer adequate.

It was before the October Revolution that Lenin first broached the idea of creating a united federative state when power in the multinational country would be seized by the working class. He elaborated on this idea exhaustively after the Revolution. Lenin made a profoundly reasoned stand in favour of integrating the independent Soviet Republics in a union. He summed up the basic provisions on this score in the summer of 1920 in his "Preliminary Draft of Theses on the National and Colonial Question". In the first place, he wrote, "without the closest alliance between the Soviet Republics" it would be impossible to safeguard their existence under the conditions of capitalist encirclement. Secondly, "a close economic alliance between the Soviet Republics is necessary, otherwise it will be impossible to restore the productive forces ruined by imperialism and ensure the well-being of the working people."* Thirdly, such an alliance would make it possible to create a single socialist economy developing according to a common plan. The union of the Soviet Republics, he said, should be achieved through federation. "The advisability of federation," he wrote, "has already been demonstrated in practice both by the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and other Soviet Republics ... and by the relations within the R.S.F.S.R.... In recognising that federation is a transitional form to complete unity, it is necessary to strive for ever closer federal unity."** An imperative condition of such federation, he stressed, was mutual confidence and the voluntary consent of the republics joining it.

The Tenth Party Congress resolution, "The Current Tasks of the Party on the National Question", was based on Lenin's instructions. The Congress defined the various forms of Soviet federation, based on the autonomous status of the national republics, on formal agreements between independent Soviet Republics, and those forms that were in substance intermediate stages between them. It stressed that federation "as the general form of the union of Soviet Republics is desirable and flexible".

In the spring and summer of 1922, the central Party bodies of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Federation requested the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) to formalise relations between the independent republics and the R.S.F.S.R. They pointed out that the federative bonds between the Soviet Republics had to be developed and strengthened. In view of this the Political Bureau of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) suggested to the Organising Bureau on August 10, 1922, that a commission be appointed to prepare the question of relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and the independent republics for discussion at the next Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee. J. Stalin, V. Kuibyshev,

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 465.
** *Ibid.*, p. 464.

G. Orjonikidze, Kh. Rakovsky, and G. Sokolnikov were made members of the commission, which also included S. Agamali-ogly of Azerbaijan, A. Myasnikov of Armenia, P. Mdivani of Georgia, G. Petrovsky of the Ukraine, A. Chervyakov of Byelorussia, and other representatives of the national republics.

The draft of the resolution "On Relations Between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Independent Republics" was drawn up by Stalin. He advanced the idea of "autonomisation" of the independent national Soviet Republics, providing for their inclusion in the Russian Federation as autonomous republics. Clause 1 of the draft read: "The formal entry of the independent Soviet Republics of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia into the R.S.F.S.R. is considered desirable." Accordingly, Clause 2 of the draft suggested the "formal extension of the competence of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence of the R.S.F.S.R. to the corresponding central government bodies of the republics listed in Clause 1".

Stalin's draft was then submitted for discussion to the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the various Soviet Republics.

Stalin's idea of "autonomisation" of the independent Soviet Republics was wrong. It conflicted with the Leninist national policy and, in effect, belittled the rights of the national Soviet Republics. Furthermore, it was inconsistent with the task of strengthening the friendship of the peoples, of uniting them, and of promoting co-operation between them in the building of socialism.

Lenin was ill at that time and had gone to Gorki. He was not informed until the end of September of how the preparations of the question of relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and the independent national republics were proceeding, and had no chance of influencing the work of the commission. However, Lenin's attitude on this issue was expressed in his works and letters, and in the Central Committee decisions he had helped to frame. Lenin urged a close political alliance of the republics, but called continuously for supreme caution and for respect of the rights and sovereignty of the independent Soviet Republics.

The Central Committee directives to the authorised representative of the Council of Labour and Defence and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade in the Transcaucasian republics, framed with Lenin's help in May 1921, pointed out in Paragraph 1 that Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia "are independent and self-contained". "The representative," Lenin added to the draft, "must scrupulously emphasise this independence in view of the public sentiment in the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics and the current international situation." When the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party complained to the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) in the spring of 1922 that some of the R.S.F.S.R. commissariats did not respect the sovereignty of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Political Bureau of the C.C.

R.C.P.(B.) on May 11, 1922, acting on Lenin's advice adopted a decision to set up a committee to investigate the matter and emphasised that "no change has occurred in the relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Ukrainian S.S.R. in the sense of repealing or curtailing the independence of the Ukrainian Republic and, generally, in the sense of revising the basic constitutional provisions of the Ukrainian Republic".

Before the independent republics could be joined in union, Lenin stressed, their peoples had to consent to it, and every provision should be made to secure their complete equality and sovereignty. This would pave the way to greater unity and the coming together of the peoples, lacking which socialism and communism could not be built in a multinational country.

Stalin ignored the principles set out by Lenin on this score and suggested abolishing the independent national Soviet Republics. This was not accidental. In 1920, Stalin had disagreed with Lenin's proposition, which drew a distinction between the federative bonds of Soviet Republics based on autonomy, and federative bonds between independent Soviet Republics. At that time he said in a letter to Lenin with reference to Lenin's theses on the national and colonial questions that there was, in effect, no difference between these types of federative bonds. "There is no difference," he wrote, "or else it is so small that it is equal to naught." Stalin also flouted the propositions on federation set out in the Tenth Party Congress decision, "The Current Tasks of the Party on the National Question".

On September 22, 1922, in reply to a note by Lenin, who had evidently inquired about the attitude of the C.C. to the question of relations between the Soviet Republics (Lenin's note is not extant), Stalin set out his point of view and tried to reason the necessity of the "autonomisation" of the independent Soviet Republics. He misconstrued the national policy of the Party, maintaining that the independence of the national Soviet Republics was no more than formal. Stalin opposed the independence of these republics to the need of unifying them effectively in "an economic whole". He contended that the only way to secure the "actual unity of the Soviet Republics" was to turn them into autonomous republics within the framework of the R.S.F.S.R. "It is my plan," Stalin wrote, "to recognise autonomisation as desirable with respect to ... the five independent republics (Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia)."

The "autonomisation" plan was approved by the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Azerbaijan and Armenia. The Georgian Communists opposed it. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia favoured relations based on formal agreement. The Ukrainian Communist Party did not even discuss the project. Earlier, in March 1922, the Political Bureau of the C.C., Ukrainian Communist Party, noted in its decision concerning relations between the R.S.F.S.R. and the Ukrainian S.S.R. that it was acting upon the resolution of the Eighth All-Russia Party Conference "On Soviet Power in the Ukraine",

which stressed that the Communist Party of Russia "maintains the view of recognising the independence of the Ukrainian S.S.R.".

Stalin submitted his "autonomisation" plan to the commission of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee. The commission, which convened on September 23 and 24, with Molotov in the chair, accepted Stalin's draft resolution as a basis. On the following day, September 25, the documents of the commission and the resolutions of the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia were dispatched to Lenin, who was in Gorki, while the commission's resolution was circulated as a preparatory paper for the plenary meeting scheduled for early October, among the members and alternate members of the C.C. without Lenin's knowledge and consent.

Lenin studied all the material closely and conversed with Sokolnikov, Stalin, Orjonikidze, P. Mdivani, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Georgia, M. Okujava, L. Dombadze and K. Tsintsadze, who were members of the C.C., Communist Party of Georgia, and Myasnikov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Armenia. He was strongly opposed to the idea of "autonomising" the independent Soviet Republics and levelled caustic criticism at Stalin's proposal. In a letter, "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation' ", which he wrote later, he described "autonomisation" as an act of great-power policy and a deviation from the principles of proletarian internationalism. Lenin stressed that the "whole business of 'autonomisation' was radically wrong and badly timed". "I think," Lenin wrote, "that Stalin's haste and his infatuation with pure administration, together with his spite against the notorious 'nationalist socialism', played a fatal role." "In politics", Lenin added, "spite generally plays the basest of roles."*

Lenin set out a fundamentally different plan for unifying the Soviet Republics. He based it on the principles of Soviet federalism which he had worked out earlier, and on the summed up experience of national development in our country, *and defined the specific form of union–the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics–based on the voluntary unification of equal and independent Soviet Republics.* This was a major contribution to Marxist theory and to the practice of socialist construction. He conceived of a new type of multi-national state and, at once, a new type of federative proletarian state–a united multi-national socialist state, a voluntary union of equal and sovereign nations governed by the principles of proletarian internationalism.

On September 26, 1922, in a letter to the members of the Political Bureau, Lenin criticised the commission's resolution on "autonomisation" and set out his own plan for the union of the Soviet Republics.**

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 802, 803.

** Lenin's letter is dated September 27. This is evidently a slip of the pen. It says in the Register of the Letters, Notes and Instructions of V. I. Lenin that the letter was sent to the members of the Political Bureau on September 26. Furthermore, Lenin's conversation with Stalin, to which Lenin refers, is dated in Lenin's medical records as having taken place on September 26. This gives reason to believe that Lenin wrote his letter on September 26.

"In my opinion," he wrote, "this issue is of the utmost importance. Stalin is somewhat inclined to hurry." Lenin suggested that the first clause of the resolution should state that the independent Soviet national republics were not entering the Russian Federation but uniting with the R.S.F.S.R. in a new political body. "We consider ourselves equal with the Ukrainian S.S.R. and the others," Lenin pointed out, "and are entering together with them, on an equal footing, into a new union, a new federation, the 'Union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia'." "It is important," he added, "that we should not give food for talk to the 'independents', that we should not destroy their *independence* and, rather, create a *new body politic*, a federation of *equal republics*."*

The other clauses of the resolution, too, Lenin suggested, should be brought into line with the principle of unifying the Soviet Republics as equal and sovereign. He envisaged an All-Union Central Executive Committee, a number of union-wide people's commissariats, etc.

Stalin did not take Lenin's criticism in the right spirit. He was opposed to Lenin's suggestion of unifying the Soviet Republics on the basis of equality and sovereignty. His letter to that effect addressed to Lenin and the other members of the Political Bureau on September 27, 1922, referred with intolerable rudeness to Lenin. Although he accepted Lenin's proposal of forming the U.S.S.R., the terms in which he couched his consent indicated that it was purely formal. He objected to the idea of a union-wide Central Executive Committee along with the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the R.S.F.S.R. and suggested reorganising the latter into a federal Central Executive Committee. Stalin did not grasp the internationalist substance of the idea of forming the U.S.S.R., and qualified Lenin's attitude as "national liberalism". Evidently Kamenev and Stalin exchanged notes at that time (the notes are not dated). In his reply to Kamenev, who wrote, "Lenin has made up his mind to go to war in behalf of independence," Stalin said: "In my opinion we have to be firm against Lenin."

However, Stalin knew that the Central Committee would back Lenin and did not dare to insist on his own point of view. So he revised the resolution of the commission of the Organising Bureau of the C.C. to bring it into line with all of Lenin's proposals. The new draft, signed by Stalin, Orjonikidze, Myasnikov, and Molotov, was sent to the members and alternate members of the Central Committee. The preamble to the draft did not say that it had been revised in accordance with Lenin's principles, and the fundamental difference between the "autonomisation" project and Lenin's plan of forming the U.S.S.R. was obscured. The preamble said that the commission's resolution on "autonomisation" was "basically correct and definitely acceptable", but that it "had to be made more specific in some parts, chiefly those concerning the structure of the union-wide central bodies and, partly, concerning their functions". The new resolution, the preamble added,

* *Leninsky Sbornik XXXVI*, p. 497.

was a "somewhat revised and more precise exposition of the decision passed by the C.C. commission".

On October 6, when the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee convened, Lenin, who was indisposed and could not attend, wrote the following note to Kamenev:

"I declare war to the death on dominant nation chauvinism. I shall eat it with all my healthy teeth as soon as I get rid of this accursed bad tooth.

"It must be *absolutely* insisted," Lenin added to his proposals of forming the U.S.S.R., "that the Union Central Executive Committee should be *presided over* in turn by a

Russian,
Ukrainian,
Georgian, *etc.*
Absolutely!"*

The Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee ranged itself behind Lenin's proposal. It passed a resolution based on his proposals and circulated it as a C.C. directive. It also appointed a new commission to draft a law on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which was to be submitted to the Congress of Soviets.

The decision was approved by the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of all the independent republics. A nation-wide discussion was announced. The working people of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Transcaucasus and the Russian Federation, and the congresses of Soviets of the republics concerned gave enthusiastic support to Lenin's idea of forming the U.S.S.R.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed at the First All-Union Congress of Soviets on December 30, 1922. Lenin was ill and did not attend the Congress. But the work of the Congress, the Declaration and the Union Agreement on the formation of the U.S.S.R. embodied Lenin's plan and were imbued with Lenin's idea of equality and fraternal co-operation among the peoples, the idea of proletarian internationalism.

Catch up and outstrip the capitalist countries. The Fourth Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (Ninth Convocation) was held at the end of October 1922. On October 31, Lenin addressed the session. He paid tribute to the Red Army which had liberated Vladivostok from the Japanese interventionists and thus cleared the Soviet Union of the last of the foreign invaders. He then went on to speak briefly of the significance of the laws endorsed at the session, emphasising that they reflected and consolidated the great gains of Soviet power.

He observed that culture and the productive forces in Russia were at a lower level than in the leading capitalist countries, and expressed the firm conviction that the Soviet country would overtake "these

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 372.

countries faster than they ever dreamed possible". "Nobody believes that any important change can be achieved at a fantastic speed," he said. "But we do believe in real speed, speed compared with the rate of development in any period of history you like to take—especially if progress is guided by a genuinely revolutionary party; and this speed we shall achieve at all costs."*

Subsequent developments confirmed Lenin's prophecy.

The fifth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution was approaching. The workers and peasants sent Lenin telegrams and letters of congratulation and wishes of good health and fruitful work for the good of the working people. "We know that your mind and your heart are preoccupied with our needs and ailments," the workers of the Moscow Bogatyr (now Krasny Bogatyr) Plant wrote. "And in gratitude for all the many years of your work you are uppermost in our thoughts on this proletarian holiday.

"We send you our proletarian greetings and declare that our calloused hands will never relinquish the banner of Soviet power."

The people's boundless love for Lenin found expression also in the gifts which they sent to their beloved leader and teacher. In the beginning of November 1922, delegates of workers from the Stodol Woollen Mill in Klintsy brought Lenin a message of greeting and a gift of a length of cloth produced at their mill. Lenin wrote the following letter in reply:

"Dear comrades,

"I heartily thank you for your greetings and for your gift. I must tell you in secret that you ought not to send me presents. I would kindly ask you to let all your workers into this secret.

"My deep thanks, greetings and best wishes,

"Your *V. Ulyanov (Lenin)*"

In November 1922, the textile workers of Petrograd sent Lenin a woollen blanket. Here is their letter:

"Dear and deeply respected Vladimir Ilyich,

"On the occasion of its anniversary the Petrograd Textile Trust sends you its ardent greetings and begs you to accept a woollen blanket made at one of its mills.

"We, Petrograd textile workers, should like the warmth of our modest present to bring you the warmth of our hearts and also to show you that in spite of the extremely worn-out condition of our equipment, in spite of the devastation, the shortages and crises, we are working no worse than before the war, which proves that we can achieve whatever we set out to do.

"We wish you, dear Comrade Lenin, good health."

The Fourth Congress of the Communist International opened on November 5, 1922, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the October

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 392.

Revolution. The opening was held in Petrograd, after which the Congress continued its work in Moscow. On November 13, Lenin delivered a report to the Congress, entitled, "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of World Revolution".

The delegates who thronged the Grand Hall of the Kremlin Palace waited eagerly for Lenin to appear. The Congress was attended by 408 delegates, representing 58 Communist Parties, as well as several other parties and international organisations. A thunderous ovation broke out when Lenin entered the hall. The delegates rose to their feet and the *Internationale* rang out in many languages. At last Lenin mounted the rostrum and the audience settled down to listen to his speech.

"Lenin's thoughts," the well-known Danish writer Martin Andersen-Nexö, who was present at the Congress, subsequently recalled, "flowed limpid and clear, even when he touched upon great human problems and showed with a clarity comprehensible to one and all that the future is inevitably and assuredly developing out of the present. He seemed to be living all these human lives himself. . . .

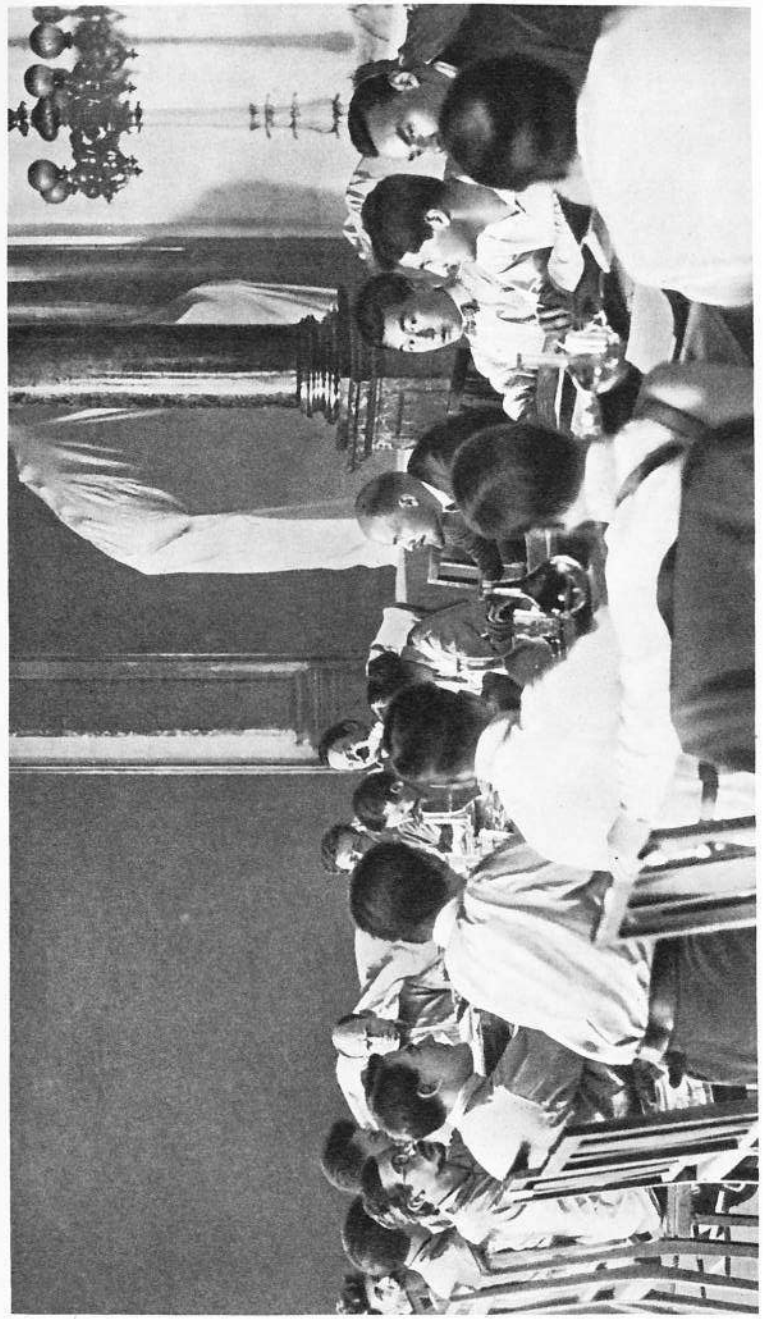
" 'This is a real man,' a Norwegian worker beside me whispered. 'He looks like any of us, yet he sees a thousand times farther!' "*

In his speech Lenin summarised the five years of development of the socialist revolution in Russia, explained the essence of NEP and what it had accomplished, and outlined the tasks confronting the Communists of the Soviet land. He said that the Soviet Republic, thanks to the New Economic Policy of the Communist Party and the heroic, self-sacrificing labour of the workers, had succeeded in achieving a general economic advance. The Soviet ruble and the financial system grew gradually stronger. Retail trade had improved. Farming was recovering quickly. Not only had the peasants coped with the food shortages of the year before. They paid the tax in kind, providing the state with hundreds of millions of poods of grain. "The peasants," Lenin noted, "are satisfied with their present situation." Good progress had been made in rehabilitating the light industries and heavy industry showed signs of recovery. The situation of the workers was improving. There were also advances in the field of culture.

