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V. I. LENIN

**AFTER THE SEIZURE OF POWER
(1917-18)**

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V·I·LENIN
SELECTED WORKS

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

V. I. LENIN

AFTER THE SEIZURE OF POWER

(1917-18)

CHRISTMAS
BOOKS
LONDON

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V·I·LENIN
SELECTED WORKS

VOLUME VII

**AFTER THE SEIZURE
OF POWER**
(1917-18)

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THE DOCTRINE OF THE STATE AND OF THE
DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

ERRATA

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aid of educated lawyers, of bourgeois writers, of the Kautskys and

Page 237 line 14 from bottom should read:
All of them furiously attack us for persecuting them. That is

Page 275 line 16 from bottom should read:
have tested and tried during the ten months of the revolution and

Page 440 line 2 from top should read:
tion and the dictatorship of the proletariat he predicted the peaceful
trans-

-1913

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PREFACE

THE present volume of *Selected Works* coincides with Volume IV, Parts I and II of the Russian edition of *Selected Works* issued by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Moscow, 1933 edition.

Readers are urged to make full use of the explanatory notes in the appendix. These are indicated by an asterisk (*) in the text, and the note in question can be found under the number in the explanatory notes corresponding to the page on which it occurs. Where more than one note occurs on a page, subsequent notes are indicated by two or more asterisks as the case may be. Footnotes are indicated by superior figures (1).

The editor wishes to acknowledge the co-operation in preparing this volume of A. Petrova and I. Mingulin who carefully compared the manuscript of the English translation with the Russian text of Lenin's *Selected Works* and by their valuable suggestions greatly assisted him in his work.

PART I

THE DOCTRINE OF THE STATE AND OF THE
DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION

THE MARXIST DOCTRINE OF THE STATE AND
THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT
IN THE REVOLUTION

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION*

THE question of the state is now acquiring particular importance both in the realm of theory and in the realm of practical politics. The imperialist war has greatly accelerated and intensified the process of transformation of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly capitalism.** The monstrous oppression of the masses of the toilers by the state—which is becoming merged more and more with the all-powerful capitalist combines—is becoming ever more monstrous. The advanced countries are being converted—we speak here of their “rear”—into military convict prisons for the workers.

The unprecedented horrors and miseries of the protracted war are making the position of the masses unbearable and are causing their anger to grow. An international proletarian revolution is clearly maturing. The question of its relation to the state is acquiring practical importance.

The elements of opportunism accumulated during the decades of comparatively peaceful development caused the predominance of social-chauvinism in the official Socialist Parties throughout the world. This trend of socialism in words and chauvinism in deeds (Plekhanov, Potresov, Breshkovskaya, Rubanovich, and in a slightly concealed form, Messrs. Tseretelli, Chernov and Co., in Russia; Scheidemann, Legien, David and others in Germany; Renaudel, Guesde, Vandervelde in France and Belgium; Hyndman and the Fabians in England, etc., etc.) is distinguished for the base, servile adaptation of the “leaders” of “socialism” to the interests not only of “their” national bourgeoisie, but also of “their” state—for the majority of the so-called Great Powers have long been exploiting and enslaving a number of small and weak nationalities. The imperialist war is precisely a war for the division and re-division of this kind of booty. The struggle for

the emancipation of the masses of the toilers from the influence of the bourgeoisie in general, and of the imperialist bourgeoisie in particular, is impossible without a struggle against opportunist prejudices about the "state."

First of all we examine Marx's and Engels' doctrine of the state and deal in particular detail with those aspects of their doctrine which have been forgotten or have been opportunistically distorted. Then we analyse separately the chief representative of these distortions, Karl Kautsky, the best-known leader of the Second International (1889-1914), which has suffered such miserable bankruptcy in the present war. Finally, we sum up, in the main, the experiences of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and particularly of that of 1917. Apparently, the latter is now (middle of August 1917) completing the first stage of its development; but, generally speaking, this revolution as a whole can only be regarded as a link in the chain of socialist proletarian revolutions called forth by the imperialist war. Hence, the question of the relation of the socialist proletarian revolution to the state acquires, not only practical political importance, but the importance of an urgent problem of the day, the problem of explaining to the masses what they will have to do to emancipate themselves from the yoke of capitalism in the very near future.

THE AUTHOR

August 1917

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The present, second edition is published almost without change, except that section 3 has been added to chapter II.

THE AUTHOR

Moscow, December 30, 1918

CHAPTER I

CLASS SOCIETY AND THE STATE

1. THE STATE AS THE PRODUCT OF THE IRRECONCILABILITY OF CLASS ANTAGONISMS

WHAT is now happening to Marx's doctrine has, in the course of history, often happened to the doctrines of other revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes relentlessly persecute them, and treat their teachings with malicious hostility, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaign of lies and slanders. After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonise them, so to say, and to surround their *names* with a certain halo for the "consolation" of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping them, while at the same time emasculating the revolutionary doctrine of its content, vulgarising it and blunting its revolutionary edge. At the present time, the bourgeoisie and the opportunists in the labour movement concur in this "revision" of Marxism. They omit, obliterate and distort the revolutionary side of its doctrine, its revolutionary soul. They push to the foreground and extol what is or seems acceptable to the bourgeoisie. All the social-chauvinists are now "Marxists" (don't laugh!). And more and more frequently, German bourgeois professors, erstwhile specialists in the extermination of Marxism, are speaking of the "national-German" Marx, who, they aver, trained the labour unions which are so splendidly organised for the purpose of conducting a predatory war!

In such circumstances, in view of the incredibly widespread nature of the distortions of Marxism, our first task is to *restore* the true doctrine of Marx on the state. For this purpose it will

be necessary to quote at length from the works of Marx and Engels. Of course, long quotations will make the text cumbersome and will not help to make it popular reading, but we cannot possibly avoid them. All, or at any rate, all the most essential passages in the works of Marx and Engels on the subject of the state must necessarily be given as fully as possible, in order that the reader may form an independent opinion on the totality of views of the founders of scientific socialism and on the development of those views, and in order that their distortion by the now prevailing "Kautskyism" may be documentarily proved and clearly demonstrated.

Let us begin with the most popular of Engels' works, *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates*, the sixth edition of which was published in Stuttgart as far back as 1894. We must translate the quotations from the German originals, as the Russian translations, although very numerous, are for the most part either incomplete or very unsatisfactory.

Summing up his historical analysis, Engels says:

"The state is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from the outside; just as little is it 'the reality of the moral idea,' 'the image and reality of reason,' as Hegel asserts.* Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms, which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict and keeping it within the bounds of 'order'; and this power, arising out of society, but placing itself above it, and increasingly alienating itself from it, is the state."¹

This fully expresses the basic idea of Marxism on the question of the historical role and meaning of the state. The state is the product and the manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms. The state arises when, where and to the extent that class antagonisms *cannot* be objectively reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms *are* irreconcilable.

¹ Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, chap. IX.—Ed. Eng. ed.

It is precisely on this most important and fundamental point that distortions of Marxism, proceeding along two main lines, begin.

On the one hand, the bourgeois ideologists, and particularly the petty-bourgeois ideologists, compelled by the pressure of indisputable historical facts to admit that the state only exists where there are class antagonisms and the class struggle, "correct" Marx in a way that makes it appear that the state is an organ for the *conciliation* of classes. According to Marx, the state could neither arise nor continue to exist if it were possible to conciliate classes. According to the petty-bourgeois and philistine professors and publicists—frequently on the strength of well-meaning references to Marx!—the state conciliates classes. According to Marx, the state is an organ of class *rule*, an organ for the *oppression* of one class by another; it creates "order," which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between the classes. In the opinion of the petty-bourgeois politicians, order means the conciliation of classes, and not the oppression of one class by another; to moderate collisions means conciliating and not depriving the oppressed classes of definite means and methods of fighting to overthrow the oppressors.

For instance, when, in the Revolution of 1917, the question of the real meaning and role of the state arose in all its magnitude as a practical question demanding immediate action on a wide mass scale, all the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks immediately and completely sank to the petty-bourgeois theory that the "state" "conciliates" classes. Innumerable resolutions and articles by politicians of both these parties are thoroughly saturated with this purely petty-bourgeois and philistine "conciliation" theory. Petty-bourgeois democracy is never able to understand that the state is the organ of the rule of a definite class which *cannot* be reconciled with its antipode (the class opposite to it). Their attitude towards the state is one of the most striking proofs that our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are not socialists at all (which we Bolsheviks have always maintained), but petty-bourgeois democrats with near-Socialist phraseology.

On the other hand, the "Kautskyan" distortion of Marxism is far

more subtle. "Theoretically," it is not denied that the state is the organ of class rule, or that class antagonisms are irreconcilable. But what is lost sight of or glossed over is this: if the state is the product of irreconcilable class antagonisms, if it is a power standing *above society* and "*increasingly alienating itself from it,*" it is clear that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible, not only without a violent revolution, *but also without the destruction* of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class and which is the embodiment of this "alienation." As we shall see later, Marx very definitely drew this theoretically self-evident conclusion from a concrete historical analysis of the tasks of the revolution. And—as we shall show fully in our subsequent remarks—it is precisely this conclusion which Kautsky has "forgotten" and distorted.

2. SPECIAL BODIES OF ARMED MEN, PRISONS, ETC.

Engels continues:

"As against the ancient *gentile* organisation, the primary distinguishing feature of the state is the division of the subjects of the state *according to territory.*"

Such a division seems "natural" to us, but it cost a prolonged struggle against the old form of tribal or gentile society.

"... The second is the establishment of a *public power*, which is no longer directly identical with the population organising itself as an armed power. This special public power is necessary, because a self-acting armed organisation of the population has become impossible since the cleavage into classes. ... This public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men, but of material appendages, prisons and coercive institutions of all kinds, of which gentile society knew nothing. ..."¹

Engels further elucidates the concept of the "power" which is termed the state—a power which arises from society, but which places itself above it and becomes more and more alienated from it. What does this power mainly consist of? It consists of special bodies of armed men which have prisons, etc., at their disposal.

We are justified in speaking of special bodies of armed men, because the public power which is an attribute of every state is

Ibid.—Ed. Eng. ed.

not "directly identical" with the armed population, with its "self-acting armed organisation."²

Like all the great revolutionary thinkers, Engels tried to draw the attention of the class conscious workers to the very fact which prevailing philistinism regards as least worthy of attention, as the most common and sanctified, not only by long standing, but one might say by petrified prejudices. A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power. But can it be otherwise?

From the point of view of the vast majority of Europeans of the end of the nineteenth century whom Engels was addressing, and who have not lived through or closely observed a single great revolution, it cannot be otherwise. They completely fail to understand what a "self-acting armed organisation of the population" is. To the question, whence arose the need for special bodies of armed men, standing above society and becoming alienated from it (police and standing army), the West European and Russian philistines are inclined to answer with a few phrases borrowed from Spencer or Mikhailovsky, by referring to the complexity of social life, the differentiation of functions, and so forth.

Such a reference seems "scientific"; it effectively dulls the senses of the average man and obscures the most important and basic fact, namely, the cleavage of society into irreconcilably antagonistic classes. Had this cleavage not existed, the "self-acting armed organisation of the population" might have differed from the primitive organisation of a tribe of monkeys grasping sticks, or of primitive man, or of men united in a tribal form of society, by its complexity, its high technique, and so forth; but it would still have been possible.

It is impossible now, because civilised society is divided into antagonistic and, indeed, irreconcilably antagonistic classes, the "self-acting" arming of which would lead to an armed struggle between them. A state arises, a special force is created in the form of special bodies of armed men, and every revolution,¹ by destroying the state apparatus,² demonstrates to us how the ruling

¹ The original manuscript read: "great revolution."—Ed.

² In the original manuscript there followed the words: "reveals to us the naked class struggle."—Ed.

class strives to restore the special bodies of armed men which serve *it*, and how the oppressed class strives to create a new organisation of this kind, capable of serving not the exploiters but the exploited.

In the above argument, Engels raises theoretically the very question which every great revolution raises practically, palpably and on a mass scale of action, namely, the question of the relation between special bodies of armed men and the "self-acting armed organisation of the population." We shall see how this is concretely illustrated by the experience of the European and Russian revolutions.

But let us return to Engels' exposition.

He points out that sometimes, in certain parts of North America, for example, this public power is weak (he has in mind a rare exception in capitalist society, and parts of North America in its pre-imperialist days where the free colonist predominated), but that in general it grows stronger:

"It [the public power] grows stronger, however, in proportion as the class antagonisms within the state become more acute, and with the growth in size and population of the adjacent states. We have only to look at our present-day Europe, where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have screwed up the public power to such a pitch that it threatens to devour the whole of society and even the state itself."¹

This was written no later than the beginning of the nineties of the last century, Engels' last preface being dated June 16, 1891. The turn towards imperialism—meaning by that the complete domination of the trusts, the omnipotence of the big banks, a colonial policy on a grand scale, and so forth—was only just beginning in France, and was even weaker in North America and in Germany. Since then "rivalry in conquest" has made gigantic strides—especially as, by the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, the whole world had been finally divided up among these "rivals in conquest," *i.e.*, among the great predatory powers. Since then, military and naval armaments have grown to monstrous proportions, and the predatory war of 1914-17 for the domination of the world by England or Germany, for the

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

division of the spoils, has brought the "devouring" of all the forces of society by the rapacious state power to the verge of complete catastrophe.

As early as 1891 Engels was able to point to "rivalry in conquest" as one of the most important distinguishing features of the foreign policy of the Great Powers, but in 1914-17, when this rivalry, many times intensified, has given birth to an imperialist war, the rascally social-chauvinists cover up their defence of the predatory interests of "their" bourgeoisie by phrases about "defence of the fatherland," "defence of the republic and the revolution," etc.!

3. THE STATE AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE EXPLOITATION OF THE OPPRESSED CLASS

For the maintenance of a special public power standing above society, taxes and state loans are needed.

"... Possessing the public power and the right to exact taxes, the officials now exist as organs of society standing *above* society. The free, voluntary respect which was accorded to the organs of the gentile organisation does not satisfy them, even if they could have it."¹

Special laws are enacted proclaiming the sanctity and immunity of the officials. "The shabbiest police servant" has more "authority" than all the representatives of the tribe put together, but even the head of the military power of a civilised state may well envy a tribal chief the "unfeigned and undisputed respect" the latter enjoys.

Here the question of the privileged position of the officials as organs of state power is stated. The main point indicated is: what puts them *above* society? We shall see how this theoretical problem was solved in practice by the Paris Commune in 1871 and how it was slurred over in a reactionary manner by Kautsky in 1912.

"As the state arose out of the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it, at the same time, arose in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which through the medium of the state became also the dominant class politically, and thus acquired new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. . . ."¹

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

It was not only the ancient and feudal states that were organs for the exploitation of the slaves and serfs but

"...the contemporary representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage-labour by capital. By way of exception, however, periods occur when the warring classes are so nearly balanced that the state power, ostensibly appearing as a mediator, acquires, for the moment, a certain independence in relation to both. . . ."

Such, for instance, were the absolute monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,* the Bonapartism of the First and Second Empires in France, and the Bismarck régime in Germany. Such, we add, is the present Kerensky government in republican Russia since it began to persecute the revolutionary proletariat, at a moment when, thanks to the leadership of the petty-bourgeois democrats, the Soviets have *already* become impotent while the bourgeoisie is *not yet* strong enough openly to disperse them.

In a democratic republic, Engels continues, "wealth wields its power indirectly, but all the more effectively," first, by means of the "direct corruption of the officials" (America); second, by means of "the alliance between the government and the Stock Exchange" (France and America).

At the present time, imperialism and the domination of the banks have "developed" both these methods of defending and asserting the omnipotence of wealth in democratic republics of all descriptions to an unusually fine art. For instance, in the very first months of the Russian democratic republic, one might say during the honeymoon of the union of the "Socialist" S. R.'s and the Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie, Mr. Palchinsky, in the coalition government, obstructed every measure intended for the purpose of restraining the capitalists and their marauding practices, their plundering of the public treasury by means of war contracts. When Mr. Palchinsky resigned (and, of course, was replaced by an exactly similar Palchinsky), the capitalists "rewarded" him with a "soft" job and a salary of 120,000 rubles per annum. What would you call this—direct or indirect corruption? An alliance between the government and the syndicates, or "only" friendly relations? What role do the Chernovs, Tseretellis, Avksentyevs and

Skobelevs play? Are they the "direct" or only the indirect allies of the millionaire treasury looters?

The omnipotence of "wealth" is thus more *secure* in a democratic republic, since it does not depend¹ on the faulty political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has gained control of this very best shell (through the Palchinskys, Chernovs, Tseretellis and Co.), it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that *no* change, either of persons, of institutions, or of parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic, can shake it.

We must also note that Engels very definitely calls universal suffrage an instrument of bourgeois rule. Universal suffrage, he says, obviously summing up the long experience of German Social-Democracy, is

"... an index of the maturity of the working class. It cannot and never will be anything more in the modern state."

The petty-bourgeois democrats, such as our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and also their twin brothers, the social-chauvinists and opportunists of Western Europe, all expect "more" from universal suffrage. They themselves share and instil into the minds of the people the wrong idea that universal suffrage "in the *modern* state" is really capable of expressing the will of the majority of the toilers and of ensuring its realisation.

Here we can only note this wrong idea, only point out that Engels' perfectly clear, precise and concrete statement is distorted at every step in the propaganda and agitation conducted by the "official" (*i.e.*, opportunist) Socialist Parties. A detailed elucidation of the utter falsity of this idea, which Engels brushes aside, is given in our further account of the views of Marx and Engels on the "*modern*" state.

Engels gives a general summary of his views in the most popular of his works in the following words:

"The state, therefore, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies which managed without it, which had no conception of the state and state power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessar-

¹ The original manuscript read: "on the individual defects of the political mechanism."—*Ed.*

ily bound up with the cleavage of society into classes, the state became a necessity owing to this cleavage. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but is becoming a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them, the state will inevitably fall. The society that organises production anew on the basis of the free and equal association of the producers will put the whole state machine where it will then belong: in the museum of antiquities, side by side with the spinning wheel and the bronze axe."¹

We do not often come across this passage in the propaganda and agitation literature of present-day Social-Democracy. But even when we do come across it, it is generally quoted in the same manner as one bows before an icon, *i.e.*, it is done merely to show official respect for Engels, and no attempt is made to gauge the breadth and depth of the revolution that this relegating of "the whole state machine . . . to the museum of antiquities" presupposes. In most cases we do not even find an understanding of what Engels calls the state machine.

4. THE "WITHERING AWAY" OF THE STATE AND VIOLENT REVOLUTION

Engels' words regarding the "withering away" of the state are so widely known, they are so often quoted, and they reveal the significance of the customary painting of Marxism to look like opportunism so clearly that we must deal with them in detail. We shall quote the whole passage from which they are taken.

"The proletariat seizes the state power and transforms the means of production in the first instance into state property. But in doing this, it puts an end to itself as the proletariat, it puts an end to all class differences and class antagonisms, it puts an end also to the state as the state. Former society, moving in class antagonisms, had need of the state, that is, an organisation of the exploiting class, at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production; that is, therefore, for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, villeinage or serfdom, wage-labour) determined by the existing mode of production. The state was the official representative of society as a whole, its embodiment in a visible corporation; but it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself, in its epoch, represented society as a whole: in ancient times, the state of the slave-owning citizens; in the Middle Ages, of the feudal nobility;

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

in our epoch, of the bourgeoisie. When ultimately it becomes really representative of society as a whole, it makes itself superfluous. As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the former anarchy of production, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed, which would make a special repressive force, a state, necessary. The first act in which the state really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—is at the same time its last independent act as a state. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The state is not 'abolished,' *it withers away*. It is from this standpoint that we must appraise the phrase 'free people's state'—both its justification at times for agitational purposes, and its ultimate scientific inadequacy—and also the demand of the so-called anarchists that the state should be abolished overnight."¹

It may be said without fear of error that of this argument of Engels', which is so singularly rich in ideas, only one point has become an integral part of socialist thought among modern Socialist Parties, namely, that according to Marx the state "withers away"—as distinct from the anarchist doctrine of the "abolition of the state." To emasculate Marxism in such a manner is to reduce it to opportunism, for such an "interpretation" only leaves the hazy conception of a slow, even, gradual change, of absence of leaps and storms, of absence of revolution. The current, widespread, mass, if one may say so, conception of the "withering away" of the state undoubtedly means the slurring over, if not the repudiation, of revolution.

Such an "interpretation" is the crudest distortion of Marxism, advantageous only to the bourgeoisie; in point of theory, it is based on a disregard for the most important circumstances and considerations pointed out, say, in the "summary" of Engels' argument we have just quoted in full.

In the first place, Engels at the very outset of his argument says that, in assuming state power, the proletariat by that "puts an end to the state . . . as the state." It is not "good form" to ponder over what this means. Generally, it is either ignored altogether, or it is considered to be a piece of "Hegelian weakness"

¹ Frederick Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* [*Anti-Dühring*], Part III, chap. II ("Socialism: Theoretical").—Ed. Eng. ed.

on Engels' part. As a matter of fact, however, these words briefly express the experience of one of the great proletarian revolutions, the Paris Commune of 1871, of which we shall speak in greater detail in its proper place. As a matter of fact, Engels speaks here of the "abolition" of the *bourgeois* state by the proletarian revolution, while the words about its withering away refer to the remnants of the *proletarian* state *after* the socialist revolution. According to Engels the bourgeois state does not "wither away," but is "*put on end to*" by the proletariat in the course of the revolution. What withers away after the revolution is the proletarian state or semi-state.

Secondly, the state is a "special repressive force." Engels gives this splendid and extremely profound definition here with complete lucidity. And from it follows that the "special repressive force" for the suppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, for the suppression of the millions of toilers by a handful of the rich, must be superseded by a "special repressive force" for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat (the dictatorship of the proletariat). This is precisely what is meant by putting an end to "the state as the state." This is precisely the "act" of taking possession of the means of production in the name of society. And it is obvious that such a substitution of one (proletarian) "special repressive force" for another (bourgeois) "special repressive force" cannot possibly take place in the form of "withering away."

Thirdly, in regard to the state "withering away," and the even more expressive and colourful "ceasing of itself," Engels refers quite clearly and definitely to the period *after* the state has "taken possession of the means of production in the name of society," that is, *after* the socialist revolution. We all know that the political form of the "state" at that time is the most complete democracy. But it never enters the head of any of the opportunists who shamelessly distort Marxism that Engels here speaks of *democracy* "withering away," or "ceasing of itself." This seems very strange at first sight; but it is "unintelligible" only to those who have not pondered over the fact that democracy is *also* a state and that, consequently, democracy will also disappear when the state disappears. Revolution alone can "put an end" to the bourgeois state. The

state in general, *i.e.*, the most complete democracy, can only "wither away."

Fourthly, after formulating his famous proposition that "the state withers away," Engels at once explains concretely that this proposition is directed equally against the opportunists and the anarchists. In doing this, however, Engels puts in the forefront the conclusion deduced from the proposition, the "state withers away," which is directed against the opportunists.

One can wager that out of every 10,000 persons who have read or heard about the "withering away" of the state, 9,990 do not know, or do not remember, that Engels did not direct the conclusions he deduced from this proposition against the anarchists *alone*. Of the remaining ten, probably nine do not know the meaning of "free people's state" or why an attack on this watchword contains an attack on the opportunists. This is how history is written! This is how a great revolutionary doctrine is imperceptibly falsified and adapted to prevailing philistinism! The conclusion drawn against the anarchists has been repeated thousands of times, vulgarised, dinned into people's heads in the crudest fashion and has acquired the strength of a prejudice; whereas the conclusion drawn against the opportunists has been hushed up and "forgotten"!

The "free people's state" was a programme demand and a popular slogan of the German Social-Democrats in the 'seventies. The only political content of this slogan is a pompous philistine description of the concept democracy. In so far as it hinted in a lawful manner at a democratic republic, Engels was prepared to "justify" its use "for a time" from an agitational point of view. But it was an opportunist slogan, for it not only expressed an embellishment of bourgeois democracy, but also a lack of understanding of the socialist criticism of the state in general. We are in favour of a democratic republic as the best form of state for the proletariat under capitalism; but we have no right to forget that wage-slavery is the lot of the people even in the most democratic bourgeois republic. Furthermore, every state is a "special repressive force" for the suppression of the oppressed class. Consequently, *no* state is a "free" or a "people's state." Marx and

Engels explained this repeatedly to their party comrades in the 'seventies.

Fifthly, this very same work of Engels', of which everyone remembers the argument about the "withering away" of the state, also contains a disquisition on the significance of violent revolution. Engels' historical analysis of its role becomes a veritable panegyric on violent revolution. This "no one remembers"; it is not good form in modern Socialist Parties to talk or even think about the importance of this idea, and it plays no part whatever in their daily propaganda and agitation among the masses. And yet, it is inseparably bound up with the "withering away" of the state into one harmonious whole.

Here is Engels' argument:

"That force, however, plays yet another role [other than that of a diabolical power] in history, a revolutionary role; that, in the words of Marx, it is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new; that it is the instrument by the aid of which the social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilised, political forms—of this there is not a word in Herr Dühring. It is only with sighs and groans that he admits the possibility that force will perhaps be necessary for the overthrow of the economic system of exploitation—unfortunately, because all use of force, forsooth, demoralises the person who uses it. And this in spite of the immense moral and spiritual impetus which has resulted from every victorious revolution! And this in Germany, where a violent collision—which indeed may be forced on the people—would at least have the advantage of wiping out the servility which has permeated the national consciousness as a result of the humiliation of the Thirty Years' War. And this parson's mode of thought—lifeless, insipid and impotent—claims to impose itself on the most revolutionary party* which history has known!"¹

How can this panegyric on violent revolution, which Engels insistently brought to the attention of the German Social-Democrats between 1878 and 1894, *i.e.*, right up to the time of his death, be combined with the theory of the "withering away" of the state to form a single doctrine?

Usually the two views are combined by means of eclecticism, by an unprincipled, or sophistic, arbitrary selection (or a selection to please the powers that be) of one or another argument, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred (if not more often), it

¹ *Ibid.*, Part II, chap. IV ("The Force Theory—Conclusion").—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

is the idea of the "withering away" that is specially emphasised. Eclecticism is substituted for dialectics—this is the most usual, the most widespread phenomenon to be met with in present-day official Social-Democratic literature on Marxism. This sort of substitution is not new, of course, it is observed even in the history of classic Greek philosophy. In painting Marxism to look like opportunism, the substitution of eclecticism for dialectics is the best method of deceiving the masses; it gives an illusory satisfaction; it seems to take into account all sides of the process, all tendencies of development, all the conflicting influences, and so forth, whereas in reality it presents no consistent and revolutionary conception of the process of social development at all.

We have already said above, and shall show more fully later, that the doctrine of Marx and Engels concerning the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois state. The latter *cannot* be superseded by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) in the process of "withering away"; as a general rule, this can happen only by means of a violent revolution. The panegyric Engels sang in its honour, and which fully corresponds to Marx's repeated declarations (recall the concluding passages of *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Communist Manifesto*, with their proud and open declaration of the inevitability of a violent revolution; recall Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* of 1875, in which, almost thirty years later, he mercilessly castigates the opportunist character of that programme)—this panegyric is by no means a mere "impulse," a mere declamation or a polemical sally. The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with *this* and precisely this view of violent revolution lies at the root of the *whole* of Marx's and Engels' doctrine. The betrayal of their doctrine by the now predominant social-chauvinist and Kautskyan trends is brought out in striking relief by the neglect of *such* propaganda and agitation by both these trends.

The substitution of the proletarian state for the bourgeois state is impossible without a violent revolution. The abolition of the

proletarian state, *i.e.*, of the state in general, is impossible except through the process of "withering away."

Marx and Engels fully and concretely enlarged on these views in studying each revolutionary situation separately, in analysing the lessons of the experience of each individual revolution. We shall now proceed to discuss this, undoubtedly the most important part of their doctrine.

CHAPTER II

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION. THE EXPERIENCE OF 1848-51

I. THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

THE first works of mature Marxism—*The Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Communist Manifesto*—appeared on the eve of the Revolution of 1848. For this reason, in addition to presenting the general principles of Marxism, they reflect to a certain degree the concrete revolutionary situation of the time. Hence, it will be more expedient, perhaps, to examine what the authors of these works said about the state immediately before they drew conclusions from the experience of the years 1848-51.

In *The Poverty of Philosophy* Marx wrote:

"The working class in the course of its development will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will be no more political power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of antagonism in civil society."¹

It is instructive to compare this general statement of the idea of the state disappearing after classes have been abolished with the statement contained in *The Communist Manifesto*, written by Marx and Engels a few months later—to be exact, in November 1847:

"In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat. . . ."²

¹ Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, chap. II, sec. 5.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

² *The Communist Manifesto*, Part I ("Bourgeois and Proletarians").—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

"... We have seen above that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy.

"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state, *i.e.*, of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."¹

Here we have a formulation of one of the most remarkable and most important ideas of Marxism on the subject of the state, namely, the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (as Marx and Engels began to call it after the Paris Commune); and also a very interesting definition of the state which also belongs to the category of the "forgotten words" of Marxism: "*the state,*" *i.e.*, "*the proletariat organised as the ruling class.*"

This definition of the state has never been explained in the prevailing propaganda and agitation literature of the official Social-Democratic Parties. More than that, it has been forgotten, for it is absolutely irreconcilable with reformism, and is a slap in the face of the common opportunist prejudices and philistine illusions about the "peaceful development of democracy."

The proletariat needs the state—this is repeated by all the opportunists, social-chauvinists and Kautskyists, who assure us that this is what Marx taught. But they "forget" to add that, in the first place, according to Marx, the proletariat needs only a state which is withering away, *i.e.*, a state so constituted that it begins to wither away immediately, and cannot but wither away. Secondly, the toilers need a "state," *i.e.*, "the proletariat organised as the ruling class."

The state is a special organisation of force; it is the organisation of violence for the suppression of some class. What class must the proletariat suppress? Naturally, only the exploiting class, *i.e.*, the bourgeoisie. The toilers need a state only to overcome the resistance of the exploiters, and only the proletariat can direct this suppression, carry it out; for the proletariat is the only class that is consistently revolutionary, the only class that can unite all the toilers and the exploited in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, in completely displacing it.

¹ *Ibid.*, Part II ("Proletarians and Communists").—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

The exploiting classes need political rule in order to maintain exploitation, *i.e.*, in the selfish interests of an insignificant minority and against the interests of the vast majority of the people. The exploited classes need political rule in order completely to abolish all exploitation, *i.e.*, in the interests of the vast majority of the people, and against the interests of the insignificant minority consisting of the modern slave-owners—the landlords and the capitalists.

The petty-bourgeois democrats, those alleged Socialists who substituted dreams of class harmony for the class struggle, even pictured the socialist reformation in a dreamy fashion—not in the form of the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class, but in the form of the peaceful submission of the minority to the majority which has become conscious of its aims. This petty-bourgeois utopia, which is inseparably bound up with the idea of the state being above classes, led in practice to the betrayal of the interests of the toiling classes, as was shown, for example, by the history of the French revolutions of 1848 and 1871,* and by the "Socialists" joining bourgeois cabinets in England, France, Italy and other countries at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.**

Marx fought all his life against this petty-bourgeois socialism—now resurrected in Russia by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties. He logically pursued his doctrine of the class struggle to the doctrine of political power, the doctrine of the state.

The overthrow of bourgeois rule can be accomplished only by the proletariat, as the particular class whose economic conditions of existence train it for this task and provide it with the opportunity and the power to perform it. While the bourgeoisie breaks up and disintegrates the peasantry and all the petty-bourgeois strata, it welds together, unites and organises the proletariat. Only the proletariat—by virtue of the economic role it plays in large-scale production—is capable of acting as the leader of *all* the toiling and exploited masses, whom the bourgeoisie exploits, oppresses and crushes not less, and often more, than it does the proletarians, but who are incapable of waging an *independent* struggle for their emancipation.

The doctrine of the class struggle, as applied by Marx to the question of the state and of the socialist revolution, leads inevitably to the recognition of the *political rule* of the proletariat, of its dictatorship, *i.e.*, of power shared with none and relying directly upon the armed force of the masses. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be achieved only by the proletariat becoming transformed into the *ruling class*, capable of crushing the inevitable and desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie, and of organising *all* the toiling and exploited masses for the new economic order.

The proletariat needs state power, the centralised organisation of force, the organisation of violence, for the purpose of crushing the resistance of the exploiters and for the purpose of *leading* the great mass of the population—the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletarians—in the work of organising socialist economy.

By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat which is capable of assuming power and of *leading the whole people* to socialism, of directing and organising the new order, of being the teacher, guide and leader of all the toiling and exploited in the task of building up their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie. As against this, the now prevailing opportunism breeds in the ranks of the workers' party representatives of the better paid workers, who lose touch with the rank and file, "get along" fairly well under capitalism, and sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, *i.e.*, renounce their role of revolutionary leaders of the people against the bourgeoisie.

Marx's theory: "The state, *i.e.*, the proletariat organised as the ruling class," is inseparably bound up with all he taught on the revolutionary role of the proletariat in history. The culmination of this role is the proletarian dictatorship, the political rule of the proletariat.

But if the proletariat needs a state as a *special* form of organisation of violence *against* the bourgeoisie, the following deduction automatically arises: is it conceivable that such an organisation can be created without first abolishing, destroying the state machine created by the bourgeoisie for *itself*? *The Communist Manifesto*

leads straight to this deduction, and it is of this deduction that Marx speaks when summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848-51.

2. THE REVOLUTION SUMMED UP

Marx sums up the Revolution of 1848-51, in connection with the question of the state we are concerned with, in the following passage in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

"... But the revolution is thoroughgoing. It is still in process of passing through purgatory. It does its work methodically. By December 2, 1851 [the day of Louis Bonaparte's *coup d'état*],* it had completed one-half of its preparatory work; it is now completing the other half. First it perfected the parliamentary power, in order to be able to overthrow it. Now that it has attained this, it perfects the *executive power*, reduces it to its purest expression, isolates it, sets it up against itself as the sole target, in order to *concentrate all its forces of destruction against it* [italics ours]. And when it has done this second half of its preliminary work, Europe will leap from her seat and exultantly exclaim: well grubbed, old mole!

"This executive power with its monstrous bureaucratic and military organisation, with its artificial state machinery embracing wide strata, with a host of officials numbering half a million, besides an army of another half million, this appalling parasitic growth, which enmeshes the body of French society like a net and chokes all its pores, sprang up in the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten." The first French Revolution developed centralisation, "but at the same time [it developed] the extent, the attributes and the agents of governmental authority. Napoleon perfected this state machinery." The legitimist monarchy and the July monarchy** "added nothing but a greater division of labour..."

"The parliamentary republic finally, in its struggle against the revolution, found itself compelled to strengthen, along with the repressive measures, the resources and centralisation of governmental power. *All the revolutions perfected this machine, instead of smashing it up* [italics ours]. The parties that contended in turn for domination regarded the possession of this huge state edifice as the principal spoils of the victor."¹

In this remarkable passage Marxism takes a tremendous step forward compared with *The Communist Manifesto*. In the latter, the question of the state is still treated in an extremely abstract manner, in the most general terms and expressions. In the above-quoted passage, the question is treated in a concrete manner, and the conclusion is most precise, definite, practical and palpable:

¹ *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, chap. VII.—Ed. Eng. ed.

all the revolutions which have occurred up to now have helped to perfect the state machine, whereas it must be smashed, broken.

This conclusion is the chief and fundamental thesis in the Marxian doctrine of the state. And it is precisely this fundamental thesis which has been not only completely *forgotten* by the predominant official Social-Democratic Parties, but positively *distorted* (as we shall see later) by the foremost theoretician of the Second International, K. Kautsky.

The Communist Manifesto gives a general summary of history, which compels us to regard the state as the organ of class rule and leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the proletariat cannot overthrow the bourgeoisie without first capturing political power, without attaining political supremacy, without transforming the state into the "proletariat organised as the ruling class"; it inevitably leads to the conclusion that this proletarian state will begin to wither away immediately after its victory, because the state is unnecessary and cannot exist in a society in which there are no class antagonisms. The question as to how, from the point of view of historical development, the substitution of the proletarian state for the bourgeois state is to take place is not raised.

Marx raises this question and answers it in 1852.¹ True to his philosophy of dialectical materialism, Marx takes as his basis the experience of the great years of revolution, 1848 to 1851. Here, as everywhere, his teaching is the *summary of experience*, illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the world and a rich knowledge of history.

The problem of the state is put concretely: how did the bourgeois state, the state machine necessary for the rule of the bourgeoisie, come into being historically? What changes did it undergo, what evolution did it undergo in the course of the bourgeois revolutions and in the face of the independent actions of the oppressed classes? What are the tasks of the proletariat in relation to this state machine?

The centralised state power that is peculiar to bourgeois society

¹ I.e., in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.—Ed.

came into being in the period of the fall of absolutism. Two institutions are most characteristic of this state machine: bureaucracy and a standing army. In their works, Marx and Engels repeatedly mention the thousand threads which connect these institutions with the bourgeoisie. The experience of every worker illustrates this connection in an extremely striking and impressive manner. From its own bitter experience, the working class learns to recognise this connection; that is why it learns so quickly and why it so completely assimilates the doctrine which reveals this inevitable connection, a doctrine which the petty-bourgeois democrats either ignorantly and light-heartedly deny, or, still more light-heartedly, admit "in general," forgetting to draw the corresponding practical conclusions.

The bureaucracy and the standing army are a "parasite" on the body of bourgeois society—a parasite created by the inherent antagonisms which rend that society, but a parasite which "chokes all its pores" of life. The Kautskyan opportunism now prevalent in official Social-Democracy considers the view that the state is a *parasitic growth* to be the peculiar and exclusive attribute of anarchism. Naturally, this distortion of Marxism is extremely useful to those philistines who have so utterly disgraced socialism by justifying and embellishing the imperialist war with the term "national defence"; but it is an absolute distortion nevertheless.

The development, perfection and strengthening of the bureaucratic and military apparatus proceeded during all the numerous bourgeois revolutions which Europe has witnessed since the fall of feudalism. It is precisely the petty bourgeoisie that is attracted to the side of the big bourgeoisie and is subordinated to it to a large extent by means of this apparatus, which provides the upper strata of the peasantry, small artisans and tradesmen with a number of comparatively comfortable, quiet and respectable jobs which raise their holders *above* the people. Consider what happened in Russia during the six months following March 12 [February 27], 1917. The governmental posts which hitherto had been given by preference to members of the Black Hundreds now became the spoils of the Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Nobody really thought of introducing any serious re-

forms; every effort was made to put them off "until the Constituent Assembly was convened"; and to put off the convocation of the Constituent Assembly until the end of the war! But there was no delay, no waiting for the Constituent Assembly in the matter of dividing the spoils, of getting the posts of ministers, vice-ministers, governors-general, etc., etc.! The game of combinations that was played in forming the government was, in essence, only an expression of this division and re-division of the "spoils," which was going on high and low, throughout the country, in every department of central and local government. The six months between March 12 [February 27] and September 9 [August 27], 1917, can be summed up, objectively summed up beyond all dispute, as follows: reforms shelved, distribution of official posts accomplished and "mistakes" in the distribution corrected by a few re-distributions.

But the more the bureaucratic apparatus is "re-distributed" among the various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties (among the Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, if we take the case of Russia), the more clearly the oppressed classes, with the proletariat at their head, become conscious of their irreconcilable hostility to the *whole* of bourgeois society. That is why it is necessary for all bourgeois parties, even for the most democratic and "revolutionary-democratic" parties, to increase their repressive measures against the revolutionary proletariat, to strengthen the apparatus of repression, *i.e.*, the state machine that we are discussing. This course of events compels the revolution "*to concentrate all its forces of destruction*" against the state power, and to regard the problem, not as one of perfecting the state machine, but one of *smashing and destroying it*.

It was not logical reasoning, but the actual development of events, the living experience of 1848-51, that led to the problem being presented in this way. The extent to which Marx held strictly to the solid ground of historical experience can be seen from the fact that, in 1852, he did not yet deal concretely with the question of *what* was to take the place of the state machine that was to be destroyed. Experience had not yet provided material for the solution of this problem which history placed on the order of the day later on, in 1871. In 1852 it was only possible to

establish with the accuracy of scientific observation that the proletarian revolution *had approached* the task of "concentrating all its forces of destruction" against the state, of "breaking" the state machine.

Here the question may arise: is it correct to generalise the experience, observations and conclusions of Marx, to apply them to a field that is wider than the history of France during the three years 1848-51? Before proceeding to answer this question we shall recall a remark made by Engels, and then we shall proceed to examine the facts. In his introduction to the third edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* Engels wrote:

"France is the land, where, more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought out to a decision, and where, consequently, the changing political forms within which they occur and in which their results are summarised have likewise been stamped with the sharpest outlines. The centre of feudalism in the Middle Ages, the model country of centralised monarchy resting on estates since the Renaissance, France has demolished feudalism in the Great Revolution and established the unalloyed rule of the bourgeoisie in a classical purity unequalled by any other European land. And the struggle of the upward striving proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie also appeared here in an acute form unknown elsewhere."

The last sentence is out of date, inasmuch as a lull has occurred in the revolutionary struggle of the French proletariat since 1871; although, long as this lull may be, it does not preclude the possibility that, in the coming proletarian revolution, France may once again reveal itself as the classic land of the class struggle to a decision.

Let us, however, cast a general glance over the history of the advanced countries at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. We shall see that the same process has been going on more slowly, in more varied forms, on a much wider field: on the one hand, the development of "parliamentary power" in the republican countries (France, America, Switzerland), as well as in the monarchies (England, Germany to a certain extent, Italy, the Scandinavian countries, etc.); on the other hand, a struggle for power between the various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties which distribute and re-distribute the "spoils" of office, while the foundations of bourgeois society re-

main unchanged. Finally, the perfection and consolidation of the "executive power," its bureaucratic and military apparatus.

There is not the slightest doubt that these features are common to the whole of the modern evolution of all capitalist states in general. In the three years 1848-51 France displayed, in a swift, sharp, concentrated form, all the processes of development which are peculiar to the whole capitalist world.

Imperialism—the era of bank capital, the era of gigantic capitalist monopolies, the era of the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly capitalism—has particularly witnessed an unprecedented strengthening of the "state machine" and an unprecedented growth of its bureaucratic and military apparatus, in connection with the increase in repressive measures against the proletariat in the monarchical as well as in the freest republican countries.

World history is now undoubtedly leading to the "concentration of all the forces" of the proletarian revolution on the "destruction" of the state machine on an incomparably larger scale than in 1852.

What the proletariat will put in its place is indicated by the extremely instructive material provided by the Paris Commune.

3. THE PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTION BY MARX IN 1852¹

In 1907, Mehring, in the magazine *Neue Zeit*² (Vol. XXV, 2, p. 164), published extracts from a letter from Marx to Weydemeyer dated March 5, 1852. This letter, among other things, contains the following remarkable observation:

"And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me, bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle, and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production* [histor-

¹ This section was added by Lenin in the second Russian edition of *The State and Revolution*, 1918.—Ed.

² *New Times*, the theoretical organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany.—Ed.

ische Entwicklungsphasen der Produktion]; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes and to a classless society*."¹

In these words Marx succeeded in expressing with striking clarity, first, the chief and radical difference between his doctrine and those of the most advanced and most profound thinkers of the bourgeoisie; and, second, the essence of his doctrine of the state.

It is often said and written that the core of Marx's theory is the class struggle; but it is not true. And from this error, very often, springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism, its falsification to make it acceptable to the bourgeoisie. The theory of the class struggle was *not* created by Marx, but by the bourgeoisie *before* Marx, and generally speaking it is *acceptable* to the bourgeoisie. Those who recognise *only* the class struggle are not yet Marxists; those may be found to have gone no further than the boundaries of bourgeois reasoning and bourgeois politics. To limit Marxism to the theory of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. A Marxist is one who *extends* the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is where the profound difference lies between a Marxist and an ordinary petty (and even big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be tested. And it is not surprising that when the history of Europe brought the working class face to face with this question in a *practical* way, not only all the opportunists and reformists, but all the Kautskyists (those who vacillate between reformism and Marxism) proved to be miserable philistines and petty-bourgeois democrats who *repudiated* the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*,* published in August 1918, *i.e.*, long after the first edition of the present pamphlet, is an example of the petty-bourgeois distortion of Marxism and base renunciation of it *in practice*, while hypocritically recognising it *in words* (see

¹ *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

my pamphlet, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Petrograd and Moscow, 1918¹).

Present-day opportunism in the person of its principal representative, the ex-Marxist, K. Kautsky, fits in completely with Marx's characterisation of the *bourgeois* position as quoted above, for this opportunism limits the field of recognition of the class struggle to the realm of bourgeois relationships. (Within this realm, within its framework, not a single educated liberal will refuse to recognise the class struggle "in principle"!.) Opportunism *does not carry* the recognition of class struggle to the main point, to the period of *transition* from capitalism to communism, to the period of the *overthrow* and complete abolition of the bourgeoisie. In reality, this period inevitably becomes a period of unusually violent class struggles in their sharpest possible forms and, therefore, during this period, the state must inevitably be a state that is democratic *in a new way* (for the proletariat and the propertyless in general) and dictatorial *in a new way* (against the bourgeoisie).

To proceed. The essence of Marx's doctrine of the state is assimilated only by those who understand that the dictatorship of a *single* class is necessary not only for class society in general, not only for the *proletariat* which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but for the entire *historical period* between capitalism and "classless society," communism. The forms of the bourgeois state are extremely varied, but in essence they are all the same: in one way or another, in the last analysis, all these states are inevitably the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*. The transition from capitalism to communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but in essence there will inevitably be only one: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*.

¹ In this volume.—Ed.

CHAPTER III

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION. EXPERIENCE OF THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871. MARX'S ANALYSIS

I. WHEREIN LAY THE HEROISM OF THE COMMUNARDS' ATTEMPT?

It is well known that in the autumn of 1870, a few months before the Commune, Marx warned the Paris workers that an attempt to overthrow the government would be desperate folly. But when, in March 1871, a decisive battle was *forced* upon the workers and they accepted it, when the uprising had become a fact, Marx greeted the proletarian revolution with the greatest enthusiasm, in spite of unfavourable auguries. Marx did not assume the rigid attitude of pedantically condemning a "premature" movement as did the ill-famed Russian renegade from Marxism, Plekhanov, who, in November 1905, wrote encouragingly about the workers' and peasants' struggle but, after December 1905, cried, liberal fashion: "They should not have taken to arms."¹

Marx, however, was not only enthusiastic about the heroism of the Communards who "stormed the heavens," as he expressed it. Although it did not achieve its aim, he regarded the mass revolutionary movement as a historic experiment of gigantic importance, as an advance of the world proletarian revolution, as a practical step that was more important than hundreds of programmes and discussions. Marx conceived his task to be to analyse this experiment, to draw lessons in tactics from it, to re-examine his theory in the new light it afforded.

Marx made the only "correction" he thought it necessary to make in *The Communist Manifesto* on the basis of the revolutionary experience of the Paris Communards.

The last preface to the new German edition of *The Communist*

¹ See *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 348.—Ed.

Manifesto signed by both its authors is dated June 24, 1872. In this preface the authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, say that the programme of *The Communist Manifesto* "has in some details become antiquated" now, and they go on to say:

"One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.'"

The authors took the words in single quotation marks in the above-quoted passage from Marx's book, *The Civil War in France*.

Thus, Marx and Engels regarded one of the principal and fundamental lessons of the Paris Commune as being of such enormous importance that they introduced it as a vital correction in *The Communist Manifesto*.

It is extremely characteristic that it is precisely this vital correction that has been distorted by the opportunists, and its meaning, probably, is not known to nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine-hundredths, of the readers of *The Communist Manifesto*. We shall deal with this distortion more fully further on, in a chapter devoted specially to distortions. Here it will be sufficient to note that the current vulgar "interpretation" of Marx's famous utterance quoted above is that Marx here emphasises the idea of gradual development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

As a matter of fact, *exactly the opposite is the case*. Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up, smash* the "ready-made state machinery," and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.

On April 12, 1871, i.e., just at the time of the Commune, Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

"If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it [Marx's italics—the original is *zerbrechen*]; and this is essential for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting."¹

¹ *Neue Zeit*, Vol. XX, 1, 1901-02, p. 709. The letters of Marx to Kugelmann have come out in Russian in no less than two editions, one of them edited and with an introduction by me. (See *Letters to Dr. Kugelmann*.—Ed. Eng. ed.)

The words, "to smash" "the bureaucratic-military state machine," briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism on the tasks of the proletariat in relation to the state during a revolution. And it is precisely this lesson that has been not only completely forgotten, but positively distorted, in the prevailing Kautskyan "interpretation" of Marxism.

As for Marx's reference to *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, we quoted the corresponding passage in full above.

It is interesting to note two particular points in the above-quoted passage in Marx's argument. First, he confines his conclusions to the Continent. This was natural in 1871, when England was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without militarism and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Hence, Marx excluded England, where a revolution, even a people's revolution could be conceived of, and was then possible, *without* the condition of first destroying the "ready-made state machinery."*

Today, in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, Marx's exception is no longer valid. Both England and America, the greatest and last representatives of Anglo-Saxon "liberty," in the sense that militarism and bureaucracy are absent, have today plunged headlong into the all-European, filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions to which everything is subordinated and which trample everything under foot. Today, both in England and America, the "essential" thing for "every real people's revolution" is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the "ready-made state machinery" (brought in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, to general "European" imperialist perfection).

Secondly, particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the military and bureaucratic state machine is "essential for every real *people's* revolution." This idea of a "people's" revolution seems strange coming from Marx, and the Russian Plekhanovists and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a "slip of the pen." They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretched "liberal" distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the

antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution—and even this antithesis they interpret in an entirely lifeless way.

If, for example, we take the revolutions of the twentieth century, we shall, of course, have to admit that the Portuguese and the Turkish revolutions are bourgeois revolutions. Neither, however, is a “people’s” revolution, inasmuch as in neither of them does the mass of the people, the enormous majority, come out actively, independently, with its own economic and political demands. On the other hand, although the Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905-07 presented no such “brilliant” successes as at times fell to the lot of the Portuguese and Turkish revolutions, it was undoubtedly a “real people’s” revolution, since the mass of the people, the majority, the “lowest social ranks,” crushed by oppression and exploitation, rose independently, since they put on the entire course of the revolution the impress of *their* demands, of *their* attempts to build in their own way a new society in place of the old society that was being destroyed.

In Europe, in 1871, there was not a single country on the Continent in which the proletariat constituted the majority of the people. A “people’s” revolution, that swept actually the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced the proletariat and the peasantry. Both classes then constituted the “people.” Both classes were united by the fact that the “bureaucratic-military state machine” oppressed, crushed, exploited them. To *smash* this machine, to *break it up*—this is what is truly in the interests of the “people,” of the majority, the workers and most of the peasants, this is what is “essential” for the free alliance between the poor peasantry and the proletarians; without such an alliance democracy is unstable and the socialist reformation is impossible.

As is well known, the Paris Commune strove for such an alliance, although it failed to achieve it owing to a number of circumstances, internal and external.

Consequently, in speaking of a “real people’s revolution,” Marx, without in the least forgetting the peculiar characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie (he spoke a great deal about them and

often), very carefully took into account the class relations that actually existed in the majority of continental countries in Europe in 1871. On the other hand, he asserted that the “smashing” of the state machine was necessary in the interests of the workers and of the peasants, that it unites them, that it places before them the common task of removing the “parasite” and of substituting something new for it.

What exactly?

2. WHAT IS TO SUPERSEDE THE SMASHED STATE MACHINE?

In 1847, in *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx’s answer to this question was still a purely abstract one, or, to speak more correctly, it was an answer that indicated the problem, but did not solve it. The answer given in *The Communist Manifesto* was that “the proletariat organised as the ruling class” “to win the battle of democracy” was to be the substitute for this machine.

Marx did not drop into utopia; he expected the *experience* of the mass movement to provide the reply to the question of the exact forms the organisation of the proletariat as the ruling class will assume and the exact manner in which this organisation will be combined with the most complete, most consistent winning of “the battle of democracy.”

Marx subjected the experience of the Commune, meagre as it was, to the most careful analysis in *The Civil War in France*. Let us quote the most important passages of this work.

There developed in the nineteenth century, he says, originating from the days of the Middle Ages, “the centralised state power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy and judicature.” With the development of class antagonisms between capital and labour “. . . the state power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labour, of a public force organised for social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism. After every revolution marking a progressive phase in the class struggle, the purely repressive character of the state power stands out in bolder and bolder relief.” After

the Revolution of 1848-49, the state power became "the national war engine of capital against labour." The Second Empire consolidated this.

"The direct antithesis to the Empire was the Commune," says Marx. It was the "positive form" of "a republic that was not only to supersede the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself."

What was this "positive" form of the proletarian, the socialist republic? What was the state it was beginning to create?

"The first decree of the Commune . . . was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people," says Marx.

This demand now figures in the programme of every party calling itself Socialist. But the value of their programmes is best shown by the behaviour of our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who, precisely after the revolution of March 12 [February 27], 1917, refused to carry out this demand!

"The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. . . . Instead of continuing to be the agent of the Central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. . . .

"Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the 'parson-power'. . . .

"The judicial functionaries were to be divested of [their] sham independence. . . . Like the rest of the public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible and revocable."¹

Thus the Commune appears to have substituted "only" fuller democracy for the smashed state machine: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this "only" signifies the very important substitution of one type of institution for others of a fundamentally differ-

¹ *The Civil War in France*, sec. III.—Ed. Eng. ed.

ent order. This is a case of "quantity becoming transformed into quality": democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is generally conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois democracy into proletarian democracy; from the state (*i.e.*, a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer really a state.

It is still necessary to suppress the bourgeoisie and crush its resistance. This was particularly necessary for the Commune; and one of the reasons for its defeat was that it did not do this with sufficient determination. But the organ of suppression is now the majority of the population, and not the minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom and wage-slavery. And since the majority of the people *itself* suppresses its oppressors, a "special force" for suppression is *no longer necessary*. In this sense the state *begins to wither away*. Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority (privileged officialdom, heads of the standing army), the majority itself can directly fulfil all these functions, and the more the functions of state power devolve upon the people generally, the less need is there for the existence of this power.

In this connection the measures adopted by the Commune and emphasised by Marx are particularly noteworthy, *viz.*, the abolition of all representation allowances, and of all monetary privileges in the case of officials, the reduction of the remuneration of *all* servants of the state to the level of "*workmen's wages*." This shows more clearly than anything else the *turn* from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, from the democracy of the oppressors to the democracy of the oppressed classes, from the state as a "*special force*" for the suppression of a given class to the suppression of the oppressors by the *general force* of the majority of the people—the workers and the peasants. And it is precisely on this most striking point, perhaps the most important as far as the problem of the state is concerned, that the teachings of Marx have been most completely forgotten! In popular commentaries, the number of which is legion, this is not mentioned. It is "good form" to keep silent about it as if it were a piece of

old-fashioned "naiveté," just as the Christians, after Christianity had attained the position of a state religion, "forgot" the "naiveté" of primitive Christianity with its democratic revolutionary spirit.

The reduction of the remuneration of the highest state officials seems to be "simply" a demand of naive, primitive democracy. One of the "founders" of modern opportunism, the ex-Social-Democrat, Eduard Bernstein, has more than once exercised his talents in repeating the vulgar bourgeois jeers at "primitive" democracy.* Like all opportunists, including the present Kautskyists, he utterly fails to understand that, first of all, the transition from capitalism to socialism is *impossible* without some "reversion" to "primitive" democracy (how else can the majority, and even the whole population, proceed to discharge state functions?); and, secondly, he forgets that "primitive democracy" based on capitalism and capitalist culture is not the same as primitive democracy in prehistoric or pre-capitalist times. Capitalist culture has *created* large-scale production, factories, railways, the postal service, telephones, etc., and *on this basis* the great majority of functions of the old "state power" have become so simplified and can be reduced to such simple operations of registration, filing and checking that they can be easily performed by every literate person, and it will be possible to perform them for "workmen's wages," which circumstances can (and must) strip those functions of every shadow of privilege, of every semblance of "official grandeur."

All officials, without exception, elected and subject to recall *at any time*, their salaries reduced to the level of "workmen's wages"—these simple and "self-evident" democratic measures, while completely uniting the interests of the workers and the majority of the peasants, at the same time serve as the bridge between capitalism and socialism. These measures concern the purely political reconstruction of society; but, of course, they acquire their full meaning and significance only in connection with the "expropriation of the expropriators," either accomplished or in preparation, *i.e.*, with the transformation of capitalist private ownership of the means of production into social ownership. Marx wrote:

"The Commune made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure—the standing army and state functionarism."¹

From the peasantry, as from other sections of the petty bourgeoisie, only an insignificant few "rise to the top," "get on in the world" in the bourgeois sense, *i.e.*, become either well-to-do people, bourgeois or officials in secure and privileged positions. In every capitalist country where there is a peasantry (and this is the case in most capitalist countries), the vast majority of the peasants is oppressed by the government and longs for its overthrow, longs for "cheap" government. This can be achieved *only* by the proletariat; and by achieving it, the proletariat at the same time takes a step forward towards the socialist reconstruction of the state.

3. THE ABOLITION OF PARLIAMENTARISM

Marx said:

"The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time..."

"Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business."¹

Thanks to the prevalence of social-chauvinism and opportunism, this remarkable criticism of parliamentarism made in 1871 also belongs now to the "forgotten words" of Marxism. The Cabinet Ministers and professional parliamentarians, the traitors to the proletariat and the "practical" Socialists of our day, have left all criticism of parliamentarism to the anarchists, and, on this wonderfully intelligent ground, they denounce *all* criticism of parliamentarism as "anarchism"!! It is not surprising that the proletariat of the "advanced" parliamentary countries, disgusted with such "Socialists" as Messrs. Scheidemann, David, Legien, Sembat, Renaudel, Henderson, Vandervelde, Stauning, Branting, Bissolati and Co., has been more and more often giving its sympathies to

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

anarcho-syndicalism, in spite of the fact that the latter is but the twin brother of opportunism.

But for Marx, revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase, the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and the others have made of it. Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly for its inability to make use even of the "pig-sty" of bourgeois parliamentarism, especially at a time when the situation was obviously not revolutionary; but at the same time he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuine revolutionary-proletarian criticism.

To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to misrepresent the people in parliament is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.

But since we are discussing the question of the state, and if parliamentarism is to be regarded as one of the institutions of the state from the point of view of the tasks of the proletariat in *this* field, what is the way out of parliamentarism? How can it be dispensed with?

Again and again we must repeat: the lessons of Marx, based on the study of the Commune, have been so completely forgotten that any criticism of parliamentarism, other than anarchist or reactionary criticism, is quite unintelligible to the present-day "Social-Democrat" (read *present-day traitor to socialism*).

The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of the representative institutions and the electoral principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from mere "talking shops" into working bodies.

"The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time."

"A working, not a parliamentary body"—this hits the nail on the head in regard to the present-day parliamentarians and the parliamentary "lap dogs" of Social-Democracy! Take any parliamentary country, from America to Switzerland, from France to England, Norway and so forth—in these countries the actual work of the "state" is done behind the scenes and is carried on by the

departments, the government offices and the General Staffs. Parliament itself is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the "common people." This is so true that even in the Russian republic, a bourgeois-democratic republic, all these sins of parliamentarism were immediately revealed, even before a real parliament was created. The heroes of rotten philistinism, such as the Skobelevs and the Tseretellis, the Chernovs and Avksentyevs, have managed to pollute even the Soviets with the pollution of disgusting bourgeois parliamentarism and to convert them into mere talking shops. In the Soviets, the Right Honourable "Socialist" Ministers are fooling the confiding peasants with phrasemongering and resolutions. In the government itself a sort of permanent quadrille is going on in order that, on the one hand, as many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as possible may get near the "pie," the lucrative and honourable posts, and that, on the other hand, the "attention of the people" may be engaged. Meanwhile, the real "state" business is being done in the government offices, in the General Staff.

Dyelo Naroda,¹ the organ of the ruling "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, recently admitted in an editorial article—with the matchless candour of people of "good society," in which "all" are engaged in political prostitution—that even in those Ministries of which the "Socialists" (save the mark) are at the head, the whole bureaucratic apparatus has in fact remained as before, that it is working in the old way, "freely" sabotaging revolutionary measures. Even without this admission, would not the actual history of the participation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the government prove this? The only characteristic thing in this is that while in the Ministerial company of the Cadets, Messrs. Chernov, Rusanov, Zenzinov and the other editors of *Dyelo Naroda* have so completely lost all shame that they unblushingly proclaim, as if it were a mere bagatelle, that in "their" Ministries everything has remained as before! Revolutionary-democratic phrases to gull the Simple Simons; bureaucracy and red tape for the

¹ *The People's Cause*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

"benefit" of the capitalists—this is the *essence* of the "honest" coalition.

The Commune was to have substituted for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion would not have degenerated into deception, for the parliamentarians would have had to work themselves, would have had to execute their own laws, they themselves would have had to test their results in real life; they would have been directly responsible to their constituents. Representative institutions would have remained, but there was to have been *no* parliamentarism as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, not even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and *must* think of democracy without parliamentarism, if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere empty words for us, if the desire to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our serious and sincere desire, and not a mere "election" cry for catching workers' votes, as it is with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Scheidemanns, the Legiens, the Sembats and the Vanderveldes.

It is extremely instructive to note that, in speaking of the functions of the officials who are *necessary* for the Commune and for proletarian democracy, Marx compares them to the workers of "every other employer," that is, of the ordinary capitalist enterprise, with its "workmen and managers."

There is no trace of utopianism in Marx, in the sense that he invented or imagined a "new society." No, he studied the *birth* of the new society *from* the old, the forms of transition from the latter to the former as a natural historical process. He examined the actual experience of the mass proletarian movement and tried to draw practical lessons from it. He "learned" from the Commune, like all the great revolutionary thinkers who were not afraid to learn from the experience of the great movements of the oppressed classes, and who never preached pedantic "sermons" (such as Plekhanov's: "They should not have taken to arms"; or Tseretelli's: "A class must limit itself").

There can be no thought of destroying officialdom immediately everywhere, completely. That is utopia. But to *smash* the old bureaucratic machine at once and to begin immediately to construct a new one that will enable all officialdom to be gradually abolished is *not* utopia, it is the experience of the Commune, it is the direct and immediate task of the revolutionary proletariat.

Socialism simplifies the functions of "state" administration; it enables the methods of "official administration" to be thrown aside and the whole business to be reduced to a matter of organising the proletarians (as the ruling class), which hires "workmen and managers" in the name of the whole of society.

We are not utopians, we do not indulge in "dreams" of dispensing *at once* with all administration, with all subordination; these anarchist dreams, based upon a lack of understanding of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship, are totally alien to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, serve only to postpone the socialist revolution until human nature has changed. No, we want the socialist revolution with human nature as it is now, with human nature that cannot dispense with subordination, control and "managers."

But the subordination must be to the armed vanguard of all the exploited, of all the toilers, *i.e.*, to the proletariat. Measures must be taken at once, overnight, to substitute for the specific methods of "official administration" by state officials the simple functions of "workmen and managers," functions which are already fully within the capacity of the average city dweller and can well be performed for "workmen's wages."

We ourselves, the workers, will organise large-scale production on the basis of what capitalism has already created; we shall rely on our own experience as workers, we shall establish strict, iron discipline supported by the state power of the armed workers, we shall reduce the role of the state officials to that of simply carrying out our instructions as responsible, revocable, moderately paid "managers" (of course, with the aid of technicians of all sorts, types and degrees). This is *our* proletarian task, this is what we can and must *start* with in carrying out the proletarian revolution.

Such a beginning, on the basis of large-scale production, will of itself lead to the gradual "withering away" of all bureaucracy, to the gradual creation of an order, order without quotation marks, which will be different from wage-slavery, an order in which the functions of control and accounting—becoming more and more simple—will be performed by each in turn, will then become a habit and will finally die out as the *special* functions of a special stratum of the population.

A witty German Social-Democrat of the seventies of the last century called the *post-office* an example of the socialist system. This is very true. At present the post-office is a business organised on the lines of a state *capitalist* monopoly. Imperialism is gradually transforming all trusts into organisations of a similar type. Over the "common" toilers, who are overworked and starved, there stands the same bourgeois bureaucracy. But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. Overthrow the capitalists, crush the resistance of these exploiters with the iron hand of the armed workers, smash the bureaucratic machine of the modern state—and you will have a mechanism of the highest technical equipment, free from the "parasite," capable of being wielded by the united workers themselves, who will hire their own technicians, managers and bookkeepers, and pay them *all*, as, indeed *every* "state" official, ordinary workmen's wages. Here is a concrete, practicable task, immediately possible of fulfilment in relation to all trusts, a task that frees the toilers from exploitation and takes into account what the Commune had already begun to carry out (particularly in the field of state construction).

Our immediate object is to organise the *whole* of national economy on the lines of the postal system, so that the technicians, managers, bookkeepers, as well as *all* officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "workmen's wages," all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat. It is such a state, standing on such an economic basis, that we need. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the labouring classes of the prostitution of these institutions by the bourgeoisie.

4. THE ORGANISATION OF NATIONAL UNITY

"In a rough sketch of national organisation which the Commune had no time to develop, it states clearly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet. . . ."¹

The communes were to elect the "National Delegation" in Paris.

"The few but important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been intentionally misstated, but were to be discharged by Communal and therefore strictly responsible agents. The unity of the nation was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, to be organised by the Communal constitutions, and to become a reality by the destruction of the state power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior to, the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence. While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society."¹

To what extent the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy have failed to understand—or perhaps it would be more true to say, did not want to understand—these observations of Marx is best shown by the famous (the fame of Herostratus) book of the renegade Bernstein, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie*.² It is precisely in connection with the above passage from Marx that Bernstein wrote that this programme

" . . . in its political content, in all its essential features, displays the greatest similarity to the federalism of Proudhon.* . . . In spite of all the other points of difference between Marx and the 'petty-bourgeois' Proudhon [Bernstein places the word "petty-bourgeois" in quotation marks in order to make it sound ironical], on these points their ways of thinking resemble each other as closely as could be."

Of course, Bernstein continues, the importance of the municipalities is growing, but

" . . . it seems doubtful to me whether the first task of democracy would be such a dissolution [*Auflösung*] of the modern states and such a complete

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

² *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democracy*.—Herostratus, in order to acquire fame, burned down the temple of Diana at Ephesus.—Ed. Eng. ed.

transformation [*Umwandlung*] of their organisation as is described by Marx and Proudhon (the formation of a National Assembly from delegates of the provincial or district assemblies, which, in their turn, would consist of delegates from the Communes), so that the whole previous mode of national representation would vanish completely."

To confuse Marx's views on the "destruction of the state power"—of the "parasitic excrescence"—with Proudhon's federalism is positively monstrous! But it is not an accident, for it never occurs to the opportunist that Marx does not speak here about federalism as opposed to centralism, but about smashing the old bourgeois state machine which exists in all bourgeois countries.

The only thing that penetrates the opportunist's mind is what he sees around him, in a society of petty-bourgeois philistinism and "reformist" stagnation, namely, only "municipalities"! The opportunist has even forgotten how to think about the proletarian revolution.

It is ridiculous. But it is remarkable that nobody disputed Bernstein on this point! Bernstein has been refuted often enough, especially by Plekhanov in Russian literature and by Kautsky in European literature, but neither of them said *anything* about *this* distortion of Marx by Bernstein.

The opportunist has forgotten to think in a revolutionary way and to ponder over revolution to such an extent that he attributes "federalism" to Marx and confuses him with the founder of anarchism, Proudhon. And Kautsky and Plekhanov, the would-be orthodox Marxists and defenders of the doctrine of revolutionary Marxism, are silent on this point! Herein lies one of the roots of the extreme vulgarisation of the views concerning the difference between Marxism and anarchism which is characteristic of the Kautskyists and opportunists, and which we shall discuss later.

Marx's observations on the experience of the Commune which we quoted above do not reveal a trace of federalism. Marx agreed with Proudhon on the very point that the opportunist Bernstein failed to see. Marx disagreed with Proudhon on the very point on which Bernstein said there was agreement.

Marx agreed with Proudhon on the necessity of "smashing" the present state machine. Neither the Kautskyists nor the op-

portunists wish to see this similarity between Marxism and anarchism (Proudhon and Bakunin) because on this point they have departed from Marxism.

Marx differed with Proudhon and with Bakunin precisely on the point of federalism (quite apart from the dictatorship of the proletariat). The petty-bourgeois views of anarchism advance federalism as a principle. Marx was a centralist. There is no departure from centralism in the observations of Marx quoted above. Only those who are imbued with the petty-bourgeois "superstitious belief" in the state can mistake the abolition of the bourgeois state machine for the abolition of centralism!

But will it not be centralism when the proletariat and poorest peasantry take political power in their own hands, organise themselves freely in communes, and *unite* the action of all the communes in striking at capital, in crushing the resistance of the capitalists, in transferring the ownership of the railways, factories, land and so forth, to the *entire* nation, to the whole of society? Will that not be the most consistent democratic centralism? And proletarian centralism at that?

Bernstein simply cannot conceive the possibility of voluntary centralism, of the voluntary amalgamation of the communes into a nation, the voluntary fusion of the proletarian communes in the process of destroying bourgeois rule and the bourgeois state machine. Like all philistines, Bernstein can imagine centralism only as something from above, to be imposed and maintained solely by means of bureaucracy and militarism.

Marx, as though foreseeing the possibility of the distortion of his ideas, deliberately emphasised the fact that the charge that the Commune desired to destroy the unity of the nation, to abolish the central power, was an intentional misstatement. Marx deliberately used the words: "The unity of the nation was . . . to be organised," so as to contrast conscious, democratic proletarian centralism with bourgeois, military, bureaucratic centralism.

But no one is so deaf as he who will not hear. And the very thing the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy do not want to hear about is the abolition of state power, the excision of the parasite.

5. THE ABOLITION OF THE PARASITE STATE

We have already quoted part of Marx's utterances on this subject, and we must now supplement them. He wrote:

"It is generally the fate of completely new historical creations to be mistaken for the counterpart of older and even defunct forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks the modern state power, has been mistaken for a reproduction of the mediæval Communes*... for ... a federation of small states, as dreamt of by Montesquieu and the Girondins ... for an exaggerated form of the ancient struggle against over-centralisation. . . . The Communal constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the state parasite feeding upon and clogging the free movement of society. By this one act it would have initiated the regeneration of France. . . . The Communal constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the workmen, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local municipal liberty, but no longer as a check upon the now superseded state power."¹

"Breaks the modern state power," which was a "parasitic excrescence"; the "repressive organs" of which were to be "amputated"; the "destruction" of "the now superseded state power"—these are the expressions used by Marx concerning the state in appraising and analysing the experience of the Commune.

All this was written a little less than half a century ago; and now one has to make excavations, as it were, to bring undistorted Marxism to the knowledge of the masses. The conclusions drawn from the observation of the last great revolution, through which Marx lived, were forgotten just at the moment when the time for the next great proletarian revolutions had arrived.

"The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected and the multiplicity of interests which construed it in their favour show that it was a thoroughly expansive political form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive. Its true secret was this. It was essentially a *working class government*, the produce of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour.

"Except on this last condition, the Communal constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion."¹

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

The utopians busied themselves with "inventing" the political forms under which the socialist transformation of society was to take place. The anarchists waived the question of political forms altogether. The opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy accepted the bourgeois political forms of the parliamentary democratic state as the unsurpassable limit; they battered their foreheads praying before this idol and denounced every attempt to *smash* these forms as anarchism.

Marx deduced from the whole history of Socialism and of the political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from state to no state) would be the "proletariat organised as the ruling class." But Marx did not set out to *discover* the political forms of this future stage. He limited himself to a precise observation of French history, to analysing it, and to the conclusion to which the year 1851 had led, *viz.*, that matters were moving towards the *smashing* of the bourgeois state machine.

And when the mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat burst forth, Marx, in spite of the failure of that movement, in spite of its short life and its patent weakness, began to study the political forms that it had *disclosed*.

The Commune is the form "at last discovered" by the proletarian revolution, under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour.

The Commune is the first attempt of a proletarian revolution to *smash* the bourgeois state machine and it constitutes the political form, "at last discovered," which can and must *supersede* the smashed machine.

We shall see below that the Russian Revolution of 1905 and 1917, in different circumstances and under different conditions, continued the work of the Commune and corroborated Marx's brilliant historical analysis.

their houses the homeless or those workers who are excessively overcrowded in their old houses. Immediately the proletariat has conquered political power such a measure dictated in the public interest will be just as easy to carry out as other expropriations and billetings are by the existing state.”¹

The change in the form of the state power is not discussed here, only the content of its activity is discussed. Expropriations and billeting of houses take place by order even of the present state. From the formal point of view the proletarian state will also “order” the occupation of houses and expropriation of buildings. But it is clear that the old executive apparatus, the bureaucracy, which is connected with the bourgeoisie, would simply be unfit to carry out the orders of the proletarian state.

“... For the rest it must be pointed out that the ‘actual seizure’ of all instruments of labour, the seizure of industry as a whole by the working people, is the direct contrary of the Proudhonist theory of ‘gradual redemption.’ Under the latter, the *individual worker* becomes the owner of the dwelling, the peasant-farm, the instruments of labour; under the former, the ‘working people’ remain the collective owners of the houses, factories and instruments of labour, and would hardly permit of their use, at least in a transitional period, by individuals and associations without compensation for the costs, just as the abolition of property in land is not the abolition of ground rent, but its transfer, although in a modified form, to society. The actual seizure of all the instruments of labour by the working people therefore does not at all exclude the retention of the rent relations.”¹

We shall discuss the question touched upon in this passage, namely, the economic reasons for the withering away of the state, in the next chapter. Engels expresses himself most cautiously, saying that the proletarian state would “hardly” permit, “at least in a transitional period,” the use of houses without compensation for the cost. The letting of houses that belong to the whole people to separate families presupposes the collection of rent, a certain amount of control, and a certain standard of allotment of houses. All this calls for a certain form of state, but it does not call for a special military and bureaucratic apparatus, with officials occupying especially privileged positions. The transition to a state of affairs when it will be possible to let houses rent-free is bound up with the complete “withering away” of the state.

¹ *The Housing Question*, Part One (“How Proudhon Solves the Housing Question”)—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

CHAPTER IV

CONTINUATION. SUPPLEMENTARY EXPLANATIONS BY ENGELS

MARX gave the fundamentals on the question of the significance of the experience of the Commune. Engels returned to the same subject repeatedly and explained Marx’s analysis and conclusions, sometimes illuminating *other* sides of the question with such strength and vividness that it is necessary to deal with his explanations separately.

1. “THE HOUSING QUESTION”

In his work, *The Housing Question* (1872), Engels took into account the experience of the Commune, and dealt several times with the tasks of the revolution in relation to the state. It is interesting to note that the treatment of this concrete subject revealed, on the one hand, points of similarity between the proletarian state and the present state—features which give grounds for speaking of the state in both cases—and, on the other hand, the features which differentiate them, or the features of the transition to the abolition of the state.

“How is the housing question to be solved then? In present-day society, just as any other social question is solved: by the gradual economic adjustment of supply and demand, a solution which ever reproduces the question itself anew and therefore is no solution. How a social revolution would solve this question depends not only on the circumstances which would exist in each case, but is also connected with much more far-reaching questions, among which one of the most fundamental is the abolition of the antithesis between town and country. As it is not our task to create utopian systems for the arrangement of the society of the future, it would be more than idle to go into the question here. But one thing is certain: there are already in existence sufficient buildings for dwellings in the big towns to remedy immediately any real ‘housing shortage,’ given rational utilisation of them. This can naturally only take place by the expropriation of the present owners and by quartering in

Speaking of the conversion of the Blanquists to the principles of Marxism after the Commune and as a result of its experience, Engels, in passing, formulates these principles as follows:

“... Necessity of political action of the proletariat, and of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the transitional stage to the abolition of classes and, with them, of the state. . . .”¹

Addicts to hair-splitting criticism, and bourgeois “exterminators of Marxism,” will perhaps see a contradiction between this recognition of the “abolition of the state” and the repudiation of this formula as an anarchist one in the previously-quoted passage from *Anti-Dühring*. It would not be surprising if the opportunists stamped Engels, too, as an “anarchist,” for the habit of accusing the internationalists of anarchism is becoming more and more widespread among the social-chauvinists.

Marxism always taught that the state will be abolished with the abolition of classes. The well-known passage on the “withering away of the state” in *Anti-Dühring* does not blame the anarchists simply for being in favour of the abolition of the state, but for preaching that the state can be abolished “overnight.”

In view of the fact that the now prevailing “Social-Democratic” doctrine completely distorts the relation of Marxism to anarchism on the question of the abolition of the state, it will be very useful to recall a certain controversy conducted by Marx and Engels with the anarchists.

2. CONTROVERSY WITH THE ANARCHISTS

This controversy took place in 1873. Marx and Engels contributed articles against the Proudhonists, “autonomists” or “anti-authoritarians,” to an Italian Socialist annual,* and it was not until 1913 that these articles appeared in German in *Neue Zeit*. Ridiculing the anarchists and their repudiation of politics, Marx wrote:

“If the political struggle of the working class assumes violent forms, if the workers set up their revolutionary dictatorship in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, they commit the terrible crime of violating principles, for in order to satisfy their wretched, vulgar, everyday needs, in order to crush the

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

resistance of the bourgeoisie, instead of laying down their arms and abolishing the state, they give the state a revolutionary and transitory form. . . .”¹

It was exclusively against this kind of “abolition” of the state that Marx fought in refuting the anarchists! He did not combat the theory that the state would disappear when classes disappeared, or that it would be abolished when classes are abolished; he opposed the proposition that the workers should renounce the use of arms, the use of organised force, that is, *the use of the state*, in order to “crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie.”

To prevent the true meaning of his struggle against the anarchists from being distorted, Marx deliberately emphasised the “revolutionary and *transitory* form” of the state which the proletariat needs. The proletariat needs the state only temporarily. We do not at all disagree with the anarchists on the question of the abolition of the state as an *aim*. We maintain that, to achieve this aim, we must temporarily make use of the instruments, resources and methods of the state power *against* the exploiters, just as the dictatorship of the oppressed class is temporarily necessary for the abolition of classes. Marx chooses the sharpest and clearest way of stating his position against the anarchists: after overthrowing the yoke of the capitalists, should the workers “lay down their arms,” or use them against the capitalists in order to crush their resistance? But what is the systematic use of arms by one class against the other, if not a “transitory form” of state?

Let every Social-Democrat ask himself: is *that* the way he has been putting the question of the state in controversy with the anarchists? Is *that* the way the vast majority of the official Socialist Parties of the Second International have been putting it?

Engels enlarges on the same ideas in even greater detail and more simply. First of all he ridicules the muddled ideas of the Proudhonists, who called themselves “anti-authoritarians,” *i.e.*, they repudiated every sort of authority, every sort of subordination, every sort of power. Take a factory, a railway, a ship on the high seas, said Engels—is it not clear that not one of these complex technical units, based on the employment of machinery and

¹ *Neue Zeit*, Vol. XXXII, 1, 1913-14, p. 40.

the ordered co-operation of many people, could function without a certain amount of subordination and, consequently, without some authority or power?

"When I put these arguments," writes Engels, "up against the most rabid anti-authoritarians, they were only able to give me the following answer: 'Ah! that is true, but here it is not a case of authority which we confer on delegates, but of a commission!' These gentlemen think that they have changed the thing by changing its name. . . ."

Having thus shown that authority and autonomy are relative terms, that the sphere of their application varies with the various phases of social development, that it is absurd to take them as absolutes, and adding that the sphere of the application of machinery and large-scale production is constantly becoming enlarged, Engels passes from the general discussion of authority to the question of the state and writes:

" . . . If the autonomists would confine themselves to saying that the social organisation of the future will restrict authority to the limits in which the relations of production make it inevitable, we could understand each other, but they are blind to all facts which make the thing necessary, and they hurl themselves against the word.

"Why don't the anti-authoritarians confine themselves to crying out against political authority, against the state? All socialists are agreed that the state, and with it political authority, will disappear as the result of the coming social revolution, *i.e.*, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over real social interests. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the political state should be abolished at once, even before the social conditions which brought it into being have been abolished. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority.

"Have these gentlemen never seen a revolution? A revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing there is. It is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, which are authoritarian means if ever there were any. And the victorious party, if it does not wish to have fought in vain, must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed population against the bourgeoisie? Should we not on the contrary reproach it for not having made more extensive use of this authority? Therefore either one of two things is possible: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are saying, and in this case they sow nothing but confusion, or they do know, and in this case they are betraying the cause of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction."

This argument touches upon questions which must be examined in connection with the relation between politics and economics during the "withering away" of the state. (This is dealt with in the next chapter.) These questions are: the transformation of public functions from political functions into simple functions of administration, and the "political state." This last term, particularly liable to cause misunderstanding, indicates the process of the withering away of the state: at a certain stage of its withering away the moribund state can be called a non-political state.

Again, the most remarkable thing in this passage from Engels is the way he states the case against the anarchists. Social-Democrats, the would-be disciples of Engels, have discussed this question with the anarchists millions of times since 1873, but they have *not* discussed it as Marxists can and should. The anarchist idea of the abolition of the state is muddled and *non-revolutionary*—that is how Engels put it. It is precisely the revolution, in its rise and development, with its specific tasks in relation to violence, authority, power, the state, that the anarchists do not wish to see.

The usual criticism of anarchism by present-day Social-Democrats has been reduced to the purest philistine banality: "We recognise the state, whereas the anarchists do not!" Naturally, such banality cannot but repel revolutionary workers who think at all. Engels says something different. He emphasises the fact that all socialists recognise the disappearance of the state as a result of the socialist revolution. He then deals with the concrete question of the revolution—the very question which, as a rule, the Social-Democrats, because of their opportunism, evade, and leave, so to speak, exclusively for the anarchists "to work out." And in putting the question, Engels takes the bull by the horns; he asks: should not the Commune have made *more* use of the *revolutionary* power of the *state, i.e.*, of the armed proletariat organised as the ruling class?

Prevailing official Social-Democracy usually dismissed the question of the concrete tasks of the proletariat in the revolution either with a philistine sneer, or, at best, with the evasive sophism, "wait and see." And the anarchists were thus justified in saying about such Social-Democracy that it had betrayed its task

of educating the working class for the revolution. Engels utilises the experience of the last proletarian revolution precisely for the purpose of making a very concrete study of what the proletariat should do in relation to the banks and the state, and how it should do it.

3. LETTER TO BEBEL

One of the most remarkable, if not the most remarkable observation on the state in the works of Marx and Engels is contained in the following passage in Engels' letter to Bebel dated March 18-23, 1875. This letter, we may observe in passing, was, as far as we know, first published by Bebel in Volume II of his memoirs (*Aus meinem Leben*), which appeared in 1911, i.e., thirty-six years after it had been written and mailed.

Engels wrote to Bebel criticising the very draft of the Gotha Programme which Marx also criticised in his famous letter to Bracke. Referring particularly to the question of the state, Engels said:

"... The free people's state is transformed into the free state. Taken in its grammatical sense a free state is one where the state is free in relation to its citizens and is therefore a state with a despotic government. The whole talk about the state should be dropped, especially since the Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. The 'people's state' has been thrown in our faces by the anarchists too long although Marx's book against Proudhon and later *The Communist Manifesto* directly declare that with the introduction of the socialist order of society the state will dissolve of itself [*sich auflöst*] and disappear. As therefore the 'state' is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down [*niederzuhalten*] one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the state, as such, ceases to exist. We would, therefore, propose to replace the word 'state' everywhere by the word *Gemeinwesen* [*community*], a good old German word, which can very well represent the French word 'commune.'"¹

It must be borne in mind that this letter refers to the Party programme which Marx criticised in a letter dated only a few weeks later than the above (Marx's letter is dated May 5, 1875).*

The Correspondence of Marx and Engels.—Ed. Eng. ed.

and that at the time Engels was living with Marx in London. Consequently, when he says "we" in the last sentence, Engels undoubtedly, in his own as well as in Marx's name, suggests to the leader of the German workers' party that the word "state" be struck out of the programme and replaced by the word "community."

What a howl about "anarchism" would be raised by the leaders of present-day "Marxism," which has been faked for the convenience of the opportunists, if such a rectification of the programme were suggested to them!

Let them howl. The bourgeoisie will praise them for it.

But we shall go on with our work. In revising the programme of our Party we must unflinchingly take the advice of Engels and Marx into consideration in order to come nearer the truth, to restore Marxism by purging it of distortions, to guide the struggle of the working class for its emancipation more correctly. Certainly no Bolshevik will be found who opposes the advice of Engels and Marx. The only difficulty that may, perhaps, arise will be in regard to terminology. In German there are two words meaning "community,"¹ of which Engels used the one which does not denote a single community, but the totality, the system of communities. In Russian there is no such word, and perhaps we may have to decide to use the French word "commune," although this also has its drawbacks.

"The Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word"—this is Engels' most important theoretical statement. After what has been said above, this statement is perfectly clear. The Commune ceased to be a state in so far as it had to repress, not the majority of the population, but the minority (the exploiters); it had smashed the bourgeois state machine; in place of a special repressive force, the whole population itself came on the scene. All this is a departure from the state in the proper sense of the word. And had the Commune lasted, all traces of the state in it would have "withered away" of themselves; it would not have been necessary for it to "abolish" the institutions

¹ *Gemeinde* and *Gemeinwesen*.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

of the state; they would have ceased to function in proportion as they ceased to have anything to do.

"The people's state has been thrown in our faces by the anarchists." In saying this, Engels had Bakunin and his attacks on the German Social-Democrats particularly in mind. Engels admitted that these attacks were justified *in so far* as the "people's state" was as much an absurdity and as much a departure from socialism as the "free people's state." Engels tried to put the struggle of the German Social-Democrats against the anarchists on right lines, to make this struggle correct in principle, to purge it of opportunist prejudices concerning the "state." Alas! Engels' letter was pigeonholed for thirty-six years. We shall see below that, even after Engels' letter was published, Kautsky obstinately repeated what in essence were the very mistakes against which Engels had uttered his warning.

Bebel replied to Engels in a letter, dated September 21, 1875, in which he wrote, *inter alia*, that he "fully agrees" with Engels' criticism of the draft programme, and that he had reproached Liebknecht for his readiness to make concessions (p. 304 of the German edition of Bebel's *Memoirs*, Vol. II). But if we take Bebel's pamphlet, *Unsere Ziele*,¹ we find there arguments on the state that are absolutely wrong.

"The state must be transformed from one based on *class rule* into a *people's state*."

This is printed in the *ninth* (the ninth!) edition of Bebel's pamphlet! It is not surprising that such persistently repeated opportunist views on the state were absorbed by German Social-Democracy, especially as Engels' revolutionary interpretations were safely pigeonholed, and all the conditions of everyday life were such as to "wean" the people from revolution for a long time!

4. CRITICISM OF THE DRAFT OF THE ERFURT PROGRAMME

In examining the Marxian doctrine of the state, the criticism of the draft of the Erfurt Programme sent by Engels to Kautsky

¹ *Unsere Ziele (Our Goal)*, German edition, 1886, p. 14.

on June 29, 1891, a criticism published only ten years later, in *Neue Zeit*, cannot be ignored; for this criticism is mainly concerned with the *opportunist* views of Social-Democracy on questions of *state* structure.

We shall note in passing that Engels also makes an exceedingly valuable observation on questions of economics, which shows how attentively and thoughtfully he watched the changes in modern capitalism, and how he was able to foresee to a certain extent the tasks of our own, the imperialist, epoch. Here is the passage: referring to the word "planlessness" (*Planlosigkeit*) used in the draft programme, as characteristic of capitalism, Engels writes:

"When we pass from joint-stock companies to trusts which control and monopolise whole branches of industry, it is not only private production that ceases, but also planlessness."¹

Here we have what is most essential in the theoretical appraisal of the latest phase of capitalism, *i.e.*, imperialism, *viz.*, that capitalism becomes monopoly *capitalism*. The latter must be emphasised because the erroneous bourgeois reformist view that monopoly capitalism or state monopoly capitalism is *no longer* capitalism, but can already be termed "state socialism," or something of that sort, is very widespread. The trusts, of course, have not created, do not create now, and cannot create full and complete planning. But to whatever extent they do plan, to whatever extent the capitalist magnates calculate in advance the volume of production on a national and even on an international scale, and to whatever extent they systematically regulate it, we still remain *under capitalism*—capitalism in its new stage, it is true, but still, undoubtedly, capitalism. The "proximity" of *such* capitalism to socialism should serve the genuine representatives of the proletariat as proof of the proximity, ease, feasibility and urgency of the socialist revolution, and not as an argument in favour of tolerating the repudiation of such a revolution or in favour of making capitalism look more attractive, an occupation in which all the reformists are engaged.

But let us return to the question of the state. In this letter Engels makes three valuable suggestions: first, as regards the re-

¹ *Neue Zeit*, Vol. XX, 1, 1901-02, p. 8.

public; second, as regards the connection between the national question and the form of state, and, third, as regards local self-government.

As regards the republic, Engels made this the centre of gravity of his criticism of the draft of the Erfurt Programme. And when we remember what importance the Erfurt Programme has acquired in the whole of international Social-Democracy, that it has become the model for the whole of the Second International, it may be said without exaggeration that Engels thereby criticised the opportunism of the whole Second International. Engels writes:

“The political demands of the draft have one great fault. What actually ought to be said *is not there...*” (Engels’ italics.)¹

And, later on, he makes it clear that the German constitution is but a copy of the very reactionary constitution of 1850; that the Reichstag is only, as Wilhelm Liebknecht put it, “the fig-leaf of absolutism”; and that to wish “to transform all the instruments of labour into public property” on the basis of a constitution which legalises the existence of petty states and the federation of petty German states is an “obvious absurdity.”

“To touch on that is dangerous, however,” Engels adds, knowing full well that it is impossible, for reasons of legality, to include in the programme the demand for a republic in Germany. But Engels does not rest content with this obvious argument which satisfied “everybody.” He continues:

“And yet somehow or other the thing has got to be attacked... How necessary this is is shown precisely at the present time by the inroads which opportunism is making in a great section of the Social-Democratic press. For fear of a revival of the Anti-Socialist Law and from recollection of all manner of premature utterances which were let fall during the reign of that law the present legal position of the Party in Germany is now all of a sudden to be treated as sufficient for the carrying out of all the demands of the Party by peaceful means.”¹

Engels particularly stresses the fundamental fact that the German Social-Democrats were prompted by fear of a revival of the Anti-Socialist Law,* and unhesitatingly calls this opportunism;

¹ *Ibid.*; see also *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

he declares that precisely because there was no republic and no freedom in Germany, the dreams of a “peaceful” path were absolutely absurd. Engels is sufficiently careful not to tie his hands. He admits that in republican or very free countries “one can conceive” (only “conceive”!) of a peaceful development towards socialism; but in Germany, he repeats,

“in Germany, where the government is almost almighty and the Reichstag and all other representative bodies have no real power, to proclaim such a thing in Germany—and moreover when there is no need to do so—is to remove the fig-leaf from absolutism, and use it to screen one’s own nakedness.”¹

The great majority of the official leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party, who pigeonholed this advice, have indeed proved to be a screen for absolutism.

“Ultimately such a policy can only lead one’s own party astray. General abstract political questions have been put into the foreground, concealing thus the immediate concrete questions, the questions which at the first great events, the first political crisis, put themselves on the agenda. What can result from this except that at the decisive moment the Party is suddenly left without guidance, that unclarity and disunity reign on the most decisive points because these points have never been discussed? . . .

“This forgetfulness of the great main standpoint in the momentary interests of the day, this struggling and striving for the success of the moment without consideration for the later consequences, this sacrifice of the future of the movement for its present may be ‘honestly’ meant, but it is and remains opportunism, and ‘honest’ opportunism is perhaps the most dangerous of all. . .

“If one thing is certain it is that our Party and the working class can only come to power under the form of the democratic republic. This is even the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the Great French Revolution has already shown. . .”¹

Engels repeats here in a particularly striking manner the fundamental idea which runs like a red thread through all of Marx’s works, namely, that the democratic republic is the nearest approach to the dictatorship of the proletariat. For such a republic—without in the least abolishing the domination of capital, and, therefore, the oppression of the masses and the class struggle—inevitably leads to such an extension, development, unfolding and intensification of that struggle that, as soon as the possibility arises of satisfying the fundamental interests of the oppressed

¹ *Ibid.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

masses, this possibility is achieved inevitably and solely in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the leadership of those masses by the proletariat. These, too, are "forgotten words" of Marxism for the whole of the Second International, and this forgetfulness was demonstrated with particular vividness by the history of the Menshevik Party in the first half year of the Russian Revolution of 1917.

On the question of a federal republic, in connection with the national composition of the population, Engels wrote:

"What should take its place?" (of present-day Germany with its reactionary monarchical constitution and its equally reactionary division into petty states, which perpetuates all the specific features of "Prussianism" instead of dissolving them in Germany as a whole). "In my view, the proletariat can only use the form of one and indivisible republic. In the gigantic territory of the United States a federal republic is still, on the whole, a necessity, although in the Eastern states it is already becoming a hindrance. It would be a step forward in England, where the two islands are peopled by four nations and in spite of a single Parliament three different systems of legislation exist side by side even today.* In little Switzerland, it has long been a hindrance, tolerable only because Switzerland is content to be a purely passive member of the European state system. For Germany, federation of the Swiss type would be an enormous step backward. Two points distinguish a federal state from a unitary state: first, that each separate federated state, each canton, has its own civil and criminal legislative and judicial system, and, second, that alongside of a popular chamber there is also a federal chamber in which each canton, large or small, votes as such."¹

In Germany the federal state is the transitional stage to the complete unitary state, and the "revolution from above" of 1866 and 1870** must not be reversed but supplemented by a "movement from below."

Engels did not display indifference to the question of the forms of state; on the contrary, he tried to analyse the transitional forms with the utmost care in order to establish, in accordance with the concrete, historical, specific features of each separate case, *from what and into what* the given transitional form is evolving.

From the point of view of the proletariat and the proletarian revolution, Engels, like Marx, insisted on democratic centralism, on one indivisible republic. He regarded the federal republic

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed.

either as an exception and a hindrance to development, or as a transitional form from a monarchy to a centralised republic, as a "step forward" under certain special conditions. And in these special conditions, the national question comes to the front.

In spite of their ruthless criticism of the reactionary nature of small states, and, in certain concrete cases, the screening of this by the national question, Engels and Marx never betrayed a trace of a desire to evade the national question—a desire of which the Dutch and Polish Marxists are often guilty, as a result of their very justifiable opposition to the narrow philistine nationalism of "their" little states.

Even in regard to England, where geographical conditions, a common language and the history of many centuries would seem to have "put an end" to the national question in the separate small divisions of England—even in regard to this country, Engels took into account the patent fact that the national question had not yet been settled, and recognised in consequence that the establishment of a federal republic would be a "step forward." Of course, there is not a trace here of an attempt to abandon the criticism of the defects of a federal republic or the most determined propaganda and struggle for a united and centralised democratic republic.

But Engels did not interpret democratic centralism in the bureaucratic sense in which this term is used by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologists, including the anarchists. His interpretation did not in the least preclude such wide local self-government as would combine the voluntary defence of the unity of the state by the "communes" and districts with the complete abolition of all bureaucracy and all "ordering" from above. Enlarging on the programme views of Marxism on the state, Engels wrote:

"So, then, a unitary republic—but not in the sense of the present French Republic, which is nothing but the Empire established in 1798 minus the Emperor. From 1792 to 1798 each Department of France, each commune [*Gemeinde*], enjoyed complete self-government on the American model, and this is what we too must have.* How self-government is to be organised and how we can manage without a bureaucracy has been shown by America and the first French Republic, and is being shown even today by Australia, Canada and the other English colonies. And a provincial and local self-government of

this type is far freer than Swiss federalism under which, it is true, the canton is very independent in relation to the *Bund** (i.e., the federated state as a whole), but is also independent in relation to the district and the commune. The cantonal governments appoint the district governors [*Bezirksstatthalter*] and prefects—a feature which is unknown in English-speaking countries and which we shall have to abolish here in the future along with the Prussian *Landräte* and *Regierungsräte*” (commissaries, district police chiefs, governors, and in general all officials appointed from above).¹

Accordingly, Engels proposes the following wording for the clause in the programme on self-government:

“Complete self-government for the provinces” (districts and communities) “through officials elected by universal suffrage. The abolition of all local and provincial authorities appointed by the state.”

I have already had occasion to point out—in *Pravda* (No. 68, June 10, 1917), which was suppressed by the government of Kerensky and other “Socialist” Ministers**—how in this connection (of course, not only in this connection by any means) our alleged Socialist representatives of alleged-revolutionary alleged-democracy have departed *from democracy* in the most scandalous manner. Naturally, people who have bound themselves by a “coalition” with the imperialist bourgeoisie have remained deaf to this criticism.

It is extremely important to note that Engels, armed with facts, disproves by a precise example the prejudice that is very widespread, particularly among petty-bourgeois democrats, that a federal republic necessarily means a greater amount of freedom than a centralised republic. This is not true. It is disproved by the facts cited by Engels regarding the centralised French Republic of 1792-98 and the federal Swiss Republic. The really democratic centralised republic gave *more* freedom than the federal republic. In other words, the *greatest* amount of local, provincial and other freedom known in history was granted by a *centralised* and not by a federal republic.

Insufficient attention has been and is being paid to this fact in our Party propaganda and agitation, as, indeed, to the whole question of federal and centralised republics and local self-government.

¹ *Ibid.*—Ed.

5. THE 1891 INTRODUCTION TO MARX'S “CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE”

In his Introduction to the third edition of *The Civil War in France* (this Introduction is dated March 18, 1891, and was originally published in *Neue Zeit*), Engels, in addition to many other interesting incidental remarks on questions connected with the attitude to be taken towards the state, gives a remarkably striking résumé of the lessons of the Commune. This résumé, which was rendered more profound by the entire experience of the twenty years that separated the author from the Commune, and which was directed particularly against the “superstitious belief in the state” so widespread in Germany, can justly be called the *last word* of Marxism on the question dealt with here.

In France, Engels observes, the workers were armed after every revolution;

“... therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois at the helm of the state. Hence after every revolution won by the workers, a new struggle, ending with the defeat of the workers.”¹

This résumé of the experience of bourgeois revolutions is as concise as it is expressive. The essence of the matter—also, by the way, of the question of the state (*has the oppressed class arms?*)—is here remarkably well defined. It is precisely this essential thing which is most often ignored by professors, who are influenced by bourgeois ideology, as well as by petty-bourgeois democrats. In the Russian Revolution of 1917, the honour (Cavaignac honour) of blabbing this secret of bourgeois revolutions fell to the Menshevik, “also-Marxist,” Tseretelli. In his “historic” speech of June 22,* Tseretelli blurted out the decision of the bourgeoisie to disarm the Petrograd workers—referring, of course, to this decision as his own, and as a vital necessity for the “state”!

Tseretelli’s historic speech of June 22 will, of course, serve every historian of the Revolution of 1917 as one of the most striking illustrations of how the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik *bloc*, led by Mr. Tseretelli, deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie *against* the revolutionary proletariat.