The successes of Soviet power, Lenin said, showed that the policy of the Bolshevik Party was correct and proved that the Soviet state was capable of developing trade, maintaining a strong position in agriculture and industry, and moving steadily forward.

Speaking of the prospects of the revolutionary liberation movement and the tasks of the Communist Parties, Lenin drew the attention of the delegates to the need for a creative, not a dogmatic, approach to the experience of the Bolshevik Party and the lessons of the Russian revolution. The Communists of all countries, he said in conclusion, must learn "in order that they may really understand the organisation, structure, method, and content of revolutionary work. If they do that,

* *Izvestia* No. 91, April 20, 1940.



Lenin at a commission sitting of the Second Congress of the Communist International
Photo, 1920



Lenin and Krupskaya among the peasants of the village of Kashino, Volokolamsk Uyezd, Moscow Region
Photo, 1920

I am sure the prospects of the world revolution will be not only good, but excellent".*

Lenin's speech made a profound impression on the Congress delegates and guests. When he finished speaking, they rose as one man to applaud and cheer the leader and teacher of the working people of the world. Shouts of "Long live our Comrade Lenin!" were heard on all sides in different languages.

During the Congress, Lenin met a number of delegations from different Communist Parties. He talked with the German delegation about the formation of a workers' government in Germany and its character. "I vividly remember that talk," recalls Walter Ulbricht, "and how Lenin at once grasped the essence of the matter. He would not be diverted by secondary questions. Nothing of any importance escaped his attention. He talked to us with his customary fervour but, at the same time, patiently and convincingly.

"We were particularly impressed by the ease and friendliness of his attitude towards all the comrades. Our talk with Lenin gave us fresh courage and confidence, and showed us how to draw conclusions for practical work after a thorough appraisal of the situation."**

In his talk with the delegates of the Italian Communist Party, Lenin asked them about their Party work, from what towns and provinces they came and how the workers lived. Speaking of the methods of fighting the fascists, who had seized power in Italy, he drew attention to the need for skilful united front tactics and emphasised that in order to win over the masses the Italian Communists should also work in the fascist trade unions.

Somewhat later, in connection with the Second Congress of the Trade Union International, Lenin had a talk with G. Monmousseau and P. Semard, leaders of the French General Confederation of Labour. They discussed the question of drawing the broad masses of the workers into the revolutionary trade unions, strengthening ties between the Communist Party and the trade unions and making the French Communist Party a mass party.

Lenin's talks with representatives of the fraternal parties, like his report to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, which was his last speech to a congress of the International, were permeated with the firm belief that the international communist movement would continue to grow, and that the future belonged to it.

On November 20, 1922, Lenin addressed a joint plenary session of the Moscow Soviet and all the district Soviets of the capital. This was Lenin's last public appearance.

Reviewing the path traversed by the Soviet country, he noted the successes of Soviet foreign policy in establishing economic and diplomatic relations with other countries. As for the internal situation,

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* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 781.
** *Unforgettable Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1958, p. 11.

he believed that the main task was to ensure that NEP was correctly and competently carried out. It was necessary, he said, to regroup our forces, to reorganise in order to launch a stubborn offensive after the period of retreat had ended.

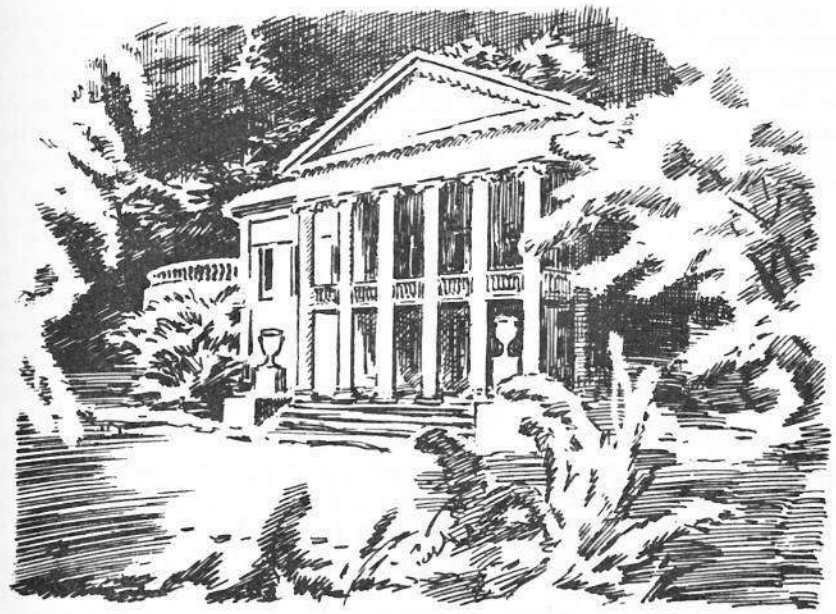
Lenin's speech was imbued with deep, indestructible faith in the strength of the Communist Party and the people. He stressed forcefully once again that the Party was able to cope, and would cope, with the most difficult and responsible tasks of socialist construction, and that the Communists had to live up to, and would surely live up to, the trust put in them by the people. "We need to take the right direction, we need to see that everything is checked, that all the masses, all the population, check the path we follow and say: 'Yes, this is better than the old system.' That is the task we have set ourselves. Our Party, a little group of people in comparison with the country's total population, has tackled this job. This tiny nucleus has set itself the task of remaking everything, and it will do so. We have proved that this is no utopia but a cause which people live by."*

We have brought socialism into the everyday life of the people, Lenin said. Questions of socialist construction have become vital, everyday, practical questions, and this is our great victory. The task of our day, of our era, consists in building the socialist society in practical business-like fashion.

". . .Difficult as this task may be," Lenin said in conclusion, "new as it may be compared with our previous task, and numerous as the difficulties may be that it entails, we shall all—not in a day, but in a few years—all of us together fulfil it whatever the cost, so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia."**

These remarkably prophetic words were met by a storm of applause expressive of the Soviet people's profound love for Lenin, their confidence in him, in the Communist Party and its policy.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 787-88.
** *Ibid.*, p. 788.



Chapter Thirteen

LAST YEAR OF LENIN'S LIFE AND WORK

> Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc.—is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society?
>
> *LENIN*

The high tension at which Lenin had been working again affected his health in the latter half of November 1922. The doctors insisted that he restrict his working hours. But he was in the centre of things all the same, guiding the Party and the country.

Defying illness. The Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, C.C. C.P.S.U., have the diary kept by Lenin's secretaries from November 21, 1922 to March 6, 1923.* It contains revealing facts about the last period of Lenin's life, showing how courageously Lenin resisted his grave illness day after day and devoted all his strength to the cause of the Party and the working class.

On December 7, on his doctors' advice, he went for a few days' rest to Gorki. But he did not stop working. He examined draft decisions

* *Voprosy Istorii KPSS* No. 2, 1963, pp. 70-85.

of the Political Bureau and dictated the draft of a decision to provide schools with bread, the "Proposal to the Plenary Meeting About Procedures in the Political Bureau", and "Regulations for the Work of the Deputy Chairmen and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars". He also wrote a letter to Constantino Lazzari, a prominent leader of the Italian Socialist Party, and drew up the plan of his report to the forthcoming Tenth All-Russia Congress of Soviets. The plan indicates that he intended to deal with issues he later discussed in some of his final articles–co-operatives, machinery of state, etc.

On December 12, Lenin returned to Moscow. In the afternoon, for all of two hours, he had a discussion with Rykov, Kamenev and Tsyurupa, who were his deputies in the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence. In the evening, he had a talk with Dzerzhinsky and then with Stomonyakov, the Soviet trade representative in Germany. This was the last time Lenin worked in his office in the Kremlin.

In the morning of December 13, Lenin had two consecutive attacks, and doctors were summoned to his bedside. Lenin was deeply alarmed at the deterioration in his health. It says in his medical record that "it was very difficult to prevail on Lenin not to speak at any sittings and to stop work for the time being. Finally he agreed and said he would begin winding up his affairs at once". For a few days Lenin worked at home. He dictated letters, issued instructions and received various comrades, trying to finish the most urgent business.

In a letter to Kamenev, Rykov and Tsyurupa he objected to the way they intended to distribute their functions and said he was putting off a final decision on this score until his recovery. He also objected most strongly to Rykov's proposal of restricting the number of Lenin's visitors by letting his deputies or the C.C. secretary see them first. "All I want to say," Lenin wrote, "is that I disagree completely with Rykov's idea and suggest the very reverse–completely free, unrestricted and even extended reception of visitors."*

In the evening of December 15, Lenin dictated a letter to Stalin for the information of the members of the C.C. concerning his speech at the forthcoming Congress of Soviets, in which he opposed procrastination in the discussion of the foreign trade monopoly at the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee. He also dictated a letter to Trotsky about Trotsky's speech in support of Lenin's point of view on the foreign trade monopoly at the coming Plenary Meeting. In his letter to the members of the Central Committee, Lenin wrote: "I have now finished winding up my affairs and can leave with my mind in peace. I have also come to an agreement with Trotsky on the defence of my views on the monopoly of foreign trade. Only one circumstance still worries me very much: it is that it will be impossible for me to speak at the Congress of Soviets. My doctors are coming on Tuesday and we

* *Leninsky Sbornik* XXXVI, p. 519.

shall see if there is even a small chance of my speaking. I would consider it a great inconvenience to miss the opportunity of speaking to say the least."* Lenin asked that provisions be made for him to speak at the Congress, but that someone else should prepare to speak in case he could not be there.

However, there was a further deterioration in Lenin's health, and he was unable to take part in the Congress of Soviets. Early in the morning of December 16, he had another severe attack, which lasted over 30 minutes. In spite of this, before the doctors arrived, Lenin dictated to Krupskaya one more letter about the work of the deputies of the Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence. In the evening, Krupskaya telephoned the Secretariat of the C.C. on Lenin's behalf and asked them to inform Stalin that Lenin would not be able to speak at the Congress of Soviets.

In the next few days Lenin's health deteriorated still more. His right arm and leg would not function. He could no longer examine current affairs. But he continued working all the same. He dictated letters and articles, and prepared for the Twelfth Party Congress.

Subsequently, Krupskaya described Lenin as "a very alert, persevering and self-controlled man. An optimist". "His usual, dominant state of mind was one of tense concentration," she wrote. He "controlled himself superbly", was "critical of what he did and very exacting, but hated agonising self-analysis" and was "an aggressive man", "bold and courageous".

Lenin was his own self even when very ill. His mind was lucid, his will-power strong, his optimism at its peak. He did not waste time reflecting on his illness, death, his own person, and the like. He was concerned for the present and future of the Soviet land, the prospects and the ways of building socialism in Russia, for the Party and the means of strengthening it, and for the world revolutionary movement.

The political testament. Lenin knew perfectly well that his illness was dangerous and told his doctors time and again that he realised it could end fatally at any hour. Knowing that he could any day become incapacitated, he made up his mind to dictate some letters and articles in order to record ideas which he considered "of the utmost importance". He wanted to sum up the great gains of the Bolshevik Party, the Russian working class, the Soviet people, and the international proletariat, and to examine the outlook for socialism, for the liberation of the working people and of the peoples oppressed by the imperialists. The fact that he suspected these letters and articles would be his last, makes them, in a way, Lenin's political testament.

On December 23, Lenin asked his doctors for permission to dictate for five minutes because a certain matter troubled him and robbed him of his sleep. When they complied, he summoned M. Volodicheva, his stenographer, and said: "I want to dictate a letter to the Congress. Please

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 460.

take it down!" For four minutes Lenin dictated the first part of a most important document, "Letter to the Congress".

"He dictated quickly, but was obviously ill," Volodicheva wrote in the Secretaries' Diary. "After he stopped dictating he asked me what day it was. He also asked me why I looked so pale and why I was not at the Congress.* He regretted having kept me from attending it. I received no other instruction."

On the following day, Lenin asked to be allowed to continue dictating. The doctors objected, but according to his sister, Maria Ulyanova, he threatened to refuse all medical treatment unless he was permitted to dictate his "diary", as he called his notes, for at least a short time every day. "Work was life for him, and idleness was death," said Professor Ferster, under whose care Lenin was.

Stalin, Kamenev and Bukharin consulted the doctors and came to the following decision: "1. Vladimir Ilyich may dictate daily for five to ten minutes, but what he dictates should not be correspondence and he should not expect any replies. Visitors are forbidden. 2. To avoid giving him food for thought and alarm neither his friends nor members of his family should tell Vladimir Ilyich any political news."

On December 24, Lenin dictated the second part of his "Letter to the Congress", containing brief character studies of some C.C. members. Lenin warned, as Volodicheva put down in the Secretaries' Diary, that what he "dictated yesterday (Dec. 23) and today (Dec. 24) is *absolutely* secret. He stressed this more than once. He said *everything* he dictated should be kept in a special place, under special care, and should be considered *strictly* confidential. He also gave me one more instruction." Much later, in 1929, Volodicheva revealed that he had in that instruction directed her to indicate on the wax-sealed envelopes in which he wanted his notes kept that "they could be opened only by V. I. Lenin or, in the event of his death, by Nadezhda Krupskaya". "I did not write the words 'in the event of his death' on the envelopes," Volodicheva added.

On December 25 and 26, Lenin continued dictating his "Letter to the Congress" to Volodicheva and Fotieva. On December 29, he dictated a reference "On Increasing the Number of C.C. Members", and on January 4, 1923, a character study (of Stalin) to be added to those he made on December 24.

During December 27 to 29, Lenin dictated a letter, "The Attribution of Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission". On one of those days he also evidently dictated subjects for subsequent elucidation:

"1. The Central Union of Consumers' Societies and its importance from the standpoint of the New Economic Policy.

"2. Correlation of the Professional Training Administration and general educational work among the people.

* The reference is to the Tenth All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

"3. Apropos of the nationalities question and internationalism (in connection with the latest conflict within the Georgian Party).

"4. On the new book of public education statistics which appeared in 1922."

During December 30-31, Lenin dictated a letter entitled "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation' ".

Between January 2 and February 9, Lenin dictated a number of articles, namely: "Pages from a Diary", "On Co-operation", "Our Revolution (Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes)", "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (Recommendation to the Twelfth Party Congress)", and "Better Fewer, But Better".

On February 7, Lenin asked Volodicheva to read him "the subjects he had planned earlier".

"After these were read to him," she wrote later, "he noted that he had forgotten one of them (the correlation of the Professional Training Administration and general educational work among the people)."* Regrettably, Lenin was not destined to write anything on this subject.

While working on his articles, Lenin asked for books on co-operatives, the scientific organisation of labour, foreign relations, imperialism, and other matters, and also requested specific information.

Lenin's work on his last articles and letters was a truly heroic achievement. It is hard to tell what effort it cost him. At first, he was allowed to dictate only five to ten minutes, and later for not more than 30 to 40 minutes a day. So he had to hurry if he wanted to say all he had to say. Besides, he was unaccustomed to dictating to a stenographer, for as a rule he wrote his letters and articles himself. Lenin said he was "accustomed to having the manuscript before him, to stop to think over some of the more complicated passages that 'bogged' him down, to pace the room, or simply to go for a walk, and that now, too, he often wanted to take a pencil and write, or to make an alteration".** Dictating called for additional effort. Lenin had to consider beforehand what he wanted to say, for he could not afford to waste any time while dictating. But his perseverance surmounted these difficulties. "As usual," wrote Volodicheva in the Secretaries' Diary on February 2, "he dictates superbly—without pause, with only a few difficulties in the choice of expressions. To be sure, he does not dictate. He speaks and gesticulates."

A will of iron, and his awareness of the responsibility that rested on him, his concern for the future of Russia and the further development of the Soviet land, gave him strength to overcome pain and to achieve more than seemed humanly possible. In something like six weeks Lenin produced a number of important works. Like all his other writings, his last letters and articles are strikingly deep, lucid, logical, down to earth and to the point. He was content with what he had written. The pertinent entry in his medical record says that after reading what he

* Secretaries' Diary.
** *Ibid.*

had dictated on December 31–it was a letter entitled "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation' "–"Lenin was pleased with his work". On February 9, after reading the concluding part of his article, "Better Fewer, But Better", which he had dictated the day before, he said to Volodicheva: "I seem to have done it quite well."

"I had the impression," Volodicheva wrote, "that he was very pleased with this part of the article."*

Lenin's last articles and letters are invaluable. They are integrally connected, develop ideas contained in previous works and speeches, and really represent a single pattern for the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R.; they set forth in general outline the programme of the socialist transformation of Russia in the light of the general prospects of the world liberation movement of the working people. He put all his genius of foresight into his final writings. They are imbued with fatherly concern for the interests and needs of the Soviet working people and the building of a happy life for the ordinary people of the world.

Socialism shall win in the U.S.S.R. The future of socialism in the Soviet Union was the basic question on which Lenin focussed attention. In his article, "Our Revolution (Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes)", he exposed the dogmatism and pedantry of the leaders of the Second International and the Mensheviks, who argued that Russia lacked the objective requisites for socialist revolution, that it had not yet attained the level of the productive forces and of culture that made socialism possible, that the Bolsheviks had carried out the socialist revolution contrary to the laws of historical development, etc. Lenin showed that they had completely departed from Marxism, that they did not understand its substance. He considered it essential to demonstrate that their arguments were absolutely untenable.

Throughout his political activities Lenin fought uncompromisingly against the Mensheviks and the opportunist leaders of the Second International. His last articles may be described as a summary of this struggle. In them he showed how reality and practice had borne out the Bolshevik Party's line and refuted the opportunist dogmas of the Right-wing socialists, which were divorced from reality.