Another incidental remark of Engels’, also connected with the

¹ Introduction to *The Civil War in France*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

question of the state, deals with religion. It is well known that German Social-Democracy, in proportion as it decayed and became more and more opportunist, slipped more and more frequently into the philistine misinterpretation of the celebrated formula: "Religion is a . . . private matter." That is, this formula was twisted to mean that the question of religion was a private matter *even for the party* of the revolutionary proletariat! It was against this utter betrayal of the revolutionary programme of the proletariat that Engels protested. In 1891 he saw only the *very feeble* beginnings of opportunism in his Party, and, therefore, he expressed himself on the subject very cautiously:

" . . . As almost without exception workers, or recognised representatives of the workers, sat in the Commune, its decisions bore a decidedly proletarian character. Either they decreed reforms which the republican bourgeoisie had failed to pass solely out of cowardice, but which provided a necessary basis for the free activity of the working class—such as the realisation of the principle that *in relation to the state* religion is a purely private matter—or they promulgated decrees which were in the direct interests of the working class and to some extent cut deeply into the old order of society."¹

Engels deliberately emphasised the words "in relation to the state," as a straight thrust at the heart of German opportunism, which had declared religion to be a private matter *in relation to the Party*, thus degrading the party of the revolutionary proletariat to the level of the most vulgar "free-thinking" philistinism, which is prepared to allow a non-denominational status, but which renounces the *Party* struggle against the religious opium which stupefies the people.

The future historian of German Social-Democracy, in investigating the basic causes of its shameful collapse in 1914,* will find no lack of interesting material on this question, from the evasive declarations in the articles of the ideological leader of the Party, Kautsky, which opened wide the door to opportunism, to the attitude of the Party towards the *Los-von-Kirche Bewegung* (the "leave the church" movement) in 1913.

But let us see how, twenty years after the Commune, Engels summed up its lessons for the fighting proletariat.

Here are the lessons to which Engels attached prime importance:

¹ *Ibid.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

" . . . It was precisely the oppressing power of the former centralised government, army, political police and bureaucracy, which Napoleon had created in 1798 and since then had been taken over by every new government as a welcome instrument and used against its opponents, it was precisely this power which was to fall everywhere, just as it had already fallen in Paris.

"From the outset the Commune was compelled to recognise that the working class, once come to power, could not manage with the old state machine; that in order not to lose again its only just conquered supremacy, this working class must, on the one hand, do away with all the old repressive machinery previously used against it itself, and, on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all, without exception, subject to recall at any moment. . . ."¹

Engels emphasises again and again that the state remains a state, *i.e.*, it retains its fundamental and characteristic feature of transforming the officials, the "servants of society," its organs, into the *masters* of society not only under a monarchy, but *also in a democratic republic.*

"Against this transformation of the state and the organs of the state from servants of society into masters of society—an inevitable transformation in all previous states—the Commune made use of two infallible expedients. In the first place it filled all posts—administrative, judicial and educational—by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, with the right of the same electors to recall their delegate at any time. And, in the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs.² In this way, an effective barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the binding mandates³ to delegates to representative bodies which were also added in profusion. . . ."¹

Engels here approaches the interesting boundary line at which consistent democracy is *transformed* into socialism and at which it *demand*s socialism. For, in order to abolish the state, the functions of the Civil Service must be converted into the simple operations of control and accounting that can be performed by the vast majority of the population, and, ultimately, by every single individual. And in order to abolish careerism it must be made *im-*

¹ *Ibid.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

² Nominally about 2,400 rubles per annum; according to the present rate of exchange about 6,000 rubles. Those Bolsheviks who propose that a salary of 9,000 rubles be paid to members of municipal councils, for instance, instead of proposing a maximum salary of 6,000 rubles for the whole country—quite an adequate sum—are committing an unpardonable error.

³ *I.e.*, binding instructions.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

possible for "honourable" though not lucrative posts in the public service to be used as a springboard to highly lucrative posts in banks or joint-stock companies, as *constantly* happens in all the freest capitalist countries.

But Engels did not make the mistake some Marxists make in dealing, for example, with the right of nations to self-determination, *i.e.*, argue that this is impossible under capitalism and will be unnecessary under socialism.* Such a seemingly clever but really incorrect statement might be made in regard to *any* democratic institution, including moderate salaries for officials; because fully consistent democracy is impossible under capitalism, and under socialism all democracy *withers away*.

It is a sophism that is similar to the old humorous problem: will a man become bald if he loses one more hair?

To develop democracy to its *logical conclusion*, to find the *forms* for this development, to test them by practice, and so forth—all this is one of the constituent tasks of the struggle for the social revolution. Taken separately, no sort of democracy will bring socialism. But in actual life democracy will never be "taken separately"; it will be "taken together" with other things, it will exert its influence on economics, will stimulate *its* reformation; and in its turn it will be influenced by economic development, and so on. Such are the dialectics of living history.

Engels continues:

"This blowing up [*Sprengrung*] of the former state power and its replacement by a new and really democratic state is described in detail in the third section of *The Civil War*. But it was necessary to dwell briefly here once more on some of its features, because in Germany particularly the superstitious belief in the state has been carried over from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers. According to the philosophical notion, the state is the 'realisation of the idea,' or the Kingdom of God on earth, translated into philosophical terms, the sphere in which eternal truth and justice is or should be realised. And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the state and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily as people from their childhood are accustomed to imagine that the affairs and interests common to the whole of society could not be looked after otherwise than they have been looked after in the past, that is, through the state and its well-paid officials. And people think they have taken quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they have rid themselves of belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class

by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the proletariat, just like the Commune, cannot avoid having to lop off at the earliest possible moment, until such time as a new generation reared in new and free social conditions will be able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap-heap."¹

Engels warned the Germans not to forget the fundamentals of socialism on the question of the state in general in connection with the substitution of a republic for the monarchy. His warnings now read like a lecture to Messrs. Tseretelli and Chernov, who in their coalition practice revealed a superstitious belief in and a superstitious reverence for the state!

Two more points. First: the fact that Engels said that in a democratic republic, "no less" than in a monarchy, the state remains a "machine for the oppression of one class by another" does not signify that the *form* of oppression is a matter of indifference to the proletariat, as some anarchists "teach." A wider, freer and more open *form* of the class struggle and of class oppression greatly assists the proletariat in its struggle for the abolition of all classes.

Second: why will only a new generation be able to throw all the useless lumber of the state on the scrap-heap? This question is bound up with the question of overcoming democracy, with which we shall deal now.

6. ENGELS ON OVERCOMING DEMOCRACY

Engels had occasion to speak on this subject in connection with the question of the term "Social-Democrat" being *scientifically* wrong.

In a preface to an edition of his articles of the 'seventies on various subjects, mainly on "international" questions (*Internationales aus dem Volksstaat*), dated January 3, 1894, *i.e.*, written a year and a half before his death, Engels wrote that in all his articles he used the word "Communist," *not* "Social-Democrat," because at that time it was the Proudhonists in France and the Lassalleans in Germany who called themselves Social-Democrats,

¹ *Ibid.*—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

"For Marx and me it was therefore quite impossible to choose such an elastic term to characterise our special point of view. Today things are different, and the word ["Social-Democrat"] may perhaps pass muster [*mag passieren*], however unsuitable [*unpassend*] it still is for a party whose economic programme is not merely socialist in general, but directly Communist, and whose ultimate political aim is to overcome the whole state and therefore democracy as well. The names of *genuine* [Engels' italics] political parties, however, are never wholly appropriate; the party develops while the name persists."

The dialectician Engels remains true to dialectics to the end of his days. Marx and I, he says, had a splendid, scientifically exact name for the party, but there was no real party, *i.e.*, no proletarian mass party. Now, at the end of the nineteenth century, there is a real party, but its name is scientifically inexact. Never mind, it will "pass muster," if only the party *develops*, if only the scientific inexactness of its name is not hidden from it and does not hinder its development in the right direction!

Perhaps some humourist will begin consoling us Bolsheviks in the manner of Engels: we have a genuine party, it is developing splendidly; even such a meaningless and ugly term as "Bolshevik" will "pass muster," although it expresses nothing but the purely accidental fact that at the Brussels-London Congress of 1903 we were in the majority.¹ . . . Perhaps, now that the persecution of our Party by republican and "revolutionary" petty-bourgeois democracy in July and August has made the name "Bolshevik" such a universally respected one; that, in addition, this persecution signals the great historical progress our Party has made in its *actual* development, even I would hesitate to insist on the suggestion I made in April to change the name of our Party.* Perhaps I would propose a "compromise" to our comrades, *viz.*, to call ourselves the Communist Party, but to retain the word "Bolsheviks" in brackets. . . .

But the question of the name of the Party is incomparably less important than the question of the attitude of the revolutionary proletariat to the state.

In the arguments usually advanced about the state, the mistake is constantly made against which Engels uttered his warning and

¹ The word for "majority" in Russian is "*bolshinstvo*," hence the word "Bolshevik." The word for "minority" in Russian is "*menshinstvo*," hence the word "Menshevik."—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

which we have in passing indicated above, namely, it is constantly forgotten that the abolition of the state means also the abolition of democracy; that the withering away of the state means the withering away of democracy.

At first sight this assertion seems exceedingly strange and incomprehensible; indeed, someone may even begin to fear that we are expecting the advent of an order of society in which the principle of the subordination of the minority to the majority will not be respected—for is not democracy the recognition of this principle?

No, democracy is *not* identical with the subordination of the minority to the majority. Democracy is a *state* which recognises the subordination of the minority to the majority, *i.e.*, an organisation for the systematic use of *violence* by one class against the other, by one section of the population against another.

We set ourselves the ultimate aim of abolishing the state, *i.e.*, all organised and systematic violence, all use of violence against man in general. We do not expect the advent of an order of society in which the principle of the subordination of the minority to the majority will not be observed. But in striving for socialism we are convinced that it will develop into communism and, hence, that the need for violence against people in general, the need for the *subjection* of one man to another, and of one section of the population to another, will vanish, since people will *become accustomed* to observing the elementary conditions of social life *without force* and *without subordination*.

In order to emphasise this element of habit, Engels speaks of a *new generation*, "reared in new and free social conditions," which "will be able to throw the entire lumber of the state"—of every kind of state, including even the democratic-republican state—"on the scrap-heap."

In order to explain this it is necessary to examine the question of the economic basis of the withering away of the state.

CHAPTER V

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

MARX explains this question most thoroughly in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (letter to Bracke, May 5, 1875, printed only in 1891, in *Neue Zeit*, Vol. IX, 1, and in a special Russian edition). The polemical part of this remarkable work, consisting of a criticism of Lassalleanism, has, so to speak, overshadowed its positive part, namely, the analysis of the connection between the development of communism and the withering away of the state.

I. MARX'S PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTION

From a superficial comparison of Marx's letter to Bracke (May 5, 1875) with Engels' letter to Bebel (March 28, 1875), which we examined above, it might appear that Marx was much more "pro-state" than Engels, and that the difference of opinion between the two writers on the question of the state was very considerable.

Engels suggested to Bebel that all the chatter about the state be dropped; that the word "state" be eliminated from the programme and the word "community" substituted for it. Engels even declared that the Commune was really no longer a state in the proper sense of the word, while Marx spoke of the "future state in communist society," *i.e.*, apparently he recognised the need for a state even under communism.

But such a view would be fundamentally wrong. A closer examination shows that Marx's and Engels' views on the state and its withering away were completely identical, and that Marx's expression quoted above refers merely to this *withering away* of the state.

Clearly, there can be no question of defining the exact moment

of the *future* withering away—the more so since it must obviously be a rather lengthy process. The apparent difference between Marx and Engels is due to the different subjects they dealt with, the different aims they were pursuing. Engels set out to show Bebel plainly, sharply and in broad outline the absurdity of the prevailing prejudices concerning the state, shared to no small degree by Lassalle. Marx, on the other hand, only touched upon *this* question in passing, being interested mainly in another subject, *viz.*, the *development* of communist society.

The whole theory of Marx is an application of the theory of development—in its most consistent, complete, thought-out and replete form—to modern capitalism. It was natural for Marx to raise the question of applying this theory both to the *forthcoming* collapse of capitalism and to the *future* development of *future* communism.

On the basis of what *data* can the question of the future development of future communism be raised?

On the basis of the fact that *it has its origin* in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism *has given birth*. There is no trace of an attempt on Marx's part to conjure up a utopia, to make idle guesses about what cannot be known. Marx treats the question of communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development of, say, a new biological species, if he knew that such and such was its origin, and such and such the direction in which it was changing.

Marx, first of all, brushes aside the confusion the Gotha Programme brings into the question of the relation between state and society. He writes:

"Present-day society' is capitalist society, which exists in all civilised countries, more or less free from mediæval admixture, more or less modified by the special historical development of each country and more or less developed. On the other hand the 'present-day state' changes with a country's frontier. It is different in the Prusso-German Empire from what it is in Switzerland, it is different in England from what it is in the United States. 'The present-day state' is therefore a fiction.

"Nevertheless the different states of the different civilised countries, in spite of their varied diversity of form, all have this in common that they are based on modern bourgeois society, only one more or less capitalistically de-

veloped. They have therefore also certain essential features in common. In this sense it is possible to speak of the 'present-day state,' in contrast to the future, in which its present root, bourgeois society, will have died away.

"The question then arises: what transformation will the state undergo in communist society? In other words, what social functions will remain in existence there that are analogous to the present functions of the state? This question can only be answered scientifically and one does not get a flea-hop nearer to the problem by a thousand-fold combination of the word people with the word state."¹

Having thus ridiculed all talk about a "people's state," Marx formulates the question and warns us, as it were, that to arrive at a scientific answer one must rely only on firmly established scientific data.

The first fact that has been established with complete exactitude by the whole theory of development, by science as a whole—a fact which the utopians forgot, and which is forgotten by present-day opportunists who are afraid of the socialist revolution—is that, historically, there must undoubtedly be a special stage or epoch of *transition* from capitalism to communism.

2. THE TRANSITION FROM CAPITALISM TO COMMUNISM

Marx continues:

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."¹

Marx bases this conclusion on an analysis of the role played by the proletariat in modern capitalist society, on the data concerning the development of this society, and on the irreconcilability of the antagonistic interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Earlier the question was put in this way: in order to achieve its emancipation, the proletariat must overthrow the bourgeoisie, conquer political power and establish its own revolutionary dictatorship.

Now the question is put somewhat differently: the transition

¹ *Critique of the Gotha Programme.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

from capitalist society—which is developing towards communism—to a communist society is impossible without a "political transition period," and the state in this period can only be the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

What, then, is the relation of this dictatorship to democracy?

We have seen that *The Communist Manifesto* simply places the two ideas side by side: "to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class" and "to win the battle of democracy." On the basis of all that has been said above, it is possible to determine more precisely how democracy changes in the transition from capitalism to communism.

In capitalist society, under the conditions most favourable to its development, we have more or less complete democracy in the democratic republic. But this democracy is always restricted by the narrow framework of capitalist exploitation, and consequently always remains, in reality, a democracy for the minority, only for the possessing classes, only for the rich. Freedom in capitalist society always remains about the same as it was in the ancient Greek republics: freedom for the slave-owners. Owing to the conditions of capitalist exploitation the modern wage-slaves are also so crushed by want and poverty that "they cannot be bothered with democracy," "they cannot be bothered with politics"; in the ordinary peaceful course of events the majority of the population is debarred from participating in social and political life.

The correctness of this statement is perhaps most clearly proved by Germany, precisely because in that country constitutional legality lasted and remained stable for a remarkably long time—for nearly half a century (1871-1914)—and because during this period Social-Democracy was able to achieve far more in Germany than in other countries in the way of "utilising legality," and was able to organise a larger proportion of the working class into a political party than anywhere else in the world.

What is this largest proportion of politically conscious and active wage-slaves that has so far been observed in capitalist society? One million members of the Social-Democratic Party—

out of fifteen million wage-workers! Three million organised in trade unions—out of fifteen million! ¹

Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich—that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the mechanism of capitalist democracy, everywhere, in the “petty”—so-called petty—details of the suffrage (residential qualification, exclusion of women, etc.), and in the technique of the representative institutions, in the actual obstacles to the right of assembly (public buildings are not for “beggars”!), in the purely capitalist organisation of the daily press, etc., etc.—on all sides we see restriction after restriction upon democracy. These restrictions, exceptions, exclusions, obstacles for the poor, seem slight, especially in the eyes of one who has never known want himself and has never been in close contact with the oppressed classes in their mass life (and nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of the bourgeois publicists and politicians are of this category); but in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics, from taking an active part in democracy.

Marx grasped this *essence* of capitalist democracy splendidly, when, in analysing the experience of the Commune, he said that the oppressed were allowed, once every few years, to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class should misrepresent them in parliament!

But from this capitalist democracy—inevitably narrow, tacitly repelling the poor, and therefore hypocritical and false to the core—development does not proceed simply, smoothly and directly to “greater and greater democracy,” as the liberal professors and petty-bourgeois opportunists would have us believe. No, development—towards communism—proceeds through the dictatorship of the proletariat; it cannot do otherwise, for the *resistance* of the capitalist exploiters cannot be *broken* by anyone else or in any other way.

But the dictatorship of the proletariat, *i.e.*, the organisation of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose

¹ According to the figures for 1917.—*Ed.*

of crushing the oppressors, cannot result merely in an expansion of democracy. *Simultaneously* with an immense expansion of democracy which *for the first time* becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich, the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must crush them in order to free humanity from wage-slavery; their resistance must be broken by force; it is clear that where there is suppression there is also violence, there is no freedom, no democracy.

Engels expressed this splendidly in his letter to Bebel when he said, as the reader will remember, that

“so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist.” ¹

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, *i.e.*, exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the change democracy undergoes during the *transition* from capitalism to communism.

Only in communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely broken, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (*i.e.*, when there is no difference between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), *only then* does “the state . . . cease to exist,” and it “*becomes possible to speak of freedom.*” Only then will really complete democracy, democracy without any exceptions, be possible and be realised. And only then will democracy itself begin to *wither away* owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually *become accustomed* to observing the elementary rules of social life that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims; they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without compulsion, without subordination, without the *special apparatus* for compulsion which is called the state.

¹ See p. 60.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

The expression "the state *withers away*" is very well chosen, for it indicates both the gradual and the spontaneous nature of the process. Only habit can, and undoubtedly will, have such an effect; for we see around us millions of times how readily people become accustomed to observing the necessary rules of social life if there is no exploitation, if there is nothing that causes indignation, that calls forth protest and revolt and has to be *suppressed*.

Thus, in capitalist society we have a democracy that is curtailed, wretched, false; a democracy only for the rich, for the minority. The dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of transition to communism, will, for the first time, create democracy for the people, for the majority, in addition to the necessary suppression of the minority—the exploiters. Communism alone is capable of giving really complete democracy, and the more complete it is the more quickly will it become unnecessary and wither away of itself.

In other words: under capitalism we have a state in the proper sense of the word, that is, a special machine for the suppression of one class by another, and of the majority by the minority at that. Naturally, the successful discharge of such a task as the systematic suppression of the exploited majority by the exploiting minority calls for the greatest ferocity and savagery in the work of suppression, it calls for seas of blood through which mankind has to wade in slavery, serfdom and wage-labour.

Furthermore, during the *transition* from capitalism to communism, suppression is *still* necessary; but it is the suppression of the exploiting minority by the exploited majority. A special apparatus, a special machine for suppression, the "state," is *still* necessary, but this is now a transitory state; it is no longer a state in the proper sense; for the suppression of the minority of exploiters by the majority of the wage-slaves of *yesterday* is comparatively so easy, simple and natural a task that it will entail far less bloodshed than the suppression of the risings of slaves, serfs or wage-labourers, and it will cost mankind far less. This is compatible with the diffusion of democracy among such an overwhelming majority of the population that the need for a *special machine* of suppression will begin to disappear. The exploiters are,

naturally, unable to suppress the people without a very complex machine for performing this task; but *the people* can suppress the exploiters with a very simple "machine," almost without a "machine," without a special apparatus, by the simple *organisation of the armed masses* (such as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, we may remark, running ahead a little).

Finally, only communism makes the state absolutely unnecessary, for there is *no one* to be suppressed—"no one" in the sense of a *class*, in the sense of a systematic struggle against a definite section of the population. We are not utopians, and we do not in the least deny the possibility and inevitability of excesses on the part of *individual persons*, or the need to suppress *such* excesses. But, in the first place, no special machine, no special apparatus of repression is needed for this: this will be done by the armed people itself, as simply and as readily as any crowd of civilised people, even in modern society, parts two people who are fighting, or interferes to prevent a woman from being assaulted. And, secondly, we know that the fundamental social cause of excesses, which consist in violating the rules of social life, is the exploitation of the masses, their want and their poverty. With the removal of this chief cause, excesses will inevitably begin to "*wither away*." We do not know how quickly and in what order, but we know that they will wither away. With their withering away, the state will also *wither away*.

Without dropping into utopias, Marx defined more fully what can be defined *now* regarding this future, namely the difference between the lower and higher phases (degrees, stages) of communist society.

3. THE FIRST PHASE OF COMMUNIST SOCIETY

In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx goes into some detail to disprove Lassalle's idea that under socialism the worker will receive the "undiminished" or "whole proceeds of his labour." Marx shows that from the whole of the social labour of society it is necessary to deduct a reserve fund, a fund for the expansion of production, for the replacement of "worn-out" machinery, and so on; then, also, from the means of consumption must be deducted a

fund for the expenses of management, for schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, and so on.

Instead of Lassalle's hazy, obscure, general phrase—"the whole proceeds of his labour to the worker"—Marx makes a sober estimate of exactly how socialist society will have to manage its affairs. Marx proceeds to make a *concrete* analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there is no capitalism, and says:

"What we have to deal with here [in analysing the programme of the Party] is a communist society not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but on the contrary as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect economically, morally and intellectually still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges."¹

And it is this communist society—a society which has just come into the world out of the womb of capitalism and which, in every respect, bears the birth marks of the old society—that Marx terms the "first," or lower, phase of communist society.

The means of production are no longer the private property of individuals. The means of production belong to the whole of society. Every member of society, performing a certain part of socially-necessary labour, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done such and such an amount of work. According to this certificate, he receives from the public warehouses, where articles of consumption are stored, a corresponding quantity of products. Deducting that proportion of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it.

"Equal right" seems to reign supreme.

But when Lassalle, having such a social order in view (generally called socialism, but termed by Marx the first phase of communism), speaks of this as "equitable distribution," and says that this is "the equal right" of "all members of society" to "equal proceeds of labour," he is mistaken, and Marx exposes his error.

"Equal right," says Marx, we indeed have here; but it is *still* a "bourgeois right," which, like every right, *presupposes unequal-*

¹ *Critique of the Gotha Programme.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

ity. Every right is an application of the *same* measure to *different* people who, in fact, are not the same and are not equal to one another; that is why "equal right" is really a violation of equality and an injustice. As a matter of fact, every man having performed as much social labour as another receives an equal share of the social product (less the above-mentioned deductions).

But people are not alike: one is strong, another is weak; one is married, another is not; one has more children, another has less, and so on. And the conclusion Marx draws is:

"...with an equal output and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another and so on. To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal."¹

Hence, the first phase of communism cannot produce justice and equality; differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still exist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize the *means of production*, the factories, machines, land, etc., as private property. In smashing Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, confused phrases about "equality" and "justice" *in general*, Marx shows the *course of development* of communist society, which, at first, is compelled to abolish *only* the "injustice" of the means of production having been seized by private individuals and which *cannot* at once abolish the other injustice of the distribution of articles of consumption "according to the amount of work performed" (and not according to needs).

The vulgar economists, including the bourgeois professors and also "our" Tugan-Baranovsky, constantly reproach the Socialists with forgetting the inequality of people and with "dreaming" of abolishing this inequality. Such a reproach, as we see, only proves the extreme ignorance of Messieurs the bourgeois ideologists.

Marx not only scrupulously takes into account the inevitable inequality of men; he also takes into account the fact that the mere conversion of the means of production into the common property of the whole of society (generally called "socialism") *does not remove* the defects of distribution and the inequality of

¹ *Ibid.—Ed. Eng. ed.*

"bourgeois right" which *continue to prevail* as long as the products are divided "according to the amount of work performed." Continuing, Marx says:

"But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birthpangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural development thereby determined."¹

And so, in the first phase of communist society (generally called socialism) "bourgeois right" is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic transformation so far attained, *i.e.*, only in respect of the means of production. "Bourgeois right" recognises them as the private property of separate individuals. Socialism converts them into *common* property. *To that extent*, and to that extent alone, "bourgeois right" disappears.

However, it continues to exist so far as its other part is concerned; it remains in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) in the distribution of products and allotment of labour among the members of society. The socialist principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat," is *already* realised; the other socialist principle: "An equal amount of labour for an equal quantity of products," is also *already* realised. But this is not yet communism, and it does not abolish "bourgeois right," which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an unequal (actually unequal) amount of work, an equal quantity of products.

This is a "defect," says Marx, but it is unavoidable in the first phase of communism; for if we are not to fall into utopianism, we cannot imagine that, having overthrown capitalism, people will at once learn to work for society *without any standard of right*; indeed, the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately* create the economic prerequisites for *such* a change.

And there is as yet no other standard than that of "bourgeois right." To this extent, therefore, there is still need for a state, which, while safeguarding the public ownership of the means of production, would safeguard the equality of labour and equality in the distribution of products.

¹ *Ibid.*—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

The state withers away in so far as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and consequently, no *class* can be *suppressed*.

But the state has not yet completely withered away, since there still remains the protection of "bourgeois right" which sanctifies actual inequality. For the complete withering away of the state, complete communism is necessary.

4. THE HIGHER PHASE OF COMMUNIST SOCIETY

Marx continues:

"In a higher phase of communist society after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not merely a means to live but has become itself the primary necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"¹

Only now can we appreciate to the full the correctness of Engels' remarks in which he mercilessly ridiculed the absurdity of combining the words "freedom" and "state." While the state exists there is no freedom. When freedom exists, there will be no state.

The economic basis for the complete withering away of the state is the high stage of development of communism in which the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears, that is to say, when one of the principal sources of modern *social* inequality—a source, moreover, which cannot be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists—disappears.

This expropriation will *facilitate* the enormous development of the productive forces. And seeing how capitalism is already *retarding* this development to an incredible degree, seeing how much progress could be achieved even on the basis of the present level of modern technique, we have a right to say with the fullest

¹ *Ibid.*—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

confidence that the expropriation of the capitalists will inevitably result in the enormous development of the productive forces of human society. But how rapidly this development will proceed, how soon it will reach the point of breaking away from the division of labour, of removing the antithesis between mental and physical labour, of transforming work into the "primary necessity of life"—we do not and *cannot* know.

That is why we have a right to speak only of the inevitable withering away of the state; we must emphasise the protracted nature of this process and its dependence upon the rapidity of development of the *higher phase* of communism; and we leave the question of length of time, or the concrete forms of the withering away, quite open, because *no material is available* to enable us to answer these questions.

The state will be able to wither away completely when society can apply the rule: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," *i.e.*, when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social life and when their labour is so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their ability*. "The narrow horizon of bourgeois right," which compels one to calculate with the shrewdness of a Shylock whether he has not worked half an hour more than another, whether he is not getting less pay than another—this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need for society to make an exact calculation of the quantity of products to be distributed to each of its members; each will take freely "according to his needs."

From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare such a social order to be "a pure utopia," and to sneer at the Socialists for promising everyone the right to receive from society, without any control of the labour of the individual citizen, any quantity of truffles, automobiles, pianos, etc. Even now, most bourgeois "savants" make shift with such sneers, thereby displaying at once their ignorance and their selfish defence of capitalism.

Ignorance—for it has never entered the head of any Socialist to "promise" that the higher phase of communism will arrive; and the great Socialists, in *foreseeing* its arrival, presupposed both

a productivity of labour unlike the present and a person *unlike the present* man in the street who, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky's story,¹ is capable of damaging the stores of social wealth "just for fun," and of demanding the impossible.

Until the "higher" phase of communism arrives, the Socialists demand the *strictest* control, by society *and by the state*, of the amount of labour and the amount of consumption; but this control must *start* with the expropriation of the capitalists, with the establishment of workers' control over the capitalists, and must be carried out, not by a state of bureaucrats, but by a state of *armed workers*.

The selfish defence of capitalism by the bourgeois ideologists (and their hangers-on, like Messrs. Tseretelli, Chernov and Co.) lies in their *substituting* controversies and discussions about the distant future for the essential imperative questions of *present-day* policy, *viz.*, the expropriation of the capitalists, the conversion of *all* citizens into workers and employees of *one* huge "syndicate"—the whole state—and the complete subordination of the whole of the work of this syndicate to the really democratic state of the *Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies*.

In reality, when a learned professor, and following him some philistine, and following the latter Messrs. Tseretelli and Chernov, talk of the unreasonable utopias, of the demagogic promises of the Bolsheviks, of the impossibility of "introducing" socialism, it is the higher stage or phase of communism which they have in mind, and which no one has ever promised, or has even thought of "introducing," because, generally speaking, it cannot be "introduced."

And this brings us to the question of the scientific difference between socialism and communism which Engels touched on in his above-quoted argument about the incorrectness of the name "Social-Democrat." The political difference between the first, or lower, and the higher phase of communism will in time, no doubt, be tremendous; but it would be ridiculous to take cognisance of this

¹ Pomyalovsky's *Seminary Sketches*, depicting the life of the students in an ecclesiastical seminary, of which drunkenness, rioting and filthy pranks were typical.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

difference now, under capitalism; only some isolated anarchist, perhaps, could invest it with primary importance (if there are still any people among the anarchists who have learned nothing from the "Plekhanovist" conversion of the Kropotkins, the Graveses, the Cornelisens and other "leading lights" of anarchism into social-chauvinists or "anarcho-trenchists," as Ge, one of the few anarchists who has still preserved a sense of honour and a conscience, has expressed it).*

But the scientific difference between socialism and communism is clear. What is generally called socialism was termed by Marx the "first" or lower phase of communist society. In so far as the means of production become *common* property, the word "communism" is also applicable here, providing we do not forget that it is *not* complete communism. The great significance of Marx's explanations lies in that here, too, he consistently applies materialist dialectics, the theory of development, and regards communism as something which develops *out* of capitalism. Instead of scholastically invented, "concocted" definitions and fruitless disputes about words (what is socialism? what is communism?), Marx gives an analysis of what may be called stages in the economic ripeness of communism.

In its first phase, or first stage, communism *cannot* as yet be economically ripe and entirely free from all the traditions and all traces of capitalism. Hence the interesting phenomenon that communism in its first phase retains "the narrow horizon of *bourgeois* right." Of course, bourgeois right in regard to distribution of articles of *consumption* inevitably presupposes the existence of the *bourgeois state*, for right is nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of the standards of right.

Consequently, for a certain time not only bourgeois right, but even the bourgeois state remains under communism, without the bourgeoisie!

This may sound like a paradox or simply a dialectical puzzle which Marxism is often accused of inventing by people who would not take the slightest trouble to study its extraordinarily profound content.

As a matter of fact, however, the remnants of the old surviving

in the new confront us in life at every step, in nature as well as in society. Marx did not smuggle a scrap of "bourgeois" right into communism of his own accord; he indicated what is economically and politically inevitable in the society which is emerging *from the womb* of capitalism.

Democracy is of great importance for the working class in its struggle for freedom against the capitalists. But democracy is by no means a boundary that must not be overstepped; it is only one of the stages in the process of development from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to communism.

Democracy means equality. The great significance of the proletariat's struggle for equality and the significance of equality as a slogan will be clear if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of *classes*. But democracy means only *formal* equality. As soon as equality is obtained for all members of society *in relation to* the ownership of the means of production, that is, equality of labour and equality of wages, humanity will inevitably be confronted with the question of going beyond formal equality to real equality, *i.e.*, to applying the rule, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." By what stages, by what practical measures humanity will proceed to this higher aim—we do not and cannot know. But it is important to realise how infinitely mendacious is the ordinary bourgeois conception of socialism as something lifeless, petrified, fixed once for all, whereas in reality *only* under socialism will a rapid, genuine, really mass movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, commence in all spheres of social and individual life.

Democracy is a form of state, one of its varieties. Consequently, like every state, it, on the one hand, represents the organised, systematic application of force against persons; but, on the other hand, it signifies the formal recognition of the equality of all citizens, the equal right of all to determine the structure and administration of the state. This, in turn, is connected with the fact that, at a certain stage in the development of democracy, it first rallies the proletariat as a revolutionary class against capitalism, and gives it the opportunity to crush, to smash to atoms, to wipe off

the face of the earth the bourgeois, even the republican bourgeois, state machine, the standing army, the police and bureaucracy; to substitute for all this a *more* democratic, but still a state machine in the shape of the armed masses of workers who become transformed into a universal people's militia.

Here "quantity is transformed into quality": *such* a degree of democracy is connected with overstepping the boundaries of bourgeois society, with the beginning of its socialist reconstruction. If, indeed, *all* take part in the administration of the state, capitalism cannot retain its hold. The development of capitalism, in turn, itself creates the *prerequisites* that *enable* indeed "all" to take part in the administration of the state. Some of these prerequisites are: universal literacy, already achieved in most of the advanced capitalist countries, then the "training and disciplining" of millions of workers by the huge, complex and socialised apparatus of the post-office, the railways, the big factories, large-scale commerce, banking etc., etc.

With such *economic* prerequisites it is quite possible, immediately, overnight, after the overthrow of the capitalists and bureaucrats, to supersede them in the *control* of production and distribution, in the work of *keeping account* of labour and its products by the armed workers, by the whole of the armed population. (The question of control and accounting must not be confused with the question of the scientifically educated staff of engineers, agronomists and so on. These gentlemen are working today and obey the capitalists; they will work even better tomorrow and obey the armed workers.)

Accounting and control—these are the *principal* things that are necessary for the "setting up" and correct functioning of the *first phase* of communist society. *All* citizens are transformed into the salaried employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers. *All* citizens become employees and workers of a *single* national state "syndicate." All that is required is that they should work equally—do their proper share of work—and get paid equally. The accounting and control necessary for this have been so utterly *simplified* by capitalism that they have become the extraordinarily simple operations of checking, recording and issuing

receipts, which anyone who can read and write and who knows the first four rules of arithmetic can perform.¹

When the *majority* of the people themselves begin everywhere to keep such accounts and maintain such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry, who preserve their capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general, national; and there will be no way of getting away from it, there will be "nowhere to go."

The whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory with equality of work and equality of pay.

But this "factory" discipline, which the proletariat will extend to the whole of society after the defeat of the capitalists and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal. It is but a necessary *step* for the purpose of thoroughly purging society of all the hideousness and foulness of capitalist exploitation, *and for the purpose of advancing further.*

From the moment all members of society, or even only the overwhelming majority, have learned to administer the state *themselves*, have taken this business into their own hands, have "set up" control over the insignificant minority of capitalists, over the gentry, who wish to preserve their capitalist habits, and over the workers who have been completely demoralised by capitalism—from this moment the need for government begins to disappear. The more complete democracy becomes, the nearer the moment approaches when it becomes unnecessary. The more democratic the "state" of the armed workers—which is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word"—becomes, the more rapidly does *the state* begin to wither away.

For when *all* have learned the art of administration, and will indeed independently administer social production, will independently keep accounts, control the idlers, the gentlefolk, the swindlers and similar "guardians of capitalist traditions," the escape

¹ When most of the functions of the state are reduced to this accounting and control by the workers themselves, it ceases to be a "political state," the "public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into . . . simple administrative functions" (cf. above, chapter IV, §2, Engels' "Controversy With the Anarchists").

from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are practical men and not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple, fundamental rules of human intercourse will become a *habit*.

The door will then be wide open for the transition from the first phase of communist society to its higher phase, and with it to the complete withering away of the state.

CHAPTER VI

THE VULGARISATION OF MARXISM BY THE OPPORTUNISTS

THE question of the relation of the state to the social revolution, and of the social revolution to the state, like the question of revolution generally, troubled the prominent theoreticians and publicists of the Second International (1889-1914) very little. But the most characteristic thing in the process of the gradual growth of opportunism, which led to the collapse of the Second International in 1914, is the fact that even when these people actually were confronted with this question they *tried to evade it* or else failed to notice it.

In general, it may be said that *evasiveness* on the question of the relation of the proletarian revolution to the state—an evasiveness which was to the advantage of opportunism and fostered it—resulted in the *distortion* of Marxism and in its complete vulgarisation.

To characterise this lamentable process briefly, we shall take the most prominent theoreticians of Marxism: Plekhanov and Kautsky.

1. PLEKHANOV'S CONTROVERSY WITH THE ANARCHISTS

Plekhanov wrote a special pamphlet on the question of the relation of anarchism to socialism, entitled *Anarchism and Socialism*, published in German in 1894.

Plekhanov managed somehow to treat this subject while completely ignoring the most vital, topical, and politically essential point in the struggle against anarchism, *viz.*, the relation of the revolution to the state, and the question of the state in general! His pamphlet is divided into two parts: one, historical and literary, contain-

ing valuable material on the history of the ideas of Stirner, Proudhon and others; the other is philistine, and contains a clumsy dissertation on the theme that an anarchist cannot be distinguished from a bandit.

An amusing combination of subjects and most characteristic of Plekhanov's whole activity on the eve of the revolution and during the revolutionary period in Russia. Indeed, in the years 1905 to 1917, Plekhanov revealed himself as a semi-doctrinaire and semi-philistine who, in politics, followed in the wake of the bourgeoisie.

We have seen how, in their controversy with the anarchists, Marx and Engels very thoroughly explained their views on the relation of revolution to the state. In 1891, in his foreword to Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Engels wrote that "we"—that is, Engels and Marx—"were at that time, hardly two years after the Hague Congress of the [First] International, engaged in the most violent struggle against Bakunin and his anarchists."

The anarchists had tried to claim the Paris Commune as their "own," so to say, as a corroboration of their doctrine; and they betrayed utter inability to understand its lessons and Marx's analysis of these lessons. Anarchism has failed to give anything even approaching a true solution of the concrete political problems, viz., must the old state machine be *smashed*? and *what* should supersede it?

But to speak of "anarchism and socialism" and evade the question of the state, *to fail to take note* of the whole development of Marxism before and after the Commune, inevitably means slipping into opportunism. For the very thing opportunism needs is that the two questions just mentioned should *not* be raised at all. This is *already* a victory for opportunism.

2. KAUTSKY'S CONTROVERSY WITH THE OPPORTUNISTS

Undoubtedly an immeasurably larger number of Kautsky's works have been translated into Russian than into any other language. It is not without reason that German Social-Democrats sometimes say in jest that Kautsky is read more in Russia than

in Germany (we may say, parenthetically, that there is deeper historical significance in this jest than those who first made it suspected; for the Russian workers, by creating in 1905 an extraordinarily strong, an unprecedented demand for the best works of the best Social-Democratic literature in the world, and by receiving translations and editions of these works in quantities unheard of in other countries, transplanted at an accelerated tempo, so to speak, the enormous experience of a neighbouring, more advanced country to the young soil of our proletarian movement).

Besides his popularisation of Marxism, Kautsky is particularly well known in our country because of his controversy with the opportunists, headed by Bernstein. But one fact is almost unknown, one which cannot be overlooked if we are to set ourselves the task of investigating how it was that Kautsky drifted into the unbelievably disgraceful morass of confusion and defence of social-chauvinism during the great crisis of 1914-15. This fact is the following: shortly before he came out against the prominent representatives of opportunism in France (Millerand and Jaurès) and in Germany (Bernstein), Kautsky betrayed very considerable vacillation. The Marxian journal, *Zarya*,¹ which was published in Stuttgart in 1901-02, and advocated revolutionary proletarian views, was forced to *enter into* controversy with Kautsky, to characterise as "elastic" the half-hearted, evasive and conciliatory resolution on the opportunists that he proposed at the International Socialist Congress in Paris in 1900. Kautsky's letters published in Germany reveal no less hesitancy on his part before he took the field against Bernstein.

Of immeasurably greater significance, however, is the fact that, in his controversy with the opportunists, in his formulation of the question and his method of treating it, we can observe, now that we are investigating the *history* of his latest betrayal of Marxism, his systematic gravitation towards opportunism precisely on the question of the state.

Let us take Kautsky's first important work against opportunism, *Bernstein und das sozialdemokratische Programm*. Kautsky

¹ *The Dawn*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

refutes Bernstein in detail, but the characteristic thing about it is the following:

Bernstein, in his famous (the fame of Herostratus) *Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus*, accuses Marxism of "Blanquism" (an accusation since repeated thousands of times by the opportunists and liberal bourgeois in Russia against the representatives of revolutionary Marxism, the Bolsheviks). In this connection Bernstein dwells particularly on Marx's *Civil War in France*, and tries, quite unsuccessfully, as we have seen, to identify Marx's views on the lessons of the Commune with those of Proudhon. Bernstein pays particular attention to Marx's conclusion, which the latter emphasised in his preface of 1872 to *The Communist Manifesto*, viz., that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes."

This utterance "pleased" Bernstein so much that he repeated it no less than three times in his book—interpreting it in the most distorted opportunist sense.

As we have seen, Marx wanted to say that the working class must *smash, break, blow up* (*Sprengung*—the expression used by Engels) the whole state machine. But according to Bernstein it would appear as though Marx in these words warned the working class *against* excessive revolutionary zeal when seizing power.

A cruder and uglier distortion of Marx's idea cannot be imagined.

How, then, did Kautsky proceed in his detailed refutation of Bernsteinism?

He refrained from probing the depths of the distortion of Marxism by opportunism on this point. He cited the above-quoted passage from Engels' preface to Marx's *Civil War* and said that according to Marx the working class cannot *simply* lay hold of the *ready-made* state machine, but generally speaking, *it can lay hold of it*—and that was all. Not a word does Kautsky utter about the fact that Bernstein attributed to Marx the *very opposite* of Marx's real views, about the fact that the task of the proletarian revolution which Marx advanced in 1852 was to "smash" the state machine.

The result was that the most essential difference between Marx-

ism and opportunism on the tasks of the proletarian revolution was glossed over!

Writing "*in opposition*" to Bernstein, Kautsky said:

"We can safely leave the solution of the problem of the proletarian dictatorship to the future." (German edition, p. 172.)

This is not an argument *against* Bernstein, but, in essence, a *concession* to him, a surrender to opportunism; for at present the opportunists ask nothing better than to "safely leave to the future" all fundamental questions of the tasks of the proletarian revolution.

From 1852 to 1891, for forty years, Marx and Engels taught the proletariat that it must smash the state machine. In 1899, Kautsky, confronted on this point with the complete betrayal of Marxism by the opportunists, fraudulently *substituted* for the question of whether it was necessary to smash this machine the question of the concrete forms in which it was to be smashed, and then tried to escape behind the screen of the "indisputable" (and barren) philistine truth that concrete forms cannot be known in advance!!

A gulf separates Marx and Kautsky in their respective attitudes towards the task of the proletarian party in preparing the working class for revolution.

We shall take the next, more mature, work by Kautsky, which also, to a large extent, was written to refute opportunist errors. This is his pamphlet, *The Social Revolution*. In this pamphlet the author chose as his special theme the question of "the proletarian revolution" and the "proletarian regime." In it he gave much that was exceedingly valuable, but he *evaded* the question of the state. Throughout the pamphlet the author speaks of the conquest of political power—and nothing else; that is, he chooses a formula which makes a concession to the opportunists, for it *admits* the possibility of power being seized *without* destroying the state machine. The very thing which Marx, in 1872, declared to be "obsolete" in the programme of *The Communist Manifesto* is revived by Kautsky in 1902!

In the pamphlet a special section is devoted to "the forms

and weapons of the social revolution." Here Kautsky speaks of the political mass strike, of civil war, and of "instruments of force at the disposal of the modern large state, such as the bureaucracy and the army"; but not a word does he say about what the Commune had already taught the workers. Evidently, Engels' warning, particularly to the German Socialists, against "superstitious reverence" for the state was not an idle one.

Kautsky explains the matter by stating that the victorious proletariat "will carry out the democratic programme," and then he formulates the clauses of this programme. But not a word does Kautsky utter about the new things the year 1871 taught us concerning bourgeois democracy being superseded by proletarian democracy. Kautsky disposes of the question by "ponderous" sounding banalities such as:

"Still, it goes without saying that we shall not achieve power under present conditions. Revolution itself presupposes long and deep-going struggles, which will change our present political and social structure."

Undoubtedly this "goes without saying," as much as the statement that horses eat oats, or that the Volga flows into the Caspian Sea. It is a pity that an empty and bombastic phrase about "deep-going" struggles is used as a means of *evading* the question that is urgent for the revolutionary proletariat, namely, *what* expresses the "deep-going" nature of *its* revolution in relation to the state, in relation to democracy, as distinct from previous, non-proletarian revolutions.

By evading this question, Kautsky *really* makes a concession to opportunism on this very essential point, although *in words* he declares terrible war against it and emphasises the importance of the "idea of revolution" (how much is this "idea" worth if one is afraid to teach the workers the concrete lessons of revolution?), or says, "revolutionary idealism before everything," or declares that the English workers are now "little more than petty bourgeois."

Kautsky writes:

"The most varied forms of enterprises—bureaucratic [??], trade union, co-operative, private . . . can exist side by side in socialist society.

". . . There are enterprises which cannot do without a bureaucratic [??] organisation, for example the railways. Here the democratic organisation might

take the following form: the workers will elect delegates who will form a sort of parliament, which draws up the working regulations and superintends the management of the bureaucratic apparatus. The management of other enterprises may be transferred to the trade unions, and still others may become co-operative enterprises."

This reasoning is erroneous, and is a step backward compared with what Marx and Engels explained in the 'seventies, using the lessons of the Commune as an example.

As far as the alleged need for a "bureaucratic" organisation is concerned, there is no difference whatever between railways and any other enterprise in large-scale machine industry, any factory, any large store, or large-scale capitalist agricultural enterprise. The technique of all such enterprises requires the very strictest discipline, the greatest accuracy on the part of everyone in carrying out his allotted task, for otherwise the whole enterprise would fail to work, or machinery or goods would be damaged. In all such enterprises the workers will, of course, "elect delegates who will form a *sort of parliament*."

But the whole point is that this "sort of parliament" will *not* be a parliament like the bourgeois-parliamentary institutions. The whole point is that this "sort of parliament" will *not* merely "draw up the working regulations" and "superintend the management of the bureaucratic apparatus," as Kautsky, whose ideas do not go beyond the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism, imagines. In socialist society the "sort of parliament" consisting of workers' deputies, will, of course, draw up the working regulations and superintend the management of the "apparatus"—*but* this apparatus will *not* be "bureaucratic." The workers, having conquered political power, will smash the old bureaucratic apparatus, they will shatter it to its very foundations, they will not leave a single stone of it standing; and they will put in its place a new one consisting of workers and office employees, *against* whose transformation into bureaucrats measures will at once be taken, as Marx and Engels pointed out in detail: 1) not only election, but also recall at any time; 2) payment no higher than that of ordinary workers; 3) immediate introduction of control and superintendence by *all*, so that *all* shall become "bureaucrats" for

a time and so that, therefore, *no one* can become a "bureaucrat."

Kautsky has not reflected at all on Marx's words:

"The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time."

Kautsky has not in the least understood the difference between bourgeois parliamentarism, which combines democracy (*not for the people*) with bureaucracy (*against the people*), and proletarian democracy, which will take immediate steps to cut bureaucracy down to the roots, and which will be able to carry out these measures to the end, to the complete abolition of bureaucracy, to the introduction of complete democracy for the people.

Kautsky here betrays the old "superstitious reverence" for the state, and "superstitious belief" in bureaucracy.

We shall now pass on to the last and best of Kautsky's works against the opportunists, his pamphlet, *Der Weg zur Macht*¹ (which, I believe, has not been translated into Russian, for it was published at the time when the severest reaction reigned here, in 1909). This pamphlet marks a considerable step forward, inasmuch as it does not deal with the revolutionary programme in general, as in the pamphlet of 1899 against Bernstein, nor with the tasks of the social revolution irrespective of the time of its occurrence, as in the pamphlet, *The Social Revolution*, 1902; it deals with the concrete conditions which compel us to recognise that the "revolutionary era" *is approaching*.

The author definitely calls attention to the intensification of class antagonisms in general and to imperialism, which plays a particularly important part in this connection. After the "revolutionary period of 1789-1871" in Western Europe, he says, a similar period began in the East in 1905. A world war is approaching with menacing rapidity. "It [the proletariat] can no longer talk of premature revolution." "We have entered a revolutionary period." The "revolutionary era is beginning."

These declarations are perfectly clear. Kautsky's pamphlet must serve as a measure of comparison between what German Social-Democracy *promised to be* before the imperialist war and the

¹ *The Road to Power*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

depth of degradation to which it fell—Kautsky included—when the war broke out.

In the pamphlet we are examining Kautsky wrote:

"The present situation brings the danger that we" (*i.e.*, German Social-Democracy) "may easily appear to be 'more moderate' than we are."

Actually, it turned out that the German Social-Democratic Party was much more moderate and opportunist than it appeared to be!

The more characteristic is it, therefore, that although he definitely declared that the revolutionary era had already begun, Kautsky, in the pamphlet which he himself said was devoted precisely to an analysis of the "political revolution," again completely evaded the question of the state.

The sum total of all these evasions of the question, omissions and equivocations, inevitably led to complete surrender to opportunism, of which we shall soon have to speak.

German Social-Democracy, in the person of Kautsky, seems to have declared: I keep to revolutionary views (1899); I recognise, in particular, the inevitability of the social revolution of the proletariat (1902); I recognise the approach of a new revolutionary era (1909); still, now that the question of the tasks of the proletarian revolution in relation to the state is raised, I go backward compared with what Marx said as long ago as 1852 (1912).

It was precisely in this direct form that the question was put in Kautsky's controversy with Pannekoek.

3. KAUTSKY'S CONTROVERSY WITH PANNEKOEK

In opposing Kautsky, Pannekoek came out as one of the representatives of the "Left radical" movement which counted in its ranks Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Radek and others. Advocating revolutionary tactics, they were united in the conviction that Kautsky was going over to the position of the "centre," which wavered without principles between Marxism and opportunism. The correctness of this view was fully confirmed by the war, when this "centre" trend, or Kautskyism, wrongly called Marxian, revealed itself in all its repulsive wretchedness.

In an article touching on the question of the state, entitled "Mass Action and Revolution" (*Neue Zeit*, 1912, Vol. XXX, 2), Pannekoek characterised Kautsky's position as an attitude of "passive radicalism," as "a theory of inactive waiting." "Kautsky loses sight of the process of revolution," said Pannekoek (p. 616).

In presenting the problem in this way, Pannekoek approached the subject which interests us, namely, the tasks of the proletarian revolution in relation to the state. He wrote:

"The struggle of the proletariat is not merely a struggle against the bourgeoisie with state power as the objective, but a struggle *against* the state power. The content of this revolution is the destruction and dissolution [*Auflösung*] of the instruments of power of the state with the aid of the instruments of power of the proletariat" (p. 544). "The struggle will cease only when the organisation of the state is utterly destroyed. The organisation of the majority will then have demonstrated its superiority by having destroyed the organisation of the ruling minority" (p. 548).

The formulation in which Pannekoek presented his ideas suffers from serious defects, but its meaning is sufficiently clear; and it is interesting to note *how* Kautsky combated it. He wrote:

"Up to now the difference between the Social-Democrats and the anarchists has been that the former wished to conquer state power while the latter wished to destroy it. Pannekoek wants to do both" (p. 724).

Although Pannekoek's exposition lacks precision and concreteness—not to speak of other defects in his article which have no bearing on the present subject—Kautsky seized on the *principle* of the issue indicated by Pannekoek; and *on this fundamental* question of *principle* Kautsky abandoned the Marxian position entirely, completely surrendered to opportunism. His definition of the difference between the Social-Democrats and the anarchists is absolutely wrong, and he utterly vulgarised and distorted Marxism.

The difference between the Marxists and the anarchists is this: 1) the former, while aiming at the complete abolition of the state, recognise that this aim can only be achieved after classes have been abolished by the socialist revolution, as the result of the establishment of socialism which leads to the withering away of the state. The latter want to abolish the state completely

overnight, failing to understand the conditions under which the state can be abolished; 2) the former recognise that after the proletariat has conquered political power it must utterly destroy the old state machine and substitute for it a new one consisting of the organisation of armed workers, after the type of the Commune. The latter, while advocating the destruction of the state machine, have absolutely no clear idea of *what* the proletariat will put in its place and *how* it will use its revolutionary power; the anarchists even deny that the revolutionary proletariat should utilise its state power, its revolutionary dictatorship; 3) the former demand that the proletariat be prepared for revolution by utilising the present state; the latter reject this.

In this controversy it is Pannekoek and not Kautsky who represents Marxism, for it was Marx who taught that it is not enough for the proletariat simply to conquer state power in the sense that the old state apparatus passes into new hands, but that the proletariat must smash, break this apparatus and substitute a new one for it.

Kautsky abandons Marxism for the opportunists, because precisely this destruction of the state machine, which is utterly unacceptable to the opportunists, completely disappears from his argument, and he leaves a loophole for them which enables them to interpret "conquest" as simply winning a majority.

To cover up his distortion of Marxism, Kautsky behaves like a Schoolman: he juggles with "quotations" from Marx. In 1850 Marx wrote that "a decisive centralisation of power in the hands of the state" was necessary, and Kautsky triumphantly asks: does Pannekoek want to destroy "centralism"?

This is simply a trick similar to Bernstein's identification of the views of Marxism and Proudhonism on federalism *versus* centralism.

Kautsky's "quotation" has nothing to do with the case. The new state machine permits of centralism as much as the old; if the workers voluntarily unite their armed forces, this will be centralism, but this centralism will be based on the "complete destruction" of the centralised state apparatus—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy. Kautsky acts exactly like a swind-

ler when he ignores the perfectly well-known arguments of Marx and Engels on the Commune and pulls out a quotation which has nothing to do with the case.

He continues:

"Perhaps he [Pannekoek] wants to abolish the state functions of the officials? But we cannot do without officials in the Party and the trade unions, much less in the state administration. Our programme does not demand the abolition of state officials, but that they be elected by the people. . . .

"We are not discussing here the form the administrative apparatus of the 'future state' will assume, but whether our political struggle will dissolve [*auflöse*] the state power *before we have captured it* [Kautsky's italics]. Which Ministry and its officials could be abolished?"

Then follows an enumeration of the Ministries of Education, Justice, Finance and War.

"No, not one of the present Ministries will be removed by our political struggle against the government. . . . I repeat in order to avoid misunderstanding: we are not discussing here the form the future state will assume as a result of the victory of Social-Democracy, but the effect our opposition will have on the present state" (p. 725).

This is an obvious trick: Pannekoek raised the question of *revolution*. Both the title of his article and the passages quoted above clearly indicate this. In skipping to the question of "opposition," Kautsky substitutes the opportunist point of view for the revolutionary point of view. What he says is: at present, opposition; we shall discuss the other matter *after* we have captured power. *Revolution has vanished!* This is exactly what the opportunists wanted.

Opposition and the political struggle in general are beside the point; we are concerned with *revolution*. Revolution means that the proletariat will *destroy* the "administrative apparatus" and the *whole* state machine, and substitute for it a new one consisting of the armed workers. Kautsky reveals a "superstitious reverence" for Ministries; but why can they not be superseded, say, by commissions of specialists, working under sovereign, all-powerful Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies?

The point is not whether the "Ministries" will remain, or whether "commissions of specialists" or other kinds of institutions will be set up; this is quite unimportant. The point is whether the

old state machine (connected by thousands of threads with the bourgeoisie and completely saturated with routine and inertia) shall remain, or be *destroyed* and superseded by a *new* one. Revolution must not mean that the new class will command, govern with the aid of the *old* state machine, but that this class will *smash* this machine and command, govern with the aid of a *new* machine. Kautsky either slurs over or has utterly failed to understand this *fundamental* idea of Marxism.

His question about officials clearly shows that he does not understand the lessons of the Commune or the teachings of Marx.

"We cannot do without officials in the Party and the trade unions. . . ."

We cannot do without officials *under capitalism, under the rule of the bourgeoisie*. The proletariat is oppressed, the masses of the toilers are enslaved by capitalism. Under capitalism democracy is restricted, cramped, curtailed, mutilated by all the conditions of wage-slavery, the poverty and misery of the masses. This is why and the only reason why the officials of our political and industrial organisations are corrupted—or, more precisely, tend to be corrupted—by the conditions of capitalism, why they betray a tendency to become transformed into bureaucrats, *i.e.*, into privileged persons divorced from the masses and *superior to* the masses.

This is the *essence* of bureaucracy, and until the capitalists have been expropriated and the bourgeoisie overthrown, *even* proletarian officials will inevitably be "bureaucratized" to some extent.

According to Kautsky, since we shall have elected officials under socialism, we shall still have bureaucrats; "bureaucracy" will remain! This is exactly where he is wrong. It was precisely the example of the Commune that Marx quoted to show that under socialism officials will cease to be "bureaucrats," "officials"; they will cease to be such *in proportion as*, in addition to the election of officials, the principle of recall at any time is introduced, *and* as salaries are reduced to the level of the wages of the average worker, *and* as the parliamentary institutions are superseded by "working bodies, executive and legislative at the same time."

In essence, the whole of Kautsky's argument against Panne-

koek, and particularly his splendid point that we cannot do without officials even in our Party and trade union organisations, is merely a repetition of Bernstein's "arguments" against Marxism in general. In his renegade book, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus*, Bernstein combats "primitive" democracy, combats what he calls "doctrinaire democracy": imperative mandates, unpaid officials, impotent central representative bodies, etc. To prove that "primitive democracy" is worthless, Bernstein refers to the experience of the British trade unions, as interpreted by the Webbs. Seventy years of development "in absolute freedom," he says (p. 137, German edition), convinced the trade unions that primitive democracy was useless, and they substituted ordinary democracy, *i.e.*, parliamentarism combined with bureaucracy, for it.

As a matter of fact the trade unions did not develop "in absolute freedom" but in *absolute capitalist slavery*, under which a number of concessions to the prevailing evil, violence, falsehood, exclusion of the poor from the affairs of the "higher" administration "cannot be avoided." Under socialism much of the "primitive" democracy will inevitably be revived, since, for the first time in the history of civilised society, the *mass* of the population will rise to *independent* participation, not only in voting and elections, but also in the *everyday administration of affairs*. Under socialism, *all* will take part in the work of government in turn and will soon become accustomed to no one governing.

Marx's critico-analytical genius perceived in the practical measures of the Commune the *turning point*, which the opportunists fear and do not want to recognise because of their cowardice, because they are reluctant to break irrevocably with the bourgeoisie, and which the anarchists do not want to perceive, either through haste or through a general lack of understanding of the conditions of great social changes. "We must not even think of destroying the old state machine; how can we do without Ministries and without officials?" argues the opportunist who is completely saturated with philistinism, and who, in fact, not only does not believe in revolution, in the creative power of revolution, but actually lives in mortal dread of it (like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries).

"We must think *only* of destroying the old state machine; it is no use studying the *concrete* lessons of previous proletarian revolutions and analysing *what* to put in the place of what has been destroyed and *how*" argues the anarchist (the best of the anarchists, of course, and not those who, with Messrs. Kropotkin and Co., follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie); consequently, the tactics of the anarchist become the tactics of *despair* instead of a ruthlessly bold revolutionary effort to solve concrete problems while taking into account the practical conditions of the mass movement.

Marx teaches us to avoid both kinds of error; he teaches us to display boundless audacity in destroying the whole of the old state machine, and at the same time he teaches us to put the question concretely: the Commune was able, within a few weeks, to *start* building a *new*, proletarian state machine by introducing such and such measures to secure wider democracy and to uproot bureaucracy. Let us learn revolutionary audacity from the Communards; let us see in their practical measures *the outline* of the practically-urgent and immediately-possible measures, and then, *pursuing this road*, we shall achieve the complete destruction of bureaucracy.

The possibility of this destruction is guaranteed by the fact that socialism will shorten the working day, will raise the *masses* to a new life, will create conditions for the *majority* of the population that will enable *everybody*, without exception, to perform "state functions," and this will lead to the *complete withering away* of the state in general.

Kautsky continues:

"Its [the mass strike's] object cannot be to destroy the state power; its only object can be to wring concessions from the government on some particular question, or to replace a hostile government with one that would be more yielding [*entgegenkommende*] to the proletariat. . . . But never, under any conditions, can it [the proletarian victory over a hostile government] lead to the *destruction* of the state power; it can lead only to a certain shifting [*Verschiebung*] of the relation of forces *within the state power*. . . . The aim of our political struggle remains, as hitherto, the conquest of state power by winning a majority in parliament and by converting parliament into the master of the government" (pp. 726, 727, 732).

This is nothing but the purest and most vulgar opportunism: a repudiation of revolution in deeds, while accepting it in words.

Kautsky's imagination goes no further than a "government . . . that would be more yielding to the proletariat"; this is a step backward to philistinism compared with 1847, when *The Communist Manifesto* proclaimed "the organisation of the proletariat as the ruling class."

Kautsky will have to achieve his beloved "unity" with the Scheidemanns, Plekhanovs and Vanderveldes, all of whom will agree to fight for a government "that would be more yielding to the proletariat."

But we shall go forward to a split with these traitors to socialism, and we shall fight for the complete destruction of the old state machine in order that the armed proletariat itself shall *become the government*. There is a "big difference" between the two.

Kautsky may enjoy the pleasant company of the Legiens, Davids, Plekhanovs, Potresovs, Tseretellis and Chernovs, who are quite willing to work for the "shifting of the relation of forces within the state power," for "winning a majority in parliament," and converting parliament into the "master of the government." A very worthy object, which is wholly acceptable to the opportunists and which keeps everything within the framework of the bourgeois parliamentary republic.

We shall go forward to a split with the opportunists; and the whole of the class conscious proletariat will be with us—not for the purpose of "shifting . . . the relation of forces," but for the purpose of *overthrowing the bourgeoisie, destroying* bourgeois parliamentarism, for a democratic republic after the type of the Commune, or a republic of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, for the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

* * *

To the Right of Kautsky in international Socialism there are trends such as the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*¹ in Germany (Legien, David, Kolb and many others, including the Scandinavians, Stauning and Branting); the followers of Jaurès and Vandervelde in France and Belgium; Turati, Treves and other representatives of the Right wing of the Italian Party; the Fabians and

¹ *Socialist Monthly*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

"Independents" (the Independent Labour Party, which, in fact, is always dependent on the Liberals) in England; and the like. All these gentry, while playing a great, very often a predominant role in parliamentary work and in the Party press, openly repudiate the dictatorship of the proletariat and pursue a policy of unconcealed opportunism. In the eyes of these gentry, the "dictatorship" of the proletariat "contradicts" democracy!! There is really no essential difference between them and the petty-bourgeois democrats.

Taking this circumstance into consideration, we are right in drawing the conclusion that the Second International, in the persons of the overwhelming majority of its official representatives, has completely sunk into opportunism. The experience of the Commune has been not only forgotten, but distorted. Instead of inculcating in the workers' minds the idea that the time is near when they must rise up and smash the old state machine and substitute for it a new one, and in this way make their political rule the foundation for the socialist reconstruction of society, they have actually taught the workers the very opposite and have depicted the "conquest of power" in a way that has left thousands of loopholes for opportunism.

The distortion and hushing up of the question of the relation of the proletarian revolution to the state could not but play an immense role at a time when the states, with their military apparatus enlarged as a consequence of imperialist rivalry, became transformed into military monsters which were exterminating millions of people in order to decide whether England or Germany—this or that finance capital—was to rule the world.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS pamphlet was written in August and September 1917. I had already drawn up the plan for the next, the seventh chapter, "The Experience of the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917." But except for the title I was unable to write a single line of the chapter; I was "interrupted" by the political crisis—the eve of the October Revolution of 1917. Such an "interruption" can only be welcomed; but the writing of the second part of the pamphlet ("The Experience of the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917") will probably have to be put off for a long time. It is more pleasant and useful to go through the "experience of the revolution" than to write about it.

THE AUTHOR

Petrograd, December 13 (November 30), 1917

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THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE
RENEGADE KAUTSKY

PREFACE*

KAUTSKY'S pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, recently published in Vienna (Wien, 1918, Ignaz Brand, 63 pp.) is a very striking example of that complete and most disgraceful bankruptcy of the Second International which all honest Socialists in all countries have been talking about for a long time. The question of the proletarian revolution is now becoming the practical question of the day in a number of states and therefore it is necessary to examine Kautsky's renegade sophisms and complete abjuration of Marxism.

First of all, however, it is important to point out that the present writer has had numerous occasions, from the very beginning of the war, to refer to ~~Kautsky's rupture with Marxism~~. A number of articles published by me in the course of 1914-16 in the *Sotsial-Demokrat* and the *Kommunist*, issued abroad, dealt with this subject. These articles were afterwards collected and published by the Petrograd Soviet under the title *Against the Stream*, by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin (Petrograd, 1918, 550 pp.). In a pamphlet published in Geneva in 1915 and simultaneously translated into German and French I wrote about "Kautskyism" as follows:

"Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, offers an extremely typical and striking example of how a merely verbal adherence to Marxism has, in fact, caused it to become transformed into 'Struvism'** or 'Brentano-ism'" (that is, into a liberal bourgeois doctrine, which recognises a non-revolutionary "class" struggle of the proletariat, and which was most strikingly expressed by the Russian writer Struve and the German economist Brentano).

"We observe this also in the case of Plekhanov. By means of obvious sophisms Marxism is emasculated of its living revolutionary soul, *everything* is accepted in it *except* the revolutionary methods of struggle, their propaganda and preparation, and the education of the masses for that purpose. Kautsky meaninglessly 'reconciles' the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, namely, the defence of one's fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic, fictitious concession to the Left in the form of abstention from voting the war credits, of a verbal proclamation of his opposition, etc. Kautsky, who in 1909

wrote a book on the approach of the era of revolutions and on the connection between war and revolution* and who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto on the duty of taking revolutionary advantage of any future war, is now trying, in all sorts of ways, to justify and embellish social-chauvinism, and, like Plekhanov, joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing all idea of revolution and all steps for an immediate revolutionary struggle.

"The working class cannot attain its world-revolutionary object unless it wages a ruthless war against such renegacy, such spinelessness, such servility to opportunism, and against such an unparalleled theoretical vulgarisation of Marxism. Kautskyism is not an accident, but a social product of the contradictions inherent in the Second International, of the combination of lip service to Marxism and submission to opportunism in deeds" (*Socialism and War*, by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin, Geneva, 1915, pp. 13-14).¹

Again, in my book, *Imperialism, the Latest Stage of Capitalism*,² which was written in 1916 and published in Petrograd in 1917, I examined in detail the theoretical fallacy of all Kautsky's arguments about imperialism. I quoted the definition of imperialism given by Kautsky:

"Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control and to annex increasingly big *agrarian*" (Kautsky's italics) "regions, irrespective of what nations inhabit those regions."

I showed how utterly incorrect this definition was, and how it was "adapted" for the purpose of glossing over the most profound contradictions of imperialism, and of bringing about a reconciliation with opportunism. I gave my own definition of imperialism, as follows:

"Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the domination of monopolies and finance capital has established itself; 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 partition of all the territories of the globe among the great capitalist powers has been completed."

I showed that Kautsky's critique of imperialism is at an even lower level than the bourgeois, philistine critique.

Finally, in August and September 1917—that is, before the proletarian revolution in Russia (which took place on November 7 [October 25], 1917)—I wrote a book (published in Petrograd

¹ *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII.—Ed.

² In later editions entitled *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Cf. *Selected Works*, Vol. V.—Ed.

at the beginning of 1918) entitled *The State and Revolution: The Marxist Doctrine of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution*.¹ In Chapter IV of this book, entitled "The Vulgarisation of Marxism by the Opportunists," I devoted special attention to Kautsky, showing that he had completely distorted the doctrines of Marx, that he had made them appear like opportunism, and that "he had repudiated the revolution in deeds, while accepting it in words."

In substance, the chief theoretical mistake Kautsky makes in his pamphlet on the dictatorship of the proletariat is precisely this opportunist distortion of Marx's doctrine of the state which I exposed in detail in my pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*.

It was necessary to make these preliminary observations in order to prove that I had openly accused Kautsky of being a renegade long before the Bolsheviks assumed state power and were condemned by him on that account.

¹ In this volume.—Ed.

HOW KAUTSKY TRANSFORMED MARX INTO A COMMON OR GARDEN LIBERAL

The fundamental question that Kautsky touches upon in his pamphlet is the question of the root content of the proletarian revolution, namely the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question that is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially for the advanced ones, especially for the belligerent countries, and especially at the present time. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the most important problem of the entire proletarian class struggle. Hence it is necessary to deal with it with particular attention.

Kautsky formulates the question as follows:

"The antithesis between the two Socialist trends" (i.e., the Bolsheviks and the non-Bolsheviks) is "the antithesis between two radically different methods: the democratic and the dictatorial" (p. 3).

I will point out, in passing, that by calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, i.e. the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, Socialists, Kautsky was guided by their appellations, that is, by a mere word, and not by the actual place they occupy in the fight between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What an excellent interpretation and application of Marxism! But of this more anon.

At present we must deal with the main point, viz., with Kautsky's great discovery of the "fundamental antithesis" between the "democratic and dictatorial methods." This is the crux of the question; this is the essence of Kautsky's pamphlet. And this is such a monstrous theoretical confusion, such a complete renunciation of Marxism, that Kautsky may be said to have far excelled Bernstein.

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the question of the relation between the proletarian state and the bourgeois state, between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy. One

would think that this was as plain as noonday. But Kautsky, like a schoolmaster who has become as dry as dust poring over historical textbooks, persistently turns his back on the twentieth century and faces the eighteenth century, and for the hundredth time, in a number of paragraphs, tediously chews the cud over the relation between bourgeois democracy and absolutism and mediævalism.

It is positively like chewing rags in one's sleep!

What a lack of understanding of the fitness of things! One cannot help smiling at Kautsky's efforts to make it appear that there are people who preach "contempt for democracy" (p. 11) and so forth. It is by such twaddle that Kautsky has to gloss over and confuse the question at issue, for he formulates it in the manner of the liberals, speaks about democracy *in general*, and not of bourgeois democracy; he even avoids using this precise class term, and, instead, tries to speak about "pre-Socialist" democracy. This windbag devotes a third of his pamphlet, twenty pages out of a total of sixty-three, to this twaddle, which is very agreeable to the bourgeoisie, for it is tantamount to embellishing bourgeois democracy, and obscures the question of the proletarian revolution.

Still, the title of Kautsky's pamphlet is *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Everybody knows that this is the very essence of Marx's doctrine; and after much idle chatter Kautsky was obliged to quote Marx's words on the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the way in which he, the "Marxist," did this was simply farcical. Listen to this:

"This view" (which Kautsky dubs "contempt for democracy") "rests upon a single word of Karl Marx." This is what Kautsky literally says on page 20, and on page 60 the same thing is repeated in a still more pointed form, to the effect that the Bolsheviks "opportunately remembered the catchword"—this is literally what he says: *des Wörtchens*—"dictatorship of the proletariat," which Marx once used in 1875 in a letter."

Here is Marx's "catchword":¹

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."

¹ See note to p. 60.*—Ed.

First of all, to call this celebrated proposition of Marx, which sums up all his revolutionary teaching, "a single word" and even a "catchword" is a mockery of Marxism, complete renunciation of it. It must not be forgotten that Kautsky knows Marx almost by heart, and, judging by all he has written, he has in his desk, or in his head, a number of pigeon-holes in which all that was ever written by Marx is carefully distributed so as to be ready at hand for quotation. Kautsky *cannot but know* that both Marx and Engels, in their letters as well as in their published works, *repeatedly* spoke about the dictatorship of the proletariat, both before and after the Paris Commune. Kautsky cannot but know that the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" is but a more historically concrete and more scientifically exact formulation of the proletariat's task of "smashing" the bourgeois state machine, about which Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke *for forty years* between 1852 and 1891.*

How is this monstrous distortion of Marxism by this "erudite" Marxist, Kautsky, to be explained? Speaking of the philosophical basis of this phenomenon, we would say that it is tantamount to the substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Kautsky is a past master of this sort of subterfuge. Speaking of it from the standpoint of practical politics, we would say that it is tantamount to subserviency to the opportunists, *i.e.*, in the long run, to the bourgeoisie. Since the outbreak of the war, Kautsky has made increasingly rapid progress in this art of being a Marxist in words and a lackey of the bourgeoisie in deeds, until he has attained virtuosity in it.

One becomes still more convinced of this when one examines the remarkable way in which Kautsky "interprets" Marx's "catchword," the dictatorship of the proletariat. Listen:

"Marx, unfortunately, failed to show us in greater detail how he conceived this dictatorship." (This is the utterly mendacious phrase of a renegade, for Marx and Engels gave us quite a number of most precise indications which our "erudite" Marxist has deliberately ignored.) "Literally, the word 'dictatorship' means the abolition of democracy. But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single individual unrestricted by any laws—an autocracy, which differs from despotism only in that it is regarded, not as a permanent state institution, but as a transitory emergency measure.

"The term, 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' hence, not the dictatorship of a single individual, but of a class, *ipso facto* precludes the possibility that Marx in this connection had in mind 'dictatorship' in the literal sense of the term.

"He speaks in this connection *not of a form of government*, but of a *condition*, which must necessarily arise whenever and wherever the proletariat has captured political power. That Marx did not have in view a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America the transition could take place peacefully, *i.e.*, in a democratic way" (p. 20).¹

I have deliberately quoted this disquisition in full in order that the reader may clearly see the method Kautsky the "theoretician" employs.

Kautsky chose to approach the question in such a way as to begin with a definition of the word "dictatorship."

Very well. Everyone has the sacred right to approach a subject in whatever way he pleases. One must only distinguish a serious and honest approach to a question from a dishonest one. Anyone who wanted to be serious in approaching this question in this way ought to have given *his own definition* of the "word," then the question would have been put fairly and squarely. But Kautsky does not do that.

"Literally," he writes, "the word 'dictatorship' means the abolition of democracy."

In the first place, this is not a definition. If Kautsky wanted to avoid giving a definition of the concept of dictatorship, why did he choose this particular approach to the question?

Secondly, it is obviously wrong. A liberal naturally speaks of "democracy" in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: for what class? Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the "historian" knows it too), that the rebellions of and even the strong ferment among the slaves in antiquity immediately revealed the fact that in essence the state of antiquity was the *dictatorship of the slave-owners*. Did this dictatorship abolish democracy *among* and *for the slave-owners*? Everybody knows that it did not.

The "Marxist" Kautsky uttered absolute nonsense and an untruth, because he "*forgot*" the class struggle. . . .

¹ See note to p. 37.*—Ed.

In order to transform Kautsky's liberal and lying assertion into a Marxian and true one, one must say: dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises dictatorship over the other classes; but it certainly does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised. But, however true this assertion may be, it does not give a definition of dictatorship.

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence:

"But of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single individual unrestricted by any laws."

Like a blind puppy casually sniffing in one direction and then in another, Kautsky accidentally stumbled upon *one* true idea (namely, that dictatorship is power unrestricted by any laws) but he *failed* to give a definition of dictatorship, and, moreover, he uttered an obvious historical falsehood, *viz.*, that dictatorship means the power of a single person. This is not even grammatically correct, since the power of dictatorship can also be exercised by a handful of persons, by an oligarchy, by a class, etc.

Kautsky then goes on to point out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but, although what he says is obviously incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the question that interests us. Everyone knows Kautsky's inclination to turn from the twentieth to the eighteenth century and from the eighteenth century to classical antiquity, and I hope that the German proletariat, after it has established its dictatorship, will take this inclination into account and appoint him, say, teacher of ancient history at some secondary school. To try to evade a definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat by philosophising about despotism is either extreme stupidity or very clumsy trickery.

As a result, we find that, having undertaken to discuss the dictatorship, Kautsky has said a great deal that is contrary to the truth, but has not given us a definition! Yet, without trusting to his mental faculties, he could have had recourse to his memory and taken from his "pigeon-holes" all those instances in which Marx speaks of the dictatorship. Had he done so, he would certainly have arrived, either

at the following definition, or one in the main coinciding with it. Dictatorship is power based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is power won and maintained by the violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, power that is unrestricted by any laws.

And this simple truth, a truth that is as plain as noonday to every class conscious worker (representing the masses, and not the upper stratum of petty-bourgeois scoundrels who have been bribed by the capitalists, such as are the social-imperialists of all countries), this truth, which is obvious to every representative of the exploited classes which are fighting for their emancipation, this truth, which is indisputable for every Marxist, has to be "extorted almost by main force" from that most learned gentleman, Mr. Kautsky. How is such a phenomenon to be explained? Simply by that spirit of servility with which the leaders of the Second International, who have become contemptible sycophants in the service of the bourgeoisie, have become imbued.

First, Kautsky committed a subterfuge by proclaiming the obvious nonsense that the word dictatorship, in its literal sense, means the dictatorship of a single person, and then, on the strength of this subterfuge, he declared that Marx's words about the dictatorship of a class must *not* be taken literally (but must be taken to mean that dictatorship does not connote revolutionary violence, but merely "the peaceful winning of a majority under bourgeois"—mark you—"democracy").

One must, if you please, distinguish between a "condition" and a "form of government"! A wonderfully profound distinction; it is like drawing a distinction between the stupid "condition" of a person who reasons foolishly and the "form" of this stupidity!

Kautsky *found it necessary* to interpret dictatorship as a "condition of rulership" (this is the literal expression he uses on the very next page, p. 21), because thereby *revolutionary violence, violent revolution, disappears*. The "condition of rulership" is a condition in which any majority finds itself under . . . "democracy." Thanks to such a fraudulent trick, *revolution successfully disappears*.

But this trick is too crude and will not save Kautsky. One can-

not do away with the fact that a dictatorship presupposes and means a "condition" of *revolutionary violence* of one class against another which is very disagreeable to all renegades. The absurdity of drawing a distinction between "condition" and "form of government" becomes patent. It is trebly stupid to speak of forms of government in this connection, for every child knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government. It must be explained to Mr. Kautsky that *both* these forms of government, like all transitional forms of government under capitalism, are but so many varieties of the *bourgeois state*, *i.e.*, of the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*.

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who very clearly spoke of this or that form or type of *state*, and not of forms of government.

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one* which, in the words of Engels, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word."

But Kautsky found it necessary to gloss this over and to lie—his renegade position demanded it.

See what miserable evasions he has to resort to for this purpose. First evasion:

"That Marx did not have in view in this connection a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America the transition could take place peacefully, *i.e.*, in a democratic way."

The *form of government* has nothing to do with the question, for there are monarchies which are not typical of the bourgeois state, for instance, such as have no militarism, and there are republics which are quite typical in this respect, *i.e.*, having militarism and a bureaucracy. This is a universally known historical and political fact, and Kautsky will not succeed in falsifying it.

If Kautsky had wanted to argue in a serious and honest manner he would have asked himself: are there historical laws governing revolution which know of no exception? And the reply would have been: no, no such laws exist. These laws only apply to what is typical, to what Marx once termed the "ideal," meaning average, normal, typical capitalism.

Further, was there in the seventies of the last century anything which made England and America an exception *in regard to what we are now discussing*? It will be obvious to anyone familiar with the requirements of science in the domain of historical problems that such a question must be put. To fail to put it is tantamount to falsifying science, to engaging in sophistry. And, the question having been put, there can be no doubt as to the reply: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is violence against the bourgeoisie; and the necessity for such violence is *particularly* created, as Marx and Engels have repeatedly explained in detail (particularly in *The Civil War in France* and in the preface to it), by the existence of *militarism and bureaucracy*. But it is precisely these institutions that were non-existent in England and America in the seventies of the nineteenth century, when Marx made his observations (they *do* exist in England and in America *now*).

Kautsky has had to be dishonest literally at every step in order to cover up his renegade!

And note how he unwittingly betrayed his cloven hoof; he wrote: "peacefully," *i.e.*, in a *democratic way*!!

In defining the term "dictatorship," Kautsky tried his utmost to conceal from the reader the fundamental symptom of this concept, namely, *revolutionary violence*, but now the truth has emerged: the point under discussion is the antithesis between *peaceful* and *violent* revolution.

That is the whole point. Kautsky had to resort to all these evasions, sophisms and fraudulent falsifications in order to *dissociate* himself from *violent* revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the side of *liberal* labour politics, *i.e.*, to the side of the bourgeoisie. That is the whole point.

Kautsky, the "historian," so shamelessly falsifies history that he forgets the fundamental fact that pre-monopoly capitalism, which reached its zenith in the seventies of the nineteenth century, was, by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits (which were most typical in England and America) distinguished by its relative attachment to peace and freedom. Imperialism, *i.e.*, monopoly capitalism, which finally matured only in the twentieth century, is, by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, distinguished by the least attach-

ment to peace and freedom, and by the greatest and universal development of militarism everywhere. To "fail to notice" this in discussing the extent to which a peaceful or violent revolution is typical or probable is to stoop to the position of a common or garden lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Second evasion:

The Paris Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was elected by *universal suffrage*; the bourgeoisie was not deprived of the franchise, *i.e.*, the Commune was elected "*democratically*." And Kautsky says elatedly:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat, for him" (Marx) "is a state of things which necessarily follows from pure democracy, if the proletariat represents the overwhelming majority" (*bei überwiegendem Proletariat*) (p. 21).

This argument of Kautsky's is so amusing that one almost suffers from an *embarras de richesse* (an embarrassment due to the wealth of replies that can be made to it). Firstly, it is well known that the flower, the General Staff, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie had fled from Paris to Versailles. In Versailles there was the "Socialist" Louis Blanc—which circumstance, by the way, proves the falsity of Kautsky's assertion that "all trends" of Socialism took part in the Paris Commune. Is it not ridiculous to represent the division of the inhabitants of Paris into two belligerent camps, in one of which the entire militant and politically active section of the bourgeoisie had concentrated, as "pure democracy," with "universal suffrage"?

Secondly, the Paris Commune waged war against Versailles as the workers' government of France waging war against the bourgeois government. What has "pure democracy" and "universal suffrage" got to do with the case when Paris decided the fate of France? When Marx expressed the opinion that the Paris Commune had committed a mistake in failing to seize the bank, which belonged to the whole of France, did he take the principles and practice of "pure democracy" as his starting point?

Obviously, Kautsky writes his books in a country where the people are forbidden by the police to laugh in "crowds," otherwise Kautsky would have been killed by laughter.

Thirdly, I would respectfully remind Mr. Kautsky, who knows Marx and Engels by heart, of the following appreciation of the

Paris Commune by Engels from the point of view of . . . "pure democracy":

"Have these gentlemen [the anti-authoritarians*] never seen a revolution? A revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing there is. It is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, which are authoritarian means if ever there were any. And the victorious party, if it does not wish to have fought in vain, must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed population against the bourgeoisie? Should we not on the contrary reproach it for not having made more extensive use of this authority?"

Here you have your "pure democracy"! How Engels would have ridiculed the vulgar petty bourgeois, the "Social-Democrat" (in the French sense of the forties of the last century ** and in the European sense of 1914-18), who took it into his head to talk about "pure democracy" in relation to a society divided into classes!

But enough. It is impossible to enumerate all the absurdities uttered by Kautsky, since every phrase he utters is a bottomless pit of renegacy.

Marx and Engels analysed the Paris Commune in a most detailed manner and showed that its merit lies in its attempt to *smash, to break up* the "existing state machine." Marx and Engels considered this conclusion to be so important that they used it in 1872 to amend the (in part) "obsolete" programme of the *Communist Manifesto*;*** and it was the *only* amendment they made. Marx and Engels showed that the Paris Commune abolished the army and the bureaucracy, abolished *parliamentarism*, destroyed "that parasitic excrescence, the state," etc.; but the all-wise Kautsky, donning his night-cap, repeats the fairy-tale about "pure democracy," which has been told a thousand times by liberal professors.

Not without reason did Rosa Luxemburg declare on August 4, 1914, that German Social-Democracy was now a *stinking corpse*.****

Third evasion:

"When we speak of the dictatorship as a form of government we cannot speak of the dictatorship of a class, since a class, as we have already pointed out, can only rule but not govern." It is "organisations" or "parties" that govern!

You are talking nonsense, sheer nonsense, Mr. Muddleheaded-Counsellor.¹ Dictatorship is not a "form of government"; that is ridiculous nonsense. And Marx does not speak of the form of *government*, but of the form or type of *state*. That is something altogether different. It is altogether wrong, also, to say that a *class* cannot govern. Such an absurdity can only be uttered by a parliamentary *cretin* who sees nothing but bourgeois parliaments, who has noticed nothing but "ruling parties." Any European country will provide Kautsky with examples of government by a ruling *class*, as for instance by the landlords in the Middle Ages, in spite of their insufficient organisation.

To sum up: Kautsky has in the most incredible manner distorted the concept "dictatorship of the proletariat," and has transformed Marx into a common or garden liberal, *i.e.*, he himself has rolled down to the level of a liberal who utters banal phrases about "pure democracy," embellishes and glosses over the class content of *bourgeois* democracy, and, above all, is mortally afraid of the oppressed class resorting to *revolutionary violence*. By "interpreting" the concept "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" to mean that the oppressed class will not use revolutionary violence against their oppressors, Kautsky beat the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx, and the renegade Bernstein has proved to be a mere puppy compared with the renegade Kautsky.

¹ An ironical allusion to the title of "Counsellor of State" awarded to Kautsky by the Social-Democratic government after the overthrow of the Kaiser in 1918.—*Ed.*

BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

THE question which Kautsky has so hopelessly confused really stands as follows:

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" so long as different *classes* exist; we can only speak of *class* democracy. (One may say in parenthesis that "pure democracy" is not only an *ignorant* phrase, revealing lack of understanding of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a hollow phrase, since in communist society democracy will gradually change and become a habit, and finally *with*er away, but will never be "pure" democracy.)

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the working class. History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy.

When Kautsky devotes scores of pages to "proving" that bourgeois democracy is progressive compared with mediævalism, and that the proletariat must utilise it in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, he is just indulging in the usual liberal twaddle to fool the workers. This is a truism not only for educated Germany, but also for uneducated Russia. Kautsky is simply throwing "learned" dust into the eyes of the workers when, with a serious mien, he talks about Weitling and the Jesuits of Paraguay * and many other things; but does this only to avoid telling them about the *bourgeois* essence of contemporary, *i. e.*, *capitalist democracy*.

Kautsky takes from Marxism what is acceptable to the liberals, to the bourgeoisie (*viz.*, the criticism of the Middle Ages, and the progressive historical role of capitalism in general and of capitalist democracy in particular), and throws away, ignores, glosses over all that in Marxism which is *unacceptable* to the bourgeoisie

(the revolutionary violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie with a view to the destruction of the latter). That is why Kautsky, by virtue of his objective position and irrespective of what his subjective convictions may be, inevitably becomes the lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with mediævalism, nevertheless remains and under capitalism cannot but remain restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor. It is this simple truth, which forms an essential part of Marx's teachings, that Kautsky, the "Marxist," has failed to understand. On this fundamental question Kautsky gives us what is agreeable to the bourgeoisie, instead of a scientific criticism of those conditions which make all bourgeois democracy only a democracy for the rich.

Let us first recall to the mind of the most learned Mr. Kautsky the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels, which the erudite Kautsky has so disgracefully "forgotten" (in order to please the bourgeoisie), and then we shall explain the question in a very elementary manner.

Not only the ancient and feudal, but also the "contemporary representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage labour by capital." (Engels, in his work on the state.)¹ "As therefore the 'state' is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down [*Niederzuhalten*] one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the state, as such, ceases to exist." (Engels, in his letter to Bebel, March 28, 1875.) "In reality the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic not less than in the monarchy." (Engels, preface to Marx's *Civil War in France*.) "Universal suffrage is an index of the maturity of the working class. *It cannot and never will be anything more in the modern state.*" (Engels, in his work on the state.)²

Mr. Kautsky tediously chews the cud over the first part of this proposition, which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie, but, like the renegade he is, he conveniently omits the second half, which we have italicised—which is not acceptable to the bourgeoisie!

¹ *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.*—Ed.

² *Ibid.* (Lenin's italics).—Ed.

"The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. . . . Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business." (Marx, *The Civil War in France*.)

Every one of these propositions, which are well known to the most learned Mr. Kautsky, is a direct challenge to him and lays bare his renegacy. Nowhere in his pamphlet does Kautsky reveal the slightest understanding of these truths. The whole of his pamphlet is but a mockery of Marxism.

Take the fundamental laws of contemporary states, take their administration, take the right of assembly, freedom of the press, and "equality of all citizens before the law," and you will see at every step evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which does not contain loopholes or limiting clauses in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a "disturbance of the peace," *i.e.*, in case the exploited class "disturbs" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and hushes up, for instance, what the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie of America and Switzerland do against workers on strike.

Oh, the wise and most learned Kautsky remains silent about these things! This pundit and statesman does not realise that to remain silent on this matter is despicable. He prefers to tell the workers nursery tales to the effect that democracy means "protecting the minority." It is incredible, but it is a fact. In the Year of Our Lord 1918, in the fifth year of the world imperialist slaughter and the strangulation of internationalist minorities (*i.e.*, those who have not despicably betrayed socialism, like the Renaudels and the Longuets, the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, the Hendersons and the Webbs, etc.) in all "democracies of the world,"* the learned Mr. Kautsky sweetly sings the praises of "protection of the minority." Those who are interested may read this on page 15 of Kautsky's pamphlet. And on page 16 this learned individual tells you about

the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century!

Oh, wonderful erudition! Oh, refined servility towards the bourgeoisie! Oh, civilised belly-crawling and boot-licking before the bourgeoisie! If I were Krupp or Scheidemann, Clemenceau or Renaudel, I would give Mr. Kautsky millions, reward him with Judas kisses, praise him before the workers and urge "Socialist unity" with "respectable" men like him. To write pamphlets against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to talk about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century, to assert that democracy means "protecting the minority," and remain silent about pogroms against internationalists in the "democratic" republic of America—is this not rendering lackey's service to the bourgeoisie?

The learned Mr. Kautsky "forgot"—no doubt accidentally—a "bagatelle"; namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another *bourgeois* party, while on all *serious, profound and fundamental* issues the proletariat gets martial law and pogroms, instead of the "protection of the minority." *The more highly developed democracy is, the more imminent is the danger of pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous for the bourgeoisie.* The learned Mr. Kautsky could have studied this "law" of bourgeois democracy in connection with the Dreyfus affair in republican France, with the lynching of Negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the case of Ireland and Ulster in democratic England, with the persecution of the Bolsheviks and the organisation of pogroms against them in April 1917 in the democratic republic of Russia.* I have purposely chosen examples not only from the period of the war but also from pre-war time. But sentimental Mr. Kautsky is pleased to shut his eyes to these facts of the twentieth century, and instead to tell the workers wonderfully new and remarkably interesting, unusually instructive and incredibly important things about the Tories and Whigs of the eighteenth century!

Take the bourgeois parliament. Can it be that learned Mr. Kautsky has never heard that the *more* highly democracy is devel-

oped, the *more* the bourgeois parliaments fall under the control of the Stock Exchange and the bankers? This, of course, does not mean that we must not use bourgeois parliaments (the Bolsheviks have made better use of them than any other party in the world, for in 1912-14 we captured the entire workers' *curia* in the Fourth Duma*). But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the *historical limitations and conventional character* of bourgeois parliamentarism as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed masses at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists, and the thousand and one *real* limitations and restrictions which make the proletarians *wage-slaves*. It is precisely this contradiction that opens the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly showing up to the masses, *in order to prepare them* for the revolution. And now that the era of revolution has begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy!

Proletarian democracy, of which Soviet government is one of the forms, has given a development and expansion of democracy hitherto unprecedented in the world, precisely for the vast majority of the population, for the exploited and for the toilers. To write a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky did (in which he devotes two pages to dictatorship and scores of pages to "pure democracy") and *fail to notice* this fact means distorting the subject in a liberal way.

Take foreign politics. In no bourgeois state, not even in the most democratic, are they conducted openly. In all democratic countries—France, Switzerland, America, or England—the masses are deceived on an incomparably wider scale and in a more subtle manner than in other countries. The Soviet government in a revolutionary manner has torn the veil of mystery from foreign politics.** Kautsky has not noticed this and remains silent about it, although in the present era of predatory wars and secret treaties for the "division of spheres of influence" (*i.e.*, for the partition of the world

among the capitalist bandits) the subject is one of cardinal importance, for it is a matter that determines the question of peace, it is a question of life and death for tens of millions of people.

Take the organisation of the state. Kautsky clutches at all manner of "trifles," down to the argument that under the Soviet constitution elections are "indirect," but he misses the essence of the thing. He fails to see the *class* nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state: under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by a thousand and one tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more "pure" democracy is developed—keep the masses *away* from the work of administration and frustrate the freedom of the press, the right of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the *first* in the world (or strictly speaking the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to *attract* the masses, precisely the *exploited* masses, to the work of administration. For the toiling masses, participation in bourgeois parliaments (which *never decide* the important questions under bourgeois democracy, because they are decided by the Stock Exchange and the banks) is *hindered* by a thousand and one obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions alien to them, *instruments for the oppression* of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, institutions of the hostile class, of the exploiting minority.

The Soviets are the direct organisation of the toiling and exploited masses themselves, which *enables* them to organise and administer the state themselves in every possible way. And in this it is precisely the vanguard of the toiling and exploited, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage in that it is best organised by the large enterprises; it is much easier for it to elect and watch elections. The Soviet organisation automatically *helps* to unite all the toilers and exploited round their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus, the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc., which are the more varied, the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed—all this disappears under the Soviet organisation. Freedom of the press ceases to be hypocrisy, because the printing presses and stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. The same

thing applies to the best buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor houses. The Soviet government has taken thousands and thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters, and in this way it has made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a million times more "democratic." The indirect elections to the non-local Soviets make it easier to hold Congresses of Soviets, they make the *entire* apparatus less costly, more flexible, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is seething and it is necessary to be able quickly to recall a deputy or to elect him to the general Congress of Soviets.

Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet government is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Only one who deliberately serves the bourgeoisie, or one who politically is quite dead, who does not see real life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, who is thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and thereby objectively becomes the lackey of the bourgeoisie, could have failed to see this.

Only one who is incapable of *presenting the question* from the point of view of the *oppressed* classes could have failed to see this.

Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the *average rank-and-file* worker, the average rank-and-file *village labourer*, or village semi-proletarian generally (*i.e.*, the representative of the oppressed masses, the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* to use the best printing works and largest stocks of paper, to express his ideas and to protect his interests, such liberty to promote men and women of his own class to administer and to "run" the state as in Soviet Russia?

It is ridiculous to think that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country one well-informed worker or agricultural labourer out of a thousand who would have any doubts as to the reply to give to this question. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathise with the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a *proletarian* democracy, a *democracy for the poor*,

and not a democracy for the rich, as is really the case in every bourgeois democracy, even the best.

We are governed (and our state is "run") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth, which tens and hundreds of millions of the exploited classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their living experience, feel and realise every day.

In Russia the bureaucratic apparatus has been completely smashed up, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been expelled, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets now control the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets now elect the judges. This fact alone is enough to cause all the oppressed classes to recognise the Soviet government, *i.e.*, the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as being a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so obvious and intelligible to every worker, because he has "forgotten," "unlearned" to put the question: democracy *for what class*? He argues from the point of view of "pure" (*i.e.*, non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: all I want is my pound of flesh. Equality for all citizens—otherwise it is not democracy.

We must ask the learned "Marxist" and "Socialist" Kautsky:

Can there be equality between the exploited and the exploiters?

It is monstrous, it is incredible, that one should have to put such a question in discussing a book written by the ideological leader of the Second International. But "having undertaken a task, stick to it to the end." Having undertaken to write about Kautsky, I must explain to the learned man why there can be no equality between the exploiters and the exploited.

CAN THERE BE EQUALITY BETWEEN THE EXPLOITED AND THE EXPLOITERS?

KAUTSKY says:

1) "The exploiters were always only a small minority of the population" (p. 14 of Kautsky's pamphlet).

This is certainly true. Taking this as the starting point, what should be the argument? One may argue in a Marxian, in a socialist way, taking as one's basis the relation between the exploited and the exploiters; or one may argue in a liberal, in a bourgeois-democratic way, taking as one's basis the relation between the majority and the minority.

If we argue in a Marxian way we must say: the exploiters inevitably transform the state (we are speaking of democracy, *i.e.*, one of the forms of the state) into an instrument for the rule of their class, of the exploiters, over the exploited. Hence, so long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploited, the democratic state must inevitably be democracy for the exploiters. The state of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a state; it must be democracy for the exploited, and a means of *suppressing the exploiters*; and the suppression of a class means inequality for this class, its exclusion from "democracy."

If we argue in a liberal way, we must say: the majority decides, the minority submits. Those who do not submit are punished. That is all. Nothing need be said about the class character of the state in general, or of "pure democracy" in particular, because it is irrelevant; for a majority is a majority and a minority is a minority. A pound of flesh is a pound of flesh; and that is all there is to it.

And this is exactly the way Kautsky argues. He says:

2) "Why should the rule of the proletariat assume, and necessarily assume, a form which is incompatible with democracy?" (p. 21).

Then follows a very lengthy and very verbose explanation, backed by a quotation from Marx and the election figures of the Paris Commune, to the effect that the proletariat is in a majority. The conclusion is:

"A regime which is so strongly rooted in the masses has not the slightest reason for infringing democracy. It cannot always dispense with violence in cases when violence is employed to suppress democracy. Violence can only be met with violence. But a regime which knows that it has the support of the masses will employ violence only in order to *protect* democracy and not to *destroy* it. It would be simply committing suicide if it attempted to destroy its own most reliable basis—universal suffrage, that deep source of mighty moral authority" (p. 22).

You see, therefore, that the relation between the exploited and the exploiters has entirely vanished in Kautsky's argument, and all that remains is majority in general, minority in general, democracy in general, the "pure democracy" with which we are already familiar.

And all this, mark you, is said *à propos of the Paris Commune!* We will quote Marx and Engels, by way of illustration, to show how they discuss the subject of dictatorship, *à propos of the Paris Commune:*

MARX: "When the workers substitute their revolutionary dictatorship for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie... in order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie... the workers invest the state with a revolutionary and transitional form..."

ENGELS: "The victorious party" (in the revolution) "must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed population against the bourgeoisie? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having made more extensive use of this authority?"

ENGELS: "As therefore the 'state' is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down [*Niederzuhalten*] one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a 'free people's state'; so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the state, as such, ceases to exist."

Kautsky is as far removed from Marx and Engels as heaven is from earth, as far as a liberal is removed from a proletarian revolutionary. The pure democracy and simple "democracy" that Kautsky

talks about is merely a paraphrase of the "free people's state," *i.e., pure nonsense*. Kautsky, with the learned air of a most learned armchair fool, or with the innocent air of a ten-year-old girl, asks: why do we need a dictatorship when we have a majority? And Marx and Engels explain:

In order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie;

In order to inspire the reactionaries with fear;

In order to maintain the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie;

In order that the proletariat may forcibly suppress its enemies!

But Kautsky does not understand these explanations. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, failing to perceive its bourgeois character, he "consistently" urges that the majority, since it is the majority, need not "break down the resistance" of the minority, need not "forcibly suppress" it—it is sufficient to suppress *cases* of infringement of democracy. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, Kautsky *unwittingly* commits the very little error that all bourgeois democrats always commit, namely, he takes formal equality (which is only a fraud and hypocrisy under capitalism) for *actual* equality. Quite a bagatelle!

The exploiter and the exploited cannot be equal.

This truth, however unpleasant it may be to Kautsky, is nevertheless the quintessence of socialism.

Another truth: there can be no real equality until all possibility of the exploitation of one class by another has been destroyed.

The exploiters can be defeated at one stroke in the event of a successful insurrection at the centre, or of a mutiny in the army; but except in very rare and particular cases, the exploiters cannot be destroyed at one stroke. It is impossible to expropriate all the landlords and capitalists of a large country at one stroke. Furthermore, expropriation alone, as a legal or political act, does not settle the matter by a long way, because it is necessary in practice to *remove* the landlords and capitalists, in practice to *replace* their management of the factories and estates by working class management. There can be no equality between the exploiters—who for many generations have enjoyed education and the advantages and habits of wealth—and the exploited, the majority of whom even

in the most advanced and most democratic bourgeois republics are cowed, backward, ignorant, frightened, unorganised. For a long time after the revolution the exploiters inevitably continue to enjoy a large number of great practical advantages: they still have money (since it is impossible to abolish money all at once); some movable property—often fairly considerable; social connections, habits of organisation and management, knowledge of all the “secrets” (customs, methods, means and possibilities) of management, superior education, close connections with the higher technical personnel (who live and think like the bourgeoisie), and incomparably greater experience in the art of war (this is very important), and so on, and so forth.

If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is typical, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they *still* remain *stronger* than the exploited, because the international connections of the exploiters are enormous. The fact that a section of the exploited, or the least intelligent section of the middle peasant, artisan and similar masses, may and indeed do follow the exploiters has been proved hitherto by *all* revolutions, including the Commune (for there were also proletarians among the Versailles troops, which the most learned Kautsky seems to have “forgotten”).

In these circumstances, to assume that in a revolution that is at all profound and serious the issue is decided simply by the relation between the majority and the minority is the acme of stupidity, the stupid prejudice of a common or garden liberal, the *deception of the masses*, concealing from them a well-established historical truth. This historical truth is that in every profound revolution, the *prolonged, stubborn, desperate* resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years enjoy important practical advantages over the exploited, is the *rule*. Never, except in the sentimental phantasies of the sentimental simpleton Kautsky, will the exploiters submit to the decision of the exploited majority without making use of their advantages in a last desperate battle, or series of battles.

The transition from capitalism to communism represents an

entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters will inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this *hope* will be converted into *attempts* at restoration. And after their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters—who had not expected their overthrow, who never believed it possible, who would not permit the thought of it—will throw themselves with tenfold energy, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of their lost “paradise,” on behalf of their families who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom now the “common herd” is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to “common” work). . . . In the wake of the capitalist exploiters will be found the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, to whose vacillation and hesitation the historical experience of every country for decades bears witness; one day they march behind the proletariat, the next day they will take fright at the difficulties of the revolution, become panic-stricken at the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers; they become irritable, they run about, snivel and rush from one camp to the other—just like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries!

And in these circumstances, in the epoch of desperate, acute war, when history is placing the question of the life and death of age-long privilege on the order of the day—at such a time to talk about majority and minority, about pure democracy, about dictatorship being unnecessary and about equality between the exploiter and the exploited! What bottomless stupidity and philistinism are needed for this!

But during the decades of comparatively “peaceful” capitalism, between 1871 and 1914, whole Augean stables of philistinism, imbecility, and renegacy accumulated in the Socialist parties which were adapting themselves to opportunism.

* * *

The reader will probably have noticed that Kautsky, in the passage from his pamphlet quoted above, speaks of an attempt to encroach upon universal suffrage (extolling it, by the way, as a deep source of mighty moral authority, whereas Engels, *à propos*

of the same Paris Commune and the same question of dictatorship, spoke of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie—a very characteristic difference between the philistine's and the revolutionary's view on "authority":

It should be observed that the question of depriving the exploiters of the franchise is *purely a Russian question*, and not a question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. Had Kautsky, casting aside hypocrisy, entitled his pamphlet *Against the Bolsheviks*, the title would have corresponded to the contents of the pamphlet, and Kautsky would have been justified in speaking directly about the franchise. But Kautsky wanted to write primarily as a "theoretician." He called his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*—in general. He deals particularly with the Soviets and Russia only in the second part of the pamphlet, beginning with part V. The subject dealt with in the first part, from which I quoted, is *democracy and dictatorship in general*. In speaking about the franchise, Kautsky betrayed himself as an opponent of the Bolsheviks *who does not care a brass farthing for theory*; for theory, *i.e.*, the discussion of the general (and not the national and particular) class basis of democracy and dictatorship, ought to deal not with a special question such as the franchise, but with the general question of whether democracy can be *preserved for the rich and the exploiters* in the historical period of the overthrow of the exploiters and the substitution of the state of the exploited for the exploiters' state.

This is the only form in which a theoretician can present the question.

We know the example of the Paris Commune, we know all that was said by the founders of Marxism in connection with it. On the basis of this material I examined, for example, the question of democracy and dictatorship in my book, *The State and Revolution*,¹ which I wrote before the October Revolution. *I did not say anything at all* about restricting the franchise. And now it must be said that the question of restricting the franchise is a specifically national

¹ In this volume: chap. IV, sec. 4-6 and chap. V, sec. 2.—Ed.

question, and not a general question of the dictatorship. One must study the question of restricting the franchise in the light of the *specific conditions* of the Russian revolution and the *specific path* of its development. This will be done later on in this pamphlet. It would be a mistake, however, to guarantee in advance that the impending proletarian revolutions in Europe will all, or for the most part, be necessarily accompanied by the restriction of the franchise for the bourgeoisie. Perhaps they will. After our experience of the war and of the Russian revolution we can say that it will probably be so; but it is not *absolutely necessary* for the purpose of realising the dictatorship, it is not an *essential* symptom of the logical concept "dictatorship," it does not enter as an *essential* condition in the historical and class concept "dictatorship."

The necessary symptom, the necessary condition of dictatorship, is the *forcible* suppression of the exploiters as a class, and, consequently, the *infringement* of "pure democracy," *i.e.*, of equality and freedom *for that class*.

Only in this way can the question be put theoretically. And by failing to put the question in this manner, Kautsky showed that he opposes the Bolsheviks not as a theoretician, but as a sycophant of the opportunists and of the bourgeoisie.

The question in which countries, and in the presence of what special national features of this or that capitalism, democracy for the exploiters will be infringed upon or restricted (wholly or in part) is a question of the special national features of this or that capitalism, of this or that revolution. The theoretical question is an entirely different one, *viz.*, is the dictatorship of the proletariat possible *without infringing democracy* for the *exploiting* class?

It is precisely this question, the *only* theoretically important and essential one, that Kautsky has evaded. He has quoted all sorts of passages from Marx and Engels, *except those* which relate to this question, and which I quoted above.

Kautsky talks about everything, about everything that is acceptable to liberals and bourgeois democrats and does not go beyond their system of ideas, but he does not talk about the main thing, namely, the fact that the proletariat cannot achieve victory *without*

breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, without forcibly suppressing its enemies, and that, where there is "forcible suppression," where there is no "freedom," there is, of course, no democracy.

This Kautsky has not understood:

* * *

We shall now examine the experience of the Russian revolution and of that divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly which led to the dissolution of the latter and to the withdrawal of the franchise from the bourgeoisie.

THE SOVIETS DARE NOT BECOME STATE ORGANISATIONS

THE Soviets are the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship. If a Marxian theoretician, writing on the dictatorship of the proletariat, had seriously set to work to study the subject (and not merely to repeat the petty-bourgeois lamentations over dictatorship, as Kautsky does in repeating the Menshevik melodies) he would first of all have given a general definition of dictatorship, and would then have examined its peculiar national form, the Soviets; he would have given his critique of them as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It goes without saying that nothing serious could be expected from Kautsky after his liberal "interpretation" of Marx's theory of the dictatorship; but the manner in which he approached the question of what the Soviets are and the way he dealt with this question is highly characteristic.

The Soviets, he says, recalling their rise in 1905,* created

"the most all-embracing [*umfassendste*] form of proletarian organisation, for it embraced all the wage workers" (p. 31).

In 1905 they were only local bodies; in 1917 they became national organisations.

Kautsky continues:

"The Soviet organisation has already behind it a great and glorious history, and it has a still more mighty future before it, and not in Russia alone. It appears that everywhere the old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat fail against the gigantic economic and political forces which finance capital has at its disposal. These old methods cannot be discarded: they are still indispensable for normal times; but from time to time tasks arise which they cannot fulfil, tasks that can be successfully fulfilled only by a combination of all the political and economic instruments of force of the working class" (p. 32).

Then follows a disquisition on the mass strike and on the "trade union bureaucracy"—which is no less necessary than the trade unions—being

"useless for the purpose of directing the mighty class battles that are more and more becoming the sign of the times. . . ."

"Thus," Kautsky concludes, "the Soviet organisation is one of the most important phenomena of our time. It promises to acquire decisive importance in the great decisive battles between capital and labour towards which we are marching.

"But are we justified in demanding more of the Soviets? After the November [October] Revolution the Bolsheviks, in conjunction with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, secured a majority in the Russian Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly they set out to transform the Soviets from a *militant organisation* of one class into a *state organisation*. They destroyed the democracy which the Russian people had won in the March [February] Revolution. Accordingly, the Bolsheviks have ceased to call themselves *Social-Democrats*. They call themselves *Communists*" (p. 33, Kautsky's italics).

Those who are familiar with Russian Menshevik literature will at once see with what servile fidelity Kautsky copies Martov, Axelrod, Stein and Co. Yes, "servile fidelity," because Kautsky distorts the facts to a ridiculous degree in order to pander to Menshevik prejudices. Kautsky did not take the trouble, for instance, to ask his informants (Stein of Berlin, or Axelrod of Stockholm) *when* the questions of changing the name of the Bolsheviks to Communists and of the importance of the Soviets as state organisations were first raised. Had Kautsky made this simple inquiry he would not have penned these ridiculous lines, for both these questions were raised by the Bolsheviks in April 1917, for example, in my *Theses* of April 17 [4], 1917,¹ *i.e.*, long before the October Revolution of 1917 (and, of course, long before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on January 18 [5], 1918).

But the passage from Kautsky's argument which I have just quoted in full represents the *crux* of the whole question about the Soviets. This *crux* is the question: should the Soviets aspire to become state organisations (in April 1917 the Bolsheviks put forward

¹ See "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—*Ed.*

the slogan: "All Power to the Soviets,"¹ and at the Party conference held in the same month they declared that they were not satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary republic, but demanded a workers' and peasants' republic of the Paris Commune type, or Soviet type²), or should the Soviets not strive for this, should they refrain from taking political power into their hands, refrain from becoming state organisations and remain the "militant organisations of one class" (as Martov expressed it, plausibly concealing under this innocent desire the fact that under Menshevik leadership the Soviets were instruments *for the subjection of the workers to the bourgeoisie*)?

Kautsky slavishly repeats Martov's words, takes up *fragments* of the theoretical controversy between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and uncritically and senselessly transplants them to the general theoretical and European field. The result is such a muddle as to provoke Homeric laughter in every class conscious Russian worker who hears of these arguments of Kautsky.

And when we explain what the question at issue is every worker in Europe (except a handful of inveterate social-imperialists) will greet Kautsky with the same outburst of laughter.

Kautsky has rendered Martov a backhanded service by reducing his mistake to obvious absurdity. Let us see what Kautsky's argument amounts to.

The Soviets embrace all wage workers. The old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate against finance capital. The Soviets have a great role to play in the future, and not only in Russia. They will play a decisive role in the great decisive battles between capital and labour in Europe. This is what Kautsky says.

Excellent. But will not the "decisive battles between capital and labour" decide the question as to which of the two classes will possess political power?

¹ See "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," "A Dual Power," and "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—*Ed.*

² See "Report on the Current Situation" at the All-Russian April Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., May 7 [April 24], 1917, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—*Ed.*

Nothing of the kind! God forbid!

Organisations which embrace all the wage workers *must not become state organisations* in the "decisive" battles.

But what is the state?

The state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

Thus, the oppressed class, the vanguard of all the toilers and of the exploited in modern society, must strive towards the "decisive battles between capital and labour," but *must not touch* the machine by means of which capital oppresses labour! It *must not break up* that machine! It must not make use of its all-embracing organisation for the purpose of *suppressing the exploiters*!

Excellent, magnificent, Mr. Kautsky! "We" recognise the class struggle, in the same way as all liberals recognise it, *i.e.*, without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie!

This is where Kautsky's complete rupture with Marxism and with Socialism becomes obvious. Practically, it is desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie which is prepared to concede everything except the transformation of the organisations of the class which it oppresses into state organisations. Kautsky can no longer save his position of trying to reconcile everything and to brush aside all profound contradictions with mere phrases.

Kautsky either rejects the transition of political power to the working class; or he concedes that the working class may take over the old bourgeois state machine; but he does not concede that it must break up, smash that machine and replace it by a new, proletarian one. Whichever way Kautsky's arguments are "interpreted" or "explained," his rupture with Marxism and his desertion to the bourgeoisie are obvious.

Describing what sort of state the victorious working class needs, Marx, already in *The Communist Manifesto*, wrote:

"A state, that is, the proletariat organised as the ruling class."

Now a man who claims that he is still a Marxist comes on the scene and declares that the proletariat, organised to a man and waging the "decisive battle" against capital, *must not* transform its class organisation into a state organisation! Here Kautsky has betrayed that "superstitious belief in the state" which in Germany,

as Engels wrote as far back as 1891, "had permeated the minds of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers." Workers, fight! Our philistine "agrees" to this (as every bourgeois "agrees," since the workers are already fighting and the only thing he can do is to devise means for blunting the edge of their sword). Fight, but *don't dare win!* Don't destroy the state machine of the bourgeoisie; don't put the proletarian "state organisation" in the place of the bourgeois "state organisation"!

Whoever sincerely shares the Marxian view that the state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and who has at all reflected upon this truth, could never have reached the absurd conclusion that the proletarian organisations capable of defeating finance capital must not become transformed into state organisations. It was this point that betrayed the petty bourgeois who believed that "after all is said and done" the state is something that is outside of class, or stands above class. Indeed, why should the proletariat, "*one class*," be permitted to wage determined war *against capital*, which rules not only over the proletariat, but over the whole people, over the whole of the petty bourgeoisie, over the whole of the peasantry, but why should this proletariat, this "*one class*," not be permitted to transform its organisation into a state organisation? Because the petty bourgeois is *afraid* of the class struggle, and does not carry it to its logical conclusion, to its *main* object.

Kautsky has got himself completely mixed up and has given himself away entirely. Mark you, he himself admits that Europe is marching towards decisive battles between capital and labour, and that the old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate. But these old methods were precisely the utilisation of *bourgeois* democracy. Hence? . . .

But Kautsky fears to think this out to its logical conclusion.

. . . Hence, only a reactionary, only an enemy of the working class, only a henchman of the bourgeoisie, can at the present time turn his face to the obsolete past, depict the charms of bourgeois democracy and babble about pure democracy. Bourgeois democracy *was* progressive compared with mediævalism, and it was necessary to utilise it. But now it is *inadequate* for the working

class. Now we must look, not backward, but forward, to substituting *proletarian* democracy for bourgeois democracy. And although the preparatory work for the proletarian revolution, the formation and the training of the proletarian army, was possible (and necessary) within the framework of the bourgeois-democratic state, now that we have reached the stage of "decisive battles" to confine the proletariat to this framework means betraying the cause of the proletariat, means being a renegade.

Kautsky has made himself particularly ridiculous by repeating Martov's argument *without* noticing that Martov's argument was based on *another* argument which he, Kautsky, does not use! Martov said (and Kautsky repeats it) that Russia was not yet ripe for socialism. From this it logically followed that it was too early to transform the Soviets from organs of struggle into state organisations (read *it is quite time to transform the Soviets, with the assistance of the Menshevik leaders, into instruments for subjecting the workers to the imperialist bourgeoisie*). Kautsky, however, *cannot* say openly that Europe is not ripe for socialism. In 1909, when he was not yet a renegade, he wrote that there was no reason to fear a *premature* revolution, that whoever renounced revolution for fear of defeat would be a traitor. Kautsky does not dare renounce this openly. And so we get the following absurdity, which utterly betrays the stupidity and cowardice of the petty bourgeois: on the one hand, Europe is ripe for socialism and is marching towards decisive battles between capital and labour; on the other hand, the *fighting organisation* (*i.e.*, the organisation which is formed, grows up and becomes strong in battle), the organisation of the proletariat, the vanguard, the organiser and the leader of the oppressed, *must not* be transformed into a state organisation!

* * *

From the point of view of practical politics the idea that the Soviets are necessary as fighting organisations but must not be transformed into state organisations is infinitely more absurd than from the point of view of theory. Even in peace time, when there is no revolutionary situation, the mass struggle of the workers against the capitalists—for instance, a mass strike—causes great

bitterness on both sides, gives rise to fierce passions in the struggle, to the bourgeoisie insisting on remaining "master in its own house," etc. But in time of revolution, when political life reaches boiling point, an organisation like the Soviets, which embraces *all* workers, *all* industries, *all* the soldiers, and *all* the toiling and poorest sections of the rural population—such an organisation, in the course of the struggle, by the simple logic of attack and defence, automatically has to raise the question of power *point blank*. The attempt to take up a middle position and to "reconcile" the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is sheer stupidity and is doomed to miserable failure. This is what happened in Russia to the preachings of Martov and other Mensheviks and this will inevitably happen in Germany and other countries if the Soviets succeed in developing on a fairly wide scale, manage to unite and become consolidated. To say to the Soviets: fight, but do not take political power entirely in your hands, do not become state organisations—is tantamount to preaching collaboration of classes and "social peace" between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It is ridiculous to think that such a position in the midst of fierce struggle could lead to anything but disgraceful failure. But it is Kautsky's everlasting fate to sit between two stools. He pretends that he does not agree with the opportunists on anything in theory, but in *practice* he agrees with them on everything that is essential (*i.e.*, on everything that pertains to revolution).

From this third thesis Kautsky quotes in full only the following part:

"A republic of Soviets . . . is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the *ordinary* bourgeois republic crowned with a Constituent Assembly) but it is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition¹ to socialism" (Kautsky omits the word "ordinary" and the introductory words of the thesis: "For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat").

After quoting these words, Kautsky, with magnificent irony, exclaims:

"It is a pity that this conclusion was arrived at only after the Bolsheviks found themselves in a minority in the Constituent Assembly. Before that no one had demanded it more clamorously than Lenin."

This is literally what Kautsky says on page 31 of his book!

It is positively a gem! Only a sycophant of the bourgeoisie could present the question so falsely as to give the reader the impression that all the Bolsheviks' talk about a higher type of state was an invention which saw the light of day *after* they found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly. Such an infamous lie could only have been uttered by a scoundrel who has sold himself to the bourgeoisie, or, what is absolutely the same thing, who has placed his trust in P. Axelrod and is concealing the source of his information.

Everyone knows that on the very day of my arrival in Russia, on April 17 [4], 1917, I publicly read my theses² in which I proclaimed the superiority of the Paris Commune type of state over the bourgeois parliamentary republic. Afterwards, I *repeatedly*

¹ Incidentally, Kautsky, with an obvious attempt at sarcasm, repeatedly quotes the expression "most painless" transition; but as the shaft misses its mark, he a few pages further on commits a slight forgery and falsely quotes it as "painless transition." Of course, by such means it is easy to put any absurdity into the mouth of an opponent. The forgery also facilitates the evasion of the *substance* of the argument, namely, that the most painless transition to socialism is possible only when all the poor are organised (Soviets) and when the central state power (of the proletariat) helps to organise them.

² See "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed.

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE SOVIET REPUBLIC

THE question of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by the Bolsheviks is the crux of Kautsky's entire pamphlet. He constantly reverts to it, and the whole of this literary production of the theoretical leader of the Second International teems with innuendoes to the effect that the Bolsheviks have "destroyed democracy" (see one of the quotations from Kautsky above). The question is really an interesting and important one, because the relation between bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy is confronting the revolution in a *practical* form. Let us see how our "Marxist theoretician" has dealt with the question.

He quotes my "Theses on the Constituent Assembly," which were published in the *Pravda* of January 8, 1918 [December 26, 1917].¹ One would think that no better evidence of Kautsky's serious approach to the subject and of his willingness to study the documents could be desired. But observe *how* he quotes. He does not say that there were nineteen of these theses; he does not say that they dealt with the question of the relation between the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly and a Soviet republic, *as well as* with the *history* of the divergence, in the course of our revolution, between the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky suppresses all that, and simply tells the reader that "two of these" (theses) "are particularly important"; one stating that a split occurred among the Socialist-Revolutionaries after the elections to the Constituent Assembly, but before it was convened (Kautsky does not mention that this was the fifth thesis), and the other, that the republic of the Soviets is in general a higher democratic form than the Constituent Assembly (Kautsky does not mention that this was the third thesis).

¹ See *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed.

stated this in print, as, for instance, in a pamphlet on political parties,¹ which was translated into English and was published in January 1918 in the New York *Evening Post*. Moreover, the conference of the Bolshevik Party held at the end of April [beginning of May] 1917 adopted a resolution to the effect that a proletarian and peasant republic was higher than a bourgeois parliamentary republic, that our Party would not be satisfied with the latter, and that the programme of the Party ought to be amended accordingly.

In face of these facts, what name can be given to Kautsky's trick of assuring his German readers that I had been clamorously demanding the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and that I began to "belittle" the honour and dignity of the Constituent Assembly after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in it? How can one excuse such a trick?² By pleading that Kautsky did not know the facts? If that is the case, why did he undertake to write about the subject? Or why did he not honestly declare that he was writing on the strength of information supplied by the Mensheviks, by Stein, P. Axelrod and Co.? By pretending to be objective, Kautsky wants to conceal his role as the servant of the Mensheviks who are disgruntled because they have been defeated.

But these are only the blossoms, the fruit is yet to come.

Let us assume that Kautsky would not or could not (??) obtain from his informants a translation of the Bolshevik resolutions and declarations on the question of whether they would be satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary democratic republic or not. Let us assume this, although it is incredible. But Kautsky *directly* mentions my theses of January 8, 1918 [December 26, 1917],³ on page 30 of his book.

Does he know these theses in full, or does he know only those parts that have been translated for him by Stein, Axelrod and Co.? Kautsky quotes my *third* thesis on the *fundamental* question of

¹ "Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—*Ed.*

² Incidentally there are many Menshevik lies of this kind in Kautsky's pamphlet. It is a lampoon written by a disgruntled Menshevik.

³ See "Theses on the Constituent Assembly," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—*Ed.*

whether the Bolsheviks, *before* the elections to the Constituent Assembly, regarded the Soviet republic as a higher type of republic than the bourgeois republic, and whether they told the *people* that. *But he does not quote the second thesis.* The second thesis reads as follows:

"While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has from the very beginning of the Revolution of 1917 repeatedly emphasised that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly." (My italics.)

In order to represent the Bolsheviks as being devoid of all principles, as "revolutionary opportunists" (this is a term which Kautsky employs somewhere in his book in some connection which I do not remember), Mr. Kautsky *has concealed from his German readers* the fact that the theses contain a *direct* reference to "repeated" declarations!

Such are the petty, miserable and contemptible methods Mr. Kautsky employs! That is the way he has evaded the *theoretical* question.

Is it true or not that the bourgeois-democratic parliamentary republic is a *lower* form of republic than that of the Paris Commune or Soviet type? This is the crux of the question, and Kautsky has evaded it. Kautsky has "forgotten" all that Marx said in his analysis of the Paris Commune. He has also "forgotten" Engels' letter to Bebel of March 28, 1875, in which Marx's idea is formulated in a terse and clear fashion: "The Commune was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word."

Here is the most prominent theoretician of the Second International, in a special pamphlet on the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat* specially dealing with Russia, where the question of a state that was higher than a democratic bourgeois republic has been raised repeatedly in a direct manner, ignoring this very question. In what way does this differ *in fact* from desertion to the bourgeois camp?

(We will observe in parenthesis that in this respect also Kautsky is merely following in the footsteps of the Russian Mensheviks. Among the latter there are any number of people who know "all the quotations" from Marx and Engels; but not a single Menshevik

from April to October 1917 and from October 1917 to October 1918 has made a *single* attempt to study the question of the Paris Commune type of state. Plekhanov, too, has evaded the question. *He thought it wiser to remain silent.*

It goes without saying that to discuss the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly with persons who call themselves Socialists and Marxists, but who in practice desert to the bourgeoisie on the *main* question, on the question of the Paris Commune type of state, would be casting pearls before swine. It will be sufficient for me to give the complete text of my theses on the Constituent Assembly as an appendix to the present book.¹ The reader will then see that the question was presented on January 8, 1918 [December 26, 1917], theoretically, historically, and from the point of view of practical politics.

If Kautsky has completely renounced Marxism as a theoretician he might at least have examined the question of the struggle of the Soviets with the Constituent Assembly as a historian. We know from many of Kautsky's works that he *could* be a Marxian historian, and that *these* works of his will remain the permanent treasure of the proletariat in spite of his subsequent renegacy. But on this question Kautsky *turns away* from the truth even as a historian, he ignores *well-known* facts and behaves like a sycophant. He wants to represent the Bolsheviks as being devoid of principles and he tells his readers that they tried to *allay* their conflict with the Constituent Assembly before dispersing it. This is absolutely nothing to be ashamed of; we have no need to recant: I give my theses in full and there I say as clear as clear can be: Gentlemen of the vacillating petty bourgeoisie who have got into the Constituent Assembly, either reconcile yourselves to the proletarian dictatorship, or else we shall conquer you by "revolutionary means" (theses 18 and 19).

That is how a really revolutionary proletariat has always behaved, and always will behave towards the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

Kautsky adopts a formal standpoint on the question of the

¹ See *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—*Ed.*

Constituent Assembly. In my theses I clearly and repeatedly say that the interests of the revolution are higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly (theses 16 and 17). The formal democratic point of view is precisely the point of view of the *bourgeois* democrat who refuses to admit that the interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class struggle are supreme. As a historian, Kautsky would not have been able to deny that bourgeois parliaments are the organs of this or that class; but now (for the sordid purpose of renouncing revolution) Kautsky finds it necessary to forget his Marxism, and he refrains from *putting the question*: what *class* was the Constituent Assembly of Russia the organ of? Kautsky does not examine the concrete conditions; he does not want to face the facts; he does not say a single word to his German readers to suggest that my theses contained, not only a theoretical elucidation of the question of the limited character of bourgeois democracy (theses 1-3), not only an outline of the concrete conditions which determined the discrepancy between the party candidate lists in the middle of October 1917 and the real state of affairs in December 1917 (theses 4-6), but also a history of the class struggle and the *civil war* in October-December 1917 (theses 7-15). From this concrete history we drew the conclusion (thesis 14) that the slogan: "All power to the Constituent Assembly" * had, in *reality*, become the slogan of the Cadets, the Kaledinites, and their abettors.

Kautsky, the historian, fails to see this. Kautsky, the historian, has never heard that universal suffrage gives rise sometimes to petty-bourgeois, sometimes to reactionary and sometimes to counter-revolutionary parliaments. Kautsky, the Marxian historian, has never heard that the method of elections and the form of democracy are one thing, and the class content of the given institution is another thing. This question of the class content of the Constituent Assembly is directly put and answered in my theses. Perhaps my answer is wrong. Nothing would have been more welcome than a Marxian criticism of our analysis by an outsider. Instead of writing silly phrases (of which there are plenty in Kautsky's book) about somebody, somehow, preventing the criticism of Bolshevism, he ought to have set out to make such a criticism. But the point is that he has no criticism to offer. He does not even *raise the question* of

the class analysis of the Soviets and of the Constituent Assembly. Hence it is *impossible* to argue, to debate with Kautsky; and all we can do is to *prove* to the reader why Kautsky cannot be called by any other name than renegade.

The divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly has its history, which even a historian who does not adopt the point of view of the class war could not ignore. Kautsky would not even *touch upon* this factual history. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers the universally known fact (which only malicious Mensheviks now suppress) that the divergence between the Soviets and the "state" (that is, the bourgeois state) institutions existed even when the Mensheviks predominated, from the end of February to October 1917. Actually, Kautsky adopts the position of an advocate of conciliation, compromise and collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. However much Kautsky may deny this, it is a fact which is borne out by his whole pamphlet. To say that the Constituent Assembly should not have been dispersed is tantamount to saying that the fight against the bourgeoisie should not have been fought to a finish, that the bourgeoisie should not have been overthrown and that the proletariat should have become reconciled with it.

Why has Kautsky said nothing about the fact that the Mensheviks were engaged in this inglorious work between February and October 1917 and did not achieve anything? If it was possible to reconcile the bourgeoisie with the proletariat why did not the Mensheviks succeed in doing so? Why did the bourgeoisie stand aloof from the Soviets? Why did the *Mensheviks* call the Soviets "revolutionary democracy,"* and the bourgeoisie the "property qualification elements"?

Kautsky has concealed from his German readers that it was precisely the Mensheviks who, in the "epoch" of their predominance (February to October 1917), called the Soviets "revolutionary democracy," thereby admitting the superiority of the Soviets over all other institutions. It is only by concealing this fact that the historian Kautsky was able to make it appear that the divergence between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie had no history, that it arose instantaneously, suddenly, without cause, because of the bad be-

haviour of the Bolsheviks. As a matter of fact, it was precisely *the more than six months'* (an enormous period in time of revolution) *experience* of the Menshevik policy of compromise, of attempts to reconcile the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, that convinced the people of the fruitlessness of these attempts and drove the proletariat away from the Mensheviks.

Kautsky admits that the Soviets are an excellent fighting organisation of the proletariat, and that they have a great future before them. But, that being the case, Kautsky's position collapses like a house of cards, or like the dreams of a petty bourgeois who believes that the acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be avoided. For revolution is a continuous desperate struggle, and the proletariat is the vanguard class of *all* the oppressed, the focus and centre of all the aspirations of all the oppressed who are striving for emancipation! Naturally, therefore, the Soviets, as the organ of struggle of the oppressed masses, reflected and expressed the moods and changes of opinions of these masses ever so much more quickly, more fully, and more faithfully than any other institution (that, incidentally, is one of the reasons why Soviet democracy is the highest type of democracy).

In the period between March 13 [February 28] and November 7 [October 25], 1917, the Soviets managed to convene *two* All-Russian Congresses of representatives of the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, of all the workers and soldiers, and 70 or 80 per cent of all the peasantry; not to speak of the vast number of local, district, urban, provincial, and regional congresses. During this period the bourgeoisie did not succeed in convening a single institution that represented the majority of the people (except that obvious sham and mockery called the "Democratic Conference,"* which enraged the proletariat). The Constituent Assembly reflected the *same* mood of the masses and the *same* political groups as were reflected by the first (June) All-Russian Congress of Soviets. About the time the Constituent Assembly was convened (January 1918), the Second and Third Congresses of Soviets met (in November [October] 1917, and January 1918, respectively) and both demonstrated *as clear as clear can be* that the masses had swung to the Left, had become revolutionised, had turned away from the Mensheviks

and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and had passed over to the side of the Bolsheviks; *i.e.*, had turned away from petty-bourgeois leadership, from the illusion that it was possible to reach a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and joined the proletarian revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

Hence, even the *external history* of the Soviets shows that the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly was inevitable and that this Assembly was a *reactionary* body.

But Kautsky sticks firmly to his motto: let "pure democracy" prevail though the revolution perish and the bourgeoisie triumph over the proletariat! *Fiat justitia, pereat mundus!*

The following figures depict the composition of the All-Russian Congresses of Soviets in the course of the history of the Russian revolution:

<i>All-Russian Congress of Soviets</i>	<i>Number of Delegates</i>	<i>Number of Bolsheviks</i>	<i>Percentage of Bolsheviks</i>
First—June 16 [3], 1917	790	103	13
Second—November 7 [October 25], 1917..	675	343	51
Third—January 23 [10], 1918	710	434	61
Fourth—March 14, 1918	1,232	795	64
Fifth—July 4, 1918	1,164	773	66

It is enough to glance at these figures to understand why the defence of the Constituent Assembly and talk (like Kautsky's) about the Bolsheviks not having a majority of the population behind them is ridiculed in Russia.

THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

As I have already pointed out, the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is not necessarily an element of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And in Russia, the Bolsheviks, who long before October advanced the slogan of proletarian dictatorship, did not say anything in advance about disfranchising the exploiters. *This* element of the dictatorship did not make its appearance "according to the plan" of any particular party; it emerged of its own accord in the course of the struggle. Of course, Kautsky, the historian, failed to observe this. He failed to understand that even when the Mensheviks, the advocates of compromise with the bourgeoisie, predominated in the Soviets, the bourgeoisie of its own accord separated itself from the Soviets, boycotted them, put itself up in opposition to them and intrigued against them. The Soviets arose without any constitution and existed for *more than twelve months* (from the spring of 1917 to the summer of 1918) without any constitution. The rage of the bourgeoisie against these independent and omnipotent (because all-embracing) organisations of the oppressed; the unscrupulous, self-seeking and despicable fight the bourgeoisie waged against the Soviets; and, lastly, the overt participation of the bourgeoisie—from the Cadets to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, from Milyukov to Kerensky—in the Kornilov mutiny, all *paved the way* for the formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets.

Kautsky has heard about this Kornilov mutiny, but he majestically scorns historical facts and the course and forms of the struggle which determined the *forms* of the dictatorship. Indeed, what have facts got to do with "pure democracy"? That is why Kautsky's "criticism" of the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is so sweetly naive—a naiveté that would be touching in a child but is repulsive in a person who has not yet been officially certified as being feeble-minded.

"If they [the capitalists] find themselves in an insignificant minority under universal suffrage they will more readily become reconciled to their fate" (p. 33).

Charming, is it not? Clever Kautsky has seen many cases in history, and, of course, knows perfectly well from his observations of life, that there are landlords and capitalists who give consideration to the will of the majority of the oppressed. Clever Kautsky firmly adopts the point of view of an "opposition," *i.e.*, the point of view of the parliamentary struggle. This is literally what he says: "opposition" (p. 34 and elsewhere).

Oh, learned historian and politician! It would not be amiss for you to know that "opposition" is a concept that belongs to the peaceful and only to the parliamentary struggle, *i.e.*, a concept that corresponds to a non-revolutionary situation, a concept that corresponds to a situation marked by an *absence of revolution*. During revolution we have to deal with a ruthless enemy in civil war; and no reactionary jeremiads of a petty bourgeois who fears such a war as Kautsky does will alter the fact. To regard the problems of ruthless civil war, when the bourgeoisie is prepared to commit any crime—the example of the Versailles and their deals with Bismarck,* must mean something to every person who does not treat history in the way it was treated by Gogol's Petrushka¹—when the bourgeoisie summons foreign states to its assistance and intrigues with them against the revolution—to regard these problems in this way is simply comical. Like the "muddle-headed counsellor" Kautsky, the revolutionary proletariat should put on a night cap and regard the bourgeoisie, which is organising Dutov, Krasnov and Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary insurrections** and which is spending millions to subsidise saboteurs, as a legal "opposition." Oh, what profundity!

Kautsky is interested only in the formal, legal aspect of the question, and his disquisitions on the Soviet constitution involuntarily recall Bebel's words: "Lawyers are thorough reactionaries."

Kautsky writes:

"In reality the capitalists alone cannot be disfranchised. What is a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? A property owner? Even in a country which has advanced so far along the path of economic progress as Germany,

¹ A character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, an ignorant serf who mechanically read books syllable by syllable without understanding their meaning.—*Ed.*

where the proletariat is so numerous, the establishment of a Soviet republic would disfranchise large masses of the people. In 1907, the number of persons in the German Empire engaged in the three great groups of occupation—agriculture, industry and commerce—together with their families amounted roughly to thirty-five million in the wage earners' and salaried employees' group, and seventeen million in the independent group. Hence, a party could well have a majority among the wage workers, but a minority among the population as a whole" (p. 33).

This is an example of Kautsky's arguments. Is it not the counter-revolutionary whining of a bourgeois? Why have you, Mr. Kautsky, relegated all in the "independent" group to the category of the disfranchised, when you know very well that the overwhelming majority of the Russian peasants do not employ hired labour, and do not, therefore, lose their political rights? Is this not falsification?

Why do you not, oh learned economist, quote the facts with which you are perfectly familiar and which are to be found in the very same German statistical returns for 1907 relating to hired labour in agriculture according to the size of farms? Why do you not quote these facts for the benefit of the German workers, the readers of your pamphlet, and thus enable them to see *how many exploiters there are*, how small is the number of exploiters out of the total number of "farmers" who figure in German statistics?

Because your renegacy has transformed you into a mere sycophant of the bourgeoisie.

The term capitalist, don't you see, is a legally vague concept, and Kautsky for the space of several pages hurls his wrath against the "tyranny" of the Soviet constitution. This "serious scholar" has no objection to the British bourgeoisie taking several centuries to work out a new (new for the Middle Ages) bourgeois constitution, but this representative of lackey's science will not give any time to us, the workers and peasants of Russia. He expects us to have a constitution all complete to the very last word in a few months.

"Tyranny!" Think what a depth of mean subserviency to the bourgeoisie and of the most idiotic pedantry is contained in *such* a reproach. When thoroughly bourgeois and, for the most part, reactionary lawyers in the capitalist countries have for centuries or decades been drawing up most detailed rules and regulations and writing hundreds of volumes of various codes and laws and inter-

pretations of these laws to *oppress* the workers, to bind the *poor man* hand and foot and to place a hundred and one hindrances and obstacles in the way of the common toiling people—oh, then bourgeois liberals and Mr. Kautsky see no “tyranny.” This is “law” and “order”: the ways in which the poor are to be “kept down” have all been thought out and written down. There are thousands and thousands of bourgeois lawyers and bureaucrats (Kautsky says nothing about them, probably for the very reason that Marx attached enormous significance to the *smashing* of the bureaucratic machine . . .) —lawyers and bureaucrats who are able to interpret the laws in such a way that the worker and the average peasant can never break through the barbed-wire entanglements of these laws. This, of course, is not the “tyranny” of the bourgeoisie, it is not the dictatorship of the sordid and self-seeking exploiters who are sucking the blood of the people. Oh, nothing of the kind! It is “pure democracy,” which is becoming purer and purer every day.

But now that the toiling and exploited classes, for the first time in history, while cut off by the imperialist war from their brothers across the frontier, have set up *their own* Soviets, have called to the work of political construction *those masses* which the bourgeoisie used to oppress and stupefy, and have begun *themselves* to build up a *new*, proletarian state, have begun in the heat of furious struggle, in the fire of civil war, to *sketch* the fundamental principles of a state *without exploiters*—all the scoundrelly bourgeoisie, the whole gang of blood-suckers with Kautsky echoing them, howl about “tyranny.” Indeed, how will these ignorant people, these workers and peasants this “mob,” be able to interpret their laws? How can these common toilers acquire the sense of justice without the aid of educated lawyers, of bourgeois writers, of the Kautsky and the wise old bureaucrats?

Mr. Kautsky quotes from my speech of April 29, 1918, the words:

“The masses themselves determine the procedure and the time of elections.”

And Kautsky, the “pure democrat,” infers from this:

“Hence, it would mean that every assembly of electors may determine the procedure of elections at their discretion. Tyranny and the opportunity

of getting rid of undesirable opposition elements in the ranks of the proletariat itself have thus been carried to a high degree” (p. 37).

Well, what is the difference between these remarks and the talk of the hired capitalist hack journalist who howls about the tyranny of the masses who oppress the “industrious” workers who are “willing to work” during a strike? Why is the bureaucratic and *bourgeois* method of determining electoral procedure under “pure,” bourgeois democracy *not* tyranny? Why should the sense of justice *among the masses who have risen to fight* their age-long exploiters and who are being educated and hardened in this desperate struggle be lower than that of a *handful* of bureaucrats, intellectuals and lawyers who are steeped in *bourgeois* prejudices?

Kautsky is a true Socialist. Don’t dare suspect the sincerity of this very respectable father of a family, of this very honest citizen. He is an ardent and convinced supporter of the victory of the workers, of the proletarian revolution. All he wants is that the sentimental petty-bourgeois and philistine intellectuals in night caps should, first—*before* the masses begin to move, *before* they enter into furious battle with the exploiters, and certainly *without* civil war—draw up a moderate and exact set of *rules for the development of the revolution*.

Burning with profound moral indignation, our most learned Yudushka Golovlev¹ tells the German workers that on April 14, 1918, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets decided to expel the representatives of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks from the Soviets.* He says:

“This measure is not directed against definite persons guilty of definite punishable offences. . . . The constitution of the Soviet Republic does not contain a single word about the immunity of Soviet deputies. It is not definite *persons*, but definite *parties*, that are expelled from the Soviets” (p. 37).

Yes, this is really awful; an intolerable departure from pure democracy, according to the rules of which our revolutionary Yudushka Kautsky will make a revolution. We Russian Bolsheviks should first of all have guaranteed immunity for the Savinkovs and

¹A character in Shchedrin’s novel *The Golovlev Family* personifying the pious hypocrite.—Ed.

Co., the Lieberdans¹ and Potresovs (the so-called "Activists")² and Co., and then we should have drawn up a criminal code proclaiming participation in the Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary war,* or an alliance with the German imperialists in the Ukraine or in Georgia *against* the workers of this country, to be "punishable offences," and *only then*, on the basis of this criminal code, should we have been justified, in accordance with the principles of "pure democracy," in expelling "definite persons" from the Soviets. It goes without saying that the Czecho-Slovaks, who were subsidised by the Anglo-French capitalists through the medium, or thanks to the agitation of the Savinkovs, Potresovs and Lieberdans, and the Krasnovs, who received shells from the Germans through the medium of the Ukrainian and Tiflis Mensheviks, would have sat quietly waiting until we were ready with our proper criminal code, and, like the purest democrats, would have confined themselves to the role of an "opposition."

No less moral indignation is aroused in Kautsky's breast by the fact that the Soviet constitution disfranchises all those who "employ hired labour with a view to profit."

He writes:

"A worker working in his own home, or a small master employing only one journeyman, may live and feel quite like a proletarian, but he has no vote!" (p. 36).

What a departure from "pure democracy"! What injustice! Up to now all Marxists have thought—and thousands of facts have proved it—that the small masters were the most unscrupulous and grasping exploiters of hired labour, but our Yudushka Kautsky takes the small masters not as a *class* (who invented the pernicious theory of the class struggle?) but as single individuals, exploiters who "live and feel quite like proletarians." The famous "thrifty Agnes," whom we had thought dead for a long time, has come to life again under Kautsky's pen. This "thrifty Agnes" was invented and set

¹ A nickname conferred on the Mensheviks in 1917 by the Bolshevik poet Demyan Bedny; it is a combination of the names of the two Menshevik leaders Lieber and Dan.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

² The Right Mensheviks who at that time took part in the armed counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet government.—*Ed.*

going in German literature a score of years ago by that "pure" democrat, the bourgeois Eugen Richter. He predicted untold calamities that were to result from the dictatorship of the proletariat, from the confiscation of the capital of the exploiters, and used to ask with an innocent air: who was a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? He took as an example a poor, thrifty seamstress ("thrifty Agnes"), who was robbed of her last farthing by the wicked "dictators of the proletariat." There was a time when the whole of German Social-Democracy poked fun at this "thrifty Agnes" of the pure democrat, Eugen Richter. But that was a long, long time ago, when Bebel was still alive and when he used to declare frankly and truthfully that there were many National-Liberals in our party; that was very long ago, when Kautsky was not yet a renegade.

Now "thrifty Agnes" has come to life again, in the person of the "small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian," and who employs "only one" journeyman. The wicked Bolsheviks are ill-treating this small master, are depriving him of his vote! It is true that "every assembly of electors," as Kautsky tells us, may, in the Soviet Republic, admit into its midst a poor little master who, for instance, may be connected with this or that factory, if, by way of an exception, he is not an exploiter, and if he *really* "lives and feels quite like a proletarian." But can one rely only on the knowledge of life, the sense of justice of an irregular factory meeting of common workers acting (oh horror!) without a written code? Clearly, would it not be better to grant the vote to *all* the exploiters, to *all* those who employ hired labour, rather than risk the possibility of "thrifty Agnes" and the "small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian" being wronged by the workers?

Let the contemptible, scoundrelly renegades, amidst the applause of the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists,¹ abuse our Soviet con-

¹ I have just read a leading article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of October 22, 1918, enthusiastically reviewing Kautsky's pamphlet. This organ of the Stock Exchange is satisfied, and no wonder. At the same time a comrade writes to me from Berlin stating that the *Vorwärts*, the organ of the Scheidemanns, has in a special article subscribed to almost every line Kautsky has written. Congratulations!

stitution for disfranchising the exploiters. This is good, because it will accelerate and deepen the split between the revolutionary workers of Europe and the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and MacDonalds, and all the old leaders and old betrayers of socialism.

The masses of the oppressed classes, the class conscious and honest revolutionary proletarian leaders, will be on *our side*. It will be sufficient for such proletarians and such masses to become acquainted with our Soviet constitution for them to say at once: "These are indeed *our people*; theirs is a real workers' party, theirs is a real workers' government, for it does not deceive the workers by talking about reforms *in the way the above-mentioned leaders have done*; it is *really* fighting the exploiters, it is *really* bringing about a revolution, it is *really* fighting for the complete emancipation of the working class."

The *fact* that after twelve months' "experience" the Soviets are depriving the exploiters of the franchise *shows* that the Soviets are really organisations of the oppressed masses and not of social-imperialists and social-pacifists who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie. The *fact* that the Soviets have disfranchised the exploiters *shows* that they are not organs of petty-bourgeois compromise with the capitalists, not organs of parliamentary chatter (of the Kautskys, the Longuets and the MacDonalds), but organs of the genuinely revolutionary proletariat which is waging a life and death struggle against the exploiters.

"Kautsky's pamphlet is almost unknown here," a well-informed comrade in Berlin wrote to me a few days ago (today is October 30). I would advise our ambassadors in Germany and Switzerland not to stint a thousand or so in buying up this book and *distributing it gratis* among the class conscious workers in order that this "European"—read *imperialist and reformist*—Social-Democracy, which has long been a "stinking corpse," may be trampled in the mud.

* * *

At the end of his book, on pages 61 and 63, Mr. Kautsky bitterly laments over the fact that "the new theory" (as he calls Bolshevism, fearing even to touch Marx's and Engels' analysis of the Paris Com-

mune) "finds supporters even among old democracies like Switzerland for instance." Kautsky "cannot understand how this theory can be adopted by German Social-Democrats."

No, it is quite easy to understand; for after the serious lessons of the war the revolutionary masses are becoming sick and tired of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys.

"We" have always been in favour of democracy, Kautsky writes; can we suddenly renounce it?

"We," the opportunists of Social-Democracy, have always been opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Kolb and Co. proclaimed this *long ago*. Kautsky knows this and it is futile for him to imagine that he can conceal from his readers the obvious fact that he has "returned to the fold" of the Bernsteins and Kolbs.

"We," the revolutionary Marxists, have never made an idol of "pure" (bourgeois) democracy. As is well known, in 1903 Plekhanov was a revolutionary Marxist (before his lamentable turn, which brought him to the position of a Russian Scheidemann). In that year Plekhanov declared at the congress of our Party, which was then adopting its programme, that in the revolution the proletariat would, if necessary, disfranchise the capitalists and *disperse any parliament* that was found to be counter-revolutionary. That this is the only view that corresponds to Marxism will be clear to anybody even from the statements of Marx and Engels which I have quoted above; it follows logically from all the fundamental principles of Marxism.

"We," the revolutionary Marxists, never made the speeches to the people that are made by the Kautskyans of all nations, who cringe before the bourgeoisie, adapt themselves to bourgeois parliamentarism, are silent about the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy and demand only *its* extension, demand that *it* be carried to its logical conclusion.

"We" said to the bourgeoisie: "You, exploiters and hypocrites, talk about democracy while at every step you create a thousand and one obstacles to prevent the *oppressed masses* from taking part in politics. We take you at your word and in the interests of these masses we demand the extension of *your* bourgeois democracy *in order to prepare the masses for revolution* for the purpose of over-

throwing you, the exploiters. And if you exploiters attempt to offer resistance to our proletarian revolution we shall ruthlessly suppress you; we shall deprive you of your rights; more than that, we shall not give you any bread, for in our proletarian republic the exploiters will have no rights, they will be deprived of fire and water, for we are Socialists in real earnest, and not the Scheidemann or Kautsky type of Socialist."

That is what "we," the revolutionary Marxists, said, and shall say—and that is why the oppressed masses will support us and be with us, while the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys will be swept into the renegades' cesspool.

WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

KAUTSKY is quite convinced that he is an internationalist and calls himself such. The Scheidemanns he calls "government Socialists." But in defending the Mensheviks (he does not openly express his solidarity with them, but he entirely expresses their views), Kautsky has glaringly revealed the sort of "internationalism" he subscribes to. And since Kautsky is not alone, but is the representative of a trend which inevitably grew up in the atmosphere of the Second International (Longuet in France, Turati in Italy, Nobs and Grimm, Grabber and Naine in Switzerland, Ramsay MacDonald in England, etc.), it will be instructive to dwell on Kautsky's "internationalism."

After emphasising that the Mensheviks also attended the Zimmerwald Conference (a diploma, certainly, but a tainted diploma), Kautsky sets forth the views of the Mensheviks, with whom he agrees, in the following manner:

"The Mensheviks wanted a general peace. They wanted all the belligerents to adopt the formula: No annexations and no indemnities. The Russian army was to stand ready for battle until this had been achieved. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, demanded an immediate peace at any price; they were prepared, if need be, to make a separate peace; they tried to extort it by force by increasing the state of disorganisation of the army, which was already bad enough" (p. 27).

In Kautsky's opinion the Bolsheviks should not have taken power, and should have been satisfied with the Constituent Assembly.

Thus, the internationalism of Kautsky and the Mensheviks amounted to this: to demand reforms from the imperialist bourgeois government, but to continue to support it, and to continue to support the war that this government was waging until all the belligerents had accepted the formula: No annexations and no indemnities. This view was repeatedly expressed by Turati and by the Kautskyans (Haase and others), and Longuet and Co., who declared that they stood for "defence of the fatherland."

Theoretically, this is complete inability to dissociate oneself from the social-chauvinists and complete confusion on the question of the defence of the fatherland. Politically, it is the substitution of petty-bourgeois nationalism for internationalism, and desertion to the reformists' camp, the renunciation of revolution.

From the point of view of the proletariat, the recognition of "defence of the fatherland" is justification of the present war, an admission that it is legitimate. And since the war remains an imperialist war, both under a monarchy and under a republic, irrespective of the territory—mine or the enemy's—occupied by the enemy troops at the given moment, the recognition of the defence of the fatherland is, *in fact*, tantamount to supporting the imperialist predatory bourgeoisie, it is tantamount to the utter betrayal of socialism. In Russia, even under Kerensky, under the bourgeois-democratic republic, the war continued to be an imperialist war, for it was being waged by the bourgeoisie as a ruling class (war is the "continuation of politics"); and a very striking expression of the imperialist character of the war were the secret treaties for the partition of the world and the plunder of other countries, which had been concluded by the ex-tsar with the capitalists of England and France.

The Mensheviks deceived the people in a most despicable manner by calling this war a defensive or revolutionary war; and by approving the policy of the Mensheviks, Kautsky is approving the deception practised on the people, is approving the part played by the petty bourgeoisie in helping capital to trick the workers and to harness them to the chariot of the imperialists. Kautsky is advocating a characteristically petty-bourgeois philistine policy by pretending (and trying to make the masses believe the absurd idea) that *putting forward a slogan* alters the position. The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion; the bourgeois democrats have always advanced, and still advance, all sorts of "slogans" in order to deceive the people. The point is *to test* their sincerity, to compare their words with their *deeds*, not to be satisfied with idealistic or charlatan *phrases*, but to get down to *class reality*. An imperialist war does not cease to be an imperialist war when charlatans or phrasemongers or petty-bourgeois philistines put forward

sentimental "slogans"; it ceases to be such only when the *class* which is conducting the imperialist war, and which is bound to it by millions of economic threads (and sometimes ropes), is *overthrown* and is replaced at the helm of state by the really revolutionary class, the proletariat. There is no other way of *getting out of an imperialist war, or imperialist predatory peace*.

By approving the foreign policy of the Mensheviks, and by declaring it to be internationalist and Zimmerwaldian, Kautsky, first, confirms the rottenness of the opportunist Zimmerwald majority (it was not without reason that we, the *Left Zimmerwaldians*, at once dissociated ourselves from it!) and secondly—and this is the most important—passes from the position of the proletariat to that of the petty bourgeoisie, from the revolutionary position to the reformist position.

The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism, for adaptation and *submission* to it. When Kautsky was still a Marxist, for instance in 1909, when he wrote his *Road to Power*, he expounded the view that war would inevitably lead to *revolution*, and he spoke of the approach of an *era of revolutions*. The Basle Manifesto of 1912 directly and definitely speaks of a *proletarian revolution* in connection with that very imperialist war between the German and the British coalitions which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when these revolutions did begin as a result of the war, Kautsky, instead of pointing out that they were inevitable, instead of pondering over and thinking out to the end the *revolutionary* tactics and the methods of preparing for revolution, began to describe the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as internationalism. Is not this renegacy?

Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for maintaining the fighting efficiency of the army, and he blames the Bolsheviks for having increased the state of "disorganisation of the army," which was already disorganised enough. This means praising reformism and submission to the imperialist bourgeoisie, blaming the revolution and abjuring it; because even under Kerensky the maintenance of the fighting efficiency of the army meant its maintenance under the *bourgeois* (albeit republican) command. Everybody knows, and

the progress of events has confirmed it, that this republican army preserved the *Kornilov* spirit because the commanding staff was Kornilovist; the bourgeois officers could not help being Kornilovists; they could not help gravitating towards imperialism and towards the forcible suppression of the proletariat. All that the Menshevik tactics amounted to *in practice* was to leave all the foundations of the imperialist war, all the foundations of the *bourgeois* dictatorship intact, to repair details and to paint up minor defects ("reforms").

On the other hand, not a single great revolution has ever refrained from "disorganising" the army and cannot now refrain from doing so; because the army is the most rigid instrument for supporting the old regime, the most hardened bulwark of bourgeois discipline, of the rule of capital, of preserving among the toiling masses and imbuing them with the servile spirit of submission and subjection to capital. Counter-revolution has never tolerated, and never could tolerate, the armed workers side by side with the army. Engels wrote that in France, after each revolution, the workers were armed; "therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment of the bourgeois at the helm of the state."

The armed workers were the embryo of a *new* army, the nucleus of the organisation of a *new* social order. The first commandment of the bourgeoisie was: crush this nucleus, prevent it from growing. The first commandment of every victorious revolution, as Marx and Engels repeatedly emphasised, was: smash the old army, dissolve it and replace it by a new one. In rising to power, the new social class never could, and cannot now, attain power or consolidate it except by absolutely disintegrating the old army ("Disorganisation!" the reactionary or just cowardly philistines will howl), except by passing through a most difficult and painful period without any army (as was the case also during the French Revolution)* and by gradually building up in the midst of stern civil war a new army, a new discipline, a new military organisation of the new class. Formerly, Kautsky the historian understood this. The renegade Kautsky has forgotten it.

What right has Kautsky to call the Scheidemanns "government

Socialists"¹ if he *approves* of the tactics of the Mensheviks in the Russian revolution? By supporting Kerensky and by joining his ministry, the Mensheviks also became government Socialists. Kautsky will not be able to wriggle out of this conclusion if he attempts to raise the question: *which ruling class* is waging the imperialist war? But Kautsky avoids raising the question of the ruling class, a question that must be put by a Marxist, because the mere raising of the question would expose him as a renegade.

The Kautskyans in Germany, the Longuetists in France, and the Turatis and Co. in Italy argue in this way: socialism presupposes the equality and freedom of nations, their self-determination; *hence*, when our country is attacked, or when enemy troops invade our territory, it is the right and duty of the Socialists to defend the country. But theoretically such an argument is either sheer mockery of socialism or a fraudulent evasion; from the point of view of practical politics, this argument coincides with that of the very ignorant muzhik who has no conception of the social, the *class* character of the war, and the tasks of a revolutionary party during a reactionary war.

Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But socialism is opposed to violence against men in general. Apart from Christian-Anarchists and Tolstoyans,* however, no one has yet drawn the conclusion from this that socialism is opposed to *revolutionary* violence. Hence, to talk about "violence" in general, without examining the conditions which distinguish reactionary from revolutionary violence, means being a petty bourgeois who renounces revolution, or else it means simply deceiving oneself and others by sophistry.

The same holds good about violence against nations. Every war is the exercise of violence against nations, but that does not prevent Socialists from being in *favour* of a revolutionary war. The class character of the war—that is the fundamental question which confronts a Socialist (if he is not a renegade). The imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two coalitions of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the partition of the world, for the division of the booty,

¹ See note to p. 25.**—Ed.

and for the plunder and strangulation of small and weak nations. This was the appraisal of the war given in the Basle Manifesto in 1912, and since then it has been confirmed by facts. Whoever departs from this point of view ceases to be a Socialist.

If a German under Wilhelm, or a Frenchman under Clemenceau, says: "As a Socialist, I have the right and it is my duty to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy," he argues not like a Socialist, not like an internationalist, not like a revolutionary proletarian, but like a *petty-bourgeois nationalist*. Because this argument leaves out of account the revolutionary class struggle of the workers against capital, it leaves out of account the appraisal of the war as a *whole* from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat: that is, it leaves out internationalism, and all that remains is a miserable and narrow-minded nationalism. My country is being wronged, that is all I care about—this is what this argument reduces itself to, and that is why it is petty-bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness. It is the same as if in regard to individual violence, violence against an individual, one were to argue that socialism is opposed to violence and therefore I would rather be a traitor than go to prison.

The Frenchman, the German or Italian who says: "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, *therefore* I defend myself when my country is invaded," *betrays* socialism and internationalism, because *he only thinks of his own* "country," he puts "his own" . . . "*bourgeoisie*" above everything else and forgets about the *international connections* which make the war an imperialist war, and make *his* bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder.

All philistines and all stupid and ignorant yokels argue in exactly the same way as the renegade Kautskyans, Longuetists, and Turati-ists: "The enemy has invaded my country; I do not care about anything else."¹

¹The social-chauvinists (the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Compères and Co.) absolutely refuse to talk about the "International" during the war. They regard the enemies of their respective bourgeoisies as "traitors" to . . . socialism. They *support* the policy of conquest pursued by their respective bourgeoisies. The social-pacifists (*i.e.*, the Socialists in words and petty-bourgeois pacifists in practice) express all sorts of "internationalist" sentiments, protest against annexations, etc., but in

The Socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, argues differently. He says: "The character of the war (whether reactionary or revolutionary) is not determined by who the aggressor was, or whose territory the enemy has occupied: it is *determined by the class that is waging the war, and the politics of which this war is a continuation*. If the war is a reactionary imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world coalitions of the imperialist, violent, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes a participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the *world proletarian revolution* as the *only* escape from the horrors of a world war. I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for this is the argument of a poor, stupid, nationalist philistine who does not realise that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

This is what internationalism is, and this is the duty of the internationalist, of the revolutionary worker, of the genuine Socialist. This is the *ABC* that Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten." And his apostasy becomes still more palpable when, after approving of the tactics of the petty-bourgeois nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuetists in France, the Turatis in Italy, and the Haases and Co. in Germany), he begins to criticise the Bolshevik tactics. This is what he says:

"The Bolshevik revolution was based on the assumption that it would become the starting point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would rouse the proletarians of all Europe to insurrection.

"On this assumption it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russian separate peace would assume, what hardships and territorial mutilations (*Verstümmelungen*) it would cause the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self-determination of nations it would give. It was also immaterial whether Russia was able to defend herself or not. According to this opinion, the European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian

practice they continue to support their respective imperialist bourgeoisies. The difference between the two types is slight. It is like the difference between two capitalists—one with rude, and the other with sweet words on his lips.

revolution, and would bring complete and genuine self-determination to all the peoples inhabiting the former Russian territory. A revolution in Europe, which would establish and consolidate the socialist order there, would also become the means of removing the obstacles to the introduction of the socialist system of production which existed in Russia owing to the economic backwardness of the country. All this would be very logical and very sound if the main assumption were granted, *viz.*, that the Russian revolution would necessarily let loose a European revolution. But what if that did not happen?

"So far the assumption has not been justified, and the proletariat of Europe is now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, for who is to be held responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (p. 28).

And Kautsky then goes on to repeat again and again that Marx, Engels and Bebel were more than once mistaken in their prediction of the advent of anticipated revolutions, but that they never based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution at a "*definite date*" (p. 29), whereas, he says, the Bolsheviks "staked everything on a general European revolution."

We have deliberately quoted this long passage in order to show our readers with what "agility" Kautsky counterfeits Marxism by palming off banal and reactionary philistine views in its stead.

First, to ascribe to an opponent an obvious absurdity and then to refute it is a trick that is played by not over-clever people. If the Bolsheviks had based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution in other countries that was to come *on a definite date*, they would have been guilty of utter folly. But the Bolshevik Party has never been guilty of that folly. In my letter to the American workers of August 20, 1918, I expressly repudiate such folly when I say that we counted on an American revolution, but *not* at any definite date. I propounded the very same idea more than once in my controversy with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and "Left Communists" (January-March 1918). Kautsky has committed a little . . . a very little forgery, and on this he bases his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confused tactics which are based on the expectation of a European revolution in the more or less near future, but not on a definite date, with tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution on a definite date. A little forgery, a very little one!

The last-named tactics are foolish. The first-named are *obligatory* for all Marxists, for all revolutionary proletarians and interna-

tionals; they are *obligatory*, because they alone in a properly Marxian way take into account the objective situation brought about by the war in all European countries, and they alone correspond to the international tasks of the proletariat.

By substituting the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but *did not*, for the important question of the foundations of revolutionary tactics in general, Kautsky adroitly abjures all revolutionary tactics.

A renegade in politics, he is *unable to present the question* of the objective prerequisites of revolutionary tactics theoretically. And this brings us to the second point.

Secondly, it is obligatory for the Marxist to count on a European revolution if a *revolutionary situation* exists. It is an elementary axiom of Marxism that the tactics of the socialist proletariat cannot be the same in a revolutionary situation as when there is no revolutionary situation.

If Kautsky had put this question, which is obligatory for every Marxist, he would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him. Long before the war, all Marxists, all Socialists, were agreed that a European war would create a revolutionary situation. Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, clearly and definitely admitted this, in 1902 (in his *Social Revolution*) and in 1909 (in his *Road to Power*). It was also admitted in the name of the entire Second International by the Basle Manifesto; it is not without reason that the social-chauvinists and the Kautskyans (the "Centrists," *i.e.*, those who waver between the revolutionaries and the opportunists) of all countries are mortally afraid of the declarations of the Basle Manifesto which appertain to this!

Hence, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not an infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but was the *general opinion* of all Marxists. When Kautsky tries to escape from this undoubted truth with the help of phrases such as that the Bolsheviks "always believed in the omnipotence of force and will," he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to *cover up* his *flight*, his shameful flight from the presentation of the question of the revolutionary situation.

To proceed. Has a revolutionary situation set in or not? Kautsky has not been able to present even this question. Economic facts

provide an answer to it: the famine and ruin created by the war everywhere imply a revolutionary situation. The political facts also provide an answer to the question: ever since 1915 a splitting process has been observed in *all countries* among the old and decaying Socialist parties, a process of *departure of the masses* of the proletariat from the social-chauvinist leaders to the Left, to revolutionary ideas and sentiments, to revolutionary leaders.

Only a person who fears revolution and betrays it could have failed to note these facts on August 5, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet. And now, at the end of October 1918, the revolution is growing in a number of European countries, and growing very rapidly under our very eyes. Kautsky, the "revolutionary," who still wants to be regarded as a Marxist, has proved to be a short-sighted philistine, who, like the philistines of 1847 who were ridiculed by Marx, did not see the approaching revolution!

And now we come to the third point.

Thirdly, what are the specific features of revolutionary tactics in a European revolutionary situation? Having become a renegade, Kautsky feared to put this question, which is obligatory for every Marxist. Kautsky argues like a typical philistine petty bourgeois, or like an ignorant peasant: has a "general European revolution" broken out or not? If it has, then *he, too*, is prepared to become a revolutionary! But under such circumstances, we will observe, every blackguard (like the scoundrels who are now trying to attach themselves to the victorious Bolsheviks) would proclaim himself a revolutionary!

If there is no revolution, then Kautsky turns his back on revolution! Kautsky does not betray a shadow of an understanding of the truth that a revolutionary Marxist differs from the ordinary philistine in that he is able to *preach* to the ignorant masses that the maturing revolution is necessary, to *prove* that it is inevitable, to *explain* its benefits to the people, and to *prepare* the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses for it.

Kautsky ascribed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity, *viz.* that they had staked everything on a European revolution breaking out on a definite date. This absurdity has turned against Kautsky himself,

because the logical conclusion of his argument is as follows: the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5, 1918. This is the very date that Kautsky mentions as the date on which he was writing his pamphlet. And when, a few weeks after this August 5, it became clear that a revolution was approaching in a number of European countries, the whole renegacy of Kautsky, his whole falsification of Marxism, and his utter inability to reason in a revolutionary manner, or even to put the question in a revolutionary manner, became revealed in all their charm.

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation against unknown persons.

You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see those "unknown persons" against whom the accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of innocence and pretends not to understand *who* has levelled the accusation, and what *meaning* it has. As a matter of fact Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being levelled by the German "Lefts," by the Spartacists, by Liebknecht and his friends. The accusation expresses a *clear appreciation* of the fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian (and international) revolution, when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia, and Esthonia.* This accusation is directed primarily and above all, not against the *masses*, who are always downtrodden, but against those *leaders* who, like the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, *failed* in their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda and revolutionary work among the masses to combat their inertness, who in fact worked *against* the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow in the depths of the oppressed classes. The Scheidemanns openly, crudely, cynically and in the majority of cases for corrupt motives betrayed the proletariat and deserted to the bourgeoisie. The Kautskyans and the Longuetists did the same thing, only in a hesitating and halting manner, casting cowardly side glances at those who were stronger at the moment. In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to *extinguish* the revolutionary spirit, instead of fostering and fanning it.

The fact that Kautsky does not even understand the enormous *theoretical importance*, and the still greater agitational and propaganda importance, of the "accusation" that the proletarians of Europe have betrayed the Russian revolution will remain a historical monument to the philistine stupidity of the "average" leader of German official Social-Democracy! Kautsky does not understand that, owing to the censorship prevailing in the German "Empire," this "accusation" was perhaps the only form in which the German Socialists who have not betrayed Socialism, Liebknecht and his friends, could express *their appeal to the German workers* to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such "leaders," to emancipate themselves from their stultifying and vulgar propaganda, to rise in revolt *in spite of them, without them, and over their heads*. It was the call for revolution!

Kautsky does not understand this. How is he to understand the tactics of the Bolsheviks? Can a man who renounces revolution in general be expected to weigh and appraise the conditions of the development of the revolution in one of the most "difficult" cases?

The Bolsheviks' tactics were correct; they were the *only* internationalist tactics, because they were based, not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a philistine "disbelief" in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect "one's own" fatherland (the fatherland of one's bourgeoisie), and not "care a hang" for all the rest; they were based on a correct and universally admitted, before the war and before the renegacy of the social-chauvinists and social-pacifists) *estimation of the revolutionary situation in Europe*. These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and stirring up of the revolution *in all countries*. The correctness of these tactics has been confirmed by the enormous success that has been achieved, because Bolshevism (owing, not to the merits of the Russian Bolsheviks, but to the most profound sympathy the masses everywhere displayed for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become *world Bolshevism*, it has produced an idea, a theory, a programme, and tactics, which differ concretely and in practice from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. Bolshevism has van-

quished the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and the MacDonalds, who henceforth will be treading on each other's heels, dreaming about "unity" and trying to revive a corpse. Bolshevism has *created* the ideological and tactical foundations of a Third International, a really proletarian and communist International, which will take into consideration both the gains of the peaceful epoch and the experience of the *epoch of revolution, which has now begun*.

Bolshevism has popularised throughout the world the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into *all* the languages of the world, and has shown by the living example of the *Soviet government* that the workers and poorest peasantry, *even* of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organisation, *have been able* for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst the struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the *whole* world) to maintain the power of the toilers, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies of the world, and to *begin*, with the aid of the creative ability of tens of millions of workers and peasants, the practical realisation of socialism.

Bolshevism has helped in a practical way to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any party in any other country has ever succeeded in doing. While the workers of the whole world are realising more and more clearly every day that the tactics of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys have not freed them from the imperialist war and from wage-slavery under the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that these tactics cannot serve as a model for all countries, the masses of the proletarians of all countries are realising 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*.

Not only the European, but the world proletarian revolution is maturing before the eyes of all, and has been assisted, has been accelerated, has been supported, by the victory of the proletariat

in Russia. Is all this enough for the complete victory of socialism? Certainly not. One country cannot do more. But thanks to the Soviet government, this one country has nevertheless done so much that even if the Russian Soviet government is crushed by world imperialism tomorrow, as a result of an agreement between German and Anglo-French imperialism, for example—even in this worst possible case, Bolshevik tactics will still have brought enormous benefit to Socialism, and will have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution.

SUBSERVIENCY TO THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE GUISE OF "ECONOMIC ANALYSIS"

As has been said already, had the title of Kautsky's book properly reflected its contents it would not have been: *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, but *A Rehash of Bourgeois Attacks on the Bolsheviks*.

The old Menshevik "theories" about the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution, i.e., the old misinterpretation of Marxism by the Mensheviks (which Kautsky rejected in 1905 *) are now once again being hashed up by our theoretician. We must deal with this question, however tedious it may be for Russian Marxists.

The Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, said all the Marxists in Russia before 1905. The Mensheviks, however, substituting liberalism for Marxism, drew the conclusion from this that, hence, the proletariat must not go beyond what was acceptable to the bourgeoisie and must pursue a policy of compromise with it. The Bolsheviks said that this was a bourgeois-liberal theory. The bourgeoisie, they said, was trying to bring about the reform of the state on bourgeois, on reformist, and not on revolutionary lines, preserving the monarchy, landlordism, etc., as far as possible. The proletariat must not allow itself to be "bound" by the reformism of the bourgeoisie, but must carry through the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end. The Bolsheviks formulated the relation of class forces in the bourgeois revolution in the following manner: the proletariat, joining to itself the peasantry, will neutralise the liberal bourgeoisie, and utterly destroy the monarchy, mediævalism and landlordism.

The alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry in general reveals the bourgeois character of the revolution because the peasantry in general are small producers who stand on the basis of commodity production. And the Bolsheviks immediately added:

further, the proletariat will join to itself *the whole of the semi-proletariat* (all the toilers and all those who are exploited), will neutralise the middle peasantry and *overthrow* the bourgeoisie: this will be the socialist revolution, as distinct from the bourgeois-democratic revolution (see my pamphlet *Two Tactics*, published in 1905, and reprinted in Petrograd in 1907¹ in the symposium *Twelve Years*).*

Kautsky took an indirect part in this controversy in 1905. In reply to an inquiry by the then Menshevik Plekhanov, he expressed an opinion that was, in fact, *opposed* to that of Plekhanov, which provoked particular ridicule in the Bolshevik press at the time. But now Kautsky does not utter a single word about the controversies of that time (for fear of being exposed by his own statements) and thereby deprives the German reader of the opportunity of understanding the gist of the matter. Mr. Kautsky could not very well tell the German workers in 1918 that in 1905 he had been in favour of an alliance of the workers with the peasants and not with the liberal bourgeoisie, and he could not tell them the conditions he had advocated for this alliance, and the programme he had proposed for it.

Retreating from his old position, Kautsky, on the pretext of making an "economic analysis," and uttering proud words about "historical materialism," now advocates the subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie, and, with the aid of quotations from the Menshevik Maslov, chews the cud of the old liberal views of the Mensheviks; the quotations are intended to illustrate the brand new idea about the backwardness of Russia, but the deduction drawn from this new idea is the old one that in a bourgeois revolution the proletariat must not go further than the bourgeoisie! And this in spite of all that Marx and Engels said when comparing the bourgeois revolution in France in 1789-93 with the bourgeois revolution in Germany in 1848!***

Before dealing with the chief "argument" and the main content of Kautsky's so-called "economic analysis," we will point out that

¹ "The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. III.—Ed.

the very first sentences in Kautsky's disquisition reveal a curious confusion, or superficiality, of thought. Our "theoretician" says:

"Agriculture, and precisely small peasant production, is to this day the economic foundation of Russia. About four-fifths, and perhaps even five-sixths, of the population live by it" (p. 45).

First of all, my dear theoretician, have you thought about how many exploiters there might be among this mass of small producers? Certainly not more than one-tenth of the total, and in the towns still less, because large-scale production is more highly developed there. Take even an incredibly high figure; assume that one-fifth of the small producers are exploiters who lose the franchise. Even then you will see that the 66 per cent of the Bolsheviks at the Fifth Congress of Soviets represented the *majority of the population*. To this it must be added that there has always been a considerable section of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries which was in favour of the Soviet government—in principle *all* the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were in favour of the Soviet government, and when a section of them, in July 1918, raised the adventurist insurrection, two new parties split away from them, *viz.*, the so-called "Narodnik-Communists" and the "Revolutionary Communists"* (consisting of prominent Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who had been nominated for important posts in the government by the old party; for instance, Zacks belonged to the first-mentioned new party, and Kolegayev to the second). Hence, Kautsky has himself—unwittingly—refuted the ridiculous fable that the Bolsheviks only had the support of a minority of the population.

Secondly, my dear theoretician, have you thought about the fact that the small peasant producer *inevitably* oscillates between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? Kautsky very conveniently "forgot" this Marxian truth, which has been confirmed by the whole of the modern history of Europe, because it shatters the Menshevik "theory" that he repeats! Had Kautsky not "forgotten" this he could not have denied that a proletarian dictatorship was needed in a country in which the small peasant producer is predominant.

Let us examine the main content of our theoretician's "economic analysis."

That the Soviet regime is a dictatorship cannot be disputed, says Kautsky.

"But is it the dictatorship of the proletariat?" (p. 34).

"According to the Soviet constitution the peasants form the majority of the population which is entitled to participate in legislation and administration. What is presented to us as a dictatorship of the *proletariat* would be—if carried out consistently, and if, generally speaking, a single class could directly exercise a dictatorship, which in reality can only be exercised by a party—a dictatorship of the peasantry" (p. 35).

And, elated over this profound and clever argument, good Kautsky tries to be witty and says:

"It would appear, therefore, that the most painless realisation of socialism is best secured when it is put in the hands of the peasants" (p. 35).

Arguing in great detail, and citing extremely learned quotations from the semi-liberal Maslov, our theoretician advances a new idea—that the peasants are interested in high grain prices, in low wages for the urban workers, etc., etc. Incidentally, the less attention our author pays to the really new phenomena of the post-war period—such as, for example, that the peasants demand for their grain, not money, but goods, and that they lack the necessary agricultural implements, which cannot be obtained in sufficient quantities for any amount of money—the more tedious the enunciation of these new ideas becomes. But of this more anon.

Thus, Kautsky charges the Bolsheviks, the party of the proletariat, with having surrendered the dictatorship, surrendered the work of realising socialism, to the petty-bourgeois peasantry. Excellent, Mr. Kautsky! But what, in your enlightened opinion, should the attitude of the proletarian party towards the petty-bourgeois peasantry have been?

Our theoretician, evidently bearing in mind the proverb: "Speech is silver, but silence is golden," prefers to remain silent. But he gives himself away by the following argument:

"Originally, the peasants' Soviets were organisations of the *peasantry* in general. Now the Soviet Republic proclaims that the Soviets are organisations of the proletarians and the *poor* peasants. The well-to-do peasants are deprived of representation in the Soviets. The poor peasant is declared to be the permanent and mass product of the socialist agrarian reform under the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" (p. 48).

What deadly irony! It is the kind of irony that is heard in Russia from the lips of every bourgeois: they all jeer and gloat over the fact that the Soviet Republic openly admits the existence of poor peasants. They jeer at socialism. They have a right to do that. But a "Socialist" who laughs at the idea that after four years of a most ruinous war there should be (and will be for a long time) poor peasants in Russia—such a Socialist could only have been born at a time of wholesale renegacy.

Listen further:

"The Soviet Republic interferes in the relations between the rich and poor peasants, but not by redistributing the land. In order to relieve the bread shortage in the towns, detachments of armed workers were sent into the villages to confiscate the rich peasants' surplus stocks. Part of that stock was distributed among the urban population, the other part was distributed among the poorest peasants" (p. 48).

Of course, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, is profoundly indignant at the idea that such a measure should be extended beyond the environs of large towns (as a matter of fact it is practised all over our country). With the matchless, incomparable and admirable coolness (or pig-headedness) of a philistine, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, says didactically:

"It" (the expropriation of the well-to-do peasants) "introduces a new element of unrest and civil war into the process of production" (civil war introduced into the "process of production"—this is something supernatural!) "which urgently needs order and security for its recovery" (p. 49).

Oh, yes, of course, it is quite proper for Kautsky, the Marxist and Socialist, to sigh and shed tears for order and security for the exploiters and grain profiteers who hoard their surplus stocks of grain, sabotage the grain monopoly law, and reduce the urban population to famine. "We are all Socialists and Marxists and Internationalists," sing the Kautskys, the Heinrich Webers (Vienna), the Longuets (Paris), the MacDonalds (London), etc., in chorus; "we are all in favour of a working class revolution, only . . . only we would like a revolution that does not disturb the order and security of the grain profiteers." Yes, and we camouflage this dirty subserviency to the capitalists by a "Marxist" reference to the "process of production." If this is Marxism, what is being a flunkey of the bourgeoisie?

Note the conclusion our theoretician arrives at. He accuses the Bolsheviks of palming off the dictatorship of the peasantry as the dictatorship of the proletariat, but at the same time he accuses us of introducing civil war into the rural districts (which we think is to our *credit*), of despatching armed detachments of workers to the villages, who publicly proclaim that they are exercising the "dictatorship of the proletariat and of the poorest peasantry," assist the latter and confiscate from the profiteers, from the rich peasants, the surplus stocks of grain which they are hoarding in contravention of the grain monopoly law!

On the one hand, our Marxist theoretician stands for pure democracy, for the subordination of the revolutionary class, the leader of all the toilers and the exploited, to the majority of the population (including, therefore, the exploiters). On the other hand, as an argument *against* us, he explains that the revolution must inevitably bear a bourgeois character—bourgeois, because the peasantry as a whole stands on the basis of bourgeois social relations—and yet he pretends to defend the proletarian, the class, the Marxian point of view!

Instead of an "economic analysis" we have a first-class hodge-podge and muddle. Instead of Marxism we have fragments of liberal doctrines and the preaching of servility to the bourgeoisie and the kulaks.

The question which Kautsky has so confused was fully explained by the Bolsheviks as far back as 1905. Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution so long as we march with the peasantry as a whole. This has been as clear as clear can be to us; we have said it hundreds and thousands of times since 1905, and we have never attempted to skip this necessary stage of the historical process or abolish it by decrees. Kautsky's efforts to "expose" us on this point have merely exposed his own confusion of mind and his own fear to recall what he wrote in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade.

But beginning with April 1917, long before the October Revolution, that is, long before we assumed power, we publicly declared and explained to the people: the revolution cannot stop at this stage for the country has marched forward, capitalism has advanced, ruin has attained unprecedented dimensions which (whether one likes

it or not) *demand steps forward to socialism*. For there is *no other way* of advancing, of saving the country that is exhausted by war, and of *alleviating the sufferings* of the toilers and the exploited.

Things have turned out just as we said they would. The course taken by the revolution has confirmed the correctness of our reasoning. *First*, with the "whole" of the peasantry against the monarchy, the landlords, the mediæval regime (and to that extent, the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). *Then*, with the poorest peasants, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, *against capitalism*, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a *socialist* one. To attempt to raise an artificial Chinese wall between the first and second revolutions, to separate them by anything else than the degree of preparedness of the proletariat and the degree of unity with the poor peasants, is monstrously to distort Marxism, to vulgarise it, to put liberalism in its place. It means smuggling in a reactionary defence of the bourgeoisie against the socialist proletariat by means of quasi-scientific references to the progressive character of the bourgeoisie as compared with mediævalism.

Incidentally, it is just because the Soviets, by uniting and drawing *the masses of workers and peasants* into political life, are the most sensitive barometer, closest to the "people" (in the sense in which Marx, in 1871, spoke of a real people's revolution *), of the growth and development of the political, class maturity of the masses, that they represent an immeasurably higher form and type of democracy. The Soviet constitution was not drawn up according to some "plan"; it was not drawn up in a study, and was not thrust upon the toilers by bourgeois lawyers. No, this constitution *emerged* in the course of the development of the *class struggle* in proportion as *class antagonisms* matured. The very facts which Kautsky himself had to admit prove this.

At first, the Soviets united the peasantry as a whole. Owing to the immaturity, the backwardness, the ignorance of the poorest peasants, the leadership passed into the hands of the kulaks, of the rich, of the capitalists, of the petty bourgeoisie and of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals. That was the period of the domination of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (only

fools or renegades like Kautsky could regard these as Socialists). The petty bourgeoisie inevitably vacillated between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (Kerensky, Kornilov, Savinkov) and the dictatorship of the proletariat; because owing to the very nature of its economic position, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of doing anything independently. Incidentally, Kautsky completely renounces Marxism by making shift, in his analysis of the Russian revolution, with the legal and formalist concept of "democracy," which serves the bourgeoisie as a screen to conceal its domination over the masses, and as a means of deceiving them, and by *forgetting* that in practice "democracy" sometimes means *the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie* and sometimes the impotent reformism of the petty bourgeoisie which submits to that dictatorship, and so on. According to Kautsky, in a capitalist country there were bourgeois parties, and there was a proletarian party which led the majority, the mass of the proletariat (the Bolsheviks), but there were *no* petty-bourgeois parties! The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had no *class roots*, no petty-bourgeois roots!

The vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, enlightened the masses and repelled the overwhelming majority of them, all the "rank and file," the proletarians and semi-proletarians, from such "leaders."

The Bolsheviks secured predominance in the Soviets (in Petrograd and Moscow in October 1917); the split among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks became more pronounced.

The victorious Bolshevik revolution marked the end of vacillation, it meant the complete destruction of the monarchy and of landlordism (which had *not* been destroyed before the October Revolution). We carried the *bourgeois* revolution to its logical conclusion. The peasantry *as a whole* supported us; its antagonism to the socialist proletariat could not reveal itself at once. The Soviets united the peasantry *in general*. The class divisions among the peasantry had not yet matured, had not yet come to the surface.

That process took place in the summer and autumn of 1918. The Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary mutiny roused the kulaks. A wave of kulak insurrections swept over Russia. The poorest peasantry learned, not from books or newspapers, but from *life*,

that its interests were irreconcilably antagonistic to those of the kulaks, of the rich, of the rural bourgeoisie. Like every other petty-bourgeois party, the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" reflected the vacillation of the masses, and precisely in the summer of 1918 a split occurred among them: one section joined the Czecho-Slovaks (insurrection in Moscow, when Proshyan, having seized the telegraph office—for one hour—informed Russia of the overthrow of the Bolsheviks; then the treachery of Muravyev, Commander-in-Chief of the army that was fighting against the Czecho-Slovaks, etc.*), while another section, that mentioned above, remained with the Bolsheviks.

The intensification of the food shortage in the towns caused the question of the grain monopoly to become more urgent (in his economic analysis, which is a mere repetition of platitudes gleaned from Maslov's writings of ten years ago, Kautsky the theoretician quite "forgot" about this monopoly!).

The old landlord and bourgeois and even the democratic-republican state had sent armed detachments to the rural districts and these detachments were practically at the disposal of the bourgeoisie. Mr. Kautsky, of course, does not know this! He does not regard this as the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." God forbid! It is "pure democracy," especially if it has been confirmed by a bourgeois parliament! Nor has Kautsky "heard" that, in the summer and autumn of 1917, Avksentyev and S. Maslov, in company with Kerensky, Tseretelli and other Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, arrested the members of the Land Committees;** he does not say a word about that!

The whole point is that a bourgeois state, which is exercising the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through a democratic republic, cannot confess to the people that it is serving the bourgeoisie; it cannot tell the truth, and is compelled to be hypocritical.

But a state of the Paris Commune type, a Soviet state, openly tells the people the *truth* and declares that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the poorest peasantry; and by this truth it rallies to its side scores and scores of millions of new citizens who are kept down under any democratic republic, but who are drawn by the Soviets into political life, into *democracy*, into the administra-

tion of the state. The Soviet Republic sends into the rural districts detachments of armed workers (primarily the most advanced) from the capitals. These workers carry socialism into the countryside, rally the poor to their side, organise and enlighten them, and help them to *suppress the resistance of the bourgeoisie*.

All those who are familiar with the conditions in the rural districts, who have been in the rural districts, declare that it was not until the summer and autumn of 1918 that the rural districts passed through the "October" (*i.e.*, proletarian) "revolution." A turning point was reached. The wave of kulak insurrections gave way to the rising of the poor, to the growth of the "Committees of Poor Peasants."* In the army, the number of working class commissars, working class officers and working class commanders of divisions and armies increased. And at the very time that Kautsky, frightened by the July (1918) crisis and the lamentations of the bourgeoisie, was running after the latter like a "cockereel," and was writing a pamphlet that breathed the conviction that the Bolsheviks were on the eve of being overthrown by the peasantry; at the very time that this simpleton regarded the desertion of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries as the "contraction" (p. 37) of the circle of those who supported the Bolsheviks—at that very time—the *real* circle of supporters of Bolshevism was expanding enormously, because millions and millions of the village poor were freeing themselves from the tutelage and influence of the kulaks and the village bourgeoisie and were awakening to *independent* political life.

We have lost hundreds of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, spineless peasant intellectuals and kulaks; but we have gained millions of representatives of the poor.¹

A year after the proletarian revolution in the capitals, under its influence and with its assistance, the proletarian revolution broke out in the remote rural districts, and this finally consolidated the power of the Soviets and Bolshevism, and finally proved that there was no power within the country that could combat it.

¹ At the Sixth Congress of Soviets, November 7-9, 1918, there were 967 delegates with decisive votes and 351 delegates with consultative votes. Of the former 950 were Bolsheviks and of the latter 335 were Bolsheviks, *i.e.*, about 97 per cent of the total number of delegates were Bolsheviks.

After completing the bourgeois-democratic revolution in conjunction with the peasantry in general, the Russian proletariat passed on definitely to the socialist revolution when it had succeeded in splitting up the rural districts, in rallying to its side the rural proletarians and semi-proletarians, and in uniting them against the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, including the peasant bourgeoisie.

If the Bolshevik proletariat in the capitals and large industrial centres had not been able to rally the village poor to its side against the rich peasants, this would have proved that Russia was "unripe" for the socialist revolution. The peasantry would then have remained an "integral whole," *i.e.*, it would have remained under the economic, political, and moral leadership of the kulaks, of the rich, of the bourgeoisie, and the revolution would not have passed beyond the limits of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. (It must be said in parenthesis that even this would not have meant that the proletariat should not have assumed power, for the proletariat alone has really carried the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its logical conclusion, the proletariat alone has done something really important to bring nearer the world proletarian revolution, the proletariat alone has created the Soviet state, which, after the Paris Commune, is the second step in the direction of the socialist state.)

On the other hand, if in October-November 1917 the Bolshevik proletariat, without waiting for the class differentiation in the rural districts, without being able to *prepare* for it and bring it about, had at once attempted to "decree" a civil war or the "introduction" of socialism in the rural districts, had attempted to do without the temporary *bloc* (alliance) with the peasants in general, without making a number of concessions to the middle peasants, etc., that attempt would have been a Blanquist distortion of Marxism, an attempt of the minority to impose its will upon the majority; it would have been a theoretical absurdity, it would have revealed a failure to understand that a general peasant revolution is *still* a bourgeois revolution, and that *without a series of transitions, transitional stages*, it cannot be transformed into a socialist revolution in a backward country.

Kautsky has confused *everything* in this very important theoretical and political problem, and has, in practice, proved to be a

mere servant of the bourgeoisie, howling against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

* * *

Kautsky has introduced similar if not greater confusion into another very interesting and important question, namely: Was the *legislative* activity of the Soviet Republic in the field of agrarian reformation—a most difficult and yet most important socialist reformation—based on sound principles and properly carried out? We should be grateful beyond words to every West-European Marxist who, after studying at least the most important documents, would *criticise* our policy, because he would thereby be rendering us immense assistance and would also help the maturing revolution throughout the world. But instead of criticism Kautsky produces incredible theoretical confusion which converts Marxism into liberalism, and which, in practice, is a series of idle, angry, vulgar sallies against the Bolsheviks. Let the reader judge for himself.

“Large landownership was made untenable by the revolution. That became clear immediately. The transference of the large estates to the peasant population became inevitable.”

(This is not true, Mr. Kautsky. You substitute what is “clear” to you for the attitude of the different *classes* towards the question. The history of the revolution has shown that the coalition government of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, pursued a policy of preserving large landownership. This was proved particularly by S. Maslov’s law and by the arrest of the members of the Land Committees. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, the “peasant population” would not have defeated the landlords, who were allied with the capitalists.)

“... On the question as to the forms in which this was to be carried out, however, there was no unity. Several solutions were conceivable...”

(Kautsky is most of all concerned about “unity” among “Socialists,” no matter who called themselves by that name. He forgets that the principal classes in capitalist society are bound to arrive at different solutions.)

“... From the socialist point of view, the most rational solution would have been to transform the large estates into state property and to allow the peasants who hitherto had been employed on them as wage labourers to cultivate them in the form of co-operative societies. But such a solution presupposes the existence of a type of agricultural labourer that does not exist in Russia. Another solution would have been to transform the large estates into state property and to divide them up into small plots, to be rented out to peasants who owned little land. Had that been done, something socialistic would have been achieved...”

As usual, Kautsky makes shift with the celebrated on-the-one-hand on-the-other-hand. He places different solutions *side by side* without asking himself the question—the only realistic and Marxian question: what *stages* must be passed from capitalism to communism in such and such *special conditions*? There are agricultural labourers in Russia, although not many, but Kautsky did not touch the question which the Soviet government *did raise* as to the method of transition to a communal and co-operative form of land cultivation. The most curious thing, however, is that Kautsky sees “something socialistic” in the renting out of small plots of land. In reality, this is a *petty-bourgeois* slogan, and there is *nothing* “socialistic” about it at all. If the “state” that rents out the land *is not* a state of the Paris Commune type, if it is a parliamentary bourgeois republic (and such is Kautsky’s constant assumption) the renting out of the land in plots is a typical *liberal reform*.

Kautsky ignores the fact that the Soviet regime has abolished *all* private property in land. Worse than that: he resorts to an incredible subterfuge. He quotes the decrees of the Soviet government in such a way as to omit the most important part.

After stating that “small production strives for complete private property in the means of production,” and that the Constituent Assembly would have been the “only authority” capable of preventing the dividing up of the land (an assertion which will cause laughter throughout Russia, where everybody knows that the Soviets *alone* are recognised as authoritative institutions by the workers and peasants, while the Constituent Assembly has become the slogan of the Czecho-Slovaks and the landlords), Kautsky continues:

“One of the first decrees of the Soviet government declared that 1) all landlords’ property in land is abolished immediately without compensation; 2) all landlords’ estates, as well as all appanage, monastery and church

lands, with all their live and dead stock, with all their buildings and appurtenances, are placed at the disposal of the Volost¹ Land Committees of the Uyezd² Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the solution of the land question by the Constituent Assembly."

Having quoted *only these two* clauses, Kautsky concludes:

"The reference to the Constituent Assembly has remained a dead letter. In point of fact, the peasants in the separate volosts could do as they pleased with the land" (p. 47).

Here you have an example of Kautsky's "criticism." Here you have a "scientific" work which is more like a forgery. The German reader is induced to believe that the Bolsheviks capitulated before the peasantry on the question of private property in land! That the Bolsheviks permitted the peasants to act locally ("in the separate volosts") in whatever way they pleased!

As a matter of fact, the decree that Kautsky quotes (the first decree, which was promulgated on November 8 [October 26], 1917³) consisted not of two, but of five clauses, *plus* eight clauses of "Instructions" which, it was expressly stated, "must serve for guidance."

Clause 3 of the decree stated that the land is transferred "*to the people*," and that "inventories of all property confiscated" must be drawn up and the "strictest revolutionary protection" of it must be established. And the Instructions declare that "the right of private property in land shall be abolished in perpetuity," that "lands with highly developed forms of cultivation . . . *shall not be divided up*," that "all livestock and farm implements of the confiscated lands shall be reserved for the exclusive use of either the state or the communes, according to their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid therefor," and that "all land, when alienated, shall pass into the land fund of the people."

Then, simultaneously with the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (January 18 [5], 1918), the Third Congress of Soviets adopted a "*Declaration of Rights* of the Toiling and Exploited

¹ Volost—a rural district.—Ed. Eng. ed.

² Uyezd—an administrative unit, part of a gubernia (province).—Ed. Eng. ed.

³ See "Decree on the Land," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed.

People,"¹ which now forms part of the Fundamental Law of the Soviet Republic.* Article 2, paragraph 1 of this Declaration states that "private property in land is hereby abolished," and that "model estates and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property."

Hence, the reference to the Constituent Assembly did *not* remain a dead letter, because another national representative body, immeasurably more authoritative in the eyes of the peasants, undertook the solution of the agrarian problem.

Again, on February 19 [6], 1918, the Land Socialisation Act was promulgated, which once again confirmed the abolition of all private property in land and placed the land and *all private stock* at the disposal of the Soviet authorities *under the control of the federal Soviet government*. Among the duties of the Soviet authorities in connection with the disposal of the land, the law prescribed:

"The development of collective farming as the more advantageous in respect of economy of labour and produce, in preference to individual farming, with a view to the transition to socialist agricultural economy" (article 11, paragraph *d*).

The same law, in establishing the principle of *equal* land tenure, replied to the fundamental question: "Who has a right to the use of the land?" in the following manner:

"Article 20. Plots of land surface for public and private needs within the frontiers of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic may be used: A. For cultural and educational purposes: 1) by the state as represented by the organs of the Soviet government (federal, regional, gubernia, uyezd, volost and village), and 2) by public bodies (under the control, and with the consent, of the local Soviet authorities); B. For agricultural purposes: 3) by agricultural communes, 4) by agricultural co-operative associations, 5) by village communities, 6) by private families and persons. . ."

The reader will perceive that Kautsky has completely distorted the facts, and has given the German reader an absolutely false view of the agrarian policy and of the agrarian legislation of the proletarian state in Russia.

Kautsky was not even able to formulate the theoretically important fundamental questions. These questions are:

¹ See *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed.

1) Equal land tenure; 2) nationalisation of the land; the relation of these two measures to socialism in general, and to the transition from capitalism to communism in particular; 3) the collective cultivation of the soil as a transition stage from small, individual, parcelled farming to large-scale social farming; does the manner in which this question is dealt with in Soviet legislation meet the requirements of socialism?

On the first question it is necessary, first of all, to establish the following two main facts: a) in weighing up the experience of the 1905 Revolution (I may refer, for instance, to my work on the agrarian problem in the first Russian revolution¹), the Bolsheviks pointed to the democratically progressive, to the democratically revolutionary, significance of the slogan "equal land tenure"; and in 1917, before the October Revolution, they said this quite definitely²; but when adopting the Land Socialisation Act—the "spirit" of which is equal land tenure—the Bolsheviks most explicitly and definitely declared: this is not our idea; we do not agree with this slogan; but we think it our duty to pass it because it is demanded by the overwhelming majority of the peasants.³ And the majority of the toilers must discard these ideas and demands *themselves*; such demands could not be "abolished" or "skipped over." We, the Bolsheviks, will *help* the peasantry to discard petty-bourgeois slogans, to *pass* from them as quickly and as painlessly as possible to socialist demands.

A Marxist theoretician who wanted to help the working class revolution by his scientific analysis should have answered the question: first, is it true that the idea of equal land tenure is of democratic-revolutionary significance in that it carries the *bourgeois-democratic* revolution to its logical end? Secondly, did the Bolsheviks act correctly in carrying through by their votes (and by observing most loyally) the petty-bourgeois equal tenure law?

¹ See "The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-07," *Selected Works*, Vol. III.—Ed.

² See "Peasants and Workers," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed.

³ See "Report on the Land Question (November 8 [October 26], 1917)" and "An Alliance Between the Workers and the Toiling and Exploited Peasants," *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed.

Kautsky was not even able to *perceive* the theoretical significance of the question!

Kautsky will never be able to refute the view that equal land tenure has a progressive and revolutionary significance in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Such a revolution cannot go beyond this. On reaching this limit, it *clearly, quickly and easily* reveals to the masses the *inadequacy* of bourgeois-democratic solutions and the necessity of proceeding beyond their limits, of passing on to *socialism*.

Having overthrown tsarism and landlordism, the peasantry dreamed of equal land tenure, and no power on earth could have prevented the peasantry, who had been freed from landlordism and from the *bourgeois* parliamentary republican state, from realising this dream. The proletarians said to the peasants: We shall help you to reach "ideal" capitalism, for equal land tenure is the idealisation of capitalism from the point of view of the small producer. At the same time we will prove to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to the social cultivation of the land.

It would have been interesting to see Kautsky attempt to prove that *this* leadership of the peasant struggle by the proletariat was wrong.

But Kautsky preferred to evade this question altogether.

Moreover, Kautsky deliberately deceived his German readers by withholding from them the fact that in its Land Law the Soviet government gave *direct preference* to communes and co-operative associations by putting them in the forefront.

With the peasantry to the end of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and with the poorest, the proletarian and semi-proletarian section of the peasantry, *forward* to the socialist revolution! Such has been the policy of the Bolsheviks, and such is the only Marxian policy.

But Kautsky is all muddled up and cannot formulate a single question! On the one hand, he *dare not* say that the proletarians should have parted company with the peasantry on the question of equal land tenure because he realises that such a rupture would have been absurd (and, moreover, in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade, he explicitly advocated an alliance between the work-

ers and peasants as a condition of the victory of the revolution). On the other hand, he sympathetically quotes the liberal platitudes of the Menshevik Maslov, who "proves" that petty-bourgeois equal land tenure is utopian and reactionary *from the point of view of socialism*, but fails to point out the progressive and revolutionary character of the petty-bourgeois struggle for equality and equal tenure *from the point of view of a bourgeois-democratic revolution*.

Kautsky is in a hopeless muddle: note that he (in 1918) *insists* on the *bourgeois* character of the Russian revolution. He (in 1918) says peremptorily: don't go beyond these limits! And yet this very same Kautsky sees "something *socialistic*" (for a *bourgeois* revolution) in the *petty-bourgeois* reform of renting out small plots of land to the *poor* peasants (*i.e.*, the approximation to equal land tenure)!

Let those understand this who can!

In addition to all this, Kautsky displays a philistine inability to take into account the real policy of a definite political party. He quotes the *phrases* of the Menshevik Maslov and *refuses to see the real policy* the Menshevik Party pursued in 1917, when in "coalition" with landlords and Cadets they actually advocated *liberal agrarian reform and compromise with the landlords*. (Proof? The arrest of members of the Land Committees and S. Maslov's Land Bill.)

Kautsky failed to realise that P. Maslov's phrases about the reactionary and utopian character of petty-bourgeois equality are really a screen to conceal the Menshevik policy of *compromise* between the peasants and the landlords (*i.e.*, of helping the landlords to deceive the peasants), instead of the *revolutionary* overthrow of the landlords by the peasants.

What a Marxist Kautsky is!

It was the Bolsheviks who strictly took into account the difference between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution: by carrying the first to its end, they opened the door for passing to the second. This was the only policy that was revolutionary and Marxian.

It is useless for Kautsky to repeat the old liberal platitude:

"The small peasants have never passed to collective production under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

How smart!

But never before have the small peasants of a large country been under the influence of a proletarian state!

Never before have the small peasants engaged in an open class struggle extending into civil war between the poorest peasants and rich peasants, with the proletarian state giving propagandist, political, economic and military support to the poor.

Never before have the profiteers and the rich amassed such wealth out of war, while the masses of the peasantry have been so utterly ruined.

Kautsky simply reiterates what is old; chews the old cud, and is afraid to ponder over the new tasks of the proletarian dictatorship.

But what, dear Kautsky, if the peasants *lack implements* for small production, and the proletarian state *helps* them to obtain agricultural machinery for the collective cultivation of the soil—is that a "theoretical conviction"?

We will now pass to the question of the nationalisation of the land. Our Narodniki, including all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, deny that the measure we have adopted is the nationalisation of the land. They are wrong in theory. In so far as we remain within the framework of commodity production and capitalism, the abolition of private property in land is the nationalisation of the land.