Although they called themselves Marxists, the Right socialists, Lenin stressed, did not understand the fundamental feature of Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. Being cowardly reformists and afraid to break with the bourgeoisie, they recognised only one path of development, the path taken by Western Europe. They completely failed to understand the fact that, while world history as a whole is governed by general objective laws, it is by no means unlikely, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may have peculiarities either in form or the sequence of their development.

A case in point was Russia, where the First World War created a revolutionary situation and where, in spite of the country's technical

* Secretaries' Diary.

and economic backwardness as compared with the other capitalist countries, the conditions matured for the victory of the socialist revolution. The situation that had arisen enabled the Bolsheviks to combine the working-class movement with the "peasant war" of which Marx had spoken in his time. By their anti-popular, imperialist policy the bourgeoisie had brought the people and the country to the brink of catastrophe and the only way out for the workers and the peasants was a socialist revolution and the transfer of power to the proletariat. Realisation of this multiplied the strength of the working people, intensified their hatred for those responsible for the war and fired their revolutionary enthusiasm. At the head of the working class of Russia marched the tried and tested Bolshevik Party which was able to appreciate the requirements of the historical moment and knew in what direction to lead the masses. All this offered the working people of Russia "the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilisation in a different way from that of the West European countries".* As Lenin pointed out, the subsequent revolutions in the countries of the East, which had a greater diversity of social conditions, would introduce in the history of the liberation movement of the working people even more peculiar features than had the Russian revolution.

Lenin rejected utterly the bourgeois-Menshevik thesis that it is reckless to undertake socialist reconstruction in a country still culturally and economically backward. Ridiculing the stupidity and philistinism of the "theoreticians" of the Second International, Lenin wrote: "If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite 'level of culture' is, for it differs in every West European country), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and *then*, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations? . . . Why could we not first create such prerequisites of civilisation in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical order of events are impermissible or impossible?"**

Lenin's criticism of the contention that the victory of socialism was impossible in Russia was aimed not only at the West European reformists and the Mensheviks, but also at the sceptics and opportunists inside the Party. It was the time, 1922, when Trotsky wrote that socialism could not be built in one country, within "the national confines of one state", that the working class of Russia, having assumed power, would inevitably come into hostile collision with the peasantry and that the creation of a socialist economy in Russia would not be possible until after the victory of the proletariat in the leading countries of Europe.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 822.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 822, 823.

In his last writings, Lenin denied these defeatist and essentially Menshevik conclusions of the Trotskyites. In his article "On Co-operation" he again stressed that Russia had "all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society": a proletarian state, large-scale production in the hands of the Soviet state, the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and the leadership of the working class in this alliance.

"It is not yet the building of socialist society," wrote Lenin, "but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for it."*

This important proposition was of tremendous historical significance. When Soviet Russia was taking her first steps in socialist construction and many did not yet clearly see how the country would advance towards socialism, Lenin opened for the Party and the people broad vistas and charted the right course that would bring them to the victory of socialism.

He drew attention to the great difficulties that attended the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. The imperialist powers organised intervention and blockade of the Soviet Republic; they did all they could to throw the country back economically; they took advantage of the civil war in Russia to ruin the country as much as possible, reckoning that if they could not destroy the Soviet system they could at least make its progress towards socialism more difficult.

"In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects."**

At the same time, it was perfectly clear that for a long time still the Soviet people would have to build socialism in a capitalist encirclement. The ebb of the revolution in the West made this evident. As for the oppressed countries of the East, although they had to fight imperialism, they were still very weak; it would take time for those backward countries, inhabited by the overwhelming majority of the world population, to become "civilised". "Capitalism itself", Lenin wrote, "is educating and training" this majority "for the struggle".

In the circumstances, Lenin taught, it should be the policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government to safeguard the existence of the Soviet Republic and prevent the imperialists from crushing it, preserve peace as long as possible and accomplish the socialist transformation of the country. To achieve this it was necessary to consolidate

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 814.
** *Ibid.*, p. 839.

the proletarian power, strengthen the alliance of the working class and the peasantry and the leading role of the working class in it, transform Russia into a highly developed industrial power, switch the peasantry to the path of large-scale socialised farming, steadily raise the material well-being and cultural level of the people, improve the machinery of state, guard the unity of the Party, and pursue a correct, flexible foreign policy. This, Lenin said, "is the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy".*

Lenin held that the Soviet land would become the base of the socialist reconstruction of the life of all mankind. He was certain that once the Russian proletariat, allied with the peasants, will have built socialism, this would be an inspiration and model for all progressive people.

The main tasks of socialist construction. In his last articles and letters Lenin developed further the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the building of socialism. He left us a conclusive plan for the building of socialist society and the advance to the approaches of communism.

He elucidated questions related to the building of the material and technical basis of socialism and defined the fundamentals of economic administration. The fact that he devoted one of his last letters, "The Attribution of Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission", to questions of economic planning is added evidence of the immense importance he attached to the economic problems of socialist and communist construction. Lenin said in his letter that economic expansion and rapid scientific and technological development called for continuously improved, exhaustive, scientific planning.

He said that the planning agencies had to play a big part in the framing of Party and government economic policy, and set out the pattern for the reorganisation of the State Planning Commission. He pointed out that the commission had to be a scientific centre handling the basic questions of the country's economic planning. He described it as "a body of experienced people, experts, representatives of science and technology". The Planning Commission, he said, "is actually in a better position to form a correct judgement of affairs".** It was essential, Lenin wrote, " to take measures towards enhancing the competence of the State Planning Commission", adding to its authority, fortifying it with highly competent personnel, and directing all its activities towards turning "our plan of economic and social construction into reality".***

In his last articles Lenin again stressed that the country's industrialisation, with priority development of heavy industry, was of decisive importance in building socialism. The working class must create a large-scale industry on the basis of an enduring alliance with the peasantry,

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 842.
** *Ibid.*, p. 796.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 798.

while steadily improving the well-being of the working people of town and country. This, he said, could not be done by "colonising" and ruining the small commodity producer, as the Trotskyites proposed. "If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry," Lenin wrote, "we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible economy in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov power project, etc.

"In this, and in this alone, lies our hope."*

Lenin's programme of the socialist reconstruction of agriculture was an important part of his plan of building socialism. He demonstrated that two forms of socialist enterprises–state farms and collective farms–were the most suitable in a country with a more or less numerous class of small producers. We owe it to Lenin that he charted ways and means for the solution of the most difficult task of the proletarian revolution, second only to the conquest of political power by the working class–that of drawing millions of peasants, who were at once petty proprietors and labourers, into socialist construction, and inducing them to convert from small individual farms to large-scale collective farming. He pointed out that the way to do so was to organise the small peasant farms into co-operatives.

On the eve of the Eleventh Party Congress, Lenin emphasised the need for studying and generalising the *"practical experience* of co-operation", and for showing *"how* to promote it". He did so himself in his wonderful article "On Co-operation". *Lenin summed up the development of co-operatives and the founding of the first collective peasant farms in Soviet Russia, and drew up his brilliant co-operative plan for the reconstruction of peasant life along socialist lines.*

In that period many of the Party's practical workers did not understand, and underrated, the role of co-operatives in socialist construction. The Trotskyites and other opportunist elements rejected the possibility of using the co-operatives as the principal means of switching the peasantry to the path of socialism. Lenin opposed these views and wrote about the vast, exceptional importance of co-operation in building a socialist society. He explained that under conditions of the dictatorship of the working class, when the economic commanding heights were in the hands of the proletarian state, co-operative enterprises did not differ from socialist enterprises. Lenin assigned the leading role to public, or state property, which he described as being consistently socialist, i.e., the most perfect form of socialist property, since it represented a higher form of socialisation of production. At the same time, he emphasised that the co-operative form of property was also socialist and that, in conjunction with public, state property, it constituted the economic basis of socialist society.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 842.

Lenin explained why co-operation was the only right way of bringing the bulk of the peasantry to socialism. First, co-operation combined the personal interests of the peasant with public interests, with control of these personal interests by the state and their subordination to the interests of society. Second, the application of various forms of co-operation–first in marketing and supply, and later in production–made it possible to introduce gradually the principles of collectivism in farming. Co-operation was therefore the *"simplest, easiest, and the most acceptable to the peasant"*. And this was the most important thing, for socialism had to be built in such a way "that *every* small peasant may take part in it".

"If the whole of the peasantry had been organised in co-operatives," Lenin wrote, "we would by now have been standing with both feet on the soil of socialism."* He estimated that it would take a whole historical era, one or two decades, to accomplish this task, for the necessary material and technical basis had to be created first and the cultural level of the peasants had to be raised considerably before the bulk of the peasants could be organised in co-operatives.

Outlining the tasks of the Party and the Soviet state in promoting the co-operative movement, Lenin emphasised that the transition from small peasant farming to large-scale social production must not be haphazard and spontaneous. This transition was possible only if the proletarian state provided all-round assistance and guidance to the co-operatives, and if all sections of the working class joined in the socialist reconstruction of the countryside.

Lenin's co-operative plan was an important step in the development of Marxism, in the development of Lenin's teaching on the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the building of communism. It became the concrete programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in its further efforts of reconstructing agriculture along socialist lines. Lenin's co-operative plan is of international significance for it is the only way the socialist reconstruction of agriculture can be accomplished. This is borne out by the experience of the People's Democracies, where the Communist and Workers' Parties, which creatively apply the principles of Lenin's co-operative plan to the concrete conditions of their countries, are successfully coping with the task of the socialist reconstruction of agriculture.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its Leninist Central Committee have developed Lenin's co-operative plan creatively and have made conclusive advances in the question of agricultural development at the time of the transition from socialism to communism and the forming of communist social relations in the countryside.

In his last articles, Lenin laid special emphasis on the cultural revolution, one of the basic tasks of socialist construction, on universal literacy and the development of a people's intelligentsia and of science.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 819.

"This cultural revolution," he wrote, "would now suffice to make our country a completely socialist country."* In his article, "Pages from a Diary", Lenin expressed confidence that the problems of cultural development would be successfully solved, because the people of Russia were very interested in real culture and because the Soviet state handled the problems of culture with deep insight.

Lenin emphasised the special importance of cultural work in the countryside and pointed out that the intelligentsia and the working class could play a very big part in promoting it.

Alliance between the working class and the peasants. Friendship of the peoples. The social system in the Soviet Republic, Lenin pointed out, is based on the co-operation of two classes–the workers and the peasants.

It was the crucial task of the Party, he said, to *maintain the leading role of the working class with respect to the peasants and to retain the trust of the peasants with respect to the workers.* "In the final analysis," Lenin wrote, "the fate of our Republic will depend on whether the peasant masses will stand by the working class, loyal to their alliance, or whether they will allow the 'Nepmen', i.e., the new bourgeoisie, to drive a wedge between them and the workers, to split them off from the workers." Lenin noted that "grounds for such a split are not necessarily present in our social system"** and inferred that if the Party conducted the right policy, it would succeed in securing a lasting alliance between the working class and the peasants.

He considered the relationship between town and country to be a fundamental political question of "decisive importance for the socialist revolution". Under capitalism the towns had implanted political, economic, moral and physical corruption in the countryside; under the dictatorship of the proletariat the towns were implanting the very opposite. They were introducing up-to-date machinery, effecting a fundamental improvement in the condition of the working peasants, drawing them into active public and political life, and bringing them advanced culture. All this could be amplified and extended, Lenin said, by introducing deliberate planning and regularity. It was vital, he added, to establish close contact and comradely relations between the city workers and the village labourers. This, he emphasised, was a duty and one of the basic tasks of the working class after it won power. He urged the towns to exercise patronage over villages, the workers to assist peasants, and called for close contacts between urban and village Party cells.

Lenin attached immense importance to the establishment of correct relations between the peoples inhabiting the U.S.S.R., devoting to this extremely important problem his letter "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation' ", which he dictated on December 30-31, 1922. In

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 819.
** *Ibid.*, p. 828.

his letter Lenin outlined the new tasks confronting the Party, stemming from the founding of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Lenin was worried over how the establishment of a union state would proceed in practice and how consistently the principles of proletarian internationalism would be carried out. So he again drew attention to the harm of the "autonomisation" idea and to the grave errors made by Stalin in the preparation for the establishment of the U.S.S.R.

Lenin said that further consolidation of the U.S.S.R. was a most important task. "*Firstly*," he wrote, "we must maintain and strengthen the union of socialist republics. Of this there can be no doubt."* The union of the republics, he said, was necessary most of all to protect the gains of socialism from the intrigues of the Western imperialists. It was necessary, too, for the whole world liberation movement.

Secondly, Lenin noted that the idea of uniting the Soviet Republics should in no case be perverted by the bureaucrats. He warned against excessive centralism and stressed the need for reinforcing the sovereignty of every republic. He described this as a necessary condition for the unification and fraternal friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. He said in this connection that it would be unwise to declare oneself beforehand against the restoration, at the Second Congress of Soviets, of the complete independence of some of the republican People's Commissariats. "It must be borne in mind," Lenin said, "that decentralisation of the People's Commissariats and the lack of co-ordination in their work as far as Moscow and other centres are concerned can be compensated sufficiently by Party authority, if it is exercised with sufficient prudence and impartiality."**

Lenin emphasised strongly that the equality of nations should not be merely legal and formal, but also factual. The internationalism of the big nations that previously oppressed others should consist not only in observing the formal equality of nations, but also in selfless assistance to the previously oppressed smaller nations in achieving factual equality by raising the level of their economic and cultural development. Complete equality, sincerity, mutual respect, friendship, fraternal co-operation and mutual assistance must be the essential features of the relations between nations.

Lenin devoted special attention in his letter to the struggle against nationalism in general and, in particular, against dominant-nation chauvinism, which he considered the chief danger of that period.

He condemned every departure from the principles of proletarian internationalism both towards dominant-nation chauvinism and towards local nationalism.

As far back as 1919, Lenin wrote that the Russian Communists "should severely punish the slightest manifestation of Great-Russian nationalism in their own midst". He pointed out that, being essentially

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 806.
** *Ibid.*, p. 807.

a betrayal of communism, Great-Russian nationalism did untold harm, disuniting the Russian Communists and Communists of other nationalities, and thereby grinding the axe of their class enemies. Lenin also emphasised the danger of local nationalism, of national egoism, of the propagation of national exclusiveness, of the tendency of disrupting or weakening the close alliance and friendship of the non-Russian and Russian nations. "Experience has provided hundreds of instances," Lenin wrote, "of the petty-bourgeois 'socialists' of various countries–all the various Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian pseudo-socialists, Georgian Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and the like–assuming the guise of supporters of the proletariat for the sole purpose of deceitfully promoting a policy of compromise with 'their' national bourgeoisie against the revolutionary workers."*

The best way of building confidence among Communists of different nations, Lenin pointed out, was to battle jointly, shoulder to shoulder, for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of socialism and communism. The Russian Communists, Lenin added, should be tractable and pliant in handling differences of opinion if the latter concerned the national question, while the Communists of other nations should maintain a correct attitude in the basic issues of communism, working for the close unity of the non-Russian and Russian people, and combating local nationalism.

In a resolution on "The Immediate Tasks of the Party with Regard to the National Question", drafted under Lenin's direction, the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) denounced deviations towards dominant-nation chauvinism and local bourgeois nationalism. It pointed out that the first deviation was particularly dangerous and harmful and described eradication of nationalist and, above all, dominant-nation tendencies as "one of the most important tasks of the Party in the outlying areas". In his letter, "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation' ", Lenin again called attention to the danger of dominant-nation chauvinism and any deviation in that direction, particularly after the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Lenin levelled strong criticism at Orjonikidze, Stalin and Dzerzhinsky for their handling of the "Georgian question", that is, the conflict between the Transcaucasian Territorial Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) headed by Orjonikidze, on the one hand, and the Mdivani group in the Georgian Communist Party, on the other.

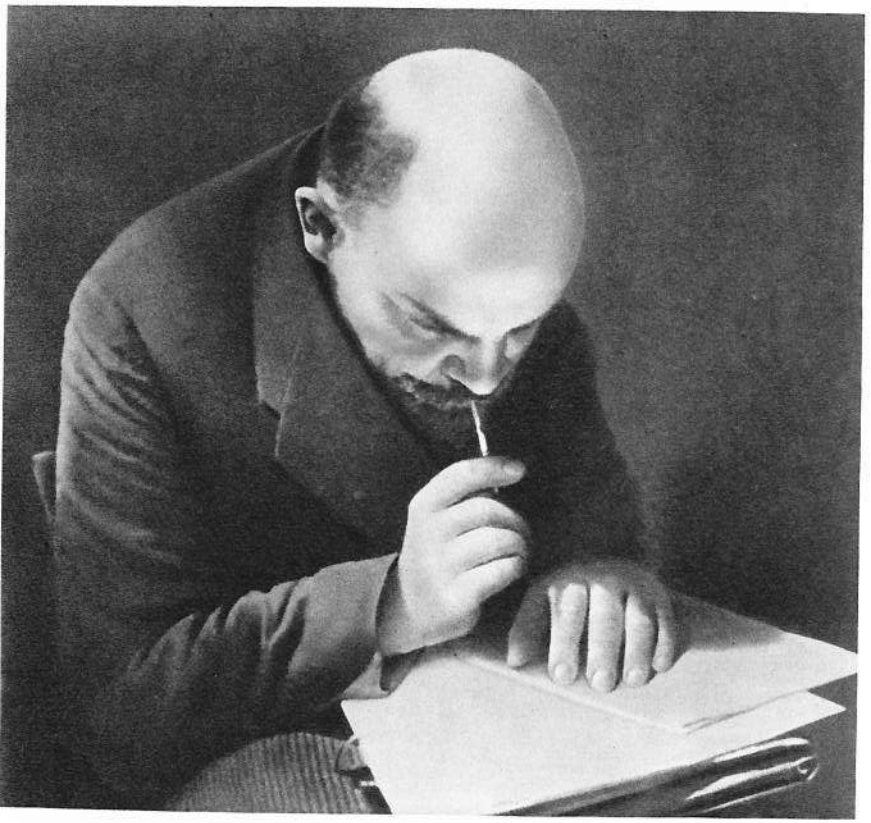
The Transcaucasian Territorial Committee, formerly the Caucasian Bureau of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.), had been right in principle to work for the unification of the Transcaucasian republics and to oppose the incorrect stand of the Mdivani group, which in effect delayed the economic and political union of the Transcaucasian republics and, in substance, sought to sustain Georgia's isolation–a course of action which served the interests of the bourgeois nationalists and the Georgian

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 295.



Lenin

Frame from a newsreel, 1921



Lenin taking notes of the speeches delivered at the Third Congress of the Communist International

Photo, 1921

Mensheviks. At their congresses, conferences and meetings the Georgian Communists described the conduct of Mdivani and his followers as a nationalist deviation.

Lenin criticised the incorrect approach of Mdivani and his group. In a draft decision of the Political Bureau, which he helped to frame in November 1921, he stressed that "a federation of Transcaucasian republics is absolutely correct in principle, and should be implemented without fail".* But even after the Plenary Meeting of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) in October 1922, Mdivani's followers did not alter their stand. They still insisted that Georgia should enter the U.S.S.R. directly and not through the Transcaucasian Federation. In a telegram addressed to S. Kirov and M. Orakhelashvili of the Territorial Transcaucasian Committee, Lenin deplored the conduct of Mdivani's followers and denounced their "fulmination against Orjonikidze".

"I was certain," Lenin wrote, "that all the differences had been ironed out by the Plenary Meeting of the C.C. with my indirect participation and the direct participation of Mdivani."**

Orjonikidze, too, committed grave errors. He did not show due flexibility and caution in the conduct of the Party's national policy in Georgia. He issued orders left and right and showed undue haste in the implementation of certain measures. Nor did he always heed the opinion and prerogatives of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party or show restraint in his relationship with the Mdivani group. Matters came to such a pass that Orjonikidze struck one of Mdivani's followers after the latter had used insulting words.

In his letter, "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation'", Lenin condemned Orjonikidze's offence and the conciliatory attitude towards him of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky. The latter headed the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) commission investigating the state of affairs in the Communist Party of Georgia. Lenin pointed out that "no provocation or even insult"*** could excuse the misdemeanor committed by Orjonikidze, who represented the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) and the central Soviet government in Transcaucasia.

In the concluding part of his letter, Lenin pointed out once again that the proper conduct of the national policy in the U.S.S.R. was incalculably important not only for the Soviet land, but for the world communist movement as a whole, and for the many millions of Asians who would in the near future come to the forefront on the international scene. "The tomorrow of world history," Lenin wrote, "will be the day when the awakening peoples oppressed by imperialism will be finally aroused and the decisive, long, hard struggle for their liberation will begin."****

Acting on Lenin's instructions, the Communist Party has solved the national question in the best possible way. It has secured consolidation

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 127.
** Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.
*** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 803.
**** *Ibid.*, p. 807.

of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, fraternal friendship of the peoples, and the flowering of their economy and culture.

During the personality cult period, Stalin grossly violated the Leninist principles of national policy. He curtailed the sovereign powers of the Union Republics and suppressed entire nationalities, depriving them of their autonomy.

The Party has put an end to the effects of the Stalin cult in national relations. It has combined comprehensive development of every nation and the extension of the rights of the national Soviet Republics with measures aimed at closer co-operation between them, at mutual assistance, and at the coming together of the peoples.

The Communist Party is determined to maintain the principles of internationalism in the relations between different nationalities. It acts always on Lenin's proposition that "the proletariat cannot support any consecration of nationalism; on the contrary, it supports everything that helps to obliterate national distinctions and remove national barriers; it supports everything that makes the ties between nationalities closer and closer, or tends to merge nations. To act differently means siding with reactionary nationalist philistinism".*

Every Soviet Republic, says the Programme of the C.P.S.U., can prosper and develop in the great family of the fraternal socialist nations of the U.S.S.R.

System of Party and government control. In his articles, "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" and "Better Fewer, But Better", Lenin outlined and substantiated a number of measures for improving the machinery of state. He proposed utilising the Party's best forces, enlisting the advanced workers and trained, educated personnel for this very important and urgent matter. Disclosing the defects in the work of Soviet institutions he advanced the task of "reducing our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy", "removing from it all traces of extravagance", tirelessly securing an improvement in "the machinery of state, from the higher state institutions to the lower local bodies", placing its entire activity on a scientific basis. Haste and bustle should not be tolerated. "We must," Lenin said, "follow the rule: 'Better fewer, but better.' "**

Lenin's central idea was to create a clear-cut system of unified, all-embracing, continuous Party and government control with general public participation. He advanced the proposition of combining Party and government control as the foundation of all control in the Soviet socialist state. He suggested that the Central Control Commission of the Party be enlarged to include 75 to 100 new members elected from among workers and peasants and that it should be amalgamated with the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. The latter, he said, should be reorganised and reduced to some 300 to 400 functionaries specially

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 35-36.
** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 831.

screened politically and as regards their competence. He voiced the belief that there was nothing wrong in combining Party and government control bodies. He pointed out that doubt should not be cast on this amalgamation since it would serve a useful purpose. He stressed that judicious amalgamation of government and Party controls would improve the efficiency, and strengthen the policy, of the Communist Party and the Soviet socialist state.

Combination of Party and government controls, the establishment of a united control body, Lenin said, would secure effective supervision and strengthen the bonds between the Party and the state machinery, on the one hand, and the masses, on the other, greatly improve the administration machinery, the implementation of Party policy, and promote the success of socialist construction.

"That," Lenin wrote, "is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high place."*

The Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) acted on Lenin's suggestion and set up a joint Central Control Commission and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, to effect Party and government control, help to improve the state machinery, strengthen Party and state discipline and safeguard Party unity. The system of Party and government control became definitive and effective under Lenin's guidance. The working people lent a hand in organising it.

During the Stalin cult period the splendid system of control wrought in the early years of Soviet power was, in effect, abandoned and replaced by a bureaucratic control apparatus with little or no contact with the masses. Instead of a joint Party and government control body, two separate centres, one of the Party and another of the government, were set up. The masses were barred from participation and many of the functions of control were turned over to state security bodies. The idea of control in the Leninist interpretation was, it turned out, incompatible with the personality cult ideology.

When removing the consequences of the Stalin cult, the Party restored the Leninist principles of control. It established a joint control body in accordance with the Leninist ideas and with an eye to present conditions. This body is known as the Committee of Party and State Control of the C.C. C.P.S.U. and the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. Appropriate local bodies of control have also been set up.

Cherish Party unity. Lenin's last articles and letters show that he was strongly dedicated to the idea of strengthening the Party's ideological and organisational unity. He regarded the Party as the guiding force of Soviet society capable of uniting the people and leading them

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 842.

in socialist construction. These matters were uppermost in his mind, and "Letter to the Congress", which dealt with the Party, was the first programme document he dictated after he fell ill.

In his "Letter to the Congress" and the related articles, "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection (Recommendation to the Twelfth Party Congress)" and "Better Fewer, But Better", Lenin examined the basic problems of the Party, its unity, the role of its Central Committee, the need for collective leadership, and the bonds between the Party and the masses. These were all questions of paramount importance for the future of the Party, its efficiency and, consequently, the future of communist construction.

The early years of Soviet power had demonstrated, Lenin pointed out, that the stability of the proletarian dictatorship and the successful accomplishment of its tasks depended on the strength and solidarity of the Communist Party, the vanguard of the working class. It was not an accident, Lenin wrote, that the Whites and other enemies of the Soviet state had counted "on a split in our Party" and "banked on grave differences in our Party to cause that split". Lenin urged appropriate measures to prevent a split, which was the greatest danger the Party could ever face.

He pointed out that the stability and cohesion of the Party's leading body, the Central Committee, was an essential condition for Party unity, because the minute the Party leadership showed instability this would be sure to affect the situation within the Party. As one of the measures designed to remove the danger of a possible split because of differences between Party leaders, Lenin in his "Letter to the Congress" proposed that the number of Central Committee members be increased to several score, even as many as a hundred, chiefly by inducting workers, and also peasants. This was necessary "to prevent conflicts between small sections of the C.C. from acquiring excessive importance for the future of the Party".* The greater number of members would, at the same time, add to the prestige and role of the Central Committee as a collective body guiding the Party and the country. It would help train more Party cadres for work in the Central Committee and improve the Party apparatus.

It was in the article "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" that Lenin set out his ideas. He suggested enlarging the Central Control Commission and connecting its work with that of the Central Committee. Members of the Central Control Commission should take part in the regular plenary meetings of the Central Committee and a certain number of the former should also attend sittings of the C.C. Political Bureau. This, Lenin believed, would make the work of the Central Committee smoother and more systematic.

"Our Central Committee," Lenin wrote, "has grown into a strictly centralised and highly authoritative group, but the conditions under which this group is working are not commensurate with its authority.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 791.

The reform I recommend should help to remove this defect, and the members of the Central Control Commission, whose duty it will be to attend all meetings of the Political Bureau in a definite number, will have to form a compact group which should not allow anybody's authority, 'regardless of person', to prevent them from putting questions, verifying documents, and, in general, from keeping themselves fully informed of all things and from exercising the strictest control over the proper conduct of affairs."*

Lenin's proposals, which were consistent with the specific conditions of the time, were, as we see, intended to ensure Party unity and collective leadership. Lenin had deep faith in the creative capacity and collective wisdom of the Communist Party. He believed firmly, too, that Party unity, so essential for the victory of socialism, would be secured.

In his "Letter to the Congress" Lenin also examined Party stability from the standpoint of the personal qualities of some of the Central Committee members. Here, in full, are his brief character studies.

"Our Party," Lenin wrote in his "Letter to the Congress" on December 24, 1922, "relies on two classes and therefore its instability would be possible and its downfall inevitable if there were no agreement between those two classes. In that event this or that measure, and generally all talk about the stability of our C.C., would be futile. No measures of any kind would be able to prevent a split in such a case. But I hope that this is too remote a future and too improbable an event to talk about it.

"I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the immediate future, and I intend to deal here with a few ideas concerning personal qualities.

"I think that from this standpoint the prime factors in the question of stability are such members of the C.C. as Stalin and Trotsky. I think relations between them make up the greater half of the danger of a split, which could be avoided, and the avoidance of which, in my opinion, would be served, among other things, by increasing the number of C.C. members to 50 or 100.

"Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky, on the other hand, as his struggle against the C.C. on the question of the People's Commissariat for Railways has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present C.C., but he takes things with excessive self-assurance and shows excessive enthusiasm for the purely administrative side of the work.

"These two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present C.C. can unconsciously lead to a split, and if our Party does not take steps to avert this, the split may come unexpectedly.

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 827-28.

"I shall not give any further appraisals of the personal qualities of other members of the C.C. I shall just recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev was, of course, no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon him* personally, any more than non-Bolshevism can upon Trotsky.

"Speaking of the young C.C. members, I wish to say a few words about Bukharin and Pyatakov. They are, in my opinion, the most outstanding figures (among the youngest ones), and the following must be borne in mind about them: Bukharin is not only a most valuable and major theorist of the Party. He is also rightly considered the favourite of the whole Party, but his theoretical views can be classified only with great reserve as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic about him (he never learned, and, I think, never fully understood dialectics)."

Lenin continued his letter on the following day, December 25.

"As for Pyatakov, he is unquestionably a man of outstanding will and outstanding ability, but shows too much enthusiasm for administrating and the administrative side of the work to be relied on in a serious political matter.

"Both of these remarks, of course, are made only for the present, on the assumption that both these outstanding and devoted Party workers do not find an occasion to enhance their knowledge and amend their one-sidedness.

*"Lenin"***

On January 4, 1923, Lenin dictated the following addition to the letter of December 24, 1922:

"Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a General Secretary. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing somebody else differing in all other respects from Comrade Stalin solely in the degree of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more considerate to the comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may appear to be a negligible detail. But I think that from the standpoint of safeguards against a split and from the standpoint of what I wrote above about the mutual relations between Stalin and Trotsky it is not a detail, or it is a detail which can assume decisive importance.

*"Lenin"****

As we see, in substance Lenin expressed political mistrust of Trotsky and warned about the ideological instability of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and Pyatakov. By saying that Zinoviev's and Kamenev's departure from the Party line at the time of the October Revolution "was, of course, no accident", Lenin evidently meant that their anti-Party attitude was an upshot of the essentially petty-bourgeois vacillation of the unstable elements in the Party and of the influence of alien class forces.

At the same time, Lenin issued a strong warning that Stalin's negative personal qualities presented a great danger to the Party and its unity.

Lenin wrote the letter for the Twelfth Party Congress. The first part of it, dictated on December 23, 1922, in which he dwelt on the need of enlarging the number of C.C. members, was dispatched to Stalin on the same day, which fact is recorded in the "Register of Lenin's Letters, Notes and Instructions". The notes made on December 24 and 25, 1922, and on January 4, 1923, containing character sketches of C.C. members, were, according to Lenin's will, turned over by Nadezhda Krupskaya to the Central Committee after Lenin's death, on May 18, 1924, a few days before the opening of the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). Krupskaya wrote:

"I have turned over the notes which Vladimir Ilyich dictated during his illness from December 23 to January 23. There were thirteen separate notes. This does not include the notes on the national question (which are at present in the keeping of Maria Ilyinichna).

"Some of these notes have been published (on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and about Sukhanov). The notes dated December 24 and 25, 1922, and January 4, 1923, are among the unpublished ones and contain character sketches of some Central Committee members. It was Vladimir Ilyich's express wish that these particular notes be submitted to the next Party Congress after his death.

*"N. Krupskaya"**

On hearing the communication of the commission appointed to study Lenin's papers, a plenary meeting of the Central Committee, held on May 21, 1924, adopted the following decision:

"In accordance with Lenin's wish, the said documents shall be put before the Congress. They shall be read separately to the delegations with the provision that they are not to be reproduced. The documents shall be read to the delegations by members of the commission which studied Lenin's papers."

In pursuance of this decision and by order of the Presidium of the Thirteenth Congress, Lenin's "Letter to the Congress" was read to the various delegations.

Lenin's proposals on enlarging the C.C. and other measures designed to secure Party unity and collective leadership were taken into account by the Central Committee when preparing for the Twelfth Congress in its special theses on the reorganisation and improvement of the Party's governing bodies.

* Apparently a slip of the pen: the context suggests "them" for "him".
** V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 792-93.
*** *Ibid.*, pp. 793-94.

* Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

Trotsky opposed Lenin's plan of reinforcing the C.C. and increasing its membership. He sent a letter to members of the Political Bureau on February 13, 1923, in which he based his objections on the plea that if the Party's leading body were enlarged to 50 members it would be deprived of "the necessary organisational form and stability".* Trotsky's objections were over-ruled by the Plenary Meeting of the C.C. in February 1923, but he continued to insist on his own proposal, which was the very opposite of Lenin's. However, all his efforts were rejected by the Central Committee.

Lenin's suggestion became a law for the Communist Party. Acting on his proposal, the Party decided to enlarge the composition of its leading body, which governs in the interim between congresses.

The resolution on organisational matters framed by the Central Committee and passed by the Twelfth Party Congress provided for an enlargement of the C.C. from the 27 members elected by the Eleventh Congress to 40. The Thirteenth Congress noted that the increase "yielded immense benefits" and ruled a further enlargement of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission. The Central Committee was increased to 53 members.

The enlargement of the Central Committee was highly important. It enhanced the role of the Central Committee in the guidance of the Party and country and helped to crush the anti-Party groups which emerged after the death of Lenin and launched a bitter struggle against the Party line. The solid Leninist core in the Central Committee repelled all opportunist attacks on Leninism. The Communist Party won a complete victory over the opposition groups. In a long and bitter struggle against the enemies of Leninism, the Trotskyites, Right opportunists, national deviationists and others, it forged the solid unity which is a characteristic feature of the Party's internal organisation. True to the behests of Lenin, the Central Committee and the whole army of Communists guard the unity of the Party, resolutely repulsing the slightest attempt to weaken this unity and rallying the Party to put into practice Lenin's general political line.

After discussing Lenin's "Letter to the Congress" the delegations resolved to keep Stalin in the office of General Secretary in view of his uncompromising struggle against Trotskyism. Stalin's dismissal would, they feared, only benefit the Trotskyites. Furthermore, Stalin assured the delegations that he would mend the faults pointed out in Lenin's letter.

But later developments showed that Stalin did not take Lenin's critical remarks into account. As time went on, Stalin disregarded Leninist standards of Party life and the principle of collective leadership. He promoted a cult of his own person. He abused his power, condoned lawlessness, gross violations of socialist legality, wholesale repressions of honest Soviet people, including major Party leaders, and committed grave errors in certain issues of home and foreign policy. The cases of

* Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.



Lenin speaks
From painting by A. Gerasimov

abuse of power, and the victimisation of many guiltless people, including many prominent veterans of the Bolshevik Party, were exposed after Stalin's death, when the Central Committee analysed and investigated a large number of pertinent documents.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not mince words to expose the Stalin cult. The historic decisions of the Twentieth and Twenty-Second congresses of the C.P.S.U. revealed and denounced the mistakes, distortions and non-Leninist methods typical of the Stalin cult environment. The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. told the Party and the people, with true Leninist courage, the bitter truth about the abuses that were widespread during the cult period. The Party restored the standards of Party life and the principles of Party leadership worked out by Lenin and took steps to root out the harmful consequences of the personality cult in all Party, government and ideological affairs.

Development of the world revolution. The immense historical significance of Lenin's last writings lies in the fact that they substantiated the general line of the Communist Party in building socialist society in the U.S.S.R., analysed the balance of class forces in the world as a whole, and presented in a new way the question of the paths the world liberation movement of the working people would follow.

In 1918-20, when a sharp revolutionary crisis developed in the West, Lenin thought that the prospects of world socialism depended in the main on the victory of the revolutionary movement in the principal European countries.

The course of events showed that the development of the world liberation movement was more complicated and slower than had been expected. The revolutions in Germany and Hungary and the revolutionary actions of the proletariat in a number of other countries had been defeated. Lenin wrote that the ruling circles of the capitalist victor-countries took advantage of their victory in the First World War to make a few concessions to "their" oppressed classes. These concessions, "insignificant though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of 'class truce' ".*

A big part in saving the sinking ship of capitalism was played by the reformists and revisionists of Marxism, who helped the reactionary forces to suppress the revolutionary movement of the working people. They intimidated the proletariat of Western Europe with talk about the "price of revolution" and argued that the capitalist system could be "improved" and that socialism could be achieved through the peaceful evolution of capitalism. The reformists described the difficulties and economic dislocation in Soviet Russia as the "price of revolution", and glossed over the fact that these difficulties had been caused primarily by the imperialist war and the subsequent intervention.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 498-99.

Lenin emphasised that the slowing down of the revolutionary movement in the West European countries did not mean, as the reformists and revisionists alleged, that the Bolsheviks had made a mistake when they advanced the proposition that socialism would inevitably triumph on a world scale. "The development of the international revolution, which we predicted," stated Lenin in July 1921, "is proceeding, but not along as straight a line as we had expected."*

The West European capitalist countries, Lenin went on to say, were moving towards socialist revolution "not by the gradual 'maturing' of socialism in them". At the same time India, China and other countries of the East "have been completely dislodged from their groove, and their development has definitely changed to fit the general European capitalist pattern". A proletariat had come into being in those countries, the democratic forces had grown stronger and more united, the national consciousness of the peoples had increased. There began "the general European ferment". As Lenin wrote elsewhere, a 1905 of its own was irresistibly and rapidly approaching in the East.