The term "socialisation" merely expresses a trend, a desire, the preparation for the transition to socialism.

What should be the attitude of Marxists towards the nationalisation of the land?

Here, too, Kautsky is unable even to formulate the theoretical question, or, what is worse, he deliberately evades it; although one knows from Russian literature that Kautsky is aware of the old controversies among Russian Marxists on the question of nationalisation or municipalisation (*i.e.*, the transfer of the large estates to the local authorities), or division of the land.

Kautsky's assertion that transferring the large estates to the state

and renting them out in small plots to poor peasants would have achieved "something socialistic" is simply a mockery of Marxism. We have said already that there was nothing socialistic about it. But this is not all; it would not even carry the *bourgeois-democratic* revolution to its logical end.

Kautsky's great misfortune is that he placed his trust in the Mensheviks. Hence the curious position that while insisting on the bourgeois character of our revolution and reproaching the Bolsheviks for taking it into their heads to proceed to socialism, he himself proposes a *liberal* reform in the guise of socialism, *without carrying this reform* to the point of clearing away all the survivals of mediævalism in agrarian relationships! The arguments of Kautsky and of his Menshevik advisers amount to a defence of the liberal bourgeoisie who fear revolution, instead of a defence of consistent bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Indeed, why should only the large estates, and not all the land, be transformed into state property? The liberal bourgeoisie would thereby attain the maximum preservation of the old conditions (*i.e.*, the least consistency in revolution), and the maximum facility for returning to the old conditions. The radical bourgeoisie, *i.e.*, the bourgeoisie that carries the bourgeois revolution to the end, demands the *nationalisation* of the land.

Kautsky, who in the dim and distant past, some twenty years ago, wrote an excellent Marxian work on the agrarian question, cannot but know Marx's references to the fact that land nationalisation is precisely a *consistent* slogan of the *bourgeoisie*. Kautsky cannot but be aware of the controversy between Marx and Rodbertus, and Marx's remarkable passages in his *Theories of Surplus Value*,* in which the revolutionary significance—in the bourgeois-democratic sense—of land nationalisation is explained with particular clarity.

The Menshevik P. Maslov, whom, unfortunately for himself, Kautsky chose as an adviser, denied that the Russian peasants would agree to the nationalisation of all the land (including the peasants' lands). To a certain extent, this view of Maslov's could be connected with his "original" theory (which merely repeats the

bourgeois critics of Marx), *viz.*, his repudiation of absolute rent and his recognition of the "law" (or "fact," as Maslov expressed it) of the "diminishing fertility of the soil."

In point of fact, however, even the Revolution of 1905 revealed that the overwhelming majority of the peasants in Russia, members of village communities as well as individual peasant proprietors, were in favour of the nationalisation of all the land. The Revolution of 1917 confirmed this, and after the assumption of power by the proletariat this was done. The Bolsheviks remained loyal to Marxism and never tried (in spite of Kautsky, who, without a shadow of evidence, accuses us of doing so) to "skip" the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Bolsheviks, first of all, helped the most radical, most revolutionary of the bourgeois-democratic ideologists of the peasantry, those who stood closest to the proletariat, namely, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, to carry out what was practically the nationalisation of the land. On November 8 [October 26], 1917, *i.e.*, on the very first day of the proletarian socialist revolution, private ownership of land was abolished in Russia.

This laid the foundation, the most perfect from the point of view of the development of capitalism (Kautsky cannot deny this without breaking with Marx), and at the same time created an agrarian system which is *most flexible* from the point of view of the transition to socialism. From the bourgeois-democratic point of view, the revolutionary peasantry *could not go any further* in Russia: there can be nothing more "ideal" from this point of view, nothing more "radical" (from this same point of view) than the nationalisation of the land and equal land tenure. It was the Bolsheviks, and the Bolsheviks alone, who, thanks to the victory of the *proletarian* revolution, helped the peasantry to carry the bourgeois-democratic revolution really to its end. And this was the only way in which they could do the utmost to facilitate and accelerate the transition to the socialist revolution.

One can judge from this what an incredible muddle Kautsky offers to his readers by accusing the Bolsheviks of failing to understand the bourgeois character of the revolution, and by himself betraying such a wide departure from Marxism that he says nothing about the nationalisation of the land and proposes the least revolu-

tionary (even from the bourgeois point of view) liberal agrarian reform as "something socialistic"!

We have now come to the third question formulated above, namely, to what extent the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia has taken into account the necessity of passing to the social cultivation of the soil. Here again, Kautsky commits something in the nature of a forgery: he quotes only the "theses" of one Bolshevik * which speak of the task of passing to the collective cultivation of the soil. After quoting one of these theses, our "theoretician" triumphantly exclaims:

"Unfortunately, a task is not fulfilled by the fact that it is called a task. For the time being, collective farming in Russia is doomed to remain on paper only. The small peasants have never passed to collective production under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

Never has a literary swindle been perpetrated equal to that to which Kautsky has stooped. He quotes the "theses," but says nothing about the *law* passed by the Soviet government. He talks about "theoretical convictions," but says nothing about the proletarian state which holds in its hands the factories and goods! All that Kautsky, the Marxist, wrote in 1899 in his *Agrarian Question* about the means at the disposal of the proletarian state for bringing about the gradual transition of the small peasants to socialism has been forgotten by the renegade Kautsky in 1918.

Of course, a few hundred state-supported agricultural communes and Soviet farms (*i.e.*, large estates cultivated by associations of workers on behalf of the state) are very little; but can Kautsky's ignoring of this fact be called "criticism"?

The nationalisation of the land that was carried out in Russia by the proletarian dictatorship provided the highest guarantees for carrying the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its end, even in the event of a victory of the counter-revolution causing a reversion from land nationalisation to land division (I examined this possibility in a pamphlet on the agrarian programme of the Marxists in the 1905 Revolution **). In addition, the nationalisation of the land has given the proletarian state the maximum opportunity for passing to socialism in agriculture.

To sum up, Kautsky has presented us with a theoretical hodge-podge which is a complete renunciation of Marxism, and with a practical policy of servility to the bourgeoisie and its reformism. A fine critique indeed!

* * *

Kautsky begins his "economic analysis" of industry with the following magnificent argument:

Russia has a large-scale capitalist industry. Cannot a socialist system of production be built up on this foundation?

"One would have thought so if socialism meant that the workers of the various factories and mines appropriated these for themselves in order to carry on production at each factory separately.... This very day, August 5, as I am writing these lines," Kautsky adds, "Moscow reports a speech delivered by Lenin on August 2, in which he is stated to have declared: 'The workers are holding the factories firmly in their hands, and the peasants will not restore the land to the landlords.' Hitherto, the slogan: The factories to the workers, and the land to the peasants—has been an Anarcho-Syndicalist slogan and not a Social-Democratic slogan" (pp. 52-53).

I have quoted this passage in full in order that the Russian workers, who formerly quite rightly respected Kautsky, may see for themselves the methods employed by a deserter to the bourgeois camp.

Just think: on August 5, when numerous decrees on the nationalisation of factories in Russia had been issued—not a single factory had been "appropriated by the workers"; *all* were converted into the property of the republic—on August 5, Kautsky, on the strength of an obviously dishonest interpretation of a sentence in my speech, tries to make the German readers believe that in Russia the factories were handed over to individual workers! And after that Kautsky, at great length, chews the cud about its being wrong to hand over the factories to individual workers!

This is not criticism, it is the trick of a lackey of the bourgeoisie, whom the capitalists hire to libel the workers' revolution.

The factories must be handed over to the state, or to the municipalities, or the co-operative societies, says Kautsky over and over again, and finally he adds: "This is what they are now trying to do in Russia. . . ."

What does "now" mean? In August? Was not Kautsky able to commission his friends, Stein, or Axelrod, or any of the other friends of the Russian bourgeoisie, to translate at least one of the decrees on the factories?

"What will come of this we cannot yet tell. At all events, this aspect of the activity of the Soviet Republic is of the greatest interest for us, but it still remains entirely shrouded in darkness. There is no lack of decrees..." (this is why Kautsky ignores their *contents*, or conceals them from his readers!) "but there is no reliable information as to the effect of these decrees. Socialist production is impossible without all-round, detailed, reliable and rapidly informing statistics. The Soviet Republic cannot possibly have created such statistics yet. What we learn about its economic activities is highly contradictory and cannot be verified. This, too, is a result of the dictatorship and the suppression of democracy. There is no freedom of the press, or of speech" (p. 53).

This is how history is written! Had there been "freedom" of the press for the capitalists and Dutovs,¹ Kautsky would have received information about the factories being handed over to the workers. This above-class, "serious savant" is really magnificent! Kautsky refuses to touch a single one of the countless facts which show that the factories are being handed over to the republic *only*, and that they are managed by the Supreme Council of National Economy, an organ of the Soviet government, which is constituted mainly of workers elected by the trade unions. With the obstinacy of the "man in the muffler,"² he goes on repeating one thing: give me peaceful democracy, without civil war, without a dictatorship, with good statistics (the Soviet Republic has created a statistical organisation in which the best statistical authorities in Russia are employed, but, of course, an ideal system of statistics cannot be created so quickly); in a word, give me a revolution without revolution, without fierce struggle, without violence! This is what Kautsky wants. It is the same as asking for strikes without the workers and employers displaying furious passion. What is the difference between this Socialist and a common or garden liberal bureaucrat?

And so, relying upon such "factual material," *i.e.*, deliberately and contemptuously ignoring innumerable facts, Kautsky concludes:

¹ See note to p. 162. **—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

² A character in a story by Chekhov, typifying the timid, conservative, petty bureaucrat.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

"It is doubtful whether the Russian proletariat has obtained under the Soviet Republic more in the sense of real practical acquisitions and not of mere decrees than it would have obtained under the Constituent Assembly, in which, as in the Soviets, Socialists, although of a different colour, predominated" (p. 58).

A gem, is it not? We would advise Kautsky's admirers to circulate this utterance as widely as possible among the Russian workers, because Kautsky could not have provided better material for gauging his political degradation. Comrades and workers, Kerensky was also a "Socialist," but of a "different colour"! Kautsky, the historian, is satisfied with the title which the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks "appropriated" to themselves. Kautsky, the historian, refuses even to listen to the facts which loudly proclaim that under Kerensky the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries supported the imperialist policy and marauding practices of the bourgeoisie; he is discreetly silent about the fact that the majority in the Constituent Assembly consisted of these "heroes" of the imperialist war and bourgeois dictatorship. And this is called an "economic analysis"!

In conclusion, let me quote another sample of this "economic analysis":

"After an existence of nine months, the Soviet Republic, instead of spreading general well-being, has been obliged to explain why there is general distress" (p. 41).

We are accustomed to hear such arguments from the lips of the Cadets. All the flunkies of the bourgeoisie in Russia argue in this way. They all want to see general well-being brought about in nine months after four years' ruinous war and in the midst of sabotage and numerous insurrections of the bourgeoisie, aided and abetted by foreign capital! In actual practice, there is absolutely no difference whatever, not a shade of difference between Kautsky and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. His sentimental speeches cloaked in the guise of "socialism" only repeat what the Kornilovs, the Dutovs and the Krasnovs in Russia say bluntly, straightforwardly and without embellishments.

* * *

The above lines were written on November 9, 1918. Late on the same night news was received from Germany announcing the be-

ginning of a victorious revolution, at first at Kiel and other northern towns and ports, where power has passed into the hands of Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and then in Berlin, where power has also passed into the hands of the Council.*

The conclusion which I intended to write on Kautsky's pamphlet and on the proletarian revolution is now superfluous.

November 10, 1918

APPENDIX II¹

VANDERVELDE'S NEW BOOK ON THE STATE

It was not until I had finished reading Kautsky's book that Vandervelde's book, *Socialism Versus the State* (Paris, 1918), came into my hands. A comparison of the two books involuntarily suggests itself. Kautsky is the ideological leader of the Second International (1889-1914), while Vandervelde, in his capacity of President of the International Socialist Bureau, is its official representative. Both represent the complete bankruptcy of the Second International, and both with the skill of experienced journalists "cleverly" conceal this bankruptcy and their own bankruptcy and desertion to the bourgeoisie with Marxian catchwords. One gives us a striking example of German opportunism, ponderous, academic, grossly falsifying Marxism by trimming it of all that is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. The other is typical of the Latin—to a certain extent, one may say, West European (that is, west of Germany)—species of prevailing opportunism, which is more flexible, less ponderous, and which falsifies Marxism by a similar method, but in a more subtle manner.

Both radically distort Marx's tenets on the state and on the dictatorship of the proletariat; Vandervelde deals more with the state, while Kautsky deals more with the dictatorship. Both obscure the very close and inseparable connection that exists between the two subjects. Both are revolutionaries and Marxists in words, but renegades in practice, who exert all their efforts to *dissociate themselves* from revolution. Neither of them betrays even a trace of what permeates all the works of Marx and Engels, and of what distinguishes socialism from a bourgeois caricature of it, namely, the

¹ Appendix I, "Theses on the Constituent Assembly," will be found in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.—Ed. Eng. ed.

elucidation of the tasks of revolution as *distinct* from the tasks of reform, the elucidation of revolutionary tactics as distinct from reformist tactics, and the elucidation of the role of the proletariat in the *abolition* of the system of wage slavery as distinct from the role of the proletariat of the "Great Powers" in sharing with the bourgeoisie a particle of the latter's imperialist super-profits and super-booty.

We will quote a few of the most important arguments of Vandervelde in support of this appraisal.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde quotes Marx and Engels with great zeal, and like Kautsky, Vandervelde quotes from Marx and Engels everything *except* what is disagreeable to the bourgeoisie and what distinguishes a revolutionary from a reformist. He has plenty to say about the conquest of political power by the proletariat, since practice has long ago confined this within strictly parliamentary limits. But *not a single word* does he say about the fact that after the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx and Engels found it necessary to supplement the, in part, obsolete *Communist Manifesto* with an elucidation of the truth that the working class cannot simply take possession of the ready-made state machine but must *smash* it. Vandervelde, like Kautsky, as if by agreement, ignores what is most essential in the *experience* of the proletarian revolution, precisely that which distinguishes the proletarian revolution from bourgeois reforms.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde also speaks about the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to repudiate it. Kautsky did it by gross falsifications, while Vandervelde does it in a more subtle way. In one of the sections of his book, section 4, "The Conquest of Political Power by the Proletariat," he devotes sub-section *b* to the question of the "collective dictatorship of the proletariat," "quotes" Marx and Engels (I repeat, omitting all the references to the main point, namely, the *smashing* of the old, bourgeois-democratic state machine), and concludes:

"In Socialist circles, the social revolution is commonly conceived in the following manner: a new Commune, this time victorious, not in one centre, but in all the main centres of the capitalist world.

"A hypothesis, but a hypothesis which has nothing improbable about

it at a time when it is becoming evident that the post-war period will in many countries see unprecedented class conflicts and social convulsions.

"But if the failure of the Paris Commune, not to speak of the difficulties of the Russian revolution, proves anything at all, it is that it is impossible to put an end to the capitalist system of society until the proletariat has been sufficiently trained to make proper use of the power which the force of certain circumstances may put into its hands" (p. 73).

And nothing more on the essence of the question!

Such are the leaders and representatives of the Second International! In 1912 they signed the Basle Manifesto, which openly speaks of the connection the very war which broke out in 1914 has with the proletarian revolution, and actually *threatens* to bring it about; and when the war actually broke out and a revolutionary situation was created, the Kautskys and Vanderveldes began to dissociate themselves from the revolution. A revolution of the Paris Commune type, don't you see, is only a probable hypothesis! This is quite analogous to Kautsky's arguments about the possible role of the Soviets in Europe.

But this is just the argument of the ordinary educated *liberal*, who will, no doubt, agree that a new Commune is "not improbable," that the Soviets have a great future before them, etc. The proletarian revolutionary differs from the liberal in that he, as a theoretician, analyses the new *state* significance of the Commune and the Soviets. Vandervelde, however, *says nothing* about what Marx and Engels said on the subject in detail in their analyses of the experience of the Paris Commune.

As a practical politician, a Marxist should have made it clear that only traitors to socialism can evade the task of explaining the need for a proletarian revolution (of the Commune, of the Soviet, or perhaps of some other type), of explaining the necessity of preparing for it, of preaching revolution among the masses, of refuting the petty-bourgeois prejudices against it, etc.

But neither Kautsky nor Vandervelde does anything of the sort, because they themselves are traitors to socialism, who only want to maintain their reputation as Socialists and Marxists among the workers.

Take the theoretical formulation of the question.

The state, even in a democratic republic, is nothing more nor

less than a machine for the suppression of one class by another. Kautsky is familiar with this axiom, admits it, agrees with it, but evades the fundamental question as to what class the proletariat ought to suppress when it establishes the proletarian state, for what reasons, and by what means.

Vandervelde is familiar with, admits, agrees with and quotes this fundamental proposition of Marxism (p. 72 of his book); but he does not say a single word on the highly "unpleasant" (for the capitalists) *subject of the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters!*

Both Vandervelde and Kautsky have completely evaded this "unpleasant" subject. Therein lies their renegacy.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde is a past master in the art of substituting eclecticism for dialectics. "On the one hand, it is so, but, on the other hand, it isn't," and so forth. On the one hand, the term state means "the nation as a whole" (see Littré's *Dictionary*—certainly a learned work—which Vandervelde quotes, *cf.* p. 87); on the other hand, the term state may mean the "government" (*ibid.*). Vandervelde quotes this learned platitude with approval, *side by side* with the quotations from Marx.

"The Marxian meaning of the term state differs from the ordinary meaning," writes Vandervelde. Hence "misunderstandings" may arise as a result of this. "Marx and Engels regard the state not as the state in the broad sense, not a state as an organ of guidance, as the representative of the general interests of society (*intérêts généraux de la société*). It is the state—as the organ of political power, the state—as the organ of authority, the state—as the instrument of the rule of one class over another" (pp. 75-76).

Marx and Engels speak about the destruction of the state in regard to the second interpretation of the state. . . . "Propositions of too absolute a character run the risk of being inexact. There are many transitional stages between the capitalist state, which is based on the exclusive rule of one class, and the proletarian state, the aim of which is to abolish all classes" (p. 156).

This is an example of Vandervelde's "style" which is only slightly different from that of Kautsky, and which, in essence, is identical with it. *Dialectics repudiate absolute truths*: they explain the successive change of opposites and the significance of crises in history. The eclectic does not want propositions that are "too absolute,"

because he wants to push forward his philistine desire to substitute "transitional stages" for revolution.

Kautsky and Vandervelde say nothing about the fact that the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the capitalist class and the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is *revolution*, which means *overthrowing* the bourgeoisie and *breaking up, smashing* its state machine.

Kautsky and Vandervelde obscure the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie *must* give way to the dictatorship of *one* class, the proletariat, and that the "transitional stages" of the *revolution* will be followed by the "transitional stages" of the gradual withering away of the proletarian state.

Therein lies their political renegacy.

Therein, theoretically, philosophically, lies their substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Dialectics are concrete and revolutionary and distinguish between the "transition" from the dictatorship of one class to the dictatorship of another, and the "transition" from the democratic proletarian state to the non-state ("the withering away of the state"). To please the bourgeoisie, the eclecticism and sophistry of the Kautskys and the Vanderveldes blur all that is concrete and precise in the class struggle and advance the general concept "transition," under which they can hide (and *nine-tenths* of the official Social-Democrats of our time *do hide*) their renunciation of revolution.

As an eclectic and sophist, Vandervelde is more skilful and more subtle than Kautsky, because the *phrase*, "transition from the state in the narrow sense to the state in the broad sense," can serve as a means of evading all the problems of revolution, all the differences between revolution and reform, and even the difference between the Marxist and the liberal. For what educated European bourgeois would think of denying, "in general," "transitional stages" in this "general" sense?

Vandervelde writes:

"I agree with Jules Guesde that it is impossible to socialise the means of production and exchange without first fulfilling the following two conditions:

"1) The transformation of the present state as the organ of the rule

of one class over another into what Menger calls a people's labour state,* by the conquest of political power by the proletariat;

"2) Separation of the state as an organ of authority from the state as an organ of guidance, or, to use the expression of Saint-Simon, of the government of men from the administration of things" (p. 89).

Vandervelde puts the above in italics in order to emphasise the importance of these propositions. But this is sheer eclectic hodge-podge, a complete rupture with Marxism! The so-called "people's labour state" is just a paraphrase of the old "free people's state," ** which the German Social-Democrats paraded in the 'seventies and which Engels branded as an absurdity. The term "people's labour state" is worthy of petty-bourgeois democrats (like our Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), it is a phrase which substitutes non-class concepts for class concepts. Vandervelde places the conquest of state power by the *proletariat* (by one *class*) in juxtaposition with the "people's" state and fails to see the muddle he has created. Kautsky, with his "pure democracy," creates the same muddle and betrays the same anti-revolutionary, philistine disregard of the tasks of the class revolution, of the class, the proletarian dictatorship, of the *class* (proletarian) state.

Further, the government of men will disappear and give way to the administration of things only when the state *as such* disappears. By talking about this relatively distant future, Vandervelde obscures, pushes into the background, the tasks of *tomorrow*, *viz.*, the *overthrow* of the bourgeoisie.

This trick is also equivalent to subserviency to the liberal bourgeoisie. The liberal is willing to talk about what will happen when it will not be necessary to govern men. Why not indulge in such innocent dreams? But we won't say anything about the proletariat having to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance to its expropriation. The class interests of the bourgeoisie demand this.

Socialism versus the state. This is Vandervelde's bow to the proletariat. It is not difficult to make a bow; every "democratic" politician can make a bow to his electors. And under cover of a "bow" an anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian policy is pursued.

Vandervelde extensively paraphrases Ostrogorsky to show what deceit, violence, corruption, mendacity, hypocrisy and oppression

of the poor is hidden under the civilised, polished, and perfumed exterior of modern bourgeois democracy; but he draws no conclusion from this. He fails to observe that bourgeois democracy suppresses the toiling and exploited masses, and that *proletarian democracy* will have to *suppress the bourgeoisie*. Kautsky and Vandervelde are completely blind to this. The class interests of the bourgeoisie, in whose wake these petty-bourgeois traitors to Marxism are floundering, *demand* that this question be evaded, that it be hushed up, or that the necessity of such suppression be directly denied.

Petty-Bourgeois Eclecticism *versus* Marxism, Sophistry *versus* Dialectics, Philistine Reformism *versus* Proletarian Revolution—such should have been the title of Vandervelde's book.

"DEMOCRACY" AND DICTATORSHIP *

THE few issues of the Berlin *Rote Fahne* and the Vienna *Weckruf*—the organ of the Communist Party of German Austria—which have reached Moscow show that the traitors to socialism, who supported the war of the predatory imperialists, all the Scheidemanns and Eberts, the Austerlitzes and Renners, are meeting with the well-deserved resistance of the true representatives of the revolutionary proletarians of Germany and Austria. We warmly greet the two organs, which are indicative of the virility and growth of the Third International.

Evidently, the principal question of the revolution in Germany and in Austria is now the question: Constituent Assembly or Soviet government? All the representatives of the bankrupt Second International, from the Scheidemanns to the Kautskys, stand for the former and describe their point of view as defence of "democracy" (Kautsky even went so far as to say "pure democracy"), as against dictatorship. I have examined Kautsky's views in detail in the pamphlet recently published in Moscow and Petrograd entitled *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*.¹ I shall try briefly to outline the quintessence of the controversial question which has now come to the fore in a practical manner in all advanced capitalist countries.

The Scheidemanns and the Kautskys speak of "pure democracy," or of "democracy" in general, in order to deceive the masses and to conceal from them the *bourgeois* character of *modern* democracy. Let the bourgeoisie continue to hold in their hands the whole apparatus of state power, let a handful of exploiters continue to use the old bourgeois state machine. The bourgeoisie, of course, like to call elections conducted under such conditions "free," "equal," "democratic" and "popular" elections, because these words serve to conceal the truth, serve to conceal the fact that the means of

¹ In this volume.—Ed.

production and political power still remain in the hands of the exploiters and that therefore there can be no thought of real liberty and real equality for the exploited, *i.e.*, for the overwhelming majority of the population. The bourgeoisie finds it advantageous and necessary to conceal the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy from the people and to depict it as democracy in general, or as "pure democracy"; and the Scheidemanns, and also the Kautskys, in repeating this, *in fact* abandon the point of view of the proletariat and desert to the side of the bourgeoisie.

When on the last occasion they jointly signed a preface to *The Communist Manifesto* (this was in 1872), Marx and Engels thought it necessary to draw the attention of the workers to the fact that the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made (*i.e.*, bourgeois) state machine and use it for its own purposes, but that it must break, must smash it. The renegade Kautsky has written a whole pamphlet about the "dictatorship of the proletariat," in which he conceals this extremely important Marxian truth from the workers and absolutely distorts Marxism; and it goes without saying that the praises which Scheidemann and Co. heaped upon this pamphlet were the well-deserved praises that the agents of the bourgeoisie heap upon those who desert to the side of the bourgeoisie.

To speak of pure democracy, of democracy in general, of equality, of liberty, and of the people, while the workers and all the toilers are starving and in rags, are ruined and tortured, not only by capitalist wage-slavery, but also by four years of predatory war, while the capitalists and the profiteers continue to own their ill-gotten "property" and their "ready-made" apparatus of state power, means mocking at the toilers and the exploited.

It means flying in the face of the fundamental truths of Marxism which taught the workers: you must utilise bourgeois democracy as something which marks enormous historical progress compared with feudalism, but you must not for a moment forget the bourgeois character of this "democracy," its historical conventionality and limitations, you must not share the "superstitious belief" in the "state," you must not forget that even under the most democratic republic, and not only under a monarchy, the state is nothing more than a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

The bourgeoisie is obliged to be hypocritical and to describe the (*bourgeois*) democratic republic as "popular government," or democracy in general or pure democracy, when as a matter of fact it is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the exploiters over the masses of the toilers. The Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners (now, unfortunately, with the aid of Friedrich Adler) support this falsehood and hypocrisy. But the Marxists, the Communists, expose them and tell the workers and the masses of the toilers the straight and open truth, *viz.*, that as a matter of fact the democratic republic, the Constituent Assembly, popular elections, etc., all represent the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and that there is no other way of emancipating labour from the yoke of capital except by substituting the *dictatorship of the proletariat* for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The dictatorship of the proletariat alone is able to liberate mankind from the yoke of capital, from the lies, the sham and hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy, which is a democracy *for the rich*; it alone is able to establish democracy *for the poor, i.e.*, to make the benefits of democracy *really* accessible to the workers and the poorest peasants, whereas at the present time (even in the most democratic—*bourgeois*—republic) the benefits of democracy are *really* inaccessible to the overwhelming majority of the toilers.

Take, for example, the right of assembly and freedom of the press. The Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners assure the workers that the elections now taking place for the Constituent Assembly in Germany and in Austria are "democratic." It is a lie, because, *in fact*, the capitalists, the exploiters, the landlords and the profiteers own nine-tenths of the best premises that are suitable for meetings. They own nine-tenths of the paper supplies, of the printing plants, etc. The workers in the towns and the day labourers and agricultural labourers in the rural districts are, *in fact*, kept out of democracy both by the "sacred right of property" (which is guarded by Messieurs the Kautskys and Renners, to whose side, unfortunately, Friedrich Adler has deserted) and by the bourgeois state apparatus, *i.e.*, the bourgeois state officials, the bourgeois judges, etc. The present "right of assembly" and "freedom of the press" in the German "democratic" (bourgeois democratic) republic are a lie and a sham, because, *in fact*, they represent *freedom for*

the rich to buy and to bribe the press, *freedom for the rich* to dope the people with fumes of bourgeois newspaper lies, *freedom for the rich* to "possess" palaces, the best premises, etc.

The dictatorship of the proletariat *deprives* the capitalists of their palaces, of the best premises, of the printing plants, of the paper warehouses, and hands them over to the toilers.

This will mean substituting "the dictatorship of one class" for "popular," "pure" "democracy"—howl the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners (in unison with their foreign friends, the Gomperses, Hendersons, Renaudels, Vanderveldes, and Co.).

It is not true, we say. It will be the substitution of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the actual dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (which is hypocritically concealed by the forms of the democratic bourgeois republic). It will be the substitution of democracy for the poor for democracy for the rich. It will be the substitution of the right of assembly and freedom of the press for the *majority* of the population—the toilers—for the right of assembly and freedom of the press for the minority—the exploiters. It will be the enormous world-historical *expansion* of democracy, its transformation from lies into truth, the emancipation of mankind from the fetters of capital, which *distorts* and curtails all bourgeois democracy, even the most "democratic" and republican. It will be the substitution of the *proletarian* state for the bourgeois state, and this is the only thing that can lead to the withering away of the state in general.

Why cannot the latter be achieved without the dictatorship of one class? Why is it not possible to pass immediately to "pure" democracy? These are the questions that are asked by the hypocritical friends of the bourgeoisie, or by naive *kleinbürger*¹ and philistines who are fooled by them.

Our reply is: because in capitalist society only the bourgeoisie or the proletariat can have decisive significance, while the small proprietors inevitably remain vacillating, impotent and stupid dreamers about "pure," *i.e.*, non-class, or above-class, democracy. Because it is impossible to emerge from a society in which one class oppresses another except by establishing the dictatorship of the oppressed class. Because the proletariat alone is able to conquer

¹ Petty bourgeois.—Ed.

the bourgeoisie and overthrow it, for it is the only class that is united and "schooled" by capitalism, and is able to lead the vacillating masses of the toilers who live in a petty-bourgeois manner—to lead them, or at all events "neutralise" them. Because only sentimental petty bourgeois and philistines can dream, and deceive themselves and the workers by these dreams, of throwing off the yoke of capital without a long and difficult period of *crushing the resistance* of the exploiters. In Germany and Austria this resistance has not yet developed on the surface because the expropriation of the expropriators has not yet commenced. This resistance will be desperate and furious when this expropriation commences. By concealing this from themselves and the workers, the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners betray the interests of the proletariat and at the most decisive moments desert the position of the class struggle and the overthrow of the yoke of the bourgeoisie for the position of compromise between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, for the position of "social peace," or of reconciling the exploiters with the exploited.

"Revolution is the locomotive of history," said Marx. Revolution teaches quickly. The workers in the towns and the agricultural labourers in the rural districts of Germany and Austria will soon understand that the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, the Austerlitzes and Renners have betrayed the cause of socialism. The proletariat will throw off these "social-traitors," these Socialists in words and traitors to socialism in deeds, in the same way as the proletariat in Russia threw off the same sort of petty bourgeoisie and philistines, the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries." The more complete the domination of these "leaders" will be, the sooner will the proletariat realise that only the substitution of a state of the Paris Commune type (about which Marx, who has been misinterpreted and betrayed by the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, said so much), or a state of the Soviet type, for the bourgeois state, even the most democratic bourgeois republic, can open the road to socialism. The dictatorship of the proletariat will liberate mankind from the yoke of capital and from war.

December 23, 1918

THESES AND REPORT ON BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT*

Submitted to the First Congress of the Communist International, March 4, 1919

1. The growth of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all countries has called forth the convulsive efforts of the bourgeoisie and of its agents in the working class organisations to find ideological political arguments in defence of the rule of the exploiters. Of these arguments, the condemnation of dictatorship and defence of democracy are put in the forefront. The sham and hypocrisy of this argument, reiterated in a thousand sharps and flats in the capitalist press and at the Berne Conference of the yellow International in February 1919, are obvious to all those who desire to remain loyal to the fundamental principles of socialism.

2. First of all this argument operates with the concepts "democracy in general" and "dictatorship in general" without putting the question as to which class is concerned. This non-class or above-class, alleged general democratic presentation of the question is a downright mockery of the fundamental tenet of socialism, *viz.*, the tenet of the class struggle, which the Socialists who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie recognise in words, but actually forget. There is not a single civilised capitalist country in the world in which "democracy in general" exists; what exists is bourgeois democracy, and what we are discussing is not "dictatorship in general," but the dictatorship of the oppressed class, *i.e.*, of the proletariat, over the oppressors and exploiters, *i.e.*, the bourgeoisie, with the object of overcoming the resistance of the exploiters in their struggle to preserve their rule.

3. History teaches that not a single oppressed class has ever come into power, or could come into power, without passing through the

period of dictatorship, *i.e.*, the conquest of political power and the violent suppression of the desperate, furious and unscrupulous resistance which the exploiters always put up. The bourgeoisie, whose rule the Socialists who oppose "dictatorship in general" and who bow down before "democracy in general" now defend, achieved power in the advanced countries by means of a number of rebellions, by civil wars, by the violent suppression of kings, feudal barons and slave-owners, and their attempts at restoration. In their books and pamphlets, in the resolutions of their congresses and in their agitational speeches, the Socialists of all countries have explained to the people the class character of these bourgeois revolutions, of this bourgeois dictatorship, a thousand and a million times. Hence, the present defence of bourgeois democracy cloaked in speeches about "democracy in general" and the present howling and shouting against the dictatorship of the proletariat cloaked by cries about "dictatorship in general" are a downright betrayal of socialism, the practical desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie, the denial of the right of the proletariat to make its own, proletarian revolution, and defence of bourgeois reformism at the very historical moment when bourgeois reformism is bankrupt all over the world, and when the war has created a revolutionary situation.

4. In explaining the class character of bourgeois civilisation, of bourgeois democracy and of bourgeois parliamentarism, all Socialists express the idea which was most scientifically expressed by Marx and Engels when they said that even the most democratic bourgeois republic is nothing more than a machine for the suppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie, of the masses of the toilers by a handful of capitalists. Every one of the revolutionaries, every one of the Marxists who is now shouting against dictatorship and for democracy has sworn and assured the workers that he recognises this fundamental truth of socialism; but now, when the revolutionary proletariat is in a state of ferment and motion, which are directed towards the destruction of this machine of oppression and towards the achievement of the proletarian dictatorship, these traitors to socialism try to make it appear that the bourgeoisie granted the toilers "pure democracy," that the bourgeoisie has ceased to resist and is prepared to submit to the majority of the toilers, and that no

state machine for the suppression of labour by capital exists, or has ever existed, in a democratic republic.

5. The Paris Commune—which all the would-be Socialists honour in words, because they know that the masses of the workers warmly and sincerely sympathise with it—most strikingly illustrated the historical conventionality and limited value of bourgeois parliamentarism and of bourgeois democracy—institutions which are extremely progressive compared with mediævalism, but which inevitably require fundamental transformation in the epoch of proletarian revolution. It was Marx who best of all appraised the historical significance of the Paris Commune, and in analysing it revealed the exploiting character of bourgeois democracy and of bourgeois parliamentarism under which the oppressed classes receive the right once every few years to decide which of the representatives of the propertied classes shall "misrepresent" ¹ the people in parliament. It is precisely at the present time, when the Soviet movement, having spread to the whole world, is in the sight of all continuing the cause of the Paris Commune, that the traitors to socialism forget the concrete experience and the concrete lessons of the Paris Commune and repeat the old bourgeois piffle about "democracy in general." The Paris Commune was not a parliamentary institution.

6. Furthermore, the significance of the Paris Commune lies in the fact that it made an attempt to smash, to destroy the bourgeois state, bureaucratic, juridical, military and police apparatus to its foundations and to substitute for it self-governing mass organisations of the workers in which there would be no division between legislative and executive authority. All modern bourgeois-democratic republics, including the German Republic, which the traitors to socialism, in mockery of the truth, describe as a proletarian republic, preserve this state apparatus. Thus, again and again we get striking confirmation of the fact that cries in defence of "democracy in general" are really cries in defence of the bourgeoisie and of its exploiting privileges.

7. "The right of assembly" may be taken as an example of the demands of "pure democracy." Every class conscious worker who

¹ See Marx, *The Civil War in France*.—Ed.

has not broken connections with his class will understand at once that it would be absurd to promise the right of assembly to the exploiters in the period and in the circumstances in which the exploiters are resisting their overthrow and are defending their privileges. Neither in England in 1649 nor in France in 1793 did the bourgeoisie, when it was revolutionary, grant "the right of assembly" to the monarchists and nobles who called for the intervention of foreign troops and who "assembled" for the purpose of organising attempts at restoration. If the modern bourgeoisie, which became reactionary long ago, demands that the proletariat give it guarantees beforehand that it will give "the right of assembly" to the exploiters—irrespective of the resistance the capitalists put up to their expropriation—the proletariat will only laugh at the hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the workers know perfectly well that even in the most democratic bourgeois republics "the right of assembly" is but an empty phrase, because the rich own all the best public and private buildings and sufficient leisure to attend meetings, which are protected by the bourgeois state apparatus. The proletarians of town and country and the small peasants, *i.e.*, the overwhelming majority of the population, do not enjoy either the first, the second or the third of these privileges. As long as this situation prevails, "equality," *i.e.*, "pure democracy" is a sham. In order to achieve real equality, in order to realise democracy for the toilers in fact, it is first of all necessary to deprive the exploiters of all public and luxurious private buildings, it is first of all necessary to give leisure to the toilers, and to have the freedom of their assemblies protected by the armed workers and not by the sons of the aristocracy or capitalist officers commanding browbeaten soldiers.

Only after this change has taken place will it be possible, without mocking at the workers, the toilers and the poor, to speak of freedom of assembly, of equality. And nobody but the vanguard of the toilers, *viz.*, the proletariat, which overthrows the exploiters, the bourgeoisie, can bring about this change.

8. "Freedom of the press" is another of the principal slogans of "pure democracy." Here, too, the workers know, and the Socialists of all countries have admitted a million times, that this freedom is

a sham as long as the best printing plants and the huge stocks of paper are in the possession of the capitalists, and as long as the press is ruled by capital—which rule manifests itself the more strikingly, more sharply and more cynically, the more democracy and the republican system are developed, as for example in America. In order to achieve real equality and real democracy for the toilers, for the workers and peasants, it is first of all necessary to deprive capital of the opportunity of hiring writers, of buying up publishing houses and bribing newspapers, and it is necessary to overthrow the yoke of capital, to overthrow the exploiters and to suppress their resistance. By "freedom" the capitalists have always meant the freedom of the rich to accumulate profits, and the freedom of the workers to die of starvation. By freedom of the press the capitalists mean the freedom of the rich to bribe the press, freedom to utilise wealth for the purposes of fabricating and manipulating so-called public opinion. Here, too, the champions of "pure democracy" prove in fact to be champions of the filthy and venal system by which the rich control the means for the education of the masses, they prove to be deceivers of the people who, by means of plausible, eloquent and absolutely false phrases, turn the people away from the concrete historical tasks of liberating the press from its bondage to capital. Real freedom and equality will exist under the system which the Communists are building and under which it will be impossible for anyone to enrich himself at another's expense, under which it will be objectively impossible, either directly or indirectly, to subject the press to the power of money, and under which there will be nothing to prevent every toiler (or group of toilers in any number) from having and exercising an equal right to use the public printing plants and public stocks of paper.

9. The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even before the war, showed what this notorious "pure democracy" really is under capitalism. The Marxists have always said that the more developed, the "purer" democracy is, the more naked, sharp and ruthless becomes the class struggle, the more "purely" the oppression of capital and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie stand forth. The Dreyfus case in republican France, the sanguinary shooting down of strikers by mercenaries armed by the capitalists in the free

and democratic republic of America—these and thousands of similar facts reveal the truth which the bourgeoisie vainly tries to conceal, *viz.*, that even in the most democratic republics it is the terror and dictatorship of the bourgeoisie which rule and which openly manifest themselves as soon as it begins to seem to the exploiters that the power of capital is tottering.

10. The imperialist war of 1914-18 finally revealed even to the backward workers the true character of bourgeois democracy even in the freest republics as the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. For the sake of the enrichment of the German or the English group of millionaires or billionaires, tens of millions were killed, and the military dictatorship of the bourgeoisie was set up even in the freest republics. This military dictatorship continues to exist in the Entente countries even after the rout of Germany. It was precisely the war that most of all opened the eyes of the toilers, tore down the garlands of artificial flowers which decorated bourgeois democracy and revealed to the people the enormous speculation and profiteering that was going on during the war and in connection with the war. The bourgeoisie waged this war in the name of "liberty and equality," and in the name of "liberty and equality" war contractors amassed incalculable wealth. No efforts of the yellow Berne International will succeed in concealing from the masses the exploiting character of now utterly exposed bourgeois freedom, bourgeois equality and bourgeois democracy.

11. In Germany, in the most developed capitalist country on the Continent of Europe, the very first months of complete republican liberty brought about by the rout of imperialist Germany showed to the German workers and to the whole world the real class nature of the bourgeois democratic republic. The murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg * is an event of world-historical importance, not only because two of the best people and best leaders of the truly proletarian Communist International met with a tragic fate, but also because it utterly revealed the class nature of an advanced European state, one can say without exaggeration, one of the most advanced in the world. If arrested persons, *i.e.*, persons taken under the protection of the state authorities, could be murdered with impunity by officers and capitalists under a government of social-

patriots, it shows that a democratic republic in which such a thing could happen is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Those who express horror at the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, but who fail to understand this truth, betray either stupidity or hypocrisy. "Freedom" in one of the freest and most advanced republics of the world, in the German Republic, is freedom to murder the arrested leaders of the proletariat with impunity. Nor can it be otherwise as long as capitalism exists, because the development of democracy does not blunt but sharpens the class struggle, which has been brought to boiling point by the results and influences of the war and its consequences.

Throughout the civilised world Bolsheviks are being deported, persecuted and imprisoned; for example, in one of the freest bourgeois republics, Switzerland,* the pogroms against the Bolsheviks in America, etc. From the point of view of "democracy in general" or of "pure democracy" it is positively ridiculous for advanced, civilised, democratic countries, which are armed to the teeth, to fear the presence of a few score of people from backward, starving, ruined Russia, which the bourgeois newspapers in tens of millions of copies describe as savage, criminal, etc. Russia. Clearly, the social conditions that could give rise to such a crying contradiction are, in fact, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

12. Under such circumstances, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only a fully legitimate means of overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but it is also absolutely necessary for the whole mass of the toilers as the sole means of protection against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which brought about the war and is preparing for new wars.

The main thing the Socialists fail to understand and what constitutes their theoretical shortsightedness, their captivity to bourgeois prejudices and their political treachery to the proletariat, is that in capitalist society, as soon as there is any serious intensification of the class struggle on which it is based, there cannot be any middle course between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat. All dreams about some third course are merely the reactionary lamentations of the petty bourgeois. This is confirmed by the experience of more than a hundred years of devel-

opment of bourgeois democracy and of the labour movement in all the advanced countries, and particularly by the experience of the past five years. It is also confirmed by the whole science of political economy, by the whole content of Marxism, which explains that under any system of commodity production the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is economically inevitable and that nothing can take the place of the latter except the class that is developed, multiplied, organised and consolidated by the very development of capitalism, *viz.*, the proletarian class.

13. The other theoretical and political mistake Socialists commit is their failure to understand that for thousands of years, from the embryonic form of the age of antiquity, the forms of democracy underwent inevitable change as one ruling class took the place of another. In the ancient republics of Greece, in the cities of the Middle Ages and in the advanced capitalist countries, democracy has different forms and different degrees of application.* It would be very absurd to think that the most profound revolution in the history of mankind, that the first transference of power from the exploiting minority to the exploited majority that has ever occurred in the world, could proceed within the old framework of the old bourgeois parliamentary democracy, that it could proceed without extremely sharp changes, without creating new forms of democracy, new institutions embodying the new conditions for its application, etc.

14. The dictatorship of the proletariat is similar to the dictatorship of other classes in that, like all dictatorships, it was called forth by the necessity of suppressing the violent resistance of the class that was being deprived of political rule. The fundamental difference between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of other classes—the dictatorship of the landlords in the Middle Ages, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in all civilised capitalist countries—is that the dictatorship of the landlords and of the bourgeoisie meant the violent suppression of the resistance of the overwhelming majority of the population, *viz.*, the toilers. The dictatorship of the proletariat, on the contrary, means the violent suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, *i.e.*, the insignificant minority of the population, the landlords and capitalists.

Hence, it follows from this that the dictatorship of the proletariat must inevitably lead, not only to a change in the forms and institutions of democracy, speaking generally, but to such a change as will lead to the extension of the actual enjoyment of democracy to those who are oppressed by capitalism, to the toiling classes, to a degree hitherto unprecedented in world history.

And indeed, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat which has been already devised, *i.e.*, the Soviet system in Russia, the Räte system in Germany,* the Shop Stewards' Committees,** and analogous Soviet institutions in other countries, all imply and secure precisely for the toiling classes, *i.e.*, for the overwhelming majority of the population, such actual opportunities for enjoying democratic rights and liberties that nothing even approximating to them has ever existed even in the best and most democratic bourgeois republics.

The quintessence of the Soviet system lies in that the permanent and sole basis of the whole state system, the whole state apparatus, is the mass organisation of precisely those classes that were oppressed by capitalism, *i.e.*, the workers and semi-proletarians (peasants who do not exploit the labour of others, and who constantly have to sell at least part of their labour power). It is precisely those masses which, even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, while being equal in law, are in fact prevented by thousands of tricks and devices from taking part in political life and from enjoying democratic rights and liberties, who are now drawn unfailingly into constant and, moreover, decisive participation in the democratic administration of the state.

15. The equality of citizens irrespective of sex, religion, race or nationality, which bourgeois democracy always and everywhere promised but never carried out, and because of the rule of capitalism could not carry out, is carried out by the Soviet government, or the dictatorship of the proletariat, immediately and to the full, because only the government of the workers, who are not interested in the private ownership of the means of production and in the struggle for their division and redivision, is able to carry this out.

16. The old, *i.e.*, bourgeois, democracy and parliamentarism were organised in such a manner that it was precisely the toiling

masses who were mostly alienated from the apparatus of administration. The Soviet government, *i.e.*, the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the contrary, is organised in such a way as to bring the masses of the toilers closer to the apparatus of administration. The same aim is pursued by the unification of the legislative and executive authorities under the Soviet organisation of the state and by the substitution of production units, like the factories and works, for the territorial electoral constituencies.

17. The army was an apparatus of oppression not only under monarchies. It remains such in all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic. The Soviet government alone, as the permanent state organisation of precisely the classes that were oppressed by capitalism, is able to abolish the subordination of the army to bourgeois command and really merge the proletariat with the army, really arm the proletariat and disarm the bourgeoisie, without which the victory of socialism is impossible.

18. The Soviet organisation of the state is adapted to the leading role of the proletariat as the class which has been most concentrated and educated by capitalism. The experience of all revolutions and of all movements of oppressed classes, the experience of the world Socialist movement teaches that the proletariat alone is able to unite and lead the scattered and backward strata of the toiling and exploited population.

19. The Soviet organisation of the state alone is capable of effectively and immediately smashing and finally destroying the old, *i.e.*, bourgeois, bureaucratic and juridical apparatus which was preserved, and inevitably had to be preserved, under capitalism, even in the most democratic republics, for it was actually the greatest obstacle to the application of democracy for the benefit of the workers and the toilers. The Paris Commune took the first world-historical step in this direction. The Soviet government took the second.

20. The abolition of the state is the aim pursued by all Socialists, including, and particularly, Marx. Until this aim has been achieved, true democracy, *i.e.*, equality and liberty, will be impossible. And it is only Soviet or proletarian democracy that is leading to this goal practically, because, by unfailingly drawing the mass

organisations of the toilers into constant participation in the administration of the state, it is beginning immediately to prepare the way for the complete withering away of the state.

21. The complete bankruptcy of the Socialists who gathered in Berne, their complete failure to understand the new, *i.e.*, proletarian democracy, is particularly apparent from the following: on February 10, 1919, Branting closed the International Conference of the yellow International in Berne. On February 11, 1919, *Freiheit*,¹ a Berlin newspaper, conducted by some of the delegates, published a manifesto to the proletariat issued by the "Independent" Party. In this manifesto the Scheidemann government is admitted to be a bourgeois government and is accused of wanting to abolish the Soviets which are described as *Träger und Schützer der Revolution*—the vehicles and guardians of the revolution—and a call is made for the legalisation of the Soviets, for granting them state rights, for granting them the right to suspend the decisions of the Constituent Assembly and to submit them to a referendum.

This proposal is evidence of the complete ideological bankruptcy of the theoreticians who defend democracy and who fail to understand its bourgeois character. The ridiculous attempt to combine the Soviet system, *i.e.*, the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the Constituent Assembly, *i.e.*, with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, utterly exposes the poverty of mind of the yellow Socialists and Social-Democrats, their petty-bourgeois political reactionariness and their cowardly concessions to the irresistible growth of the power of the new proletarian democracy.

22. In condemning Bolshevism, the majority of the yellow International in Berne, which dared not formally vote on the resolution that was proposed on this subject out of fear of the masses of the workers, acted correctly from the class point of view. It is precisely this majority that is fully in agreement with the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and with the Scheidemanns in Germany. Complaining about persecution by the Bolsheviks, the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to conceal the fact that this persecution is called forth by their participation in the

¹ *Freedom*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

civil war on the side of the bourgeoisie and against the proletariat. Similarly, the Scheidemanns and their party in Germany are participating in the civil war on the side of the bourgeoisie and against the workers.

It is quite natural therefore that the majority of the participants in the Berne yellow International should condemn the Bolsheviks. This expressed not defence of "pure democracy" but the self-defence of those who know and feel that in the civil war they side with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

That is why, from the class point of view, the decision of the majority of the yellow International must be regarded as correct. The proletariat must not fear the truth, but look it straight in the face and draw from this all the political conclusions.

Comrades! I would like to add a word or two to the last two points. I think that the comrades who are to report to us on the Berne Conference will deal with it in greater detail.

During the whole course of the Berne Conference* not a word was said about the significance of the Soviet power. We in Russia have been discussing this question for two years. At our Party conference in April 1917 we raised, theoretically and politically, the question: "What is the Soviet power, what is its content and what is its historical significance?" We have been discussing this question for almost two years. And at our Party congress we shall adopt a resolution on it.

On February 11 the Berlin *Freiheit* published a manifesto to the German proletariat signed, not only by the leaders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, but also by all the members of the Independent Social-Democratic fraction in the Reichstag. In August 1918, Kautsky, one of the biggest theoreticians of these Independents, wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*,¹ in which he declared that he was a supporter of democracy and of the Soviet bodies, but that the Soviets must bear only economic significance and must not be regarded as state organisations. Kautsky says the same thing in *Freiheit* of November 11 and January 12. On February 9 an article appeared by Rudolf

¹ See note to p. 33.*—Ed.

Hilferding, who is also regarded as one of the most authoritative theoreticians of the Second International, in which he proposed juridically, by legislation, to unite the Soviet system with the National Assembly. This was on February 9. On February 11 this proposal was adopted by the whole of the Independent Party and was published in the form of a manifesto.

Notwithstanding the fact that the National Assembly already exists, and that "pure democracy" has already been embodied in reality, after the biggest theoreticians of the Independent Social-Democratic Party have declared that the Soviet organisations must not be state organisations, in spite of all this—again there is vacillation! This proves that these gentlemen have really failed to understand anything about the new movement and about the conditions of its struggle. But it also proves something else, namely, that there must be conditions and causes which give rise to these vacillations! When, after all these events, after nearly two years of victorious revolution in Russia, resolutions like those adopted at the Berne Conference are presented to us in which not a word is said about the Soviets and their significance, when not a single delegate utters a single word about them, we have a perfect right to say that all these gentlemen are dead to us as Socialists and theoreticians.

But comrades, from the practical point of view, from the point of view of politics, the fact that these Independents, who in theory and on principle have been opposed to these state organisations, suddenly make the stupid proposal to "peacefully" unite the National Assembly with the Soviet system, *i.e.*, to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat, shows that great changes are taking place among the masses. We see that these Independents are bankrupt in the Socialist and theoretical sense and that an enormous change is taking place among the masses. The backward masses of the German proletariat are coming to us, have come to us! Thus, the significance of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the best section of the Berne Conference, is equal to zero from the theoretical and Socialist point of view. Still, it has some significance, and that is that these vacillating elements serve as an index of the moods of the backward sections of the proletariat. This is the great historical significance of this

conference, in my opinion. We experienced something of the kind in our own revolution. Our Mensheviks traversed almost exactly the same path of development as that traversed by the theoreticians of the Independents in Germany. At first, when they were in the majority in the Soviets, they were in favour of the Soviets.* All we heard then was "Long live the Soviets!" "For the Soviets!" "The Soviets are revolutionary democracy!" When, however, we Bolsheviks secured the majority in the Soviets, they began to sing a different song; they said: the Soviets must not exist side by side with the Constituent Assembly. And various Menshevik theoreticians made similar proposals for uniting the Soviet system with the Constituent Assembly and for absorbing them in the state organisations. Once again it is revealed that the general course of the proletarian revolution is the same throughout the world. First, the spontaneous formation of Soviets, then their spread and development, and then, the rise of the practical question: Soviets or National Assembly, or Constituent Assembly, or bourgeois parliamentarism? Utter confusion among the leaders, and finally—the proletarian revolution. But I do not think that we ought to present the question in this way after two years of revolution; we ought to adopt a concrete decision because, for us, and particularly for the majority of the West European countries, the spreading of the Soviet system is a most important task.

I would like to quote only one Menshevik resolution. I have asked Comrade Obolensky to translate it into German. He promised to do this, but, I am sorry to say, he is not here. I will try to quote it from memory, as I have not the full text with me.

It is very difficult for a foreigner who has not heard anything about Bolshevism to arrive at an opinion about our controversial questions. All that the Bolsheviks assert is challenged by the Mensheviks and *vice versa*. Of course, things cannot be different in the midst of a struggle, and that is why it is so important that the last conference of the Menshevik Party, held in December 1918, adopted a long and detailed resolution which was published in full in the Menshevik *Gazeta Pechatnikov*.¹ In this resolution the Mensheviks

¹ *Printers' Gazette*.—Ed.

themselves briefly outline the history of the class struggle and of the civil war. They state that they condemn those groups in their party which are in alliance with the propertied classes in the Urals, in the South, in the Crimea and in Georgia—and they enumerate all these regions. Those groups of the Menshevik Party which, in alliance with the propertied classes, fought against the Soviet government, are now condemned in the resolution; but the last point of the resolution also condemns those who went over to the Communists. Thus, the Mensheviks were compelled to admit that there was no unity in their party and that some were on the side of the bourgeoisie and others on the side of the proletariat. The majority of the Mensheviks went over to the side of the bourgeoisie and during the civil war fought against us. Of course, we persecute the Mensheviks, we even shoot them when they wage war against us, fight against our Red Army and shoot our Red commanders. We retaliated to bourgeois war by proletarian war—there can be no other way. Thus, from the political point of view, all this is mere Menshevik hypocrisy. Historically, it is incomprehensible how at the Berne Conference people who have not been officially certified as mad could, on the instructions of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, talk about the Bolsheviks fighting the latter and not say a word about their own struggle against the proletariat in alliance with the bourgeoisie.

All of them furiously attack us for persecuting them. That is true. But they do not say a word about the part they took in the civil war! I think that I will have to provide the full text of the resolution to be recorded in the minutes and I will ask the foreign comrades to study this resolution because it is a historical document in which the question is presented correctly and which provides excellent material for appraising the controversy among the "Socialist" trends in Russia. Between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie there is another class which inclines first to one side and then to another. This has always been the case in all revolutions, and it is absolutely impossible in capitalist society, in which the proletariat and the bourgeoisie form two hostile camps, for intermediary strata not to exist between them. The existence of these vacillating elements is historically inevitable, and unfortunately these elements, who do

not know themselves on whose side they will fight tomorrow, will exist for a fairly long time.

I want to make the practical proposal that a resolution be adopted in which three points shall be specifically mentioned.

First: One of the most important tasks confronting the West European comrades is to explain to the masses the significance, importance and necessity of the Soviet system. There does not seem to be sufficient clarity on this question. Although Kautsky and Hilferding are bankrupt as theoreticians, nevertheless, the recent articles in *Freiheit* show that they correctly reflect the mood of the backward sections of the German proletariat. The same thing happened in our country: during the first eight months of the Russian revolution the question of the Soviet organisation was discussed at great length, but the workers did not understand what the new system was and whether the Soviets could be transformed into a state apparatus. In our revolution we advanced not theoretically, but practically. For example, formerly we did not raise the question of the Constituent Assembly theoretically, and we did not say that we do not recognise the Constituent Assembly. It was only afterwards, when the Soviet organisations had spread throughout the country and had captured political power that we decided to dissolve the Constituent Assembly. Today we see that in Hungary and in Switzerland the question is much more acute. On the one hand this is very good: it imbues us with the firm conviction that in the West European states the revolution will advance more quickly and will bring us great victories. On the other hand, a certain amount of danger is concealed in it, *viz.*, that the struggle will be so precipitous that the minds of the masses of the workers will not be able to keep pace with the rapid development. Even now the significance of the Soviet system is not clear to large masses of the politically educated German workers because they have been trained in the spirit of parliamentarism and in bourgeois prejudices.

Second: The spread of the Soviet system. When we hear how quickly the idea of Soviets is spreading in Germany, and even in England, it is very important evidence that the proletarian revolution will be victorious. Its progress can be retarded only for a short time. It is quite another thing, however, when Com-

rades Albert and Platten tell us that in the rural districts in their countries¹ there are hardly any Soviets among the rural workers and small peasants. In *Rote Fahne*² I read an article opposing the formation of peasant Soviets, but quite properly supporting the formation of Soviets of agricultural labourers and poor peasants. The bourgeoisie and its lackeys, like Scheidemann and Co., have already issued the slogan of peasant Soviets.* We require only Soviets of agricultural labourers and poor peasants. Unfortunately, judging from the reports of Comrades Albert, Platten and others, very little is being done, with the exception of Hungary,** to spread the Soviet system in the rural districts. Herein, perhaps, lies the practical and rather serious danger for the achievement of certain victory by the German proletariat. Victory can be assured only when not only the urban, but also the rural proletarians are organised, and organised not as they were organised before—in trade unions and co-operative societies—but in Soviets. We were able to achieve victory comparatively easily because in October 1917 we marched with the peasantry, with the whole of the peasantry. In that sense, our revolution at that time was a bourgeois revolution. The first step our proletarian government took was to embody in a law promulgated on November 8 [October 26], 1917,*** on the morrow of the revolution, the old demands of the whole of the peasantry which the peasant Soviets and village assemblies had put forward even under Kerensky. Herein lay our strength; that is why we were able to win the overwhelming majority so easily. In the rural districts our revolution continued to be a bourgeois revolution and only later, after the lapse of six months, were we compelled within the framework of the state organisations to introduce the class struggle in the rural districts, to establish Committees of Poor Peasants,³ of semi-proletarians, in every village, and systematically to fight the rural bourgeoisie. This was inevitable in Russia owing to the backwardness of the country. In Western Europe things will proceed differently, and that is why we must emphasise the fact that the

¹ Germany and Switzerland.—*Ed.*

² *The Red Flag*, Communist newspaper, the organ of the Communist Party of Germany.—*Ed.*

³ See note to p. 194.*—*Ed.*

spreading of the Soviet system to the rural population in proper forms, in new forms, perhaps, is also absolutely necessary.

Third: We must say that the winning of a Communist majority in the Soviets is the principal task in all countries in which the Soviet government is not yet victorious. Our Resolutions Commission discussed this question yesterday. Perhaps other comrades will express their opinion on it; but I would like to propose that these three points be adopted as a special resolution. Of course, we cannot prescribe the path of development. It is quite probable that the revolution will come very soon in many West European countries, but we, as the organised section of the working class, as a party, strive and must strive to gain the majority in the Soviets. Then our victory will be assured and no power on earth will be able to do anything against the Communist revolution. If we do not, victory will not be achieved so easily, and it will not be durable. Therefore, I would like to propose that these three points be adopted as a special resolution.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE QUESTION OF DICTATORSHIP *

THE question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the fundamental question of the modern working class movement in all capitalist countries without exception. For the complete elucidation of this question, a knowledge of its history is necessary. On an international scale the history of the doctrine of revolutionary dictatorship in general and of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular coincides with the history of revolutionary Socialism and especially with the history of Marxism. Moreover—and this, of course, is the most important thing—the history of all revolutions of the oppressed and exploited classes against the exploiters constitutes the principal material and source of our knowledge on the question of dictatorship. Those who have not understood the necessity of the dictatorship of any revolutionary class for its victory have failed to understand anything of the history of revolution, or else do not want to know anything about it.

As far as Russia is concerned, of especial significance, if we are to speak of theory, is the programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, drafted in 1902-03 by the editorial board of *Zarya* and *Iskra*,** or rather by G. V. Plekhanov, and edited, amended and endorsed by this editorial board. In this programme the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is presented clearly and definitely, and it is presented precisely in connection with the struggle against Bernstein, against opportunism. But of the greatest significance, of course, is the experience of revolution, *i.e.*, in Russia, the experience of the year 1905.

The last three months of that year—October, November and December—constituted a period of a remarkably strong, broad, revolutionary mass struggle, a period of the combination of the two most powerful weapons of this struggle: the political mass strike

and the armed uprising. (We will observe in parenthesis that *already in May 1905*, the Bolshevik congress, the "Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party," recognised "the task of organising the proletariat for the direct struggle against the autocracy by means of an armed uprising" as "one of the principal and urgent tasks of the Party," and instructed all the Party units to "explain the role of political mass strikes, which may be of great importance at the beginning of and during the uprising.")

For the first time in history the revolutionary struggle attained such a high stage of development and such strength that the armed uprising was combined with the mass strike, this specifically proletarian weapon. Clearly, this experience is of world-wide significance for *all* proletarian revolutions. And the Bolsheviks studied this experience with the greatest attention and zeal from its political as well as from its economic aspect. I shall mention an analysis of monthly statistics of economic and political strikes of 1905, of the forms of connection between the two, of the high stage of development of the strike struggle then attained for the first time in world history. I presented this analysis in the journal *Prosveshchenie* in 1910 and 1911, and a brief summary of it was reprinted in the Bolshevik literature published abroad in that period.

Mass strikes and armed uprisings automatically placed on the order of the day the question of revolutionary power and of dictatorship, for these methods of struggle inevitably gave rise—at first on a local scale—to the expulsion of the old government authorities, to the seizure of power by the proletariat and the revolutionary classes, to the expulsion of the landlords, sometimes to the seizure of factories, etc., etc. The revolutionary mass struggle of that period called into being organisations previously unknown in history, such as the *Soviets of Workers' Deputies*, and then the *Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies*, Peasants' Committees, and so on. Thus, the fundamental questions (the Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) which are now engaging the minds of class conscious workers all over the world were raised in a practical way at the end of 1905. While outstanding representatives of the revolutionary proletariat and of unadulterated Marxism like Rosa Luxemburg at once appreciated the significance of this practical experience and made a

critical analysis of it at meetings and in the press, the overwhelming majority of the official representatives of the official Social-Democratic and Socialist parties—among them both reformists and the future "Kautskyans," "Longuetists," followers of Hillquit in America, etc., proved absolutely incapable of grasping the significance of this experience and of carrying out their duty as *revolutionaries, i.e.*, of setting to work to study and to propagate the lessons of this experience.

In Russia, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, immediately after the defeat of the armed uprising of December 1905,* began to sum up this experience; and this work was particularly accelerated by the fact that in April 1906 the so-called "Unity Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" took place in Stockholm, at which the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks were represented and formally united. Preparations for this congress were carried on most energetically by both these factions. Prior to the congress, at the beginning of 1906, both factions published drafts of their resolutions on all the most important questions. These draft resolutions—reprinted in my pamphlet *Report on the Unity Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Letter to the St. Petersburg Workers)*, Moscow, 1906 (110 pages, of which almost half are taken up with the texts of the draft resolutions of both factions and with the resolutions finally adopted by the congress)—constitute the most important material for a study of the question as it stood at that time.

Already at that time disputes as to the significance of the Soviets were linked up with the question of the dictatorship. Even prior to the October Revolution of 1905, the Bolsheviks had raised the question of the dictatorship (see my pamphlet *The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Geneva, July 1905;¹ reprinted in the volume of collected articles, *Twelve Years***). The Mensheviks were opposed to the slogan of "dictatorship." The Bolsheviks emphasised that the Soviets of Workers' Deputies were actually "embryos of a revolutionary power," as it was literally worded in the draft of the Bolshevik resolution (p. 95

¹ See *Selected Works*, Vol. III.—Ed.

of my Report). The Mensheviks recognised the significance of the Soviets, they were in favour of "helping to organise them," etc., but did not regard them as embryos of revolutionary power, in general did not say anything about a "new revolutionary power" of this or a similar type and flatly rejected the slogan of dictatorship. It is not difficult to see that *all* the present disagreements with the Mensheviks already existed in embryo in the presentation of the question at that time. It is also not difficult to see that in their presentation of this question the Mensheviks (both Russian and non-Russian, such as the Kautskyans, Longuetists, and the like) have been behaving as reformists or opportunists, who recognise the proletarian revolution in words, but *in reality reject what is most essential and fundamental in the concept "revolution."*

Even before the Revolution of 1905 I analysed in the aforementioned pamphlet, *Two Tactics*, the arguments of the Mensheviks, who accused me of having "imperceptibly interchanged the concepts: 'revolution' and 'dictatorship'" (*Twelve Years*, p. 459). I showed in detail that by this very accusation the Mensheviks revealed their opportunism, their true political nature as henchmen of the liberal bourgeoisie, as the vehicles of its influence in the ranks of the proletariat. When the revolution becomes an undisputed force, I said, even its opponents begin to "recognise the revolution"; and I pointed (in the summer of 1905) to the example of the Russian liberals, who had remained constitutional monarchists. Now, in 1920, one may add that in Germany and Italy the liberal bourgeois—or at least the most educated and agile of them—are ready to "recognise the revolution." But by "recognising" the revolution and at the same time refusing to recognise the *dictatorship* of a definite class (or of definite classes), the Russian liberals and Mensheviks of that time, and the present-day German and Italian liberals, the Turati-ists and the Kautskyans, reveal their own *reformism*, their absolute unfitness as revolutionaries.

Because, when the revolution has already become an undisputed force, when even the liberals "recognise" it, when the ruling classes not only see but also feel the invincible might of the oppressed masses, the *whole question*—both for theoreticians and for practical leaders of policy—reduces itself to an exact class definition of the

term "revolution." Without the concept "dictatorship" it is impossible to give such a precise class definition. Without preparing for the dictatorship one cannot be a *real* revolutionary. This truth was not understood by the Mensheviks in 1905; in 1920 it is not understood by the Italian, German, French and other Socialists who are afraid of the strict "conditions" of the Communist International.* Only those who are capable of recognising the dictatorship *in words* but who are incapable of *preparing for it in deeds* can be afraid of these conditions. Hence, it will not be out of place if I quote at length the explanation of Marx's views which I published in July 1905 in opposition to the Russian Mensheviks, but which is equally applicable to the West European Mensheviks of 1920. (Instead of giving titles of newspapers, etc., I shall merely indicate whether Mensheviks or Bolsheviks are referred to.)

"Mehring tells us in the notes to his edition of Marx's articles from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 1848 that incidentally the following reproach was hurled at this newspaper in the bourgeois publications. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was alleged to have demanded 'the immediate introduction of a dictatorship as the only means of achieving democracy.' (Marx, *Nachlass*,¹ Vol. III, p. 53.) From the vulgar-bourgeois standpoint the concepts dictatorship and democracy mutually exclude each other. Not understanding the theory of class struggle and accustomed to seeing in the political arena only a petty squabble of various bourgeois circles and coteries, the bourgeois conceives the dictatorship to be the annulment of all liberties, of all guarantees of democracy, tyranny of every kind, and all possible abuses of power in the personal interests of the dictator. In effect, it is precisely this vulgar-bourgeois viewpoint that permeates the writings of our Mensheviks, who attribute the partiality of the Bolsheviks for the slogan dictatorship to Lenin's 'being obsessed by a passionate desire to try his luck.' (*Iskra*, No. 103, p. 3, column 2.) In order to explain to the Mensheviks the concept of class dictatorship as distinguished from personal dictatorship and the tasks of democratic dictatorship as distinguished from socialist

¹ *Posthumous Works*.—Ed.

dictatorship, it would be useful to dwell on the views of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

"On September 14, 1848, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* wrote:

"After a revolution, every provisional organisation of the state requires a dictatorship, and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we have reproached Camphausen' (the head of the Ministry after March 18, 1848) 'for not acting dictatorially, for not having immediately smashed up and eliminated the remnants of old institutions.* And while Mr. Camphausen was rocking himself in constitutional dreams, the defeated party (i.e., the party of reaction) strengthened its positions in the bureaucracy and in the army and here and there even began to venture upon open struggle.'

"These few words, Mehring justly remarks, sum up in a few propositions all that was propounded in detail in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in long articles on Camphausen's Ministry. What do these words of Marx imply? That the provisional revolutionary government *must* act dictatorially (a proposition which the Mensheviks, who were fighting shy of the slogan dictatorship, were totally unable to grasp), that the task of such a dictatorship is to destroy the remnants of old institutions (precisely what was clearly indicated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party [Bolsheviks] on the struggle against the counter-revolution, and what, as we have indicated above, was omitted in the Mensheviks' resolution).** Thirdly, and finally, it follows from these words that Marx castigated the bourgeois democrats for entertaining 'constitutional dreams' in an epoch of revolution and open civil war. The meaning of these words becomes particularly obvious from the article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of June 6, 1848. Marx wrote:

"The Constituent National Assembly must first of all be an active, revolutionary-active assembly. But the Frankfort Assembly*** is busying itself with school exercises in parliamentarism while allowing the government to act. Let us assume that this learned assembly succeeded after mature consideration in working out the best agenda and the best constitution. But what would be the use of the best agenda and of the best constitution if the German government had already in the meantime placed the bayonet on the agenda?"

"Such is the meaning of the slogan dictatorship. . . ."

"Great questions in the life of nations are settled only by force. The reactionary classes are usually themselves the first to resort to

violence, to civil war; they are the first to 'place the bayonet on the agenda,' as Russian autocracy has been doing systematically, consistently, everywhere, all over the country, ever since January 22 [9]. And since such a situation has arisen, since the bayonet has really taken first place on the political agenda, since the uprising has become necessary and urgent—the constitutional dreams and school exercises in parliamentarism are becoming only a screen for the bourgeois betrayal of the revolution, a screen for the bourgeoisie as they 'recoil' from the revolution. The genuinely revolutionary class must, then, advance precisely the slogan of dictatorship."¹

This is the way the Bolsheviks argued about the dictatorship before the October Revolution of 1905.

After the experiences of this revolution, I made a detailed study of the question of the dictatorship in the pamphlet *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party*, St. Petersburg, 1906 (the pamphlet is dated April 10 [March 28], 1906). From this pamphlet I shall quote all the most essential arguments, but I shall substitute for a number of proper names a mere indication as to whether the reference is to the Cadets or to the Mensheviks. In general, this pamphlet was directed against the Cadets, but in part it was directed also against the non-party liberals, semi-Cadets and semi-Mensheviks. In essence, everything that is said about the dictatorship applies precisely to the Mensheviks, who were constantly slipping over to the side of the Cadets on this question.

"At the very time when the shooting was dying down in Moscow, when the military-police dictatorship was celebrating its wild orgies, when executions and mass tortures were taking place throughout Russia, voices were raised in the Cadet press against violence from the Left, against the strike committees set up by the revolutionary parties.* The Cadet professors, trading their science with the Dubasovs, went so far as to translate the word 'dictatorship' as 'reinforced guard.' The 'men of science' even distorted their school Latin in order to belittle the revolutionary struggle. Dictatorship means—note this once and for all, honourable Cadets—unlimited power,

¹ See *Selected Works*, Vol. III, pp. 125-27.—Ed. Eng. ed.

based on force and not on law. During civil war the victorious power can only assume the form of a dictatorship. The point is, however, that there is a dictatorship of the minority over the majority, of a small body of police over the people, and there is also a dictatorship of the overwhelming majority of the people over a small group of oppressors, plunderers, and usurpers of the power of the people. By their vulgar distortion of the scientific concept of dictatorship, by their howls against violence from the Left at a time when the most lawless and most despicable acts of violence were being committed by the Right in a regular orgy of debauchery, the honourable Cadets clearly revealed the position of the 'compromisers' in the acute revolutionary struggle. A 'compromiser' hides like a coward whenever the struggle flares up. When the revolutionary people is victorious (October 30 [17]) the 'compromiser' crawls out of his hole, struts about vaingloriously, boasts and shouts until he is hoarse: that was a 'glorious' political strike! But when the counter-revolution is victorious, the 'compromiser' begins to shower hypocritical admonitions and edifying advice upon the defeated. A victorious strike is 'glorious.' Lost strikes are criminal, wild, senseless, anarchistic. An unsuccessful uprising is madness, the raging of the elements, barbarism, folly. In a word, the political conscience and the political intellect of the 'compromiser' are expressed by his cringing before whoever happens to be the stronger at the time, by getting in the way of the combatants and hindering now one and now the other side, by blunting the struggle and by blunting the revolutionary consciousness of the people, which is waging a desperate struggle for freedom."

To proceed. It will now be exceptionally opportune to quote the explanations on the question of dictatorship that were directed against Mr. R. Blank. In 1906, this R. Blank, in a newspaper which was in reality Menshevik, though formally non-party, expounded the views of the Mensheviks and extolled their "efforts to direct the Russian Social-Democratic movement along that path along which international Social-Democracy is moving with the great Social-Democratic Party of Germany at its head."

In other words, like the Cadets, R. Blank characterised the Bolsheviks as unreasonable, non-Marxian, riotous revolutionaries,

in contrast to the "reasonable" Mensheviks, and put the German Social-Democratic Party also in the Menshevik category. This is the usual method of the international trend of social-liberals, pacifists, etc., who in all countries extol the reformists, opportunists, Kautskyans and Longuetists as "reasonable" Socialists in contradistinction to the "unreasonable" Bolsheviks.

In the above-mentioned pamphlet I replied to R. Blank as follows:

"Mr. Blank draws a comparison between two periods of the Russian revolution. The first covers approximately the period from October to December 1905. This was the period of revolutionary whirlwind. The second is the present period, which, of course, we may rightly describe as the period of Cadet victories in the Duma elections, or—if we take the risk of anticipating—the period of the Cadet Duma.

"Concerning this period Mr. Blank says that the turn of sense and reason had now come again and that it was possible to turn to intelligent, planned, systematic activity. The first period, however, Mr. Blank characterises as a period of divergence between theory and practice. All Social-Democratic principles and ideas disappeared, the tactics which had always been advocated by the founders of Russian Social-Democracy were forgotten, and even the very pillars of the Social-Democratic world outlook were torn from their foundations.

"Mr. Blank's main assertion is of a purely factual character. The whole theory of Marxism, according to him, was at variance with 'practice' in the period of revolutionary whirlwind.

"Is that the case? What is the first and principal 'pillar' of Marxian theory? The thesis that the proletariat is the only thoroughly consistent revolutionary class in modern society and, consequently, is the vanguard class in every revolution. It may be asked: did not the revolutionary whirlwind tear this 'pillar' of the Social-Democratic world outlook from its foundations? No! On the contrary, the whirlwind brilliantly proved its firmness. It was the proletariat that was the principal *fighter* in this period and almost the only fighter in the beginning of the period. Almost for the first time in history a bourgeois revolution was marked by the employ-

ment of a purely proletarian weapon, *viz.*, the mass political strike, to an extent unprecedented even in advanced capitalist countries. The proletariat took up the directly revolutionary struggle at a time when the honourable Cadets and honourable Blanks were calling upon the people to elect representatives to the Bulygin Duma,* when the Cadet professors were calling upon the students to keep to their studies.** The proletariat with its proletarian weapon of struggle gained for Russia the whole of the 'constitution'***—if one may call it that—which since then has been only spoiled, curtailed, and shorn. In October 1905, the proletariat applied the tactics of struggle that were indicated *six months previously* in the resolution of the *Bolshevik* Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which directed particular attention to the importance of combining the political mass strike with insurrection—and it is precisely the combination of the two that characterises the whole period of 'revolutionary whirlwind,' the whole of the last quarter of 1905. Thus, our petty-bourgeois ideologist distorted the facts in the most shameful, most crying manner. He did not point to a single fact that could testify to a divergence between Marxian theory and the practical experience of the 'revolutionary whirlwind.' He tried to obscure the fundamental feature of this whirlwind which most brilliantly confirmed 'all Social-Democratic principles and ideas,' 'all the pillars of the Social-Democratic world outlook.'

"What, however, is the real reason that caused Mr. Blank to arrive at the monstrously erroneous opinion that all Marxian principles and ideas disappeared in the period of 'whirlwind'? An investigation of this circumstance proves to be most interesting; it reveals to us once again the true nature of philistinism in politics.

"What was the main difference between the period of 'revolutionary whirlwind' and the present 'Cadet' period, from the point of view of the various methods of political activity, from the point of view of the various methods of the people's historical creativeness? The first and principal difference was the fact that in the period of 'whirlwind' several special methods of this creativeness were employed which are alien to other periods of political life. The most essential of these methods were: 1) '*seizure*' of political liberty by the people—the exercise of this liberty without any rights and

laws and without any restriction (freedom of assembly, even in universities, freedom of the press, freedom of association, freedom to convene congresses, etc.); 2) the creation of new organs of *revolutionary government*—Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Railway Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, new village and town authorities, etc., etc. These organs were created exclusively by the *revolutionary* strata of the population, without laws or norms, in an entirely revolutionary manner, as the product of the inborn creativeness of the people, as an expression of the initiative of the people, which had freed itself or was freeing itself from the old police shackles. These were precisely organs of *power*, notwithstanding their embryonic, spontaneous, informal and diffusive character as regards composition and method of functioning. They functioned as organs of government; for example, when they seized the printing shops (in St. Petersburg), arrested police officials who hindered the revolutionary people in exercising their rights (instances of such acts occurred also in St. Petersburg, where the new organ of power was weakest and the old power strongest). They acted as a government when they called upon the people not to give money to the old government. They confiscated the money of the old government (the railwaymen's strike committees in the South) and used it for the needs of the new government, the people's government. Yes, these were undoubtedly embryos of a new, of a people's government, or—if you will—of a revolutionary government. In its social-political character it was, in embryo, the dictatorship of the revolutionary elements of the people. You are surprised, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter? You do not see the 'reinforced guard,' which for the bourgeoisie is synonymous with dictatorship? We have already told you that you do not in the least understand the scientific concept dictatorship. We will explain it to you in a minute, but first we shall point to the *third* 'method' of action in the epoch of 'revolutionary whirlwind': *the employment of violence by the people against those who used violence against the people.*

"The organs of power we have described were the embryo of dictatorship, for this government recognised *no other* power, *no* law, *no* norm, *no* matter from what source. Unrestricted power, beyond the law, resting on force in the strictest sense of the word—this is

dictatorship. But the force upon which this new power rested and desired to rest was not the force of the bayonet seized by a handful of militarists, not the force of the 'police station,' not the force of money, or of any of the old, established institutions. Nothing of the sort. The new organs of the new power possessed neither weapons, nor money, nor old institutions. Their force—can you imagine it, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter?—was totally unlike the old instruments of force, totally unlike a 'reinforced guard,' if we leave out of account the reinforced guard of the people against oppression by the police and other organs of the old government.

"On what did this force rest? It rested on the masses of the people. This is the *fundamental* distinction between this new power and all the former organs of the old power. The latter were organs of power of the minority over the people, over the masses of workers and peasants. The former were organs of power of the people, of the workers and peasants, over the minority, over a handful of police thugs, over a small group of privileged nobles and officials. That is the distinction between a dictatorship *over* the people and a dictatorship *of* the revolutionary people. Keep this well in mind, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter! The old power, as a dictatorship of the minority, could maintain itself only by the aid of police stratagems, only by preventing and diverting the masses from participating in the government, from controlling the government. The old power persistently distrusted the masses, feared the light, maintained itself by means of deception. The new power, as a dictatorship of the overwhelming majority, could and did maintain itself only by winning the confidence of the great masses, only by drawing, in the freest, broadest, and most energetic manner, all the masses into the work of government. Nothing hidden, nothing secret, no regulations, no formalities. You are a workingman? You wish to fight to liberate Russia from a handful of police thugs? Then you are our comrade. Choose your delegate at once, immediately. Choose as you think best. We shall willingly and gladly accept him as a full member of our Soviet of Workers' Deputies, of our Peasants' Committee, of our Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies, etc., etc. It is a power that is open to all, that does everything in sight of the masses, that is accessible to the masses, that springs directly from the masses;

it is the direct organ of the masses and of their will. Such was the new power, or rather its embryo, for the victory of the old power very soon trampled upon the tender shoots of this new plant.

"Perhaps, Mr. Blank or Mr. Kiesewetter, you will ask: Why 'dictatorship,' why 'violence'? Need an enormous mass use force against a mere handful? Can tens and hundreds of millions be dictators over thousands, over tens of thousands?

"These questions are usually put by those who see the term 'dictatorship' employed in a way that is new to them. These people are accustomed only to police rule and only to police dictatorship. The idea that there can be power without police, that there can be a non-police dictatorship seems strange to them. You say that millions need not use force against thousands, but you are mistaken, precisely because you do not observe this phenomenon in its process of development. You forget that the new power does not fall from heaven, but springs up and grows side by side with the old power, in opposition to the old power, in conflict with it. Without the employment of violence against the users of violence who possess the weapons and organs of power, it is impossible to liberate the people from these oppressors.

"Here is a very simple example for you, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter, which will help you to understand this piece of wisdom, which is so incomprehensible and so 'head-breaking' for the Cadet mind. Imagine that Avramov is mutilating and torturing Spiridonova.* On Spiridonova's side, let us suppose, there were scores and hundreds of unarmed people; on Avramov's side, a handful of Cossacks. What would the people have done if Spiridonova had been tortured, not in a dungeon, but in a more accessible place? They would have employed force against Avramov and his men. Perhaps they would have sacrificed several of their fighters, who would have been shot down by Avramov, but nevertheless, they would have forcibly disarmed Avramov and his Cossacks, in the course of which, probably, several of these men—if one may call them that—would have been killed on the spot, while the rest would have been put into some prison, in order to prevent them from perpetrating further outrages and to turn them over to a people's court.

"You see, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter: when Avramov and his Cossacks torture Spiridonova, that is a military-police dictatorship over the people. When the revolutionary people (who are capable of fighting the oppressors and not merely of uttering exhortations, admonitions, expressions of regret or condemnation, of whining and grieving, who are not narrow-mindedly petty-bourgeois, but revolutionary) employ force against Avramov and his like—that is a dictatorship of the revolutionary people. It is a *dictatorship*, for it is the power of the people over the Avramovs, a power unrestricted by laws. (A petty bourgeois would, perhaps, be opposed to forcibly wresting Spiridonova from the clutches of Avramov. That would not be 'according to law,' he would say: is there a 'law' which permits the killing of Avramov? Have not certain ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie created the theory of resist not evil by violence?) The scientific concept 'dictatorship' means nothing more nor less than unrestricted power, absolutely unimpeded by laws or regulations and resting directly upon force. *This* is the meaning of the concept 'dictatorship' and *nothing else*. Keep this well in mind, honourable Cadets! Further, in the example we have given we see a dictatorship precisely of the *people*, because the people, the mass of the population, having in an unorganised way, 'casually' gathered at a given spot, come on the scene themselves, administer justice themselves, exercise authority and create a new, revolutionary law. Finally, it is a dictatorship of the *revolutionary* people. Why only of the revolutionary and not of all the people? Because among all the people, who are suffering constantly and most cruelly from the exploits of the Avramovs, there are some who are physically wrecked and intimidated, some who are morally wrecked, for example, by the theory of resist not evil by violence, or wrecked, not by theory, but by prejudices, habits and routine, indifferent people, the so-called man in the street, the philistine, who is more inclined to avoid a sharp struggle, to pass on the other side, or even to hide from it (so as not to get into trouble!). That is why the dictatorship is not exercised by the whole people, but only by the revolutionary people, who, however, do not in the least fear the whole people, and disclose to them the reasons for their actions and for all the constituent parts of these actions, gladly

draw *all* the people, not only into the work of 'administering' the state, but also into power, into the work of building up the state.

"Thus, the simple example we have taken contains *all the elements* of the scientific concept 'dictatorship of the revolutionary people' as well as of the concept 'military-police dictatorship.' From this simple example, which even a learned Cadet professor can understand, we can pass on to more complicated phenomena of social life.

"Revolution—in the narrow, direct sense of the word—is precisely that period in the life of a people in which the century-old anger against the exploits of the Avramovs bursts forth in *action*, not in words; in the action of *vast masses*, not of single individuals. The people wake up and rise to liberate themselves from the Avramovs. The people free the countless Spiridonovas of Russian life from the Avramovs, employ force against the Avramovs, seize power over the Avramovs. This, of course, does not happen so simply and so 'suddenly' as in the example we gave, which we simplified for the benefit of Professor Kiesewetter. The people's struggle against the Avramovs, the struggle in the narrow, direct sense, this throwing-off of the Avramovs by the people drags on for months and years of 'revolutionary whirlwind.' This throwing-off of the Avramovs by the people is the real content of what is called the great Russian revolution. Examined from the standpoint of the methods of historical creativeness, this throwing-off takes place in the forms which we described when we spoke about the revolutionary whirlwind, namely: seizure of political liberty by the people, *i.e.*, liberty that the Avramovs have prevented the people from enjoying; the creation by the people of a new, revolutionary power, a power over the Avramovs, a power over the old, oppressive police regime; the employment of violence by the people against the Avramovs in order to remove, disarm, and render harmless all these mad dogs, all these Avramovs, Durnovos, Dubasovs, Mins,* etc., etc.

"Is it good that the people use such illegal, irregular, planless, and unsystematic methods of struggle as the seizure of liberty, the creation of a new revolutionary power that is not formally recognised by anyone, that they employ force against the oppressors of

the people? Yes, it is very good. It is the highest manifestation of the people's struggle for freedom. It marks the great times when the dreams of liberty of the best people of Russia are transformed into *action*, the action of the masses themselves, and not of individual heroes. This is as good as the crowd liberating (in our example) Spiridonova from the clutches of Avramov, forcibly disarming him and rendering him harmless.

"But this brings us to the central point of the secret thoughts and fears of the Cadets. The Cadets are the ideologists of philistines because in their views on politics, on the emancipation of all the people, on revolution, they adopt the point of view of the man in the street who, in our example of the torture of Spiridonova by Avramov, would have restrained the crowd, would have advised them not to break the law, not to hurry in liberating the victim from the hands of the executioner who was acting in the name of the legal authorities. Of course, in our example such a man in the street would be a downright moral pervert, but as applied to the whole of social life, the moral perversion of the petty bourgeois, is, we repeat, by no means an individual but a social quality, conditioned, perhaps, by the prejudices of the bourgeois-philistine science of law which is firmly entrenched in his brain.*

"Why does Mr. Blank take for granted that all Marxian principles were forgotten in the period of the 'whirlwind'? Because he transforms Marxism into Brentano-ism and regards such 'principles' as the seizure of freedom, as the creation of a revolutionary power, as the employment of force by the people as non-Marxian. This viewpoint runs like a thread through the whole of Mr. Blank's article, and not only through Mr. Blank's writings but through those of all the Cadets, of all those who are now extolling Plekhanov for his love for the Cadets, of all the writers of the liberal and radical camp, including the Bernsteinian editors of *Bez Zaglavii*,** Prokopovich, Kuskova, and *tutti quanti*.

"Let us see how this viewpoint arose, and why it had to arise.

"It arose directly out of the Bernsteinian or, speaking in broader terms, the opportunist conception of West European Social-Democracy. Those errors of this conception which the 'orthodox' in the West have been systematically exposing all along the line

are now being transferred to Russia 'under cover,' in another guise and on a different occasion. The Bernsteinians have been accepting Marxism *without* its directly revolutionary side. They regarded the parliamentary struggle, not as one of the means of struggle that was particularly appropriate in certain historical periods, but as the main and almost exclusive form of struggle, which made 'violence,' 'usurpation' and 'dictatorship' unnecessary. This vulgar, petty-bourgeois distortion of Marxism is now being brought to Russia by the Blanks and other liberal extollers of Plekhanov. They have become so accustomed to this distortion that they take it for granted that Marxian principles and ideas are forgotten in the period of revolutionary whirlwind.

"Why should such a viewpoint have arisen? Because it corresponds in the most fundamental way to the class position and interests of the petty bourgeoisie. The ideologist of 'purified' bourgeois society recognises *all* the methods of struggle employed by Social-Democracy *except those which the revolutionary people employ in the period of 'whirlwind,'* and the employment of which revolutionary Social-Democracy approves and aids. The interests of the bourgeoisie require the participation of the proletariat in the struggle against the autocracy, but only such participation as will not lead to the supremacy of the proletariat and the peasantry, only such participation as will not entirely abolish the old autocratic, feudal and police organs of power. The bourgeoisie wants to preserve these organs, but it wants to subject them to its own direct control. It needs them to use *against the proletariat*, whose proletarian struggle would be too greatly facilitated by the complete abolition of these organs. That is why the interests of the bourgeoisie as a class demand both a monarchy and an Upper Chamber, that is why they must prevent the establishment of the dictatorship of the revolutionary people. Fight the autocracy!—the bourgeoisie says to the proletariat—but do not touch the old organs of power, for I need them. Fight in a 'parliamentary way,' *i.e.*, within the limits I shall prescribe to you in agreement with the monarchy; fight with the aid of organisations, not with organisations like general strike committees,* Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, etc., but with such as are recognised, restricted, and rendered

harmless for capital by the laws promulgated by me in agreement with the monarchy.

"Hence it is clear why the bourgeoisie speaks about the period of 'whirlwind' with scorn, contempt, rage and hatred, and why it speaks about the period of constitutionalism upheld by Dubasov* with ecstasy, rapture, with infinite philistine infatuation . . . for reaction. The constant and immutable quality of the Cadets is a striving to gain the support of the people and fear of their revolutionary activity.

"It is clear also why the bourgeoisie fears a repetition of the 'whirlwind' worse than the plague, why it ignores and hushes up the elements of the new revolutionary crisis, why it supports constitutional illusions and spreads them among the people.

"Now we have fully explained why Mr. Blank and his ilk declare that all Marxian principles and ideas were forgotten in the period of 'whirlwind.' Like all petty bourgeois, Mr. Blank recognises Marxism *without* its revolutionary side, he recognises Social-Democratic methods of struggle *without* the most revolutionary and directly revolutionary methods.

"Mr. Blank's attitude to the period of the 'whirlwind' is extremely characteristic as an illustration of bourgeois lack of understanding of proletarian movements, of bourgeois fear of sharp and determined fighting, of bourgeois hatred for all manifestations of sharp, revolutionary—in the strict sense of the term of solving social-historical questions—methods which break up the old institutions. Mr. Blank has betrayed himself, he has betrayed all his bourgeois narrow-mindedness at one stroke. He heard and read that the Social-Democrats had made 'mistakes' in the period of whirlwind and he hastened to conclude from this and to declare with an aplomb brooking no appeal, but without any proof, that all the 'principles' of Marxism (about which he hasn't the slightest conception) had been forgotten. In regard to these 'mistakes' we would ask: has there ever been a period in the development of the working class movement, in the development of Social-Democracy, in which mistakes of one sort or another have not been made, in which there has not been some deviation or other either to the Right or to the Left? Is not the history of the parliamentary period of the struggle

of German Social-Democracy—the period which all the narrow-minded bourgeois throughout the world regard as the impassable limit—full of such mistakes? If Mr. Blank were not such an absolute ignoramus on questions of socialism, he would easily recall the cases of Mühlberger, Dühring, the question of the *Dampfersubvention*,* the 'Young' Socialists,** Bernstein and many, many others. But Mr. Blank does not think that a study of the real course of development of Social-Democracy is important. All he wants to do is to belittle the sweep of the proletarian struggle in order to exalt the bourgeois poverty of his own Cadet Party.

"Indeed, if we examine the matter from the point of view of the deviation of Social-Democracy from its usual 'normal' course, we shall see that in this respect, too, the period of 'revolutionary whirlwind' exhibits not a lesser, but *greater* consolidation and ideological unity of Social-Democracy, compared with other periods. The tactics in the epoch of the 'whirlwind' did not separate the two wings of Social-Democracy, but brought them closer to one another. Instead of the former disagreements there was unanimity of views on the question of the armed uprising. Social-Democrats of both factions worked in the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, in these peculiar organs of the embryonic revolutionary power; they drew the soldiers and peasants into these Soviets and issued revolutionary manifestoes in conjunction with the petty-bourgeois revolutionary parties. The former disputes of the pre-revolutionary epoch were replaced by solidarity on practical questions. The upsurge of the revolutionary wave thrust disagreements aside, compelled acceptance of fighting tactics, thrust aside the Duma question, put the question of insurrection on the order of the day, brought Social-Democracy and revolutionary bourgeois democracy closer together for direct and immediate work. In *Severny Golos*,¹ the Mensheviks jointly with the Bolsheviks called for a strike and insurrection; called upon the workers to continue the struggle until they had captured power. The revolutionary situation itself suggested the practical slogans. Disputes arose only over details in the appraisal of events. *Nachalo*,² for example, regarded the Soviets

¹ *The Northern Voice*—Ed. Eng. ed.

² *The Beginning*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

of Workers' Deputies as organs of revolutionary self-government; *Novaya Zhizn*¹ regarded them as embryonic organs of revolutionary power which united the proletariat and revolutionary democracy. *Nachalo* inclined toward the standpoint of the dictatorship of the proletariat; *Novaya Zhizn* took the standpoint of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. But have there not been similar differences of opinion in the ranks of Social-Democracy in every period of development of every European Socialist party?

"Mr. Blank's distortion of the question, his glaring mutilation of the history of the recent past is explained by his smug, bourgeois vulgarity which makes him regard the periods of revolutionary whirlwind as madness ('all principles are forgotten,' 'sense and common reason almost disappear'), while periods of suppression of revolution and of philistine 'progress' (protected by the Dubasovs) are epochs of sensible, intelligent and planned activity. This comparative appraisal of the two periods (the period of 'whirlwind' and the Cadet period) runs like a thread through the whole of Mr. Blank's article. When the history of humanity moves forward at the speed of a locomotive, he calls it a 'whirlwind,' a 'deluge,' the 'disappearance' of all 'principles and ideas.' When history moves at the speed of a horse and cart he calls it reason, system. When the masses themselves, with all their virgin primitiveness, their simple, rough determination, begin to make history and to apply 'principles and theories' directly and immediately, the bourgeoisie takes fright and wails that 'reason is thrust into the background.' (Is not the very opposite the case, you philistine heroes? Is it not precisely in such moments of history that the reason of the masses is displayed rather than the reason of single individuals? Is it not precisely at such times that the reason of the masses becomes a living, active force, and not an armchair force?) When direct action by the masses is crushed by shootings, executions, floggings, unemployment and famine, when the bugs of professorial science, subsidised by Dubasov, crawl out of the cracks and begin to speak on behalf of the people, *in the name of the*

¹ *New Life*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

masses, and sell and betray the interests of the latter to a privileged few—the knights of philistinism imagine that an epoch of peace and of calm progress has set in, that 'the turn of sense and reason has now come again.' The bourgeois always and everywhere remains true to himself: whether you take the *Polyarnaya Zvezda*¹ or *Nasha Zhizn*,² whether you read Struve or Blank *—it is all the same; everywhere you find this narrow-minded, professorial, pedantic, bureaucratic, lifeless appraisal of revolutionary and reformist periods. The former are periods of madness, *tolle Jahre*³ periods, when sense and reason disappear. The latter are periods of 'intelligent, systematic' activity.

"Do not misconstrue my words. Do not say that I am speaking about Mr. Blank and Co. preferring this or that period. It is not a matter of preference; our subjective preference does not determine the order of historical periods. The point is that *in their analysis of the characteristics* of this or that period (irrespective of our preferences or our sympathies) Mr. Blank and Co. unscrupulously *distort the truth*. The point is that it is precisely the revolutionary periods that are distinguished for their greater breadth, greater wealth, greater intelligence, greater and more systematic activity, greater audacity and vividness of historical creativeness compared with periods of philistine, Cadet, reformist progress. But Mr. Blank and Co. picture it the other way about. They pass off poverty as historical-creative wealth. They regard the inactivity of the suppressed, downtrodden masses as the triumph of the 'systematic' activity of the bureaucrats and the bourgeoisie. They shout about the disappearance of sense and reason, when the picking to pieces of parliamentary bills by all sorts of bureaucrats and liberal 'penny-a-liners' gives way to a period of direct political activity by the 'common people,' who in their simple way directly and immediately destroy the organs of oppression of the people, seize power, appropriate for themselves what was considered to be the property of all sorts of plunderers of the people—in a word, precisely when the sense and reason of millions of downtrodden

¹ *The North Star*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

² *Our Life*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

³ Mad years—1848-49 in Germany.—Ed. Eng. ed.

people is awakening, not only for reading books, but for action, for living human action, for historical creativeness."

Such was the controversy around the question of the dictatorship in the years 1905 and 1906 in Russia.

Messieurs the Dittmanns, Kautskys, Crispiens, and Hilferdings in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Turati and his friends in Italy, MacDonal and Snowden in England, etc., in effect argue about the dictatorship in exactly the same way as Mr. R. Blank and the Cadets did in Russia in 1905. They do not understand what dictatorship is, do not know how to prepare for it, and are incapable of understanding and achieving it.

October 20, 1920

PART II

THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE PARTY AFTER THE SEIZURE OF POWER BY THE PROLETARIAT

January-June 1918

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

*Report Delivered to the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets,
January 24 [11], 1918 **

COMRADES! On behalf of the Council of People's Commissars I must submit to you a report of its activities for the two months and fifteen days that have elapsed since the establishment of the Soviet power and the Soviet government in Russia.

Two months and fifteen days—this is only five days more than the preceding workers' government lasted, the government that ruled over a whole country, or over the exploiters and the capitalists, *viz.*, the government of the Paris workers in the epoch of the Paris Commune of 1871.

We must first of all remember this workers' government, we must throw our minds back to the past and compare it with the Soviet government that was formed on November 7 [October 25]. And if we compare the preceding dictatorship of the proletariat with the present one we shall see at once what enormous progress the international working class movement has made, and in what an immeasurably more favourable position the Soviet government in Russia finds itself, notwithstanding the incredibly complicated conditions and circumstances of war and ruin in which it has to work.

Retaining power for two months and ten days, the workers of Paris, who for the first time in history established the Commune, which was the embryo of Soviet government, perished at the hands of the French Cadets, Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionary Kaledinites. . . . The French workers had to pay an unprecedentedly heavy price for the first experience of workers' govern-

ment, of the significance and purpose of which the overwhelming majority of the peasants in France were ignorant.

We find ourselves in immeasurably more favourable circumstances because the Russian soldiers, workers and peasants were able to create an apparatus which informed the whole world of its methods of struggle, *viz.*, the Soviet government. This is what primarily alters the position of the Russian workers and peasants in comparison with the rule of the proletariat of Paris. They had no apparatus, the country did not understand them; we were able immediately to rely on the Soviet government, and that is why we never doubted that the Soviet government enjoyed the sympathy and the warmest and most devoted support of the overwhelming majority of the masses, and that, for that reason, the Soviet government was invincible.

Those who were sceptical of the Soviet government and frequently, either consciously or unconsciously, sold and betrayed it for compromise with the capitalists and the imperialists, raised a deafening clamour about the rule of the proletariat alone not being able to maintain itself in Russia. As if any Bolshevik, or any adherent of the Bolsheviks, forgot for a moment that in Russia only a government that managed to organise the working class and the majority of the peasantry, all the toiling and exploited classes, in a single, inseparably inter-connected force fighting against the landlords and the bourgeoisie, could remain in power for any length of time.

We never doubted that only the alliance of the workers and the poorest peasants, the semi-proletarians mentioned in our Party programme, could, in Russia, embrace the majority of the population and ensure firm support for the government. And after November 7 [October 25] we were able immediately, in the course of several weeks, to overcome all difficulties and establish a government on the basis of this firm alliance.