Lenin probed the part played by the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries in the world revolutionary process, which undermines and destroys capitalism, and demonstrated the immense impact it has on the final victory of socialism throughout the world. In 1921, he wrote that the First World War and the establishment of Soviet power in Russia had definitely converted "these masses into an active factor in world politics and in the revolutionary destruction of imperialism". "It is perfectly clear," he wrote, "that in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary part than we expect."**

Enlarging on this thesis in his last article, "Better Fewer, But Better", Lenin wrote that the countries of the East "have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism".*** Since the proletarian revolutions in the developed capitalist countries were delayed, Lenin believed that the national liberation movements in the East would come to play a particularly important part. The break-up of the colonial system would mean the collapse of imperialism's positions in the rear, the loss of its reserves; it would mean that the imperialists would be deprived of the opportunity to siphon out, through the plunder of their colonies, the enormous superprofits they used for the reformist corruption of a certain section of the proletariat in the capitalist countries. This would inevitably lead to a sharpening of class contradictions and intensify the working-class struggle in those countries for the victory of socialism. Lenin pointed out time and again that for a number of reasons it would

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 480.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, pp. 454-55, 482.
*** *Ibid.*, Vol. 33, p. 499.

be harder to begin socialist revolutions in the developed Western capitalist countries than in Russia. But he was certain that they were inevitable. He stressed over and over again that joint struggle by the peoples of the East and West against imperialism, their common enemy, and united action by the Communist and Workers' Parties of all countries would lead to the victory of socialism all over the world.

Lenin expressed the firm conviction that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, the achievements of socialist and communist construction in the country, and the struggle against imperialism of the bulk of the world population, would speed up world development, and make the victory of socialism on a world scale inevitable. "In the last analysis," he wrote, "the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured."*

This is the substance of Lenin's last articles and letters. They hold a signal place in the ideological heritage left by Lenin for the wealth of ideas they contain and the importance of their theoretical propositions. In them he charted the Soviet Union's road to communism and society's progress many score years in advance. They are of vital importance for our Party, for the Communist and Workers' Parties of the People's Democracies, and for the whole world communist movement.

The articles dictated by Lenin were published in *Pravda*: "Pages from a Diary" on January 2, 1923, "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" on January 25, "Better Fewer, But Better" on March 4, "On Co-operation" on May 26 and 27, and "Our Revolution" on May 30, 1923. The letters on internal Party matters were not published at the time, while the letter entitled "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation'" was read to the delegations at the Twelfth Party Congress in connection with the debate on the national question. The letter, "The Attribution of Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission", which Krupskaya submitted to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee R.C.P.(B.) on June 2, 1923, was sent to all members and alternate members of the Central Committee, and the "Letter to the Congress", as we have said earlier, was read to the delegations at the Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in May 1924.

The part of the "Letter to the Congress" which contained character sketches of some C.C. members was published in Bulletin No. 30 of the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1927. But the Fifteenth Congress decision to publish the "Letter to the Congress" and some other of Lenin's letters on internal Party matters in the *Lenin Miscellany* publications was not

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 500.

carried out. By decision of the Central Committee these letters were read to the delegates of the Twentieth Congress of the C.P.S.U. in 1956, then sent to Party organisations all over the country and published in the press.

At Gorki. Lenin hoped that he would be able to take part in the coming Twelfth Congress of the Party and planned to address it. On March 10, 1923, however, he had another and the most severe attack, which led to a loss of speech and further paralysis of the right arm and leg. On March 14, a government communication was published stating that the health of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin had deteriorated sharply. In view of this the Government deemed it necessary that medical bulletins on the condition of his health be published.

In April 1923, the Party held its Twelfth Congress. This was the first congress since the October Revolution that Lenin was unable to attend. However, the Congress took guidance in its work from Lenin's last articles and letters. Accordingly, the Central Committee framed a resolution "On the Organisational Question", theses for the reorganisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the Central Control Commission (resolution on "The Tasks of the W.P.I. and C.C.C."), and a few more resolutions "On Industry", "On R.C.P. Work in the Countryside", "On the National Question", and others. On February 21, the C.C. Plenary Meeting examined the theses on the national and organisational questions and decided not to publish them until Lenin sees them (with the doctors' permission). If Lenin disapproved of them, an emergency plenary meeting could be called to re-examine them. Lenin's articles "How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" and "Better Fewer, But Better" were discussed in the press and by Party organisations, and approved by the Communists.

This shows that the claims of bourgeois writers that Lenin was no longer able to work and no longer influenced Party and government affairs in the latter period of his life were absurd inventions.

Here is what Y. Bumazhny, Secretary of the Bryansk Gubernia Party Committee, said on this score in his speech at the Congress: "Comrades, I think the debate on the C.C. report should first deal with Comrade Lenin's articles, because Comrade Lenin has done almost as much for the Twelfth Congress as he did for the previous congresses in the way of preparation. I would go so far as to say he has done more, and not only in the sense of preparing for it, but also in shaping its decisions, because, considering Lenin's recent condition, his articles are, in effect, a political report and have outlined the immediate tasks facing the Party, Soviet power and the Communist International."*

In a reply on behalf of the Congress to messages from workers and Red Army men, M. Frunze said: "Comrade Lenin was not among us at the Congress, but, as the speakers noted over and over again, he was

* *Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). Verbatim Report*, April 17-25, 1923, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1923, pp. 95-96.

with us in spirit all the time and we took his guidance and followed the course he charted for us."*

The Congress sent a message of greetings to Lenin, which said: "From the bottom of the heart of the Party, the proletariat and all the working people, the Congress sends greetings and words of warm love to its leader, the genius of proletarian thought and revolutionary action, to Ilyich, who even in these days of grave illness and long absence rallies as always the Congress and the whole Party by his personality.

"More than ever before the Party is conscious of its responsibility to the proletariat and to history. More than ever before it wants to be, and will be, worthy of its banner and its leader. It firmly believes that the day is not far off when the helmsman will be back at the helm."**

Lenin's sturdy constitution resisted the ailment stubbornly. In the first half of May 1923, his condition improved somewhat and on May 15, a fine sunny day, he was taken by car to Gorki. At his request he was put in the room which he had occupied before his illness, the most simply furnished one in the house. Fresh air and good care had a beneficial effect, and towards the end of July, Lenin began steadily to recuperate. He slept more soundly, his appetite improved. He was able to sit up and before long he could walk and take daily airings in the park in his wheel-chair. His state of mind, Krupskaya wrote later, changed completely. He "joked a lot, and laughed", and even hummed the *Internationale* and other revolutionary songs.

During his illness Lenin was sustained by the deep love and fond care of the Party and the people. At their meetings, workers, peasants and Red Army men never failed to inquire about Lenin's health. Every piece of good news from Gorki was received with joy by the working people. Thousands of letters and telegrams wishing Lenin rapid recovery were received by the Central Committee, the Council of People's Commissars, the press, and Lenin personally.

The workers of the Kiev Arsenal Plant, congratulating Lenin on his 53rd birthday, wrote:

"We are looking forward impatiently to the speedy recovery of our Ilyich.

"We, workers of Arsenal, want you to know that we are always with you and with the R.C.P., led by you.

"Anxious to establish still closer contacts with our dear Ilyich, our general meeting has on your birthday resolved to make you an honorary operator of the lathe shop of the Kiev Arsenal. . . .

"We wish you a long life and good work for the benefit of the working class."

In a message on July 22, a conference of non-Party peasants of Verkhovye Volost, Smolensk Uyezd, Smolensk Gubernia, wrote:

"Dear Vladimir Ilyich, leader of the socialist revolution,

* *Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.). Verbatim Report*, April 17-25, 1923, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1923, p. 516.

** *Ibid.*, p. 80.

"The Verkhovye Volost, Smolensk Uyezd, non-Party peasants' conference attended also by peasant women, having learned with satisfaction of your improved health, sends you most sincere wishes for a speedy and complete recovery and a speedy return to the helm of the Soviet Republic."

Many of the letters contained all kinds of medical advice. Their writers said they would gladly donate their blood for their beloved leader. Communists and non-Party people alike wrote, "We are ready to give our lives that he may get well and be able to work."

The doctors said of Lenin that he was a "most remarkable patient". With the will power and persistence typical of him, Lenin strove to conquer his illness. This is one of the reasons he improved in health so markedly towards the close of 1923. Lenin's principal object in those months was to regain his speech and to learn to write with his left hand. He applied himself to the task with extraordinary tenacity and, much to his joy, made steady progress. A speech specialist said he was sure Lenin would talk again.

Lenin's desk stood beside a window. He liked to look at Gorki. He had good contacts with the peasants there, and saw to it that electricity was installed in the village and that the peasants were supplied with seeds and machinery.

All this time Lenin kept his attention focussed on the affairs of the country, the work of the Party and people. He insisted on being given *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. After a look at the headlines he would ask Nadezhda Krupskaya to read the editorials, news items and articles to him. "After reading the papers," Krupskaya later recalled, "we would talk about sundry matters."*

Lenin also kept abreast of new publications. Usually, he examined the packages of books that came to Gorki, selecting those which interested him most, such as literature dealing with the scientific organisation of labour, the magazine *Pod Znamenem Marxizma*, reference books, and atlases. In the evenings Nadezhda Krupskaya would read fiction to him. Saltykov-Shchedrin was one of the authors. Lenin liked Gorky's book *My Universities*. He always inquired after Maxim Gorky and was very much upset on learning of his illness. Lenin also greatly enjoyed poetry: the verses of Demyan Bedny, Béranger and other revolutionary poets.

"As I read to him," Krupskaya recalls, "he would look pensively out of the window at the setting sun. I recall the verse ending with the line: 'The Communards will never, never be slaves.'

"I read as though vowing to Ilyich that we should never, never surrender the gains of the revolution. . . ."**

Lenin enjoyed watching newsreels, particularly Soviet ones. He was keenly interested in the All-Russia Agricultural Exhibition. On his request the assistant manager of the Gorki State Farm went to the Exhibition and then told Lenin about his impressions and also about

* *Lenin and Gorky*, Letters, Recollections and Documents, Russ. ed., 1961, p. 219.
** N. K. Krupskaya, *Stories About Lenin*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1960, p. 74.

the work of the state farm. When two tractors were brought to the farm Lenin watched them at work. Afterwards, well pleased with their performance, he shook the hand of their driver.

On October 18, 1923, Lenin decided to visit Moscow. Nadezhda Krupskaya and Maria Ulyanova accompanied him. He was in high spirits during the trip. When they drove into the city he removed his cap and waved it in greeting. In the Kremlin, he went to his apartment, looked into the meeting-hall of the Council of People's Commissars and then went to his office. On the following day he drove through the city, passing by the Agricultural Exhibition. In the Kremlin, he took a few books from his bookcase and returned to Gorki. This was Lenin's last visit to Moscow.

Lenin was very glad when delegations of workers and peasants visited him. On November 2, a delegation of workers from the Glukhovo Mill (now the Lenin Textile Mill) came to see him. They brought him a gift of eighteen cherry-trees and a message of greeting from the workers. In parting, the delegates embraced and kissed Lenin. The last to go was an old worker named Kuznetsov. He and Lenin stood with their arms around each other. Through his tears, the old man kept repeating:

"I'm a worker, a smith, Vladimir Ilyich. I'm a blacksmith. We'll forge everything you planned."

Even when very ill, Lenin showed concern for his relatives and friends and the people around him. He was very fond of Nadezhda Krupskaya and Maria Ilyinichna, and watched over their health. He saw to it that there was absolute quiet in the house after lunch, when Nadezhda Krupskaya had her afternoon rest. He always asked the doctors and the rest of the medical personnel how they were and inquired whether visitors from the city had been given a meal. He was very fond of children. When a party was arranged for the children of Gorki on New Year's Eve, Lenin sat in the hall watching them at play, enjoying their concert and sharing in their merriment. When his relatives thought the noise might tire him, he said the children should not be interrupted in their games.

Krupskaya wrote to Maxim Gorky about Lenin's last weeks: "Up to his death, he was the same—a man of tremendous will-power and self-control, who laughed and joked and was tenderly solicitous of others."*

In the latter half of October 1923 Lenin's health deteriorated again, although he felt well enough to continue his daily routine. Krupskaya read the papers to him every day. He followed closely the discussion which Trotsky and his supporters forced on the Party in the autumn of 1923. The Trotskyites slandered the Central Committee, demanded freedom for factions and groups in the Party and urged economic concessions to foreign capital. The Party rebuffed the Trotskyites firmly. The Thirteenth Party Conference held on January 16-18, 1924, condemned

* *Lenin and Gorky*, Letters, Recollections and Documents, Russ. ed., 1961, p. 218.

Trotskyism as a petty-bourgeois deviation and an attempt to revise Leninism, and endorsed the Leninist line of the Central Committee. During the discussion Lenin familiarised himself with the principal documents published in *Pravda*. There is every reason to assume that Krupskaya opposed the Trotsky line with Lenin's knowledge. After the conference opened, Lenin wanted the account of it read to him from beginning to end. "When Lenin appeared excited on Saturday (January 19)," Krupskaya wrote later, "I told him the resolutions were passed unanimously. We spent Saturday and Sunday reading them. Lenin listened very attentively, and asked questions from time to time."

It appeared that Lenin was on the road to recovery. He was even expected to be up and about by summer. When opening the Eleventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets on January 19, 1924, Mikhail Kalinin informed the delegates that the leading specialists attending Lenin hoped that he would return to government and political work. The delegates received this news with stormy applause and cheers.

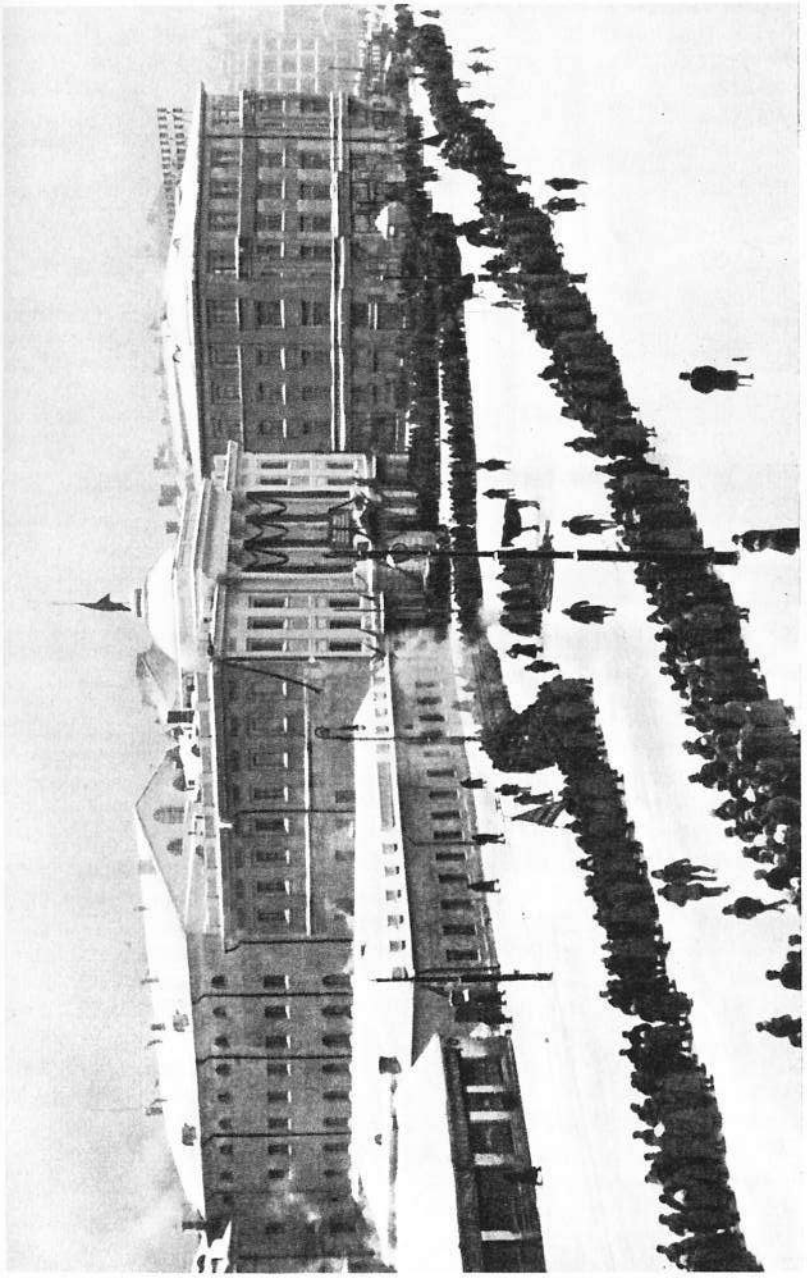
The death of Lenin. But the hopes that Lenin would recover were dashed on January 21, 1924, when a sharp deterioration set in suddenly. At 6.50 p.m. Lenin died. The medical report stated that Lenin had suffered from cerebrosclerosis caused by mental overstrain. The direct cause of death was cerebral haemorrhage. Superhuman exertion and incessant work had cut short Lenin's life prematurely.

On the night of January 21, the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) called an emergency Plenary Meeting. On January 22, at 6 a.m., the radio announced the sad tidings to the country and the whole world. The government communication on Lenin's death said: "He is no longer with us, but his cause lives on. Acting on the will of the masses, the Soviet Government will carry on the work of Vladimir Ilyich and will advance along the path charted by him. The Soviet state stands firmly at its post, on guard over the gains of the proletarian revolution."*

On the following day the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) published an appeal "To the Party, to All Working People". It enumerated Lenin's historic services to the Party and the country, to the world proletariat and to all progressive mankind. It stressed the immortality of Lenin's cause and called on Communists and all working people to follow Lenin's behests, to unite even more closely round the Communist Party.

"Never since Marx," the appeal said, "has the history of the great liberation movement of the proletariat produced such a titanic figure as our departed leader, teacher and friend. All that is truly great and heroic in the proletariat–a fearless mind, a will of iron, unbending, persistent and able to surmount all obstacles, a burning, undying hatred of slavery and oppression, a revolutionary passion that moves mountains, boundless faith in the creative energies of the masses, vast organisational genius–

* Special issues of *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, January 22, 1924.



People come to the House of Trade Unions where Lenin lies in state
Photo, January 1924



At the Lenin Mausoleum
Photo

all this found splendid embodiment in Lenin, whose name has become the symbol of the new world from East to West, from North to South....

"But his physical death is not the death of his cause. Lenin lives on in the heart of every member of our Party. Every member of our Party is a part of Lenin. The whole of our Communist family is the collective embodiment of Lenin.... The death of our teacher, a heavy blow, will unite our ranks even more closely. We are marching against capital in a solid militant chain and no force on earth will be able to prevent our ultimate victory.

"This victory will be the finest monument to Comrade Lenin, to the man whom, as their best friend, the masses called their 'Ilyich'.

"Long live our Party and may it ever be victorious!

"Long live the working class!"*

On January 23, the Executive Committee of the Communist International issued an appeal which ended with the words:

"We address the millions of our comrades in struggle in all parts of the world with the appeal: follow the behests of Lenin which continue to live on in his Party and in everything he created in his lifetime. Fight the way Lenin fought and like Lenin you will be victorious."**

On January 21-23, members of the Party Central Committee and of the Government, delegations from the Eleventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets and from the working people of Moscow went to Gorki to bid farewell to Lenin. They were joined by the peasants from the surrounding villages. On January 23, Lenin's body was brought by special train to Moscow and placed in the Hall of Columns of the House of Trade Unions where the people came to pay tribute to Vladimir Ilyich.

Workers, peasants, Red Army men, intellectuals, students, people of diverse nationalities, delegations of working people from all over the world moved in an endless stream past the bier in solemn silence, broken from time to time by restrained sobbing. All the streets adjacent to the House of Trade Unions were filled with slowly moving columns of people, who had come, in spite of the bitter January frost of −30°C., to bid farewell to their great leader. Fires were built in the streets at which the people, standing in the queues for hours, warmed themselves. Over 900,000 people passed through the Hall of Columns during the four days and nights that Lenin lay in state.

At memorial meeting held at all enterprises, military units, institutions and in the countryside, workers and peasants, Red Army men, men of science and art expressed their deep grief over the premature, irreparable loss and assured the Communist Party of their absolute trust in it. They promised the Central Committee and the Soviet Government that they would devote all their energies to carrying out Lenin's behests.

"The enemies need not rejoice: Ilyich is dead, but the working class and the Communist Party live on," said the resolution passed by the

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* Special issues of *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, January 23, 1924.
** *Ibid.*

workers of the Alexeyev Textile Mill.* "We shall carry out Ilyich's behests and this is a guarantee of our ultimate victory. In response to the death of Ilyich we shall unite still more closely round the R.C.P."

The workers of the Krasny Vyborzhets Plant stated:

"We pledge always to follow his example, unceasingly to serve the interests of the working class and call on all not to spare themselves for the welfare of the working people. We call on the working class to rally even more solidly round the Communist Party."

Lenin's death came as a terrible blow to the peasants. In their speeches and resolutions they pledged themselves to strengthen the alliance of workers and peasants, to advance under the leadership of the Communist Party. The resolution adopted by the conference of non-Party peasants of Troitskoye Volost, Klin Uyezd, Moscow Gubernia, stated: "Dear comrade Communists, we vow to help you in your great work and are confident that together with us and with the workers you will bring Soviet Russia to the final victory of socialism."

The news of the death of Lenin, the great fighter against social and national oppression, and for the freedom and equality of peoples, came as a great shock to the working masses of the non-Russian republics and regions. Workers and peasants solemnly vowed to promote the friendship of peoples, to strengthen the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Second All-Union Congress of Soviets opened on January 26. It was dedicated to the memory of the great leader and teacher of the working people. Opening the Congress, Kalinin, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R., said that the Soviet Government would steadfastly follow the directives of Lenin in its home and foreign policy.

"Comrades," said Kalinin, "we shall cherish his behests. As we pay our last tribute to his memory we firmly say to ourselves: his thoughts, his behests to fight for communism are our thoughts, our behests, and no matter how sad our bereavement, how sad the loss of the greatest, most beloved leader, we must all increase our energies tenfold to achieve communism, the ultimate goal of the working class."**

"His heart throbbed with a fervent love for all working people, for all the oppressed," said Nadezhda Krupskaya at the Congress. "Vladimir Ilyich dedicated his whole life to the cause of the working class and to the liberation of all the oppressed." Krupskaya finished her speech with the call: "Comrade workers, comrade peasants, men and women, working people of all countries, close your ranks, rally under the banner of Lenin, under the banner of communism!"***

The Congress was also addressed by Stalin, Clara Zetkin, N. Narimanov, etc. A. Sergeyev spoke on behalf of the workers of the Krasny

* *Pyotr Alexeyevich Alexeyev* (1849-1891)—prominent Russian revolutionary of the 70s, weaver by profession.

** *Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Verbatim Report*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1924, p. 10.

*** *Ibid.*

Putilovets Works, A. Krayushkin on behalf of the peasants, K. Voroshilov on behalf of the Red Army, P. Smorodin on behalf of the youth, and Academician S. Oldenburg on behalf of the country's scientists.

The Second Congress of Soviets unanimously passed a decision to perpetuate the memory of Lenin and addressed an appeal to the workers of the world. It emphasised that wide circulation of his works would be the best monument to Lenin, for it would bring the ideas of communism within the reach of all. It entrusted the Lenin Institute with the publication as soon as possible of a popular edition of Lenin's selected works in millions of copies and in various languages and also with the preparation for publication, on a strictly scientific basis, of his collected works. The Congress likewise resolved, in compliance with the request of the Petrograd Soviet supported by the workers of the city's factories and plans, to rename Petrograd, the cradle of the proletarian revolution, into Leningrad.

Meeting the wishes of the working people the Congress also decided to preserve Lenin's body in a mausoleum to be specially built for the purpose near the Kremlin wall in Red Square, beside the common graves of the fighters of the October Revolution. Later Soviet scientists, in response to the wishes of the people, for the first time in the history of world science solved a most difficult problem; they developed a method of embalming which would make it possible to preserve Lenin's body over the years.

On the morning of January 27, 1924, Lenin's body was transferred from the House of Trade Unions to the Red Square and placed on a specially built platform, past which the working people of Moscow and numerous delegations from all parts of the Soviet Union marched. At 4 o'clock the coffin was installed in the Mausoleum to the accompaniment of solemn music and thousands of factory whistles and gun salvoes.

On the day of Lenin's funeral the international proletariat declared a five-minute work stoppage. Motor vehicles and trains came to a standstill, work stopped at plants and factories in the Soviet Union and many capitalist countries as Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was laid to rest. In deep sorrow the working people of the whole world bade farewell to their teacher, their best friend and protector.

Communist Parties abroad sent letters of condolence to the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) in which they declared their adherence to the principles of proletarian internationalism and their steadfast determination to follow the behests of Lenin. Memorial meetings were held in Berlin, Paris, London, New York, Prague, Warsaw and in many other cities. No repressions or persecutions could deter the workers and the ordinary folk from expressing their solidarity with the Soviet people.

Lenin's death came as a heavy blow to the working masses of the oppressed East, which was awakening to a new life. The news of his death was received with profound grief by the Chinese people. A mass meeting was held in Peking. In Canton, then the revolutionary centre of

China, three days' mourning was declared. Speaking at a memorial meeting, Sun Yat-sen said:

"Through the ages of world history thousands of leaders and scholars appeared who spoke eloquent words, but these remained but words. You, Lenin, were an exception. You not only spoke and taught us, but translated your words into deeds. You created a new country. You showed us the road of joint struggle.... You, great man that you are, will live on in the memories of the oppressed peoples through the centuries."

Large sections of the population of India, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Korea, Indochina, Indonesia, Turkey, Iran, the Arab countries and the countries of Latin America expressed their grief at the death of Lenin.

The imperialists, Whites and reactionaries of all hues made no attempt to conceal their joy. They reckoned that the death of the leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet people would result in a split in the Party and the collapse of the Soviet system. However, the expectations of the enemies of the Soviet Republic did not materialise.

Although the Party and the people were overwhelmed by grief, the death of Lenin did not cause panic or confusion in their ranks. On the contrary. In those days of profound distress, the working people of the Soviet land displayed exceptional firmness, courage and self-control and united even more closely round the Communist Party and its Central Committee. A mass movement arose among the working people to join the Communist Party. Over 240,000 new members were admitted to the Party; they were the foremost section of the working class, the most class-conscious, devoted and disciplined. This was the historic Lenin Enrolment.

Under the banner of Leninism, under the leadership of the Central Committee, the Communist Party has confidently guided the Soviet people towards the fulfilment of Lenin's behests and towards the victory of socialism and communism.



Chapter Fourteen

THE TRIUMPH OF LENINISM

Communism is bound to win.
It will win.

LENIN

The present epoch is one of triumph for the immortal ideas of Lenin. It is the epoch in which these ideas are being translated into practice. Speaking of the new times ushered in by the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin said: "The abolition of capitalism and its vestiges, and the establishment of the fundamentals of the communist order comprise the content of the new era of world history that has set in."*

Today, four decades after these words were spoken, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has proclaimed at its Twenty-Second Congress that the present generation of Soviet people shall live in communism.

Lenin stood at the source of the new historical era. Soon after the victory of the Great October Revolution he made his bold and scientifically reasoned revolutionary conclusion that the epoch of the downfall of capitalism and the triumph of communism had arrived. Sweeping changes have occurred in the world since then, and all of them prove that Lenin's brilliant deduction was correct.

In its new Programme, the Communist Party has extended Lenin's definition of the new epoch, bringing it into line with modern conditions.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 392.

"Our epoch, whose main content is the transition from capitalism to socialism," says the Programme of the C.P.S.U., "is an epoch of struggle between the two opposing social systems, an epoch of socialist and national liberation revolutions, of the breakdown of imperialism and the abolition of the colonial system, an epoch of the transition of more and more peoples to the socialist path, of the triumph of socialism and communism on a world-wide scale."*

Lenin's name is the symbol and banner of this new age.

History develops as Lenin predicted. Lenin had an extraordinary capacity for probing the future, foreseeing the course of historical development, anticipating imminent events and gauging their importance.

Lenin's foresight stemmed from his understanding of the objective social laws, from knowledge of the laws of class struggle. It was based on his ability to apply revolutionary theory when analysing a concrete historical situation.

Maxim Gorky described him thus:

"Vladimir Ilyich Lenin knew past history so well that he could look at the present from the standpoint of the future.... Generally, nobody before him could foresee so clearly the things that were bound to happen. He could do it, I believe, because half his great soul lived in the future; his powerful but flexible logic showed him the distant future in absolutely concrete and realistic forms."**

The facts show that world development is proceeding as Lenin predicted. History is developing according to Lenin.

The reactionary forces undertook campaign after campaign against Marxism. They tried to refute it and declared boastfully that they had destroyed it. Yet Marxism is scoring new victories and exerting an increasing influence on social development. Today, more than 1,000 million of the world's population are building a new life for themselves under the Marxist-Leninist banner, and in so doing follow the path Lenin charted. Lenin's ideas are winning the hearts of fresh millions.

Leninism rules the minds of all progressive mankind.

Marxism-Leninism is a living, creative and developing international teaching which sums up and generalises the historical experience of all countries. Linked closely to life, it is continuously enriched through the generalisation of new experiences of the class struggle, new historical developments, and the practice of socialist and communist construction. Each major turn in history, each new development in the economic and political progress of society, the great discoveries of the natural and other sciences are adding constantly to the treasure-trove of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Lenin's greatness lies in his having developed Marxism in the new historical period that began at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Marxism is inconceivable and impossible

* *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 449.
** *Lenin and Gorky*, Letters, Recollections and Documents, Russ. ed., 1961, p. 287.

without the new elements introduced by Lenin. Leninism is Marxism as developed by Lenin to suit the new historical conditions.

Lenin's immortal works are an inexhaustible source of great ideas. His literary legacy is truly immense. He produced more than 30,000 works, letters and documents. His complete works consist of 55 volumes.

Lenin never tired of stressing that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action. He always fought uncompromisingly against any ossification of the mind, against stereotyped thinking and against revisionism and dogmatism, which he classed as varieties of opportunism. While upholding Marxist theory, its basic propositions and its revolutionary substance, Lenin at once indicated that Marxism had to be approached creatively, and developed to accord with the newly-arising historical conditions. He said that a dogmatic view of revolutionary theory was just as dangerous as revisionism.

Lenin did not want the Marxists to memorise formulas and postulates as they would dogmas, or to tolerate subjectivism in the evaluation of events and developments. He wanted them to learn to apply the Marxist dialectical method creatively, with an eye to living reality, to the facts.

The dogmatists and bookworms believed that any creative development of Marxism was a departure from the Marxist teaching and from its revolutionary traditions. In reply to them Lenin wrote: "The duty to preserve the revolutionary traditions calls, also, for an analysis of the conditions in which they are applied, and not for a simple repetition of revolutionary slogans which were important in specific conditions."*

Lenin ridiculed the Mensheviks for their dull and sterile dogmatism. "They have memorised, but have not understood," he said, "they have learned by heart, but have not considered. They have mastered the letter, but have not grasped the sense."**

Reformists and revisionists are spreading the absurd notion that Leninism is "a departure from Marxism", "a revival of Blanquism", etc. Yet it is the Communists, the Leninists, and above all Lenin, who safeguarded Marxism from the vulgar notions of the opportunist leaders of the Second International, the revisionists and the dogmatists. None but the Leninists, the Communists, have been loyal in their practices to the revolutionary spirit of the Marxist doctrine. The specious talk of the revisionists about Lenin's Blanquism is nothing but a screen for their own defection, their opportunism and ideological sabotage.

The enemies of socialism are trying to belittle the international importance of Leninism. They are trying to "prove" that it is unsuited for other countries. They claim that Leninism could not have sprung up anywhere but on "specifically Russian soil", that its appearance was due to conditions "exclusive" to Russia, to her "economic and cultural backwardness", and that Leninism is inapplicable in the West European countries because they have "civilisation" and "order".

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 5th Russ. ed., Vol. 16, p. 474.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 368.

The facts have refuted all these contentions.

Lenin pointed out that, indeed, every country has its specific conditions and that these ought to be considered by the Marxists when they frame their strategy and tactics. But the general and guiding principles of Marxist theory, he said, are applicable in all countries. In Russia, he wrote, "we see the same *basic* processes of the development of capitalism, the same *basic* tasks for the socialists and the working class."* The specific features of a country, Lenin explained, do not revoke the basic objective laws of the socialist revolution and socialist construction.

That is the point of departure for the Marxist-Leninist parties. The Statement of the Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in November 1960 points out that the experience of the C.P.S.U. in the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is of fundamental significance to the world communist movement as a whole.

The revisionists and dogmatists, and the pedants of the Second International, have for many years been circulating the time-worn "theory" that socialist revolution is practicable only in countries where the proletariat comprises the majority of the population. Lenin repudiated their notion as far back as 1908. He wrote:

"It would be a profound mistake to think that the 'complete' proletarianisation of the majority of the population is essential for bringing about such a revolution."**

The inventions of the opponents of Marxism-Leninism are disproved by history. In all countries, whether advanced or backward, Leninism has shown the way in the struggle for the liberation of the working class, the working peasantry, the oppressed peoples. The Leninist theory of socialist revolution, the lifeblood of Leninism, has been tested in the crucible of socialist and communist construction in the Soviet Union, which under tsarism was a poorly developed capitalist country, and in countries such as the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic, which were highly developed capitalist countries to start with, and also in underdeveloped, previously backward countries that have now embarked on socialist construction.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is creatively developing Leninism in the new historical conditions. The decisions and documents of its Twentieth, Twenty-First and Twenty-Second congresses have strongly influenced the Marxist-Leninist elucidation of the new problems of our time.

The results of the comprehensive and tireless practical and theoretical activities of the Party are reflected exhaustively in the Programme of the C.P.S.U. adopted at the 22nd Congress. It represents a new chapter in the development of Leninism. It is the master plan for the building of communist society, it is Leninism in action, Leninism realised in the daily practice of communist construction.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 235.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 39.

The C.P.S.U. does not deviate or stray from the course charted by Lenin, a course backed by the world communist movement, by progressives all over the world.

Socialism is reality. Lenin's ideas have been most fully embodied in the socialist society of the U.S.S.R. *"Socialism, which Marx and Engels scientifically predicted as inevitable and the plan for the construction of which was mapped out by Lenin, has become a reality in the Soviet Union."** The triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union is a triumph for Lenin's great ideas, the result of creative work by the masses, led and inspired by the Communist Party.

Time and again, anti-Party groups and factions, such as the Trotskyists, Right opportunists, nationalist deviationists and other hostile elements, tried to lead our Party away from the path charted by Lenin. But the Party guided the country onward along Lenin's course firmly and staunchly. It routed the enemies of Leninism, it upheld the purity of Lenin's teaching in uncompromising struggles, and consistently realised this teaching in practice.

At a time when the country was ravaged by the imperialist and civil wars, and by foreign interventionists, Lenin foresaw the great future of the Soviet land. He foresaw the tremendous growth of its economic, political and military power, the growth of the creative forces of its people, the flowering of its art and science, the victory of socialism. And the plans made by Lenin, his scientifically reasoned and audacious dreams, his wise and noble ideas, have been translated into reality in the Soviet Union in an unprecedentedly short period of history despite the difficult conditions–the country's economic backwardness and dislocation, the hostile capitalist encirclement, and the ferocious attacks of the imperialist states.

In a short time, the Soviet Union turned from an agrarian country into a powerful socialist state, the second industrial power of the world, a country of progressive technology, extra-powerful machines and automated production lines, electronic computers and atom-powered electric stations.

In tackling the historic task of economic development, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union proceeded from Lenin's postulate that a highly developed heavy industry constitutes the basis of socialist construction. Lenin was the initiator of the plan for the country's wholesale electrification. He attached prime importance to it in the building of the material and technical basis of the new society. "Electrification based on the Soviet system," he wrote, "will mean the complete success of the foundations of communism in our country."**

Metallurgy, engineering, electrification, the chemical industry, and all other branches of Soviet production are now developing at rates of which Lenin could only dream at the outset of socialist construction.

* *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 459.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 368.

Suffice it to say that considerably more manufactured goods are now produced in a year than in all the pre-war Five-Year-Plan periods combined.

Lenin described socialist industry as the foundation for the reorganisation and development of agriculture along socialist lines. In the process of socialist construction the Party and the people fulfilled Lenin's directions and completed the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. It was an immensely complicated task. The voluntary conversion of millions of small individual farms to collective farming was tantamount to *"a great revolution in economic relations, in the entire way of life of the peasantry"*.*

The victory of the co-operative collective-farm system in the countryside has put an end once and for all to the stratification of the peasant class, to the poverty and ruin of the peasants. Socialist agriculture is equipped with first-class up-to-date machines. All the collective farmers and state-farm workers are sparing no effort to achieve a new upsurge in agriculture, and an abundance of farm products, in pursuance of the grand programme of communist construction.

Lenin's co-operative plan has been put into practice and has transformed the individual peasant proprietor into a collectivist who keeps pace with the working class. The alliance of the two friendly classes of Soviet society, the working class and the peasants, has gained added strength and become truly indestructible. The victory of socialism, elimination of the exploiting classes, and the identity of the basic interests of workers, peasants and the people's intelligentsia have produced socio-political and ideological unity.

The fraternal friendship of the peoples of our country has grown incalculably since the victory of socialism.

Lenin was the inspirer and organiser of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. He worked out the plan for the building and strengthening of the Soviet multi-national state. It was his postulate that the principles of proletarian internationalism must be carried through consistently and that the friendship and fraternal co-operation of the peoples must be continuously advanced.

In carrying out the Leninist national policy, the Party promotes the all-round economic and cultural development of all the Soviet nations and nationalities, securing their increasingly close co-operation, cohesion and alliance, and their mutual enrichment in all spheres of life. The Programme of the C.P.S.U. says that the Party will continue uncompromisingly to combat any and all manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism, of national narrowness, idealisation of the past, glossing over of social contradictions in the history of the various peoples, and neglect or exaggeration of distinctive national features.