Yes, comrades! When the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, in its old form—when the peasants did not yet understand who in this party were real advocates of socialism—put forward the slogan of equal land tenure without caring who was to carry out this slogan—in alliance with the bourgeoisie or not—we said that it was a fraud.

And this section, which has now realised that the people are not with it, which has realised that it is a bubble, claimed that it could introduce equal land tenure in alliance with the bourgeoisie; that was the fraud they perpetrated. And when, in the greatest moment in the life of the nation, the Russian revolution presented an example of collaboration between the toiling masses and the bourgeoisie, when the war was ruining the people and dooming millions to death from starvation, and when its consequences showed what compromise means in practice, when the Soviets themselves experienced this and felt it after having passed through the school of compromise, it became obvious that there was a sound, virile and great socialist core in the teachings of those who wanted to unite the toiling section of the peasantry with the great Socialist movement of the workers of the whole world.

And as soon as this question presented itself to the peasantry as a clear and distinct practical question, something happened of which no one had any doubt, as has now been proved by the peasant Soviets and Congresses: when the time came to introduce socialism in practice, the peasants obtained the opportunity to see clearly these two main political lines, *i.e.*, alliance with the bourgeoisie, or alliance with the toiling masses; they then realised that the party which expressed the real strivings and interests of the peasantry was the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party. . . . And when we concluded our government alliance with this party, we, from the very outset, arranged it so that this alliance rested on the clearest and most obvious principles. If the peasantry of Russia want to socialise the land in alliance with the workers who will nationalise the banks and establish workers' control, then they are our loyal colleagues, our most loyal and valuable allies. Comrades, not a single Socialist would refuse to admit the obvious truth that between socialism and capitalism there lies a long, more or less difficult transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that the forms this period will take will be determined to a large extent by whether small proprietorship or big proprietorship, whether petty culture or large-scale culture predominates. It goes without saying that the transition to socialism in Esthonia, that small country in which the whole population is literate, and which

consists of large agricultural enterprises, cannot be the same as the transition to socialism in Russia, which is mainly a petty-bourgeois country. This must be taken into account.

Every intelligent Socialist will agree that socialism cannot be imposed upon the peasantry by force and that we can rely only upon the force of example and on the masses of the peasants assimilating living experience. How would the peasantry prefer to pass to socialism? This is the practical problem which now confronts the Russian peasants. How can they support the Socialist proletariat and begin the transition to socialism? And the peasants have already started this transition, and we have complete confidence in them.

The alliance we concluded with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries is built on a firm basis and is growing stronger and stronger every day. At first we on the Council of People's Commissars feared that factional struggles would hinder the work; but now, after the experience of two months of joint work, I must say definitely that on the majority of questions we arrived at unanimous decisions. . . .

We know that only when experience has shown the peasants the kind of exchange¹ there must be between town and country will they themselves, from below, on the basis of their own experience, establish this exchange. On the other hand, the experience of the civil war has demonstrated to the representatives of the peasantry that there is no other road to socialism except the dictatorship of the proletariat and the ruthless suppression of the rule of the exploiters.

Comrades, every time we touch upon this theme, at the present assembly, or on the Central Executive Committee, I, from time to time, hear from the Right side of this assembly the exclamation: "Dictator!" Yes, "when we were Socialists" we all recognised the dictatorship of the proletariat; they even wrote about it in their programmes, they were angry about the widespread prejudice that it was possible to persuade the population, to prove to it, that the toiling masses ought not to be exploited, that this was sinful and disgraceful, and that, when this was done, we would achieve heaven

¹ *I.e.*, exchange of agricultural produce and manufactured goods.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

on earth. No, this utopian prejudice was smashed in theory long ago, and now our task is to smash it in practice.

We must not depict socialism as if Messieurs the Socialists will bring it to us on a plate all nicely dressed. That will never happen. Not a single problem of the class struggle has ever been solved in history except by violence. When violence is exercised by the toilers, by the masses of the exploited against the exploiters—then we are for it . . . and we are not in the least disturbed by the howls of those who consciously or unconsciously side with the bourgeoisie, or who are so frightened, so downtrodden by its rule, that they are flung into consternation at the sight of this unprecedented, acute class struggle, shed bitter tears, forget all their premises and demand that we perform the impossible, that we Socialists achieve complete victory without fighting against the exploiters and without suppressing their resistance.

As far back as the summer of 1917 Messieurs the exploiters understood that this was "the last fight we must face," and that if the Soviets came into power the last bulwark of the bourgeoisie, their principal instrument for the suppression of the toiling masses would be torn out of their hands.

That is why the October Revolution commenced this systematic and unswerving struggle to compel the exploiters to cease their resistance and to become reconciled to the thought, however difficult that may be for even the best of them, that the rule of the exploiting classes has been abolished forever, that from now on the simple muzhik will give the orders and that they must obey, however unpleasant that may be.

This will entail many difficulties, sacrifices and mistakes; this work is new, unprecedented in history and cannot be studied in books. It goes without saying that this is the greatest and most difficult transition that has ever occurred in history; but there was no other way to make this great transition. And the fact that a Soviet government has been established in Russia has shown that it is the revolutionary masses who are richest of all in revolutionary experience—when millions come to the assistance of a few score of Party people—that the masses themselves practically take their exploiters by the throat.

That is why civil war has acquired predominance in Russia at the present time. Against us is advanced the slogan: "Away with civil war!" I heard this shouted by the representatives of the Right of the so-called "Constituent Assembly." Away with civil war. . . . What does that mean? Civil war against whom? Against the Kornilovs, Kerenskys and Ryabushinskys who are spending millions to bribe tramps and bureaucrats? Against the saboteurs who, consciously or unconsciously, are accepting these bribes? Undoubtedly, among the latter there are ignorant people who accept these bribes unconsciously, because they cannot imagine how the old bourgeois system can be destroyed and why it should be destroyed and an entirely new, socialist society built up on its ruins. Undoubtedly there are people like that, but does that alter the position?

That is why the representatives of the propertied classes are staking their all, that is why this is the last and decisive battle for them, and they stick at nothing in their efforts to smash the Soviet government. Does not the whole history of Socialism, and particularly of French Socialism, which is so rich in revolutionary striving, show that when the toilers themselves take power in their hands the ruling classes resort to incredible crimes and shooting when it is a matter of protecting their money-bags.* When these people talk to us about civil war we answer them with ridicule; but when they carry their slogans among the student youth we say—you are deceiving them!

The class struggle did not accidentally assume its latest form in which the exploited class takes all the means of government in its hands in order to completely destroy its class enemy, the bourgeoisie, in order to sweep from the land of Russia not only the bureaucrats, but also the landlords, as the Russian peasants in several gubernias did.

We are told that the sabotage with which the bureaucrats and the landlords met the Council of People's Commissars is an indication of their unwillingness to assist socialism;** as if it were not clear that the whole of this gang of capitalists and swindlers, tramps and saboteurs, represent a single gang corrupted by the bourgeoisie and resisting the rule of the toilers. Of course, those who thought that it was possible to leap straight from capitalism

to socialism, or those who imagined that it was possible to convince the majority of the population that socialism could be achieved through the medium of the Constituent Assembly, those who believed in this bourgeois-democratic fable, can go on quietly believing it, but let them not complain if life destroys this fable.

Those who have understood what class struggle means, who know what the sabotage organised by the bureaucrats means, know that it is impossible to jump straight into socialism. Representatives of the bourgeoisie, capitalists, have remained, who hope to restore their rule and who defend their money-bags; tramps have remained, a stratum of corrupt people who are absolutely downtrodden by capitalism and who are unable to rise to the level of the idea of the proletarian struggle. Office employees, bureaucrats have remained, who believe that it is in the interests of society to protect the old order. How can anyone imagine that the victory of socialism can come about except by the complete collapse of these strata, except by the destruction of the Russian and European bourgeoisie? Do you think the Ryabushinskys do not understand their class interests? It is they who are paying the saboteurs not to work for us. Are they disunited? Are they not operating in conjunction with the French, British and American capitalists in buying up securities? It remains to be seen whether they will get anything out of these transactions. Will not the heaps of securities they are now buying up turn out to be useless heaps of scrap paper?

That is why, comrades, our reply to all the reproaches and accusations hurled against us of employing terror, dictatorship, civil war, although we are far from having resorted to real terror, because we are stronger than they—we have the Soviets, it will be sufficient if we nationalise the banks and confiscate their property in order to compel them to submit—our reply to all these charges of instigating civil war is: yes, we have openly proclaimed that which no other government has been able to proclaim. The first government in the world that can afford to speak openly of civil war is the government of the masses of the workers, peasants and soldiers. Yes, we have started and we are waging civil war against the exploiters. The more straightforwardly we say this, the more quickly will this war come to an end, the more quickly will all the

toilers and the masses of the exploited understand us, understand that the Soviet government is fighting for the real, vital cause of all the toilers.

Comrades, I do not think we shall achieve victory in this struggle quickly, but we are very rich in experience: we have managed to achieve a great deal in the course of two months. We experienced the attempt of Kerensky to launch an attack against the Soviet government and—the complete collapse of this attempt;* we experienced the organisation of the rule of the Ukrainian Kerenskys—the struggle has not yet ended there, but anyone who has watched the struggle, who has heard at least a few truthful reports from the representatives of the Soviet government, will realise that the bourgeois elements of the Ukrainian Rada are living their last days. There cannot be the slightest doubt about the victory of the Soviet government, of the Ukrainian People's Republic, over the Ukrainian bourgeois Rada.**

As for the struggle against Kaledin ***—here, indeed, everything rests on the basis of the exploitation of the toilers, on the basis of the bourgeois dictatorship, that is, if the opposition to the Soviet government has any sort of social basis. The Peasants' Congress **** has clearly demonstrated that Kaledin's cause is hopeless; the masses of the toilers are against him. The experience of the Soviet government, propaganda by deeds, and the example of the Soviet organisations are having their effect, and Kaledin's internal stronghold in the Don region is collapsing, not so much externally as internally.

That is why, looking at the civil war front in Russia, we can say with complete conviction: here the victory of the Soviet government is complete and absolutely assured. And, comrades, this victory of the Soviet government is being achieved by the fact that right from the outset the Soviet government began to realise the age-long aspirations of Socialism, while consistently and determinedly relying on the masses and considering its duty to be to rouse the most oppressed and downtrodden strata of society to active life, to raise them to the level of socialist creativeness. That is why the old army, the army of the barracks, of the parade ground and of the torture of soldiers, has retreated into the limbo of the

past. It has been thrown on the scrap heap, razed to the ground. The complete democratisation of the army has been carried out.*

Permit me to relate an incident that occurred to me. I was in the train on the Finnish Railway and I overheard a conversation between several Finns and an old woman. I could not take part in the conversation because I cannot speak Finnish. But one of the Finns turned to me and said: "Do you know the curious thing this old woman said? She said, 'now there is no need to fear the man with the gun. I was in the woods one day and I met a man with a gun and instead of taking the firewood I had collected from me, he helped me to collect some more.'"

When I heard that, I said to myself: let the hundreds of newspapers, no matter what they call themselves—Socialist, near-Socialist, etc.—let hundreds of extremely loud voices shout at us, "dictators," "violators," and similar epithets. We know now that another voice is rising from among the masses; these masses say to themselves: now we need not be afraid of the man with the gun because he protects the toilers and will be ruthless in suppressing the rule of the exploiters. This is what the people have realised, and that is why the agitation that simple and uneducated people are carrying on when they relate how the Red Guards are turning their might against the exploiters—that is why this agitation is invincible. It will spread among millions and tens of millions, and will firmly create that which the French Commune of the nineteenth century began to create, but created for only a very short time because it was wrecked by the bourgeoisie—it will create a socialist Red Army, what we Socialists have always striven for, *viz.*, the general arming of the people. It will create new cadres of the Red Guard, which will enable us to train the masses of the toilers for the armed struggle.

Formerly it was said that Russia could not fight because she had no officers; but we must not forget what these very bourgeois officers said as they observed the workers fighting against Kerensky and Kaledin. They said: "The technical equipment of the Red Guards is worthless, but if these people had a little training they would have an invincible army." Because for the first time in the history of the world struggle elements have penetrated the army

which are not the vehicles of bureaucratic knowledge, but are guided by the idea of the struggle for the emancipation of the exploited. And when the work we have commenced will be completed, the Russian Soviet Republic will be invincible.

Comrades, the road which the Soviet government has traversed in regard to the socialist army has also been traversed in regard to another instrument of the ruling classes, a still more subtle, a still more complicated instrument, *viz.*, the bourgeois courts, which pretended to maintain order, but which, as a matter of fact, were a blind, subtle instrument for the ruthless suppression of the exploited, and an instrument for protecting the interests of the money-bags. The Soviet government acted as it was commanded to act by all the proletarian revolutions; it immediately threw the old court on the scrap-heap. Let them cry that we are not reforming the old court but that we immediately threw the old court on the scrap-heap.* By that we paved the way for a real people's court, and not so much by the force of repression as by the example of the masses, the authority of the toilers, without formalities—that is what transforms the court from an instrument of exploitation into an instrument of education on the firm foundations of socialist society. There is no doubt whatever that we cannot attain such a society all at once.

These, then, are the main steps the Soviet government has taken along the road indicated by the experience of all the great people's revolutions throughout the world. There has not been a single revolution in which the masses of the toilers did not take some steps along this road in order to set up a new state. Unfortunately, they only began to do this, but were not able to finish, they were not able to create the new type of state. We have created it—we have already established a Socialist Republic of Soviets.

I have no illusions about the fact that we have only just entered the period of transition to socialism, that we have not yet reached socialism. But if you say that our state is a Socialist Republic of Soviets, you will be right. You will be as right as those who say that many Western bourgeois republics are democratic republics although everybody knows that not one of even the most democratic of these republics is completely democratic. They grant scraps of democracy, they cut off tiny bits of the rights of the exploiters, but

the toiling masses are as much oppressed as they are everywhere else. Nevertheless, we say that the bourgeois system is represented by the old monarchies as well as by the constitutional republics.

And so in our case now. We are very far from having completed even the transitional period from capitalism to socialism. We have never consoled ourselves with the hope that we could finish it without the aid of the international proletariat. We never had any illusions on that score, and we know how difficult is the road that leads from capitalism to socialism; but it is our duty to say that our Soviet Republic is a socialist republic because we have taken this road, and our words will not be empty words.

We have initiated a number of measures to undermine the rule of the capitalists. We know that the activities of all our institutions should be combined by a single principle, and this principle we express in the words: "Russia is declared to be a Socialist Republic of Soviets." This will be the truth, which rests on what we must do and have already begun to do, this will be the best unification of all our activities, the proclamation of our programme, a call to the toilers and the exploited of all countries who either do not know what socialism is, or, what is worse, believe that socialism is the Chernov-Tseretelli hodge-podge of bourgeois reforms which we have tasted and tried during the ten months of the revolution and found to be an adulteration, but not socialism.

And that is why "free" England and France did all they possibly could during the ten months of our revolution to prevent a single copy of Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionary newspapers from entering their countries. They had to act in this way because they saw that the masses of the workers and peasants in all countries instinctively understood what the Russian workers were doing. At every meeting news about the Russian revolution and the slogan of Soviet government was hailed with loud applause. The toilers and the masses of the exploited everywhere have already come into conflict with their party leaders. The old leaders of Socialism are not yet dead and buried as Chkheidze and Tseretelli are in Russia, but they are already done for in all countries of the world, they are already moribund.

As against the old bourgeois system there now stands a new

state, *viz.*, the Republic of Soviets, the republic of the toilers, of the exploited classes, which are breaking down the old bourgeois barriers. New forms of state have been created, which make it possible to suppress the exploiters, to crush this insignificant handful who are strong because of yesterday's money-bags and yesterday's store of knowledge. They—the professors, teachers and engineers—transform their knowledge into an instrument for the exploitation of the toilers, saying: I want my knowledge to serve the bourgeoisie, otherwise I refuse to work. . . . But their power has been broken by the workers' and peasants' revolution, and against them is rising a state in which the masses themselves freely elect their representatives.

It is precisely at the present time that we can say that we really possess an organisation of government which clearly indicates the transition to the complete abolition of government, of the state. This will be possible when every trace of exploitation has been abolished, *i.e.*, in socialist society.

Now I will briefly deal with the measures which the socialist Soviet government of Russia has initiated. One of the first measures adopted for the purpose, not only of wiping the Russian landlord from the face of the earth, but also of eradicating the rule of the bourgeoisie and the possibility of capital oppressing millions and tens of millions of toilers, was the nationalisation of the banks. The banks are important centres of modern capitalist economy. They collect enormous wealth and distribute it over an enormous area of the country; they are the nerve centres of capitalist life. They are subtle and intricate organisations, which grew up in the course of centuries; and against them were hurled the first blows of the Soviet government which at first encountered desperate resistance in the State Bank. But this resistance did not deter the Soviet government. We succeeded in the main thing, in organising the State Bank; this main thing is in the hands of the workers and peasants. After these fundamental measures, which still require a lot of working out in detail, we proceeded to lay our hands on the private banks.*

We did not proceed in the way the compromisers would no doubt have advised us to do, *viz.*, first wait until the Constituent Assembly was convened, then perhaps draft a bill and introduce it in the Constituent Assembly and by that inform Messieurs the bourgeoisie

of our intentions and thus enable them to find a loophole through which to extricate themselves from this unpleasant position; perhaps draw them into our company, and then make state laws—that would be a “state act.” . . .

That would have been the annulment of socialism. We acted quite simply: not fearing the reproaches of the “educated” people, or rather of the uneducated supporters of the bourgeoisie who were trading in the remnants of their knowledge, we said: we have armed workers and peasants at our disposal. This morning they must occupy all the private banks. . . . After they have done that, after power is in our hands, only after this, we will discuss what measures to adopt. In the morning the banks were occupied and in the evening the Central Executive Committee issued a decree: “The banks are declared to be national property”—the nationalisation, the socialisation of banking, its transfer to the Soviet government, took place.

There is not a man among us who imagines that an intricate and subtle apparatus like banking, which grew out of the capitalist system of economy in the course of centuries, could be broken or transformed in a few days. We never said that it could. And when scientists, or alleged scientists, shook their heads and prophesied, we said: you can prophesy what you like. We know only one road for the proletarian revolution, and that is, to occupy the enemy's positions—to learn to rule by experience, from our mistakes. We do not in the least belittle the difficulties in our path, but we have done the main thing. The source of the distribution of capitalist wealth has been undermined. After all this, the annulment of the national debt, throwing off the financial yoke, was a very easy matter.* The confiscation of the factories, after workers' control had been introduced, was also very easy. When we were accused of breaking up production into separate departments by introducing workers' control, we brushed aside this nonsense. In introducing workers' control,** we knew that it would take some time before it spread to the whole of Russia, but we wanted to show that we recognise only one road—changes from below; we wanted the workers themselves to draw up, from below, the new principles of economic conditions. Not a little time will be required for this.

From workers' control we passed on to the creation of a Supreme

Council of National Economy. This measure alone, in conjunction with the nationalisation of the banks and railways which will be carried out within a few days, will enable us to work to build up a new socialist economy. We know perfectly well the difficulties that confront us in this work; but we assert that only those who set to work to carry out this task and who rely on the experience and the instincts of the masses of the toilers are real Socialists. The masses will commit many mistakes, but the main thing has been done. They know that when they appeal to the Soviet government they will get nothing but support against the exploiters. There was not a single measure intended for the purpose of easing their work that was not wholly and entirely supported by the Soviet government. The Soviet government does not know everything and cannot deal with everything in time, and very often it is confronted with difficult tasks. Very often delegations of workers and peasants come to the Soviet government and ask what to do with such and such a piece of land, for example. And frequently I myself have felt embarrassment when I saw that they had no very definite views. And I said to them: you are the government, do as you please, take all you want, we will support you, but take care of production, see that production is useful. Take up useful work, you will make mistakes, but you will learn. And the workers have already begun to learn; they have already begun to fight against the saboteurs. People have transformed education into a fence which hinders the advance of the toilers; this fence will be pulled down.

Undoubtedly, the war is corrupting people in the rear and at the front, people who are working on war supplies are being paid far above the rates, all the shirkers who tried to keep out of the war, the tramp and semi-tramp elements who are imbued with but one desire, to "snatch" something and clear out, are being drawn into the war industries. We are now being blamed for the fact that in many places the workers' government has drawn up measures for the temporary closing down of factories for several weeks and months. But these elements are the worst that have remained of the old capitalist system and bring with them all the old evils; these we must kick out, remove, and put in the factories all the best proletarian elements and form them into nuclei of future socialist Russia.

This is not an easy task: it will give rise to many conflicts, to much friction. The Council of People's Commissars, and I, personally, have heard these complaints and threats, but we have remained calm, knowing that now we have a court to which we can appeal. That court is the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Its word cannot be gainsaid, and we will always rely upon it.

Capitalism deliberately splits up the workers in order to rally an insignificant handful of the upper stratum of the working class around the bourgeoisie. Conflicts with this stratum are inevitable. We shall not achieve socialism without a struggle. But we are ready to fight, we have started the fight and we shall bring this fight before the apparatus that is called the Soviet. If we bring this fight before the court of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies every problem will be easily solved. For however strong the privileged group of workers may be, when they are brought before the court of the representatives of all the workers, such a court, I repeat, cannot be gainsaid. This sort of regulation is only just beginning. The workers and peasants have not yet sufficient confidence in their own strength; owing to age-long tradition they are accustomed to waiting for orders from above. They have not yet fully appreciated the fact that the proletariat is the ruling class and that elements have arisen from their ranks who are frightened and downtrodden and who imagine that they must pass through the despicable school of the bourgeoisie. This most despicable of bourgeois prejudices has remained alive longer than all the rest, but it will die, die out completely. And we are convinced that with every step the Soviet government takes a larger and larger number of people will arise who have completely thrown off the old bourgeois prejudice that simple workers and peasants cannot administer the state. They can and will learn to do so if they set to work and administer!

The organisational task that will confront us is to train leaders and organisers from the ranks of the masses. This enormous, gigantic task is now on the order of the day. We could not dream of fulfilling this task if we did not have the Soviet government, a filtering apparatus for promoting people.

Not only have we a state law on control, we have something far more valuable, *viz.*, attempts on the part of the proletariat to

enter into an agreement with the Manufacturers' Associations by which whole branches of industry will be managed by the workers. Such an agreement is being drawn up, and is almost completed, between the Leather Workers' Union and the All-Russian Leather Manufacturers' Association *; and I attach very special importance to these agreements. They show that the workers are becoming imbued with the consciousness of their strength.

Comrades, I have not in my report dealt with particularly painful and difficult questions, such as the question of peace and the food supply, because these questions are special items on the agenda and will be discussed separately.

The aim I set myself in making this brief report was to depict in the way it appears to me and to the whole of the Council of People's Commissars the history of all that we have experienced during the past two and a half months, the correlation of class forces that has taken place in this new period of the Russian revolution, how the new state was built up, and what special tasks confront it.

Russia has entered the right road towards the achievement of socialism, *viz.*, the nationalisation of the banks and the transfer of the land entirely to the masses of the toilers. We are perfectly well aware of the difficulties that lie ahead; but we are convinced, by comparing our revolution with previous revolutions, that we will achieve enormous successes, and that we are on the road that will lead us to complete victory.

And by our side will march the masses of the more advanced countries, which have been disunited by a predatory war, and the workers of which have passed through a longer period of training in democracy. When people depict the difficulties of our task, when we are told that the victory of socialism is possible only on a world scale, we regard this merely as an attempt, a particularly hopeless attempt, on the part of the bourgeoisie and of its voluntary and involuntary adherents to distort the irrefutable truth. Of course, the final victory of socialism in a single country is impossible. Our unit of workers and peasants which is supporting the Soviet government is only one of the units of the great world army, which at present is split up by the World War; but it is striving for unity,

and the proletariat greets every piece of information, every fragment of a report about our revolution, every name, with loud and sympathetic cheers, because it knows that in Russia the common cause is being pursued, *viz.*, the cause of the revolt of the proletariat, the international socialist revolution. A living example, getting down to the work in some single country is more effective than manifestoes and conferences; this is what inflames the masses of the toilers in all countries.

The strike of October 1905 *—the first steps of the victorious revolution—immediately spread to Western Europe and then, in 1905, called forth the movement of the Austrian workers. Already at that time we had a practical illustration of the value of the example of revolution, of the example of action by the workers in a single country. Today we see that the socialist revolution is maturing very rapidly in all countries of the world.

Although we make mistakes and blunders and meet obstacles in our path, our example influences them, unites them; they say: we shall march together and conquer, come what may.

Marx and Engels, the great founders of socialism, watched the development of the labour movement and the growth of the world socialist revolution for a number of decades and they saw clearly that the transition from capitalism to socialism would be accompanied by prolonged birth pangs, a long period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the break-up of all that belongs to the old system, the ruthless destruction of all forms of capitalism, the co-operation of the workers of all countries who must combine their efforts in order to ensure final victory. And they said that at the end of the nineteenth century "the French will commence, and the Germans will finish"—the French will commence, because in the course of decades of revolution they acquired that fearless initiative in revolutionary action that made them the vanguard of the socialist revolution.

Today we see a different combination of the forces of international Socialism. We say that it is easier for the movement to start in those countries which are not exploiting countries, which have no opportunities for robbing easily, and are not able to bribe the upper stratum of their workers. The alleged-Socialist, nearly all minister-

ial¹ Chernov-Tseretelli parties of Western Europe do not accomplish anything, and they lack firm foundations. We have seen the example of Italy; during the past few days we witnessed the heroic struggle of the Austrian workers against the predatory imperialists. The pirates may succeed in holding up the movement for a time, but they cannot stop it altogether, it is invincible. The Soviet Republic will serve as an example for a long time to come. Our Socialist Republic of Soviets will stand firmly, like a beacon of international Socialism and as an example to all the masses of the toilers. Over there, there is fighting, war, bloodshed, the sacrifice of millions of people, capitalist exploitation; here, there is the pursuit of a real peace policy, and the Socialist Republic of Soviets.

Things have turned out differently from what Marx and Engels expected. History has given us, the Russian toiling and exploited classes, the honourable role of vanguard of the international socialist revolution; and today we see clearly how far the development of the revolution will go. The Russians commenced; the Germans, the French and the English will finish, and socialism will be victorious.

¹ Alleged-Socialist ministerial parties: the parties affiliated to the Second International which co-operated with the bourgeoisie instead of fighting it, entered bourgeois governments and adapted their policy to the preservation of the alliance with the bourgeoisie and to the protection of its interests against those of the revolutionary proletariat.—*Ed.*

WAR AND PEACE

*Report Delivered to the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), March 7, 1918**

A POLITICAL report might consist of an enumeration of the measures taken by the Central Committee; but what is urgently needed at the present time is not such a report, but an outline of our revolution as a whole. Only a report of this kind can serve as a truly Marxian basis for all our decisions. We must review the whole preceding course of development of the revolution and ascertain why the course of its further development has changed. Changes have occurred in our revolution that will have enormous significance for the international revolution. I refer to the October Revolution.

The first successes of the February Revolution were due to the fact that the proletariat was followed, not only by the masses of the rural population, but also by the bourgeoisie. Hence the easy victory over tsarism, which we failed to achieve in 1905. The unprompted, spontaneous creation of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies in the February Revolution was a repetition of the experience of 1905—we had to proclaim the principle of Soviet government. The masses learned the tasks of the revolution from their own experience of the struggle. The events of May 3-4 [April 20-21] were a peculiar combination of demonstrations and of something in the nature of armed rebellion.** This was enough to cause the fall of the bourgeois government. A long period of compromise commenced, the logical consequence of the very nature of the petty-bourgeois government which had come into power. The July events*** could not yet achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat—the masses were not yet prepared for it. That is why not one of the responsible organisations called upon them to establish it. But as a reconnoitring operation in the enemy's camp, the July events were of enormous

significance. The Kornilov affair * and subsequent events served as practical lessons and made possible the October victory. The mistake committed by those who even in October desired to divide power was that they did not connect the October victory with the July days, with the offensive,** with Kornilov, etc., etc. which caused the vast masses to realise that the Soviet government had become inevitable. Then followed our triumphal procession throughout Russia, accompanied by the universal desire for peace. We know that we would not have achieved peace by a one-sided withdrawal from the war. We pointed to this even at the April Conference.¹ In the period from May [April] to November [October], the soldiers clearly realised that the policy of compromise was prolonging the war and was leading to the wild and senseless attempts of the imperialists to start an offensive and to get still more entangled in a war that would last for years. That was the reason why it was necessary at all costs to adopt as quickly as possible an active policy of peace, why it was necessary to establish the Soviet government, and utterly abolish landlordism. You know that the latter was maintained not only by Kerensky but also by Avksentyev² who even went so far as to order the arrest of the members of the Land Committees. This policy, the slogan of "Power to the Soviets," which we instilled into the minds of the broad masses of the people, enabled us, in October, to achieve victory so easily in St. Petersburg, and transformed the last months of the Russian revolution into one continuous triumphal procession.

Civil war became a fact. The thing we foretold in the beginning of the revolution, and even in the beginning of the war, and which considerable sections of Socialist circles treated sceptically and even with ridicule, *viz.*, the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, actually took place on November 7 [October 25], 1917, in one of the largest and most backward of the belligerent countries. In this civil war the overwhelming majority of the popu-

¹ See *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, "Speech in Favour of the Resolution Relating to the War," "Resolutions of the All-Russian April [May] Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.," and resolution "On the War."—*Ed.*

² A leading member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and member of the Kerensky government.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

lation was found on our side, and that is why victory was achieved with such extraordinary ease.

The troops who abandoned the front carried with them wherever they went the maximum of revolutionary determination to put an end to compromise; and the compromising elements, the White Guards, the sons of the landlords, were found to have lost all support among the population. Gradually, as the broad masses of the people and of the military units that were sent against us came over to the side of the Bolsheviks, this war became transformed into a victorious triumphal procession of the revolution. We saw this in Petrograd, on the Gatchina front,¹ where the Cossacks, whom Kerensky and Krasnov tried to lead against the Red capitals, wavered, we saw this later in Moscow, in Orenburg and in the Ukraine. A wave of civil war swept over the whole of Russia, and everywhere we achieved victory with extraordinary ease precisely because the fruit had ripened, because the masses had already gone through the experience of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The slogan "All Power to the Soviets," which the masses had tested by long historical experience, had become part of their flesh and blood.

That is why in the first months after November 7 [October 25], 1917, the Russian revolution was a continuous triumphal procession. As a result of this continuous triumphal procession the difficulties which the socialist revolution immediately encountered, and could not but encounter, were forgotten, were pushed into the background. One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, new economic organisations gradually are created in the womb of the old order, which gradually change all aspects of feudal society. Bourgeois revolution was confronted by only one task, *viz.*, to sweep away, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding society. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfills all that is required of it; it accelerates the growth of capitalism.

The socialist revolution is in an altogether different position. The more backward the country which, owing to the zigzags of

¹ See note to p. 272.*—*Ed.*

history, had to start the socialist revolution, the more difficult is it for it to pass from the old capitalist relations to socialist relations. To the tasks of destruction, new tasks are added, incredibly difficult tasks, *viz.*, organisational tasks. Had not the popular creative spirit of the Russian revolution, which had gone through the great experience of 1905, given rise to the Soviets as early as March [February] 1917, they could not under any circumstances have captured power in November [October], because success depended entirely on the existence of ready-made organisational forms of a movement embracing millions. These ready-made forms were the Soviets, and that is why those brilliant successes, that continuous triumphal procession that we had, awaited us in the political sphere; the new forms of political power were already available and all we had to do was, by passing a few decrees, to transform the power of the Soviets from the embryonic state in which it was in the first months of the revolution into a legally recognised form which has become established as the Russian state, *i.e.*, the Russian Soviet Republic. It was born at one stroke; it was born so easily because in March [February] 1917 the masses created the Soviets even before any party had managed to proclaim this slogan. It was the creative spirit of the people, which had passed through the bitter experience of 1905 and had been made wise by it, that gave rise to this form of proletarian power. The task of achieving victory over the internal enemy was an extremely easy one. The task of creating the political power was an extremely easy one because the masses had created the skeleton of this new power. The Republic of Soviets was born at one stroke. But two exceedingly difficult tasks remained, the fulfilment of which could not possibly be the triumphal procession we had in the first months of our revolution—we had no doubt whatever that the socialist revolution would be later confronted with enormously difficult tasks.

First, there were the tasks of internal organisation which confront every socialist revolution. The difference between socialist revolution and bourgeois revolution lies precisely in the fact that the latter has ready at hand the forms of capitalist relationships, while the Soviet power—the proletarian power—does not inherit ready-made relationships, if we leave out of account the most de-

veloped forms of capitalism which, strictly speaking, affected only a small stratum of industry and hardly touched agriculture. The organisation of accounting, of 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 task that rested on our shoulders. Under the present conditions of labour, this task could not possibly be carried out by the “hurrah” methods by which we were able to fulfil the tasks of the civil war. The very nature of the task prevented a solution by these methods. We achieved an easy victory over our Kaledinites and created the Soviet Republic in the face of a resistance that was not even worth serious consideration; such a course of events was predetermined by the whole of the preceding objective development; all we had to do was to say the last word and to change the signboard, *i.e.*, to take down the sign: “The Soviet exists as a trade union organisation,” and put up instead the sign: “The Soviet is the sole form of state power.” But the situation was altogether different in regard to organisational tasks. In this we encountered enormous difficulties. It immediately became clear to everyone who cared to ponder over the tasks of our revolution that only by long and severe self-discipline would it be possible to combat the disintegration that the war had caused in capitalist society, that only by extraordinarily long and persistent efforts could we overcome this disintegration and conquer those growing elements of it which regarded the revolution as a means of discarding the old fetters and of getting as much for themselves as they possibly could. The appearance of a large number of such elements was inevitable in a petty-bourgeois country at a time of incredible ruin, and the fight against these elements that is ahead of us will be a hundred times more difficult, it will be a fight that promises no striking positions, and we have only just started this fight. We are only at the first stage of this struggle. Severe trials await us. The objective situation precludes any idea of limiting ourselves to triumphal processions with flying banners such as we had in fighting against the Kaledinites. Anyone who attempted to apply these methods of struggle to the organisational tasks that

confront the revolution would prove to be utterly bankrupt as a politician, as a Socialist, as an active worker in the socialist revolution.

And the same fate awaited several of our young comrades who were carried away by the first triumphal processions of the revolution, when the second enormous difficulty confronting the revolution arose, *viz.*, the international question. The reason we achieved such an easy victory over Kerensky's gangs, why we so easily set up our government and without the slightest difficulty passed the decrees on the socialisation of the land and on workers' control of industry, the reason we achieved all this so easily was that a fortunate combination of circumstances protected us for a short time from international imperialism. International imperialism, with its mighty capital, its highly organised military technique, which is a real force, a real fortress of international capital, could not under any circumstances, on any condition, live side by side with the Soviet Republic because of its objective position and because of the economic interests of the capitalist class which are embodied in it—it could not because of commercial connections and international financial relations. In this sphere a conflict is inevitable. Here lies the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its great historical problem, *viz.*, the necessity of solving international problems, the necessity of calling forth an international revolution, of traversing the path from our strictly national revolution to the world revolution. This task confronts us with all its incredible difficulties. I repeat, many of our young friends who regard themselves as Lefts have begun to forget the most important thing, *viz.*, why in the course of the weeks and months of the great triumph after October we were able so easily to pass from triumph to triumph. And yet this was only due to the fact that a special combination of international circumstances temporarily protected us from imperialism. It had other things to think about besides us. And it seemed to us that we too had other things to think about besides imperialism. Individual imperialists had no time to bother with us, because the whole of the great social, political and military might of contemporary world imperialism was torn by internecine war into two groups. The imperialist pirates who were involved in this struggle had gone to such lengths,

were at such death grips with each other, that neither of these groups was able to concentrate serious forces against the Russian revolution. It is paradoxical, but it is true, that our revolution broke out in October, at such a fortunate moment, when unprecedented disaster was afflicting the overwhelming majority of the imperialist countries in the form of the destruction of millions of human beings, when the war was exhausting the nations by unprecedented disasters, when in the fourth year of the war the belligerent countries had reached an *impasse*, had reached the crossroads, when the objective question arose: can the nations which have been reduced to such a state continue to fight? It was only the fact that our revolution broke out at this fortunate moment, when neither of the two gigantic groups of pirates was able immediately to fling itself on the other, or combine against us, it was only this situation in international political and economic relations that enabled our revolution to take advantage of the situation and march in this brilliant triumphal procession in European Russia, to spread to Finland and begin the conquest of the Caucasus and Rumania. This alone explains the appearance in the leading circles of our Party of Party workers, intellectual super-men, who allowed themselves to be carried away by these triumphal processions and who said: we can easily smash international imperialism; over there, there will also be triumphal processions, over there, there will be no real difficulties. The whole thing is explained by the divergence in the objective position of the Russian revolution which only temporarily took advantage of the difficulties of international imperialism; the engine that was moving against us temporarily got stuck, like a railway engine, rushing along towards a small wheel-barrow on the rails which it would smash into splinters if it reached it, suddenly gets stuck—and the engine got stuck because two groups of pirates were in conflict. Here and there the revolutionary movement grew, but in all the imperialist countries without exception it was still mostly in the initial stage. Its rate of development was entirely different from that in our country. Anyone who has carefully thought over the economic prerequisites of the socialist revolution in Europe cannot but be clear on the point that in Europe it will be immeasurably more difficult to start, whereas it was immeasurably easier for

us to start; but it will be more difficult for us to continue the revolution than it will be over there. This objective situation caused us to experience an extraordinarily difficult, sharp turn in history. From the continuous triumphal procession on our internal front, against our counter-revolution, against the enemies of the Soviet government in October, November and December, we had to pass to collisions with real international imperialism, in its real hostility towards us. From the period of triumphal processions we had to pass to the period of an extraordinarily difficult and severe position, which could not be brushed aside with words, with brilliant slogans—however pleasant that would have been—because in our disturbed country we had incredibly weary masses who had reached a state in which they could not possibly go on fighting; they had been so utterly broken up by three years of agonising war that they were rendered utterly useless from a military point of view. Even before the October Revolution we saw representatives of the masses of the soldiers, not members of the Bolshevik Party, who did not fear to tell the whole bourgeoisie the truth that the Russian army refused to fight. This state of the army gave rise to a gigantic crisis. A small-peasant country, disorganised by war, reduced to an incredible state and placed in an extremely difficult condition; we have no army, but we have to continue to live side by side with a pirate armed to the teeth, a pirate who has remained and will remain a pirate and, of course, cannot be moved by agitation in favour of peace without annexations and indemnities. A tame and domesticated animal lay side by side with a tiger and tried to persuade it to conclude a peace without annexations and indemnities, whereas such a peace could only be attained by attacking the tiger. The upper stratum of our Party—intellectuals and a section of the workers' organisations—tried to brush this prospect aside primarily with phrases and excuses, such as: it must not be like that. This peace was too horrible a prospect; to think that we, who up to now have marched in open battle with flying colours and stormed the enemy's positions with "hurrahs," should now yield and adopt these humiliating terms. Never! We are proud revolutionaries, we declare above all: "The Germans cannot attack."

This was the first excuse with which these people consoled them-

selves. History has now placed us in an extraordinarily difficult position; in the midst of organisational work of extraordinary difficulty we shall have to suffer a number of humiliating defeats. Of course, if we take the position on a world historical scale, there can be no doubt that if our revolution remains alone, if there are no revolutionary movements in other countries, our position will be hopeless. When the Bolshevik Party alone took this matter entirely into its own hands we were convinced that the revolution was maturing in all countries and that in the end—but not in the beginning—no matter what difficulties we experienced, no matter what defeats were in store for us, the international socialist revolution would come—because it is coming; would ripen—because it is ripening. I repeat, our salvation from all these difficulties is an all-European revolution. Taking this absolutely abstract truth as our starting point, and being guided by it, we must see to it that it does not in time become a phrase, because every abstract truth, if it is accepted without analysis, becomes a phrase. If you say that every strike bears within itself the hydra of revolution, and he who fails to understand this is no Socialist, you are right. Yes, every strike bears within itself the socialist revolution. But if you say that every given strike is an immediate step towards the socialist revolution, you will be uttering empty phrases. We have heard these phrases "every blessed time on this very same spot" so often that we are sick and tired of them, and the workers have rejected these anarchist phrases. Undoubtedly, clear as it is that every strike contains within itself the hydra of socialist revolution, it is equally clear that the assertion that every strike can develop into revolution is utter nonsense. While it is indisputable that all the difficulties of our revolution will be overcome only when the world socialist revolution matures, and it is maturing everywhere—it is absolutely absurd to declare that we must conceal every concrete difficulty of our revolution today and say: "I stake everything on the international socialist movement—I can commit any piece of folly I please." "Liebknecht will help us out, because he is going to win, anyhow." He will create such an excellent organisation, he will plan everything beforehand so well, that we will be able to take ready-made forms in the same way as we took the ready-made Marxian doctrine from Western

Europe—and that is why it was able to triumph in our country in a few months, whereas scores of years are required for its triumph in Western Europe. Thus, applying the old method of solving the problem of the struggle by triumphal processions to the new historical period which has set in, and which has confronted us, not with a rotten little Kerensky and a Kornilov, but with an international pirate—the imperialism of Germany, where the revolution is ripening but is obviously not quite ripe—is a useless gamble. The assertion that the enemy would not dare attack the revolution was such a gamble. The situation at the time of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations was not yet such as to compel us to adopt any peace terms. The objective correlation of forces was such that obtaining a respite was not enough. The Brest-Litovsk negotiations had to show that the Germans would attack, that German society was not so pregnant with revolution that it could give birth to it at once, and we cannot blame the German imperialists for not having by their conduct prepared for the outbreak, or, as our young friends who regard themselves as Lefts say, for the position in which the Germans could not attack. When we tell them that we have no army, that we were compelled to demobilise—we were compelled to do so, although we did not forget that a tiger was lying beside our tame, domestic animal—they refuse to understand. Although we were compelled to demobilise we did not forget that it was impossible to stop the war by one side sticking its bayonet in the ground.

Generally speaking, how is it that not a single trend, not a single tendency, not a single organisation in our Party opposed this demobilisation? Have we gone mad? Not in the least. Officers, not Bolsheviks, told us even before October that the army could not fight, that it could not be kept at the front even for a few weeks longer. After October this became obvious to everybody who was willing to see the facts, willing to see the unpleasant, bitter reality and not hide, or pull his cap over his eyes, and make shift with proud phrases. We have no army, we cannot hold it. The best thing we can do is to demobilise it as quickly as possible. This is the sick part of the organism, which has suffered incredible torture and mutilation as the result of the privations of war, into which it entered technically unprepared, and from which it has emerged in such a

state that it falls into a panic at every order to advance. We cannot blame these people who have suffered so much. In hundreds of resolutions we have said quite frankly, we said it even in the first period of the Russian revolution: "We are drowning in blood, we cannot go on fighting." We could have postponed the end of the war artificially, we could have committed the frauds Kerensky committed,¹ we could have postponed the end for a few weeks, but objective reality forced a path for itself. This is the sick part of the Russian body politic, which can no longer bear the burden of this war. The quicker we demobilise it the quicker will it become absorbed among those parts that are not so sick and the quicker will the country be prepared for new, severe trials. That is what we felt when we unanimously, without the slightest protest, adopted the decision—which was absurd from the point of view of foreign events—to demobilise the army. It was the proper step to take. We said that it was a frivolous illusion to believe that we could hold the army. The more quickly we demobilise the army, the more quickly will the social organism as a whole recover. That is why the revolutionary phrase: "The Germans cannot attack," from which followed the other phrase: "We can declare the state of war at an end. Neither war nor the signing of peace," was such a profound mistake, such a bitter overestimation of events. But suppose the Germans do attack? "No, they cannot attack." Have you the right to stake, not the fate of the international revolution, but the concrete question: will you not be accomplices of German imperialism at the decisive moment? But we, who since October 1917 have become defencists, who have recognised the principle of defence of the fatherland, we all know that we have broken with imperialism, not in words but in deeds: we destroyed the secret treaties, vanquished the bourgeoisie in our own country and proposed an open honourable peace so that all the nations might see what our intentions are. How can people who seriously accept the point of view of defending the Soviet Republic agree to a gamble which has already brought forth bitter fruit? And this is a fact, because the severe crisis which our Party is now experiencing owing to the formation of a Left opposi-

¹ See note to p. 284.**—Ed.

tion in it is one of the severest crises the Russian revolution has experienced.

This crisis will be overcome. Under no circumstances will it break the neck of our Party, or of our revolution, although at the present moment it is very near doing so; it is quite possible. The guarantee that we will not break our neck on this question lies in the fact that instead of applying the old method of settling factional disagreements, the old method of issuing an enormous quantity of literature, of discussions and plenty of splits, instead of this old method, events have brought our people a new method of learning things. This method is testing everything with facts, with events, with the lessons of world history. You say that the Germans cannot attack. The logic of your tactics is that we can declare the state of war to be at an end. History taught you a lesson, it dispersed this illusion. Yes, the German revolution is growing, but not as fast as we would like it, not as fast as Russian intellectuals would like it, not at the rate our history developed in October—when we entered any town we liked, proclaimed the Soviet government, and within a few days nine-tenths of the workers came over to our side. The German revolution has the misfortune of not moving so quickly. What do you think: must we reckon with the revolution, or must the revolution reckon with us? You would like the revolution to reckon with you. But history has taught you a lesson. It is a lesson, because it is the absolute truth that without a German revolution we are doomed—perhaps not in Petrograd, not in Moscow, but in Vladivostok, in more remote places to which perhaps we shall have to retreat, and the distance to which is greater than the distance from Petrograd to Moscow. At all events, under all conceivable vicissitudes, if the German revolution does not come, we are doomed. Nevertheless, this does not in the least shake our conviction that we must be able to bear the most difficult position without a fanfare.

The revolution will not come as quickly as we expected. History has proved this, and we must be able to take this as a fact, we must be able to reckon with the fact that the world socialist revolution cannot begin so easily in the advanced countries as the revolution began in Russia—the land of Nicholas and Rasputin, the land in

which the overwhelming majority of the population were quite different to the conditions of life of the people in the outlying regions. In such a country it was quite easy to start a revolution, as easy as lifting a feather.

But it is wrong, absurd, without preparation to start a revolution in a country in which capitalism is developed, which has produced a democratic culture and has organised every man. We are only just approaching the painful period of the beginning of socialist revolutions. This is a fact. We do not know, no one knows; perhaps—it is quite possible—it will conquer within a few weeks, even within a few days, but we cannot stake everything on that. We must be prepared for extraordinary difficulties, for extraordinarily severe defeats, which are inevitable, because the revolution in Europe has not yet begun, although it may begin tomorrow, and when it does begin we shall not be tortured by doubts, there will be no question about a revolutionary war and there will be just one continuous triumphal procession. That will be, it will inevitably be so, but it is not so yet. This is the simple fact that history has taught us, with which she has hit us rather painfully—and a man who has been thrashed is worth two that have not been thrashed. That is why I think that after history has shattered our hope that the Germans cannot attack and that we can get everything by shouting "hurrah!" * this lesson, with the help of our Soviet organisation, will very quickly sink into the minds of the masses all over Soviet Russia. They are all on the move, meeting together, preparing for the Congress, passing resolutions, thinking over what has occurred. It is not the old pre-revolutionary controversies which have remained among narrow Party circles that are going on at the present time; all resolutions are discussed by the masses who demand that they be tested by experience, by deeds, and who never allow themselves to be carried away by frivolous speeches, and never allow themselves to be diverted from the path prescribed by the objective progress of events. Of course, an intellectual, or a Left Bolshevik, will try to gloss over difficulties. He can gloss over such facts as the lack of an army and the failure of the revolution to come in Germany. The vast masses—and politics begin where the masses are, not where there are thousands, but millions, that is where serious politics begin—

the vast masses know what an army is, they have seen soldiers returning from the front. They know—that is, if you take, not individual persons, but real masses—that we cannot fight, that every man at the front has borne everything that it is possible to bear. The masses have understood the truth, *viz.*, that if we have no army, and a wild beast is lying beside us, we will have to sign a burdensome, humiliating peace treaty. That is inevitable until the birth of the revolution, until your army recovers, until you allow the men to return home. Until then the invalid will not recover. And we will not be able to capture the German wild beast by shouting “hurrah!”; we will not throw him off as easily as we threw off Kerensky and Kornilov. This is the lesson that the masses learned without the excuses that those who desire to evade bitter reality try to bring them.

At first a continuous triumphal procession in October and November—then, suddenly, the Russian revolution is defeated within several weeks by the German pirate; the Russian revolution is prepared to adopt the terms of a predatory treaty. Yes, the turns of history are very sharp. All such turns affect us severely. When, in 1907, we signed the incredibly shameful internal treaty with Stolypin, when we were compelled to pass through the pig-sty of the Stolypin Duma and undertook obligations by signing monarchist documents, we experienced on a small scale what we are experiencing now.* At that time, people who belonged to the best vanguard of the revolution said (and they too had not the slightest doubt that they were right), “we are proud revolutionaries, we believe in the Russian revolution, we will never enter legal Stolypin institutions.” But you will. The life of the masses, history, are stronger than your protestations. If you won’t go, history will compel you to do so. These were very Left people and after the first turn in history nothing remained of them as a faction but smoke.** If we managed to remain revolutionaries, managed to work under terrible conditions and emerge from them, we will be able to do so now, because it is not our caprice, it is objective inevitability created in an utterly ruined country, because in spite of our desires the European revolution dared to be late, and in spite of our desires, German imperialism dared to attack.

Here we must be able to retreat. We cannot conceal the incredibly bitter, deplorable reality from ourselves with phrases; we must say: God grant that we retreat in perfect order. If we cannot retreat in perfect order, then God grant that we retreat in semi-order, that we gain a little time for the sick part of our organism to be absorbed at least to some extent. On the whole the organism is sound, it will overcome its disease. But you cannot expect it to overcome it all at once, instantaneously; you cannot hold up an army in flight. When I said to one of our young friends, a would-be Left: Comrade, go to the front, see what is going on there—he took offence at this proposal. He said: “They want to deport us so as to prevent us agitating for the great principle of a revolutionary war.” To tell the truth, in making this proposal I had no intention whatever of deporting factional enemies; I merely suggested that they go and see for themselves that the army was in full flight. Even before that we knew, even before that we could not close our eyes to the fact that the disintegration of the army had reached incredible proportions, to the extent of selling our guns to the Germans for next to nothing. We knew that, just as we know that the army cannot be held back; and that the excuse that the Germans will not attack was a great gamble. Since the European revolution has been delayed severe defeats await us because we lack an army, because we lack organisation, because, at the moment, we cannot solve these two problems. If you are not able to adapt yourself, if you are not inclined to crawl in the mud on your belly, you are not a revolutionary but a chatterbox: and I propose this, not because I like it, but because we have no other road, because history has not turned out to be so pleasant as to make the revolution ripen everywhere simultaneously.

Events are proceeding in such a way that civil war commenced as an attempt to come into collision with imperialism, which showed that imperialism was rotten to the core and that the proletarian elements were rising in every army. Yes, we will see the international world revolution, but for the time being it is a very good fairy tale, a very beautiful fairy tale—I quite understand children liking beautiful fairy tales. But I ask, is it becoming for a serious revolutionary to believe fairy tales? There is an element of reality in every

fairy tale. If you told fairy tales to children in which the cock and the cat did not converse in human language they would not be interested. The same thing happens when you tell the people that civil war will break out in Germany and at the same time you promise that instead of a collision with imperialism we will have an international revolution in the field. The people will say that you are deceiving them. By that you are overcoming the difficulties with which history has confronted us only in your minds, in your desires. It will be a good thing if the German proletariat will be able to attack. But have you measured, have you discovered the instrument with which to determine whether the German revolution will break out on such and such a day? No, you have not, and we have not. You are staking everything on this card. If the revolution breaks out, everything is saved. Of course! But if it does not turn out as we desire, if it takes it into its head not to achieve victory tomorrow—what then? Then the masses will say to you: you behaved like egoists—you staked everything on a fortunate turn of events that did not take place, you have proved to be unfit for the situation that actually arose in place of an international revolution, which will inevitably come, but which has not ripened yet.

A period has set in of severe defeats, inflicted by imperialism, armed to the teeth, upon a country which has demobilised its army, which had to demobilise. The thing I foretold has come to pass: instead of the Brest-Litovsk Peace we have received a much more humiliating peace, and the blame for this rests upon those who refused to accept the former peace. We knew that through the fault of the army we were concluding peace with imperialism. We sat at the same table with Hoffmann¹ and not with Liebknecht—and by that we assisted the German revolution. But now you are assisting German imperialism, because you have surrendered wealth amounting to millions—guns and shells—and anybody who had seen the incredibly painful state of the army could have foretold this. Every conscientious man who came from the front said that had the Germans made the slightest attack we would have perished inevitably. We fell a prey to the enemy within a few days.

¹ General Hoffmann, the head of the German delegation which negotiated peace with the Soviet delegation.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Having learned this lesson, we shall overcome our split, our crisis, however severe the disease may be, because an immeasurably more reliable ally will come to our assistance, *viz.*, the world revolution. When they talk to us about ratifying this Tilsit Peace,* this incredible peace, more humiliating and predatory than the Brest Peace, I say: certainly, yes. We must do this because we look at things from the point of view of the masses. Any attempt to apply the tactics of October-November in a single country—this triumphant period of the revolution—to apply them with the aid of our fantasy to the progress of events in the world revolution, is doomed to failure. When it is said that respite is a fantasy, when the newspaper called the *Kommunist*—from the word “Commune,” I suppose—when this paper fills column after column in the attempt to refute the respite theory, I say: I have known quite a lot of factional conflicts and splits and so I have a great deal of experience; but I must say that it is clear to me that the disease will not be cured by the old method of factional Party splits, because it will be healed by life first. Life is marching forward very quickly. In this respect it is operating magnificently. History is driving its locomotive with such speed that before the editors of the *Kommunist* get out their next number the majority of the workers in Petrograd will have begun to be disappointed in its ideas, because life is showing that respite is a fact. We are now signing a peace treaty, we have a respite, we are taking advantage of it to defend our fatherland better—because had we been at war we would have had an army fleeing in panic which would have had to be held up, and which our comrades cannot and could not hold up, because war is more powerful than sermons, more powerful than ten thousand arguments. Since they did not understand the objective situation they could not hold up the army, and cannot do so. This sick army infected the whole organism, and another incredible defeat was inflicted upon us, German imperialism struck another blow at the revolution, a severe blow, because we frivolously deprived ourselves of machine-guns under the blows of imperialism. Meanwhile, we shall take advantage of this respite to urge the people to unite, to fight, to say to the Russian workers and peasants: “Create self-discipline, strict discipline, otherwise you will have to lie under the German jackboot as you are lying now, as

you will inevitably have to lie, until the people learn to fight and to create an army capable, not of flight, but of withstanding the severest trials." It is inevitable, because the German revolution has not yet broken out, and we have no guarantee that it will break out tomorrow.

That is why the respite theory, which is totally rejected in the flood of articles in the *Kommunist*, is advanced by life itself. Everyone can see that the respite is a fact, that everyone is taking advantage of it. We believed that we would lose Petrograd in a few days when the advancing German troops were only a few marches away from it, and when our best sailors and the Putilov workers,* notwithstanding all their enthusiasm, were isolated, when incredible chaos and panic broke out, which compelled our troops to flee right up to Gatchina, and when we had cases when positions were recaptured that had never been lost. For example, a telegraph operator arrived at the station, sat down at the apparatus and wired: "No Germans in sight. We have occupied the station." A few hours later I received a telephone communication from the Commissariat of Ways of Communication informing me: "We have occupied the next station. We are approaching Yamburg. No Germans in sight. Telegraph operator at his post." That is the kind of thing we had. This is the real history of the eleven days' war. It was described to us by sailors and Putilov workers, who ought to be brought to the Congress of Soviets. Let them tell the truth. It is a frightfully bitter, humiliating, painful truth, but it is a hundred times more useful, it is understood by the Russian people.

I leave it to others to dream about the international revolution in the field, that it will come. Everything will come in due time; but for the time being, set to work to create self-discipline, obey, come what may, so that we can have exemplary order, so that the workers may learn to fight for at least one hour in twenty-four. This is much more difficult than writing beautiful fairy tales. This is the position today; by that you will help the German revolution, the international revolution. We do not know how many days the respite will last, but we have got it. We must demobilise the army as quickly as possible, because it is a sick organ; meanwhile, we will assist the Finnish revolution.

Yes, of course, we are violating the treaty; we have violated it thirty or forty times. Only children can fail to understand that in an epoch like the present, when a long painful period of emancipation is setting in, which has only just created and raised the Soviet power three stages of its development—only children can fail to understand that in this case there must be a long, circumspect struggle. The disgraceful peace treaty is rousing rebellion, but when a comrade from the *Kommunist* talks about war he appeals to sentiment and forgets that the people were "seeing red," were clenching their fists with rage. What do they¹ say? "A class conscious revolutionary will never stand this, will never submit to such a disgrace." Their newspaper bears the title *Kommunist*, but it should bear the title *Szlachta*² because it looks at things from the point of view of one of the *szlachta*, who said, dying in a beautiful pose with his sword in his hand: "Peace is disgraceful, war is honourable." They argue from the point of view of the *szlachta*; I argue from the point of view of the peasant.

If I accept peace when the army is in flight, and cannot but be in flight without losing thousands of men, I accept it in order to prevent things from getting worse. Is the treaty shameful? Every serious peasant and worker will say I am right, because they understand that peace is a means of gathering strength. History knows the case—I have referred to it more than once—history knows the case of the liberation of the Germans from Napoleon after the Peace of Tilsit; I deliberately called the peace the Peace of Tilsit although we did not agree to the terms that were contained in that treaty, *viz.*, that we give an obligation to lend our troops to assist the victor to conquer other nations—things like that have happened before, and will happen to us if we continue to place our hopes on the international revolution in the field. Take care that history does not reduce us to this form of military slavery. Until the socialist revolution is victorious in all countries there is a danger that the Soviet Republic may be reduced to slavery. In Tilsit, Napoleon compelled the Germans to accept disgraceful peace terms. The situation at that time was that peace was signed several times. The

¹ *I.e.*, the Left Communists.—*Ed.*

² From *szlachta*—Polish nobility.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Hoffmann of the time—Napoleon—hunted the Germans for violating the peace treaty, and the present Hoffmann will hunt us for the same reason. Only we shall take care that he does not catch us soon.

The last war has been a bitter, painful, but serious lesson for the Russian people. It taught them to organise, to become disciplined, to obey, to create a discipline that will be exemplary discipline. Learn discipline from the Germans; if we do not, we, as a people, are doomed, we shall live in eternal slavery.

This is the way history has proceeded, and no other way. History suggests that peace is a respite for another war, war is a method of obtaining a somewhat better or somewhat worse peace. At Brest the relation of forces corresponded to a peace dictated by the victor, but it was not a humiliating peace. The relation of forces at Pskov corresponded to a disgraceful, more humiliating peace; and in Petrograd and Moscow, at the next stage, a peace four times more humiliating will be dictated to us. We will not say that the Soviet power is only a form, as our young Moscow friends have said, we will not say that the content can be sacrificed for this or that revolutionary principle. We will say: let the Russian people understand that they must become disciplined and organised, and then they will be able to withstand all the Tilsit peace treaties. The whole history of wars for liberation shows that when these wars embraced large masses liberation came very quickly. We say: since history marches forward in this way, we will have to abandon peace for war, and this may happen within the next few days. Every man must be prepared. I have not the slightest shadow of doubt that the Germans are preparing near Narva, if it is true that it has not been taken, as all the newspapers say; not in Narva, but near Narva, not in Pskov, but near Pskov, the Germans are collecting their regular army, their railways, in order, at the next jump, to capture Petrograd. And this beast can jump very well. He has proved that. He will jump again. There is not a shadow of doubt about that. That is why we must be prepared, we must be able, not to brag, but to take advantage of even a single day of respite, because we can take advantage of one day's respite to evacuate Petrograd, the capture of which will cause incredible suffering to hundreds of thousands of our proletarians. I say again that I am ready to sign, and that I consider it my duty

to sign a treaty twenty times, a hundred times more humiliating, in order to gain at least a few days in which to evacuate Petrograd, because by this I will alleviate the sufferings of the workers, who otherwise may fall under the yoke of the Germans; by that I facilitate the removal from Petrograd of all the materials, gun powder, etc., which we need, because I am a defencist, because I stand for preparing an army even in the most remote rear where our present, demobilised, sick army is recuperating.

We do not know how long the respite will last—we will try to take advantage of the situation. Perhaps the respite will be a long one, perhaps it will last only a few days. Anything may happen, no one knows, or can know, because all the big powers are bound, restricted, compelled to fight on several fronts. Hoffmann's behaviour is determined first by the fact that he must smash the Soviet Republic; secondly, that he has to wage war on a number of fronts, and thirdly, that the revolution in Germany is maturing, is growing, and Hoffmann knows this, he cannot, as some assert, take Petrograd and Moscow this very minute. But he may do so tomorrow, that is quite possible. I repeat that at a moment when the army is obviously sick, when we are taking advantage of every moment, come what may, to get at least one day's respite, we say that every serious revolutionary who has contacts with the masses and who knows what war is, what the masses are, must discipline the masses, must heal them; must try to rouse them for a new war—every such revolutionary will admit that we are right, will admit that we were right in signing any disgraceful peace, because it is in the interests of the proletarian revolution and the regeneration of Russia, because it will help to get rid of the sick limb. As every sensible man will understand, by signing this peace treaty we do not put a stop to our workers' revolution; everyone will understand that by concluding peace with the Germans we do not stop rendering military aid; we are sending arms to the Finns, but not military units which proved to be unfit.

Perhaps we will accept war; perhaps tomorrow we will surrender even Moscow and then pass to the offensive: if a change takes place in the mood of the people, which change is maturing, for which perhaps much time is required, but which will come,

when the broad masses will not say what they are saying now, we will move our army against the enemy. I am compelled to accept the harshest peace terms because I cannot say to myself that this time has arrived. When the time of regeneration arrives everyone will realise it, will see that the Russian is no fool; they will see and understand that for the time being we must refrain, that this slogan must be carried through—and this is the main task of our Party Congress and of the Congress of Soviets.

We must learn to work on a new path. That is much more difficult, but it is by no means hopeless. It will not break the Soviet power if we do not break it ourselves by senseless gambling. The time will come when the people will say: we will not permit ourselves to be tortured any longer. But this will happen if we do not allow ourselves to be drawn into this adventure and are able to work under severe conditions and under the humiliating treaty we signed the other day, because war alone, or a peace treaty alone, cannot solve such a historical crisis. Because of its monarchical organisation, the German people was bound in 1807 when it signed its Peace of Tilsit after several humiliating peace treaties, which were transformed into respites for new humiliations and new infringements. The Soviet organisation of the masses makes our task easier.

We should have but one slogan—seriously learn the art of war, put the railways in order. To wage a socialist revolutionary war without railways would be the most sinister treachery. We must create order, and we must create the whole of that energy and the whole of that might which all that is best in the revolution will create.

Take advantage even of an hour's respite if it is given you, in order to maintain contact with the remote rear and there create new armies. Abandon illusions for which life has punished you and will punish you more severely in the future. An epoch of severe defeats is looming up before us, it has set in, we must be able to reckon with it, we must be prepared for persistent work in conditions of illegality, in conditions of downright slavery to the Germans; it is no use glossing this over; it is really a Peace of Tilsit. If we are able to act in this way, then, in spite of defeat, we shall be able to say with absolute certainty—victory will be ours.

SPEECH IN REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE REPORT ON WAR AND PEACE

*Delivered to the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist
Party (Bolsheviks), March 8, 1918*

COMRADES, permit me first of all to make a few remarks of relatively minor importance; to start from the end. At the end of his speech, Comrade Bukharin went so far as to compare us with Petlura.¹ If he thinks such a comparison can be made, how can he remain in the same party with us? Is it not a phrase? Of course, if the situation had really been as he described it, we would not have been members of the same party. The very fact that we are together shows that we are nine-tenths in agreement with Bukharin. It is true that he added a few revolutionary phrases about our wanting to betray the Ukraine. I am sure it is not worth discussing such obvious nonsense. I will revert to Comrade Ryazanov. Here, too, I want to observe that just as something which happens once in ten years by way of exception merely proves the rule, so he, accidentally, happened to give utterance to a serious phrase. He said that Lenin is yielding space in order to gain time. That is almost a philosophical argument. This time, it is true, Comrade Ryazanov gave utterance to a very serious phrase which contains the whole essence of the case; I want to yield space to the actual victor in order to gain time. That is the whole point, and the only point. All the rest is mere talk: need for revolutionary war, rousing the peasantry, etc. When Comrade Bukharin argues that there can be no two opinions about the possibility of war and says: "Ask any military man" (I wrote down what he said), since he puts the question in that way and suggests that we should ask any military man, then my reply to him is: I have asked "any

¹ Leader of the Ukrainian nationalists who, with the aid of the Germans, overthrew the Soviet government in the Ukraine in 1918 and set up the government of the so-called Rada.—*Ed.*

military man," and he proved to be a French officer with whom I conversed. This French officer, looking at me angrily, of course—didn't I sell Russia to the Germans?—said: "I am a royalist, I am a supporter of a monarchy even in France, I stand for the defeat of Germany, don't think that I am a supporter of the Soviet government"—how could I think so, seeing that he was a monarchist?—"but I was in favour of your signing the treaty at Brest because that was necessary." There you have your "ask any military man." A military man had to say what I said: we ought to have signed the treaty at Brest. And if now it logically follows from Comrade Bukharin's speech that our disagreements have diminished considerably, it is because his friends have concealed the main point of our disagreements.

When Comrade Bukharin now comes forward and roundly abuses us for having demoralised the masses, he is absolutely right, only he is roundly abusing himself, and not us. Who caused all the mess on the Central Committee? You, Comrade Bukharin. Truth will prevail, no matter how much noise you make: we in our own comradesly circle, we at our own congress have nothing to conceal and we must speak the truth. And the truth is that there were three trends on the Central Committee. On February 17 Lomov and Bukharin abstained from voting.* I asked that the record of the voting be typed in many copies so that every member of the Party could go to the secretariat if he so desired and see the voting—the historical voting of February 3 [January 21] which shows that *they* wavered; we did not waver in the least, we said: "We will accept peace at Brest—you will not get a better one—in order to prepare for a revolutionary war." We have already gained five days in which to evacuate Petrograd. Now a manifesto has been issued by Krylenko and Podvoisky, who are not among the Lefts, and whom Bukharin treated with derision when he said that we are "shoving forward" Krylenko, as if we had invented what Krylenko reported. We absolutely agree; that is exactly the position; the military men confirmed what I said, and you put forward the excuse that the Germans will not attack. Can this situation be compared with October, when it was not a matter of technique? No. If you want to reckon with facts, then reckon with the fact that our disagreement arose about

the point that we should not start a war when it is obviously disadvantageous to do so. When Comrade Bukharin commenced his speech in reply by shouting the question: "Is war possible in the near future?"—he surprised me very much. I reply unhesitatingly: it is possible—but now we must accept peace. There is no contradiction here at all.

After these brief remarks I will reply in detail to the other speakers. I must make an exception in regard to Radek. But there was another speech, that by Comrade Uritsky. What else did he say except "Canossa,"* "treachery," "you retreated," "you adapted yourselves"? What does all this mean? Is not all your criticism taken from the Left Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper? Comrade Bubnov read to us a declaration submitted to the Central Committee by members of the Central Committee who regard themselves as being extremely Left, and who presented a perfect example of what demonstrating before the whole world means: "The conduct of the Central Committee strikes a blow at the international proletariat." Is this not a phrase? "Demonstrate our impotence to the whole world!" How do we demonstrate this? By offering to conclude peace? By the fact that the army fled? Have we not proved that by starting war against Germany now, and not accepting the Brest Peace, we would have demonstrated to the world that our army is sick and refuses to go into battle? It is absurd for Comrade Bubnov to assert that we alone caused this wavering. The wavering was caused by the fact that our army was sick. We had to give it a respite some time or other. Had you pursued a correct strategy we would have had a month's respite, but as you pursued a wrong strategy, we had only five days' respite—and even that is good. The history of war shows that sometimes even a few days are enough to stop an army that is fleeing in panic. Whoever refuses to sign a diabolical peace now is a man of phrases and not a strategist. That is the whole trouble. When members of the Central Committee write to me: "Demonstration of impotence," "treachery," it is the most pernicious, piffling, infantile phrasemongering. We demonstrated impotence when we tried to fight, when it was impossible to demonstrate, when an attack against us was inevitable. As for the Pskov peasants, we shall invite

them to come to the Congress of Soviets to relate how the Germans are treating them, in order to create the mentality with which a soldier who has fallen sick with panic may recover and say: "Yes, now I understand that this is not the war that the Bolsheviks promised to put a stop to, it is a new war, which the Germans are waging against the Soviet government." Then recovery will set in. But you put a question to us that cannot be answered. No one knows how long the respite will last.

Now I must deal with the position taken up by Comrade Trotsky. We must discern two aspects in his activities: when he started negotiations at Brest and made excellent use of them for the purpose of agitation, we were all in agreement with him. He quoted here a part of a conversation he had with me, but I will add that it had been arranged between us that we would hold out until the Germans presented us with an ultimatum and that when the ultimatum was presented, we would yield. The Germans fooled us: out of the seven days they stole five. In so far as Trotsky's tactics were directed towards playing for time, they were correct; they became wrong when the state of war was declared to be at an end, but peace was not signed. I very definitely proposed that peace be signed. We could not get a better peace than the Brest-Litovsk Peace. It is clear to everyone that we could have obtained a month's respite, that we would not have lost. Since history has proved this, it is not worth talking about again; but it is ridiculous for Bukharin to say: "Life will prove that we were right." I was right, because I wrote about this as far back as 1915: "We must prepare to wage war, it is inevitable, it is coming, it will come."¹ But we ought to have accepted peace and not bragged for nothing. The very fact that war will come made it all the more necessary for us to accept peace; now, at all events, we are facilitating the evacuation of Petrograd, we have facilitated it. This is a fact. When Comrade Trotsky puts forward a new demand: "Promise not to conclude peace with Vinnichenko," I say: under no circumstances will I give such a pledge. If the congress gave such a pledge, neither I, nor a single one of those who think with me would accept any responsibility for it. It would mean

¹ See "A Few Theses" (Thesis 11) in *Selected Works*, Vol. V.—Ed.

that instead of having a clear line of manœuvring—retreating when it is possible, sometimes attacking—we would tie our hands again with a formal decision. In war you must never tie your hands with considerations of formality. It is ridiculous not to know the history of war, not to know that a treaty is a means of gaining strength; I have already referred to the history of Russia. Some people childishly think that by concluding peace we sold ourselves to the devil, we went to hell. This is positively ridiculous, because the history of war shows as clearly as clear can be that the signing of a treaty after defeat is a means of gaining strength. Cases have occurred in history when war followed on war, but we have forgotten all this; we see the old war becoming transformed into. . . .¹ Tie your hands with considerations of formality forever if you like, but then surrender your responsible posts to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. We will not take responsibility for this. There is not the slightest shadow of a desire for a split in this. I am convinced that life will teach you. March 12 is not very far off, and you will receive a large quantity of material.*

Comrade Trotsky says that this will be treachery in the fullest sense of the word. I assert that this is a totally wrong point of view. In order to prove this concretely, I will quote an example: two men are walking together and are attacked by ten men; one fights, the other runs away—that is treachery. But suppose there are two armies, each a hundred thousand strong, and these two armies are opposed by five armies. One army is surrounded by a force of two hundred thousand. The other army ought to come to its assistance, but it knows that a force of three hundred thousand is ranged in such a position that if it advances to the assistance of the first army it will be caught in a trap. Should it go to the assistance of the other army? No, it should not. That would not be treachery, it would not be cowardice: the mere increase in numbers changed all concepts, every military man knows that—no personal concepts are involved here. By acting in this way, I preserved my army. Let the other army be captured; I will reinforce mine, I have allies, I will wait until these allies join me. This is the only line of reasoning one can adopt.

¹ Several words omitted from the stenographic report.—Ed.

But when other considerations are added to military considerations, nothing but phrases can result. Politics cannot be conducted in this way.

We have done all that could be done. By signing the peace treaty we saved Petrograd, if only for a few days (don't let the secretaries or the stenographers think of putting this down). The treaty orders us to withdraw our troops from Finland, the troops are obviously useless, but we are not prohibited from sending arms to Finland. If Petrograd had fallen a few days ago, there would have been panic in the city and we would not have been able to remove anything; but during the five days we assisted our Finnish comrades—I will not say how much, they know that themselves.

The talk about our having betrayed Finland is infantile phrasemongering. We actually helped her by retreating from the Germans in time. Russia will not perish if Petrograd falls, Bukharin is a thousand times right when he says that; but if we manoeuvred in the Bukharin way, we would ruin a good revolution.

We have betrayed neither Finland nor the Ukraine. Not a single class conscious worker will accuse us of having done that; we are rendering all the assistance we can. We have not taken a single good man out of the forces and will not do so. If you say that Hoffmann will catch us, you are right. Of course he can, I have no doubt about that; but how many days it will take him to do it he does not know, and nobody knows. Moreover, your argument that he will catch us is an argument that concerns the political relation of forces, about which I will speak later on.

Having explained why I cannot possibly accept Trotsky's proposal—we cannot conduct politics in this way—I must say that Radek has presented an example of the extent to which the comrades at this congress have abandoned phrases, which Uritsky, however, still adheres to. I cannot possibly accuse Radek of phrasemongering in his speech. He said: "There is not a shadow of treachery, there is no disgrace, because it is clear that you retreated in the face of superior military forces." This appraisal smashes Trotsky's position completely. When Radek said: "Clenching our teeth, we must prepare our forces," he was right—I subscribe to this entirely: without bragging, prepare with clenched teeth.

Clench your teeth, don't brag, but prepare your forces. The revolutionary war will come, there is no disagreement among us about that. The disagreement is about the Peace of Tilsit, should we sign it or not? The worst thing of all is that the army is sick, and that is why the Central Committee should have a single firm line and not disagreements, or a middle line, which Comrade Bukharin also supported. I do not paint the respite in rosy colours. No one knows how long the respite will last. I do not know. The efforts made to force me to say how long the respite will last are ridiculous. By keeping possession of the main railway lines we are helping the Ukraine and Finland. We are taking advantage of the respite by manoeuvring and retreating.

It is no longer possible to tell the German workers that the Russians are capricious, because it is clear now that German-Japanese imperialism is advancing, and this will be clear to everybody. Besides wanting to strangle the Bolsheviks, the Germans want to strangle the West; everything has got mixed up, and in this new war we will have to learn, and we must learn how to manoeuvre.

In regard to Comrade Bukharin's speech I want to say that when he lacks an argument he takes something from Uritsky and says: "You have been utterly disgraced." No argument is required for this: if we have been disgraced, then we ought to have collected our papers and fled; but although we have been disgraced, I do not think our positions have been shaken. Comrade Bukharin tried to analyse the class basis of our positions, but instead of doing that he told us a story about a deceased Moscow economist. When they found some connection between our tactics and bagman profiteering,¹ by God, it was ridiculous; they forgot that the attitude of a class as a whole—of a class and not of bagmen—shows that the Russian bourgeoisie and all its hangers-on—the *Dyelo Naroda*-ists and the *Novaya Zhizn*-ists—are exerting every effort to drive us into this war.* You do not emphasise this class fact. To declare war on Germany now means allowing yourself to be provoked by the Russian bourgeoisie. There is nothing new in this; it is the surest—I do

¹ Owing to the shortage of the food supply, petty traders used to go into the country, buy up food supplies and bring them into the towns in bags for the purpose of profiteering.—Ed. Eng. ed.

not say absolutely the surest, there is no such thing as absolute surety—but it is the surest way of overthrowing us at the present time. When Comrade Bukharin said that life was on his side, that everything would end with our recognising revolutionary war, he celebrated an easy victory, because we foretold the inevitability of a revolutionary war as far back as 1915.¹ What we disagreed about was: will the Germans attack or not? Shall we declare the state of war at an end? Shall we, in the interests of a revolutionary war, retreat physically, surrender territory in order to gain time? Strategy and politics prescribe the most despicable peace treaty. Our disagreements will disappear if we adopt these tactics.

¹ See "A Few Theses" (Thesis 11), *Selected Works*, Vol. V.—*Ed.*

THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT *

THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE RUSSIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

THANKS to the peace which has been achieved—notwithstanding its burdensome character and its instability—the Russian Soviet Republic is enabled for a certain time to concentrate its efforts on the most important and most difficult aspect of the socialist revolution, *viz.*, the organisational task.

This task was clearly and definitely presented to all the toilers and the oppressed masses in the fourth section (Part 4) of the resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in Moscow on March 16, 1918,** in the very section (or part) which speaks of the discipline of the toilers and of the ruthless struggle against chaos and disorganisation.

Of course, the peace achieved by the Russian Soviet Republic is unstable not because it is now thinking of resuming military operations; apart from bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and their henchmen (the Mensheviks and others) not a single sane politician thinks of doing that. The instability of the peace is due to the fact that in the imperialist states bordering on Russia on the West and the East, which command enormous military forces, the military party, tempted by the momentary weakness of Russia and egged on by capitalists who hate socialism and are eager for plunder, may secure supremacy at any moment.

Under these circumstances the only real, not paper guarantee of peace we have is the antagonism between the imperialist states, which has reached extreme limits, and which manifests itself on the one hand in the resumption of the imperialist butchery of the peoples in the West, and on the other hand in the extreme intensification of the imperialist rivalry between Japan and America for supremacy in the Pacific and on the Pacific coast.

It goes without saying that, protected by such an unreliable guard, our Soviet Socialist Republic is in an extremely unstable and certainly critical international position. All efforts must be exerted to the very utmost to take advantage of the respite which has been given us by the combination of circumstances in order that the very severe wounds that the war has inflicted upon the whole of the social organism of Russia may be healed and that the economic revival of the country, without which a real improvement in the power of defence of the country is inconceivable, may be brought about.

It goes without saying also that we shall be able to render serious assistance to the socialist revolution in the West, which has been delayed for a number of reasons, only to the extent that we are able to fulfil the organisational task that confronts us.

A fundamental condition for the successful fulfilment of the primary organisational task that confronts us is that the political leaders of the people, *i.e.*, the members of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and all the class conscious representatives of the masses of the toilers, shall fully appreciate the fundamental difference between previous bourgeois revolutions and the present socialist revolution in this respect.

In bourgeois revolutions, the principal task of the masses of the toilers was to fulfil the negative or destructive work of abolishing feudalism, monarchy and mediævalism. The positive, or creative work of organising the new society was carried out by the property-owning bourgeois minority of the population. And the latter carried out this task relatively easily, notwithstanding the resistance of the workers and the poorest peasants, not only because the resistance of the masses that were exploited by capital was then extremely weak owing to their scattered character and ignorance, but also because the fundamental organising force of anarchically-constructed capitalist society is the spontaneously expanding national and international market.

In every socialist revolution—and consequently in the socialist revolution in Russia which we started on November 7 [October 25], 1917—the principal task of the proletariat, and of the poorest peasantry which it leads, is the positive or creative work of setting up

an extremely intricate and subtle system of new organisational relationships extending to the planned production and distribution of the goods required for the existence of tens of millions of people. Such a revolution can be successfully carried out only if the majority of the population, and primarily the majority of the toilers, display independent historical creative spirit. Only if the proletariat and the poorest peasantry display sufficient class consciousness, devotion to ideals, self-sacrifice and perseverance will the victory of the socialist revolution be assured. By creating a new Soviet type of state, which gives the opportunity to all the toilers and the masses of the oppressed to take an active part in the independent building up of a new society, we solved only a small part of this difficult problem. The principal difficulty lies in the economic sphere, *viz.*, the introduction of the strict and universal accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, raising the productivity of labour and *socialising* production in *actual practice*.

* * *

The development of the Bolshevik Party, which today is the governing party in Russia, very strikingly indicates the nature of the historical change we are now passing through, which represents the peculiar feature of the present political situation and which calls for a new orientation of the Soviet government, *i.e.*, for a new presentation of new tasks.

The first task of every party of the future is to convince the majority of the people that its programme and tactics are correct. This task stood in the forefront under tsarism as well as in the period of the Chernovs' and Tseretellis' compromise with the Kerenskys and Kishkins. This task has now been fulfilled in the main (of course, it is not completely fulfilled, and it can never be completely fulfilled), for, as the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow¹ incontrovertibly showed, the majority of the workers and peasants of Russia are obviously on the side of the Bolsheviks.

The second task that confronted our Party was to capture political power and to suppress the resistance of the exploiters. Nor

¹ The Fourth, Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, which took place in Moscow, March 14-16, 1918. See notes to p. 309* and p. 313.**—Ed.

has this task been fulfilled completely, and it cannot be ignored because the monarchists and Cadets and their henchmen and hangers-on, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, are continuing their efforts to unite for the purpose of overthrowing the Soviet government. But in the main the task of suppressing the resistance of the exploiters was fulfilled in the period from November 7 [October 25], 1917, to (approximately) February 1918, or to the surrender of Bogayevsky.¹

A third task is now coming to the front as the immediate task and one which represents the peculiar feature of the present situation, *viz.*, the task of organising the *administration* of Russia. Of course, this task arose and we carried it out on the very next day after November 7 [October 25], 1917. But up to now, while the resistance of the exploiters still took the form of open civil war, the task of administration *could not* have become the *main*, the *central* task.

Now it has become the main and central task. We, the Bolshevik Party, have *convinced* Russia. We have *won* Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the toilers. Now we must *administer* Russia. And the peculiar feature of the present situation, the difficulty, lies in understanding the specific character of the transition from the principal task of convincing the people and of suppressing the exploiters by military force to the principal task of *administration*.

For the first time in history a Socialist party has managed, in main outline, to fulfil the task of winning power and of suppressing the exploiters, and has managed to approach *very close* to the task of *administration*. We must prove worthy executors of this most difficult (and most grateful) task of the socialist revolution. We must *ponder over the fact* that *in addition* to being able to convince people, in addition to being able to conquer in civil war, it is necessary to be able to do practical *organisational* work in order that the administration may be successful. It is a very difficult task, because it is a matter of organising in a new way the most deep-rooted, the economic foundations of life of tens and tens of millions of people.

¹ See note to p. 272.***—*Ed.*

And it is a very grateful task because, only *after* it has been *fulfilled* (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that *Russia has become* not only a Soviet, but also a Socialist Republic.

THE GENERAL SLOGAN OF THE MOMENT

The objective situation outlined above, which was created by the severe and unstable peace, the terrible state of ruin, the unemployment and starvation we inherited from the war and the rule of the bourgeoisie (represented by Kerensky and the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported him), all this inevitably caused extreme weariness and even exhaustion among the broad masses of the toilers. These masses imperatively demand—and cannot but demand—a respite. The task of restoring the productive forces destroyed by the war and the mismanagement of the bourgeoisie comes to the front, *viz.*, the healing of the wounds inflicted by the war, by the defeats in the war, by the profiteering of the bourgeoisie and its attempts to restore the rule of the exploiters; the economic revival of the country; the durable maintenance of elementary order. It may seem paradoxical, but in view of the objective conditions enumerated above, it is absolutely certain that at the present moment the Soviet government can ensure the transition to socialism only if these very elementary and most elementary problems of maintaining public order can be solved practically in spite of the opposition of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. In view of the concrete and specific features of the present situation, and in view of the existence of the Soviet government with its land socialisation law, workers' control law, etc., the practical solution of these elementary problems and the overcoming of the organisational difficulties of the first steps towards socialism represent two sides of the same medal.

Introduce accurate and conscientious accounting of money, manage economically, do not be lazy, do not steal, observe the strictest discipline during work—it is precisely such slogans, which were justly scorned by the revolutionary proletariat when the bourgeoisie concealed its rule as an exploiting class by these commandments, that now, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, are becoming the

immediate and the principal slogans of the moment. On the one hand, the practical application of these slogans by the masses of the toilers is the *sole* condition for the salvation of the country which has been tortured almost to death by the imperialist war and by the imperialist pirates (headed by Kerensky); on the other hand, the practical application of these slogans by the *Soviet* government, by the methods that *it* employs, on the basis of *its* laws, is a necessary and *sufficient* condition for the final victory of socialism. This is precisely what those who contemptuously brush aside the idea of putting such "thread-bare" and "trivial" slogans in the forefront fail to understand. In a small-peasant country, which overthrew tsarism only a year ago, and which liberated itself from the Kerenskys less than six months ago, naturally not a little of spontaneous anarchism, intensified by the brutality and savagery that accompanies every protracted and reactionary war, has remained, and moods of despair and aimless exasperation have been created. And if to this we add the provocative policy of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie (the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.)—the prolonged and persistent efforts that had to be exerted by the best and most class conscious workers and peasants in order to bring about a complete change in the mood of the masses and to bring them on to the proper and tried path of disciplined labour will be appreciated. Only such a transition, brought about by the masses of the poor (the proletarians and semi-proletarians), will be able to consummate the victory over the bourgeoisie and particularly over the more stubborn and numerous peasant bourgeoisie.

THE NEW PHASE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE

The bourgeoisie in our country is vanquished, but it is not yet uprooted, not yet destroyed, and not even utterly broken. That is why a new and higher form of struggle against the bourgeoisie is emerging, the transition from the very simple task of further expropriating the capitalists to the much more complicated and difficult task of creating conditions in which it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist, or for a new bourgeoisie to arise. Clearly, such a task is an immeasurably higher one than the preceding task;

and it is clear also that until it is fulfilled there will be no socialism.

If we measure our revolution by the scale of West European revolutions we will find that at the present moment we are approximately at the level reached in 1793 and 1871.* We can be legitimately proud of having risen to this level, and in one respect we have certainly advanced somewhat further, namely: we have decreed and introduced in the whole of Russia the highest *type* of state—the Soviet state. But under no circumstances can we rest content with what we have achieved, because we have only just started the transition to socialism, we have *not yet* done the most decisive thing in *this* respect.

The most decisive thing is the organisation of the strictest and nation-wide accounting and control of production and of the distribution of goods. And yet, we have *not yet* introduced accounting and control in those enterprises and in those branches and sides of economy which we have confiscated from the bourgeoisie; and without this there can be no thought of creating the second and equally important material condition for the introduction of socialism, *viz.*, increasing the productivity of labour on a national scale.

That is why the task of the present moment could not be defined in the simple formula: continue the offensive against capital. Although we have certainly not utterly routed capital and although it is certainly necessary to continue the offensive against this enemy of the toilers, such a definition would be inexact, would not be concrete, would not take into account the *peculiar feature* of the present situation in which, in order that the *future* offensive may be successful, it is necessary to "halt" the offensive *for the time being*.

This can be explained by comparing our position in the war against capital with the position of a victorious army that has captured, say, a half or two-thirds of the enemy's territory and is compelled to halt in order to collect its forces, to replenish its supplies of munitions, repair and reinforce the lines of communication, build up new bases, call up new reserves, etc. The cessation of the offensive of a victorious army under such conditions is necessary precisely in order that the remaining part of the enemy's territory may be won, *i.e.*, in order that complete victory may be achieved. Those who have failed to understand that the objective state of affairs at the present

moment dictates precisely such a "cessation" of the offensive against capital have failed to understand anything at all about the present political situation. It goes without saying that we can speak about the "cessation" of the offensive against capital only in quotation marks, *i.e.*, only metaphorically. In ordinary war, a general order can be issued to stop the offensive, the advance can actually be stopped. In the war against capital, however, the advance cannot be stopped, and there can be no thought of our abandoning the further expropriation of capital. What we are discussing is the shifting of the *centre of gravity* of our economic and political work. Up to now measures for the direct expropriation of the expropriators were in the *forefront*. Now the organisation of accounting and control in those branches of economy in which the capitalists have already been expropriated, and in all other branches of economy, is in the *forefront*.

If we continued to expropriate capital at the same rate at which we have been doing up to now, we would certainly suffer defeat, because our work of organising proletarian accounting and control has obviously—obviously to every thinking person—*lagged behind* the work of directly "expropriating the expropriators." If we now concentrate all our efforts on the organisation of accounting and control, we shall be able to solve this problem, we shall be able to make up for lost time, we shall win our "campaign" against capital.

But is not the admission that it is necessary to make up for lost time tantamount to admitting that we have committed an error? Not in the least. We will again quote our military example. If it is possible to defeat and push back the enemy merely with detachments of light cavalry, it should be done. But if this can be done successfully only up to a certain limit, then it is quite conceivable that when this limit has been reached, it will be necessary to call up heavy artillery. In admitting that it is now necessary to make up for lost time, in calling up heavy artillery, we do not admit that the successful cavalry attack was a mistake.

Frequently, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie reproach us for having launched a "Red Guard" attack on capital. The reproach is absurd, it is worthy of the lackeys of the money-bags, because *at one time* the "Red Guard" attack on capital was absolutely dictated by cir-

cumstances: in the first place capital put up military resistance through the medium of Kerensky and Krasnov, Savinkov and Gotz (Gegechkori is putting up such resistance even now), Dutov and Bogayevsky. Military resistance cannot be broken except by military means, and the Red Guards fought in the noble and great historical cause of emancipating the toilers and the exploited from the yoke of the exploiters.

Secondly, we could not at that time put the method of administration in the forefront in place of the methods of suppression, because the art of administration is not an art that one is born to, it is acquired by experience. At that time we lacked that experience; now we have it. Thirdly, at that time we could not have specialists in the various fields of knowledge and technique at our disposal because those specialists were either fighting in the ranks of the Bogayevskys, or were still able to put up systematic and stubborn passive resistance in the form of *sabotage*. Now we have broken the sabotage. The "Red Guard" attack on capital was successful, was victorious, because we vanquished both the military resistance of capital and the sabotaging resistance of capital.

Does that mean that a "Red Guard" attack on capital is *always appropriate*, in *all* circumstances, that we have no other means of fighting capital? It would be childish to think that. We achieved victory with the aid of light cavalry, but we also have heavy artillery. We achieved victory by methods of suppression; we can achieve victory also by methods of administration. We must be able to change our methods of fighting the enemy in accordance with the changes in the situation. We will not for a moment cease our "Red Guard" suppression of Messieurs the Savinkovs and Gegechkoris and all other landlord and bourgeois counter-revolutionaries. But we will not be so foolish as to put "Red Guard" methods in the forefront at a time when the epoch when Red Guard attacks were necessary has, in the main, drawn to a close (and to a successful close), and when the epoch of utilising bourgeois specialists by the proletarian state power for the purpose of reploughing the soil in order to prevent the growth of any bourgeoisie is knocking at the door.

This is a peculiar epoch, or rather stage of development, and

in order to utterly defeat capital, we must be able to adapt the forms of our struggle to the peculiar conditions of this stage.

Without the guidance of specialists in the various fields of knowledge, technology and experience, the transition to socialism will be impossible, because socialism calls for the class conscious and mass advance to greater productivity of labour compared with capitalism, and on the basis achieved by capitalism. Socialism must achieve this advance *in its own way*, by its own methods—or, to speak more concretely, by *Soviet* methods. And the specialists, in view of the environment of the social life which made them specialists, are, in the main, bourgeois. Had our proletariat, after capturing power, quickly solved the problem of accounting, control and organisation on a national scale (which was impossible owing to the war and the backwardness of Russia), we, after breaking the sabotage, would have completely subordinated these bourgeois specialists to ourselves by means of universal accounting and control. Owing to the considerable “delay” in introducing accounting and control generally, we, although we have managed to vanquish sabotage, have *not yet* created the conditions which would place the bourgeois specialists at our disposal. The vast majority of the saboteurs are “coming into our service,” but the best organisers and the biggest specialists can be utilised by the state either in the old way, in the bourgeois way (*i.e.*, for high salaries), or in the new way, in the proletarian way (*i.e.*, by creating the conditions of national accounting and control from below, which would inevitably and automatically subordinate the specialists and enlist them for our work).

Now we have had to resort to the old bourgeois method and to agree to pay a very high price for the “services” of the biggest bourgeois specialists. All those who are familiar with the subject appreciate this, but not all ponder over the significance of the measure that has been adopted by the proletarian state. Clearly, such a measure is a compromise, a departure from the principles of the Paris Commune* and of every proletarian state, which call for the reduction of all salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker, which call for a struggle against careerism, not in words, but in deeds.

Moreover, it is clear that such a measure not only implies the cessation—in a certain field and to a certain degree—of the offensive against capital (for capital is not a sum of money, but a definite social relation); it is also a *step backward* on the part of our socialist Soviet government, which from the very outset proclaimed and pursued the policy of reducing high salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker.

Of course, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, particularly the small fry, such as the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn*-ists and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, will giggle over our confession that we are taking a step backward. But we can afford to ignore their giggling. We must study the peculiar features of the extremely difficult and new path to socialism without concealing our mistakes and weaknesses, and we must try in good time to do what has been left undone. To conceal from the masses the fact that the enlistment of bourgeois specialists by means of extremely high salaries is a retreat from the principles of the Paris Commune would be tantamount to sinking to the level of bourgeois politicians and to deceiving the masses. Openly explaining how and why we took this step backward, and then publicly discussing what means are available for making up for lost time, means educating the masses and learning from experience together with the masses how to build up socialism. There is hardly a single victorious military campaign in history in which the victor did not commit certain mistakes, suffer temporary defeat and temporarily retreat in some things and in some places. The “campaign” which we have undertaken against capitalism is a million times more difficult than the most difficult military campaign, and it will be silly and disgraceful to fall into despondency because of a single and partial retreat.

We will now discuss the question from the practical point of view. Let us suppose that the Russian Soviet Republic required one thousand first class scientists and specialists in various fields of knowledge, technology and practical experience for the purpose of guiding the labour of the people with a view to securing the speediest possible economic revival of the country. Let us assume also that we will have to pay these “stars of the first magnitude”—of course the majority of those who shout loudest about the corruption

of the workers are themselves utterly corrupted by bourgeois morals—25,000 rubles per annum each. Let us assume that this sum (25,000,000 rubles) will have to be doubled (assuming that we have to pay bonuses for the particularly successful and rapid fulfilment of the most important of the organisational and technical tasks), or even quadrupled (assuming that we have to enlist several hundred more exacting foreign specialists). The question is, would the expenditure of fifty or a hundred million rubles per annum by the Soviet Republic for the purpose of reorganising the labour of the people according to the last word in science and technology be excessive or too heavy? Of course not. The overwhelming majority of the class conscious workers and peasants will approve of this expenditure because they know from practical experience that our backwardness causes us to lose billions, and that we have *not yet* reached that degree of organisation, accounting and control which calls forth the mass and voluntary participation of the “luminaries” of the bourgeois intelligentsia in *our* work.

It goes without saying that this question has another aspect. The corrupting influence of high salaries upon the Soviet government (the more so that the rapidity with which the revolution occurred could not but attract a certain number of adventurers and rogues who, together with a number of untalented or dishonest commissars, would very much like to become “star” embezzlers of state funds) and upon the masses of the workers is indisputable. But every thinking and honest worker and poor peasant will agree, will admit, that we cannot immediately rid ourselves of the bad heritage of capitalism, and that we can liberate the Soviet Republic from the duty of paying a “tribute” of fifty million or one hundred million rubles per annum (a tribute for our own backwardness in organising *nation-wide* accounting and control *from below*) only by organising ourselves, by tightening up discipline in our own ranks, by purging our ranks of all those who are “guarding the heritage of capitalism,” who “observe the traditions of capitalism,” *i.e.*, of loafers, idlers and embezzlers of state funds (now all the land, all the factories and all the railways are the “state funds” of the Soviet Republic). If the class conscious advanced workers and

poor peasants manage with the aid of the Soviet institutions to organise, become disciplined, to pull themselves up, to create strong labour discipline in the course of one year, then in a year's time we shall throw off this “tribute,” which can be reduced even before that . . . in exact proportion to the successes we achieve in our workers' and peasants' labour discipline and organisation. The sooner we workers and peasants learn to acquire the best labour discipline and the highest technique of labour, using the bourgeois specialists for this purpose, the sooner shall we liberate ourselves from the duty of paying tribute to the specialists.

Our work of organising nation-wide accounting and control of production and distribution under the guidance of the proletariat has lagged very much behind our work of directly expropriating the expropriators. This postulate is fundamental for the understanding of the specific features of the present situation and of the tasks of the Soviet government that emerged from it. The centre of gravity of our struggle against the bourgeoisie is shifting to the organisation of such accounting and control. Only if we take this as our starting point will it be possible properly to determine the immediate tasks of economic and financial policy in the sphere of nationalising the banks, monopolising foreign trade, the state control of money circulation, the introduction of a property and income tax satisfactory from the proletarian point of view, and the introduction of compulsory labour service.

We are extremely late with socialist changes in these spheres (very, very important spheres), and we are late precisely because accounting and control are insufficiently organised in general. It goes without saying that this is one of the most difficult tasks we have to fulfil, and in view of the ruin caused by the war, it can be fulfilled only over a long period of time; but we must not forget that it is precisely here that the bourgeoisie—and particularly the numerous petty and peasant bourgeoisie—is putting up the most serious fight, disrupting the control that has already been organised, disrupting the grain monopoly, for example, and is winning positions for profiteering and speculative trade. We have far from adequately carried out the things we have decreed, and the principal

task of the moment is to concentrate all efforts on the businesslike, practical *realisation* of the principles of the changes which have already become embodied in law, but which have not yet become a reality.

In order to proceed further with the nationalisation of the banks¹ and to march unswervingly towards transforming the banks into model points of public accounting under socialism, we must first of all, and above all, achieve real success in increasing the number of branches of the People's Bank, in attracting deposits, in simplifying the paying in and withdrawal of deposits, in abolishing queues, in catching and *shooting* bribe-takers and rogues, etc. First of all we must carry out the simple things, properly organise what is available, and then prepare for the more intricate things.

Consolidate and regulate the state monopolies (in grain, leather, etc.) which have been introduced already, and by that prepare for the state monopoly of foreign trade. Without this monopoly we shall not be able to save ourselves from foreign capital by paying "tribute." The possibility of building up socialism depends entirely upon whether we shall be able, by paying a certain amount of tribute to foreign capital, to safeguard our internal economic independence for a given transitional period.

We are also lagging very much behind in regard to the collection of taxes generally, and of the property and income tax in particular. The imposing of tribute upon the bourgeoisie—a measure which in principle is absolutely permissible and is worthy of proletarian approval—shows that in this respect we are still nearer to the methods of winning (Russia) from the rich for the poor than to the methods of administration. But in order to become stronger, in order to be able to stand firmly on our feet, we must adopt the latter method, we must substitute for the tribute imposed upon the bourgeoisie the constant and regular collection of a property and income tax, which will bring a *greater* return to the proletarian state, and which calls for better organisation and better accounting and control.

The fact that we are late in introducing compulsory labour

¹ See note to p. 276.*—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

service also shows that the work that is coming to the front at the present time is precisely the preparatory organisational work that will finally consolidate our gains and that is necessary in order to prepare for the operation of "surrounding" capital and compelling it to "surrender." We ought to begin introducing compulsory labour service immediately, but we ought to do so more gradually and circumspectly, testing every step by practical experience, and, of course, taking the first step by introducing compulsory labour service *for the rich*. The introduction of labour and consumers' budget books¹ for every bourgeois, including every rural bourgeois, would be an important step towards completely "surrounding" the enemy and towards the creation of real, popular accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR NATION-WIDE ACCOUNTING AND CONTROL

The state, which for centuries has been an organ of oppression and robbery of the people, has left us a heritage of mass hatred and suspicion of everything that is connected with the state. It is very difficult to overcome this, and only a Soviet government can do it. But even a Soviet government will require plenty of time and enormous perseverance. This "heritage" particularly affects the question of accounting and control—the fundamental problem facing the socialist revolution on the morrow of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. A certain amount of time will inevitably pass before the masses, who for the first time feel free after the overthrow of the landlords and the bourgeoisie, will understand—not from books, but from their own, *Soviet* experience—will understand and *feel* that without all-sided state accounting and control of production and distribution of goods, the power of the toilers, the freedom of the toilers, cannot be maintained, and that a return to the yoke of capitalism is *inevitable*.

All the habits and traditions of the bourgeoisie, and of the petty bourgeoisie in particular, also run counter to *state* control, and

¹ Books in which are recorded the work the holder has performed and the amount of rations he has received.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

support the inviolability of the "sacred right of property," of "sacred" private enterprise. It is now being particularly clearly demonstrated to us how correct is the Marxian postulate that anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism are *bourgeois* trends, that they irreconcilably contradict socialism, proletarian dictatorship and communism. The fight to instill into the minds of the masses the idea of *Soviet* state control and accounting, and to carry out this idea in practice; the fight to break with the cursed past, which taught the people to regard the gaining of bread and clothes as a "private" matter, as buying and selling, as a transaction "which concerns only myself"—is a great fight of world-historical significance, a fight between socialist consciousness and bourgeois-anarchist spontaneity. We have passed a workers' control law, but this law is only just beginning to be applied and is only just barely beginning to penetrate the minds of the broad masses of the proletariat. In our agitation we do not sufficiently explain that lack of accounting in the production and distribution of goods means the death of the rudiments of socialism, means the embezzlement of state funds—for all property belongs to the Treasury, and the Treasury is the Soviet government, the government of the majority of the toilers—we do not explain that carelessness in accounting and control is downright aiding and abetting the German and the Russian Kornilovs who can overthrow the power of the toilers *only* if we fail to master the task of accounting and control and who, with the aid of the muzhik bourgeoisie, with the aid of the Cadets, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, are "watching" us and waiting for an opportune moment to attack us. Nor do the advanced workers and peasants think and speak about this sufficiently. And until workers' control has become a fact, until the advanced workers have organised and carried out a victorious and ruthless crusade against the violators of this control, or against those who are careless in matters of control, it will be impossible to pass from the first step (from workers' control) to the second step, to socialism, *i.e.*, to pass on to workers' regulation of production.

The socialist state can arise only as a network of producers' and consumers' communes, which conscientiously calculate their production and consumption, economise labour, steadily raise the

productivity of labour, and thus enable the working day to be reduced to seven, six and even less hours per day. Nothing will be achieved unless the strictest, nation-wide, all-embracing accounting and control of *grain and the production of grain* (and later of all other necessities) are organised. Capitalism left us a heritage of mass organisations which can facilitate our transition to the mass accounting and control of the distribution of goods, *viz.*, the consumers' co-operative societies. In Russia these societies are not so well developed as in the advanced countries, nevertheless, they have over ten million members. The Consumers' Co-operative Society Law,* passed the other day, is an extremely remarkable phenomenon, which strikingly illustrates the peculiar position and the tasks of the Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment.

The decree represents an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies and the workers' co-operative societies which still adhere to the bourgeois point of view. The agreement, or compromise, lies firstly in that the representatives of the institutions mentioned not only took part in discussing the decree, but actually obtained the right to a deciding vote, for the parts of the decree which were strongly opposed by these institutions were dropped. Secondly, in essence the compromise lies in that the Soviet government has abandoned the principle of no entrance fees in co-operative societies (which is the only consistently proletarian principle) and also the principle of uniting the whole of the population in a given locality *in a single* co-operative society. In retreating from this principle, which alone is a socialist principle and which corresponds to the task of abolishing classes, the right was given to the "working class co-operative societies" (which in this case call themselves "class" societies only because they subordinate themselves to the class interests of the bourgeoisie) to continue to exist. Finally, the Soviet government's proposal to expel the bourgeoisie entirely from the management boards of the co-operative societies was also considerably modified, and the bar to membership of management boards was extended only to owners of private capitalist commercial and industrial enterprises.

Had the proletariat, operating through the Soviet government, managed to organise accounting and control on a national scale,

or at least introduced the principles of such control, it would not have been necessary to enter into such compromises. Through the food departments of the Soviets, through the Soviet supply organisations, we would have organised the population into a single co-operative society guided by the proletariat—without the assistance of the bourgeois co-operative societies, without making any concession to the purely bourgeois principle which induces the workers' co-operative societies to remain workers' societies *side by side with* bourgeois societies, *instead of* subordinating these bourgeois co-operative societies entirely to themselves, merging the two together and taking the management of the society and the supervision of the consumption of the rich *in their own hands*.

In concluding such an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies, the Soviet government concretely defined its tactical tasks and its peculiar methods of operation in the present stage of development, *viz.*, by guiding the bourgeois elements, utilising them, making certain partial concessions to them, we create the conditions for further progress that will be slower than we at first anticipated, but surer, with better bases and lines of communication and better consolidation of the positions which have been won. The Soviets can (*and should*) now measure their successes in the field of socialist construction, among other things, by extremely clear, simple and practical standards, *viz.*, in how many communes or villages, or blocks of houses, etc., co-operative societies have been organised, and to what extent their development has reached the point of embracing the whole population.

RAISING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOUR

In every socialist revolution, after the proletariat has solved the problem of capturing power, and to the extent that the task of expropriating the expropriators has been carried out in the main, there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system that is superior to capitalism, *viz.*, raising the productivity of labour, and in this connection (and for this purpose) securing better organisation of labour. Our Soviet government is precisely in the position in which, thanks to the victory

over the exploiters—from Kerensky to Kornilov—it is able to approach this task directly, to set to work to fulfil it. And here it becomes immediately clear that while it is possible to get control of the central government in a few days, while it is possible to suppress the military resistance and sabotage of the exploiters even in different parts of a great country in a few weeks, the permanent solution of the problem of raising the productivity of labour requires, at all events (particularly after a terrible and ruinous war), several years. The protracted nature of the work is certainly dictated by objective circumstances.

The raising of the productivity of labour first of all requires that the material basis of large-scale industry shall be assured, *viz.*, the development of the production of fuel, iron, the engineering and chemical industries. The Russian Soviet Republic is in the favourable position of having at its command, even after the Brest-Litovsk Peace, enormous reserves of ore (in the Urals), fuel in Western Siberia (coal), in the Caucasus and the South-East (oil), in the midlands (peat), enormous timber reserves, water power, raw materials for the chemical industry (Karabugaz), etc. The development of these natural resources by methods of modern technology lays the basis for the unprecedented progress of productive forces.

Another condition for raising the productivity of labour is, first, the raising of the educational and cultural level of the masses of the population. This is taking place extremely rapidly, which those who are blinded by bourgeois routine are unable to see; they are unable to understand what an urge towards light and initiative is now developing among the "lower ranks" of the people thanks to the Soviet organisation. Secondly, a condition for economic revival is the raising of the discipline of the toilers, their skill, their dexterity, increasing the intensity of labour and improving its organisation.

In this respect things are particularly bad and even hopeless if we are to believe those who allow themselves to be frightened by the bourgeoisie or by those who are serving the bourgeoisie for their own ends. These people do not understand that there has not been, nor could there be, a revolution in which the supporters of the old

system did not raise a howl about chaos, anarchy, etc. Naturally, among the masses who have only just thrown off an unprecedentedly savage yoke there is deep and widespread seething and ferment, the working out of new principles of labour discipline is a very protracted process, and this process could not even start until complete victory had been achieved over the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

But without in the least dropping into the despair, very often pretended, which is spread by the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals (who have despaired of retaining their old privileges), we must under no circumstances conceal an obvious evil. On the contrary, we shall expose it and intensify the Soviet methods of combating it, because the victory of socialism is inconceivable without the victory of proletarian conscious discipline over spontaneous petty-bourgeois anarchy—this real guarantee of a possible restoration of Kerenskyism and Kornilovism.

The more class conscious vanguard of the Russian proletariat has already set itself the task of raising labour discipline. For example, the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union and the Central Council of Trade Unions have begun to draft the necessary measures and decrees.* This work must be supported and pushed forward with all speed. We must raise the question of piece work and apply and test it in practice; we must raise the question of applying much of what is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system, we must make wages correspond to the total amount of goods turned out, or to the amount of work done by the railways, the water transport system, etc., etc.

The Russian is a bad worker compared with workers of the advanced countries. Nor could it be otherwise under the tsarist regime and in view of the tenacity of the remnants of serfdom. The task that the Soviet government must set the people in all its scope is—learn to work. The Taylor system, the last word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the subtle brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of its greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work, the elimination of superfluous and awkward motions, the working out of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic

must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building socialism will be determined precisely by our success in combining the Soviet government and the Soviet organisation of administration with the modern achievements of capitalism. We must organise in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our purposes. At the same time, in approaching the task of raising the productivity of labour, we must take into account the specific features of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, which, on the one hand, requires that the foundations be laid of the socialist organisation of competition, and on the other hand the application of coercion, so that the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat" shall not be desecrated by the practice of a jelly-fish proletarian government.

THE ORGANISATION OF COMPETITION

Among the absurdities which the bourgeoisie are fond of spreading about socialism is the argument that Socialists deny the importance of competition. As a matter of fact, it is only socialism, which, by abolishing classes, and consequently, by abolishing the enslavement of the masses, for the first time opens the way for competition on a really mass scale. And it is precisely the Soviet organisation, in passing from the formal democracy of the bourgeois republic to the real participation of the masses of the toilers in *administration*, that for the first time puts competition on a broad basis. It is much easier to organise this in the political field than in the economic field; but for the success of socialism, it is precisely the latter that is important.

Take, for example, a means of organising competition like publicity. The bourgeois republic ensures publicity only formally; as a matter of fact, it subordinates the press to capital, entertains the "mob" with sensational political trash, conceals what takes place in the workshops, in commercial transactions, contracts, etc., with a veil of "commercial secrets," which protect "the sacred right of property." The Soviet government has abolished commercial secrets; it has entered a new path; but we have done hardly anything to

utilise publicity for the purpose of encouraging economic competition. While ruthlessly suppressing the lying and insolently slanderous bourgeois press, we must systematically set to work to create a press that will not entertain and fool the masses with political sensations and trivialities, but which will bring the questions of everyday economics before the court of the people and assist in the serious study of these questions. Every factory, every village, is a producers' and consumers' commune, whose right and duty it is to apply the general Soviet laws in their own way ("in their own way," not in the sense of violating them, but in the sense that they can apply them in various forms) and to solve the problems of accounting in the production and distribution of goods in their own way. Under capitalism, this was the "private affair" of the individual capitalist, landlord and kulak. Under the Soviet state, it is not a private affair, but an important affair of state.

And we have not yet started on the enormous, difficult, but grateful task of organising competition between communes, of introducing accounting and publicity in the process of the production of bread, clothes and other things, of transforming dry, dead, bureaucratic accounts into living examples, both repulsive and attractive. Under the capitalist mode of production, the significance of individual example, say the example of some co-operative workshop, would inevitably be exceedingly restricted, and only those who are imbued with petty-bourgeois illusions can dream of "correcting" capitalism by the force of example of good institutions. After political power has passed to the proletariat, after the expropriators have been expropriated, the situation radically changes—as prominent Socialists have repeatedly pointed out—and force of example for the first time is able to exercise mass influence. Model communes should and will serve as educators, teachers, helping to raise the backward communes. The press must serve as an instrument of socialist construction, give publicity to the successes achieved by the model communes in all their details, study the causes of these successes, the methods these communes employ, and on the other hand, put on the "blacklist" those communes which persist in the "traditions of capitalism," *i.e.*, anarchy, laziness, disorder and profiteering. In capitalist society, statistics

were entirely a matter for "official persons," or for narrow specialists; we must carry statistics to the masses and make them popular so that the toilers themselves may gradually learn to understand and see how long it is necessary to work, how much time can be allowed for rest, so that the comparison of the business results of the various communes may become a matter of general interest and study, and that the most outstanding communes may be rewarded immediately (by reducing the working day to a certain extent, raising wages, placing a larger amount of cultural or æsthetic facilities, or other values, at their disposal, etc.).

When a new class comes forward on the historical arena as the leader and guide of society, a period of strong "tossing," shocks, struggle and storm, a period of uncertain steps, experiments, wavering, hesitation in regard to the selection of new methods corresponding to the new objective circumstances, is inevitable. The dying feudal nobility avenged themselves on the bourgeoisie which vanquished them and took their place, not only by conspiracies and attempts at rebellion and restoration, but also by pouring ridicule upon the lack of skill, the clumsiness and the mistakes of the "upstarts" and the "insolent" who dared to take hold of the "sacred helm" of state without the centuries of training which the princes, barons, nobles and dignitaries had had, in exactly the same way as the Kornilovs and Kerenskys, the Gotzes and Martovs and the whole of that fraternity of heroes of bourgeois swindling or bourgeois scepticism avenge themselves on the working class of Russia for having "dared" to take power.

Of course, not weeks, but long months and years are required in order that the new social class, and the class which up to now has been oppressed and crushed by poverty and ignorance at that, may master its new position, look around, organise its work and promote its organisers. It goes without saying that the Party which led the revolutionary proletariat could not acquire the experience and habits of large organisational undertakings embracing millions and tens of millions of citizens; the remoulding of the old, almost exclusively agitators' habits is a very long process. But there is nothing impossible in this, and as soon as the necessity for a change is clearly appreciated, as soon as there is firm determina-

tion to make the change, and if there is perseverance in pursuing a great and difficult aim, we shall achieve it. There is an enormous amount of organising talent among the "people," *i.e.*, the workers and the peasants who do not exploit the labour of others. Capital crushed these talented people in thousands; it killed them and threw them on the scrap-heap. We are not yet able to find them, promote them, encourage them, and put them on their feet. But we will learn to do so if we set about it with revolutionary enthusiasm, without which there can be no victorious revolutions.

No profound and mighty popular movement has ever occurred in history without scum rising to the top, without adventurers and rogues, boasters and shouters attaching themselves to the inexperienced novices, without senseless fuss, confusion, aimless bustling, without individual "leaders" trying to deal with twenty matters at once and not finishing any one of them. Let the pups of bourgeois society, from Belorussov to Martov, squeal and yelp about the chips that are flying while the old tree is being cut down. What else are pups for if not to yelp at the proletarian elephant? Let them yelp. We shall go our road and try as carefully and as patiently as possible to test and discover real organisers, people with sober minds and a practical outlook, people who combine loyalty to socialism with ability without fuss (and in spite of fuss and noise) to organise the strongly welded and harmonious joint work of a large number of people within the framework of Soviet organisation. Only *such* people, after testing them a score of times, by moving them from the simplest tasks to the most difficult, should be promoted to the responsible posts of leaders of the people's labour, leaders of administration. We have not yet learned to do this, but we shall learn to do so.

"SYMMETRICAL ORGANISATION" AND DICTATORSHIP

The resolution adopted by the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow¹ advanced as the primary task of the moment the establishment of a "symmetrical organisation," and the tightening of

¹ See note to p. 313. **—*Ed.*

discipline. Everyone now readily "votes for" and "subscribes to" resolutions of this kind; but usually people do not ponder over the fact that the application of such resolutions calls for coercion—coercion precisely in the form of dictatorship. And yet it would be extremely stupid and absurdly utopian to believe that the transition from capitalism to socialism was possible without coercion and without dictatorship. Marx's theory very definitely opposed this petty-bourgeois democratic and anarchist absurdity long ago. And Russia of 1917-18 confirms the correctness of Marx's theory in this respect so strikingly, palpably and imposingly that only those who are hopelessly stupid or who have obstinately decided to turn their backs on the truth can be under any misapprehension concerning this. Either the dictatorship of Kornilov (if we take him as the Russian type of bourgeois Cavaignac), or the dictatorship of the proletariat—there is *no other* choice for a country which has gone through an extremely rapid development with extremely sharp turns and amidst terrible chaos created by one of the most terrible wars in history. All solutions that offer a middle path are either an attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to deceive the people—for the bourgeoisie dare not tell the truth, dare not say that they need Kornilov—or are an expression of the stupidity of the petty-bourgeois democrats, of the Chernovs, Tseretellis and Martovs, and of their chatter about the unity of democracy, the dictatorship of democracy, the general democratic front, and similar nonsense. Those whom the progress of the Russian revolution of 1917-18 has not taught that a middle course is impossible are hopeless.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that in every transition from capitalism to socialism, dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons, or along two main channels. First, capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated without the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their superiority of organisation and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor; secondly, a great revolution, and a socialist revolution in particular, even if there were no external war, is inconceivable without internal war, *i.e.*, civil war, which is even more destructive than external war, and implies thousands and

millions of cases of wavering and desertion from one side to another, implies a state of extreme indefiniteness, lack of equilibrium and chaos. And of course, all the elements of disintegration of the old society, which are inevitably very numerous and connected mainly with the petty bourgeoisie (because it is the petty bourgeoisie that every war and every crisis ruins first) cannot but "reveal themselves" in such periods of profound change. And these elements of disintegration *cannot* "reveal themselves" otherwise than in the increase of crime: hooliganism, corruption, profiteering and outrages of every kind. We must have time and *an iron hand* to put these down.

There has not been a single great revolution in history in which the people did not instinctively realise this and did not reveal saving firmness by shooting thieves on the spot. The misfortune of previous revolutions has been that the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses, which sustained them in their state of tension and gave them the strength ruthlessly to suppress the elements of disintegration, did not last long. The social, *i.e.*, the class reason for this ephemeral character of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses was the weakness of the proletariat, which *alone* is able (if it is sufficiently numerous, class conscious and disciplined) to win over to its side the majority of the toilers and exploited (the majority of the poor, to speak more simply and popularly) and retain power sufficiently long to enable it utterly to suppress all the exploiters as well as all the elements of disintegration.

It was this historical experience of all revolutions, it was this world-historical—economic and political—lesson that Marx confirmed in giving his short, sharp, concise and striking formula: dictatorship of the proletariat. And the fact that the Russian revolution set to work to fulfil this world-historical task correctly *has been proved* by the victorious progress of the Soviet organisations among all the peoples and tongues of Russia. For Soviet government is nothing more nor less than the organisational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the advanced class, which raises tens and tens of millions of toilers and exploited—who by their own experience learn to regard the disciplined and class conscious vanguard of the proletariat as their reliable leader—to a

new democracy and to independent participation in the administration of the state.

But dictatorship is a big word, and big words should not be thrown about carelessly. Dictatorship is iron rule, government that is revolutionarily bold, quick and ruthless in suppressing the exploiters as well as hooligans. But our government is too soft, very often it is more like jelly than iron. We must not forget for a moment that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements are fighting against the Soviet government in two ways: on the one hand, they are operating from outside, by the methods of the Savinkovs, Gotzes, Gegechkoris and Kornilovs, by conspiracies and rebellions, and by their filthy "ideological" reflection, the flood of lies and slander in the Cadet, Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press; on the other hand, these elements operate from within and take advantage of every element of disintegration, of every weakness, in order to bribe, to increase indiscipline, laxity and chaos. The nearer we approach the complete military suppression of the bourgeoisie, the more dangerous the elements of petty-bourgeois anarchy become. And the fight against these elements cannot be waged solely with the aid of propaganda and agitation, solely by organising competition and by choosing organisers. The struggle must also be waged by means of coercion.

In proportion as the fundamental task of the government becomes, not military suppression, but administration, the typical manifestation of suppression and coercion will be, not shooting on the spot, but trial by court. In this respect also the revolutionary masses after November 7 [October 25], 1917, entered the right path and demonstrated the virility of the revolution by setting up their own workers' and peasants' courts, even before the decrees dissolving the bourgeois bureaucratic juridical apparatus were passed. But our revolutionary and people's courts are extremely, incredibly weak. One feels that we have not yet changed the people's attitude towards the courts as towards something official and alien, an attitude inherited from the yoke of the landlords and of the bourgeoisie. It is not yet sufficiently realised that the court is an organ which enlists the whole of the poor in the work of state administration (for the work of the courts is one of the functions of state administration),

that the court is an *organ* of government of the proletariat and of the poorest peasants, that the court is an instrument for *inculcating discipline*. There is not yet sufficient appreciation of the simple and obvious fact that if the principal misfortunes of Russia at the present time are hunger and unemployment, these misfortunes cannot be overcome by spurts, but only by all-sided, all-embracing, nationwide organisation and discipline in order to increase the output of food for the people and food for industry (fuel), to transport these in proper time to the places where they are required, and to distribute them properly; and it is not fully appreciated that it is those who violate labour discipline in any factory, in any place, who are *responsible* for the starvation and unemployment, that the guilty one must be found, tried before the court, and ruthlessly punished. The petty-bourgeois elements against which we must now wage a persistent struggle manifest themselves precisely in the failure to appreciate the national economic and political connection between starvation and unemployment and general laxity in matters of organisation and discipline—in the tenacity of the *small-proprietor outlook*, *viz.*, I'll grab all I can for myself; what do I care for the rest?

In railway transport, which perhaps most strikingly embodies the economic ties of the organism created by large-scale capitalist production, the struggle between petty-bourgeois elements of laxity and proletarian organisation manifests itself in most striking relief. The "administration" element provides saboteurs and bribe-takers in great abundance; the best part of the proletarian element fights for discipline; but among both elements there are, of course, many waverers and "weak ones" who are unable to withstand the temptation of profiteering, bribery, personal gain obtained by spoiling the whole apparatus—upon the proper working of which the victory over starvation and unemployment depends.

The struggle that is developing around the recent decree on the management of the railways, the decree which grants individual leaders dictatorial powers (or "unlimited powers")* is characteristic. The conscious representatives of petty-bourgeois laxity (in all probability most of them are unconscious representatives) would like to see in this granting of "unlimited" (*i.e.*, dictatorial) powers

to individual persons a departure from the collegium principle, from democracy and from other principles of Soviet government. Here and there, among Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, a positively hooligan agitation, *i.e.*, agitation appealing to bad instincts and to the small proprietor's striving to "grab all he can," has been developed against the dictatorship decree. The question has become one of really enormous significance: first, the question of principle, *viz.*, is the appointment of individual persons, dictators with unlimited powers, in general compatible with the fundamental principles of Soviet government? Secondly, what relation has this case—this precedent, if you will—to the special tasks of the government in the present concrete situation? We must deal very attentively with both these questions.

The irrefutable experience of history has shown that in the history of revolutionary movements the dictatorship of individual persons was very often the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship of individual persons was compatible with bourgeois democracy. But at this point in their abuse of the Soviet government, the bourgeoisie, as well as their petty-bourgeois henchmen, always display remarkable legerdemain: on the one hand, they declare the Soviet government to be something absurd and anarchistically savage, and they carefully evade all our historical examples and theoretical arguments which prove that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy, and even more, the beginning of the *socialist* form of democracy; on the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than bourgeois democracy and say: personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with your, Bolshevik (*i.e.*, not bourgeois, but *socialist*) Soviet democracy.

These are very poor arguments. If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state, *i.e.*, *coercion*, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances, such as, for example, the heritage of a long and reactionary war and the forms of resistance put up by the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie. Hence, there is absolutely no contradiction in principle between Soviet (*i.e.*, socialist) de-

mocracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individual persons. The difference between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship is that the former strikes at the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority, and that it is exercised—also through *individual* persons—not only by the masses of the toilers and exploited, but also by organisations which are built in such a way as to rouse among the masses the historical creative spirit. The Soviet organisations are organisations of this kind.

In regard to the second question concerning the significance of precisely individual dictatorial powers from the point of view of the specific tasks of the present moment, it must be said that large-scale machine industry—which is precisely the material productive source and foundation of socialism—calls for absolute and strict unity of will, which directs the joint labours of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. The technical, economic and historical necessity of this is obvious, and all those who have thought about socialism have always regarded it as one of the conditions of socialism. But how can strict unity of will be ensured? By thousands subordinating their will to the will of one.

Given ideal class consciousness and discipline on the part of those taking part in the common work, this subordination would more than anything remind one of the mild leadership of a conductor of an orchestra. It may assume the sharp forms of a dictatorship if ideal discipline and class consciousness are lacking. But be that as it may, *unquestioning submission* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of labour processes that are based on large-scale machine industry. On the railways it is twice and three times as necessary. This transition from one political task to another, which *on the surface* is totally dissimilar to the first, represents the peculiar feature of the present situation. The revolution has only just broken the oldest, most durable and heaviest fetters to which the masses were compelled to submit. That was yesterday. But today the same revolution demands, in the interests of socialism, that the masses *unquestioningly obey the single will* of the leaders of the labour process. Of course, such a transition cannot be made at one step. It can be achieved only as a result of tremendous impulses, shocks, reversions to old forms, the enormous exertion of effort on

the part of the proletarian vanguard, which is leading the people to the new society. Those who drop into the philistine hysterics of *Novaya Zhizn*, *Vperyod*,¹ *Dyelo Naroda* and *Nash Vek*² do not stop to think about this.

Take the psychology of the average rank-and-file representative of the toiling and exploited masses; compare it with the objective, material conditions of his social life. Before the October Revolution he did *not* see any real effort on the part of the propertied exploiting classes to make any real sacrifice for him, to do anything for his benefit. He did *not* see any attempt to give him land, liberty and peace that had been repeatedly promised him, any sacrifice of "Great Power" interests and of the interests of Great Power secret treaties, sacrifice of capital and profits. He saw this only after November 7 [October 25], 1917, when he took this himself by force, and had to defend what he had taken by force from the Kerenskys, the Gotzes, the Gegechkoris, Dutovs and Kornilovs. Naturally, for a certain time, all his attention, all his thoughts, all his efforts, were concentrated on taking his breath, on unbending his back, on looking around, on taking the benefits of life which were immediately accessible and which the overthrown exploiters had never given him. Of course, a certain amount of time was required to enable the rank-and-file representative of the masses not only to see for himself, not only to become convinced, but also to feel that it was not good simply to "take," to grab things, that this leads to increased chaos and ruin, to the return of the Kornilovs. The corresponding change in the conditions of life (and consequently in the psychology) of the rank-and-file toiling masses is only just beginning. And our task, the task of the Communist Party, which is the class conscious expression of the strivings of the exploited for emancipation, is to appreciate this change, to understand that it is necessary, to take the lead of the exhausted masses who are wearily seeking a way out and lead them along the true path, along the path of labour discipline, along the path of co-ordinating the task of holding meetings and discussing the conditions of labour with the task of unquestion-

¹ *Forward*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

² *Our Age*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

ingly obeying the will of the Soviet leader, of the dictator, *during work time*.

"Holding meetings" is an object of the ridicule, and still more often of the malicious spite, of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn*-ists, who see only the chaos, the confusion and the outbursts of small-proprietor egoism. But without holding meetings the masses of the oppressed could never pass from the compulsory discipline of the exploiters to class conscious, voluntary discipline. Holding meetings is the real democracy of the toilers, it is their way of unbending their backs, their awakening to new life, their first step along the road which they themselves have cleared of reptiles (the exploiters, the imperialists, the landlords and capitalists) and which they want to learn to lay down themselves, in their own way, for themselves, on the principles of their own "Soviet" and not alien, not aristocratic, not bourgeois rule. The October victory of the toilers over the exploiters was required, a whole historical period was required in which the toilers themselves could first of all discuss the new conditions of life and the new tasks, in order to make possible the durable transition to superior forms of labour discipline, to the intelligent appreciation of the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to unquestioning obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the Soviet government during work time.

This transition has now commenced.

We have successfully fulfilled the first task of the revolution; we have seen how the masses of the toilers created the fundamental condition for its success: unity of effort against the exploiters in order to overthrow them. Stages like that of October 1905, March [February] and November [October] 1917 are of world-historical significance.

We have successfully fulfilled the second task of the revolution: to awaken, to raise precisely those social "lower ranks" whom the exploiters had pushed down, and who only after November 7 [October 25], 1917, obtained the freedom to overthrow the exploiters and to look around and organise things in their own way. Meetings of precisely the most oppressed and downtrodden, of the least educated masses of the toilers, their transition to the side of the Bolshe-

viks, their establishment everywhere of their own Soviet organisations—this was the second great stage of the revolution.

The third stage is now beginning. We must consolidate what we ourselves have won, what we have decreed, passed into law, discussed, planned—consolidate them in durable forms of *everyday labour discipline*. This is a very difficult, but a very grateful task, because its fulfilment alone will give us socialist conditions. We must learn to combine the "meeting" democracy of the toiling masses—turbulent, surging, overflowing its banks like a spring flood—with *iron discipline* while at work, with *unquestioning obedience* to the will of a single person, the Soviet leader, while at work.

We have not yet learned to do this.

We shall learn to do so.

Yesterday we were menaced with the restoration of bourgeois exploitation personified by the Kornilovs, Gotzes, Dutovs, Gegechkoris and Bogayevskys. We vanquished them. This restoration, this very same restoration menaces us today in another form, in the form of the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchism, or small-proprietor "it's not my business" psychology, in the form of the daily, petty, but numerous sorties and attacks of these elements against proletarian discipline. We must vanquish this element of petty-bourgeois anarchy, and we shall vanquish it.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET ORGANISATION

The socialist character of Soviet, *i.e.*, *proletarian*, democracy, as concretely applied today, lies first in that the electors are the toiling and exploited masses; the bourgeoisie is excluded. Secondly, it lies in the fact that all bureaucratic formalism and restriction of elections are abolished; the masses themselves determine the order and time of elections, and every elected person is liable to recall. Thirdly, it lies in that the best mass organisation of the vanguard of the toilers, *i.e.*, the proletariat engaged in large-scale industry, is created, which enables it to lead the vast masses of the exploited, to draw them into independent political life, to educate them politically by their own experience and in that for the first time a start is thus

made in teaching the *whole* of the population the art of administration, and in their beginning to administer.

Such are the principal distinguishing features of the democracy which is being applied in Russia, which is a higher type of democracy, a rupture with the bourgeois distortion of democracy, its transition to socialist democracy and to the conditions in which the state can begin to wither away.

It goes without saying that the elements of petty-bourgeois disorganisation (which must *inevitably* manifest itself to some extent in every proletarian revolution, and which manifests itself particularly in our revolution, owing to the petty-bourgeois character of our country, its backwardness and the consequences of a reactionary war) cannot but leave their impress upon the Soviets.

We must work tirelessly to develop the organisation of the Soviets and of the Soviet government. There is a petty-bourgeois tendency to transform the members of the Soviets into "Members of Parliament," or into bureaucrats. This must be combated by drawing *all* the members of the Soviets into the practical work of administration. In many places the departments of the Soviets are gradually becoming merged with the Commissariats. Our aim is to draw *the whole of the poor* into the practical work of administration, and every step that is taken in this direction—the more varied they are, the better—should be carefully registered, studied, systematised, tested by wider experience and passed into law. Our aim is to ensure that *every* toiler, after having finished his eight hours' "lesson" in productive labour, shall perform state duties *gratis*: the transition to this is a particularly difficult one, but this transition alone can guarantee the final consolidation of socialism. Naturally, the novelty and difficulty of the change give rise to an abundance of steps taken, as it were, gropingly, to an abundance of mistakes and vacillations—without this, rapid progress is impossible. The reason why the present position seems peculiar to many of those who would like to be regarded as Socialists is that they have been accustomed to contrasting capitalism to socialism abstractly and that they profoundly put between the two the word: "leap" (some of them, recalling fragments of what they have read of Engels' writings, still more profoundly add the phrase: "leap from the kingdom of necessity into

the kingdom of liberty"). The majority of these so-called Socialists, who have "read about socialism in books," but who have never seriously understood it, have never stopped to think that by "leap" the teachers of socialism meant changes in world history, and that leaps of this kind extended over periods of ten years and even more. Naturally, in such times, the notorious "intelligentsia" provide an infinite number of mourners of the dead. Some mourn over the Constituent Assembly, others mourn over bourgeois discipline, others again mourn over the capitalist system, still others mourn over the cultured landlord, and still others again mourn over imperial grandeur, etc., etc.

The real interest of the epoch of great leaps lies in that the abundance of fragments of the old, which sometimes accumulate much more rapidly than the rudiments (not always immediately discernible) of the new, calls for the ability to discern what is most important in the line or chain of development. Historical moments arise when the most important thing for the success of the revolution is to heap up as large a quantity of the fragments as possible, *i.e.*, to blow up as many of the old institutions as possible; moments arise when enough has been blown up and the next task is to perform the "prosaic" (for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary, the "boring") work of clearing away the fragments; and moments arise when the careful nursing of the rudiments of the new system, which are growing out of the wreckage on a soil which as yet has been badly cleared of rubble, is the most important thing.

It is not sufficient to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism, or a communist in general. One must be able at each particular moment to find that special link in the chain which one must grasp with all one's might in order to hold the whole chain, and to make lasting preparations for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, their difference from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as senseless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.

The fight against the bureaucratic distortion of the Soviet organisation is made secure by the firmness of the connection between the Soviets and the "people," meaning by that the toilers and exploited,

and by the flexibility and elasticity of this connection. Even in the most democratic capitalist republics in the world, the poor never regard the bourgeois parliament as "their own" institution. But the Soviets are "their own" and not alien institutions to the masses of workers and peasants. The contemporary "Social-Democrats" of the Scheidemann or, what is almost the same thing, of the Martov type, are repelled by the Soviets, and they are drawn towards the respectable bourgeois parliament, or to the Constituent Assembly as much as Turgenyev, sixty years ago, was drawn towards a moderate monarchist and aristocratic Constitution and was repelled by the muzhik democracy of Dobrolubov and Chernyshevsky.

It is precisely the closeness of the Soviets to the "people," to the toilers, that creates the special forms of recall and control from below which must be most zealously developed now. For example, the Councils of People's Education, as periodical conferences of Soviet electors and their delegations called to discuss and control the activities of the Soviet authorities in a given field, are deserving of full sympathy and support. Nothing would be sillier than to transform the Soviets into something congealed and self-contained. The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individual persons, *in definite processes of work*, in definite aspects of *purely executive functions*, the more varied must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of possibility of distorting the Soviet power, in order repeatedly and tirelessly to weed out bureaucracy.

CONCLUSION

An extraordinarily difficult and dangerous situation in international affairs; the necessity of manoeuvring and retreating; a period of waiting for new outbreaks of the revolution which is maturing in the West at a painfully slow pace; within the country a period of slow construction and ruthless "tightening up," of prolonged and persistent struggle waged by stern, proletarian discipline against the menacing element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchy—such in brief are the distinguishing features of the special stage

of the socialist revolution we are now living in. Such is the link in the historical chain of events which we must grasp with all our might in order to be able to cope with the tasks that confront us before passing to the next link which is attracting us by its particular brightness, the brightness of the victory of the international proletarian revolution. Try to compare the slogans that arise from the specific conditions of the present stage, *viz.*, manoeuvre, retreat, wait, build slowly, ruthlessly tighten up, sternly discipline, smash laxity—with the ordinary everyday concept "revolutionary." Is it surprising that when certain "revolutionaries" hear this they are filled with noble indignation and begin to "thunder" abuse at us for forgetting the traditions of the October Revolution, for compromising with the bourgeois specialists, for compromising with the bourgeoisie, for being petty bourgeois, reformists, etc., etc.?

The misfortune of these sorry "revolutionaries" is that even those who are prompted by the best motives in the world and are absolutely loyal to the cause of socialism fail to understand the particular, and "particularly unpleasant," state that a backward country, which has been tortured by a reactionary and disastrous war and which began the socialist revolution long before the more advanced countries, has to pass through; they lack stamina in the difficult moments of a difficult transition. Naturally, it is the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" who are acting as an "official" opposition of *this* kind against our Party. Of course, there are and always will be individual exceptions in groups and class types. But social types remain. In the land in which the small-proprietor population greatly predominates over the purely proletarian population, the difference between the proletarian revolutionary and petty-bourgeois revolutionary will inevitably make itself felt, and from time to time will make itself very sharply felt. The petty-bourgeois revolutionary wavers and vacillates at every turn of events; he is an ardent revolutionary in March 1917 and praises "coalitions" in May, hates the Bolsheviks (or laments over their "adventurism") in July and runs away from them in fear at the end of October, supports them in December, and finally in March and April 1918 such types, more often than not, turn up their noses contemptuously and say:

"I am not one of those who sing hymns to 'organic' work, to practicalness and gradualness."

The social source of these types is the small master who is driven to frenzy by the horrors of war, the sudden ruin, the unprecedented tortures of starvation and destruction, who hysterically rushes from place to place seeking salvation, places his confidence in the proletariat and supports it at one moment and falls into fits of despair at another. We must clearly understand and fully appreciate the fact that socialism cannot be built on such a social basis. The only class that can lead the toilers and the exploited masses is the class that unswervingly marches along its path without losing courage and without dropping into despair even at the most difficult, severe and dangerous crossings. Fits of hysteria are of no use to us. What we need is the steady march of the iron battalions of the proletariat.

March-April 1918

"LEFT-WING" CHILDISHNESS AND PETTY-BOURGEOIS MENTALITY *

THE publication by a small group of "Left Communists" of their journal, *Kommunist* (No. 1, April 20, 1918), and their "theses," afford striking confirmation of the views advanced by the present writer in his pamphlet: *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*. One could not wish for better confirmation, in political literature, of the utter naiveté of the defence of petty-bourgeois laxity that is sometimes concealed by "Left" slogans. It will be useful and necessary to deal with the arguments of the "Left Communists," because they are characteristic of the period we are passing through: they bring out in extraordinary relief the negative side, the "high point" of this period; they are instructive, because the people we are dealing with are the best of those who fail to understand the present period, people who by their knowledge and loyalty stand far, far above the *ordinary* representatives of the same mistaken views, *viz.*, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

I

The "Left Communist" group has presented its "Theses on the Present Situation" as a political magnitude, or as a group claiming to play a political role. It is a good Marxian custom to give a connected and complete exposition of the principles underlying one's views and tactics. And this good Marxian custom has helped to reveal the mistake committed by our "Lefts," because the mere attempt to argue and not to declaim lays bare the unsoundness of their arguments.

The first thing that strikes one is the abundance of allusions, hints and evasions with regard to the old question as to whether it was right to conclude the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The "Lefts" did not dare put the question straightforwardly. They flounder about

in a comical fashion, pile argument on argument, fish for arguments, plead that "on the one hand" it may be so, but "on the other hand" it may not, their thoughts wander over all and sundry subjects, trying all the time not to see that they are defeating themselves.

The "Lefts" are very careful to quote the figures: "twelve votes at the Party congress against peace, twenty-eight votes in favour," but they modestly refrain from mentioning that of the hundreds of votes cast at the meeting of the Bolshevik fraction of the Congress of Soviets they obtained less than one-tenth. They invented a "theory" that the peace policy was carried by "the war-weary and declassed elements," while "the workers and peasants of the southern regions, where there was greater vitality in economic life and the supply of bread was more assured," were opposed to peace. . . . Who can help laughing at such a statement? Not a word about the voting at the All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets in favour of peace, not a word about the social and class character of the typically petty-bourgeois and declassed political conglomeration in Russia who were opposed to peace (the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party). In a purely childish manner, by means of amusing "scientific" explanations, they try to conceal their own bankruptcy, to conceal the facts, the mere catalogue of which would prove that it was precisely the declassed intellectual Party "tops" and leaders who opposed the peace with slogans couched in revolutionary petty-bourgeois phrases, while it was precisely the *masses* of workers and exploited peasants who carried the vote for peace.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these declarations and evasions of the "Lefts" on the question of peace and war, the plain and manifest truth manages to come to light. The authors of the theses are compelled to admit that:

"The conclusion of peace has for the time being weakened the attempts of the imperialists to bring about an international settlement" (this is inaccurately formulated by the "Lefts," but this is not the place to deal with inaccuracies). "The conclusion of peace has already caused the conflict between the imperialist powers to become more acute."

Now this is a fact. Here is something that has *decisive* significance. That is why the opponents of peace were actually playthings in the hands of the imperialists, and fell into the trap laid for them.

For, until the international socialist revolution breaks out, embraces several countries and is strong enough to overcome *international imperialism*, it is the bounden duty of the Socialists, who have conquered in one country (especially a backward one), *not* to accept battle against the giants of imperialism. Their duty is to try to avoid war, to wait until the conflicts between the imperialists weaken them *still more*, and bring the revolution in other countries still nearer. Our "Lefts" did not understand this simple truth in January, February and March. Even now they are afraid of admitting it openly. But it comes to light through all their confused reasoning like: "on the one hand it is impossible not to agree, on the other hand one must admit." In their theses the "Lefts" write:

"During the coming spring and summer the collapse must begin of the imperialist system which a victory for German imperialism in the present phase of the war can only postpone, but which will for that reason express itself in more acute forms."

This formulation is still more childishly inaccurate, despite its scientific pretensions. It is natural for children to understand science to mean that it can determine in what year, spring, summer, autumn and winter the "collapse must begin."

These are absurd efforts to ascertain what cannot be ascertained. No serious politician will ever say *when* this or that collapse of a "system" "must begin" (the more so that the collapse of the *system* has already begun, and it is now a question of the moment of the outbreak in *particular* countries). But an incontrovertible truth forces its way through this childishly helpless formula, *viz.*, the outbreak of revolution in more advanced countries is *nearer* now, a month after the "respite" which followed the conclusion of peace, than it was a month or six weeks ago.

Hence?

Hence those who were in favour of peace and who inculcated into the minds of the lovers of ostentation that one must be able to calculate the relation of forces and not help the imperialists by making the war against socialism easier for them, while socialism is still weak, and when the chances of the war are manifestly *against* socialism, were right, and have been proved right by the course of events.

But our "Left" Communists—who are also fond of calling themselves "proletarian" Communists, although there is very little that is proletarian about them and very much that is petty-bourgeois—are incapable of giving thought to the relation of forces, the calculation of the relation of forces. This is the main point in Marxism and Marxian tactics, but they disdainfully brush aside the "main point" with "proud" phrases such as:

"That the masses have become firmly imbued with an inactive 'peace mentality' is an objective fact of the political moment."

What a gem! After three years of most agonising and reactionary war, the people, thanks to the Soviet government and the correctness of its tactics, which never became blurred in mere phrasemongering, obtained a very very brief, insecure and far from sufficient respite; but the "Left" intellectual striplings, with the magnificence of a self-infatuated Narcissus, profoundly declare: "That the masses [???] have become firmly imbued with an inactive [!!!???] peace mentality." Was I not right when I said at the Party congress that the paper or journal of the "Lefts" ought to have been called not *Kommunist* but *Szlachta*?

Could a Communist with the slightest understanding of the mentality and conditions of life of the toiling and exploited masses descend to the point of view of the typical declassed petty-bourgeois intellectual with the mental outlook of a noble who considers that a "peace mentality" is "inactive" and the brandishing of a cardboard sword is "activity"? For our "Lefts" merely brandish a cardboard sword when they ignore the universally known fact—of which the war in the Ukraine has served as an additional proof—that a country which had been utterly exhausted by three years of butchery is incapable of continuing the fight without a respite; and that war, if it cannot be organised on a national scale, often creates a mentality of disintegration peculiar to petty proprietors, instead of the iron discipline of the proletariat. Every page of the *Kommunist* shows that our "Lefts" have no conception of iron proletarian discipline and how it is achieved; that they are thoroughly imbued with the mentality of the declassed petty-bourgeois intellectual.

II

But perhaps all these phrases of the "Lefts" about war are merely childish ebullitions, which, moreover, concern the past, and therefore have not a shadow of political significance? This is the argument some people put up in defence of our "Lefts." But this argument is unsound. Anyone aspiring to political leadership must be able to *think out* political problems; the lack of this ability converts the "Lefts" into characterless preachers of a policy of vacillation, which objectively can have only one effect, *viz.*, by their vacillation the "Lefts" *are helping* the imperialists to provoke the Russian Soviet Republic into a clearly disadvantageous war; they *are helping* the imperialists to draw us into a snare. Listen to this:

"... The Russian workers' revolution cannot 'save itself' by abandoning the policy of world revolution, by continually avoiding battle and yielding to the pressure of international capital, by making 'concessions to home capital.'

"From this point of view it is necessary to adopt a determined class international policy, which will unite international revolutionary propaganda by word and deed, and to strengthen the organic connection with international socialism and not with the international bourgeoisie...."

I shall deal separately with the thrusts at home policy contained in this passage. But examine this riot of phrasemongering mixed with actual timidity in the sphere of foreign policy. What tactics *are binding* at the *present* time on all who do not wish to be tools of imperialist provocation, and who do not wish to walk into the snare? Every politician must give a clear, straightforward reply to this question. Our Party's reply is well known. At the *present* moment we must *retreat*, we must avoid battle. Our "Lefts" dare not contradict this and shoot into the air: "A determined class international policy"!!

This is deceiving the masses. If you want to fight now, say so openly. If you do not wish to *retreat* now, say so openly. Otherwise, in your objective role, you are a tool of imperialist provocation. And your subjective "mentality" is that of a frenzied petty bourgeois who swaggers and blusters, but knows perfectly well that the proletariat is *right* in retreating and in trying to retreat in an organised way, that the proletariat is right in arguing that as we lack strength we must retreat (before Western and Eastern imperialism) even

as far as the Urals, for in this lies the *only* chance of playing for time while the revolution in the West matures, the revolution which is not "bound" (notwithstanding the twaddle of the "Lefts") to begin in "spring or summer," but which is approaching nearer and becoming more probable every month.

The "Lefts" have no policy of their "own." They *dare not* declare that retreat at the *present moment* is unnecessary. They twist and turn, play with words, substitute the question of "continuously" avoiding battle for the question of avoiding battle at the *present moment*. They blow bubbles, such as: "International revolutionary propaganda by deed"!!! What does this mean?

It can only mean one of two things: either it is mere "Nozdrevism"* or it means an aggressive war to overthrow international imperialism. Such nonsense cannot be uttered openly, and that is why the "Left" Communists are obliged to take refuge from the derision of every politically conscious proletarian behind high-sounding and empty phrases. They hope the inattentive reader will not notice the real meaning of the phrase "international revolutionary propaganda by deed."

The flaunting of high-sounding phrases is characteristic of the declassed petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. The organised proletarian Communists will certainly punish this "habit" with nothing less than derision and expulsion from all responsible posts. The masses must be told the bitter truth simply, clearly and straightforwardly: it is possible, and even probable, that the militarist party will again get the upper hand in Germany (that is, they will immediately commence an offensive against us); and that Germany together with Japan, by official agreement or tacit understanding, will divide and strangle us. Our tactics, if we do not want to listen to loud-mouthed fools, must be to wait, procrastinate, avoid battle, retreat. If we shake off the shouters and "pull ourselves together," create genuinely iron, genuinely proletarian, genuinely Communist discipline, we shall have a real chance of gaining many months. And then by retreating, even (if the worst comes to the worst) to the Urals, we shall *make it easier* for our allies (the international proletariat) to come to our aid, to "cover" (to use a sporting term) the distance between the beginning of revolutionary outbreaks and revolution.

Such, and such alone, are the tactics which can strengthen the links between one temporarily isolated section of international socialism and the other sections. But truth to tell, all that your arguments lead to, dear "Left Communists," is the "strengthening of the organic connection" between one high-sounding phrase and another. A bad sort of "organic connection," this!

And I shall enlighten you, my amiable friends, as to why such disaster overtook you. It is because you devote more effort to learning by heart and committing to memory revolutionary slogans than to thinking them out. This leads you to write "the defence of the socialist fatherland" in quotation marks, which no doubt is meant to signify irony, but which really proves that you are muddleheads. You are accustomed to regard "defencism" as something base and despicable; you have learned this and committed it to memory. You have learned this by heart so thoroughly that some of you have begun talking nonsense to the effect that "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist *epoch* is impermissible (as a matter of fact, it is impermissible in an imperialist, reactionary war, waged by the bourgeoisie). But you have not thought out why and when "defencism" is abominable.

To recognise defence of one's fatherland means recognising the legitimacy and justice of war. Legitimacy and justice from what point of view? Only from the point of view of the socialist proletariat and its struggle for emancipation. We do not recognise any other point of view. If war is waged by the exploiting class with the object of strengthening its class rule, such a war is a criminal war, and "defencism" in *such* a war is a base betrayal of socialism. If war is waged by the proletariat after it has conquered the bourgeoisie in its own country, and is waged with the object of strengthening and extending socialism, such a war is legitimate and "holy."

We have been "defencists" since November 7 [October 25], 1917. I have said this more than once very definitely, and you dare not deny this. It is precisely in the interests of "strengthening connections" with international socialism that we *are duty bound* to defend our *socialist* fatherland. It is those who would treat the defence of the country in which the proletariat has already achieved victory frivolously who destroy the connections with international

socialism. When we were the representatives of an oppressed class we did not adopt a frivolous attitude towards defence of the fatherland in an imperialist war; we opposed such defence on principle. Since we have become the representatives of the ruling class, which has begun to organise socialism, we demand that all adopt a *serious* attitude towards defence of the country. And adopting a serious attitude towards defence of the country means preparing thoroughly for it, and strictly calculating the relation of forces. If our forces are obviously small, the best means of defence is retreat *into the interior of the country*. Whoever regards this as an artificial formula, made up to suit the needs of the moment, is advised to read old Clausewitz, one of the greatest authorities on military matters, concerning the lessons of history to be learned in this connection. The "Left Communists," however, do not give the slightest indication that they understand the significance of the question of the relation of forces.

When we were opposed to defencism on principle we were justified in holding up to ridicule those who wanted to "save" their fatherland, ostensibly in the interests of socialism. When we gained the right to be proletarian defencists the whole question was radically altered. It became our duty to calculate with the utmost accuracy the different forces involved, to weigh with the utmost care the chances of our ally (the international proletariat) being able to come to our aid. It is in the interest of capital to destroy its enemy (the revolutionary proletariat) bit by bit, before the workers in all countries have united (actually united, *i.e.*, by beginning the revolution). It is in our interest to do all that is possible to take advantage of the slightest opportunity to postpone the decisive battle until the moment (or "*till after*") the revolutionary ranks of the single, great, international army have been united.

III

We will pass to the misfortunes of our "Left" Communists in the sphere of home policy. It is difficult to read phrases such as the following in the theses on the *present* situation without smiling.

"... The systematic use of the remaining means of production is conceivable only if a most determined policy of socialisation is pursued"... "not capitulation to the bourgeoisie and its servile petty-bourgeois intel-

ligentsia, but the utter rout of the bourgeoisie and the complete break-down of sabotage."

Dear "Left Communists," how determined they are; but how little judgment they display! What do they mean by pursuing "a determined policy of socialisation"?

One may or may not be determined on the question of nationalisation or confiscation. But the whole point is that even the greatest possible "determination" is not enough to pass *from* nationalisation and confiscation *to* socialisation. The misfortune of our "Lefts" is that by their naive, childish combination of words: "Most determined policy of socialisation" they reveal their utter failure to understand the crux of the question, the crux of the "present" situation. The misfortune of our "Lefts" is that they have missed the essence of the "present situation," *viz.*, the transition from confiscation (the carrying out of which requires above all a determined policy) to socialisation (the carrying out of which requires a *different* quality in the revolutionary).

Yesterday, the main task of the moment was, as determinedly as possible, to nationalise, confiscate, beat down and crush the bourgeoisie, and break down sabotage. Today, only a blind man could fail to see that we have nationalised, confiscated, beaten down and broken more than we have been able to *keep count of*. And the difference between socialisation and simple confiscation lies precisely in the fact that confiscation can be carried out by means of "determination" alone, without the ability to count up and distribute properly, *whereas socialisation cannot be brought about without this ability*.

The historical service we have rendered is that yesterday we were determined (and will be tomorrow) in confiscating, in beating down the bourgeoisie, in breaking down sabotage. To write about this today, in "Theses on the Present Situation," is to face the past, and to fail to understand the transition to the future.

"The complete break-down of sabotage!" What a task they have found! Our saboteurs are quite sufficiently "broken." What we lack is something quite different. We lack the proper calculation of which saboteurs to set to work, and where to place them; we lack the organisation of *our own* forces for supervision, one Bol-

shevik leader or controller, let us say, to supervise a hundred saboteurs who are now coming into our service. Under such circumstances to flaunt such phrases as "the most determined" policy of "socialisation," "beating down," and "complete break-down" is just beating the air. It is usual for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary not to understand that beating down, breaking down and the like is not enough for socialism. It is sufficient for a small proprietor who is enraged against the big proprietor, but no proletarian revolutionary would fall into such error.

If the words we have quoted provoke a smile, the following discovery made by the "Left Communists" will provoke nothing short of Homeric laughter. According to them, under the "Right Bolshevik deviation" the Soviet Republic is threatened with "evolution in the direction of state capitalism." They have really frightened us this time! And with what zeal these "Left Communists" repeat this threatening revelation in their theses and articles. . . .

It has never occurred to them that state capitalism would be an *advance* on the present state of affairs in our Soviet Republic. If we introduced state capitalism in approximately six months' time, we would achieve a great success and a sure guarantee that within a year socialism will have gained a permanently firm hold and will have become invincible in our country.

I can imagine with what noble indignation a "Left Communist" will recoil from these words, and what "deadly criticism" he will unfold to the workers against the "Right Bolshevik deviation." What! The transition to state *capitalism* in the Soviet *Socialist* Republic a step forward? Isn't this the betrayal of socialism?

This is precisely where the root of the *economic* mistake of the "Left Communists" lies. And that is why we must deal with this point in greater detail.

In the first place, the "Left Communists" do not exactly understand the nature of the *transition* from capitalism to socialism which gives us the right and the grounds on which to call our country the Socialist Republic of Soviets.

Secondly, they reveal their petty-bourgeois character precisely in not *recognising* the petty-bourgeois element as the *principal* enemy of socialism in our country.

Thirdly, in making a bug-bear of "state capitalism," they betray their failure to understand the economic difference between the Soviet state and the bourgeois state.

Let us examine these three points.

No one, I think, in studying the question of the economics of Russia, has denied their transitional character. Nor, I think, has any Communist denied that the term Socialist Soviet Republic implies the determination of the Soviet government to achieve the transition to socialism, and not that the new economic order is a socialist order.

But what does the word "transition" mean? Does it not mean, as applied to economics, that the present order contains elements, particles, pieces of both capitalism and socialism? Everyone will admit that it does. But not all who admit this take the trouble to consider the precise nature of the elements that constitute the various social-economic forms which exist in Russia at the present time. And this is the crux of the question.

Let us enumerate these elements: 1) patriarchal, *i.e.*, to a considerable extent natural, self-sufficing peasant economy; 2) small-commodity production (this includes the majority of those peasants who sell their grain); 3) private capitalism; 4) state capitalism, and 5) socialism.

Russia is so vast and so varied that all these different types of social-economic forms are intermingled. This is what constitutes the peculiar feature of the situation.

The question arises: what elements preponderate? Clearly, in a small-peasant country, the preponderating element must be the petty-bourgeois element, nor can it be otherwise, for the majority and the great majority of the tillers of the soil are small-commodity producers. Hence, the shell of state capitalism (grain monopoly, state-controlled producers and traders, bourgeois co-operators) is pierced, now in one place, now in another, by *profiteers*, and the chief object of profiteering is *grain*.

It is precisely in this field that the struggle is mainly proceeding. Between what elements is this struggle being waged, if we are to speak in terms of economic categories such as "state capitalism"? Between the fourth and the fifth in the order in which I have just

enumerated? Of course not. It is not state capitalism that is at war with socialism; it is the petty bourgeoisie plus private capitalism fighting against both state capitalism and socialism. The petty bourgeoisie oppose every kind of state interference, regulation and control, whether it be state capitalist or state socialist. This is an absolutely incontrovertible fact of our reality, the failure to understand which lies at the root of the economic mistake of the "Left Communists." The profiteer, the trade marauder, the disrupter of monopoly—these are our principal "internal" enemies, the enemies of the economic enactments of the Soviet government. A hundred and twenty-five years ago it might have been excusable for the French petty bourgeois, the most ardent and sincere of revolutionaries, to endeavour to crush the profiteer by executing a few of the "chosen" ones and by thunderous declamations; but today the purely rhetorical attitude to this question assumed by some Left Socialist-Revolutionaries can rouse nothing but disgust and revulsion in an intelligent revolutionary. We know perfectly well that the economic basis of profiteering is the small proprietors, who are unusually widespread in Russia, and private capitalism, of which every petty bourgeois is an agent. We know that the million tentacles of this petty-bourgeois hydra encircle first one and then another section of the working class, that instead of *state monopoly* profiteering forces its way through all the pores of our social and economic organism.

Those who fail to see this show by their blindness that they are captives to petty-bourgeois prejudices. This is precisely the case with our "Left Communists," who in words (and of course in their deepest convictions) are merciless enemies of the petty bourgeoisie, while in fact they help only the petty bourgeoisie, serve only this stratum, express only its point of view by fighting, *in April 1918!*—against . . . "state capitalism." Beating the air!

The petty bourgeois has money put away, several thousands gained by "honest" and especially by dishonest means, during the war. This is the economic type, the characteristic type, that serves as the basis of profiteering and private capitalism. Money is a certificate entitling the possessor to receive social wealth; and a vast

stratum of small proprietors, numbering millions, cling to this certificate, conceal it from the "state." They do not believe in socialism or communism, and "sit tight" until the proletarian storm blows over. Either we subordinate this petty bourgeoisie to our control and accounting (we can do this if we organise the poor, that is, the majority of the population or semi-proletariat, round the politically conscious proletarian vanguard), or they will overthrow our workers' government as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and Cavaignacs who sprang from this very soil of small ownership. This is how the question stands. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries alone fail to see this plain and evident truth through their mist of phrases about the "toiling" peasantry; but who takes these phrasemongering Left Socialist-Revolutionaries seriously?

The petty bourgeoisie, hoarding their thousands, are the enemies of state capitalism. They want to use their thousands for themselves, against the poor, in the teeth of all state control. And the sum total of these thousands, amounting to many billions, forms the basis of the profiteering which is disrupting our socialist construction. Let us suppose that a given number of workers produce in a certain number of days goods to the value of, say, 1000. Suppose, further, that of this total 200 is lost to us as a result of petty profiteering, embezzlement and the small proprietors "evading" Soviet decrees and regulations. Every politically conscious worker will say: if better order and organisation could be obtained at the price of 300 I would willingly give 300 instead of 200 out of the 1000, for it will be easy under the Soviet government to reduce this "tribute" to 100 or to 50 later on, when order and organisation are established and the petty-bourgeois disruption of state monopoly is finally stopped.

This simple illustration in figures—which I have deliberately simplified to the utmost in order to make it absolutely clear—explains the present *correlation* of state capitalism and socialism. The workers hold political power; they have every legal opportunity of "taking" the whole thousand, *i.e.*, without giving up a single kopek, except for socialist purposes. This legal opportunity, which

rests upon the actual transition of power to the workers, is an element of socialism. But in many ways, the small-owner and private capitalist element undermines this legal position, drags in profiteering, hinders the execution of Soviet decrees. State capitalism would be a gigantic step forward *even if* we paid *more* than we are paying at present (I took this numerical example deliberately to bring this out more sharply), for it is worth while paying for "tuition," because it is profitable for the workers, because victory over disorder, ruin and slackness is the most important thing; because the continuation of small-owner anarchy is the greatest, the most serious danger which threatens us and which will *certainly* be our ruin unless we overcome it. On the other hand, not only will the payment of a heavier tribute to state capitalism not ruin us, it will lead us to socialism by the surest road. When the working class has learned how to defend the state system against small-owner anarchy, when it has learned to build up a great, nation-wide state organisation of production on state capitalist lines, it will have, if I may use the expression, all the trump cards in its hands, and the consolidation of socialism will be assured.

In the first place, *economically*, state capitalism is immeasurably superior to the present system of economy.

In the second place, the Soviet power has nothing terrible to fear from it; for the Soviet state is a state in which the power of the workers and the poor is assured. The "Left Communists" do not understand these incontrovertible truths, which, of course, a Left Socialist-Revolutionary, who cannot connect any ideas on political economy in his head, will never understand, but which every Marxist *must* admit. It is not even worth while arguing with a Left Socialist-Revolutionary. It is enough to point to him as a "repulsive example" of a wind-bag. But the "Left Communists" *must* be argued with, because the erring ones are Marxists, and an analysis of their mistake will help the *working class* to find the true road.

IV

To elucidate the question still more, let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism. Everybody knows what this example is. It is Germany. Here we have "the last word" in

modern large-scale capitalist technique and planned organisation, subordinated to *Junker-bourgeois imperialism*.* Cross out the words in italics, and, in place of the militarist, *Junker-bourgeois imperialist state*, put a *state*, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a *Soviet*, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the *sum total* of the conditions necessary for socialism.

Socialism is inconceivable without large-scale capitalist technique based on the last word of modern science; it is inconceivable without planned state organisation which subjects tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a single standard in production and distribution. We Marxists have always insisted on this, and it is not worth while wasting two seconds talking to people who do not understand *even* this (anarchists and a good half of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

At the same time socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is A B C. And history (which nobody, except Menshevik blockheads of the first rank, ever expected to bring about "complete" socialism smoothly, gently, easily and simply) took such an original course that it "brought forth" in 1918 two unconnected halves of socialism existing side by side like two future chickens in the single shell of international imperialism. In 1918 Germany and Russia were the embodiment of the most striking material realisation of the economic, the productive, the social-economic conditions for socialism; on the one hand, and the political conditions, on the other.

A successful proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and very easily have shattered the shell of imperialism (which, unfortunately, is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of *any and every* . . . chicken), it would have brought about the victory of world socialism for certain, without any difficulty, or with slight difficulty—if, of course, by "difficulty" we mean difficult on a world-historical scale, and not in the philistine-circle sense.

While the revolution in Germany is slow in "coming forth," our task is to study the state capitalism of the Germans, to spare *no effort* in copying it and not shrink from adopting *dictatorial* methods to hasten the copying of it. Our task is to do this even more

thoroughly than Peter¹ hastened the copying of Western culture by barbarian Russia, and he did not hesitate to use barbarous methods in fighting against barbarism. If there are anarchists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (I suddenly recall the speeches of Karelin and Ge on the C.E.C.) who indulge in Narcissus-like reflections and say that it is unbecoming for us, revolutionaries, to "take lessons" from German imperialism, there is only one thing we can say in reply to this: the revolution would perish irrevocably (and deservedly), if we took these people seriously.

At present, petty-bourgeois capitalism prevails in Russia, and it is *one and the same road* that leads from it to large-scale state capitalism and to socialism, through *one and the same* intermediary station called "national accounting and control of production and distribution." Those who fail to understand this are committing an unpardonable mistake in economics. Either they do not know the facts of reality, do not see what actually exists and are unable to look the truth in the face; or they confine themselves to abstractly comparing "capitalism" with "socialism" and fail to study the concrete forms and stages of the transition that is taking place in our country. Let it be said in parenthesis that this is the very theoretical mistake which misled the best people in the *Novaya Zhizn* and *Vperyod* camp. The worst and the mediocre of these, owing to their stupidity and spinelessness, drag at the tail of the bourgeoisie, of whom they stand in awe. The best of them failed to understand that it was not without reason that the teachers of socialism spoke of a whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism and emphasised the "prolonged birth pangs" of the new social order. And this new order is an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect, concrete attempts to create this or that socialist state.

It is precisely because Russia cannot advance economically without traversing the ground *that is common* to state capitalism and to socialism (national accounting and control) that the attempt to frighten others as well as themselves with the bogey of "evolution

¹ Peter the Great.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

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towards state capitalism" (*Kommunist* No. 1, p. 8, col. 1) is utter theoretical nonsense. To talk nonsense of this sort is to let one's thoughts wander *away from* the true road of "evolution," is to fail to understand what this road is. In practice it is equivalent to dragging back to small-owner capitalism.

In order to convince the reader that this is not the first time I have given this "high" appreciation of state capitalism and that I gave it before the Bolsheviks seized power I take the liberty of quoting the following passage from my pamphlet *The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight It*,¹ written in September 1917.

"... But try to substitute for the *Junker*-capitalist state, for the landlord-capitalist state, a *revolutionary-democratic* state (*i.e.*, such as will destroy *all* privileges in a revolutionary way without being afraid of introducing in a revolutionary way the fullest possible democracy), and you will see that, in a truly revolutionary-democratic state, state monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably means progress towards socialism!

"... For socialism is nothing but the next step forward after state capitalist monopoly.

"... State monopoly capitalism is the fullest *material* preparation for socialism, it is its *threshold*, it is that rung on the historical ladder between which and the rung called socialism there are *no intervening rungs*."

Please note that this was written when Kerensky was in power, that we are discussing, *not* the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* the socialist state, but the "revolutionary-democratic" state. Is it not clear that the *higher* we stand on this political ladder, *the more completely* we incorporate the socialist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviets, *the less ought* we to fear "state capitalism"? Is it not clear that from the *material*, economic and productive point of view, we are not yet "on the threshold" of socialism? And how otherwise than by way of this "threshold," which we have not yet reached, shall we pass through the door of socialism?

From whatever side we approach the question, only one conclusion can be drawn: the argument of the "Left Communists" about the "state capitalism" which is alleged to be threatening us is an utter mistake in economics and is manifest proof that they are in complete captivity to petty-bourgeois ideology.

¹ See *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

V

The following is also extremely instructive.

In our controversy with Comrade Bukharin on the C.E.C., he declared, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists "we" (evidently meaning the "Left Communists") "were more to the Right than Lenin," for in this case we see no deviation from principle, bearing in mind that Marx said that under certain conditions it is more expedient for the working class to "buy off this gang" (that is, the gang of capitalists, *i.e.*, to buy from the bourgeoisie the land, factories, works and other means of production).

This extremely interesting statement shows, in the first place, that Bukharin is head and shoulders above the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists, that he is by no means hopelessly stuck in the mud of phrasemongering, but on the contrary is making efforts to think out the *concrete* difficulties of the transition—the painful and difficult transition—from capitalism to socialism.

In the second place, this statement makes Bukharin's mistake still more glaring.

Let us consider Marx's idea carefully.

Marx was discussing England of the seventies of the last century, of the culminating point in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism. At that time England was a country in which militarism and bureaucracy were less pronounced than in any other, a country in which there was the greatest possibility of a "peaceful" victory for socialism by the workers "buying off" the bourgeoisie. And Marx says: under certain conditions the workers will certainly not refuse to buy off the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself—or the future leaders of the socialist revolution—to matters of form, to methods and ways of bringing about the revolution; for he understood perfectly well that a vast number of new problems would arise, that the whole situation would change in the process of the revolution, and that the situation would change *radically* and *often* in the process of revolution.

Well, and what about Soviet Russia? *After* the seizure of power by the proletariat, *after* the crushing of the armed resistance and

sabotage of the exploiters—is it not clear that *certain* conditions prevail which correspond to those which might have existed in England half a century ago had a peaceful transition to socialism begun then? The subordination of the capitalists to the workers in England would have been assured at that time owing to the following circumstances: 1) the absolute preponderance of workers, *i.e.*, proletarians, in the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in England in the 'seventies there was every hope of an extremely rapid spread of socialism among agricultural labourers); 2) the excellent organisation of the proletariat in trade unions (England was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect); 3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat which had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; 4) the old habit of the well-organised English capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the English capitalists were better organised than the capitalists of any country in the world (this superiority has now passed to Germany). These were the circumstances which at that time gave rise to the idea that the *peaceful* subjugation of the English capitalists by the workers was possible.

In Soviet Russia, at the present time, this subjugation is assured by certain premises of fundamental significance (the victory in October and the suppression, from October to February, of the armed and sabotaging resistance of the capitalists). But *instead* of the absolute preponderance of workers, that is, of proletarians in the population, and a high degree of organisation among them, the important factor of victory in Russia was the support the proletarians received from the poorest and quickly pauperised peasantry. Finally, we have neither a high degree of culture nor the habit of compromise. If these concrete conditions are carefully considered it will become clear that we can and ought to employ two methods *simultaneously*, *i.e.*, the ruthless suppression¹ of the uncultured

¹ In this case also we must look truth in the face. There is still too little of that ruthlessness which is indispensable for the success of socialism, not because we lack determination, we have sufficient determination, but because we do not know how to capture quickly enough a sufficient number of profiteers, marauders and capitalists—the people who infringe the enactments of the Soviets. The ability to do this can only be acquired by

capitalists, who refuse to have anything to do with "state capitalism" or to consider any form of compromise, and who continue by means of profiteering, by bribing the poor peasantry, etc., to hinder the application of the measures taken by the Soviets, and the *method of compromise*, or buying off the cultured capitalists, who agree with state capitalism, who are capable of putting it into practice and who are useful to the proletariat as the clever and experienced organisers of the *largest* types of enterprises, which supply commodities to tens of millions of people.

Bukharin is a well-educated Marxian economist. Hence he remembered that Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers the importance of preserving the organisation of large-scale production precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism and that (as an exception, and England was then an exception) the idea was conceivable of *paying the capitalists well*, of buying them off, if the circumstances were such as to compel the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to socialism in a cultured and organised fashion, provided they were bought off.

But Bukharin fell into error because he did not study sufficiently the concrete peculiarity of the situation in Russia at the present time—an exceptional situation. We, the Russian proletariat, are in *advance* of England or Germany as regards our political order, as regards the strength of the political power of the workers; but we are *behind* the most backward West European country as regards well-organised state capitalism, as regards our level of culture and the degree of material and productive preparedness for the "introduction" of socialism. Is it not clear that the peculiar nature of the present situation creates the need for a peculiar type of "buying off" which the workers should offer to the most cultured, the most skilled, the most capable organisers among the capitalists who are ready to enter the service of the Soviet government and to help honestly in organising "state" industry on the largest possible scale? Is it not clear that in such a peculiar situation we must make every effort to avoid two mistakes, both of which are of petty-bourgeois establishing accounting and control! In the second place, the courts are not sufficiently firm. Instead of sentencing people who take bribes to be shot, they sentence them to six months' imprisonment. These defects have the same social root: the influences of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchy.

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nature? On the one hand, it would be an irretrievable mistake to declare that since there is a discrepancy between our economic "forces" and our political forces, it "follows" that we should not have seized power. Such an argument can be advanced only by a "man in a muffler" who forgets that there will always be such a "discrepancy," that it always exists in the development of nature as well as in the development of society, that only by a series of attempts—each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided, will suffer from certain inconsistencies—will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletariat of *all* countries.

On the other hand, it would be an obvious mistake to give free rein to shouters and phrasemongers, who allow themselves to be attracted by "dazzling revolutionism" but who are incapable of sustained, thoughtful and deliberate revolutionary work which takes into account the most difficult stages of transition.

Fortunately, the history of the development of the revolutionary parties and of the struggle Bolshevism waged against them¹ has left us a heritage of sharply defined types; of these, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists are striking examples of bad revolutionaries. They are now shouting—shouting hysterically, shouting themselves hoarse—against the "compromise" of the "Right Bolsheviks." But they are incapable of thinking *why* "compromise" is bad, and *why* "compromise" has been justly condemned by history and the course of the revolution.

Compromise in Kerensky's time surrendered power to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the question of power is the fundamental question of every revolution. The compromise of a section of the Bolsheviks in October-November 1917* either feared the seizure of power by the proletariat or wished to share power equally, not only with "unreliable fellow travellers" like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, but also with the enemy, with the Chernovists² and the Mensheviks, who would inevitably have hindered us in fundamental matters, such as the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the ruthless suppression of the Bogayevskys, the complete

¹ Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

² Chernov was one of the leaders of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Party.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

establishment of the Soviet institutions, and in every act of confiscation.

Now power has been seized, retained and consolidated in the hands of a single party, the party of the proletariat, even without the "unreliable fellow travellers." To speak of compromise at the present time when there is no question, and can be none, of sharing power, of renouncing the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, is merely to repeat, parrot-fashion, words which have been learned by heart, but not understood. To describe as "compromise" the fact that, having arrived at a situation when we can and must rule the country, we try to win over to our side, not grudging the cost, the most cultured elements capitalism has trained, to take them into our service against small-proprietor disintegration—calling this compromise reveals a total incapacity to think out the economic problems of socialist construction.

Therefore, while it is to Comrade Bukharin's credit that on the C.E.C. he "felt ashamed" of the "service" rendered him by Karelin and Ge, nevertheless, as far as the "Left Communist" trend is concerned, the references to their political comrades-in-arms still serve as a serious warning. Take for example the *Znamya Truda*,¹ the organ of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, of April 25, 1918, which proudly declares:

"The present position of our party coincides with that of another trend in Bolshevism (Bukharin, Pokrovsky and others)."

Or take the Menshevik *Vperyod* of the same date, which contains, among other articles, the following "thesis" drawn up by the well-known Menshevik Isuv:

"Lacking a genuinely proletarian character from the very outset, the policy of the Soviet government has lately pursued a still more undisguised course of compromise with the bourgeoisie and has assumed an obviously anti-working-class character. On the pretext of nationalising industry, a policy of establishing industrial trusts is being pursued; on the pretext of restoring the productive forces of the country, attempts are being made to abolish the eight-hour day, to introduce piece work and the Taylor system, blacklists and victimisation. This policy threatens to deprive the proletariat of its most important economic gains and to make it a victim of the unrestricted exploitation of the bourgeoisie."

¹ *The Banner of Labour*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

Magnificent, is it not?

Kerensky's friends, who, together with him, conducted an imperialist war for the sake of the secret treaties, who promised annexations to the Russian capitalists, the colleagues of Tseretelli, who, on June 22 [9], threatened to disarm the workers;¹ the Lieberdants who screen the rule of the bourgeoisie with high-sounding phrases—these—these are the people who accuse the Soviet government of "compromising" with the bourgeoisie, of "establishing trusts" (that is of establishing "state capitalism"!), of introducing the Taylor system!

Indeed, the Bolsheviks ought to present Isuv with a medal, and his thesis ought to be placed in every workers' club and union, as an example of the *provocative utterances of the bourgeoisie*. The workers know these Lieberdants, Tseretellis and Isuvs very well now. They know them from experience, and it would be very useful indeed for the workers to ponder over the reason why *such lackeys of the bourgeoisie* should incite the workers to resist the Taylor system and the "establishment of trusts."

Class conscious workers will carefully compare the thesis of Isuv, the friend of Messieurs the Lieberdants and the Tseretellis, with the following thesis of the "Left Communists."

"The introduction of labour discipline in connection with the restoration of capitalist management of industry cannot really increase the productivity of labour, but it will diminish the class initiative, activity and organisation of the proletariat. It threatens to enslave the working class; it will rouse discontent among the backward elements as well as among the vanguard of the proletariat. In order to introduce this system in the face of the hatred prevailing at present among the proletariat against the 'capitalist saboteurs,' the Communist Party would have to rely on the petty bourgeoisie, as against the workers, and in this way would ruin itself as the party of the proletariat." (*Kommunist*, No. 1, p. 8, col. 2.)

This is the most striking proof of the fact that the "Lefts" have fallen into the trap, have allowed themselves to be provoked by the Isuvs and the other Judases of capitalism. It serves as a good lesson for the workers, who know that it is precisely the vanguard of the proletariat which stands for the introduction of labour discipline and that it is precisely the petty bourgeoisie which is doing its utmost to disrupt this discipline. Utterances of the "Lefts" such as the

¹ See note to p. 69.*—Ed.

thesis quoted above are a disgrace and imply the complete renunciation of communism in practice, complete desertion to the camp of the petty bourgeoisie.

"In connection with the restoration of capitalist management"—such are the words with which the "Left Communists" hope to defend themselves! A perfectly useless defence, because, in the first place, in placing "management" in the hands of capitalists the Soviet government appoints workers' commissars, or workers' committees, who will watch every step of the manager, who will learn from his experience in management, who will not only have the right to appeal against his orders, but to secure his removal through the organs of the Soviet government. In the second place, "management" is entrusted to capitalists only in regard to executive functions while at work, the conditions of which are determined by the Soviet government, by whom they may be abolished or revised. In the third place, *management* is entrusted by the Soviet government to capitalists not as capitalists, but as highly-paid specialist-technicians or organisers. And the workers know very well that ninety-nine per cent of the organisers and first-class technicians of really large-scale and giant enterprises, trusts or other establishments belong to the capitalist class. But it is precisely these people whom we, the proletarian party, must appoint to direct the labour process and the organisation of production, for there are no other people who have practical experience in this business; for the workers, having emerged from the infancy in which they could be misled by Left phrases or petty-bourgeois loose thinking, are advancing towards socialism through the capitalist management of trusts, through gigantic machine industry, through enterprises having a turnover of several millions per annum—only through such a system of production and such enterprises. The workers are not petty bourgeois. They are not afraid of large-scale "state capitalism," they prize it as their *proletarian* weapon which *their* government, the *Soviet* government, will use against small-proprietor disintegration and disorganisation.

This is incomprehensible only to the declassed and consequently thoroughly petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, typified among the "Left Communists" by Ossinsky, when he writes in their journal:

"The whole initiative in organisation and management of any enterprise will belong to the 'organisers of the trusts.' We are not going to *teach* them, or make rank-and-file workers out of them, we are going to *learn* from them." (*Kommunist*, No. 1, p. 14, col. 2.)

The attempted irony in this phrase is aimed at my words: "Learn socialism from the organisers of trusts."

Ossinsky thinks this is funny. He wants to make "rank-and-file workers" out of the organisers of the trusts. If this had been written by a man of the age of which the poet wrote: "Fifteen years, not more?..."—there would have been nothing surprising about it. But it is somewhat strange to hear such things from a Marxist who has learned that socialism is impossible unless it makes use of the achievements of the technique and culture created by large-scale capitalism. Not a trace of Marxism is to be found in this.

No. Only those who understand that it is impossible to create or introduce socialism *without learning* from the organisers of trusts are worthy of the name of Communists. For socialism is not a figment of the imagination; it is the assimilation and application by the proletarian vanguard, after it has seized power, of what has been created by the trusts. We, the party of the proletariat, have *no other way* of acquiring the ability to organise large-scale production of the trust type, as trusts, except by acquiring it from the first-class capitalist specialists. We have nothing to teach them, unless we undertake the childish task of "teaching" the bourgeois intelligentsia socialism. We must not teach them, but expropriate them (as is being done in Russia "determinedly" enough), *break* their sabotage, *subordinate* them as a stratum or group to the Soviet government. We, on the other hand, if we are not Communists of infantile age and infantile understanding, must learn from them; for the party of the proletariat and its vanguard have *no experience* of independent work in organising giant enterprises which serve the needs of scores of millions of people.

And the best workers in Russia have realised this. They have begun to learn from the capitalist organisers, the engineer-directors and the specialist technicians. They have begun to learn steadily and cautiously with easy things, gradually passing on to the more

difficult things. If things are going more slowly in the iron and steel and engineering industries, it is because they present greater difficulties. But the textile, tobacco and leather workers are not afraid of state capitalism or of "learning from the organisers of trusts" as the declassed petty-bourgeois intelligentsia are. These workers in the leading enterprises of the type of Glavkozha and of Centrotexil¹ take their place by the side of the capitalists, *learn from them*, establish trusts, establish "state capitalism" which under the Soviet government represents the threshold of socialism, the condition of its permanent victory.

This work of the most advanced workers of Russia, together with their work of introducing labour discipline, has gone on and is proceeding quietly, unobtrusively, without the noise and fuss so necessary to some "Lefts." It is proceeding very cautiously and gradually, taking into account the lessons of practical experience. This hard work, the work of *learning* practically how to build up large-scale production is the guarantee that we are on the right road, the guarantee that the class conscious workers in Russia are carrying on the struggle against small-proprietor anarchy, against petty-bourgeois indiscipline²—the guarantee of the victory of communism.

VI

Two remarks in conclusion.

In arguing with the "Left Communists" on April 4, 1918 (*Kommunist*, No. 1, p. 4, footnote), I bluntly put it to them: "Explain why you are dissatisfied with the Railway Decree; submit your amendments to it. It is your duty as Soviet leaders of the proletariat to do so, otherwise your words are nothing but empty phrases."

¹ Chief Leather Board and Central Textile Trust.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

² It is very characteristic that the authors of the theses do not mention the significance of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the economic sphere. They talk only of the "state of organisation" and so on. But the latter is accepted also by the petty bourgeoisie, who fear precisely the *dictatorship* of the workers in economic relations. A proletarian revolutionary could never at such a moment "forget" this core of the proletarian revolution, which is directed against the economic foundations of capitalism.

The first number of *Kommunist* appeared on April 20, 1918, but did not contain a *single word* about how, according to the "Left Communists," the Railway Decree should be altered or amended.¹

The "Left Communists" stand condemned by their own silence. They did nothing but attack the Railway Decree with all sorts of insinuations (pp. 8 and 16 of No. 1), but gave *no* articulate answer to the question: "How should the Decree be amended if it is wrong?"

No comment is needed. The class conscious workers will call *such* "criticism" of the Railway Decree (which is a typical example of our line of action, the line of firmness, the line of dictatorship, the line of proletarian discipline) either "Isuvian" criticism or empty phrasemongering.

Second remark. The first issue of *Kommunist* contained a very flattering review by Comrade Bukharin of my pamphlet *The State and Revolution*. But however much I value the opinion of people like Bukharin, my conscience compels me to say that the *character* of the review reveals a sad and significant fact. Bukharin regards the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship from the point of view of the *past* and not of the future. Bukharin noted and emphasised that which may be common in the point of view of the proletarian and that of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary on the question of the state. But Bukharin "failed to note" the very thing that distinguishes the one from the other.

Bukharin noted and emphasised the fact that the old state machine must be "smashed" and "blown up," that the bourgeoisie must be "strangled to death," and so on.² The petty bourgeois in a frenzy may also want as much. And this, in the main, is what our revolution did between October 1917 and February 1918.

But in my pamphlet I also mention what even the most revolutionary petty bourgeois cannot want, but what every class conscious worker does want—what our revolution has *not* yet accomplished. But on this problem, the problem of tomorrow, Bukharin said nothing.

And I have every reason not to be silent on this point, because,

¹ See note to p. 340.*—*Ed.*

² See note to p. 5.*—*Ed.*

in the first place, a Communist is expected to devote greater attention to the problems of tomorrow, and not of yesterday, and, in the second place, my pamphlet was written *before* the Bolsheviks seized power, when it was impossible to entertain the Bolsheviks with vulgar, petty-bourgeois arguments such as: "Yes, *of course, after* seizing power, they begin to sing about discipline."

"... Socialism... will develop into communism... since people will become accustomed to observing the elementary conditions of social life without force, and without subordination."¹

Thus, "elementary conditions" were discussed, *before* the seizure of power.

"And only then will democracy itself begin to *wither away*" when "people will gradually become accustomed to observing the elementary rules of social life that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims; they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without compulsion, without subordination, without the special apparatus for compulsion which is called the state."²

Thus mention was made of "copy-book maxims" *before* the seizure of power.

"... The higher phase of communism" (from each according to his ability; to each according to his needs) "... presupposed both a productivity of labour unlike the present, and a person unlike the present man in the street, who, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky's story,³ is capable of damaging the stores of social wealth 'just for fun,' and of demanding the impossible.

"Until the higher phase of communism arrives, the Socialists demand the strictest control, by society and by the state, of the amount of labour and the amount of consumption."⁴

"Accounting and control—these are the principal things that are necessary for the 'setting up' and correct functioning of the first phase of communist society."⁵ And this control must be established not only over "the insignificant minority of capitalists, over the gentry, who wish to preserve their capitalist habits," but also over those workers who "have been completely demoralised by capitalism," and over the "idlers, the gentlefolk, the swindlers and similar 'guardians of capitalist traditions.'"⁶

It is significant that Bukharin *did not* emphasise *this*.

May 3-5, 1918

¹ *The State and Revolution*, in this volume, p. 75.—Ed.

² *Ibid.* p. 81.—Ed.

³ See footnote to p. 89.—Ed.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 88-89.—Ed.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 92.—Ed.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 93.—Ed.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FINANCE DEPARTMENTS OF THE SOVIETS

May 18, 1918 *

(Brief Newspaper Report)

LENIN began his speech by stating that the financial position of the country was undoubtedly critical. In the course of the socialist transformation of society, he said, it is necessary to overcome a number of difficulties which often seem insurmountable. But the tasks are such that they are worth taking trouble over and for the sake of them it is worth giving final battle to the bourgeoisie.

You know better than anyone else, said Lenin, the difficulties that have to be overcome in the transition from general assumptions and decrees to everyday life. The work ahead will be very difficult because the resistance of the propertied classes will be desperate. But the difficulties that lie ahead of us will be more than compensated for when we succeed in overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie and in subordinating it to the control of the Soviet government. We must not forget that every radical reform we undertake will be doomed to failure unless we achieve success in our financial policy. Success in this field will determine the success of the enormous work we have planned to transform society on socialist lines.

The fundamental financial tasks which the Soviet government has outlined must be immediately taken up, and consultation with you, people with practical experience, will only help to make the changes we have planned something more than mere declarations.

We must at all cost achieve lasting financial reform. In the name of the Council of People's Commissars I submit for your consideration the tasks which emerged from the numerous consultations and

conversations we have had, and I ask you to work them out in detail in order that they may be taken up. These tasks are as follows:

Financial centralisation. The speaker expressed the opinion that the complete separation of the localities from the centre was quite natural. He regarded this as the expression of the natural hatred and abhorrence the people felt towards the old system of centralisation that existed under the autocracy. But the people, by their own experience, would come to the conclusion that democratic centralisation is necessary, because without it, it will be impossible to carry out the financial reforms which will give every citizen bread and a cultured life.

No matter how great the state of ruin may be when a local Soviet proceeds to create an independent republic, we must not fall into despair, for these difficulties are merely growing pains, which are quite natural during the transition from tsarist Russia to the Russia of united Soviet organisations.

Introduction of an income and property tax. I would ask you to take up this question as early as possible. You know that all Socialists are opposed to indirect taxation, because the only proper system of taxation from the Socialist point of view is the graduated income and property tax. As I have said already, the resistance of the propertied classes will be desperate when this tax is introduced. At present, thanks to their connections and the various dirty tricks they play, including bribery, they manage to evade this tax, but we must adopt all measures to prevent them from doing so.

We have outlined a number of measures in this field, the ground has been cleared for the foundations, for the edifice, but the foundations have not yet been laid because some time is required to find the necessary workers to do it. The time for this is now approaching. The question of the income tax is such that mere decrees are inadequate for its introduction; practical measures and experience are required.

We are of the opinion that a monthly system of collecting the income tax must be adopted. All measures must be taken to collect the income tax each month from persons obtaining incomes from the Treasury by deducting the tax from their salaries.

The income tax must be collected from everybody without ex-

ception, because managing with the aid of the printing press, as we have been doing up to now, can be justified only as a temporary expedient.

This transitional period has now come to an end, and we must introduce the graduated property tax with very frequent collections. I would ask you to work out this measure in a detailed and practical manner, and to draw up definite plans which we could quickly embody in decrees and instructions.

Referring to the question of contributions, Lenin said:

I am not at all opposed to contributions, because I understand perfectly well that the proletariat could not dispense with them in the first period. It is a proper measure for the transitional authorities to impose. But the transitional period has now come to an end and we are about to introduce the centralised collection of a graduated income tax with very frequent collections. Undoubtedly, the bourgeoisie will exert every effort to evade our laws and will resort to petty deception. We shall combat this in order completely to undermine the remnants of the bourgeoisie.

The introduction of compulsory labour service and raising of labour discipline. The old capitalism, based on free trade and competition, has been greatly undermined by the war throughout Europe.

The war led to the introduction of compulsory labour service for the population in many countries. In actual fact, however, it turned out that compulsory labour service was introduced only for the poor, because the rich could easily evade it. We must introduce compulsory labour service primarily not for the poor, who even without that have brought sufficient sacrifices to the altar of war, but for the rich, who amassed wealth out of the war. It is from this measure that we must start. We must introduce workers' budget-tax books primarily for the rich in order that it may be seen what share of work each performs for the purpose of saving his country. Supervision will be exercised by the local Soviets.

In regard to the poor, this measure is at present superfluous, because they have quite enough work to do as it is; moreover, the trade unions are adopting all measures to increase productivity and to raise labour discipline.

This measure, I repeat, must be introduced first of all. It will serve as a preparatory measure for transferring the burden of taxation to the rich, who, in fairness, should bear it.

The substitution of a new currency for the present currency. One of the results of the war has been an abundance of paper currency in all countries. In the transition to socialism it is necessary to substitute other tokens of claim upon public wealth for the present money tokens. Money, paper tokens—that which is now called money—has a corrupting influence and is dangerous because the bourgeoisie, hoarding stocks of these paper tokens, remain in economic power. We must take immediate measures to counteract this.

These measures are the introduction of the strictest registration of the amount of paper tokens in circulation by completely substituting new money for the present money. Undoubtedly, great economic and political difficulties lie in the path of introducing this measure. It calls for careful preparation, and we have already started on these preparations.

We shall fix a very short period of time during which everyone must declare the amount of money in his possession and receive new money in exchange for it. If the sum is a small one, he will get a ruble for a ruble. If the sum exceeds the fixed limit, he will get only a part. Undoubtedly, this measure will meet with the strong resistance, not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of our peasants who have become rich as a result of the war, and who have buried bottles filled with paper money in the ground. We shall come face to face with the class enemy. The struggle will be a severe one but a fruitful one. There is no doubt among us about our having to take up the burden of the struggle, because it is necessary and inevitable.

An enormous amount of preparatory work is required for the purpose of carrying out this measure: it is necessary to draw up a form of declaration, propaganda must be carried on in the localities, the date on which the old money is to be exchanged for the new must be fixed, etc. But we shall do all this. This is the last and decisive battle with the bourgeoisie which will enable us to pay the debts to foreign capital—until the hour of the social revolution strikes in the West—and to carry out the necessary economic reforms in the country.

The concluding remarks of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, in which he expressed the conviction that the measures he had enumerated would meet with the sympathy of all those who held culture and the gains of the revolution dear, were greeted with loud and prolonged applause.

strictest account and control of all materials and the productivity of labour, we must achieve, and we can achieve, enormous economies in raw materials and labour.

I think that if the conference and the bodies it sets up work energetically, it will be possible for the Council of People's Commissars to pass the nationalisation decree *within the next few days*.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONALISED ENTERPRISES

*May 18, 1918 **

HAVING heard the communication of the comrades elected by the workers' delegation at the conference of representatives of large metal works, and bearing in mind the resolution adopted by the conference, I am able to say that in my opinion the Council of People's Commissars will certainly be unanimously *in favour* of immediate nationalisation if the conference will exert every effort to secure planned and systematic organisation of work and increased productivity.

Hence, it is desirable that the conference: 1) Immediately elect a Provisional Council to prepare for the amalgamation of the works; 2) Authorise the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union, in agreement with the Supreme Council of National Economy, to change their form and to add members to this Provisional Council for the purpose of transforming it into a *Management Board* of a single union (or amalgamation) of all the nationalised works; 3) Approve, or by means of a resolution legalise the factory regulations, on the model of the Briansk regulations, for the purpose of creating strict labour discipline; 4) Nominate candidates from among specialists, engineers and organisers of large-scale production, for the purpose of participating in the management, or authorise the Supreme Council of National Economy to seek for and appoint such; 5) It is desirable that workers from the best organised works, or those having most experience in managing large-scale production, shall be sent (by the Provisional Council or by the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union) to assist in properly organising affairs at the less successful works; 6) By keeping the

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE FIRST CONGRESS OF COUNCILS OF NATIONAL ECONOMY, MAY 26, 1918 *

COMRADES, permit me first of all to greet the Congress of Councils of National Economy in the name of the Council of People's Commissars.

Comrades, upon the Supreme Council of National Economy now devolves a most difficult, but a most grateful task. There is not the slightest doubt that the further the gains of the October Revolution progress, the more profound the change which it commenced becomes, the more firmly the gains of the socialist revolution become established and the socialist system becomes consolidated, the greater and higher will become the role of the Councils of National Economy, which alone of all the state institutions are destined to occupy a permanent place. And this place will become all the more durable the more closely we approach the establishment of the socialist system and the less need there will be for a purely administrative apparatus, for an apparatus which is solely engaged in administration. After the resistance of the exploiters has been finally broken, after the toilers have learned to organise socialist production, this apparatus of administration in the proper, strict, narrow sense of the word, this apparatus of the old state, is doomed to die; while the apparatus of the type of the Supreme Council of National Economy is destined to grow, to develop and become strong, and to perform all the main activities of organised society.

That is why comrades, when I look back on the experience of our Supreme Council of National Economy and of the local Councils, with the activities of which it is closely and inseparably connected, I think that in spite of much that is unfinished, incomplete, and unorganised, there is not the slightest ground for pessimistic conclusions. For the task which the Supreme Council of National Economy sets itself, and the task which all the regional and local

Councils set themselves, are so enormous, so all-embracing, that there is nothing that gives rise to alarm in what we all observe. Very often—of course, from our point of view, perhaps too often—the proverb “measure your cloth seven times before you cut it” is not applied. Unfortunately, things are not so simple in regard to the organisation of economy on socialist lines as they are expressed in that proverb. With the transition of all power—this time not only political and not even mainly political, but economic power, that is, power that affects the most deep-seated foundations of everyday human existence—to a new class, and moreover to a class which for the first time in the history of humanity is the leader of the overwhelming majority of the population, of the whole mass of toilers and of the exploited—our tasks become more complicated. It goes without saying that in view of the supreme importance and the supreme difficulty of the organisational tasks that confront us, when we must organise the most deep-seated foundations of the human existence of hundreds of millions of people on entirely new lines, it is impossible to proceed according to the proverb “measure your cloth seven times before you cut it.” Indeed, we are not in a position to measure a thing innumerable times and then cut out and fix what has been finally measured and fitted. We must build our economic edifice in the process of the work, trying out this or that institution, watching their work, testing them by the collective common experience of the toilers, and, above all, by the results of their work. We must do this in the process of the work, and, moreover, in the midst of desperate struggles and the furious resistance of the exploiters, who become the more furious the nearer we come to the time when we can pull out the last bad teeth of capitalist exploitation. It goes without saying that if even in a short space of time we have again and again to alter types, regulations and organs of administration in various branches of national economy, there is nothing in this that can give grounds for pessimism, although, of course, it may give considerable grounds for angry outbursts on the part of the bourgeoisie and Messieurs the exploiters, whose finest sentiments have been wounded. Of course, those who take too close and too direct a part in this work do not find it

pleasant to alter the rules, the norms and the laws of administration, say, of the Chief Water Board, three times; the pleasure obtained from work of this kind cannot be very great. But if we abstract ourselves somewhat from the direct unpleasantness of too frequent alteration of decrees, and if we look somewhat more deeply and further into the enormous world-historical task that the Russian proletariat has to carry out with the aid of its as yet inadequate forces, it will become immediately clear that even a more frequent alteration and testing by experiment of various systems of administration and various forms of discipline is inevitable. In such a gigantic task, we could never claim, and not a single sensible Socialist who has ever written on the prospects of the future ever thought, that we could revise the forms of organisation of the new society according to a predetermined pattern, and at one stroke. All we knew, all that the best experts on capitalist society, the best minds who foresaw the development of capitalist society, could tell us at all precisely was that this transformation was historically inevitable and would proceed along a certain main line, that private ownership of the means of production had been doomed by history, that it would burst, that the exploiters would inevitably be expropriated. This was established with scientific precision, and we knew this when we grasped the banner of socialism, when we declared ourselves to be Socialists, when we formed Socialist parties, when we transformed society. We knew this when we took power for the purpose of proceeding with socialist reorganisation; but we could not know the form this transformation would take, or the rate of development of the concrete reorganisation. Collective experience, the experience of millions alone can give us decisive guidance in this respect; because, for the purposes of our task, for the purpose of building socialism, the experience of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands who constitute the upper strata which have made history up to now in landlord society and in capitalist society was insufficient. We cannot proceed in this way precisely because we rely on joint experience, on the experience of millions of toilers.

That is why we know that the work of organisation, which is the main and fundamental task of the Soviets, will inevitably entail a vast number of experiments, a vast number of steps, a vast num-

ber of alterations, a vast number of difficulties, particularly in regard to the question as to how to put people in their proper places; because we have no experience of this, here we have to devise every step ourselves, and the more serious the mistakes we make on this path, the more the certainty will grow that with every increase in the membership of the trade unions, with every additional thousand, with every additional hundred thousand that come over from the camp of the toilers, of the exploited who have hitherto lived according to tradition and habit, into the camp of the builders of Soviet organisations, the number of people who answer to the requirements of the tasks and who will organise the work on proper lines will grow. Take one of the secondary tasks that the Supreme Council of National Economy particularly comes up against, the task of utilising bourgeois specialists. We all know, at least those who stand on the basis of science and socialism know, that this task can be fulfilled only when and to the extent that international capitalism has developed the material and technical prerequisites of labour organised on an enormous scale and based on the framework of science, and hence on the training of enormous cadres of scientifically educated specialists. We know that without this socialism is impossible. If we peruse the works of those Socialists who have observed the development of capitalism during the last half century, and who again and again came to the conclusion that socialism is inevitable, we will find that all of them without exception pointed out that socialism alone would liberate science from its bourgeois fetters, from its enslavement to capitalism, from its slavery to the interests of frightful capitalist greed. Socialism alone 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 toilers and of improving their conditions to the utmost extent. Socialism alone can achieve this. We know that it must achieve this, and in the understanding of this truth lies the difficulty and the strength of Marxism.

We must achieve this while relying on elements which are opposed to it, because the bigger capital becomes the more the bourgeoisie suppresses the workers. Now that power is in the hands of the proletariat and the poor peasants and the government is setting

itself tasks with the support of these masses, we have to achieve these socialist changes with the help of bourgeois specialists who have been trained in bourgeois society, who know no other conditions, who cannot conceive of any other social system. Hence, even in those cases when these people are absolutely sincere and loyal to their work they are filled with thousands of bourgeois prejudices, they are connected by thousands of invisible ties with bourgeois society, which is dying and decaying and is therefore putting up furious resistance. We cannot conceal these difficulties of the tasks and achievements from ourselves. Of all the socialist authors who have written about this, I cannot recall the work of a single one, nor am I aware of the opinion of a single prominent Socialist on future socialist society, which pointed to this concrete practical difficulty that would confront the working class when it took power, when it set itself the task of transforming the sum total of the rich, historically inevitable and necessary store of culture and knowledge and technique from an instrument of capitalism into an instrument of socialism. It is easy to do this in a general formula, in abstract contrasts; but in the struggle against capitalism, which does not die all at once but puts up increasingly furious resistance the closer death approaches, this task is one that calls for tremendous effort. Experiments in this field, the repeated rectification of partial mistakes are inevitable because it is impossible, in this or that sphere of national economy, to transform specialists from servants of capitalism into the servants of the toiling masses, into their advisers, all at once. The fact that we cannot do this all at once should not give rise to the slightest pessimism, because the task which we have set ourselves is a task of world-historical difficulty and significance. We do not shut our eyes to the fact that in a single country, even if it were a much less backward country than Russia, even if we were living amidst better conditions than those prevailing after four years of unprecedented, painful, severe and ruinous war, we could not carry out the socialist revolution completely, solely by our own efforts. He who turns away from the socialist revolution now taking place in Russia and points to the obvious lack of forces is like the conservative "man in a muffler" who cannot see further than his nose, who forgets that not a single historical change of any im-

portance takes place without there being a lack of forces in a number of cases. Forces grow in the process of the struggle, in the course of the growth of the revolution. When a country has taken the path of profound change it is to the credit of that country and the party of the working class which achieved victory in that country, that they have taken up in a practical manner the tasks that were formerly raised abstractly, theoretically. This experience will never be forgotten. The experience which the workers now united in trade unions and local organisations are acquiring in the practical work of organising the whole of production on a national scale cannot be lost, no matter what vicissitudes the Russian revolution and the international socialist revolution may pass through. It has gone into history as a gain of socialism and on it the future international revolution will erect its socialist edifice.