Leninism is embodied not only in the growth of Soviet material and economic power, but also in the cultural progress of all the peoples of

* *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 458.

the Soviet Union. As Lenin anticipated, in the U.S.S.R. socialism has impelled a true flowering of science, technology and culture. The achievements of human genius have been placed at the service of the people.

Soviet scientists, engineers, technicians, and workers were the first in history to launch artificial earth satellites, to deliver a Soviet pennant to the Moon, to build an interplanetary automatic station which photographed the reverse, invisible side of the Moon, and to send an interplanetary station to Mars. The first men to conquer the earth's gravity and fly into outer space were citizens of the Soviet Union, the Communists Yuri Gagarin and Herman Titov. Spacemen Andrian Nikolayev and Pavel Popovich performed a long group space flight and maintained continuous communications with each other and with the earth. This unexampled feat, performed for peaceful purposes, for the good of mankind, a feat that amazed and delighted the world, is added testimony to the great advantages of socialism, the superiority of Soviet science, the courage and heroism of the Soviet people.

Lenin's ideas and the immortal image of Lenin inspired the spacemen in their grand exploit. Before taking off for outer space they visited Lenin's Mausoleum and vowed that they would honourably perform the assignment of Lenin's Party and their motherland.

"The image of our great leader," wrote Andrian Nikolayev and Pavel Popovich, "lived in our hearts, and our spaceships bore Lenin's ideas to all the continents of the earth.

"We were raised from childhood on Lenin's all-conquering teaching. The lives of our fathers, our own adolescence, our youth and manhood are associated closely with his name."*

The great spiritual uplift of the Soviet people expressed in their wonderful scientific achievements, their progress in public education, art and literature, are bound up with Lenin's name. Universal elementary literacy has been achieved long ago. A high standard of education and culture is now a reality for the whole population, as Lenin foresaw.

Lenin believed that dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, the power of the working people, the highest form of democracy, was an essential condition for the successful building of socialism. In developing Marx's ideas, Lenin demonstrated that the working class needs dictatorship to create socialist society and to abolish exploitation of man by man. According to the Marxist-Leninist teaching, the state of proletarian dictatorship is the state of the transition period from capitalism to socialism.

By securing the complete and final victory of socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat fulfilled its historic mission and ceased to be essential in the Soviet Union from the point of view of domestic development. The dictatorship of the proletariat has evolved into a state of the whole people, a body representing the interests and the will of the whole

* *Pravda* No. 243, August 31, 1962.

people. But the working class, the most organised and advanced force of Soviet society, will retain its guiding role until classes disappear.

The Soviet state of the whole people is a state of genuinely socialist people's democracy, which ensures the true power of the people, true equality and genuine freedom. As socialist democracy continues to develop, the bodies of power are gradually transformed into bodies of communist public self-administration.

The Soviet people are happy and proud of what has been and is being done in their country to attain the objectives set by the great Lenin. The Party and the people will follow the path charted by Lenin and will continue to develop rapidly their industry, agriculture, transport, science, and culture, to erect new towns, to build houses, hospitals, schools, and clubs–and all in the name of man and for the benefit of man.

Time and again Lenin noted that the building of communism is a complex and difficult process involving not only a reorganisation of the economy, but also of human relations, of the people's way of life and of their outlook. The moulding of the new man is one of the cardinal tasks, and it is being performed in sharp and uncompromising struggle against the survivals of the past in men's minds, against the influence of bourgeois ideology.

Lenin's ideas and principles, upon which the Party acts in all its endeavours, serve as the basis for the communist education of the masses. The Party is educating the working people in the Leninist spirit. It teaches them that the labour of every Soviet citizen is bringing nearer the triumph of communism, that every Soviet citizen should live and work in the Leninist, the communist style. This means that all Soviet citizens should work better and more productively, that they should multiply the material and spiritual wealth of the country to the utmost of their ability. To live, work and struggle as Lenin has taught, is the principal condition for the development of the new man.

The Soviet people have followed the road charted by Lenin and have overcome all difficulties to score victories of historical world-wide impact. Today, too, in the period of full-scale communist construction, the nation is living up to Lenin's precepts. The life, labour and struggle of the Soviet people are illumined by the great ideas of Lenin, the ideas of the Twenty-Second Party Congress, and the new Programme of the C.P.S.U., which epitomises the creative power and wisdom of Leninism.

The Party and its Central Committee have always followed Lenin's principles in working out their programmes, studying the outlook for the coming decades and defining the tasks of communist construction.

In its resolution, the Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U. wrote: *"The creation of the material and technical basis of communism, the development of socialist social relations, the moulding of the man of communist society–such are the major tasks confronting the Party in the sphere of internal policy during the period of the full-scale construction of communism."**

* *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 430.

Lenin wisely predicted that the example of the Soviet Union would exercise an ever-increasing influence on other countries. He predicted that the torch of socialist revolution lit in Soviet Russia and her achievements in socialist construction would be a beacon for the working people of the world, showing them the way to a brighter future.

Lenin's prophetic words have come true.

A number of European and Asian countries have fallen away from capitalism. A world socialist system has arisen, of which the Soviet Union is a mighty member. The common social system and ideology, and the same goals, are the source of strength of the socialist camp. They determine the strength of the bonds and the unity of the countries of the great world socialist community. The relations between the states of the socialist system are based on the Leninist principles of proletarian internationalism, on the principles of full equality, sovereignty, friendship and co-operation, and fraternal mutual assistance.

"The experience of the world socialist system," says the Programme of the C.P.S.U., "has confirmed the need for the *closest unity* of countries that fall away from capitalism, for their united effort in the building of socialism and communism." The line of isolated socialist construction is untenable theoretically and harmful economically. It is reactionary and dangerous politically because it "divides the peoples in face of the united front of the imperialist forces, because it nourishes bourgeois-nationalist tendencies and because it may ultimately lead to the loss of the socialist gains".*

The countries building socialism have a common path. It was charted by Lenin and tested in practice not only in the U.S.S.R., but also in all the other socialist countries. Despite different features of the transition from capitalism to socialism in different countries, socialist revolution and socialist construction are governed by common objective laws in all countries. These laws, formulated by Lenin, have been specified and developed on the basis of the experience of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies. They are defined in the 1957 Declaration of the Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties of the Socialist Countries and in the 1960 Statement of the Meeting of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties, and also in the new Programme of the C.P.S.U. adopted by the Twenty-Second Party Congress.

The Communist and Workers' Parties in the People's Democracies are applying the common laws of socialist construction creatively, and are developing Marxism-Leninism, enriching it with new experience, with due consideration for the distinctive features of the respective countries.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union attaches special importance to the economic and political unity of the socialist community and to mutual exchanges of experience in the building of the new life.

Now that socialism has won in the U.S.S.R. not only completely, but also finally, and now that the country has become a mighty world power,

* *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 466.

with the world socialist system going from strength to strength, the imperialist dream of restoring the old system has been destroyed.

"The successes of the socialist countries," says the resolution of the Twenty-Second Party Congress, "are exercising an increasing influence on the peoples of the non-socialist states and revolutionising and accelerating the development of mankind along the road of progress. *Today, it is not imperialism, but socialism which determines the main direction of world development.*"

The capitalist system is suffering a deep-going crisis. This is mirrored in bourgeois ideology. The bourgeoisie lacks the ideas that would inspire people. Nor can the moribund class of exploiters, which is approaching its doom, produce such ideas. The imperialist bourgeoisie is employing *anti-communism* as its chief ideological and political weapon in an effort to safeguard capitalism and combat progressive ideas. Anti-communism has brought all enemies of social progress together, and reflects the ultimate degree of degradation that taints bourgeois ideology.

As has always been the case in history, the defenders of the moribund system are trying to prevent its downfall by all the means at their disposal. But the laws of history are inexorable. The transition from the lower social system to the higher is inevitable.

Capitalism has a past, but it has no future. The future belongs to communism.

All the peoples need peace. Socialism delivers mankind from wars, that terrible blight of all exploiting social systems, especially imperialism. In contrast to capitalism, socialism is opposed to war. The wish for peace is organically inherent in it. As they build communism, the Soviet people are vitally interested in preserving the peace. "All our politics and propaganda," Lenin stressed, "are directed towards putting an end to war and in no way towards driving nations to war."* The peace policy of the Soviet Union, Lenin pointed out, is supported by the bulk of the world's population.

The Communist Party and the Soviet Government are carrying through the Leninist principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. They are doing it consistently. It is the basic course of Soviet foreign policy. The decisions of the C.P.S.U. and the new Party Programme enlarge on the Leninist principles of the peaceful coexistence of socialist and capitalist countries. These historic Party documents point out that peaceful coexistence rejects war as a means of settling disputes between states and implies their solution by negotiation. Its basic principles are equality, mutual understanding and confidence between states; non-interference in internal affairs and unfailing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; and, last but not least, development of economic and cultural co-operation on the basis of complete equality and mutual advantage.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 470.

The cold war ideologists, the various falsifiers and all the different groups of dogmatists are spreading the invention that Lenin never formulated the principle of peaceful coexistence and that he never even used the expression "peaceful coexistence" in his speeches and writings. To make their invention more plausible, they distort the text of Lenin's speeches, present passages from them in isolation from the context and interpret incorrectly Lenin's words about the inevitability of collisions between the forces of capitalism and those of socialism.

This is due either to ignorance or malicious design, the design to deceive the masses and world opinion. It is quite true that Lenin referred to the inevitability of collisions between capitalism and socialism. But consider when and in what circumstances he did so. Lenin spoke about it at a time when the imperialists were attacking the Soviet land, and later, when, smashed and driven out of the Soviet territories, they continued to prepare new armed attacks on the world's only socialist state, which stood like a besieged stronghold amidst the capitalist world.

One need not tax one's imagination too much to picture what Lenin would have said about the historical situation that has arisen today under the influence of the great successes scored by the forces of peace, socialism and democracy.

After the Soviet people had beaten off enemy assaults, Lenin gave an exhaustive exposition of the all-important principle of peaceful coexistence and economic competition between the socialist and capitalist systems. "It will be clear that we have something more than a breathing-space," he said. "We have entered a new period, in which we have won the right to our fundamental international existence in the network of capitalist states."* He pointed out that a long period lies ahead "when socialist and capitalist states will exist side by side."

In developing the idea of peaceful economic competition between the two systems, Lenin said that socialism and communism should demonstrate in practice, by their example, what they stand for. He added that this example would always exercise a tremendous influence on the development of history as a whole.

Lenin believed that wars were inevitable under imperialism. But the situation has changed due to the change in the relation of forces in the world in favour of socialism, the emergence of the world socialist system and the intensive struggle of the masses for peace. Acting upon, and developing, the Leninist teaching, our Party has drawn new important theoretical and political conclusions to the effect that *wars are not fatally inevitable and can be prevented* in the modern period.

Lenin's proposition is valid today, for so long as imperialism remains, the soil for aggressive war remains too. International imperialism, primarily United States imperialism, is the chief danger to world peace. The antagonistic socio-economic substance of monopoly capitalism has not changed. Its existence is tied up with the continuous danger of war.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 412.

But we live at a time when powerful forces stand guard over the peace, and these forces have all the necessary means of restraining the war-like imperialist groups and preventing new wars. The ever-growing might of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is a most important guarantee of world peace.

"It is possible to avert a world war," says the Programme of the C.P.S.U., "by the combined efforts of the mighty socialist camp, the peace-loving non-socialist countries, the international working class and all the forces championing peace. The growing superiority of the socialist forces over the forces of imperialism, of the forces of peace over those of war, will make it actually possible to banish world war from the life of society even before the complete victory of socialism on earth, with capitalism surviving in a part of the world."*

Lenin's principle of peaceful coexistence, both in the early years of the Soviet state and today, constitutes the basis of Soviet foreign policy.

The enemies of socialism say: "What sort of peaceful coexistence is this if you are not giving up class struggle and are pursuing an offensive against bourgeois ideology?" They would probably like the sort of peaceful coexistence that would bring about our ideological disarmament.

But that is not the way we look at it. Marxists-Leninists consider peaceful coexistence to be a form of class struggle, a form of struggle in which socialism combats imperialism in the political, economic and ideological spheres. Peaceful coexistence between the socialist and the bourgeois ideologies is impossible, unless one betrays the interests of communism. Peaceful coexistence does not signify a rejection of struggle between two opposite ideologies. What it signifies is a rejection of the development of ideological struggle into armed struggle. Peaceful coexistence gives rise to more favourable opportunities for the class struggle of the proletariat in the capitalist countries, for democracy and socialism, and for a further uplift of the national liberation movement of the peoples in the colonies and the dependent countries.

Contemporary history shows that peaceful coexistence and lasting peace cannot be secured without an active struggle for peace in which all forces join in opposing a new world war. This has been confirmed conclusively by the events set off in the Caribbean area by the aggressive actions of the United States.

The U.S. imperialists blockaded Cuba and were preparing an armed attack on its gallant revolutionary people, who have embarked on the building of the new life. The Caribbean conflict could have developed into a world-wide thermonuclear war and claimed hundreds of millions of lives. The Soviet Union undertook resolute and urgent measures, hailed gratefully by the peoples of the world, to cut short the dangerous conflict, and thus avert nuclear disaster.

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* *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 505.

The Leninist foreign policy of the Soviet Union, its concern for the preservation of peace, the heroic struggle of the Cuban people for their country's freedom and independence, the efforts of other socialist countries and peace forces throughout the world, thwarted the aggressive designs of the U.S. imperialists and brought about a new victory for the cause of peace.

The acute crisis in the Caribbean was overcome on the basis of mutual concessions by the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. Lenin taught that "an advocate of proletarian revolution may conclude compromises or agreements with capitalists. It all depends on *what kind* of agreement is concluded and *under what circumstances*".* The Caribbean compromise was a sensible compromise. It was essential, because it accorded with the interests of all the nations and with their struggle to prevent war in our time.

All nations need peace. For this reason, the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence pursued by the Soviet Union is supported by millions of working people and by all progressives. While struggling consistently and firmly for peace, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government are faithfully following Lenin's behests of reinforcing the country's defences and cherishing the gains of socialism like the apple of their eye.

The struggle for peace, the struggle to prevent a thermonuclear war, accords with the vital interests of all peoples. Marxists-Leninists believe that all means should be used to promote peace—the struggle of the masses, the defensive might of the socialist camp, and the peaceful policy of the socialist countries, which is firm and flexible, consistent with the balance of strength and amenable to compromise. The struggle for socialism cannot be separated from the struggle for peace. Marxism-Leninism teaches the working class to work for victory over capitalism not by wars between states, but by revolutionary struggle against the ruling exploiting classes.

The Soviet Union has no intention of attacking anyone, and from the viewpoint of domestic conditions it has no need for an army or for armaments. But so long as imperialism exists, and precisely due to its existence, the danger of aggressive war will remain until agreement is reached on general and complete disarmament. The imperialists are building up their military power all the time. They are engineering new armed provocations, and for this reason the peoples of the U.S.S.R. are compelled to be vigilant, to strengthen their defences and to be ready at any time to defend their socialist homeland with arms in hand.

Leninism is the great banner of the struggle of the peoples. The growth of the working class and communist movement throughout the world is proof that Lenin's teaching is correct. It is proof of its vitality and of the uncontestable accuracy of Lenin's scientific foresight.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 491.

Lenin was firmly convinced that Communist Parties would arise and grow in all countries on the basis of the mass revolutionary working-class movement, and that they would gain influence. The scale of the revolutionary working-class struggle and the development of the present-day communist movement are all graphic evidence that Lenin's forecasts were accurate. Ninety Communist Parties with a membership of 42,500,000 exist today in the world, working devotedly for the bright future of mankind, for the triumph of Lenin's ideas.

The growing strength of communism throughout the world is a law of history discovered by Marxism-Leninism. Communism steadily surmounts all obstacles arising in its path, and advances to a certain and final victory. Neither brutal repressive measures nor the venomous weapon of slander will help the reactionaries to block this most powerful movement or the spread of communist ideas.

Unity of the Communist Parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and cohesion of the countries of the world socialist community are highly important now.

"At a time when imperialist reaction is joining forces to fight communism it is particularly imperative vigorously to consolidate the world communist movement. Unity and solidarity redouble the strength of our movement and provide a reliable guarantee that the great cause of communism will make victorious progress and all enemy attacks will be effectively repelled."*

The unity of all the Communist Parties stems from deep-going objective conditions—the identity of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, and the community of tasks and strategic goals. All the Communist Parties, which express the rock-bottom interests of the working class, have a common class enemy—the imperialist bourgeoisie. As for differences of opinion between Communist Parties, these are caused more often than not by extraneous circumstances. They are no more than local when compared with the factors of world-wide application that unite the communist movement.

Adhering faithfully to Lenin's behests, the C.P.S.U. is educating its members and all Soviet people in the spirit of proletarian socialist internationalism and doing much to cement the unity of the Marxist-Leninist parties. It shows constant concern for the interests of the world working-class and communist movement. The C.P.S.U. considers it an internationalist duty to adhere rigidly to the appraisals and conclusions worked out jointly by the fraternal parties and adopted at international conferences. Working for the purity of Marxism-Leninism and developing it creatively in new historical conditions, the C.P.S.U. has always combated all renegades from Marxism-Leninism both on the Right and on the Left. It has always combated nationalism no matter what complexion it assumed. The struggle against revisionism as the chief danger also presupposes uncompromising struggle against

* *The Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism*, Moscow, p. 79.

dogmatism and sectarianism. If a methodical struggle is not waged against the latter, they are also likely to become the chief danger at one stage or another in the development of the various parties.

The lessons of history show that *"Left" opportunism, dogmatism and adventurism are no less dangerous than revisionism*, and that a determined struggle has to be waged against them, just as it is waged against Right opportunism.

In its efforts to unite the world communist movement, the C.P.S.U. is acting on the postulates of Lenin, the teacher and leader of the working people of the world. Lenin always pointed out that intolerance, intemperance and irritation should be ruled out in discussions between parties. So too should the policy of ostracism with regard to any adherents of communism, because, far from strengthening world communism, this would be sure to weaken it. The task is to follow the correct Marxist-Leninist line of the communist movement and to help the erring to rectify their mistakes.

Leninism is the guiding doctrine for the great army of Communists in all their activities. *"By his works and life Lenin was the beacon* for the Communists of all countries. His genius is leading the working people of all countries in their struggle for liberation," wrote a group of French Communists in the Visitors' Book after visiting Lenin's study and living quarters in the Kremlin. They expressed the sentiments of Communists all over the world.

While the world communist movement is growing and gaining strength, and increasing its influence continuously, the Socialist parties in some of the biggest countries are steadily losing contact with the working class. Their leaders have quite openly and irrevocably turned their backs on Marxism. They started by opposing social reforms to socialist revolution, by refusing to link recognition of class struggle with the dictatorship of the proletariat, and have now ended up by disavowing socialism. They defend state-monopoly capitalism, deny the existence of antagonistic classes and class struggle in bourgeois society, and oppose destruction of private ownership of the means of production, claiming that a "transformation of capitalism into socialism" is under way. Lenin's works directed against the social reformists are an effective weapon today against modern revisionists in the ranks of the communist movement.