Permit me to mention another problem, perhaps the most difficult problem that the Supreme Council of National Economy has now to solve in a practical manner, that is, the problem of labour discipline. Properly speaking, in mentioning this problem, we ought to admit and emphasise with satisfaction that it was precisely the trade unions—their largest organisations, namely, the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union and the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, the supreme trade union body, which unites millions of toilers—which were the first to set to work independently to solve this problem; and this problem is of world-historical importance. In order to understand it we must abstract ourselves from those partial minor failures, from the incredible difficulties which, if taken separately, seem to be insurmountable. We must rise to a higher level and survey the historical change of systems of social economy. Only from this angle will it be possible to appreciate the immensity of the task which we have undertaken. Only then will it be possible to appreciate the enormous significance of the fact that on this occasion, the most advanced representatives of society, namely, the toiling and exploited masses, are, on their own initiative, setting to work to solve the problem which hitherto, in feudal Russia, up to 1861, was solved by a handful of landlords who regarded it as their special function. At that time it was their function to create national connections and discipline. We know how the feudal land-

lords created discipline. It was oppression, torture and the incredible torments of penal servitude for the majority of the people. Recall the transition from serfdom to bourgeois economy. From all that you have witnessed—although the majority of you could not have witnessed it—and from all that you have learned from the older generation, you know how comparatively easy, historically, was the transition to the new bourgeois economy after 1861, the transition from the old feudal discipline of the stick, from the discipline of senseless, arrogant and brutal insult and violence against the person, to bourgeois discipline, to the discipline of starvation, to so-called free hire, which in fact was the discipline of capitalist slavery. This was because mankind passed from one exploiter to another; because one minority of plunderers and exploiters of the labour of the people gave way to another minority who were also plunderers and exploiters of the labour of the people; because the landlords gave way to the capitalists, one minority gave way to another minority, while the broad masses of the toilers and the exploited classes were oppressed. And even this change from one exploiter's discipline to another exploiter's discipline took years, if not decades, of effort; it extended over a transition period of years, if not decades. During this period the old feudal landlords quite sincerely believed that everything was going to rack and ruin, that it was impossible to manage the country without serfdom; while the new capitalist master encountered practical difficulties at every step and gave up his enterprise in disgust. The material sign, the material evidence of the difficulties of this transition was the fact that Russia at that time imported machinery from abroad in order to employ the best equipment, and it turned out that no people were available to handle these machines, and there were no managers. And all over Russia one could see excellent machinery lying around unused, so difficult was the transition from the old feudal discipline to the new bourgeois capitalist discipline.

And so, comrades, if you look at the matter from this angle, you will not allow yourselves to be misled by those people, by those classes, by the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, whose sole task is to sow panic, to cause despondency, to cause complete despondency concerning the whole of our work, to make it appear to be

hopeless, who point to every single case of indiscipline and corruption and for that reason turn away in disgust from the revolution, as if there was ever in the world, in history, a single really great revolution in which there was no corruption, no loss of discipline, no painful steps of experiment when the masses were creating a new discipline. We must not forget that this is the first time that this preliminary turning point in history has been reached, when a new discipline, labour discipline, the discipline of comradesly contact, Soviet discipline, is being created by millions of toilers and exploited. We do not claim, nor do we expect quick successes in this field. We know that this task will take up an entire historical epoch. We have begun this historical epoch, an epoch in which we are breaking up the discipline of capitalist society in a country which is still bourgeois, and we are proud of the fact that all the class conscious workers, absolutely all the toiling peasants are everywhere helping this destruction; an epoch in which the masses voluntarily, on their own initiative, are becoming imbued with the conviction that they must—not on instructions from above, but on the instructions of their own living experience—change this discipline which is based on the exploitation and slavery of the toilers into the new discipline of united labour, the discipline of the united organised workers and toiling peasants of the whole of Russia, of a land with a population of scores of millions, over a hundred million. This is a task of enormous difficulty, but it is a grateful one, because only when we have fulfilled it in practice shall we have driven the last nail into the coffin of capitalist society which we are burying.

THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF TRADE UNIONS AND FACTORY COMMITTEES OF MOSCOW

REPORT ON THE PRESENT SITUATION, JUNE 27, 1918 *

COMRADES, you all know, of course, of the great disaster that has befallen our country, namely, famine. Before discussing the measures to be adopted to combat this disaster, which has now become more acute than ever, we must first of all discuss its main causes. In discussing this question we must say and bear in mind that this disaster has not only befallen Russia, but all, even the most cultured, advanced and civilised countries.

In Russia, where the overwhelming majority of the peasantry were disunited and oppressed by the yoke of the tsars, the landlords and capitalists, famine more than once affected whole regions of our agrarian country in past decades. And it has affected us particularly now, during the revolution. But this disaster reigns also in the West European countries. Many of these countries have not known what famine is for decades and even centuries, so highly was agriculture developed there, and to such an extent were those European countries which could not produce a sufficient supply of grain of their own assured of an enormous quantity of imported grain. But now, in the twentieth century, side by side with still greater progress in technology, side by side with wonderful inventions, side by side with the wide application of machinery and electricity, of modern internal combustion engines in agriculture, side by side with all this we now see this same disaster of famine advancing upon the people in all European countries without exception. It would seem that with civilisation, with culture, the countries are once again returning to primitive barbarism, are again experiencing a situation when morals deteriorate and people become savage in the struggle for a crust of bread. What has caused

this return to barbarism in a number of European countries, in the majority of them? We all know that it was caused by the imperialist war, by the war which has been torturing humanity for four years, the war which has already cost the peoples more, far more than ten million young lives, the war which was called forth by the avarice of the capitalists, the war which is being waged to decide which of the great robbers—the British or the German—shall rule the world, acquire colonies and strangle the small nations.

This war, which has affected almost the whole of the globe, which has destroyed not less than ten million lives, not counting the millions of maimed, crippled and sick, the war which, in addition, has torn millions of the healthiest and best forces from productive labour—this war has reduced humanity to a state of absolute barbarism. What numerous Socialist writers foresaw as the worst, most painful and severest end of capitalism has come to pass. They said: capitalist society based on the private ownership of the land, the factories and tools by a handful of capitalists, of monopolists, will be transformed into socialist society, which alone is capable of putting an end to war, because the “civilised,” “cultured” capitalist world is heading for unprecedented bankruptcy, which is capable of undermining and will inevitably undermine all the foundations of cultured life. I repeat, we see famine not only in Russia, but in the most cultured, advanced countries, like Germany, where the productivity of labour is incomparably greater, which can supply the world with more than a sufficiency of technical appliances, and which, still maintaining free intercourse with remote countries, can supply her population with food. The famine there is better “organised,” it is spread over a longer period than in Russia, but it is famine nevertheless, still more severe and more painful than here. Capitalism has led to such a severe and painful disaster that it is now perfectly clear to all that the present war cannot end without a number of severe and very bloody revolutions, of which the Russian revolution was only the first, only the beginning.

You have now received news to the effect that in Vienna, for example, Councils of Workers' Deputies have been established for the second time,* and for the second time the toiling population have

come out on an almost general mass strike. We hear that in cities like Berlin, which up to now have been models of capitalist order, culture and civilisation, it is becoming dangerous to go out into the street after dark, because, in spite of the very severe measures and the very strict guard that is kept, the war and famine have reduced people to such a state of absolute savagery, have led to such anarchy, have roused such anger, that not merely the sale, but downright looting, an actual war for a crust of bread, is becoming the order of the day in all cultured civilised countries.

Hence, comrades, since a painful and difficult situation has been created in our country as a consequence of the famine, we must explain to the few but nevertheless still existing absolutely blind and ignorant people the fundamental and principal causes of the famine. We can still meet people in our country who argue in this way: under the tsar we had bread; the revolution came and there is no bread. Naturally, it is quite possible that for some old village women the development of history during the past ten years is summed up entirely by the fact that formerly there was bread and now there is none. This is comprehensible, because famine is a disaster which sweeps away all other questions, which takes its place at the cornerstone, and overshadows everything else. But it goes without saying that our task, the task of the class conscious workers, is to explain to the broad masses, to explain to all the representatives of the toiling masses in town and country the principal cause of the famine; for unless we explain this we shall not be able to create a proper attitude either among ourselves or among the representatives of the toiling masses, we shall not be able to create a proper understanding of its harmfulness and we shall not be able to create that firm determination and temper that is required to combat this disaster. If we remember that this disaster was caused by the imperialist war, that today even the richest countries are experiencing unprecedented hunger and that the overwhelming majority of the toiling masses are suffering incredible torture; if we remember that for four years already this imperialist war has been compelling the workers of the various countries to shed their blood for the benefit of the greedy capitalists, and if we remember that the longer the war lasts, the fewer become the ways

out of it, we will understand what gigantic, immense forces will have to be set moving.

The war has lasted nearly four years. Russia came out of the war, and owing to the fact that she came out of the war alone she found herself between two gangs of imperialist pirates, each of which is clutching at her, strangling her and taking advantage of her temporary defencelessness and disarmament. The war has already lasted four years. The German imperialist pirates have achieved a number of victories and continue to deceive their workers, a section of whom, bribed by the bourgeoisie, have deserted to the side of the German imperialists and continue to repeat the despicable lie about the defence of the fatherland when as a matter of fact the German soldiers are defending the selfish predatory interests of the German capitalists who promised them that Germany will bring peace and prosperity. Actually we see that the more extensive Germany's victories become the more the hopelessness of her position becomes revealed.

When the violent exploiters' Brest Peace, a peace based upon violence and the oppression of peoples, was signed, Germany, the German capitalists boasted that they would give the workers bread and peace. But now they are reducing the bread ration in Germany. It is universally admitted that the food campaign in the rich Ukraine was a failure.* In Austria the situation has reached a stage of hunger riots, of national mass outbursts of anger,¹ because the more Germany is victorious the clearer it becomes to all, even to many representatives of the big bourgeoisie in Germany, that the war is hopeless. They are beginning to realise that even if the Germans are able to maintain their resistance on the Western front it will not bring the end of the war a bit nearer but will create another enslaved country which will have to be occupied by German troops and make it necessary to continue the war; and this will lead to the disintegration of the German army, which is being transformed from an army into gangs of looters violating alien peoples, unarmed peoples, and extracting from the country the last remnants of food supplies and raw materials in the face of the tremendous resistance

¹ See note to p. 395.—*Ed.*

of the population. The closer Germany approaches the extreme borders of Europe the clearer it becomes that she is confronted by England and America, which are far more developed than she is, which have greater productive forces, which find the time to dispatch tens of thousands of the best new forces to Europe, and to transform all their machines, factories and works into instruments of destruction. The war is receiving fresh fuel, and that means that every year, nay every month, sees the further extension of this war. There is no other way out of this war except revolution, except civil war, except the transformation of the war between capitalists for profits, for the distribution of the loot, for the strangulation of small countries, into a war of the oppressed against the oppressors, which is the only war which always accompanies not only war but every serious revolution in history; it is the only war that is legitimate and just, a holy war from the point of view of the interests of the toilers, of the oppressed and of the exploited masses. Without such a war there can be no liberation from imperialist slavery. We must be perfectly clear in our minds about the new disasters that civil war brings for every country. The more cultured a country is the more serious will be these disasters. Let us picture to ourselves a country equipped with machinery and railways in which civil war is raging, and this civil war cuts off communication between the various parts of the country. Picture to yourselves the condition of regions which for tens of years have been accustomed to living by the interchange of manufactured goods and you will understand that every civil war brings fresh disasters, which the great Socialists foresaw. The imperialists are dooming the working class to disaster, suffering and extinction. Burdensome and painful as all this may be for the whole of mankind, it is becoming clearer and clearer every day to the new socialist society that the imperialists will not be able to put an end to the war which they started; other classes will end it—the working class, which in all countries is becoming more and more active every day, which is expressing its anger and indignation and which, irrespective of sentiments and moods, the force of circumstances is compelling to overthrow the rule of the capitalists. We in Russia, which is particularly affected by the disaster of famine, are passing through a period more difficult than has ever

been experienced by a revolution before, and we cannot count on immediate aid from our West European comrades. The whole burden of the Russian revolution lies in that it was much easier for the Russian revolutionary working class to start than it was for the West European classes, but it is much more difficult for us to continue. It is more difficult to start revolutions in West European countries because there the revolutionary proletariat is opposed by the highest minds of culture, while the working class is in a state of cultural slavery.

Meanwhile, by the very force of our international position, we must pass through an incredibly difficult time, and we representatives of the toiling masses, we workers, class conscious workers, in all our agitation and propaganda, in every speech we deliver, in every appeal we issue, in our talks in the factories and at every meeting with peasants, must explain that the disaster that has befallen us is an international disaster and that there is no other way out of it except international revolution. Since we must pass through such a painful period in which we temporarily stand alone, we must exert all our efforts to bear the difficulties of this period staunchly, knowing that in the last analysis we are not alone, that the disaster which we are experiencing is creeping upon every European country, and that not one of these countries will be able to extricate itself from it except by a series of revolutions.

Russia has been afflicted by famine which has been made more acute by the fact that the violent peace has deprived her of the most fertile grain-bearing gubernias, and it has also been made more acute by the fact that the old food campaign is drawing to a close. We still have several weeks to go before the next harvest, which is undoubtedly a rich one; and these few weeks will be a very difficult period of transition which, being a difficult one generally, is rendered still more acute by the fact that in Russia the deposed exploiting classes of landlords and capitalists are doing all they can, are exerting every effort, to restore their power. This is one of the main reasons why it is precisely the grain-bearing gubernias of Siberia which are cut off from us as a result of the Czecho-Slovak mutiny.¹

¹ See note to p. 166.*—Ed.

But we know very well that the Czecho-Slovak soldiers are declaring to the representatives of our troops, of our workers and of our peasants, that they do not want to fight against Russia and against the Russian Soviet government, that they only want to make their way by force of arms to the frontier. But at their head stand yesterday's generals, landlords and capitalists who are financed with Anglo-French money and enjoy the support of Russian social-traitors who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie.

The whole of this gang is taking advantage of the famine to make another attempt to restore the landlords and the capitalists to power. Comrades, the experience of our revolution confirms the correctness of the words which always distinguish the representatives of scientific socialism, Marx and his followers, from the utopian socialists, from the petty-bourgeois socialists, from the socialist intellectuals and from the socialist dreamers. The intellectual dreamers, the petty-bourgeois socialists, thought, and perhaps still think, dream, that it is possible to introduce socialism by persuasion. They think that the majority of the people will be convinced, and when they become convinced the minority will obey; that the majority will vote and socialism will be introduced. No, the world is not built so happily; the exploiters, the brutal landlords, the capitalist class are not amenable to persuasion. The socialist revolution confirms what everybody has seen—the furious resistance of the exploiters. The stronger the pressure of the oppressed classes becomes, the nearer they come to overthrowing all oppression, all exploitation, the more determinedly the oppressed peasantry and the oppressed workers display initiative, the more furious does the resistance of the exploiters become.

We are passing through a very severe and very painful period of transition from capitalism to socialism, a period which will inevitably be a very long one in all countries because, I repeat, the oppressors retaliate to every success achieved by the oppressed class by fresh attempts at resistance, by attempts to overthrow the power of the oppressed class. The Czecho-Slovak mutiny, which is obviously being supported by Anglo-French imperialism in the pursuit of its policy of overthrowing the Soviet government, illustrates what this resistance can be. We see how this mutiny is spreading, natur-

ally because of the famine. It goes without saying that among the broad masses of the toilers there are many (you know this particularly well; every one of you sees this in the factories) who are not enlightened socialists and cannot be such because they have to slave in the factories and they have neither the time nor the opportunity to become socialists. It goes without saying that these people begin to sympathise when they see the workers rising in the factory, when they see that these workers obtain the opportunity to learn the art of managing factories—a difficult and hard task in which mistakes are inevitable, but which is the only task in which the workers can at last realise their constant striving to make the machines, the factories, the works, the best of modern technique, the best achievements of humanity serve not purposes of exploitation, but the purpose of improving and easing the lives of the overwhelming majority. But when they see the imperialist pirates in the West, in the North and in the East taking advantage of Russia's defencelessness to crush her soul, and since they do not know what the situation in the labour movement is in other countries, of course they are guided by despair. Nor can it be otherwise. It would be ridiculous to expect and foolish to think that capitalist society based on exploitation could at one stroke create the complete appreciation and understanding of the need for socialism. This cannot be. This appreciation comes only at the end of the struggle which has to be waged in this painful period, in which one revolution has broken out before the rest and gets no assistance from the others, and when famine approaches. Naturally, certain strata of the toilers are inevitably overcome by despair and indignation and turn away in disgust from everything. Naturally, the counter-revolutionaries, the landlords and capitalists, and their protectors and henchmen, take advantage of this situation for the purpose of launching attack after attack upon the socialist government.

We see what this has led to in all the towns where no assistance was given by foreign bayonets. We know that it was possible to defeat the Soviet government only when those people who had shouted so much about defending the fatherland and about their patriotism revealed their capitalist nature and concluded agreements, one day with the German bayonets in order jointly with them

to massacre the Ukrainian Bolsheviks, the next day with the Turkish bayonets in order to march against the Bolsheviks, the day after that with the Czecho-Slovak bayonets in order to overthrow the Soviet government and massacre the Bolsheviks in Samara. Foreign aid alone, the aid of foreign bayonets alone, the betrayal of Russia to Japanese, German and Turkish bayonets alone, have up to now given some show of success to those who have compromised with the capitalists and the landlords. But we know that when rebellions of this sort broke out as a result of the starvation and the despair of the masses in districts where the aid of foreign bayonets could not be obtained, as was the case in Saratov, Koslov and Tambov, the rule of the landlords, the capitalists and their friends who camouflaged themselves with the beautiful slogans of the Constituent Assembly lasted not more than days, if not hours. The further the units of the Soviet army were from the centre temporarily occupied by the counter-revolution, the more determined was the movement among the urban workers, the more these workers and peasants displayed initiative in marching to the aid of Saratov, Penza and Koslov and in immediately overthrowing the rule of the counter-revolution which had been established.

Comrades, if you examine these events from the point of view of all that is taking place in world history, if you bear in mind that your task, our common task, is to explain to ourselves and to explain to the masses that these great disasters have not befallen us accidentally, but first as a result of the imperialist war, and secondly as a result of the furious resistance of the landlords, the capitalists and the exploiters, if we are clear about this we can be certain that, however difficult it may be, the full appreciation of this will sink deeper and deeper into the minds of the broad masses and we shall succeed in creating discipline, in overcoming the indiscipline in our factories, and in helping the people to live through this painful and particularly difficult period, which perhaps will last the month or two, the few weeks that still remain until the new harvest.

You know that as a consequence of the Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary mutiny which has cut us off from Siberia, as a consequence of the continuous unrest in the South, and as a consequence

of the war, the position in Russia today is particularly difficult; but it goes without saying that the more difficult the position of the country in which famine is approaching, the more determined and firm must be the measures that we adopt to combat this famine. One of the principal measures to combat the famine is the establishment of the grain monopoly. In this connection you will know perfectly well from your own experience that the kulaks, the rich, are raising a howl against the grain monopoly at every step. This can be understood, because in those places where the grain monopoly was temporarily abolished, as Skoropadsky abolished it in Kiev, profiteering reached unprecedented dimensions, there the price of a pood¹ of grain rose to two hundred rubles. Naturally, when there is a shortage of goods without which it is impossible to live, the owners of such goods can become rich, prices rise to unprecedented heights. Naturally, the horror, the panic created by the fear of death from starvation forced prices up to unprecedented heights, and in Kiev they had to think of restoring the monopoly. Here in Russia, long ago, even before the Bolsheviks came into power, notwithstanding the wealth of grain that Russia possessed, the government became convinced of the necessity of introducing the grain monopoly. Only those who are absolutely ignorant, or who have deliberately sold themselves to the interests of the money-bags, can be opposed to it.

But, comrades, when we speak of the grain monopoly we must think of the enormous difficulties of realisation that are contained in this phrase. It is quite easy to say grain monopoly, but we must ponder over what this phrase means. It means that all surplus grain belongs to the state; it means that every single pood of grain over and above that required by the peasant for his farm, over and above that required to maintain his family and cattle and for sowing, that every extra pood of grain must be taken by the state. How is this to be done? The state must fix prices; every surplus pood of grain must be found and brought in. How can the peasant, whose mind has been stultified for hundreds of years, who has been robbed and beaten to stupefaction by the landlords and capitalists who never allowed him to eat his fill, how can this peasant learn to appreciate

¹ One pood equals about 36 pounds.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

in a few weeks or a few months what the grain monopoly means? How can millions of people who up to now have known the state only by its oppression, its violence, by the tyranny and robbery of the government officials, how can these peasants, living in remote villages and doomed to ruin, be made to understand what the rule of the workers and peasants means, be made to understand that power is in the hands of the poor, that to hoard grain, that to possess surplus grain and not hand it over to the state is a crime, and that those who hoard surplus grain are robbers, exploiters and guilty of causing terrible starvation among the workers of Petrograd, Moscow, etc.? How can the peasant understand these things considering that up to now he has been kept in ignorance and that the only thing he was concerned with in the village was to sell his grain? How can he understand these things? It is not surprising that when we examine this question more closely, from the point of view of practical life, we realise what an enormously difficult task it is to introduce a grain monopoly in a country in which tsarism and the landlords held the majority of the peasants in ignorance, in a country in which the peasantry have sown grain on their own land for the first time in many centuries.

But the more difficult this task is, the greater it appears to be after close and careful study, the more clearly must we say to ourselves what we have always said, namely, that the emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves. We have always said: the emancipation of the toilers from oppression cannot be brought from outside; the toilers themselves, by their struggle, by their movement, by their agitation must learn to solve the new historical problem; and the more difficult, the greater, the more responsible the new historical problem is, the larger must be the number of those enlisted for the purpose of taking an independent part in solving it. No class consciousness, no organisation is required to sell grain to a merchant, to a trader. To do that one must live as the bourgeoisie has ordered. One must merely be an obedient slave and picture to oneself and admit that the world as built by the bourgeoisie is magnificent. But in order to overcome capitalist chaos, in order to introduce the grain monopoly, in order to ensure that every surplus pood of grain is transferred to the state, pro-

longed, difficult and hard organisational work must be carried on, not by organisers, not by agitators, but by the masses themselves.

There are such people in the Russian countryside. A majority of the peasants belong to the category of the very poor and poor peasants who are not in a position to trade in grain surpluses and become robbers hoarding perhaps hundreds of poods of grain while others are starving. But today, the situation is that a peasant will perhaps call himself a toiling peasant (some people like this term very much); but if such a peasant has by his own labour, even without the aid of hired labour, gathered hundreds of poods of grain and calculates that if he holds this grain he will be able to sell it to a profiteer, or to a starving urban worker who has come with his starving family, not for six rubles per pood but for two hundred rubles, such a peasant, who hoards hundreds of poods of grain in order to raise the price and get even a hundred rubles a pood, cannot be called a toiling peasant, he becomes transformed into an exploiter, into worse than a robber. What must we do under these circumstances? Whom can we rely upon in our struggle? We know that the Soviet revolution and the Soviet government differ from other revolutions and other governments not only by the fact that they have overthrown the power of the landlords and the capitalists, that they have destroyed the feudal state, the autocracy, but also by the fact that the masses have rebelled against all the officials and created a new state in which power must belong to the workers and peasants, not only must, but already belongs to them. In this state there are no police, no officials and no standing army which had been kept in barracks for many years isolated from the people and trained to shoot the people.

We place arms in the hands of the workers and peasants who must learn the art of war. There are units who give way to temptation, vice and crime because they are not separated as by a Chinese wall from the world of oppression, from the world of starvation, in which the well-fed try to enrich themselves because they are well-fed. That is why very often we see detachments of class conscious workers leaving Petrograd and Moscow and on reaching the district to which they were sent going astray and becoming criminals. We see the bourgeoisie clapping their hands in delight and filling the

columns of their venal newspapers with all sorts of bogies to frighten the people. "See what your detachments are like," they say, "what disorder they are creating, how much better our detachments of private capitalists would behave!"

No, thank you, Messieurs the bourgeoisie! You will not frighten us. You know very well that recovery from the misfortunes and ulcers of the capitalist world will not come all at once. And we know that recovery will come only in the midst of struggle; we will expose every incident of this kind, not to provide material for the counter-revolutionary Mensheviks and Cadets to smile and gloat over, but in order to teach the broad masses of the people. Since our detachments do not fulfil their duties properly, give us more loyal and class conscious detachments far exceeding the number of those who gave way to temptation. These must be organised and educated; non-class-conscious, exploited and starving toilers must be united around every class conscious worker. The rural poor must be roused, educated and shown that the Soviet government will do all it possibly can to help them, so as to carry out the grain monopoly. And so, when we approached this task, when the Soviet government definitely raised these questions, it said: comrades, workers, organise, organise food detachments, combat every case in which these detachments show that they are not equal to their duties, organise more strongly and rectify your mistakes, organise the village poor around yourselves! The kulaks know that their last hour has struck, that their enemy is advancing not merely with sermons, words and phrases, but with the organised village poor; and if we succeed in organising the village poor we shall vanquish the kulaks. The kulaks know that the hour of the last, most determined, most desperate battle for socialism is approaching. This struggle seems to be only a struggle for bread, but as a matter of fact it is a struggle for socialism. If the workers learn to solve these problems independently—for no one will come to their aid—if they learn to unite the village poor around themselves, they will achieve victory, they will have bread and the proper distribution of bread, they will even have the proper distribution of labour, because by distributing labour properly we shall be supreme in all spheres of labour, in all spheres of industry.

Foreseeing all this, the kulaks have made repeated attempts to bribe the poor. They know that grain must be sold to the state at six rubles per pood, but they sell grain to a poor peasant neighbour at three rubles per pood and say to him: "You can go to a profiteer and sell at forty rubles per pood. Our interests are the same; we must unite against the state which is robbing us. It wants to give us six rubles per pood; here, take three poods, you can make sixty rubles. You need not worry about how much I make, that is my business."

I know that on these grounds armed conflicts with the peasants repeatedly occur, while the enemies of the Soviet government gloat over it and snigger, and exert every effort to overthrow the Soviet government. But we say: "That is because the food detachments that were sent were not sufficiently class conscious; but the larger the detachments were the more frequently we had cases—and this happened repeatedly—when the peasants gave their grain without a single case of violence, because class conscious workers understand that their main strength lies, not in violence, but in the fact that they are the representatives of the organised and enlightened poor whereas in the rural districts there is a mass of ignorance, the poor are not enlightened. If the latter are approached in an intelligent manner, if they are told in plain language, without bookish words, in a plain human way, that in Petrograd and Moscow, and in scores of uyezds where people are starving, where typhus is spreading as a result of famine, that tens of thousands of Russian peasants and workers are dying of starvation, that it was the rich who unjustly hoarded grain and made profit out of the starvation of the people, it will be possible to organise the poor and get the surplus grain collected not by violence but by the organisation of the village poor. I frequently receive complaints about the kulaks from comrades who have gone to the villages with food detachments and who have fought against the counter-revolution. I will quote an example of which I have a particularly lively recollection because I heard it yesterday, of something that occurred in the Eletz Uyezd. In that uyezd a Soviet of Workers' Deputies was set up, and there are a large number of class conscious workers and poor peasants there. Thanks to this, it was possible to consolidate the power of the poor.

The first time the representatives of the Eletz Uyezd came to report to me I would not believe them, I thought they were boasting somewhat. But what they said was confirmed by comrades who had been sent especially from Moscow to other gubernias. They said that the manner in which they had organised their work in Eletz was only to be welcomed, and confirmed the fact that in Russia there were uyezds where the Soviets were equal to their tasks and had succeeded in completely removing the kulaks and exploiters from the Soviets, in organising the toilers, in organising the poor. Let those who use their wealth for profit clear out of the Soviet state organisations!

After they had expelled the kulaks they went to the town of Eletz, a trading town. They did not wait for a decree to introduce the grain monopoly but remembered that the Soviets represent a government that is close to the people and that every person, if he is a revolutionary, if he is a socialist and is really on the side of the toilers, must act quickly and decisively. They organised all the workers and poor peasants and formed so many detachments that searches were made all over Eletz. They allowed only the trusted and responsible leaders of the detachments to enter the houses. Not a single person of whom they were not certain was allowed to enter the houses, for they knew how often vacillation occurs and that nothing disgraces the Soviet government so much as these cases of robbery committed by unworthy representatives and servants of the Soviet government. They succeeded in collecting a huge quantity of surplus grain and there was not a single house in commercial Eletz in which the bourgeoisie could make any profit by profiteering.

Of course, I know that it is much easier to do this in a small town than in a city like Moscow, but it must not be forgotten that not a single uyezd town possesses the proletarian forces that Moscow has.

In Tambov, recently, the counter-revolution was victorious for several hours. It even published one issue of a Menshevik and Right Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper which called for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, for the overthrow of the Soviet government and declared that the victory of the new government was permanent. But Red Army men and peasants arrived from the surrounding country and in one day overthrew this new "permanent"

government which claimed to be resting on the Constituent Assembly.

The same thing occurred in other uyezds in the Tambov Gubernia—a gubernia of enormous dimensions. Its northern uyezds are in the non-agricultural zone, but its southern uyezds are extraordinarily fertile. There they gather very big harvests and there are many peasants who have surplus grain. There one must be able to act energetically and have a particularly firm and clear appreciation of the necessity of relying on the poor peasants in order to fight the kulaks. There the kulaks are hostile to every sort of workers' and peasants' government and our people must wait for the assistance of the Petrograd and Moscow workers who, on every occasion, armed with the weapon of organisation, expel the kulaks from the Soviets, organise the poor and jointly with the local peasants acquire experience in fighting for the state monopoly of grain, experience in organising the rural poor and urban toilers in such a way as will guarantee us final and complete victory. I quoted these examples to illustrate the food situation, comrades, because it seems to me that from the point of view of the toilers, for us, for the workers, it is not the statistical estimate of the amount of grain, of how many million poods we can obtain that is important for the characterisation of the fight against the kulaks for bread. I leave it to the food specialists to draw up these statistics. I must say that if we succeed in securing the surplus grain from the gubernias adjacent to the Moscow non-agricultural zone and from fertile Siberia, right now, during the few severe weeks that remain until the new harvest, we shall have enough grain to save the non-agricultural gubernias from starvation. In order to do that we must organise a still larger number of class conscious, advanced workers. This was the main lesson to be learned from all preceding revolutions, and it is the main lesson to be learned from our revolution. The better we are organised, the more widely good organisation manifests itself, the more the workers in the factories and works understand that their strength lies entirely in their organisation and in that of the village poor, the more certain shall we be of victory in the struggle against famine and in the struggle for socialism. For, I repeat, our task is not to invent a new form of government but to rouse, to educate and to organise every representative of the village

poor, even in the remotest villages, to independent activity. It will not be difficult for a few class conscious urban workers, Petrograd and Moscow workers, to explain, even in remote villages, that it is unjust to hoard grain, to profiteer in grain, to use it for making vodka, when hundreds of thousands are dying in Moscow. In order to do that, the workers of Petrograd and Moscow, and particularly you, comrades, the representatives of the most varied trades, factories and works, must thoroughly understand that no one will come to your assistance, that from other classes you can expect, not assistants but enemies, that the Soviet government has no loyal intelligentsia at its service. The intelligentsia are using their experience and knowledge—the highest human achievement—in the service of the exploiters, and are doing all they can to prevent our gaining victory over the exploiters; but even if hundreds of thousands die of starvation, that will not break the resistance of the toilers. We have no one to depend upon but the class with which we achieved the revolution and with which we shall overcome the very greatest difficulties, cross the very difficult zone that lies ahead of us—and that is the factory workers, the urban and rural proletariat, who speak to each other in a language they all understand, who in town and country will vanquish all our enemies—the kulaks and the rich.

But in order to achieve this we must remember the fundamental postulate of the socialist revolution which the workers so often forget, and that is, that in order to make a socialist revolution, in order to bring it about, in order to liberate the people from oppression, it is necessary immediately to abolish classes; the most class conscious and organised workers must take power in their hands. The workers must become the ruling class in the state. That is the truth which the majority of you have read in *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, which was written more than seventy years ago, and which has been translated into all languages and circulated in all countries. Everywhere the truth has been revealed that in order to vanquish the capitalists it is necessary during the struggle against exploitation, while it is still dark, while people do not yet believe in the new system, that the organised urban factory workers become the ruling class. When you gather together in your factory com-

mittees to settle your affairs, remember that the revolution will not be able to retain a single one of its gains if you, in your factory committees, merely concern yourselves with workers' technical or purely financial interests. The workers and the oppressed classes have managed to seize power more than once, but never have they been able to retain it. For this purpose it is not only necessary for the workers to be able to rise in heroic struggle and overthrow exploitation; they must also be able to organise, to maintain discipline, to be staunch, to calmly discuss affairs when everything is tottering, when you are being attacked, when innumerable stupid rumours are being spread—it is at such a time that the factory committees, which in all things are closely connected with the vast masses, are faced with the great political task of becoming primarily an organ of administration of political life. The fundamental political problem that faces the Soviet government is that of securing the proper distribution of grain. Although Eletz succeeded in bridling the local bourgeoisie, it is much more difficult to do this in Moscow; but here we have incomparably better organisation, and here you can easily find tens of thousands of honest people whom your Party and your trade unions will supply and answer for, who will be able to lead the detachments with every certainty that they will remain ideologically loyal in spite of all difficulties, in spite of all temptations and in spite of the torments of hunger. No other class could undertake this task at the present time, no other class would be able to lead the people who often fall into despair; there is no other class but the urban factory proletariat that can do this. Your factory committees must cease to be merely factory committees, they must become the fundamental state nuclei of the ruling class. Your organisation, your solidarity, your energy will determine whether we shall hold out in this severe transitional period as staunchly as a Soviet government should hold out. Take up this work yourselves, take it up from every side, expose abuses every day. Rectify every mistake that is committed with your own experience—many mistakes are committed today because the working class is still inexperienced, but the important thing is that it should itself take up this work and rectify its own mistakes. If we act in this way, if every

committee understands that it is one of the leaders of the greatest revolution in the world—then we shall achieve socialism for the whole world!

SPEECH IN REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE PRESENT SITUATION

JUNE 28, 1918

Comrades, permit me first of all to deal with several of the propositions advanced in opposition to me by the co-reporter Paderin. From the stenographic report I note that he said: "We must do everything possible to enable primarily the English and German proletariat to come out against their oppressors. What must be done for this? Is it our business to help these oppressors? By rousing enmity among ourselves, by destroying and weakening the country, we infinitely strengthen the position of the imperialists, British, French and German, who in the last resort will unite in order to strangle the working class of Russia." This argument shows how irresolute the Mensheviks were in their struggle against and in their opposition to imperialist war, because the argument I have just quoted can only be understood when it comes from the lips of a man who calls himself a defencist, who entirely takes up the position of imperialism, of a man who justifies imperialist war and who repeats the bourgeois lie that in such a war the workers defend their fatherland. If, indeed, one adopts the point of view that the workers must not destroy and weaken the country during such a war, it is tantamount to calling upon the workers to defend the fatherland in an imperialist war. And you know what the Bolshevik government, which considered its first duty to be to publish, to expose and to pillory the secret treaties, has done.* You know that the Allies waged a war for the sake of the secret treaties and that the Kerensky government, which existed with the aid and support of the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, not only did not annul the secret treaties, but did not even publish them; you know that the Russian people waged the war for the sake of these secret treaties which promised the Russian landlords and capitalists, in the event of victory, Constantinople, the Dardanelles, Lvov, Galicia and Armenia. If we adopt the point of view of the working class, if we

are opposed to the war, how could we tolerate these secret treaties? As long as we tolerated the secret treaties, as long as we tolerated the rule of the bourgeoisie in Russia, we fostered the chauvinistic conviction in the minds of the German workers that there were no class conscious workers in Russia, that everyone in Russia supported imperialism and that Russia was pursuing a war for the purpose of plundering Austria and Turkey. But the very opposite is the case. The workers' and peasants' government has done more than any other government in the world to weaken the German imperialists, to tear the German workers away from them, because when the secret treaties were published and exposed to the world, even the German chauvinists, even the German defencists, even those workers who supported their government, had to admit in their newspaper *Vorwärts*, their central organ, that "this is an act of a socialist government, a genuinely revolutionary act." They had to admit this because not a single imperialist government involved in the war did this; ours was the only government that denounced the secret treaties.

Of course, at the back of every German worker's mind, no matter how cowed, downtrodden or bribed by the imperialists he may be, there is the thought: "Has not our government secret treaties?" [*A voice*: "Tell us about the Black Sea fleet."] All right, I will tell you about it, although it has nothing to do with the subject. At the back of every German worker's mind there is the thought: "If the Russian workers have gone to the lengths of denouncing the secret treaties, has not the German government secret treaties?" When the Brest negotiations commenced Comrade Trotsky's exposures reached the whole world. Did not this policy rouse in an enemy country engaged in a terrible imperialist war with other governments, not anger, but the sympathy of the masses of the people? The only government to do that was our government. Our revolution succeeded in rousing a great revolutionary movement during war time in an enemy country merely by the fact that we denounced the secret treaties, by the fact that we said: "We will not be deterred by any danger." If we know, if we say, and not merely say, but mean it, that international revolution is the only salvation from international war, from the imperialist massacre of the

people, then we in our revolution must pursue that aim notwithstanding all difficulties and all dangers. And when we took this path for the first time in history, in Germany, in the most imperialistic and most disciplined country, in the midst of war, a mass strike broke out and flared up in January.* Of course, there are people who believe that the revolution can break out in a foreign country to order, by agreement. These people are either mad or they are provocateurs. We have experienced two revolutions during the past twelve years. We know that revolutions cannot be made to order, or by agreement; 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. We know what difficulties accompanied the birth of the revolution in 1905 and in 1917, and we never expected revolution to break out in other countries at one stroke, as a result of a single appeal. The fact that revolution is beginning to grow in Germany and in Austria is a tribute to the great service rendered by the Russian October Revolution. We read in the newspapers today that in Vienna, where the bread ration is smaller than ours, where the plunder of the Ukraine can bring no relief, where the population says that it has never before experienced such horrors of starvation, a Council of Workers' Deputies has sprung up. In Vienna general strikes are breaking out again.

And we say to ourselves: This is the second step, this is the second proof that when the Russian workers denounced the imperialist secret treaties, when they expelled their bourgeoisie, they acted as consistent class conscious worker-internationalists, they facilitated the growth of the revolution in Germany and in Austria in a way that no other revolution in the world has ever done in a hostile country which was in a state of war and in which bitter feeling ran high.

To forecast when the revolution will break out, to promise that it will come tomorrow, would be deceiving you. You remember, particularly those of you who experienced both Russian revolutions, that no one in November 1904 could guarantee that within two months a hundred thousand St. Petersburg workers would march to the Winter Palace and start the great revolution.**

Recall December 1916. How could we guarantee that within

two months the tsarist monarchy would be overthrown in the course of a few days? We in this country, which has experienced two revolutions, know and realise that the progress of the revolution cannot be foretold and that revolution cannot be called forth. We can only work for the revolution. If you work consistently, if you work devotedly, if this work is linked up with the interests of the oppressed masses who represent the majority, revolution will come; but where, how, at what moment, from what immediate cause, cannot be foretold. That is why we shall never take the liberty of deceiving the masses by saying: "The German workers will help us tomorrow, they will blow up their Kaiser the day after tomorrow." We have no right to say such things.

Our position is made difficult by the fact that the Russian revolution proved to be ahead of other revolutions; but the fact that we are not alone is proved by the news that reaches us nearly every day that the best German Social-Democrats are expressing themselves in favour of the Bolsheviks, that the Bolsheviks are being supported in the open German press by Clara Zetkin and also by Franz Mehring, who in a number of articles showed the German workers that the Bolsheviks alone properly understood what socialism is. Recently a Social-Democrat named Hoschka definitely stated in the Württemberg Landtag that he regarded the Bolsheviks as models of consistency in the pursuit of a correct revolutionary policy. Do you think that such statements do not find an echo among scores, hundreds and thousands of German workers who associate themselves with them almost before they are uttered? When affairs in Germany have reached the stage of the formation of Councils of Workers' Deputies and of a second mass strike, we can say without the least exaggeration, without the least self-deception, that this marks the beginning of the revolution.* We say very definitely: Our policy and our path was a correct policy and a correct path; we helped the Austrian and the German workers to regard themselves, not as enemies strangling the Russian workers in the interests of the Kaiser, in the interests of the German capitalists, but as brothers of the Russian workers who are performing the same revolutionary work as they are.

I would also like to mention a passage in Paderin's speech which,

in my opinion, deserves attention, the more so that it partly coincides with the idea expressed by the preceding speaker. This is the passage: "We now see that civil war is going on within the working class. Can we permit this to go on?" You see therefore that civil war is described as war within the working class or as war against the peasants, as the preceding speaker described it. We know perfectly well that both descriptions are wrong. The civil war in Russia is the war waged by the workers and the poor peasants against the landlords and the capitalists. This war is being prolonged and protracted because the Russian landlords and capitalists were vanquished in October and November with relatively small losses, were vanquished by the enthusiasm of the masses of the people amidst conditions in which it became immediately clear to them that the people would not support them. Things reached the stage that even in the Don region where there is the largest number of rich Cossacks who live by exploiting wage labour, where the hopes of the counter-revolution were brightest, even there, Bogayevsky, the leader of the counter-revolutionary rebellion, then publicly admitted: "Ours is a lost cause because even in our region the majority of the population are on the side of the Bolsheviks."

That was the position, that was how the landlords and capitalists lost their counter-revolutionary game in October and November.

That was the result of their adventure when they tried to organise the *Junkers*, the officers, the sons of landlords and capitalists into a White Guard to fight the workers' and peasants' revolution. And now, as you know—read today's newspapers—the Czecho-Slovak adventurers are operating with the financial assistance of the Anglo-French capitalists who are bribing troops for the purpose of dragging us into the war again. You have read what the Czecho-Slovaks said in Samara. They said: "We shall join Dutov and Semyonov and compel the workers of Russia and the Russian people once again to fight against Germany side by side with England and France. We shall restore those secret treaties and fling you once again, for another four years perhaps, into this imperialist war in alliance with the bourgeoisie." But instead of that we are now waging war against our bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie of all countries, and it is solely due to the fact that we are waging

this war that we have won the sympathy and support of the workers of other countries. If the workers of one belligerent country see that in the other belligerent country close connections are being established between the workers and the bourgeoisie it splits the workers up according to nation and unites them with their respective bourgeoisies. This is a great evil, it means the collapse of the socialist revolution, it means the collapse and doom of the whole International.

In 1914 the International was wrecked because the workers of all countries united with the bourgeoisie in their respective countries and split their own ranks. Now, this split is being healed. Perhaps you have read that in England recently the Scottish school teacher and trade unionist MacLean was sentenced for a second time to five years' imprisonment—the first time he was sentenced to eighteen months—for exposing the real objects of the war and speaking about the criminal nature of British imperialism. When he was released there was already a representative of the Soviet government in England, Litvinov, who immediately appointed MacLean Consul, a representative of the Soviet Russian Federative Republic in England, and the Scottish workers greeted this appointment with enthusiasm. The British government has for the second time commenced to persecute MacLean and this time not only as a Scottish school teacher, but also as Consul of the Federative Soviet Republic. MacLean is in prison because he came out openly as the representative of our government; we have never seen this man, he is the beloved leader of the Scottish workers, he has never belonged to our Party, but we joined with him; the Russian and Scottish workers united against the British government in spite of the fact that the latter buys Czecho-Slovaks and is pursuing a furious policy to drag the Russian republic into the war. This is proof that in all countries, irrespective of their position in the war—in Germany which is fighting against us, in England which is trying to grab Bagdad and completely strangle Turkey—the workers are uniting with the Russian Bolsheviks, with the Russian Bolshevik revolution. The speaker whose speech I have quoted said that workers and peasants are waging a civil war against workers and peasants; we know perfectly well that this is not true. The working class is

one thing, groups, small strata of the working class are another thing. From 1871 to 1914, for almost half a century, the German working class served as a model of socialist organisation for the whole world. We know that it had a party with a membership of a million, that it created trade unions with a membership of two, three and four millions; nevertheless, in the course of this half century hundreds of thousands of German workers were united in Catholic trade unions which stood staunchly for the priests, for the church and for the Kaiser. Who were the real representatives of the working class? Was it the huge German Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions, or the hundreds of thousands of Catholic workers? The working class, which comprises the overwhelming majority of the class conscious, advanced thinking workers is one thing, while a single factory, a single district, a few groups of workers who still remain on the side of the bourgeoisie, are another thing.

The overwhelming majority of the working class of Russia—this is shown by the elections to the Soviets, the factory committees and conferences—ninety-nine per cent are on the side of the Soviet government, knowing that this government is waging war against the bourgeoisie, against the kulaks and not against the peasants and workers. This is altogether different. If there is an insignificant group of workers still in slavish dependence upon the bourgeoisie we do not wage war against it but against the bourgeoisie. If those insignificant groups which are still in alliance with the bourgeoisie get hurt in the process they have only themselves to blame.

A question was sent to me in writing: it reads as follows: "Why are counter-revolutionary newspapers still published?" One of the reasons is that there are elements among the printers who are bribed by the bourgeoisie [*commotion, cries*: "It is not true."] You can shout as much as you like, but you will not prevent me from telling the truth, which all the workers know and which I have just begun to explain. When a worker attaches importance to the high wages he gets for working for the bourgeois press, when he says: "I want to preserve my high wages by helping the bourgeoisie to purvey poison, to poison the minds of the people," then I say it is as if these workers were bribed by the bourgeoisie, not in the sense that any

individual person was hired, but in the sense in which all Marxists have spoken about the English workers when the latter concluded an alliance with their capitalists. All of you who have read trade union literature know that there are not only trade unions in England, but also alliances between the workers and capitalists in a particular industry for the purpose of raising prices and of robbing everybody else. All Marxists, all Socialists of all countries point the finger of scorn at these cases and, beginning with Marx and Engels, say that there are workers who, owing to their ignorance and pursuit of their craft interests, allow themselves to be bribed by the bourgeoisie. They sold their birthright, their right to the socialist revolution, by entering into an alliance with their capitalists against the overwhelming majority of the workers and the oppressed toilers in their own country, against their own class. The same thing is happening here. When certain groups of workers say: "The fact that the stuff we print is opium, poison, spreads lies and provocation, has nothing to do with us. We get high wages and we don't care a hang for anybody else,"—we will denounce them. In our literature we have always said and we say openly: "Such workers are abandoning the working class and deserting to the side of the bourgeoisie."

Comrades, I will in a moment deal with the questions that have been put to me; but first of all, so as not to forget, I will reply to the question about the Black Sea fleet that seems to have been put for the purpose of exposing us. Let me tell you that the man who was operating there was Comrade Raskolnikov whom the Moscow and Petrograd workers know very well because of the agitation and Party work he has carried on. Comrade Raskolnikov himself will tell you how he agitated in favour of destroying the fleet rather than allow the German troops to use it for the purpose of attacking Novorossiisk. That was the situation in regard to the Black Sea fleet; and the People's Commissars Stalin, Shlyapnikov and Raskolnikov will arrive in Moscow soon and tell us all about it. You will see therefore that ours was the only policy which, like the Brest Peace policy, caused us many misfortunes, but which enabled the Soviet government and the workers' socialist revolution to hold their banner aloft before the workers of all countries. If today the number

of workers in Germany who are abandoning the old prejudices about the Bolsheviks, and who understand that our policy is correct, is growing, it is due to the tactics we have been pursuing since the Brest Treaty.

Of the questions that were sent up to me I will deal with the second one on the transportation of grain. Certain workers ask: "Why do you prohibit individual workers from bringing grain into the town when it is for the use of their own families?" The reply is a simple one. Just think what would happen if the thousands of poods that are necessary for a given locality, for a given factory, for a given district, or for a given street were carried by thousands of people. If we allowed this the food supply organisations would begin to break down entirely. We do not blame the man, tormented by hunger, who travels into the country to get bread and procures it in whatever way he can, but we say: "We do not exist as a workers' and peasants' government for the purpose of legalising and encouraging disintegration and ruin." A government is not required for this purpose. It is required for the purpose of uniting and organising the class conscious in order to combat lack of class consciousness. We cannot blame those who owing to their lack of class consciousness throw up everything, close their eyes to everything, and try to save themselves by procuring grain in whatever way they can, but we can blame Party people who, while advocating the grain monopoly, do not sufficiently foster class consciousness and solidarity in action. Yes, the struggle against the bagman, against the private transportation of grain is a very difficult one because it is a struggle against ignorance, against lack of class consciousness, against the lack of organisation of the broad masses; but we shall never abandon this struggle. Every time food-collecting campaigns are organised we shall call for proletarian socialist methods of combating famine: having united together, let us replace the deteriorated food detachments by new forces, by fresher, stronger, more honest, more class conscious and tried men, and we shall collect the same amount of grain, the same thousands of poods that are collected individually by two hundred persons, each carrying fifteen poods, each raising prices and increasing profiteering. We shall unite these two hundred persons, we shall create a strong com-

pact workers' army. If we do not succeed in doing this at the first attempt we shall repeat our efforts; we shall try to induce the class conscious workers in every factory to delegate larger numbers of more reliable people for the purpose of combating profiteering, and we are sure that the class consciousness, discipline and organisation of the workers will in the last resort withstand all severe trials. When people will have become convinced by their own experience that individual bagmen cannot help to save hundreds of thousands from starvation we will see the victory of the cause of organisation and class consciousness, and by united action we shall organise the fight against famine and secure the proper distribution of grain.

I am asked: "Why is not the monopoly of manufactured goods, which are as necessary as grain, introduced?" My reply is: "The Soviet government is adopting all measures to this end." You know that there is a tendency to organise, to amalgamate the textile factories, the textile industry. You know that the majority of the people in the leading bodies of this organisation are workers, you know that the Soviet government is preparing to nationalise all branches of industry; you know that the difficulties that confront us in this are enormous and that much effort will be required to do all this in an organised manner.* We are not setting to work on this task in the way governments which rely on bureaucrats do. It is quite easy to manage affairs in that way: let one man receive 400 rubles per month; let another get more, a thousand rubles per month—our business is to give orders and the others must obey. That is how all bourgeois countries are administered; they hire officials at high salaries, they hire the sons of the bourgeoisie and entrust the administration to them. The Soviet Republic cannot be administered in this way. We have no officials to manage and guide the work of amalgamating all the textile factories, of registering all their property and stocks, of introducing a monopoly of all articles of primary necessity and of properly distributing them. We call upon the workers to do this work; we call upon the representatives of the Textile Workers' Union and say to them: "You must be the majority on the leading body of the Central Textile Board, and you are the majority on it, in the same way as you are the majority on the leading bodies of the Supreme Council of National Eco-

nomny. Comrades, workers, take up this very important state task yourselves. We know that it is much more difficult than appointing efficient officials, but we know also that there is no other way of doing it." Power must be placed in the hands of the working class, and the advanced workers must, in spite of all difficulties, learn from their own bitter experience, from the work of their own hands, how all articles, all textile goods, should be distributed in the interests of the toilers.

Hence, the Soviet government is doing all it possibly can in the present circumstances to introduce a state monopoly and to fix prices. It is doing it through the medium of the workers, in conjunction with the workers; it gives them the majority on the management boards, and in every leading centre, as for example on the Supreme Council of National Economy, the amalgamated metal works, or sugar factories which were nationalised in a few weeks. This is a difficult road, but, I repeat, we cannot avoid difficulties in the task of transferring the workers, who have been accustomed and have been trained by the bourgeoisie for hundreds of years merely to slavishly carry out its orders, to a new position, the task of making them feel that they are the government. We are the owners of industry, we are the owners of the grain, we are the owners of all the wealth of the country. Only when this has deeply penetrated the minds of the working class, when, by their own experience, by their own efforts, they increase their forces tenfold, will all the difficulties of the socialist revolution be overcome.

I conclude by once again appealing to this factory committee conference. In the city of Moscow the difficulties are particularly great because it is an enormous centre of trade and profiteering in which, for many years, tens of thousands of people have obtained their livelihood by trade and profiteering. Here the difficulties are particularly great, but here there are forces that no small town in the country possesses. Let the workers' organisations, let the factory committees remember and firmly take into consideration what present events and the famine that has affected the toilers of Russia teach. New organisations, broader organisations of class conscious and advanced workers alone can save the revolution and prevent the restoration of the rule of the landlords and capitalists. Class

conscious workers are now in the majority, but it is not enough; they must take a greater part in general state work. In Moscow we have hosts of cases of profiteers gambling on the famine, making profit out of the famine, breaking the state grain monopoly, of the rich having everything they desire. In Moscow there are 8,000 members of the Communist Party. In Moscow the trade unions can delegate 20,000 to 30,000 men and women whom they can vouch for, who will be reliable and staunch exponents of proletarian policy. Unite them, create hundreds and thousands of detachments, fight the food problem, search the whole of the rich population and you will secure what you need.

In my report I told you what successes were achieved in this sphere in the town of Eletz; but it is more difficult to achieve this in Moscow. I said that Eletz was a well-organised town. There are many towns that are much worse organised because this is a very difficult matter, because it is not a matter of a shortage of arms—we have any amount of them—the difficulty lies in appointing hundreds and thousands of reliable workers to responsible posts, workers who understand that they are not working in their local cause but in the cause of the whole of Russia, who are capable of sticking at their posts as representatives of the whole class, of organising the work according to a definite and systematic plan, of carrying out orders, of carrying out the decisions of the Moscow Soviet, of the Moscow organisations representing the whole of proletarian Moscow. The whole difficulty lies in organising the proletariat, in training it to become more class conscious than it has been up to now. Look at the Petrograd elections. You will see that although famine is raging there even worse than in Moscow and still greater misfortunes have befallen it, the loyalty to the workers' revolution is growing, organisation and solidarity are increasing, and you will say to yourselves: simultaneously with the growth of the disasters that have befallen us the determination of the working class to overcome these difficulties is growing also. Take this path, increase your efforts, put thousands of new detachments on this path to help to solve the food problem, and we, relying on your support, will overcome the famine and secure proper distribution.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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PAGE 5.* Lenin's work, *The State and Revolution*, was first published in December 1917. Since then numerous editions of it have been published in the U.S.S.R. and in other countries.

The publication of this book was an epoch-making event in the development of the revolutionary theory and practice of the proletariat. Appearing on the morrow of the October Revolution in Russia and explaining as it does the path of development of the proletarian revolution and of the state of the proletarian dictatorship created by this revolution, this pamphlet has been and remains a fundamental work for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which guides the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. It is also a fundamental work for the Communist Parties in all the capitalist countries, for the international revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the history of the struggle for the revolutionary theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, this pamphlet is the direct continuation of the struggle against Right opportunist and "Left" anarchist distortions of Marxism which was begun by Marx and Engels and was unceasingly waged by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party from the very birth of Bolshevism.

Marx and Engels hammered out their doctrine in the struggle against liberalism and petty-bourgeois reformism (Lassalleanism, etc.) and against anarchism (Proudhonism, Bakuninism, etc.), against "bloodthirsty radicalism," as Engels called it, and also against other "Left" trends which were merely the reverse side of petty-bourgeois narrow-mindedness, which likewise carried bourgeois influences among the proletariat, but in other forms. They were equally ruthless in their attacks upon the opportunist theories of the state, upon the lack of understanding and repudiation of the dictatorship of the proletariat by the successors of Lassalleanism, namely, the reformists in the ranks of the Socialist parties in the West which were formed during their lifetime. After their death, with the development of reformism in the Socialist parties affiliated to the Second International, this distortion of revolutionary Marxism and its renunciation assumed wide proportions as early as the end of the nineteenth century and affected growing circles of theoreticians and practical workers in the Second International (Bernsteinism, etc.). This did not meet with the necessary resistance on the part of those theoreticians of the Second International in the West who, like Kautsky,

claimed to be the executors of the will of Marx and Engels and who came forward in the role of champions of Marxism against the revisionists (Bernstein and others) but who, in fact, while criticising the revisionists, themselves sank to the level of revisionism on the fundamental question of Marxism, *viz.*, the question of the state, of violent revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Lenin says in this pamphlet, they *systematically vulgarised and emasculated Marxism.*

The fight against opportunism which Lenin waged from the very outset was a fight for the Marxian theory of proletarian revolution and for the development of this theory in the new conditions of growing imperialism. It was a fight for violent revolution, for a Marxian attitude towards the exploiters' state, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight developed on the basis "of fundamental questions of the Russian revolution such as the question of the Party, the attitude of Marxists towards the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, the hegemony of the proletariat, the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggle, the general strike, the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, imperialism, the self-determination of nations, the liberation movement of the oppressed nations and colonies, the policy of supporting this movement, etc." (Stalin.) This struggle was of enormous international significance because "the Russian revolution was (and remains) the nodal point of the world revolution," because at the same time "the fundamental questions of the Russian revolution were (and are now) the fundamental questions of the world revolution." (Stalin.) The important place the question of the state and of the dictatorship of the proletariat occupied in this struggle can be seen from the works of Lenin contained in the preceding volumes of *Selected Works*, and particularly from "What the 'Friends of the People' Are, etc.," in Volume XI, "The Economic Content of Narodism, etc.," in Volume I, "What Is To Be Done?" in Volume II, "The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" and "The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-07," in Volume III. It can also be seen from the article "A Contribution to the History of the Question of Dictatorship" in this volume.

In this struggle, Lenin directed the spear-head of his attacks against opportunism and particularly against the Bernstein, Martynov, Plekhanov and Trotsky distortions and vulgarisations of Marxism on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the paths by which it was to be achieved in Russia, *viz.*, through the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. At the same time, however, he fought against the distortions of Marxism on these questions from the "Left," particularly by the "Left radicals" in the Polish and German Social-Democratic Parties (Rosa Luxemburg and her followers).

During the World War certain members of the Russian Party were guilty of "Left" distortions of Marxism on the question of the state, and in their

views on imperialism and the socialist revolution they came close to the Polish and German "Left radicals." These comrades belonged to the Bukharin-Pyatakov group. In essence they arrived at the anarchist method of presenting the question of the state. This was already revealed when they and the Polish and German "Left radicals" defended their anti-Marxian positions on the national and colonial questions. (See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Volume V, "Imperialism and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination.") They rejected the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination; they asserted that this slogan could not be adopted by the proletarian party under *capitalism* and was superfluous under *socialism*, thus completely leaving out of account the *transition period from capitalism to socialism*, the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of the existence of the proletarian state, which cannot be built up unless the right of nations to self-determination is recognised and applied. This anarchist approach to the question of the state was very definitely expressed by Comrade Bukharin in 1916 in the magazine, *The Youth International*, in an article signed "Nota Bene" in which he identified the Marxian attitude towards the state with the anarchist attitude towards the state. He asserted that, like the anarchists, the Marxists were on principle opposed to the state in general, that Marxists and anarchists equally set themselves the task of "blowing up" the state. By asserting this he 1) denied the Marxian doctrine that it was necessary for the proletariat, after having broken up the state machine of the bourgeoisie, to create for the transition period from capitalism to socialism a *new* proletarian state, in other words he denied the need for the proletarian dictatorship and 2) he obscured the difference in principle between the anarchist "blowing up" of the bourgeois state and the Marxian destruction of this state, the "smashing," "breaking" of the state machine of the bourgeoisie. Lenin, in an article entitled "The Youth International" (see *Selected Works*, Volume V), attacked Bukharin's anarchist views on the question of the state and revolution and promised to deal further with the subject in a special article. At the same time the editorial board of the magazine *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*, of which Lenin was chief, rejected an article by Bukharin on the theory of the imperialist state, in which he enunciated his anarchist point of view. After Lenin's death, Bukharin published this article in the magazine, *Revolyutsiya Prava (Revolution in Law)*, No. 1, 1925, to which he appended a footnote stating: "The reader will readily see that I did not commit the mistake that was attributed to me, because I distinctly saw the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat; on the other hand it will be seen from Ilyich's [Lenin's] note that he was wrong in his attitude towards the postulate of blowing up the state (the bourgeois state, of course) and confused this question with the question of the withering away of the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . After studying the question, Ilyich arrived at the same conclusion about blowing up the state."

It is quite obvious from this footnote that in accusing Lenin of being "wrong" in his attitude towards the question of "blowing up" the state,

Bukharin, even after the experience of the October Revolution, after eight years of experience of the proletarian dictatorship and the building up of the Soviet proletarian state, still clung to his old position. He continued to confuse the anarchist "blowing up" of "the state (the bourgeois state, of course)" with the Marxian "smashing," "breaking up" of the bourgeois state machine.

Comrade Stalin, in his speech on the Right deviation in the C.P.S.U. delivered at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party in April 1929, gave his opinion of Bukharin as a theoretician, dealt in great detail with the latter's position on the question of the state and exhaustively proved that this position was incompatible with the Marxist-Leninist attitude towards the state. Comrade Stalin said: "... The point here is that in the opinion of Comrade Bukharin (and of the anarchists) the workers should emphasise their hostility in principle to the state as such, and, hence, to the state of the transition period, to the working class state. Try to explain to our workers that the working class must become imbued with hostility in principle to the proletarian dictatorship, which, of course, is also a state. Comrade Bukharin's position as set forth in his article in *The Youth International* is that he repudiates the state in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Comrade Bukharin here overlooked a 'trifle,' namely, the whole transition period, during which the working class cannot get along without its own state, if it really wants to crush the bourgeoisie and build socialism. That is the first point. The second point is that it is not true that Comrade Lenin at that time did not deal in his criticism with the theory of the 'blowing up,' of the 'abolition' of the state in general. Lenin not only dealt with that theory, as is obvious from the passages I have cited, but he severely criticised it as an anarchist theory, and opposed it by a theory of the *creation* of a new state after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, namely, the state of the proletarian dictatorship. Finally, the anarchist theory of 'blowing up' the state must not be confused with the Marxian theory of the 'breaking up,' the 'smashing' of the *bourgeois* state machine. Certain comrades are inclined to confuse these two distinct conceptions in the belief that they are an expression of one and the same idea. But that is wrong, comrades, absolutely wrong. Lenin proceeded only from the Marxian theory of the 'smashing' of the *bourgeois* state machine when he criticised the anarchist theory of 'blowing up' and 'abolishing' the state in general." (See *Leninism*, Vol. II.)

After dealing with Bukharin's footnote to his article in *Revolyutsiya Prava*, mentioned above, Comrade Stalin went on to say: "He" (Bukharin) "decided that henceforward, not Lenin, but he, *i.e.*, Comrade Bukharin, was to be regarded as the creator, or at least the inspirer, of the Marxian theory of the state. Hitherto we regarded ourselves, and we continue to regard ourselves, as Leninists. But now it appears that both Lenin and we, his pupils, are Bukharinites. Rather funny, comrades. But what can we do when dealing with the puffed-up pretentiousness of Comrade Bukharin?"

In this speech Comrade Stalin quoted at length from Lenin's notebooks on

"Marxism and the State," which showed what importance Lenin attached to the struggle against Comrade Bukharin's anarchist views on the state. In these notes Lenin wrote: "What distinguishes us from the anarchists is (α) the use of the state *now* and (β) during the proletarian *revolution* ('the dictatorship of the proletariat')—points of extreme and immediate importance in practice. (But it is these very points that Bukharin *forgot!*)"

"What distinguishes us from the opportunists is the more profound, 'more permanent' truths regarding ($\alpha\alpha$) the temporary nature of the state, ($\beta\beta$) the *harm* of 'twaddle' about it now, ($\gamma\gamma$) the not entirely state character of the dictatorship of the proletariat, ($\delta\delta$) the contradiction between the state and freedom, ($\epsilon\epsilon$) the more correct idea (conception, programme-term) 'community' in place of state, ($\zeta\zeta$) the 'smashing' (*zerbrechen*) of the bureaucratic-military machine. It must not be forgotten also that the outspoken opportunists in Germany (Bernstein, Kolb, etc.) directly repudiate the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, and the official programme and Kautsky *indirectly* repudiate it, ignoring it in their day-to-day agitation and *tolerating* the renegacy of Kolb and Co.

"In August 1916, Bukharin was written to: 'allow your ideas regarding the state to *mature*.' Without, however, allowing them to mature he broke into print as 'Nota Bene' and in such a way that, instead of unmasking the Kautskyists, he *helped* them by his errors!... And yet, in essence, Bukharin is nearer to the truth than Kautsky." (Quoted by Stalin in his speech on the Right deviation, *Leninism*, Vol. II.)

Writing to Comrade Kollontai on the same subject on March 2 [February 17], 1917, Lenin wrote: "I am preparing (I have the material nearly ready) an article on the question of the attitude of Marxism towards the state. I have arrived at conclusions that are sharper against Kautsky than against Bukharin (have you seen his 'Nota Bene' in *The Youth International*, No. 6, and *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*, No. 2?). The question is one of supreme importance. Bukharin is much better than Kautsky, but Bukharin's mistakes may *kill* this 'good cause' in the fight against Kautskyism."

Thus, Bukharin's anarchist position and his anarchist criticism of opportunism on the question of the state only helped the Kautskyan vulgarisation and emasculation of Marxism and thus caused enormous harm in the struggle against Kautskyism.

As may be seen from the extract from the letter to Comrade Kollontai quoted above, Lenin had "the material nearly ready" for his work on the question "of the attitude of Marxism towards the state." This work was *The State and Revolution*. The materials for this were the notebooks on "Marxism and the State" referred to above. The February Revolution for a time prevented Lenin from completing the book. He was only able to do so after the July days of 1917. The Kerensky government had issued an order for Lenin's arrest and so he went into hiding in a hut in the middle of a field in the village of Razliv, on the Finnish border. There he asked for the materials to be sent to him and resumed his work. Later he continued

it in Helsingfors, Finland. But he was unable to complete it. He only managed to write six chapters and to begin on the seventh, which was to have dealt with the experience of the Revolution of 1905 and the February Revolution of 1917. The work was interrupted by the unfolding of the October Revolution.

PAGE 5.** The monopoly of powerful capitalist combines, trusts and syndicates, headed and directed by finance capital (industrial capital merged with bank capital) through the banks, is one of the most important and characteristic features of imperialism. In his work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin says: "If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism, we should have to say that imperialism is the *monopoly* stage of capitalism." (Our italics.—*Ed.*) During the period of the World War this monopoly capitalism which characterises the epoch of imperialism was transformed into *state-monopoly* capitalism. A distinction must be drawn between state capitalism under the *proletarian* state and state capitalism under the bourgeois state. Under the proletarian state, state capitalism is private capitalism (*e.g.*, enterprises leased from the state by private persons, concessions, etc.) regulated by the proletarian government in the interests of the proletariat. (See "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," chaps. III and IV, in this volume.) Under the bourgeois state it means that capitalist enterprises, or even whole branches of economy, are owned by the bourgeois state, or, in other words, by the bourgeoisie as a class, or else it is private capitalist industry, agriculture or commerce regulated by the bourgeois state in the interests of the bourgeoisie. During the imperialist war the interests of the bourgeoisie in the belligerent countries demanded such regulation and standardisation of capitalist production and distribution for the purpose of subordinating them to the interests of "national defence" and the "fight to a finish" for the predatory aims pursued by the imperialist bourgeoisie in the belligerent countries. It is this regulation of production and distribution that Lenin here calls "the process of transformation of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism." Lenin repeatedly pointed to this "process of transformation" in a number of his previously written works. For example, in an article entitled "The Turn in World Politics," written in January 1917, he wrote: "... world capitalism, which . . . in the beginning of the twentieth century grew into *monopoly* capitalism, *i.e.*, imperialism, made a considerable stride forward during the war, not only towards the greater concentration of finance capital, but also towards transformation into *state capitalism*." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XIX.) And the symptoms of this considerable stride, he thought, was the adoption of state regulation of national economy. In the same article he wrote: "The extent to which modern society has ripened for the transition to socialism has been revealed by the war, during which the exertion of all the efforts of the nation called for the regulation of the economic life of more than fifty million people by *one* centre." (Lenin here refers to Germany.) The

question of state capitalism in imperialist countries during the war and the significance of state capitalism for the proletarian revolution is dealt with in the article "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," chaps. III and IV, in this volume.

PAGE 8.* The great German philosopher Hegel, who developed the dialectical method, was an idealist. It was Marx who converted Hegel's dialectics into materialist dialectics, "put it right side up" (Marx, in his preface to *Capital*, Vol. I, said it was "standing on its head") and, jointly with Engels, created dialectical materialism. (See *Selected Works*, Vol. XI.) Being an idealist in general, Hegel remained an idealist in his doctrine of the state. According to his theory man is innately moral. Man does not create morality; it exists independently of him in his general consciousness as a special moral law. This law, in its turn, is the manifestation of the "absolute spirit," of "absolute reason," which lies at the base of the whole universe and demands the unconditional obedience of all. The state is the product of this moral law, its supreme consummation. The moral idea, which *exists independently of man*, is concretely realised in the state. Hence, according to Hegel, the state must not be regarded as the instrument of the interests of individual persons, social organisations or classes.

Hegel's conception of the state was opposed to the bourgeois doctrine of the state propounded before him by Jean Jacques Rousseau, who regarded the state as the product of the "social contract" which was the expression of the totality of the wills of all the individual members of society. Rousseau's theory of the state lacked the class conception of the state as the organisation of the ruling class; nevertheless, for his time it was a revolutionary doctrine, for it taught that the state was man's creation and could be changed by man. According to Hegel's theory of the state this was not possible, because, according to Hegel, the state is the product of the absolute spirit, absolute reason, the expression, the manifestation of the "absolute spirit," which is beyond the sphere of man's influence.

PAGE 11.* As will be seen from the passages Lenin quotes, by "self-acting armed organisation" Engels meant primitive tribal society in which all the members capable of bearing arms did so. In so far as there was no private property, no class division and no antagonism between the private interests of the individual members of the tribe and the interests of the tribe as a whole, the arming of all the members of the tribe was possible. In a society which is divided into classes of oppressors and oppressed and which has a state as the organisation of the class rule of the oppressors, the place of the "self-acting armed organisation" is taken by "special bodies of armed men," a standing army, a police force, etc., which serve as instruments for the armed protection of the rule of the oppressing classes and for the suppression of the oppressed classes.

PAGE 14.* The absolute monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in France (Louis XIV, XV and XVI) immediately preceded the French Revolution of 1789. The commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, which developed within the framework of feudal society, steadily became economically and politically stronger. Although living by means of the feudal exploitation of the peasants, the feudal landlords themselves often became financially dependent upon the growing bourgeoisie. At a definite stage of development a certain equilibrium set in between the forces of the bourgeois class and the feudal landlord class. The bourgeoisie was not yet strong enough to seize power, while the feudal landlords, having become economically weak, were not able to rule independently. The state power, which in essence was a feudal landlord power, was compelled to heed the persistent demands of the bourgeoisie and to satisfy them within certain limits in order to protect the interests of its class, namely, the feudal landlords. At the same time, the king, who was merely the largest feudal landlord in the country, relied on the feudal landlord class in bringing pressure to bear upon the bourgeoisie, particularly in regard to squeezing money out of them for the purpose of maintaining the state apparatus. When, however, he desired to resist the efforts of the feudal landlords to restrict his power he relied upon the bourgeoisie. It was this position of the absolute monarchy that served as the external reason for the argument that the state stood above the conflicting classes and intervened in the struggle between them only for the purpose of conciliating them. As a matter of fact, the absolute monarchy was the state of the decaying feudal class. As soon as the bourgeoisie became strong enough it overthrew the absolute monarchy and established its own class state (the Great French Revolution of 1789-94).

PAGE 20.* Engels here refers to the Social-Democratic Party of Germany which at that time was the strongest unit in the international labour movement.

PAGE 25.* A striking example of the betrayal of the interests of the toiling classes by the alleged Socialists, who were in fact petty-bourgeois democrats, in 1848 and in 1871, is that of Louis Blanc. In 1917, Lenin wrote: "The French Socialist, Louis Blanc, gained deplorable fame in the Revolution of 1848 by changing from the position of the class struggle to the position of petty-bourgeois illusions, adorned with alleged 'Socialist' phraseology, but in reality serving to strengthen the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. Louis Blanc expected aid from the bourgeoisie; he hoped, and aroused the hope in others, that the bourgeoisie could aid the workers in 'organising labour'—this vague term having been supposed to express 'Socialist strivings.'" (See *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, "In Louis Blanc's Footsteps.") Louis Blanc failed to understand the class character of the state and denied that the proletariat must wage a revolutionary struggle for power. By "socialism" he meant the organisation of public workshops in all branches of industry with the aid

of the democratic state, with the aid of the bourgeoisie and its capital. And these workshops, he believed, would enable the working class, quite peacefully and without a revolutionary struggle, to replace the capitalist "competitive system" by the socialist system of workers' associations. After the revolution in February 1848, Louis Blanc joined the bourgeois Provisional Government and succeeded in securing the appointment of a commission to investigate the conditions of the workers (known as the Luxembourg Commission), of which he was the chairman. In this commission he and his followers conscientiously fulfilled the function the bourgeoisie had assigned to them, *viz.*, to divert the workers from the revolutionary struggle by endless talk about "organising labour" and "public workshops" while the bourgeoisie actively prepared to crush the working class. And the bourgeoisie carried out its designs by the ruthless suppression of the June rising of the Paris workers in 1848. Later, in 1871, when the Paris Commune was established, Louis Blanc remained in Versailles with the Thiers government, which subsequently crushed the Paris Commune. While the bourgeoisie was organising its forces for the purpose of crushing revolutionary Paris, Louis Blanc preached that the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie were identical, and in this way he helped to cloak the shooting of the Paris communards with the name of "the whole French people."

PAGE 25.** This refers to the "Ministerialism" of the opportunists of the Second International who justified and practised the entry of Socialists into bourgeois governments. The first case of this kind was the entry of the French Socialist Millerand in 1899 into the government of which General Gallifet, the butcher of the Paris Commune, was a member. Millerand did this on the pretext of forming a united government to defend the Republic from the monarchist movement. The question of whether it was permissible for Socialists to join bourgeois governments was discussed at the Fifth International Socialist Congress in Paris in 1900. Jules Guesde, the representative of the Left wing of the French Socialists, moved a resolution forbidding "any participation whatever of Socialists in bourgeois governments, towards which Socialists must take up an attitude of unbending opposition." This resolution was defeated. The Congress passed an "elastic centrist resolution," moved by Kautsky, which stated: "The entry of a single Socialist into a bourgeois Ministry cannot be considered the normal beginning for winning political power; it can never be anything but a temporary and exceptional makeshift in an emergency situation. Whether, in any given instance, such an emergency situation exists is a question of tactics and not of principle." The resolution subjected the entry of Socialists into bourgeois governments to the condition that they obtained the consent of their Party and remained under its control. Thus, although Millerand's entry into a bourgeois government without the consent of his Party was formally condemned, the principle of Socialists joining bourgeois governments was conditionally approved and justified by the congress. After the Millerand case Socialists began to join bourgeois

governments in other countries. This assumed an extremely widespread character during the imperialist war when the majority in all the Socialist Parties in Western Europe became social-chauvinists. Then even Guesde, who in 1900 had protested against Socialists joining bourgeois governments, became a Minister in the government of the French bourgeoisie.

PAGE 27.* The Revolution of February 1848 in France placed power in the hands of the liberal republican section of the bourgeoisie. The characteristic feature of this revolution was that the working class for the first time came out with its own class demands. This revealed the enormous extent to which the working class had grown, and served as a signal for the bourgeoisie of the immediate danger that threatened its rule. That is why the immediate task of the government of the liberal bourgeoisie set itself was to crush the revolutionary working class. This it succeeded in doing in the brutal suppression of the June uprising of the working class in Paris against the bourgeois government. But the growing anger of the workers after the June massacre warned the bourgeoisie that the immediate danger to the bourgeois system had not been removed. That is why after the June massacre it was easy to unite all the bourgeois parties in the "Party of Order," in a single *bloc*, for the common cause of suppressing the labour movement and reinforcing the bourgeois system. Urged by the fear of working class rebellion, the bourgeoisie of all shades strove to create a strong government that would be the organiser of "order." In this, they found strong support among the wealthier section of the rural population, which was interested in stabilising the capitalist system. By resorting to demagogy the bourgeoisie also succeeded in winning over to its side a considerable section of the urban petty bourgeoisie which had been frightened by the menace of the destruction of private property by a workers' revolution. Under these conditions the bourgeoisie was able at first to conceal its counter-revolutionary measures under the cloak of a general election and thus create the illusion that the "will of the whole people" was being expressed. For a short time the state power took the form of a parliamentary republic headed by a president, and Louis Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, was elected to this post. During the presidential election Bonaparte received the votes of the big urban bourgeoisie, of the wealthy peasants in the rural districts, and also of the majority of the *small peasants*, who had been deceived by the hope that the Bonaparte government would protect them from the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois republic. In *The Class Struggles in France*, Marx wrote: "Napoleon, for the peasants, was not a person but a programme. With banners, with beat of drums and blare of trumpets, they marched to the polling booths shouting: *Plus d'impôts, à bas les riches, à bas la république, vive l'Empereur!* No more taxes, down with the rich, down with the republic, long live the emperor! Behind the emperor was hidden the peasant war. The republic they voted down was the republic of the rich." (Chap. II.) This was the section of the peasantry which at that time was the majority, and which,

as Marx said, represented "not the revolutionary, but the conservative peasant ... not the country folk who want to overthrow the old order through their own energies linked up with the towns, but on the contrary those who, in stupefied bondage to this old order, want to see themselves with their small holdings saved and favoured by the ghost of the Empire." (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, chap. VII.) The election of Louis Bonaparte as president was but the first step towards the establishment of the monarchy: the interests of the big bourgeoisie, the desire to crush the working class, the desire to introduce class terror against the working class and the revolutionary section of the peasantry which was in a state of rebellion, called for the reinforcement of the "strong government." On December 2, 1851, Louis Bonaparte, with the aid of the army, and with the consent of the bourgeoisie itself, which had elected him as president, brought about a *coup d'état*, dissolved the Legislative Assembly and proclaimed his period of presidency to be extended for ten years. After the *coup d'état*, amidst undisguised class terror against the working class, Bonaparte proclaimed himself Emperor Napoleon III. Thus the Second Empire came into being, which lasted until September 1870.

PAGE 27.** The legitimist monarchy of Louis XVIII and Charles X in France lasted from 1815 to 1830. After the fall of Napoleon I the feudal landlords who had been banished after the Revolution of 1789 were restored to power with the aid of the reactionary governments of Europe, and with them the old Bourbon dynasty was also restored. This was the epoch of White terror and the annulment of the reforms brought about by the Great Revolution. But during the period of restoration the legitimist monarchy could not abolish the fundamental social and economic changes brought about by the revolution; they could not restore the feudal relationships in the rural districts or the guild system in the towns. The policy of this monarchy, however, was subordinated to the interests of the feudal landlords who had been overthrown by the Great Revolution. Incidentally, as compensation for the losses caused them by the revolution, they received a grant of one billion francs. During these years the upper stratum, the aristocracy, as it were, of the bourgeoisie, was allowed to share power under certain conditions. The constitution, "granted" from above, and the protection of national industry secured the support of this upper stratum of the bourgeoisie for the monarchy. But industrial capitalism began to make rapid headway in France, and the bourgeoisie, and, of course, its upper stratum, became strong enough to take power entirely in its own hands; this put them in opposition to the Bourbon monarchy. The implacable hatred of the peasantry towards the landlords, the growing poverty among the urban artisans and proletarians, the opposition of the petty bourgeoisie which was being ruined by capitalism, and, finally, the conflict between the industrial bourgeoisie and the existing regime—all made another revolution inevitable in France. This revolution broke out in July 1830 and was the expression of the protest of the broad masses against

the determined attempt of Charles X to abolish even the pretence of a constitution and to restore the regime of Louis XVI, who had been beheaded in 1793. The government troops were defeated by the people, Charles X fled and the "legitimist monarchy" gave way to the *bourgeois monarchy*.

The *July monarchy*, as it was called, existed from 1830 to 1848. As a matter of fact, it was only a section of the bourgeoisie, the *financial aristocracy*, that ruled under this monarchy. These were the "bankers, stock-brokers and railway kings and a section of the landowners who joined them: owners of coal mines, iron mines and forests" (Marx). Louis Philippe, the "bourgeois king," came into power by the will of capital. During the revolution of July 1830, victory was torn out of the hands of the masses of the people owing to their weak state of organisation and to the treachery of the republican section of the bourgeoisie. Under the reign of the July monarchy the industrial revolution was completed in France; during the 'forties the factory and the machine became established in French industry. A considerable section of the peasantry was in the power of the usurers. Soon a severe struggle broke out between the industrial and financial bourgeoisie for preference in exploiting the workers and the masses of the peasants. The employers required the extensive proletarianisation of the peasantry, its divorce from the land; the usurers and bankers dreamed of tying the peasants to their small plots of land. The petty bourgeoisie was driven from power and only the rich property owners enjoyed the franchise. All this gave rise to a number of antagonisms in the country which served to create the conditions for another revolution. During this period the proletariat acquired considerable importance. Owing to the growth of factory industry the reign of the July monarchy saw the growth of the labour movement. In 1847 the antagonisms in the country had matured sufficiently for another revolution and the latter became inevitable. The fate of the July monarchy was determined by the Revolution of February 1848 (see preceding note).

PAGE 33.* Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, represents, as Lenin said in his reply to it, "a very striking example of that complete and most disgraceful bankruptcy of the Second International which all honest Socialists in all countries have been talking about for a long time." (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, preface, in this volume.) It was published in August 1918, at the height of the counter-revolutionary attack of the home and international bourgeoisie against the young and not yet consolidated dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia. By his renegade sophistry, "hypocritically recognising" Marxism *in words* only to conceal his "base renunciation of it in practice," by his slanderous attacks upon the October Revolution, upon the Soviet government led by the Bolshevik Party, and upon its leader, Lenin, and by his defence of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revisionaries, Kautsky was already at that time directly serving the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and interventionists and was their ideological inspirer.

PAGE 37.* Marx was of the opinion that, as a rule, power could pass to the proletariat only as a result of a violent revolution, but in certain countries it was possible, he thought, as an exception, for power to pass to the proletariat peacefully. In addition to the passage from the letter to Kugelmann which Lenin quotes, and in which Marx limits the inevitability and the need for a violent revolution to the Continent of Europe, *i.e.*, conceives of England and America being the exceptions to the rule, Marx also indicated this possibility for England and Holland in a speech he delivered at the Hague in 1874. In his pamphlet, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany*, Engels mentions Marx's statement that "it would be advantageous for the proletariat to ransom themselves from the whole of this gang," *i.e.*, buy out the land, the factories and other means of production from the bourgeoisie. In addition to the passage in *The State and Revolution* here commented on, an explanation of Marx's opinion in regard to this question will also be found in "Left-Wing Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," in this volume. In both cases Lenin shows that the reasons which induced Marx to believe that a peaceful transition of power and the means of production to the proletariat was possible in England are no longer valid. At the Fifteenth Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Stalin dealt with this question twice. He said: "The limitation or exception which Marx conceived of in the case of England and America was valid as long as there was no developed imperialism and developed bureaucracy in those countries. In Lenin's opinion this limitation no longer applies in the new conditions of monopoly capitalism, when militarism and bureaucracy have developed in England and America no less, if not more, than on the Continent of Europe. Therefore, violent revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is an inevitable condition of the advance towards socialism in all imperialist countries without exception. That is why the opportunists of all countries, in clutching at the conditional limitation which Marx conceived of, and in opposing the dictatorship of the proletariat, are defending not Marxism, but their own cause. Lenin arrived at this conclusion because he was able to distinguish between the letter of Marxism and the substance of Marxism; he regarded Marxism, not as a dogma, but as a guide to action."

PAGE 42.* Eduard Bernstein was a prominent opportunist in the pre-war period, a social-chauvinist during the war and a social-fascist after it. In 1897 he wrote a series of articles for the theoretical organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, *Neue Zeit*, entitled "Problems of Socialism," which in a slightly revised form were afterwards published in book form under the title *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democracy*. In these articles he "criticised" Marxism like an agent of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement and repudiated the fundamentals of Marxism. For the growth and intensification of the contradictions of capitalism he substituted the subsiding of the struggle and collaboration between the proletariat and

the bourgeoisie; instead of the inevitability and need for the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat he predicated the peaceful transformation of capitalist society by means of the collaboration of classes on the basis of bourgeois democracy and the peaceful evolution of capitalism into socialism. On these grounds he demanded that the Social-Democratic Party be converted from a party of the proletariat into an inter-class party of social reform, *i.e.*, in effect, into a liberal-bourgeois party. In these articles he "exercised his talents in repeating the vulgar bourgeois jeers" at the "primitive democracy" of Marx and Engels. The editorial board of the *Neue Zeit*, of which Kautsky was the head, not only accepted Bernstein's articles, but even published them without any comment. Later on, Kautsky belatedly criticised Bernstein; but on a number of questions, particularly on the fundamental questions of the revolutionary theory of Marxism, namely, the questions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the need for the proletariat breaking up the bourgeois state machine, his "criticism" was "not an argument *against* Bernstein, but in essence a *concession* to him, a surrender to opportunism." (See chap. VI, sec. 2.) Subsequently, the verbal criticism and condemnation of Bernstein and Bernsteinism by Kautsky and the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party and of the Second International were accompanied by increasing concessions to Bernsteinism and by the adaptation of "orthodoxy" to opportunism. As Comrade Stalin has said: "... the opportunists adapted themselves to the bourgeoisie; as for the 'orthodox' they adapted themselves to the opportunists. ... As a result, opportunism dominated; because the links between the policy of the bourgeoisie and the policy of the 'orthodox' were joined." (Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, "Foundations of Leninism.")

From the nineties of the last century onward, Lenin consistently fought against Bernstein and his adherents Vollmar, David, Herz and Co. and against opportunism generally in the Social-Democratic Party of Germany and in the Second International. In 1900-03, under Lenin's leadership, *Iskra* and *Zarya* were the only consistent fighters against the Bernsteinians and their Russian followers, the Economists. And the only party which from its formation in 1903 consistently pursued a course towards rupture with the opportunists in Russia and in the whole of the Second International (including the Centrist Kautskyists) was the Bolshevik Party.

PAGE 49.* Proudhon, the "founder of anarchism," as Lenin calls him later on, preached under the guise of socialism the return from capitalism to small production, thus expressing the reactionary utopian strivings of the petty bourgeoisie. He was of the opinion that the working class could be emancipated by ensuring for every worker the individual ownership of the means of production and the product of his labour. Proudhon and his followers pictured the society that was to take the place of capitalist society as a federation of co-operative associations of small private producers. This society was

to be established peacefully by means of the organisation of a so-called "people's" or "exchange" bank. This bank was to ensure the "fair" exchange of the products of the small producer which would fully compensate him for the labour he expended ("labour" would exchange for "labour"). This would ensure the small producer against ruin. This bank was also to supply the proletariat with free credits for the purpose of obtaining means of production and of transforming him into a small producer. Repudiating the state in general, Proudhon and his followers also denied that it was necessary for the proletariat to capture political power or to wage a political struggle.

In opposition to the Proudhonists, the Marxists are of the opinion that the emancipation of the working class can only be achieved by the abolition of classes and the foundation upon which they rest, namely, private property, by the proletariat capturing political power, establishing the proletarian dictatorship, expropriating capitalist property and in a revolutionary manner transforming capitalist society into socialist society. The founders of Marxism, Marx and Engels, waged an implacable struggle against Proudhon and his followers. As far back as 1847, Marx in his *Poverty of Philosophy* subjected Proudhonism to withering criticism. Proudhonism was fairly widespread among the workers in France, Belgium and other Latin countries. But, as a result of the constant struggle which Marx and Engels waged against it, for example, in the book just mentioned, in *Engels' Housing Question*, as well as in their practical work in guiding the international proletarian movement, particularly the First International, it was, as Engels stated in the preface to his *Housing Question*, "finally supplanted among the workers of the Latin countries also."

PAGE 52.* In Italy and France in the Middle Ages the free towns were called communes, which enjoyed the right of self-government. In some places the towns obtained their charters by fighting the feudal lords. In other places they obtained them in exchange for a money payment.

PAGE 56.* Reference is here made to an article by Marx, entitled "Political Indifference," and an article by Engels, entitled "The Authoritarian Principle," which were written in opposition to the Proudhonists and published in 1873 in an Italian annual entitled *Almanacco Reppublicano per 1874*.

PAGE 60.* In his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx severely criticised the programme of the Socialist Labour Party of Germany that was adopted at its congress in Gotha in February 1875. He described it as being thoroughly imbued with Lassalleian opportunism. At the Gotha Congress the two Socialist organisations that existed at that time, *viz.*, the opportunist Lassalleans and the Marxian Eisenachers, combined to form the Socialist Labour Party of Germany. The programme that was adopted was the result of

a compromise between the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers. This programme remained in force until the Erfurt Congress of the Party held in 1891, at which a new programme was adopted, known as the Erfurt Programme, which was also severely criticised by Engels because it contained a number of opportunist propositions.

PAGE 64.* The Anti-Socialist Law was in operation in Germany for twelve years, from 1878 to 1890. The law was passed for the purpose of suppressing the labour movement in Germany which was making tremendous headway. The law deprived the working class and its party of political rights. It empowered the police to close down the trade unions and all other workers' associations and to suppress all publications which "in a form menacing the public peace, and particularly the harmony between the various classes of the population serve Social-Democratic, socialist or communist aims which have for their object the undermining of the foundations of the existing state and social system." It also empowered the police to prohibit meetings, the collection of funds for Social-Democratic purposes, etc. Persons convicted of violating this law were liable to imprisonment. It authorised the police to deport offenders; and the central authorities were empowered to declare a state of siege in various towns and localities if they considered it necessary.

At first the operation of the law was limited to two and a half years, but on the demand of the government its operation was prolonged several times by the Reichstag and so it continued until 1890. It is calculated that during the operation of the law 1,300 periodical and other publications and 332 workers' organisations were suppressed. Over 900 persons were deported and no less than 1,500 were tried and sentenced to imprisonment. The actual number of persons who suffered penalties of various kinds was certainly much larger. In spite of all this, the law failed to break the labour movement in Germany and the Social-Democratic Party continued to grow and gain in strength. It adapted itself to the semi-legal conditions of existence and transferred the publication of its central organ and held its congresses abroad. When the law was finally repealed, the Social-Democratic Party trebled its vote at the elections (from 500,000 to 1,500,000); the membership of the trade unions increased fourfold (from 50,000 to 200,000) and the number of journals published greatly increased. But while the Party grew and gained in strength as a result of the twelve years' struggle under the Anti-Socialist Law, opportunism and conciliation with opportunism became deep-rooted among the leading circles of the Party as a result of the fact that they had adapted themselves to legality within the restricted possibilities of the Anti-Socialist Law. Marx and Engels, and after Marx's death Engels alone, waged an unceasing struggle against this opportunism and conciliation and watched every step in the activities of the Party and its leaders. The correspondence of Marx and Engels with the leaders of the Party in the period 1879-91 was largely devoted to this.

PAGE 66.* This refers to the United Kingdom of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Although Ireland at that time was under the direct rule of England, separate laws were passed for that country, as is done for Scotland to this day.

PAGE 66.** By the "revolution from above" of 1866 and 1870" in Germany is meant the unification of the various German states, principalities and dukedoms into a single German state, under the hegemony of Prussia. This unification was brought about by the *Junker* government of Prussia headed by Bismarck. The split in the ranks of the German Socialists of that time, between the Lassalleans, who supported the "revolution from above," i.e., the policy of Bismarck, and the Eisenachers, led by Marx and Engels, who stood for "a movement from below," to which Engels refers here, was connected with this unification. In this connection, Lenin, in an article entitled "August Bebel," wrote: "The question of the unification of Germany was on the order of the day. This could take place, amidst the relation of classes that existed at that time, in one of two ways: either by means of a revolution led by the proletariat and creating a German republic, or by Prussian dynastic wars which would strengthen the hegemony of the Prussian landlords in a united Germany. Lassalle and the Lassalleans, seeing little chance of success for the proletarian and democratic path, pursued wavering tactics, and adapted themselves to the hegemony of the *Junker* Bismarck. The mistake they made was that they diverted the workers' party to the Bonapartist-state-socialist path. On the other hand, Bebel and Liebknecht consistently pursued the democratic and proletarian path and fought against the slightest concession to the *Junkers*, Bismarckism and nationalism. And history justified Bebel and Liebknecht, notwithstanding the fact that Germany was united in the Bismarckian way."

PAGE 67.* The Constitution of 1791, created by the Great French Revolution, put in the place of the old centralised bureaucratic apparatus extensive local self-government based on the electoral principle, although with certain limitations of the franchise for those who owned no property. The country was divided into departments, arrondissements and communes (i.e., urban and rural municipalities). Every town and rural commune had its elected municipal council, and governing bodies for the larger administrative areas were also elected. All these local governing bodies enjoyed extensive powers. In particular, the police were under their jurisdiction and when necessary they had the right to call for the aid of regular troops. The central government did not appoint any of its representatives to these local governing bodies. Legislative powers were concentrated in a single Chamber of People's Representatives. There were repeated struggles on the question of the rights of the local government bodies in the period of the revolution, but the system remained in force until the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire, 1799, when power passed into the hands of the Consuls, with Napoleon Bonaparte as

First Consul (subsequently he became Emperor). The Constitution of the Year VIII (according to the new calendar adopted after the Revolution), drawn up by Napoleon, while preserving the outward form of a republic, concentrated dictatorial power in the hands of the First Consul. The elected local government bodies were abolished and in their place prefects were appointed who were subordinate to the First Consul. The arrondissement and municipal councils were reduced to the position of the prefects' offices. All the local administrators, including the judges, were appointed by the First Consul, as were also the Ministers and the officers of the army and navy. The First Consul alone had the right to initiate legislation. The two Legislative Chambers, the *Tribunat* and the *Corps Législatif*, were appointed by the *Senate Conservateur*, which in its turn was appointed by the First Consul. In 1802, when Napoleon was proclaimed Consul for life, his dictatorial powers were still further increased. Thus, after the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire, in place of the principle of decentralisation that prevailed during the republic, the strict bureaucratic centralisation of the whole apparatus of administration was introduced and the apparatus was subordinated to the First Consul who exercised dictatorial powers. The bureaucratic centralised administration corresponded to the interests of the bourgeoisie which feared that the masses of the people would again rise in revolution and which dreamed of establishing a strong government that would ensure the stability of the bourgeois order. The principle of electing public bodies appeared to be dangerous to the bourgeoisie because this would have strengthened the forces of the opponents of the bourgeoisie among the masses. The principle of bureaucratic centralised administration was preserved in France throughout the nineteenth century and, combining itself with the "democratic" republic, it exists in a modified form to this day.

PAGE 68.* Bund, i.e., Federation. Switzerland is a federation of twenty-two cantons. According to the constitution each canton is a sovereign state; but in proportion as large-scale capitalism developed in Switzerland the independence of the canton, to which Engels refers, diminished. The Constitution of 1848 gave the central government considerable powers over the cantons, but even this constitution did not satisfy the growing industrial and financial-commercial bourgeoisie which strove to achieve the greater economic unity of the country. In 1872 the bourgeoisie took a referendum on a proposed centralised constitution, but it was rejected, mainly by the votes of the peasantry. In 1874 another draft of a constitution was submitted to a referendum which also contained the principle of centralised government, but which was worded in a more cautious form. This draft was carried and is in force to this day. After the adoption of the Constitution of 1874, the striving for centralisation, which reflected the development of industrial and finance capital, found expression in the adoption of numerous amendments to the constitution, all tending to increase the powers of the Federal Government over the cantons, particularly in regard to economic questions.

PAGE 68.** As early as April 1917, the Constitutional-Democratic Party, or the Cadets, as they were called, with Milyukov at their head, demanded the arrest of Lenin and the suppression of *Pravda*. After the events of July 16 and 17, the counter-revolution gained the upper hand and began to break up the Bolshevik organisations. On the night of July 17, the Junkers (students of the Military Academy) wrecked the offices of *Pravda*, and on July 18 and 19 they wrecked the printing offices of the paper, which had been equipped with the aid of funds collected by the Petrograd workers, and killed a worker named Voynov who had removed the copies of *Listok Pravdy* which had been printed. On July 28, the Minister for War, Kerensky, issued an order for the closing of *Pravda*, and of *Okopnaya Pravda (Trench Truth)*, the organ of the military organisation of the Riga Committee of the Lettish Social-Democratic Party. This order was issued on the basis of a decree of the Provisional Government passed on July 26 authorising the Minister for War to "close periodical publications which incite to disobedience of the orders of the military authorities, which incite to non-fulfilment of military duty and which contain appeals for violence and civil war, the responsible editors to be prosecuted in the prescribed order." After a brief interruption the publication of the central organ of the Bolshevik Party was resumed under different titles (*The Worker and Soldier, The Proletarian, The Worker*), the name being changed each time the Kerensky government suppressed the paper under the preceding title.

The reference which Lenin makes to his article in *Pravda*, No. 68, of June 10 [May 28], 1917, is to the article "One Question of Principle." (See *Collected Works*, Vol. XX.) In this article Lenin mentions the very passage from Engels quoted in the text and exposes the gross infringements of democracy by the "Socialist" Ministers (the Mensheviks Tseretelli and Skobelev) during the conflict between the Kronstadt Soviet and the Provisional Government over the question of electing officials. The Kronstadt Soviet refused to accept the Commissar for Kronstadt appointed by the Provisional Government. Tseretelli and Skobelev, whom the Provisional Government had sent to Kronstadt to settle the question, forced upon the Kronstadt Soviet a "compromise" resolution which proposed that in the future the Commissar elected by the Soviet be endorsed by the Provisional Government. This was only one of the many infringements of democracy by the "Socialist" Ministers to the detriment of the interests of the workers, sailors and soldiers, only one of the steps towards counter-revolution which, together with their party, they definitely took after the July days. It was part of the service they were rendering to the counter-revolution.

PAGE 69.* The Bolsheviks had arranged for a peaceful demonstration to take place on June 23 [10], 1917, to protest against the policy of continuing the war pursued by the Provisional Government. The First Congress of Soviets, which was then in session, and in which the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were in the majority, banned the demonstration. Tseretelli, a pro-

minent Menshevik and leader of the defencist Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, at a meeting of the presidium of the Congress, demanded that the workers be disarmed. He said: "The Bolsheviks must be combated not with words, not with resolutions; they must be deprived of all the technical means in their possession." This "historical and hysterical" speech, as Lenin described it in another place, clearly demonstrated that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had deserted to the camp of the counter-revolution and it signalled the beginning of the open offensive against the working class. Lenin compared the role of Tseretelli in demanding the disarming of the workers to that of the French General Cavaignac, Minister for War after the February Revolution of 1848 in France, who brutally suppressed the rebellion of the Paris workers in June of that year.

PAGE 70.* The cause of the "shameful collapse" of German Social-Democracy in 1914, *i.e.*, its utter betrayal of socialism and its desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie in the imperialist war, was the growth and final victory of opportunism. This victory had been complete even before the war, but it manifested itself with the utmost clarity in the very first days of the war when at the meeting of the Reichstag on August 4, 1914, the Social-Democratic deputies voted for the war credits. In the name of the Social-Democratic fraction, Haase read a declaration which ended with the words: "We shall vote for the required credits." There were differences of opinion within the fraction on this question, however; 78 of the deputies were in favour of voting for the credits while 14 (Karl Liebknecht and others) were opposed to doing so. The minority, however, was prohibited from making its own declaration in the Reichstag, "and even Karl Liebknecht, that tireless fighter against militarism, obeying Party discipline, submitted to this prohibition." On the second vote of war credits in the Reichstag on December 2 in the same year, Liebknecht, alone of all the Social-Democratic deputies, voted against the credits. For further details of the collapse of German Social-Democracy and of the whole of the Second International see *Selected Works*, Vol. V, particularly the article "The Collapse of the Second International."

PAGE 72.* By "some Marxists" Lenin means the advocates of Left opportunist views on the national-colonial question, *i.e.*, Rosa Luxemburg and her followers among the Polish and German Social-Democrats and the Bukharin and Pyatakov group in the Russian Party. For Lenin's criticism of these views which, as Comrade Stalin said, represented "a semi-Menshevik hodge-podge," which was "an out-and-out underestimation of the national and colonial question," see *Selected Works*, Vol. V, Part IV, "Imperialism and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination."