The present period has brilliantly confirmed Lenin's forecast that the national liberation movement would inevitably develop as a component of the world-wide development towards socialism. Lenin thought an alliance was essential between the working class in the developed countries and the oppressed peoples in the colonies and semi-colonies. He believed that the development towards socialism on a world-wide scale would proceed through the merging of the proletarian revolution in the capitalist countries with the national liberation struggle.

The powerful national liberation movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which has caused the collapse of the colonial imperialist

system and brought about the emergence of independent national states, shows strikingly that Lenin's scientific conclusions about the development of the world towards socialism are correct. The colonial and dependent countries have embarked on a struggle against imperialist oppression and colonialism, for national independence, freedom, democracy and socialism.

In this, too, we witness the influence of the liberative Leninist ideas of the October Revolution, which have spread to the remotest corners of the globe. The existence of the Soviet Union, its successes and its powerful upsurge, and the growth of the world socialist system, are exercising a tremendous influence on the development of the national liberation movement.

Lenin's well-reasoned postulate that previously backward countries may follow the path of non-capitalist development is of outstanding importance.

Lenin taught that the capitalist stage of development is not an unavoidable stage for the countries that liberate themselves from colonialism. Helped by countries in which the proletariat has won, the backward countries may begin to build socialism by-passing the capitalist stage, and coming to communism after passing through the appropriate phases of development. The historic experience of the previously backward peoples of Russia shows that the support and assistance of the more developed socialist nations helped them to avoid the harrowing stage of capitalism and to build socialism together with the other peoples. This experience is of international importance.

The national liberation movement is demonstrating with mounting force the Leninist principles of the equality and friendship of the peoples, the ideas of proletarian socialist internationalism. These principles have been realised in full in the U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries, and are being hailed more and more enthusiastically by all the peoples of the world.

Lenin taught that national interests if correctly interpreted do not contradict internationalist socialist interests. On the contrary, consistent practice of the principles of proletarian socialist internationalism is absolutely essential to ensure the national interests of any nation or country. He enjoined all concerned to subordinate national interests to the tasks and aims of the world working-class and communist movement, to the struggle for socialism and communism. He opposed the prejudices of national egoism and national narrow-mindedness.

Acting upon Lenin's teaching, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government are steadily putting the principles of socialist internationalism into practice not only in their own country, but also in their relations with all the peoples of the socialist camp, and with the countries that have embarked upon the path of the national liberation movement, the path of struggle against imperialism

and colonialism. The Soviet Union welcomes the liberation of the peoples from colonialism and renders them friendly, selfless assistance in their industrial, technical, scientific and cultural development.

Capitalism has always divided the peoples. It seeks to fan internecine strife. It seeks to exhaust the peoples and then to enslave them once more. The imperialists act in their own selfish interests, which are irreconcilable with those of the peoples. Nothing but the devoted practice of socialist internationalism, of the principles of equality, friendship and mutual respect can create the dependable groundwork of fraternal relations between all peoples, and lead ultimately to a world-wide community of equal nations.

Mankind has now entered the period of history when the voluntary coming together of the nations is progressing at a rapid pace. The great Lenin, the standard-bearer of peace and friendship among the peoples, foresaw that this process is inevitable.

Lenin's activities, his great and noble ideas, influenced world events and the destiny of all mankind, and as time goes on this influence increases. At present, the movement of the peoples of the globe towards progress and deliverance from social and national oppression, from destructive wars and the struggle of the peoples for peace and socialism are bound up inseparably with Lenin's name.

Even some of the enemies of communism are compelled to admit that Lenin exercised an influence on every human being on earth.

E. H. Carr, a British bourgeois historian, wrote the following in his book about the October Revolution: "Lenin was a great revolutionary—perhaps the greatest of all time—his genius was far more constructive than destructive."* *Leninism is marching triumphantly across all the continents. Lenin's name is alive. It lives in the hearts of working men in all countries.*

Political leaders, scientists, writers and men of arts of different opinions and convictions, many of them far removed from Marxism-Leninism and from the interests of the working class, recognise the immense, all-embracing influence Lenin and his ideas exercise on mankind. Everybody who has the future of man at heart, everybody who follows the developments, cannot but acknowledge the grandeur of Lenin and his cause, and the historic impact of his ideas. All over the globe Lenin's name is pronounced as a symbol of the new world, a symbol of freedom and happiness. The course charted by Lenin for mankind is already followed by hundreds of millions of people.

Bernard Shaw, the famous British writer, described the importance of Lenin's works for mankind with these apt words:

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* E. H. Carr, *A History of Soviet Russia. The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-23*, London, 1954, Vol. I, p. 25.

"You must not think that Lenin belongs to the past because he is now dead. Lenin's significance is such that should his attempt to introduce socialism fail, then our present civilisation will go under."

The "attempt to introduce socialism" has succeeded. Socialism has won in the Soviet Union. It has shown its vitality. A world socialist system has emerged, and its influence on social development is increasing all the time.

Take, too, the statement of Theodore Dreiser, the American writer. He said that, imbued by Lenin's spirit, the Russian people, free thanks to Lenin's activities, will never let anyone turn them back to slavery. They will fight and win. The Soviet state founded by Lenin will triumph.

Lenin's great liberating ideas are spreading to the Latin American countries. They are an inspiration for the heroic people of Cuba in their struggle for independence, freedom and socialism. Juan Marinello, Cuban writer and public leader, writes that "Marxism-Leninism is the theoretical basis of everything done by the Cuban Government, which is the first in the Western Hemisphere to have embarked on socialist construction. Every Cuban knows and loves Lenin".

Olga Poblete, a public leader of Chile and winner of the International Lenin Peace Prize, declared: "Lenin's sparkling name lives in the hearts of the people of Chile."

Asia is an immense continent. Throughout its vastness, in the great People's Republic of China, the Korean People's Democratic Republic, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Mongolian People's Republic, which had embarked on the new road earlier, socialism is being built and Lenin's great ideas are being translated into reality. Progressive leaders in the other Asian countries describe Leninism as a source of light, knowledge and progress. Sakhib Singh Sokkhei, an Indian scientist and public leader, writes: "Leninism has become the lodestar of development for more than one-third of mankind, and I am convinced that the time is not far distant when it will be accepted by all the people of our planet.

"To struggle selflessly for a world without wars, for the happiness of all working men—this is what the great Lenin willed and what he devoted his wonderful life to."

Here is a remark made by an Indian when she visited the Lenin Museum: "The history of Lenin's life is a new era in the life of mankind. We follow him, because for us, the oppressed nations, Leninism is the torch of freedom."

Lenin's ideas are spreading in Africa. They inspire the turbulent African national liberation movement against colonialism, for a new life.

Lenin's name is known and revered in far-away Australia. As everywhere else, Australians are inspired by his ideas and long for a new life, a life without exploitation of man by man and based on equality and friendship among the peoples. Australian progressives call on their

people to live and struggle as Lenin did and build life along Leninist lines.

So today we chime in with the poet, who said:

Lenin's with us,
Deathless and grand.
All over the Universe
The procession swells
Of the Thoughts,
Words
and Deeds of Lenin.

V. Mayakovsky

Lenin's cause is unconquerable. Leninism is strikingly embodied in the works of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Lenin, founder and leader of the proletarian party of a new type, has steeled it in battles against the enemies and developed it in a spirit of undying loyalty to the cause of communism, to the struggle for the interests and happiness of the working man. He equipped the Party with a great ideological weapon, scientific strategy and tactics, and taught it to skilfully apply and creatively develop revolutionary theory. The C.P.S.U. is a credit to its organiser and teacher, Lenin. It has absorbed from its great leader courage and fearlessness and unbending willpower, a sense of principle and flexibility, and the ability to find the correct solutions in all historical situations.

"Marxism," Lenin taught, "is the art of determining the policy best suited for any of the circumstances that may arise."*

In the most complex historical conditions, when the course of events changed sharply and the Party faced the most difficult of tasks, on whose correct solution the future of the Soviet state and of socialism depended, the Party never failed to find the right answers and led the people and the country, just as now, firmly and undeviatingly along the Leninist course. The Party has been the inspirer and leader of the socialist revolution, the organiser and leader of the world's first socialist state. Mighty productive forces have been built up in the Soviet land under the leadership of the Party. The great Leninist plan of socialist construction has been put into practice. Today, the Soviet Union is successfully building communism.

The unconquerable strength of the Soviet Union's socialist system was demonstrated strikingly at the time of the Second World War. The Soviet state played the decisive part in defeating fascist Germany which controlled the resources of almost all Europe when it perfidiously and suddenly attacked the U.S.S.R. The heroic struggle of the Soviet people delivered the European nations from fascist enslavement. Furthermore, the Soviet state made a big contribution to the defeat of militarist Japan.

* Central Party Archives of Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

Lenin taught the Party to see the zigzags of historical development but never to lose sight of the main direction. He explained that the complexity of the historical process should always be borne in mind when defining the political line. In framing and carrying through the tactical line, he said, room should be left for compromise whenever the circumstances required it. Lenin came down upon people who advanced the slogan "no compromises" in his *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. He wrote: "It would be absurd to formulate a recipe or a general rule ('no compromises!') to serve all cases. One should use one's own brains and be able to find one's bearings in each particular case."* Lenin pointed out that the Marxist proletarian party must employ flexible tactics, master all forms and means of struggle, change them quickly if the historical situation changes, carry the revolutionary banner untainted through all the compromises and agreements both in the days of victory and of temporary setbacks, and always struggle for the revolutionary cause, for the interests of socialism.

Our Party has mastered this art brilliantly. Therein lies its strength, and therein lies one of the decisive conditions for its victories and achievements in the various stages of history.

The strength of the Party lies in its loyalty to Leninism, in the creative application and development of Leninism. It assails uncompromisingly and consistently any and all deviations from Lenin's teaching in theory and in practice, and combats revisionism, dogmatism and sectarianism.

Our Party is strong because all its activities are governed by the unbreakable unity of revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice, and deep-rooted contact with reality. When tackling the urgent practical tasks and blazing new trails, while building communism, the Party also develops revolutionary theory, enriching it with the new experience of the masses.

The historical experience of the C.P.S.U., its tireless activities, have been highly commended by the fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties.

"The Communist and Workers' Parties," says the 1960 Statement, "unanimously declare that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been, and remains, the universally recognised vanguard of the world communist movement, being the most experienced and steeled contingent of the international communist movement. The experience which the C.P.S.U. has gained in the struggle for the victory of the working class, in socialist construction and in the full-scale construction of communism, is of fundamental significance for the whole of the world communist movement."**

The Party denounced the cult of Stalin's person, alien to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. It overcame its harmful consequences and completely restored the Leninist standards of Party life and the principles of Party leadership. The Twentieth Party Congress was of

* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 416.
** *The Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism*, Moscow, p. 80.

immense historical importance in that respect. It levelled criticism of principle against the mistakes and perversions connected with the cult of the individual and stressed the great role of the people as the decisive force in the building of new society and the role of the Party as the leading and guiding force in the struggle for communism.

At first, the historic decisions of the Twentieth Congress were carried through in the teeth of bitter resistance of anti-Party elements. The Party crushed the anti-Party group of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, and others, who opposed the course charted by the Twentieth Congress, who opposed the exposure of the personality cult and the elimination of its consequences, and who tried to divert the Party from the Leninist path and slow down communist construction.

Consistent adherence to the Leninist principles of Party leadership added still more to the vitality and efficiency of the Party organisations and extended inner-Party democracy. The regular holding of Party congresses and plenary meetings of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., and nation-wide discussions of the major measures planned by the Party, show that the C.C. takes guidance in the collective experience of the Party membership and of the people.

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that the personality cult should not be confused with the prestige of the leaders of the proletariat, and of the people who have proved their loyalty to the working-class cause in their many years of struggle and enjoy the well-deserved affection and respect of the masses.

"Marxists," wrote Lenin, "cannot adopt the usual standpoint of the intellectual radical, with his pseudo-revolutionary abstraction: 'no authorities'.

"No. The working class, which all over the world is waging a hard and persistent struggle for complete emancipation, needs authorities, but, of course, only in the way that young workers need the experience of veteran *fighters* against oppression and exploitation, of those who have organised many strikes, have taken part in a number of revolutions, who are wise in revolutionary traditions, and have a broad political outlook."*

The Twenty-Second Party Congress was a big event. It demonstrated the triumph of Lenin's principles of Party leadership, unprecedented Party unity and strength, and holds a special place not only in the life of our Party and of the Soviet people, but also in the development of the world communist movement, the history of all mankind. The historic significance of the Congress lies in the fact that it adopted the new Programme of the C.P.S.U. This Programme contains a scientifically reasoned and concrete plan of communist construction, an exciting picture of the future of all mankind.

The Twenty-Second Congress noted the immense political and practical importance of everything the Party has done since the Twentieth

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 412.

Congress in eliminating the harmful consequences of the Stalin cult and rooting out its survivals. Having done away with the personality cult and following Leninist traditions, the Congress told the Party and the people the truth about the gross violations of Lenin's postulates by Stalin, about his abuses of power, his wholesale repressions of honest Soviet people, of the grave mistakes made during the Second World War, the painful consequences of the personality cult in the national economy, especially in agriculture, and in the spheres of Party, government and ideological work, and also in international relations. The Congress denounced the mistakes, distortions and un-Leninist methods typical of the Stalin cult environment, for Stalin treated the experience of the masses and their interests with contempt, fenced himself off from and feared the people. These mistakes, distortions and abuses of power greatly injured the Party and the people, and slowed down progress in the Soviet Union. But no matter how grave the consequences of the cult had been, they were unable (despite the slanders and lies of the enemies of socialism) to lead the country away from the Leninist path, unable to alter the truly popular character of the Soviet socialist system, unable to impair the organisational, political and theoretical foundations of the Party established and developed by the great Lenin.

The Twenty-Second Congress expressed the unanimous will of the Party to end once and for all the negative influences of the personality cult and framed the necessary measures to prevent its recurrence.

While combating the consequences of the Stalin personality cult, the Party considers it necessary to oppose firmly and uncompromisingly any and all attempts at undermining the pillars of Marxist-Leninist theory under the guise of struggle against the consequences of the Stalin cult, and to cut short any and all attempts at vindicating the anti-Marxist views and trends crushed by the Party.

Great changes have occurred in the life of the Party during the years of socialist construction. Having arisen as a proletarian party of a new type, as the vanguard of the working class, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has developed into the vanguard of the Soviet people. It has become a party of the whole people. Its influence on all aspects of public life has expanded immeasurably.

In the period of full-scale communist construction the role and importance of the Party as a leading and guiding force of Soviet society is becoming still greater. As the Party Programme points out, this is due to:

the scale and complexity of the tasks of communist construction, which require a higher level of political and organisational leadership;

the surge of mass creative activities and the involvement of new millions of working people in the administration of affairs of state and production;

the further development of socialist democracy, the increased role of the public organisations and the extension of the rights of the Union Republics and local organisations;

the mounting importance of the theory of scientific communism and its creative development and propaganda, the need to improve the communist education of the masses and to struggle for the elimination of the survivals of the past from the minds of men.

Having entered a new, higher stage in its development, our Party is strengthening further its bonds with the masses, extending inner-Party democracy, adding to the efficiency of all the Party organisations. It calls for undeviating observance of the Leninist standards of Party life and the principles of collective leadership.

The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. is a wise leader of the Party and resolves the questions of theory and practice of communist construction boldly, in the Leninist fashion. It wages a tireless struggle for the preservation and strengthening of peace, guides the fulfilment of urgent economic and political tasks, works for the improvement of industrial, agricultural and construction management, for the greater efficiency of the state and Party machinery, and for an upsurge of ideological work and socialist culture. The Central Committee and the Party have restored the Leninist principles of economic management violated by Stalin, the Leninist principles of Party and state control, and are applying them creatively to the conditions of full-scale communist construction. The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. is improving Party leadership all the time. All the activities of the Central Committee are imbued with deep concern for the welfare of the people, for the improvement of the living and cultural standards, for the satisfaction of the people's increasing requirements.

The people rightly consider the Leninist Party to be their leader and teacher. They consider Party leadership of communist construction to be a guarantee that the grand tasks facing the nation will be successfully fulfilled.

Never before have the bonds between Party and people been as secure as now, in the period of the full-scale building of communism. Lenin taught the Party to turn directly to the people when solving its tasks, to inspire and organise the masses, and to stimulate their creative initiative and energy. Today more than ever before, the Soviet people are ranged solidly behind the Party, which is holding high the victorious banner of Leninism. It is from its loyalty to Leninism, from the support of the people and from its unbreakable bonds with the people that the Party derives its strength, directing the country along the Leninist path, under Lenin's unconquerable banner, towards the complete triumph of communism. "This path of ours is the right one," Lenin said, "for it is the path which, sooner or later, all other countries must inevitably take."*

Quite right. More than 1,000 million people united by their common purpose, their common ideology, and inspired by the noble ideas of Leninism, are now marching together with the Soviet Union as part

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 161.

of the mighty world system of socialist countries towards a new, bright and happy life.

The Party regards the building of communism in the U.S.S.R. as a great internationalist task, consistent with the interests of the world socialist system as a whole, the interests of the world proletariat, of all mankind. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was, is and will be loyal to the teaching of Marxism-Leninism, to proletarian internationalism, and international friendship. It will always work for world peace, for the victory of communism.

* * *

Lenin's life and work is an unexampled feat of devoted service to mankind. It has many facets and its scope is boundless. Lenin's life was dedicated to the one noble cause of liberating the working people from all oppression, to the struggle for socialism and communism.

The giant figure of Lenin towers in the history of mankind as that of the greatest of the men of our epoch, the man who showed all the peoples of the world the road to genuine freedom and happiness. The sparkling genius of Lenin, the great teacher of the working people of the world, whose name will live for ever, illumines mankind's road to communism. Today, communism is an unconquerable force, an existing society that is being built up on a large section of the globe. Lenin's ideas shape the destiny of generations.

The immortal image of Lenin, his great, high-minded ideas inspire the people in their struggle against the sinister forces of reaction, evil and oppression, for the establishment and consolidation of society upon a groundwork of true justice, true equality of men, a society in which free, all-round development of the individual, the full satisfaction of people's material and spiritual requirements will be secured.

It is the highest ideal of the contemporary generation to work and build as Lenin taught.

Time wields no power over Lenin's genius. Having departed from this world, he lives on, and not only in the memory of the later generations, but also in their deeds, their bold feats, performed for the good of man. Lenin's great ideas, creatively developed by the Communist Party which he founded, are being put into practice, and are winning immortality. Their triumph throughout the world is inevitable, because they reflect the objective and progressive march of history, heralding the bright future to which all mankind is advancing.

Lenin's name, his works and his teaching will live down the ages. Lenin's cause is unconquerable!

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