PAGE 74.* Lenin raised the question of changing the name of the Party in his April Theses: "Instead of 'Social-Democrats,' whose official leaders throughout the world have betrayed socialism by deserting to the bourgeoisie (the 'defencists' and the vacillating 'Kautskyists') we must call ourselves a

Communist Party." (See *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," and also "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," Thesis 19.) Lenin's proposal was adopted at the Seventh Congress of the Party, held in March 1918, when the name of the Party was changed from the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks) to the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

PAGE 90.* From the very beginning of the World War, Plekhanov adopted a Right social-chauvinist position. He declared that tsarism was waging a just war and an interview with him was published in the Italian press in which he justified "Russia's war of liberation against Germany's striving to convert her into her colony" and urged the desirability of the defeat of Germany. At the same time he justified the social-chauvinist conduct of the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party. Declaring that it was "unpleasant to shake the hand [of the German Social-Democrats] that reeks of the blood of the innocently killed," he nevertheless proposed that they be granted an "amnesty." He wrote: "It would be quite in place here to subordinate the *heart to reason*. For the sake of the great cause of the International even a belated declaration must be taken into consideration." The prominent leaders of anarchism mentioned by Lenin acted in the same "Plekhanovist" way from the very outbreak of the war.

PAGE 115.* Lenin's pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* was written in October-November 1918 and published at the end of that year as a reply to a pamphlet by Kautsky entitled *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, in which he made a counter-revolutionary attack on the dictatorship of the proletariat and on the proletarian revolution in Russia, which had established this dictatorship. In the present pamphlet Lenin replies to Kautsky, denounces him as a renegade from Marxism and, utterly exposing the counter-revolutionary nature of his attack, further develops in a more concrete manner the fundamental ideas he enunciated in his previous work on the proletarian revolution and the proletarian dictatorship, *The State and Revolution* (in this volume).

Analysing the stages which the revolution in Russia had passed through, Lenin in this pamphlet makes a theoretical analysis of the various problems that were brought to the front in the course of the class struggle in the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this analysis, Lenin devotes special attention to the problem of bourgeois and proletarian democracy and links it up very closely with the problem of class relationships in the proletarian revolution. At a time when an immediate revolutionary situation was maturing in Germany and when broad strata of the working class still harboured illusions about the revolutionary character of the Social-Democrats in general and of Kautsky in particular, the latter, by substituting the idea of "pure" democracy, by which was meant bourgeois democracy, for the Marxian doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat,

pursued the aim of diverting the minds of the workers from the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and from the necessity of the proletariat establishing its own class dictatorship by armed force. Lenin reveals the utter futility and the counter-revolutionary nature of Kautsky's attempt to refute the doctrine of the violent proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, which he, Lenin, had developed in his book, *The State and Revolution*, on the basis of the works of the founders of Marxism. Lenin shows why it is wrong to speak about democracy "in general" and about "pure" democracy, why one must speak about bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy. He shows also that the Social-Democrats, in defending "pure" democracy, were really defending the *bourgeois* state, and that in doing so they strove to prove that the proletariat must not use violence against its class enemies. He exposes the totally anti-Marxian character of Kautsky's arguments about democracy in general and dictatorship in general, of his contrasting the one with the other, and proclaiming bourgeois democracy to be democracy for all. Kautsky asserted that there could be no democracy under a dictatorship, and hence that there was no democracy under the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. As a matter of fact, the dictatorship of the proletariat, by abolishing bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie which lay concealed behind it, establishes proletarian democracy, democracy "for the poor," in place of democracy "for the rich." According to Kautsky, Marx never recognised that it was necessary for the proletariat to establish its own class dictatorship. He argued that the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" used by Marx in a number of his works was an accidental slip of the pen, which should be interpreted to mean "universal democracy" and formal equality. Lenin, in this pamphlet, utilising the rich experience of the class struggle, shows that there can be no equality between the exploited and the exploiter. Kautsky, in his admiration for the formal equality that exists under bourgeois "universal" democracy, refused to see its reverse side—the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. He obscured the core of the question of the class struggle of the proletariat, namely, the question of the proletarian dictatorship. He denied the most important thing—the necessity of waging the struggle until the dictatorship of the proletariat is established. Kautsky transformed Marx into an advocate of the peaceful evolution of capitalism into socialism, utterly distorting his revolutionary theory. He conceived the possibility of the proletariat achieving victory by winning a majority in parliament and totally rejected the only real path of transition of power to the working class, *viz.*, violent revolution.

Lenin's striking exposure of this counter-revolutionary theory by means of evidence brought from the international experience of the proletarian class struggle, and primarily from the experience of the revolution in Russia, was of exceptional significance at a time when in Western Europe class battles were assuming increasing dimensions and intensity. Lenin revealed the class nature of democracy and showed the difference between bourgeois

democracy and proletarian democracy. He showed that Kautsky obscured the fact that the rule of each class has its own special form of democracy: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie has bourgeois, formal democracy, whereas the dictatorship of the proletariat has proletarian democracy. He showed that the rule of the proletariat is incompatible with the preservation of bourgeois democracy, which is only a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and an instrument for the suppression of the proletariat and of all the toilers in the interests of the bourgeoisie. Lenin quotes striking examples to illustrate how in Russia, in the very first months after the October Revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat introduced genuine democracy for the overwhelming majority of the population—proletarian, Soviet democracy. Simultaneously, he exposes the real, *i.e.*, the counter-revolutionary meaning of Kautsky's defence of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, whom he, Kautsky, tried to palm off as real socialists. He shows that the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties were enemies of the revolution, that they displayed activity only in fighting against it. The Bolshevik Party was the only party that fought for the socialist revolution, for the dictatorship of the proletariat and, hence, for proletarian democracy, *i.e.*, democracy for the broad masses of the toilers.

The present pamphlet is really a direct continuation of Lenin's work *The State and Revolution*. It enriches the doctrine of the proletarian revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat with a number of new theoretical propositions which logically followed from the experience of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia already accumulated at the time it was written.

PAGE 115.** Struvism (from the name of P. Struve, the so-called Russian legal Marxist; for further particulars see note to p. 456* in *Selected Works*, Vol. I) and Brentano-ism (from the name of the German professor Brentano) were theories which took from Marxism its admission that capitalism was progressive compared with feudalism and semi-feudalism, but rejected the essence of Marxism—the class struggle of the proletariat for the establishment of its dictatorship, the necessity and inevitability of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian dictatorship. Plekhanov was already slipping into Struvism even before the imperialist war, and during the war he used it as grounds for justifying his social-chauvinist position. He was fond of repeating the proposition—which was absolutely correct for pre-war Russia—that Russia was suffering not so much from the development of capitalism as from the inadequate development of capitalism; but he drew utterly non-Marxist conclusions from it. He argued that the *sole task of the proletariat* in the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905-07 in Russia was to remove the obstacles to the development of capitalism. Thus he saw only the tasks that confronted the bourgeoisie and failed to see the *independent* class aims of the proletariat in this revolution. He denied that the proletariat had any independent tasks, and opposed these tasks as formulated by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in their slogan "the revolutionary-

democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry," the realisation of which would ensure the possibility of passing from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution immediately after the overthrow of tsarism. Plekhanov was of the opinion that in the bourgeois-democratic revolution the proletariat should not take up any special class tasks that would run counter to the tasks of the bourgeoisie, that all the proletariat should do was to support the bourgeoisie, push it forward, enter into an agreement or *bloc* with it, but not to frighten it away from the revolution and not to break up the united front with it by employing the tactics and the slogans advocated by the Bolsheviks. On the outbreak of the imperialist war, Plekhanov adopted a pronounced social-chauvinist position, and one of the principal arguments he advanced in support of this position of defending tsarist Russia was his old argument that Russia did not suffer so much from the development of capitalism as from its inadequate development. The defeat of Russia by Germany, he argued, would lead to the economic enslavement of Russia, to the *retarding of the development of Russian capitalism*, whereas the proletariat was interested in the development of capitalism in its country, for it alone paved the way to socialism. Hence, the proletariat should have gone to war in defence of tsarist Russia. He rejected the argument that the war was an imperialist war, and he rejected the special tasks which confronted the proletariat of all the belligerent countries in the midst of the growing revolutionary crisis caused by the war, namely, the tasks formulated by Lenin in his slogan "transform the imperialist war into civil war." Just as in the conditions of the 1905-07 Revolution, so also in the conditions of the imperialist war, Plekhanov rejected the special class tasks which confronted the Russian proletariat at that time, namely, through the bourgeois-democratic revolution to pass *immediately* to the socialist revolution, and in this way turn the country from the capitalist path of development to the socialist path. Plekhanov, like Struve and the Struvists in the nineties of the last century, allowed the progressive character of capitalist development to obliterate the class tasks of the proletariat. And just as Struve with his alleged Marxism found himself in the camp of the bourgeoisie, so Plekhanov, by distorting, vulgarising and emasculating Marxism, found himself in the camp of the bourgeoisie in the period of the war.

PAGE 116.* Lenin here refers to Kautsky's book *The Road to Power*, published in 1909, which deals with the question of the political revolution of the proletariat. In it Kautsky argued that in the new epoch of war and revolution that was approaching the proletariat could "win and firmly maintain political power." He spoke of the struggle for power as a "noble struggle" and of the winning of power as a "magnificent victory." In one of the chapters of this pamphlet, he even mentioned "the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat," which was advanced by Marx and Engels, the slogan of "the political sovereignty of the proletariat as the sole

form in which it can exercise its state power." Nevertheless, taking the pamphlet as a whole, Kautsky showed that he was very far from being a genuine Marxist. As Lenin says, even in this, one of the relatively good books written by Kautsky in the pre-war period, and one which dealt with the proletariat's "road to power," "the special features of the proletarian revolution are obscured." Hence this pamphlet served only as another link in the chain of Kautsky's literary pronouncements, by means of which he prepared for himself the "loop-hole" for the complete surrender of his positions and for sinking to the level of "pure and despicable opportunism" and to the "renunciation of revolution in deeds while recognising it in words" which Lenin pointed to during Kautsky's controversy with Pannekoek in 1912 (see end of last chapter in *The State and Revolution*, in this volume).

PAGE 120.* For what Marx and Engels said about the necessity of smashing the bourgeois state machine, see Lenin's *State and Revolution*, chaps. III and IV.

PAGE 127.* Anti-authoritarians—those who repudiate all authority, all subordination and all government, and also the political struggle. This was the title adopted by the anarchist Proudhonists (see also note to p. 49*).

PAGE 127.** This refers to the French petty-bourgeois Social-Democratic Party led by Ledru-Rollin, which acted as the Left opposition in the Constituent Assembly in France in 1848. The majority in the Assembly consisted of Monarchists. The Social-Democratic Party relied for support upon the urban petty bourgeoisie, a section of the peasantry and certain sections of the proletariat which had not yet abandoned their petty-bourgeois illusions and foolishly believed that it was possible to realise "the right to work" under capitalism and to emancipate the workers from capitalist bondage by means of free credits, etc. In the political sphere, the Social-Democratic Party demanded "the sovereignty of the people," *i.e.*, a democratic republic and universal suffrage. It was in favour of state intervention in economic relationships and of the introduction of a progressive income tax. This Social-Democratic Party did not, however, demand the socialisation of the means of production. A class analysis and an appreciation of the activities of this party are given by Marx in his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* and *The Class Struggles in France in 1848-1851*.

PAGE 127.*** For the nature of this amendment, see Lenin's *State and Revolution*, chap. III, sec. I, in this volume.

PAGE 127.**** The words quoted by Lenin were uttered by Rosa Luxemburg after the German Social-Democrats in the Reichstag had voted the war credits on the outbreak of the imperialist war (see note to p. 70*).

PAGE 129.* The Jesuits were a militant order of Catholics, known as the

Society of Jesus, founded in Spain in the sixteenth century by the soldier and priest, Ignatius Loyola, for the purpose of fighting for the protection of the Catholic religion and of the power of the Pope and the Catholic Church. The Jesuits carried out the Bloody Inquisition in the Catholic Church, and the history of their order is a history of murder, plunder, torture and the stake. After the discovery of America, the Spaniards and Portuguese subjugated the native population with fire and sword. The persecution of the Indians in South America was particularly cruel. The population fled to the forests, and when the Jesuit missionaries visited the country at the end of the sixteenth century they found the formerly flourishing land in a state of utter ruin. The Jesuits decided to "tame the natives" by other means. They allowed the population a certain amount of liberty, but they compelled them all, without exception, to till the land and to work in the service of their "benefactors." For two days in the week the Indians were allowed to work for themselves, and for the rest of the week they presented their labour as a "gift to God," i.e., to the Jesuits. Reactionary European publicists described this system as "the communism of the Jesuits in Paraguay." What this "communism" amounted to was that the Jesuits and their Order became rich and the Indians were transformed into their serfs. The Jesuit colonies existed in South America up to the middle of the eighteenth century.

PAGE 131.* By "internationalist minorities" in all "democracies of the world," Lenin means the revolutionary oppositions in the Socialist parties affiliated to the Second International, which were formed in a number of countries at the time of the imperialist war. Such a group, for example, was the International group, later known as the Spartacus League, which was led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in Germany. These groups did not "despicably betray socialism," and did not go over to the side of "their" bourgeoisie, but fought against it, fought against the war, and against open and concealed (Centrist) opportunism. They were not, however, sufficiently consistent in their internationalism and in their struggle against social-chauvinism; they hesitated to break off all connections with the Second International, and on a number of questions (for example, on the national-colonial question) they took up an anti-Marxian and semi-Menshevik position. The Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin, was the only party that was thoroughly consistent in its revolutionary and internationalist position, and, while supporting these groups in their fight against the Second International and uniting them under its leadership in what was known as the Zimmerwald Left, it combated their inconsistencies and their "Left" opportunist, semi-Menshevik attitude on a number of questions.

PAGE 132.* Lenin here refers to the campaign of lies and slander waged against the Bolsheviks by the press and the agitators of the bourgeois parties in April 1917 in connection with the arrival in Russia of Lenin and a number of other political exiles from Switzerland through Germany in a sealed car.

The bourgeoisie accused Lenin and the Bolsheviks generally of being German agents. This campaign was supported by the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

PAGE 133.* The elections to the State Dumas, under the tsar, were conducted on a class basis, the electors being divided into separate categories, or *curiae*, each *curia* being given a certain number of deputies, so apportioned as to give the landlords and capitalists an overwhelming majority. The workers were put in a separate *curia*. During the elections to the Second Duma, the workers' *curia* elected twenty-three deputies—twelve Mensheviks and eleven Bolsheviks. Later, the law passed by Stolypin on June 16, 1907, allowed only six deputies for the workers' *curia*. By a special clause in this act, the working class electors in the Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kostroma, Vladimir, Kharkov and Ekaterinoslav gubernias were grouped in a separate *curia*. In each of these gubernias, the workers elected their delegates to the gubernia electoral college, which consisted of the delegates of all the *curiae*, and this college was obliged by the law to elect one workers' deputy. In the other gubernias of the country this law did not apply, and it was almost impossible for the workers to secure the election of any of their deputies. During the elections to the Third and Fourth Dumas, the Bolsheviks managed to secure the election of their candidates in all six of the gubernia electoral colleges. The Bolsheviks utilised the Dumas as a platform from which they exposed and attacked the reactionary policy of the tsarist government and the bourgeois parties, and called the attention of the masses of the toilers to the tasks of the struggle of the proletariat.

PAGE 133.** As soon as it came into power, the Soviet government published the secret treaties concluded between the tsarist and Provisional governments and the Allies, and thus exposed the true objects for which the war was being waged. During the peace negotiations with Germany, the Soviet government published in full the text of the speeches delivered on both sides and also the documents connected with the negotiations, and emphasised its hostility to the secret diplomacy of the bourgeoisie.

PAGE 145.* The first Soviet of Workers' Deputies was formed in Ivanovo-Voznesensk during a strike in the summer of 1905. During the general strike in October 1905, Soviets of Workers' Deputies were formed in a number of other important industrial centres. Frequently, the strike committees were transformed into Soviets. The leading role among the Soviets in 1905 was played by the St. Petersburg Soviet, the influence of which was nation-wide. The Moscow Soviet also played a very important part by leading the December movement in Moscow in that year. It declared a general strike and transformed it into an armed uprising. The Bolsheviks fought the Mensheviks on the question of the role and significance of the Soviets and of the role of the Party within them. The Mensheviks argued that the Soviets ought to be "organs of revolutionary self-government," "independent" of all political parties, including the party of the proletariat. The Bolsheviks regarded the

Soviets as "organs of the direct mass struggle of the proletariat," organs of insurrection and of the new revolutionary government, which should be led by the party of the proletariat.

PAGE 157.* The slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly" was advanced by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in March 1917, but, as a matter of fact, they and the bourgeoisie did all they could to put off the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. After the October Revolution, which transferred power to the Soviets, this slogan became nothing more nor less than the slogan of the bourgeois counter-revolution, because the transfer of power to the Constituent Assembly would then have meant the overthrow of the power of the Soviets and the liquidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. During the Civil War of 1918-20, this slogan served to rally all the counter-revolutionary elements.

PAGE 158.* By "revolutionary democracy" the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries meant their own parties and the Soviets, in which, in the period from March to August 1917, they were in the majority. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to reconcile the existence of the Soviets with the existence of a "democratic," *i.e.*, parliamentary, and therefore bourgeois state power. In their opinion the Soviets were to serve as "talking shops" and to have no power whatever. With their chatter about "revolutionary democracy" at a time when it was necessary to mobilise the working class and all the toilers for the struggle against the rule of the capitalists and for the rule of the Soviets, the Mensheviks served the bourgeoisie, disorganised the working class and the peasantry, fought with all their might against the Soviets taking power, and disintegrated them. In July 1917, the Soviets, under their leadership, had ceased to represent the real relationship of class forces in the country and to serve as the real representative of the masses of the workers and soldiers, who were now following the lead of the Bolsheviks. As Lenin said, they had become "a fig-leaf of the counter-revolution." In an article entitled "Firm Revolutionary Power" (*Collected Works*, Vol. XX), Lenin says: "When one speaks of 'revolution,' of the 'revolutionary people,' of 'revolutionary democracy,' etc., nine times out of ten it is a lie or self-deception." The lie consisted in the fact that in scattering phrases like "democracy," "revolution" and "revolutionary democracy," the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries glossed over the class character of the Soviets and of the bourgeois state and obscured the fact that it is impossible for the Soviets, as organs of the proletariat and of the toiling masses led by the former, to live peacefully side by side with the bourgeois state when the proletariat and the toiling masses are conscious of their interests. Lenin replied to these phrases about "revolutionary democracy" in the following words: "Gentlemen heroes of the phrase! Gentlemen knights of revolutionary grandiloquence! Socialism implies a distinction between capitalist democracy and proletarian democracy, between

bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution, between the rise of the rich against the tsar and the rise of the toilers *against the rich.*" (*Collected Works*, Vol. XX, "The Harm of Phrases.")

PAGE 159.* The Democratic Conference was convened by the Kerensky government after the Kornilov mutiny for the purpose of restoring the prestige of the Provisional Government. The Conference took place in Petrograd and lasted from September 27 to October 5. It consisted of representatives of the Zemstvos, co-operative societies and certain other public organisations, of the trade unions and of the Soviets. The representatives of the Soviets were in an insignificant minority at the Conference. The Democratic Conference elected a Provisional Council of the Republic, which became known as the "Pre-parliament." The purpose of this Council, after representatives of the bourgeoisie—the so-called property qualification elements—had been added to it, was to serve as a representative organ until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. This Council, however, enjoyed no prestige whatever. The government ignored its decisions as well as the decisions of the Democratic Conference. It merely wished to utilise the Conference and the Pre-parliament as a pretext for putting off the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. In a letter addressed to the Central Committee, the Petrograd Committee and the Moscow Committee of the Party, Lenin wrote: "The Democratic Conference represents *not* a majority of the revolutionary people, but *only the compromising upper stratum of the petty bourgeoisie.* . . . the Democratic Conference is deceiving the peasants: it is giving them neither peace nor land." He demanded the boycott of the Democratic Conference and of the Pre-parliament. For Lenin's struggle against the Right opportunists—Kamenev, Rykov, and others—on this question, see "From a Publicist's Diary. The Mistakes of Our Party," and the corresponding notes, in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.

PAGE 162.* After the insurrection in Paris on March 18, 1871, the bourgeois government of Thiers fled to Versailles and there began to organise its forces for the purpose of crushing the Paris Commune. At first they tried to persuade Bismarck to occupy Paris, which was then besieged by the Prussian troops. But Bismarck refused, and thereby compelled the Versailles, who at that time had no forces of their own with which to fight the Paris Commune, to agree readily to the harsh peace terms which he imposed upon France. The Versailles had to agree to a somewhat different bargain than the one they desired in order to secure Bismarck's assistance in suppressing the Paris Commune. Marx describes the bargain concluded between the French bourgeoisie and Bismarck in the following terms: "These terms included a shortening of the intervals in which the war indemnity was to be paid and the continued occupation of the Paris forts by Prussian troops until Bismarck should feel satisfied with the state of things in France; Prussia thus being recognised as the supreme arbiter in internal French politics! In return for

this he offered to let loose, for the extermination of Paris, the captive Bonapartist army, and to lend them the direct assistance of Emperor William's troops. He pledged his good faith by making payment of the first instalment of the indemnity dependent on the 'pacification' of Paris." (Marx, *The Civil War in France*, part IV.) Thanks to this bargain with Bismarck, the Versailles government, headed by Thiers, obtained the armed forces with which to invade Paris and crush the revolution.

PAGE 162.** In 1918-19, the Ataman of the Orenburg Cossacks, Dutov, waged a counter-revolutionary war in the South Urals and the Trans-Volga regions. Dutov actively supported the Kolchak counter-revolution and co-ordinated his military operations with the Kolchak generals. After the Kolchak forces were compelled to retreat to Siberia, Dutov managed to hold on to his positions in Orenburg and cut off Turkestan from the rest of the Soviet Republic. After the Red Army captured Orenburg, the Dutov forces were routed. In 1918 General Krasnov waged a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet government in the region of the River Don, where he was defeated in 1919. After this defeat, the general leadership of the counter-revolutionary struggle in the South passed to General Denikin. For details of the Czecho-Slovak insurrection, see note to p. 166.*

PAGE 165.* By a decision adopted by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets on June 14, 1918, all the representatives of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were expelled from this body, and all Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and Cossacks' Deputies were instructed to expel the representatives of these parties from their midst. This decision was adopted because both these parties had openly joined the camp of the counter-revolution and actively supported the struggle for the overthrow of the Soviet government.

PAGE 166.* The Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Republic was organised by the governments of England and France in 1918. Previous to that, in the summer of 1917, the Provisional Government had formed an army consisting of Czecho-Slovak prisoners of war for the purpose of fighting the Germans on the Russian Western front. In 1918, after the Brest-Litovsk Peace had been concluded between the German and Soviet governments, the Commander of the Czecho-Slovak forces declared that they desired to be transferred to France. To this the Council of People's Commissars agreed. When the army was spread out along the Siberian Railway from Penza to Irkutsk, its Commander, on the instructions of the Entente governments and in agreement with the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, gave the order for rebellion against the Soviet government. With the aid of the Czecho-Slovak forces, the counter-revolutionaries seized the Urals and the Volga districts, and later Siberia. Protected by the Czecho-Slovaks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Constitutional-Democrats organised a Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly in Samara, proclaimed

it the "organ of Russian democratic government," and elected a Directorate of Five. This Directorate did not last long, however, as the Entente was interested in setting up a stronger counter-revolutionary government. Admiral Kolchak, who was Minister for War in this Directorate, dispersed this body and, in agreement with the Entente, proclaimed himself "Supreme Ruler." After a long struggle, the Red Army finally defeated the Czecho-Slovak and Kolchak counter-revolutionary forces in 1920; and later the Czecho-Slovak forces were repatriated to Czecho-Slovakia *via* Vladivostok.

PAGE 174.* During the Great French Revolution of 1789-94, power first passed into the hands of the big liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, then into the hands of the more revolutionary strata of the middle bourgeoisie, and later into the hands of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, represented by the Jacobins. At the time the latter were in power, the revolutionary government was obliged to organise its forces to repel the intervention of the feudal-monarchist states of Europe and to wage a revolutionary war against them. The old French army, which had been organised for the purpose of protecting the feudal monarchy and the landlords, and which was officered by members of the nobility, was, of course, useless for the purpose of waging a revolutionary war. The Jacobins had to organise a new army with officers drawn from the democratic strata of society; political commissars were appointed to the various units to represent the central government; extensive political educational work was carried on in the army, particularly in regard to supplying newspapers, etc. Strong in the fact that it was really the army of the revolution, this army proved invincible in the struggles against the feudal-monarchist states of Europe.

PAGE 175.* The Christian-Anarchists were a trend which criticised the state, the official church, private property and the whole of the capitalist order, but denied the necessity of waging a political or any other kind of struggle against the system, and particularly denied the necessity of resorting to violence. Their motto was "resist not evil by violence." They were of the opinion that it was possible to change the state of things by Christian conduct and by self-perfection. The celebrated Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy, was the principal theoretician of Christian-Anarchism, particularly in Russia. Tolstoyism found adherents mainly among the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. It was a reflection of the *immaturity* of the revolutionary protest of the peasantry. It was only by overcoming sentiments of this kind that the peasantry could come out as a revolutionary force in the Russian revolution. Lenin gives a class characterisation of the teachings of Tolstoy in his articles: "L. Tolstoy as the Mirror of the Russian Revolution" and "L. Tolstoy and His Epoch." (See *Selected Works*, Vol. XI.)

PAGE 181.* This refers to the occupation by the German troops of Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia and Esthonia in the beginning of 1918. In January and February 1918, Finland was in the grip of revolution. The insurgent work-

ers, supported by the peasantry, overthrew the bourgeois government, which had to retreat to the northern part of Finland. In March and April, German troops came to the assistance of the Finnish bourgeois government and helped to crush the revolution. In the Ukraine, the petty-bourgeois nationalist supporters of Petlura, with the aid of German troops, overthrew the Soviet government, which had not yet managed to consolidate itself; and later the German militarists overthrew the government of the nationalists, the so-called Rada, and established in its place the Black Hundred government of the Hetman Skoropadsky. In Latvia and Esthonia the German troops of occupation, after overthrowing the Soviets, drove the labour movement underground and organised the counter-revolutionary forces of these countries. Lenin, in speaking of the betrayal of the Russian and international revolution by the German proletariat, means the objectively reactionary role which the German workers and peasants in soldiers' uniform had to play in the districts occupied by the Germans owing to the fact that the Social-Democrats concealed the true nature of the imperial government from the workers and did all they could to retard the development of the revolutionary labour movement in Germany.

PAGE 185.* Lenin here refers to an article by Karl Kautsky entitled "The Driving Forces and the Prospects of the Revolution," written in 1906. At that time Kautsky took up a Centrist position in the struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism, but in this article he temporarily inclined towards Bolshevism in the interpretation of the Russian Revolution of 1905-07 and its driving forces. He characterised this revolution as "not a bourgeois" and "not a socialist" revolution, but a revolution in which the bourgeoisie was not the driving force and could not take power; nor could the proletariat *alone* achieve victory without the assistance of the peasantry, which is the ally of the proletariat in this revolution. Lenin regarded this temporary inclination of Kautsky towards the Bolshevik view of the Russian revolution as a victory for Bolshevism, and he utilised it in the articles he wrote in his controversies with the Mensheviks.

PAGE 186.* Lenin here refers to the explanation of the tasks of the proletariat in the revolution, which he so strikingly summed up in his pamphlet *The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* in the following words:

"The proletariat must carry out to the end the democratic revolution, and in this unite to itself the masses of the peasantry, in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution and in this unite to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population, in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie." (Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 110-11.)

Lenin developed this thesis long before 1905 in his pamphlet *To the Rural Poor*. (See *Selected Works*, Vol. II.)

PAGE 186.** Evidently, Lenin here refers to an article written by Marx at the end of 1848 entitled "The Bourgeoisie and Counter-Revolution" ("The Balance Sheet of the Prussian Revolution"), in which he compares the role of the bourgeoisie in the German revolution of 1848 with that of the English bourgeoisie in the Cromwellian revolution of 1648 and of the French bourgeoisie in the Great French Revolution of 1789. In this article Marx says: "The March Revolution in Prussia" (*i.e.*, the Revolution of 1848.—*Ed.*) "must not be confused with the English Revolution of 1648, or with the French Revolution of 1789. In these two last mentioned revolutions," he continues, "the bourgeoisie was the class which really stood at the head of the movement. The proletariat and those sections of the urban population which did not belong to the bourgeoisie either had no interests apart from those of the bourgeoisie, or else did not yet represent an independently developed class, or section of a class. Hence, where they opposed the bourgeoisie, as for example in France in 1793 and 1794, they only fought for the realisation of the interests of the bourgeoisie, although they did not fight in the bourgeois manner. . . ." "Unlike the French bourgeoisie in 1789, the Prussian bourgeoisie was not the class which represented the whole of modern society as against the representatives of the old society, the monarchy and the nobility. It sank to the level of a sort of estate opposed to both the crown and the people, was in opposition to both of its opponents and irresolute towards each of them separately, because it saw both of them either before or behind it; from the very beginning, it was inclined to betray the people and to compromise with the crowned representatives of the old society, because it had already become part of the old society. . . . Having no confidence in itself and no confidence in the people, without a world-historical mission—a decrepit old man cursed by all, who sees himself doomed in the interests of his own senility to lead the youthful strivings of a strong people and to mislead them—a decrepit old man who has lost his sight, his hearing, his teeth, has lost everything—such was the Prussian bourgeoisie that found itself at the helm of the Prussian state after the March Revolution." If this is what the bourgeoisie of Prussia, the principal state in Germany at that time, was like in the Revolution of 1848, the bourgeoisie of the rest of Germany was no better. This decrepit old man, cursed by all, ended by entering into a counter-revolutionary bargain against the workers and peasants and helped to crush the revolution. In his preface to the second edition of his *Peasant War in Germany*, Engels explains this bargain between the German bourgeoisie and the counter-revolution by the fact that at a certain point the bourgeoisie ". . . begins to notice that this, its proletarian double, is outgrowing it. From that moment on, it loses the power for exclusive political domination; it looks round for allies with whom it shares its domination,

or to whom it cedes its whole domination, as circumstances may demand. In Germany this turning point came for the bourgeoisie as early as 1848. . . . The German bourgeoisie was frightened not so much by the German as by the French proletariat." In June 1848, the proletariat of Paris made an attempt to seize power by armed force. This attempt was crushed, but it showed the German bourgeoisie "what it had to expect." And Engels goes on to say: "The German proletariat was just restless enough to make it clear that the seed of the same harvest had been sown in German soil also." In Russia in 1905, the proletariat was much stronger and better organised than the German proletariat in 1848, and, moreover, it was led by the Bolshevik Party of the proletariat. In the first Russian Revolution of 1905-07 the Russian bourgeoisie proved to be more decrepit, more inclined to conclude a bargain with the tsar, more counter-revolutionary than the German bourgeoisie in 1848. It betrayed the Revolution of 1905-07, it entered into direct alliance with the tsar and the landlords, and when the workers and peasants (clothed in soldiers' uniforms) overthrew the autocracy in February 1917, it tried to restore the monarchy and put the Grand Duke Michael in the place of Nicholas. Thus, in the bourgeois revolutions in Germany in 1848 and in Russia in 1905-07 and February 1917, "to go no further than the bourgeoisie" meant going no further than concluding a bargain with the "crown," with tsarism, with the counter-revolution.

PAGE 187.* During the imperialist war, a Left wing led by Spiridonova, Kamkov and Natanson-Bobrov began to be formed in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. After the February Revolution, this Left wing opposed the coalition with the bourgeoisie and the imperialist foreign policy of the Provisional Government. While remaining in their party, these Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, as they were called, formed a separate faction, which pursued an independent line on a number of questions. They did not have the courage, however, to break off all connections with the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. During the elections to the Constituent Assembly the Left Socialist-Revolutionary candidates ran on the same ticket as the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. At the Second Congress of Soviets, at the moment when power was seized by the Soviets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries left the Congress in protest; but the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries remained and elected their delegates to the Central Executive Committee. They still feared, however, to break off all relations with the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, and refused to appoint their representatives to the Council of People's Commissars. Moreover, they demanded that the Bolsheviks form a "homogeneous Socialist government consisting of representatives of all Socialist parties." It was only in December 1917, after much wavering and hesitation, that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries finally broke off all connections with the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and formed a separate party known as the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party (Internationalists). At

the end of November, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries agreed to appoint their representatives to the Council of People's Commissars. The Bolsheviks were in favour of forming a *bloc* with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, because *at that time* they more or less consistently expressed the revolutionary tendencies of the peasantry, its striving to consummate the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and were supported by the rural poor and the wavering middle peasants. But, while expressing the revolutionary strivings of the peasantry, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in their policy expressed the vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat that are characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie; and even when they were represented in the Soviet government they were in continuous conflict with the Bolsheviks. Very sharp disagreements arose between the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks at the time of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, in January and February 1918. The former were opposed to the conclusion of peace and withdrew their representatives from the Council of People's Commissars. In the summer of 1918, to the disagreements on foreign policy were added disagreements on questions of economic construction (the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were opposed to Lenin's economic plan advanced in the spring of 1918), on the question of the grain monopoly, on the grain prices policy, on the formation of Committees of Poor Peasants and on the sending of workers' food detachments to the rural districts to obtain food for the towns. As the class struggle in the rural districts developed, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries became the spokesmen of the kulaks, of the kulak counter-revolution that was developing in the rural districts against the socialist revolution, against the dictatorship of the proletariat, and, finally, they became the leaders of the kulak counter-revolution. On July 6, 1918, they rose in armed rebellion in Moscow against the Soviet government. Taking advantage of the fact that the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Alexandrovich was vice-president of the Cheka, two other Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, Y. Blumkin and N. Andreyev, secured forged documents with which they gained admission to the German Embassy in Moscow, threw a bomb there, and killed the German Ambassador, Mirbach. This was the signal for the Left Socialist-Revolutionary rebellion. Having seized the central telegraph office, the Central Committee of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party on the night of July 6 sent telegrams all over the country, stating: "Detain all telegrams signed by Lenin, Trotsky and Sverdlov and all telegrams sent by counter-revolutionaries, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, anarchists and all those who provoke the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries." In this wire the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries also proclaimed themselves the ruling party. The Left Socialist-Revolutionary rebellion was doomed to failure from the very outset, for it found no support in the Red Army or among the workers of Moscow or any other part of the country. The rebellion was crushed the very next day by the efforts of the masses of the Red Army and the workers. After this a section of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries went underground and continued to wage armed warfare against the

Soviet government. Another section, however, condemned the policy of their Central Committee and expressed themselves in favour of co-operating with the Bolsheviks. This section broke up into two independent parties, the Narodnik-Communist Party and the Revolutionary Communist Party. These parties did not exist long, however, and a considerable number of their members subsequently joined the Communist Party.

PAGE 191.* Lenin here refers to the following passage in Marx's letter to Kugelmann of April 12, 1871: "If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire* you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it, and that is essential for every real people's revolution on the Continent." (*Letters to Dr. Kugelmann*, p. 123.) The last chapter of *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, to which Marx refers in this letter, shows what people's revolution he had in mind. In this chapter Marx speaks of the smashing of the military-bureaucratic state machine in connection with the possibility of a *proletarian* revolution in France supported by a peasant "chorus," as the outcome of the inevitable overthrow of the monarchy of Napoleon III. (See *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, chap. VII.)

PAGE 193.* During the rebellion of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in Moscow in July 1918, the Central Committee of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party sent a telegram to the Left Socialist-Revolutionary, Muravyev, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army fighting against the Czecho-Slovaks, informing him of the rebellion in Moscow and announcing that they had declared war on Germany. Muravyev immediately issued an order to the troops to withdraw from this front and to march on Moscow, thus considerably weakening the front against the Czecho-Slovaks. Thanks to the Bolshevik Party leadership at the front, however, this order was not carried out, and Muravyev committed suicide.

PAGE 193.** The Land Committees were organised by the Order of the Provisional Government of May 4, 1917, in the capital, in the gubernias, uyezds and volosts. By setting up these committees, the Provisional Government hoped to pacify the peasants and to divert the growing peasant movement against the landlords into the channels of "voluntary agreements" between the peasants and the landlords, and thus avert the revolutionary solution of the agrarian problem by the complete abolition of landlordism. In pursuit of this policy, the Land Committees were instructed to collect material and to draw up a scheme of land reform to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly. Meanwhile, the Provisional Government and the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Parties, which joined it on May 6, 1917, declared that every attempt on the part of the peasants to solve the agrarian problem "independently," by revolutionary means, was harmful "to the cause of

liberty," and "unauthorised assumption of power" by the peasants was prosecuted with great severity, even to the extent of sending punitive expeditions to the villages. These measures, however, failed to pacify the countryside. The growth of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, which, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, was marching towards the socialist revolution; the influence of the proletarian movement in the countryside; the Party's work among the masses of the soldiers and in the rural districts, and its advocacy of the slogan "alliance between the proletariat and the rural poor, and the immediate seizure of the land by the peasants and the placing of it at the disposal of the Soviets of Peasants' and Agricultural Labourers' Deputies"; the fact that day after day the rural poor were joining the proletariat in increasing numbers and were securing increasing influence in the peasant movement against the landlords—all this led to the movement assuming more and more decisive forms. Thus, proceeding under the hegemony of the revolutionary proletariat, this movement at the end of the summer and in the autumn of 1917 assumed the form of genuine peasant uprisings in a number of gubernias, for example, in the Tambov, Voronezh, Tula, Kaluga, Ryazan and others. Contrary to the expectations of the Provisional Government and the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Parties, very often the Volost Land Committees took the lead in these peasant uprisings.

During these uprisings the peasants took the harvest from the landlords' fields and shared it among themselves; they wrecked the landlords' manor houses and divided up the property among themselves. It should be noted that at that time prominent Right Socialist-Revolutionaries like Avksentyev and Semyon Maslov were members of the Kerensky government—Maslov holding the post of Minister for Agriculture—which sent reactionary military forces to the rural districts to crush the peasant uprisings. The leaders of the uprisings were arrested, among them members of the Volost Land Committees. They were taken to the Butyrka prison in Moscow, and detained there until the October Revolution, when they were released by order of the Moscow Military-Revolutionary Committee.

PAGE 194.* Committees of Poor Peasants were instituted in the summer of 1918 in accordance with the decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of July 11, 1918, when the Party and the Soviet government were organising the grain campaign against the kulaks. These committees consisted of the poor strata of the rural population and their object was to unite the rural poor under the leadership of the proletariat, to fight against the kulaks, to develop the socialist revolution and strengthen the proletarian dictatorship in the rural districts. Under the leadership of the working class and the Bolshevik Party, they were of enormous assistance in breaking the resistance of the kulaks to the socialist revolution, in preparing the ground for passing from the policy of neutralising the middle peasants to that of alliance between them and the proletariat, with the latter still relying on the

village poor, and in preparing for the reorganisation of the village Soviets, which often came under the influence of the kulaks, and transforming them into genuine organs of the proletarian dictatorship in the countryside. These committees existed until the end of 1918; when they were replaced by newly elected village Soviets and Volost Executive Committees, in the elections of which the rural poor took a very active part.

PAGE 199.* The Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People was adopted at the Third Congress of Soviets in January 1918. It is the fundamental thesis of the Soviet constitution. The Declaration was drawn up by Lenin with the assistance of Stalin and Bukharin (for text see *Selected Works*, Vol. VI). It is a further development of Lenin's "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" (see *Selected Works*, Vol. VI). It was submitted to the Constituent Assembly on its opening on January 18, 1918, by the Chairman of the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets, Y. M. Sverdlov, in the name of that body, but the Assembly refused to discuss it and thereby repudiated the October Revolution and the Soviet government, whereupon it was dissolved. The Fifth Congress of Soviets adopted a draft of the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R., of which the Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People formed the preamble.

PAGE 204.* In his work, *Theories of Surplus Value* (Vol. II, chap. II, "Ground Rent. I. Rodbertus"), Marx criticises the theory of rent advanced by the German economist Rodbertus. Rodbertus "corrected" Ricardo and advanced the landowner as a participant in the creation of surplus value. Marx says ironically that the origin of Rodbertus' theory of rent is to be explained by the fact that Rodbertus himself "is too much of the old Prussian landlord." Marx showed that, even from the bourgeois point of view, the receivers of ground rent, *i.e.*, the landlords, are not essential participants in the capitalist process of production. "The capitalist and the wage worker are the only participants and factors in production," says Marx. The landlord is merely a participant in the distribution of the value of the finished product and receives part of it (part of the surplus value) in the form of ground rent. This takes place owing to the "relationships of property in the forces of nature, which did not grow out of the capitalist method of production, but were inherited" from the preceding feudal society, in which the big landlords predominated. Marx reveals the contradiction between private landownership and the capitalist mode of production. The ownership of land creates for the landlord privileges which "enable him to pocket part of the surplus labour, or surplus value, to the management of which, or creation of which, he makes no contribution. That is why, in the event of collisions, the capitalist regards him as an excrescence, as a sybarite, as a parasitic ulcer on capitalist production, as a louse on his coat." Lenin's reference to Kautsky's "excellent Marxian work on the agrarian question" is to a book entitled *The Agrarian Question*, published in 1898.

PAGE 206.* This refers to the "Theses on the Socialist Revolution and the Tasks of the Proletariat During Its Dictatorship in Russia," written by Bukharin in the summer of 1918 while on a journey abroad for the purpose of establishing contacts with the Spartacus League. These theses were distributed illegally in Germany by the Spartacus League. Lenin refers particularly to point 24 of these theses, which stated: "Further, mention must be made of the complete alienation of the large estates. The land and all minerals were declared to be public property. Future tasks: the organisation of state agriculture, the collective cultivation of the former latifundia, the amalgamation of small farms into large units, and collective management (so-called agricultural communes, etc.)."

PAGE 206.** This refers to chap. III, sec. 8, of Lenin's book *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-07*, which was written in 1907, but was confiscated and destroyed by the tsarist censor immediately after it was printed. The book was published for the first time in 1918. In this book, Lenin, on the basis of Marxian theory and of the experience of the Revolution of 1905-07, criticises the Menshevik agrarian programme adopted at the Fourth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, examines the programmes of the Constitutional-Democrats, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Trudoviki, and argues in favour of his own programme of *nationalising the land*, which he submitted to the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. The principal chapters of this book are given in *Selected Works*: chaps. I, II, IV and conclusion in Vol. III and chap. III in Vol. XII.

PAGE 210.* On the night of November 9, 1918, news was received of a revolution in Germany. This was the first result in the West of the imperialist war and of the influence of the Russian October Revolution. In the autumn of 1917, a mutiny broke out in the German naval fort at Kiel, but this was soon suppressed. In January 1918, a huge strike broke out in Germany in response to the declaration made by the Soviet delegation during the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, and in protest against the dragging out of the negotiations by the German government. In 1918 the demand for peace and the revolutionary struggle against the German government united broad masses of the toilers in Germany. In order to avert a revolution, the imperial government in October 1918 formed a cabinet in which it included several Social-Democrats who were followers of Scheidemann, the leader of the social-chauvinists. All attempts to retard the development of the revolutionary movement proved fruitless, however. On November 1 a mutiny broke out in the fleet stationed at Kiel, which within a few days spread to Berlin and other important centres in Germany. On November 9 Wilhelm abdicated and fled to Holland. The revolution liberated Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the leaders of the German Left wing, who had been flung into

prison by the government of Wilhelm. In Berlin and a number of other towns the Lefts took the lead in the movement. Having overthrown Wilhelm, the revolutionary workers and soldiers of Berlin proclaimed Germany a socialist republic. A Council of Revolutionary Factory Delegates was formed, which soon after was transformed into a Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Soviets sprang up in a number of other towns. Karl Liebknecht and his group set before the revolutionary proletariat the task of fighting for a Soviet government. But, on the one hand, the German Lefts, led by Liebknecht and Luxemburg, were far from being real Bolsheviks; they did not understand the strategy and tactics of Bolshevism and lacked the revolutionary experience and firmness of the Bolsheviks. Hence they committed a number of mistakes. On the other hand, their forces were weak and unorganised. They had only just broken with the Social-Democrats and begun to form an independent Communist Party, the inaugural congress of which was held in December 1918. For these reasons they were unable to lead the advanced revolutionary section of the German proletariat in a Bolshevik manner and take command of the movement as a whole. The Scheidemannists and Kautskyans retained the predominant influence among the proletariat. After the abdication of Wilhelm, power passed into the hands of the so-called Council of People's Deputies, which consisted of Scheidemannists and Independent Social-Democrats (Kautskyans), and after December 28 entirely of Scheidemannists. The Council of People's Deputies fixed the elections for the National (Constituent) Assembly for January 17, 1919, on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot, i.e., on the basis of bourgeois democracy. On the eve of the elections, the Berlin workers rose in rebellion, but were suppressed by the Social-Democratic government after stubborn fighting between the workers and the government troops. During this rebellion, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were arrested and brutally murdered. The petty bourgeoisie, frightened by this rebellion, voted for the bourgeois parties which promised to restore order. The bourgeois parties formed a government jointly with the Scheidemann Social-Democrats, and this government led the reactionary suppression of the labour movement. The National Assembly was an ordinary bourgeois parliament serving as a screen for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

PAGE 216.* Anton Menger, a bourgeois professor of law in Vienna, wrote a number of works, such as *A New Doctrine of the State* (1903), *The Right to the Full Product of Labour, Civil Law and the Propertyless Classes of the Population, A New Doctrine of Morality* (1905), etc., etc., in which he developed his theory of "a people's labour state," which in essence in no way differed from ordinary bourgeois democracy. Menger was one of the most important forerunners of the petty-bourgeois "Jurist Socialists," who developed the theory of the peaceful, "legal" evolution of capitalism into socialist society by means of the "democratisation of the politically and economically coercive system."

PAGE 216.** The slogan "A free people's state" (in other words, a bourgeois-democratic state with universal suffrage) was an item in the programme adopted by the German Social-Democratic Party at its Congress in Gotha in 1875. It was borrowed from Lassalle and his followers, with whom the German Marxists, or Eisenachers, as they were called, united at that time. This slogan served as a substitute for the Marxian idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and was very severely criticised by Marx in his letter to Bracke of May 5, 1875, and also by Engels in his letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875. See Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. Lenin deals with this slogan in detail in chaps. I and IV of *The State and Revolution*, in this volume.

PAGE 218.* The article "Democracy and Dictatorship," published in *Pravda*, No. 2, January 3, 1919, was written by Lenin in the period when a revolutionary situation prevailed in Germany and Austria at the end of 1918. Beginning with the November days in 1918, the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses of the workers in Germany and Austria continued to grow, but the majority of the workers were under the influence of the Social-Democrats who had long before betrayed the cause of socialism. The leadership of the majority of the workers was either in the hands of the Scheidemannists who were determined not to allow the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship to develop and to suppress the proletarian revolution, or in the hands of the Centrist Kautskyans (the "Independent" Social-Democrats) who, by word and deed, helped the Scheidemannists and echoed them in preaching "pure," i.e., bourgeois democracy which served to turn the masses of the workers from the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. The only party that set the masses of the workers in town and country the task of fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets was the Communist Party of Germany led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. But this party had only just been formed; it was far from being a genuine Bolshevik party, it committed a number of "Left" mistakes and was still weak and unable to direct the movement as a whole. In this article Lenin shows the unity of the Social-Democrats of both shades (Scheidemannists and Kautskyans) in defending the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and fighting against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

PAGE 223.* Lenin's theses and report on "Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" submitted to the First Congress of the Communist International (March 2-6, 1919) very distinctly dissociate the fundamental principles of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism from all pseudo-Marxian views on the fundamental question of the proletarian revolution, namely, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The First Congress of the Communist International was held in the period of great class battles all over the world. In all countries the proletariat was waging an offensive against the capitalist system and the bourgeois state. On the

basis of the experience of the Russian revolution, the proletariat advanced the Soviets as the form of organisation of their offensive operations. But the young Communist Parties which had only just been formed, which had not yet expanded into mass organisations, had not yet become Bolshevised and had not yet acquired sufficient fighting experience, were not in a position to exercise their leadership over the broad mass movement. Owing to this, an important role in the leadership of the mass movement was played by various alleged "Left" Kautskyan groups in the Social-Democratic parties. They preached to the proletariat that it was necessary to preserve "pure" democracy and tried to persuade it that it was possible to combine the latter with Soviets, and in this way disarmed the proletariat in the struggle against bourgeois democracy, *i.e.*, in the struggle against the rule of the bourgeoisie and for the rule of the Soviets.

This alleged "Left" position was most strikingly revealed among the German Kautskyans who at that time were organised in the Independent Social-Democratic Party led by Kautsky, Hilferding and Co. Lenin criticises the position of these "Independents" in detail in the present theses. The main object of these theses was to show the antithesis between bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat, between the bourgeois state and the proletarian, Soviet state. The theses concentrated attention upon the fundamental question of the proletarian revolution, *viz.*, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviet power as the form of this dictatorship, and on combating the false hopes the masses of the workers in the West placed in bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy. On the basis of a distinct interpretation of the nature of the class tasks of the proletariat in the socialist revolution, the division between the adherents of the Communist International and its opponents became still wider.

PAGE 228.* Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the leaders of the German proletariat, were arrested in January 1919, during the rebellion of the Berlin workers and soldiers against the Social-Democratic government. On the way to prison they were brutally murdered by the officers who had charge of them. The murderers were tried by court-martial, but were acquitted. The responsibility for this murder and for the acquittal of the murderers rested entirely upon the Social-Democrats.

PAGE 229.* For a long time Switzerland was regarded as the freest of bourgeois countries. Owing to the peasant character of the population, the comparatively slow development of the rule of large-scale industrial and bank capital, the relatively slight centralisation of the administration and the lack of a strong administrative apparatus as a result of this, formal bourgeois liberties are enjoyed most fully in that country. Before and during the war, Switzerland was a haven of refuge for political emigrants, who were exempt from the operation of the extradition law, but in 1919, when the revolutionary movement in Switzerland itself assumed menacing proportions

for the bourgeoisie, the Swiss government began widely to apply Article 70 of the Constitution, which reads: "The Federation has the right to expel from its territory aliens who are a menace to the internal or external safety of Switzerland." In this way the Swiss bourgeoisie tried to get rid of the revolutionary emigrants who took an active part in the Swiss labour movement.

PAGE 230.* Democracy in the republics of ancient Greece was democracy for the slave-owners. The National Assembly, the organ of the democratic government which decided the affairs of state, consisted exclusively of "freemen" who constituted a minority of the population. Among the freemen there dominated the big owners of land and slaves. Slaves, and also the inhabitants of conquered territories, enjoyed no right whatever to take part in the administration of the state.

Democracy in the cities of the Middle Ages was a form of municipal government exercised by the merchant and handicraft guildsmen. In this case also formal democracy was merely a cloak to conceal the rule of the rich burghers.

Democracy in developed bourgeois countries differs from preceding forms of democracy owing to the fact that under the former the *formal* right to take part in the administration of the state is enjoyed by nearly all citizens. Thus, under bourgeois democracy formal equality achieves the widest dimensions. Actually, however, this democracy serves to protect capitalist exploitation, it serves as a cloak to conceal the rule of the bourgeoisie. Under bourgeois democracy it is big capital that rules. While proclaiming democratic liberties—free speech, freedom of assembly, free press, etc.—the bourgeoisie knows that the broad masses of the toilers cannot enjoy these liberties because the necessary requirements for it—premises, printing offices, etc.—are the private property of the capitalists. Bourgeois liberties, bourgeois democracy, are simply a means of deceiving the toiling masses. In actual fact bourgeois democracy is merely democracy for the rich minority, democracy for the capitalists.

Thus, although its forms have changed, democracy has been and is democracy for the ruling minority of the population and an instrument for the oppression of the exploited majority. Only after the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a Soviet republic, are the broad masses of the toilers really brought into the work of administering the state. Proletarian democracy alone is democracy for the toiling majority of the population.

PAGE 231.* In January 1918, a general political strike broke out in Germany. At the very beginning of the strike workers' Soviets (Räte) were elected. The role of these first German Soviets was restricted to leading the strike movement and when the strike came to an end their activities ceased. In the beginning of November 1918 a new movement for the formation of Soviets

began. In Kiel the revolutionary sailors formed a Sailors' and Soldiers' Council which became the centre of the revolutionary movement in the navy and in the towns on the Baltic coast. During the rebellion in Kiel the Sailors' and Soldiers' Council became the real power in the town and in the fleet; it controlled the police, the food supplies, etc. At that time also power in Hamburg passed into the hands of the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Under the influence of the rebellion in Kiel a Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was elected in Bremen and Councils of Soldiers' Deputies were elected in Lübeck and Brunsbüttel. On November 5, 1918, a general strike started in Berlin and in other industrial cities in Germany. At first the centre of the movement was the Berlin Council of revolutionary representatives of big factories which very soon was transformed into the Berlin Council of Workers' Deputies. Following Berlin, Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies began to spring up in all industrial cities. The development of the activities of the Soviets inevitably brought them into conflict with the existing state apparatus. That is why the governmental Social-Democrats, who stood for a bourgeois parliamentary state, did all they possibly could to prevent the role of the Soviets from increasing. The Independents (Kautskyans) tried to combine parliamentarism with the Soviet system. The Spartacus League (which later became the Communist Party of Germany) alone put up a real fight to transfer power to the Soviets. Owing to the strong influence exercised by the Social-Democrats and the weakness of the Communist organisations, the leading role in the Soviets was taken by the Right Social-Democrats and the Independents. Under their leadership the congresses of the German Soviets were held, the First Congress in December 1918, and the Second Congress in April 1919. The Communist Party of Germany failed to capture the Soviets from the German Mensheviks in the way the Russian Bolshevik Party captured the Soviets in Russia from the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in 1917. The German Soviets were not transformed into organs of rebellion and for the seizure of power by the proletariat. They expired without becoming organs of the proletarian dictatorship.

PAGE 231.** Shop Stewards' Committees were formed by the revolutionary workers in Great Britain during the imperialist World War. During the war the British trade unions, adopting the position of social-patriotism, proclaimed a class truce and abandoned the strike struggle in order not to hamper the bourgeoisie in the pursuit of the war. The revolutionary elements in the trade union movement, however, were opposed to this peace with the bourgeoisie and organised strikes in defence of the workers' interests. These strikes were led by the Shop Stewards' Committees and Workers' Councils which functioned independently of and in opposition to the official trade union bodies. In many places the Shop Stewards' Committees were under Communist influence. After the October Revolution in Russia the idea of forming a system of Shop Stewards' Committees throughout the country

similar to the Soviet system began to gain popularity among the revolutionary elements of the British working class. Communist influence, however, was very weak in the labour movement at that time, whereas the influence of the anti-Communist parties like the Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party was very strong. The result was that Soviets were not formed in Great Britain.

PAGE 234.* The Berne Conference of the Second International took place in February 1919, and was the first international socialist conference to be called after the war. It was convened for the purpose of restoring the Second International. Ninety-eight delegates were present from various countries, including representatives of the Kautskyan Centrists. Delegates of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, with Kautsky at their head, were also present. The conference bore a strongly marked chauvinist character and wholly adhered to the position of serving the imperialist bourgeoisie in the fight against the proletarian revolution. It tried to fix responsibility for the war and granted "mutual amnesty" to both belligerent sides and to the Socialist Parties of both sides. On the colonial question it adopted a resolution moved by Kautsky in which the exploitation of the colonies by the imperialists was declared to be inevitable and only needed mitigation. On the question of labour protection laws the conference decided to take part in a conference that was to be convened by the capitalists and the governments of the Entente. It was only owing to the protest of the opposition group (numbering twenty delegates) that this conference rejected a resolution moved by Kautsky, Bernstein and the representatives of the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, condemning the proletarian revolution and by that openly taking the side of imperialist intervention and internal counter-revolution in Soviet Russia.

PAGE 236.* In the period from March to July 1917, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries had an overwhelming majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. This was the case also at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets at which the Bolsheviks had only 103 delegates out of 709, i.e., only 13 per cent. But already at that time the overwhelming majority of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries no longer reflected the real relation of influence of these parties and that of the Bolsheviks among the masses of workers and soldiers. Long before the July days the Bolsheviks had been making enormous strides in winning over the proletariat and the soldiers. This was reflected in the demonstration in Petrograd on April 21, and it was manifested on an enormous scale in the great demonstration of June 18, at the very time the First Congress of Soviets was in session. This demonstration was organised under the slogans of the Bolsheviks. Thus, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries began to lose their leadership in the Soviets before the July days. After the July days,

and especially owing to the Kornilov mutiny, the Bolsheviks completely won over to their side the overwhelming majority of the workers all over the country, and very quickly captured the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. As the Mensheviks lost their power in the Soviets, they ceased to praise them as organs of "revolutionary democracy."

PAGE 239.* In advancing the slogan of "Peasant Soviets," the German Social-Democrats and Scheidemannists pursued the very definite object of opposing the revolutionary labour movement by Peasant Soviets led by the rich farmers, and in this way preserving their own influence in the rural districts. As is known, the main strategic slogan of the Bolsheviks in Russia in the period from the February Revolution to the October Revolution was the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants, from which logically followed the unification of the rural labourers and poor peasants with the urban proletariat. With this end in view, Lenin, as far back as April 1917, set the task of organising Soviets of Agricultural Labourers and Poor Peasants, and later agricultural labourers' unions. As Lenin says, the German Communists, in advancing the slogan of Soviets of Agricultural Labourers and Poor Peasants as against the Scheidemann slogan of "Peasant Soviets," followed the same path as that pursued by the Russian Bolshevik Party in the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

PAGE 239.** During the proletarian revolution in Hungary in 1919, after the establishment of the Soviet government, measures were taken to organise Soviets in the towns and rural districts.

PAGE 239.*** Lenin here refers to the Decree on the Land adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets on November 8 [October 26], 1917, *i.e.*, on the very next day after the October Revolution. The Decree abolished the private ownership of large estates without compensation and placed these estates as well as the lands of the tsar, the monasteries and the churches, with all their live and dead stock, and buildings, at the disposal of the Volost Land Committees and Uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. Thus, the desires of the peasants which had been expressed in numerous Instructions to their representatives elected at peasant meetings and Soviets, *viz.*, that the land be taken from the landlords and transferred to the peasants for their use, were immediately satisfied. For the purpose of guiding the introduction of the agrarian reform, Point 4 of the Decree on the Land provided model instructions that were based on the 242 "Instructions" or demands put forward by local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. For further details of this see Lenin's "Report on the Land Question," delivered at the Second Congress of Soviets, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI. This report contains the Decree in full; and see also the chapter "Subserviency to the Bourgeoisie in the Guise of 'Economic Analysis'" in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, in this volume.

PAGE 241.* This article, written by Lenin at the end of October 1920, was first published in the *Communist International* No. 14, November 6, 1920. Like all Lenin's works on the dictatorship of the proletariat, it was directed against Russian and international, tacit and avowed Centrist reformism which renounced the core of Marxism, *viz.*, its "doctrine of the revolutionary dictatorship in general and the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular." It shows that from its very inception Bolshevism always made this the keystone of its principles and that long ago it began to develop the doctrine of the dictatorship on the basis of the experience of the international revolutionary movement in general, and of the Russian Revolution of 1905-07 in particular.

PAGE 241.** In the programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Party adopted at the Second Party Congress in April 1903, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat was formulated as follows: "Having substituted the social ownership of the means of production and exchange for private ownership, and having introduced the planned organisation of the social production process in order to ensure the well-being and all-sided development of all the members of society, the proletarian social revolution will abolish the division of society into classes and thereby emancipate the whole of oppressed humanity, for it will put an end to all forms of exploitation of one section of society by another. A necessary condition for this social revolution is the dictatorship of the proletariat, *i.e.*, the conquest by the proletariat of such political power as will enable it to suppress all resistance on the part of the exploiters." This passage together with the whole preamble of the programme of the R.S.D.L.P. forms part of the present programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In preparing the draft programme of the R.S.D.L.P. for the Second Party Congress, Plekhanov had the above-quoted passage in his first draft, but he deleted it from his second draft. On the insistence of Lenin, however, it was inserted in the programme as finally adopted by the congress. The programme of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted at the Second Party Congress was the only programme of a party affiliated to the Second International that had a clause concerning the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

PAGE 243.* Lenin here refers to the armed uprising in Moscow in December 1905, which grew out of the general strike declared by the Moscow Soviet of Workers' Deputies. In 1906 Lenin wrote a special article on the Moscow uprising, entitled "The Lessons of the Moscow Uprising" (*Selected Works*, Vol. III; see also Lenin's "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution" and the explanatory notes thereto, in the same volume).

PAGE 243.** The pamphlet *The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* was written in June-July 1905, and published in Geneva in August of that year. It is reproduced in *Selected Works*, Vol. III. Lenin deals particularly with dictatorship in chaps. VI and X and also in the "Postscript" of this pamphlet.

PAGE 245.* "The Twenty-One Conditions of Affiliation to the Communist International" were adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International in August 1920. They were drawn up on the basis of theses entitled "Conditions of Affiliation to the Communist International" drafted by Lenin.

PAGE 246.* This refers to the German Revolution of 1848. In March 1848, a rebellion broke out in Berlin, then the capital of Prussia, which was the largest of the German states. It failed, however, to overthrow the monarchy, but it compelled the king of Prussia to promise "freedom" and to convene a parliament. At the same time the new Ministry was formed which included two representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie, Camphausen and Hansemann. Camphausen became head of the Ministry. Marx described Camphausen's "March Ministry" as the Ministry of the "big bourgeoisie." And what the German big bourgeoisie and the German bourgeoisie in general represented at that time can be seen from Marx's characterisation of them quoted in explanatory note to p. 186** in this volume. It was incapable of "acting in a dictatorial manner" but was only capable of striking a bargain with the counter-revolution and of betraying the revolution that was being made by the workers and peasants. In the same issue of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* to which Lenin refers, Marx wrote: "The people permitted the formation of a Ministry of the big bourgeoisie, and the big bourgeoisie, anti-revolutionary as of old, out of fear of the people, i.e., out of fear of the workers and the democratic burghers, concluded a defensive and offensive alliance with reaction." Reaction triumphed, first in Prussia (as early as November 1848) and later over the whole of Germany, with the direct assistance of the bourgeoisie and particularly with the assistance of, first, the bourgeois Ministry of Camphausen and later of the Hansemann and subsequent Ministries.

PAGE 246.** The resolution on the provisional revolutionary government adopted at the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1905 stated: "Subject to the relation of forces, and other factors which cannot be exactly determined beforehand, representatives of our Party may participate in the provisional revolutionary government for the purpose of ruthlessly combating all counter-revolutionary attempts and of defending the independent interests of the working class." Irrespective of whether the participation of Social-Democrats in the provisional revolutionary government would prove possible or not, the resolution urged the necessity of "permanent pressure being brought to bear upon the provisional government by the armed proletariat led by Social-Democracy, for the purpose of defending, consolidating and extending the gains of the revolution." (*Selected Works*, Vol III, p. 47.) Thus, it clearly emphasised the necessity of demanding of the provisional revolutionary government that it wage an active, ruthless struggle against counter-revolution—the necessity of dictatorship. By a provisional government in which the party of the proletariat could participate, the resolution

of the Bolsheviks meant a government of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry. (*Cf.* "The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" and "Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government," in *Selected Works*, Vol. III.)

The resolution adopted by the Menshevik Conference, which was held simultaneously with the Third Congress of the Party, started out from an entirely different position. In the opinion of the Mensheviks, who at that time were opposed to participation in a provisional revolutionary government, such a government would only be a *bourgeois* government and "would not only have to push revolutionary development further forward in regulating the mutual struggle of the conflicting classes of the emancipated nation, but also to fight against those of its factors which threaten the foundations of the capitalist regime." Unlike the resolution of the Bolsheviks, the Menshevik resolution did not contain a single word about the need for a ruthless struggle against counter-revolution. Hence, the Mensheviks restricted the functions of the provisional government, and consequently the functions of the revolution, to the establishment and protection of the capitalist system.

A detailed analysis of the Menshevik resolution on the provisional revolutionary government and the arguments for the resolution of the Bolsheviks are given in Lenin's work *The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* in *Selected Works*, Vol. III. This also contains the full text of the two resolutions.

PAGE 246.*** Marx here refers to the Frankfort National Assembly, which was convened after the revolution in Germany in March 1848 for the purpose of drawing up a constitution for the whole of Germany. In the main, the Assembly consisted of state officials of the pre-revolutionary period and of representatives of the bourgeoisie. Among the deputies there were many university professors, which gave Marx cause for ironically calling the Frankfort Assembly a "learned assembly." The majority in the Assembly consisted of the liberal bourgeoisie who betrayed all the traits of cowardice in the face of reaction, fear of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants, and treachery towards this movement, and of bargaining with the crown for which the German bourgeoisie of that time was distinguished. (See note to p. 186.***) Marx described this bourgeoisie as a toothless old man, and Engels and Marx described the Frankfort National Assembly as "an assembly of old women." In his pamphlet *The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* (*Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 58) Lenin describes the results of the "activities" of this Assembly as follows: "They [i.e., the deputies of the National Assembly.—*Ed.*] uttered fine words, adopted all sorts of democratic 'decisions,' 'constituted' all kinds of liberties while in reality they left power in the hands of the king and failed to organise an armed struggle against the armed forces at the disposal of the king. And while the Frankfort *Osvobozhdeniye*-ists were prattling, the king bided his time, consolidated his military forces, and the

counter-revolution, relying on real force, utterly routed the democrats with all their beautiful 'decisions.'

PAGE 247.* P. Struve (then a Cadet) opposed "violence from the Left" and "the strike committees of the revolutionary parties" in an article entitled "Two Strike Committees" published in No. 3 of the Cadet journal *Polyarnaya Zvezda (The North Star)* of January 12, 1906, [December 30, 1905]. This article, as it were, served as the reply of the Cadets to the December armed insurrection in Moscow. Expressing indignation at the "violence from the Left," Struve in this article accuses the revolutionary parties of damaging and undermining the cause of the revolution by this violence. In referring to the translation of the word "dictatorship" by the words "reinforced guard" Lenin had in mind the speech delivered by the Cadet professor A. Kiesewetter at a meeting in Moscow in February 1906. Replying to the Social-Democratic speakers, Kiesewetter said, among other things: "However much they may try to soften the meaning of the word 'dictatorship' of the proletariat, they cannot do so. Dictatorship is a Latin word which in Russian means 'chrezvichainaya okhrana' (reinforced guard) and wherever else one may be tempted with this, it is not in Moscow." Thus, already in 1906, the Cadet professor placed dictatorship on a par with the worst expression of the tsarist police regime with its *okhrana* (secret police) and gendarmerie.

PAGE 250.* The "Bulygin Duma" was the name given to the legislative-advisory State Duma that was to have been set up in accordance with the law drafted by the then Minister for the Interior, Bulygin, and promulgated on August 19 [6], 1905, but which was prevented by the October general strike. This legislative-advisory body was to have served as a new bureaucratic accessory to the bureaucratic State Council. The elections to this Duma were to have been based on a very high property qualification, as a consequence of which, as Lenin said, it could have been only "an advisory assembly of representatives of the landlords and the big bourgeoisie, elected under the supervision and with the aid of the lackeys of the absolutist government on the basis of an electoral system so indirect, with so many reactionary rank and property qualifications, that it is a downright mockery of the idea of popular representation." (*Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 319.) The Bolsheviks declared an active boycott of the Bulygin Duma, whereas the Mensheviks adopted the confused opportunist position of: 1) taking advantage of the elections in order to bring pressure upon the electors to induce them to elect supporters of a democratic representative body and 2) organising unofficial elections for the purpose of creating local "revolutionary self-governing bodies," and subsequently a Constituent Assembly. For further details of the Bulygin Duma and the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks concerning it, see the article "The Boycott of the Bulygin Duma and the Insurrection" and the explanatory notes thereto in *Selected Works*, Vol. III.

PAGE 250.** Lenin here refers to the student political strikes which took place in the autumn of 1905 and to the attempts of the Cadet professors to break these strikes.

PAGE 250.*** By "constitution" Lenin means the tsar's manifesto of October 17, 1905, which was promulgated as a result of the October general strike and which promised the convocation of a popular representative assembly and the granting of the franchise to the workers, and also the new law on the State Duma and the elections for it issued by Witte (in place of the Bulygin law referred to above) during the armed insurrection in Moscow. For further details see notes on pp. 527-29 in *Selected Works*, Vol. III.

PAGE 253.* Lenin here refers to an actual historical fact. Maria Spiridonova, a member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, was arrested in 1905 on the charge of assassinating a government official named Luzhenovsky, who was in charge of operations in suppressing the peasant movement in the Tambov Gubernia. While under arrest Spiridonova was brutally tortured by the Cossack officer Avramov, who was afterwards assassinated by the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

PAGE 255.* Lenin here refers to the active servants of the tsarist regime during the 1905 Revolution. The case of Avramov is explained in the preceding note. Durnovo, Minister for the Interior in the Witte Cabinet, was the official who directed all the operations for suppressing the 1905 Revolution. Admiral Dubasov was an extreme reactionary who suppressed the peasant uprisings in a number of gubernias. While Governor-General of Moscow he acquired special notoriety for his suppression of the December armed insurrection in Moscow and by his organisation of punitive expeditions which shot workers without trial. Min, commander of the Semyonov Life Guard regiment, was in direct charge of the troops which suppressed the December uprising in Moscow and gave the order "take no prisoners," i.e., to shoot on the spot all the revolutionary workers who fell into the hands of the soldiers.

PAGE 256.* Lenin here ridicules the cringing before bourgeois laws which is characteristic of all philistines, and which is supported by bourgeois science. Bourgeois science of law does not explain the social roots of the laws which are in operation, nor does it reveal the class interests which these laws serve. Its object is merely to interpret the letter of these laws, not to criticise them. At the same time, bourgeois science worships laws which protect the interests of the propertied classes. These laws are sacred for it; and it condemns every action which infringes or exceeds the boundaries of bourgeois law and order. Hence, in the main, bourgeois science of law serves the purpose of fixing in the minds of the ordinary person the prejudice that the laws of the bourgeois state and the social system which these laws protect are immutable.

PAGE 256.** The journal *Bez Zaglaviya (Without a Title)* was published in 1906 by the semi-Cadet group consisting of E. Kuskova, S. Prokopovich, V. Bogucharsky and others.

PAGE 257.* General strike committees were formed in 1905 in the big industrial centres for the purpose of uniting the strike movement in all the enterprises in the given town or district. It was under their leadership that the great wave of general political strikes spread. As a rule, these general strike committees arose before the Soviets of Workers' Deputies and, as was the case in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, for example, they served as the basis for the creation of these Soviets. For further details see notes on pp. 529-31 in *Selected Works*, Vol. III.

PAGE 258.* This refers to the period of the first Witte State Duma (in 1906—see note on p. 527 in *Selected Works*, Vol. III) when the Cadets enthusiastically praised “the constitution (save the mark)” as Lenin expressed it, and spread illusions about this State Duma being a parliament, when as a matter of fact it was only an advisory body under the tsar’s government. In the same pamphlet which Lenin here refers to—“The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers’ Party”—he wrote: “The special features of the present situation in the Russian revolution are precisely that the objective conditions bring to the forefront the decisive extra-parliamentary struggle for parliamentarism, and therefore, in such a situation, nothing is more harmful and dangerous than constitutional illusions and playing at parliamentarism.”

PAGE 259.* The steamship subsidy. The question of subsidising steamship companies which maintained intercourse with East Asia, Australia and Africa gave rise to a very acute internal party struggle in the ranks of the German Social-Democratic Party in 1885. In demanding a vote of 4,400,000 marks for the purpose of these subsidies, the German government pursued the aim of exploiting the colonial and semi-colonial countries, of widening Germany’s sphere of influence in them. To vote for these subsidies meant supporting the colonial policy of the German bourgeoisie and the plunder of the oppressed nations in the colonies and semi-colonies. The majority of the members of the Social-Democratic fraction in the German Reichstag, as well as the whole of the Right wing of the German Social-Democratic Party which had already grown up at that time, adopted this opportunist position of supporting the colonial policy of the bourgeoisie. The minority in the fraction, however, supported by the central organ of the party, the *Sozialdemokrat*, which was then published in Switzerland (this was the period of the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany), started a struggle against this opportunist position. The energetic intervention of Engels led to the victory of the minority; the Reichstag fraction as a whole was compelled to vote against the steamship subsidies. The struggle within the Reichstag fraction and

within the party as a whole over this question was so acute and the opportunism of the Right wing of the Party was so strongly revealed in the course of it, that Engels, not for the first time, raised the question of the need for pursuing a course towards a split from this Right wing. In his letter to Sorge of June 3, 1885, he wrote: “Concerning your parliamentarians, you had the same correct presentiment as I had—on the question of the debates on the steamship subsidies; they revealed colossal philistine appetites. Things almost reached a split, which now, while the Anti-Socialist Law is in operation, would be undesirable. But as soon as we in Germany get a little elbow room, *a split will of course take place, and then it will be only useful.*” (Our italics.) In his letter to Bebel in July of the same year, he very severely attacked Wilhelm Liebknecht, who at that time played the role of a conciliator in the internal party struggle. Engels again wrote that a split from the opportunists was inevitable and necessary. Expressing irony at the expense of Wilhelm Liebknecht, he wrote: “In the whole of this business [Liebknecht] is playing the comic role of the hen who hatched ducklings: he wanted to hatch ‘educated’ Socialists, but lo, only philistines emerged from the eggs. . . . The only result that will come of all this will be that the party will realise that two trends exist within it, of which one gives direction to the masses and the other gives direction to the so-called leaders, and that these two trends are diverging more and more. By this *the subsequent split* will be prepared, and this is very good.” (Our italics.) As is well known, after Marx and Engels, the consistent Marxist Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin, were the only ones to continue and carry out the line for a split, for a rupture with the opportunists in Russia, in the German Social-Democratic Party, and in the whole of the Second International.

PAGE 259.** The “Young” Socialists were a “Left” opportunist trend in the German Social-Democratic Party which began to take shape during the period of operation of the Anti-Socialist Law (1878-90) and which made itself felt particularly as an opposition group within the party in the beginning of the 1890’s. Fostered by the growth of Right opportunism in the German Social-Democratic Party, and opposing it, this “Left” opposition (Ernst, Kampfmeyer, H. Mueller, the brothers Wille and others) was itself a typical representative of petty-bourgeois revolutionariness drifting into anarchism similar to that of the otzovists, ultimatumists and *Vperyod*-ists in Russia in the period of reaction. Engels, continuing the fight on two fronts which he and Marx had waged, while scourging Right opportunism in the German Social-Democratic Party and conciliation with this opportunism in the leading circles of the party, at the same time sharply attacked the “Left” opportunism, the anarchist tendencies and revolutionary phrasemongering of the “Young” Socialists. Subsequently, this group was expelled from the party and some of them drifted into anarchism, while others drifted into Right opportunism.

PAGE 261.* This refers to the closeness of the positions of the Cadets and the Mensheviks. In the period of the first Russian revolution Struve was the editor of the Cadet *Polyarnaya Zvezda* (*The North Star*) and Blank was the editor of the semi-Cadet, semi-Menshevik *Nasha Zhizn* (*Our Life*).

PAGE 265.* The Third Congress of Soviets took place in Petrograd on January 23-31 [10-18], 1918, following the dispersion of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Constituent Assembly which rejected the October Revolution and the Soviet government and was in its turn rejected by the masses of the workers and peasants (see "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" and the speech and decree on its dissolution, and also the explanatory notes to them, in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI). The Congress of Soviets met at the end of the first stage of the proletarian revolution, which, as Lenin said, was "a continuous triumphal procession." The congress served to consolidate the victory of the revolution for the period, to define the tasks of the Soviet government for the immediate future.

At the time of the Third Congress of Soviets the international situation of Soviet Russia was that she was emerging from the imperialist war, but had not yet entirely emerged. It was necessary, at the price of extremely costly concessions, to purchase a respite, to take cover against the advancing forces of German imperialism (Entente imperialism was not yet able to throw its forces directly into the effort to suppress the Soviet government), and to set to work to restore national economy, to create the foundation for socialist economy and to strengthen the defence of the country. The peace negotiations with Germany that were proceeding at the time of the Third Congress of Soviets served this purpose. At this time, as a result of the influence of the revolution in Russia and the extreme suffering caused by the imperialist war, the revolutionary temper of the masses in the capitalist countries rose to a high pitch, and this found expression in Germany, in January 1918, in a series of strikes and uprisings under the slogan of Soviet government. This increased the chances of Soviet Russia obtaining a respite.

The relation of class forces within the country was obviously in favour of the revolution. In the principal and decisive centres the proletariat had broken the resistance of the deposed ruling classes and had successfully completed the first stage of the Civil War. In the Ukraine, Kuban, the Don, in Siberia and in the Far East, the Red Guards had routed the White Guard forces and were marching forward victoriously, thanks to the universal support they obtained from the workers and the rural poor.

In addition to the overthrow of the rule of the landlords and of all the remnants of tsarism and feudalism in the rural districts, considerable successes had already been achieved in the fulfilment of the fundamental socialist tasks of the revolution. In his report Lenin described the results of the economic policy of the proletariat during the three months of its dictatorship as an enormous "step forward to socialism." Having captured

the economic key positions, the proletariat had performed "one of the greatest and most difficult marches in history." In order to proceed with its work of socialist construction the proletariat needed a certain period in which to accumulate organisational experience in the management of industry. During this period of transition the proletarian government intended to utilise the experience of those capitalists who were willing to come to some agreement with the proletarian dictatorship. This explains why the nationalisation of the banks and the nationalisation of industry were preceded by the decree on workers' control of industry. Workers' control of industry (see note to p. 277**) served as a mighty instrument for the education and training of the working class for the management of industry, and it created the prerequisites for the transition to the latter. On December 14 [11], 1917, the Supreme Council of National Economy was already formed. In the words of Lenin, this body was to serve in economics "as a fighting organ for the struggle against the landlords and capitalists just as the Council of People's Commissars is in politics." At that time the nationalisation of industry was not yet being carried out in a planned manner; it took the form of a series of measures against the capitalists who refused to submit to the decrees of the proletarian state. The nationalisation of the banks was brought about on December 27 [14], and on February 8 [January 26], 1918, the capital of the private banks was confiscated (see note to p. 276*). Lenin regarded the nationalisation of the banks and the introduction of workers' control of industry as "the first step towards socialism."

Simultaneously with these measures, the proletariat broke up the old state machine of the exploiters and created a new type of state power which was of world-historical significance, *viz.*, the Soviet proletarian state.

In the midst of fierce struggles, and overcoming the resistance and sabotage of the deposed classes, the masses of the workers learned to administer the state. It was necessary to do everything to encourage and develop the initiative of the proletariat in building the new organs of the proletarian power and to assist it in overcoming the old prejudice that only the former ruling classes can administer the state. Lenin regarded this task as one of the most important tasks, and dealt with the manner in which it was to be fulfilled in his speeches at the Third Congress of Soviets, and in his utterances before and after it. Thus, in his article "How to Organise Competition" he wrote: "We must at all costs smash the old, *stupid*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called 'upper classes,' only the rich, or those who have passed through the school of the rich classes, can administer the state, can direct the organised construction of socialist society." (See *Selected Works*, Vol. IX.)

A very important task which Lenin advanced in his report was that of widely enlisting the masses for the work of administering the state and of training and promoting thousands and thousands of organisers from the ranks of the proletariat and the toiling peasantry.

Lenin's report at the Third Congress of Soviets is of enormous importance, not only because it sums up the experience of the first period of work of the Soviet government and indicates the path on which the further consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship could be achieved, but also because it indicates the forms and the conditions of the transition from capitalism to socialism. In this report Lenin raised and solved a number of important problems of the transition period, such as: formulating the reasons of the necessity for a transition period from capitalism to socialism; the difficulties of this transition to socialism and the class struggle that must be waged in the process; the role of violence and terror; democracy and dictatorship; the alliance between the proletariat and the masses of the peasantry; the significance of the new type of state; the forms of the transition of the small peasants to socialism; and the final victory of socialism.

The Third Congress served as a striking demonstration of the victory of Bolshevik ideas. Out of a total of 1,046 delegates with decisive and consultative votes, 61 per cent were Bolsheviks. The items on the agenda at the congress were as follows: 1) Report of the Central Executive Committee (Y. M. Sverdlov), 2) Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, 3) Report of the Council of People's Commissars (Lenin), 4) Report on War and Peace, 5) Report on the Federative Soviet Republic and on the National Question (Stalin), 6) Election of the Central Executive Committee.

The results of the congress confirmed the fact that "the Soviet power is not an invention, not a Party trick, but the result of the development of life itself, the result of the spontaneous moulding of the world revolution." (Lenin.)

PAGE 270.* Throughout the history of the revolutionary labour movement the intensification of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and every attempt on the part of the proletariat to take power, was always accompanied by terrible crimes against the workers and the shooting down of workers, i.e., by the mass terror of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. In the history of the French labour movement, to which Lenin refers here, the orgy of brutal White terror let loose to suppress the June uprising of the workers of Paris in 1848 and the suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, when nearly 35,000 workers were exterminated and about 50,000 were imprisoned and sent to penal servitude, were outstanding. Mass White terror, carried out by the hand of the German Social-Democratic Party and its "bloodhound" Noske, accompanied the suppression of the uprising of the Berlin workers in January 1918, and White terror, also carried out by the hand of the Social-Democrats, accompanied the suppression of the revolutionary proletariat of Germany (particularly in the Ruhr) when, after having with its own forces liquidated the attempted monarchist *coup* in the spring of 1921, it tried to wage a struggle for a Soviet government in Germany. Terror also raged during the suppression of Soviet Bavaria

and Soviet Hungary; and it raged in Russia during the Civil War of 1918-20 wherever the bourgeoisie and the landlords, assisted by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and by foreign interventionist forces, succeeded, even if only for a very brief period, in overthrowing the Soviet government, and wherever the White Guards ruled. Every Communist they captured was tortured to death; tens of thousands of workers and peasants were shot, beaten with ramrods and thrown into filthy dungeons, their wives and daughters were raped, whole villages were razed to the ground and brutal pogroms against the Jews were organised.

White terror did not cease in the capitalist countries even after the period of revolutionary struggles of 1919-23. According to the returns of the Central Committee of the International Labour Defence from 1925 to 1929 the number of victims of White terror (sentenced to death, murdered, tortured, maimed, wounded) steadily grew from 120,167 in 1925 to 367,479 in 1929. With the outbreak of the world economic crisis in 1929, the revival of the revolutionary movement and the growth of the revolutionary crisis in a number of capitalist countries, White terror increased to unprecedented dimensions and raged with particular fury in those countries where the fascists came into power or were coming into power. Not long ago Poland occupied first place among the countries in which White terror rages; now her place has been taken by fascist Germany. The Hitler terror against the revolutionary proletariat of Germany, and against the Communist Party which is leading it, can only be compared with the White Guard terror during the Civil War in Russia.

PAGE 270.** The sabotage of government officials and officials in rural and urban administrative bodies, as well as of the office employees of private capitalist enterprises (banks, syndicates, river transport, private railways) which passed into the hands of the new proletarian state, began immediately after the October Revolution and assumed a variety of forms (strikes, refusal to obey the orders of the Soviet government, leaving work without permission). It was carried out by the bourgeoisie through the medium of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were the actual organisers of it. It spread to all categories of officials and office employees, including the technical intelligentsia, teachers, professors, doctors, etc. Owing to the generous financial support it received from the capitalists (the bankers and manufacturers) and the landlords, it continued persistently and on a fairly wide scale during the first three or four months after the October Revolution, but finally it was broken by the power of the proletarian dictatorship.

In the period of the Civil War of 1918-20, sabotage, as a form of resistance of the deposed classes to the dictatorship of the proletariat, accompanied by the organisation of armed fighting, was superseded by the armed struggle against the Soviet government and the organisation of counter-revolutionary plots in the Soviet rear. In the final stages of the period of

restoration, and particularly in the first stages of the reconstruction period of the New Economic Policy (1927-30), sabotage was revived in a new form, in the form of wrecking by bourgeois specialists on the socialist construction front; and this was accompanied by the general intensification of the class struggle and resistance of the capitalist elements in the country to the socialist offensive of the proletariat, as well as by an increase in international imperialist strivings directed against the U.S.S.R.

PAGE 272.* Kerensky fled from Petrograd to Pskov even before the Winter Palace was occupied by the Bolshevik forces on November 7 [October 25], 1917. He thought it would be possible to move the troops at the front against the Bolsheviks; but the troops refused to march against them. The only support he found was that of General Krasnov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Third Cavalry Corps consisting of Cossacks. On November 10 [October 28], Krasnov occupied Gatchina. On November 12 [October 30], the battle of Pulkovo took place in which the Cossacks suffered heavy losses. An armistice was concluded which the Bolsheviks took advantage of to carry on agitation among the Cossacks with the result that the latter refused to continue the advance. On November 14 [1] a delegation from the Soviet High Command arrived in Gatchina and demanded the cessation of military operations and the surrender of Kerensky. Kerensky managed to escape, but Krasnov was arrested.

PAGE 272.** The Central Rada of the Ukraine, which consisted of Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and other petty-bourgeois nationalist groups, was formed at a congress of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois national organisations held in Kiev in April 1917. Soon after the October Revolution, the Rada adopted the so-called "Third Edict," which proclaimed the Ukraine to be an Independent People's Republic headed by a Rada and a General Secretariat. The General Secretariat of the Rada immediately took up a sharply hostile attitude towards the Soviets. In Kiev, the Rada disarmed the Red Guards, arrested the most active Soviet workers and began to unite all the anti-Bolshevik forces. It allowed the Cossack forces to pass through Ukrainian territory to join General Kaledin on the Don, and in this way it helped the latter in his struggle against the Soviets.

The Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. submitted an ultimatum to the Rada demanding the immediate cessation of hostile acts. The General Secretariat of the Rada gave an evasive reply and the Council of People's Commissars declared war on the Rada. At about the same time a Soviet government was formed in the Ukraine known as the People's Secretariat and Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Ukraine. In the struggle that broke out between these two Ukrainian governments, which was in fact a struggle between the proletarian revolution and the bourgeois nationalist counter-revolution, the Rada was

overthrown. The members of the Rada fled to the western uyezds of the Ukraine and on February 10, 1918, Kiev was occupied by the Soviet forces. At this time peace negotiations were being conducted with the Germans and the delegation of the Rada concluded a separate peace with Germany without the knowledge of the Soviet delegation. Under the protection and with the assistance of the German army, the Ukrainian Rada returned to Kiev; but very soon after it was overthrown by the very same German military forces that helped it to return to power and it was superseded by the government of the monarchist Skoropadsky.

PAGE 272.*** The counter-revolutionary action of that period was that of General Kaledin. In June 1917 General Kaledin became Ataman of the Don Cossacks. In November of that year he commenced military operations against the Soviet government in the Don. For this purpose he organised the Cossack troops and relied on the aid of the "volunteer" forces of General Alexeyev. Against him were the forces of the Red Guards and Cossack troops from the front which had joined them. The fight against Kaledin lasted until January 1918 and ended in his defeat. On January 29, 1918, after the defeat of Kaledin, the White Guard Cossack government was dissolved and Kaledin committed suicide. His assistant, General Bogayevsky (the president of the dissolved Cossack government) made an effort to continue the struggle, but he too was defeated and on March 4 he surrendered to the Chief of the Soviet Cossack forces, Golubev. Together with the latter, however, he turned against the Soviet government and began to prepare for a fresh offensive against the Soviets. He was soon captured by the Red Guards, however, and on April 14 he was shot.

PAGE 272.**** This refers to the All-Russian Extraordinary Congress of Peasant Deputies held in November 1917 and to the Second Congress of Peasant Deputies held in December 1917. Both these congresses recognised the October Revolution and the revolutionary measures it introduced, approved the policy of the Soviet government, and resulted in the merging of the Central Executive Committee of the Peasant Soviets with the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which formed a single All-Russian Central Executive Committee representing an organ of the central Soviet government. By this these congresses showed that the poor and middle masses of the peasantry were opposed to the counter-revolution organised at that time by the bourgeoisie, the landlords, the tsarist generals and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries.

PAGE 273.* The democratisation of the army was started with the issue of the celebrated Order No. 1 issued by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on March 14 [1], 1917. In accordance with this order, committees were formed in all units of the army; the army was

brought into political life; saluting of officers and other forms of subordination to officers by soldiers when off duty were abolished. From the point of view of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who were then the leaders of the Soviets, one of the principal aims of this democratisation was to restore the fighting fitness of the army in the imperialist war. That is why they tried to restrict the democratisation of the army demanded by Order No. 1 within limits that would serve the interests of what they called "defending the revolution," which in fact meant protecting the interests of the bourgeoisie in the imperialist war, and which would not in any way affect the position and rights of the old counter-revolutionary officers and the High Command of the army. But even this sort of democratisation ran counter to the principles upon which the tsarist army was based, and upon which all capitalist armies are based, and it created favourable soil for revolutionary work in the army. That is why the bourgeoisie and the officers in the army were hostile to this democratisation, because, in their opinion, it led to the "disintegration" of the army. As soon as the first signs of Bolshevik influence in the army were observed at the front and in the rear, the Provisional Government adopted measures to restrict the operation of Order No. 1. This was the purpose of the government's Declaration of Rights of the Soldiers. But Guchkov, the Minister for War, refused to sanction this declaration on the grounds that it did not sufficiently restrict the "liberty" of the soldier, and it was signed by the subsequent Coalition Government under Kerensky. Also in the interests of "defending the revolution," i.e., of protecting the interests of the bourgeoisie, the government after the July days went to the length of restoring the death penalty at the front. The object of these measures was to restore the old discipline of the stick in the army. On the other hand, from the very first, the elected army organisations which were formed on the basis of Order No. 1 were packed with Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and representatives of the officers; and while the composition of the *lower* army organisations changed to a more or less degree in proportion as Bolshevik influence developed in the army and the masses of the soldiers became revolutionary, the higher organisations assumed an increasingly counter-revolutionary character, and during the October Revolution, as well as immediately after it, they served as strongholds of the counter-revolutionary officers and bases for their operations against the proletarian revolution. Naturally, such a situation in the army could not be tolerated. It was impossible to dissolve the old army as long as the country was involved in imperialist war and until a new Red Army had been formed. Hence, it was necessary to break the resistance of the old counter-revolutionary generals and officers and to destroy their strongholds, viz., the higher army organisations. For this purpose a *new* democratisation of the army, to which Lenin refers in his report, was required. This was carried out by the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of December 29 [16], 1917, which introduced the principle of election of officers, including the commander-

in-chief at the front, and the concentration of power within a given military unit in the hands of the soldiers' committees and the Soviets.

PAGE 274.* Lenin here refers to the Decree on the Judiciary No. 1, issued December 7 [November 24], 1917, which abolished the bourgeois courts that had existed up to that time and established people's courts in their place. This decree introduced the principle of the election and recall of judges and the system of people's assessors, i.e., assistant judges. A Soviet people's court consists of one permanent judge and two lay assessors.

PAGE 276.* In the epoch of finance capital the role of the banks grows enormously. As Lenin wrote in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*: "As banking develops and becomes concentrated in a small number of establishments, the banks become transformed, and instead of being modest intermediaries, they become powerful monopolies having at their command almost the whole of the money capital of all the capitalists and small businessmen and also a large part of the means of production and of the sources of raw materials of the given country and of a number of other countries." (*Selected Works*, Vol. V, p. 27.)

In Russia the role and influence of the banks on the eve of the October Revolution was extremely great. The merging of the banks with industrial enterprises resulted in the concentration in the hands of the banks of 85.7 per cent of the whole of the Russian iron and steel industry, 76.9 per cent of the coal industry, and 80 per cent of the oil industry. The banks controlled 35 per cent of the grain exports and two-thirds of the raw cotton trade. In his pamphlet written on the eve of the October Revolution, *The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Fight It*, Lenin explains in detail why the nationalisation of the banks was necessary. He wrote: "As is well known, the banks are centres of modern economic life, the main nerve centres of the whole of the capitalist system of national economy. . . . Modern banks have become so intimately and indissolubly connected with trade (in grain and everything else) and industry that without 'laying hands' on the banks it is absolutely impossible to do anything serious, anything 'revolutionary democratic.'" (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXI.)

The nationalisation of the banks was not brought about immediately after the October Revolution. At first, as a transitional measure, the control of the operations of the banks was introduced. But the bank magnates, and following their lead the bank employees, maliciously sabotaged the orders of the Soviet government and this transitional measure was very soon superseded by the direct nationalisation of the banks.

On December 27 [14], on the orders of the Soviet government, all banks and credit institutions in Petrograd were occupied by detachments of Red Guards who arrested the bank directors. The same evening the Decree on the Nationalisation of the Banks was promulgated. The first two clauses of the decree read as follows: "1. Banking is declared to be a state monopoly.

2. All existing private joint stock banks and banking offices are amalgamated with the State Bank."

PAGE 277.* The annulment of the state debts of the tsarist and Provisional Governments by the Decree of January 21, 1918, was of enormous significance for Soviet Russia because it released the country from its bondage to foreign imperialism. At the end of 1917 the Russian national debt amounted to 28,000,000,000 rubles of which 12,000,000,000 rubles had to be paid abroad in foreign currency. No less than 700,000,000 rubles per annum were required merely for the payment of interest on this debt.

PAGE 277.** The slogan of workers' control of social production and consumption was one of the most important Bolshevik slogans and had been formulated in Lenin's famous "April Theses" in 1917. Lenin explained the significance of workers' control in particular detail in his pamphlet *The Threatening Catastrophe and How To Fight It*. Speaking of the fundamental and principal means of preventing economic catastrophe and famine, Lenin wrote: "This means is control, supervision, accounting, state regulation, the establishment of a correct distribution of labour forces in the production and distribution of products, husbanding the resources of the people, elimination of any waste of forces, the utmost economy. Control, supervision, accounting—this is the first word in the fight against catastrophe and famine." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXI.) Among the most important measures that were to accompany the introduction of workers' control, Lenin then proposed the following: 1) The nationalisation of the banks, 2) The nationalisation of the sugar, coal, oil and metallurgical syndicates, 3) The abolition of commercial secrets, 4) The compulsory amalgamation of manufacturers, merchants, etc., into syndicates and 5) The compulsory amalgamation of the population in consumers' co-operative societies. Lenin regarded the fundamental condition for effective workers' control to be political power *in the hands of the proletariat*. Thus, workers' control was one of the slogans of the proletarian revolution and in this revolution it was to serve as a transitional measure towards the socialisation of production, towards transferring industry from the hands of the capitalists to the hands of the proletarian state, and the transformation of private capitalist trade into the state and co-operative organisation of exchange and distribution, the forms of which were to be determined in the subsequent progress of the revolution in accordance with the concrete conditions of the class struggle and of socialist construction.

Soon after the October Revolution, on November 27 [14], 1917, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee adopted, and later put into operation, a decree on workers' control which was based on Lenin's draft of this decree. For the text of this draft see Lenin's "Draft Statutes on Workers' Control" in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI and the explanatory notes thereto.

The capitalists expressed very great hostility to the decree on

workers' control. Thus, in the resolutions adopted by representatives of the All-Russian Commercial and Industrial Organisations and of the Petrograd Manufacturers' Association on December 6 [November 23], 1917, employers were advised to close their enterprises in the event of a demand being made for the introduction of workers' control.

PAGE 280.* This refers to the negotiations between the Central Committee of the Leather Workers' Union and the employers in the leather industry which began in December 1917. As a result of these negotiations the Chief Committee for the Leather Industry was reorganised and two-thirds of the seats on this committee were given to Soviet organisations. In the beginning of April an order, signed by Lenin, was sent to all the Soviets urging the necessity of reorganising the local committees for the leather industry in such a way as to give two-thirds of the seats on these committees to the workers and one-third to the employers.

PAGE 281.* The strike of October 1905, which was carried out under the slogan of the overthrow of tsarism, began with the Moscow railway strike at the end of September. Within a few days the strike affected the whole of Moscow, spread to St. Petersburg and other towns, and developed into a general strike. All over the country the employees in all industrial enterprises, the railways, the post and telegraph, etc., went on strike. Officials in state institutions, doctors, engineers, and lawyers also went on strike. The strike ended after the promulgation of the tsar's Manifesto of October 30 [17], 1905, which promised liberty and the convocation of a State Duma for "legislative" work on a wider franchise than the one proposed for the Bulygin Duma (see note to p. 250*). During the course of the strike, Soviets of Workers' Deputies arose in St. Petersburg and several other towns.

PAGE 283.* The Seventh Congress of the Party took place on March 6-8, 1918, and was convened for the purpose of discussing a very important question of international politics, *viz.*, Soviet Russia's withdrawal from the war and the conclusion of peace with Germany. The only other question discussed at this congress was the question of the revision of the Party programme.

The Second Congress of Soviets, which was held on the morrow of the victory of the October Revolution, adopted the Decree on Peace proposed by Lenin (for Lenin's report on this decree see *Selected Works*, Vol. VI). This decree contained an appeal to the peoples and governments of the belligerent countries proposing immediate negotiations for peace. The Council of People's Commissars published this decree and took all measures to bring about the opening of peace negotiations. The Entente governments ignored the proposal of the Soviet government. Germany alone agreed to open peace negotiations. These negotiations began on December 22 [9], 1917, and continued with interruptions until March 3, 1918, when the Brest-Litovsk Peace was signed.

The question of peace gave rise to acute differences of opinion in the Party and almost caused a split. Lenin, and those who supported the position he outlined in his "Report on War and Peace" at the Seventh Party Congress, were obliged to wage a fierce struggle in the Party in favour of concluding peace before his point of view prevailed. The fight against Lenin's position on this question was waged by the so-called "Left" Communists led by N. Bukharin, who was their political leader, theoretician and inspirer; and they waged this struggle also in the Soviets where they worked hand in hand with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. In the Party, the "Left" Communists controlled the Moscow Regional Bureau and the Moscow and Petrograd Committees of the Party, and they utilised the apparatus, the forces, and the finances of these organisations for the purpose of waging a furious factional struggle.

On January 10, 1918 [December 28, 1917], the Moscow Regional Bureau of the Party passed a resolution demanding the cessation of peace negotiations with imperialist Germany and also the rupture of all diplomatic relations "with all the diplomatic pirates of all countries." At the end of January 1918, both the Moscow and Petrograd Committees protested against the peace negotiations and demanded their cessation. In opposition to Lenin's view that it was necessary immediately to conclude peace with Germany even on the harshest terms for the sake of preserving the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia as the hearth of the international revolution, of obtaining a "respite" in which to prepare for the further struggle for this dictatorship and of fulfilling its internal and international tasks, Lenin's opponents either put forward the demand for an immediate revolutionary war or Trotsky's formula: "We stop the war, we do not conclude peace, we demobilise the army."

At a joint conference of the Central Committee and the delegates at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets, 32 delegates voted in favour of a revolutionary war, 16 voted for the Trotskyist position, and 15 voted for Lenin's point of view. It is true that of all the delegates present only one, Comrade Stukov, voted for an immediate rupture of negotiations. On January 24 [11] the Central Committee, by a majority of 9 against 7, adopted Trotsky's formula. On the morning of February 18, when it transpired that the Germans were advancing, 6 members of the Central Committee voted in favour of a proposal to send a telegram to the German headquarters agreeing to conclude peace, while 7 voted against. It was only on the evening of February 18 that Lenin's point of view prevailed: 7 voted in favour of sending the telegram, 5 voted against, and 1 abstained.

On February 23 the Central Committee discussed the new proposals of the German government. Lenin, Stalin, Zinoviev, Stassova, Sverdlov, Sokolnikov and Smilga were in favour of accepting them, while Bubnov, Uritsky, Bukharin and Lomov were opposed. Trotsky, Krestinsky, Dzerzhinsky and Joffe abstained from voting. Thus, by a relative majority of 7 against 4,

with 4 abstaining, a decision was adopted to resume negotiations with Germany on the basis of the latter's new proposals.

This decision of the Central Committee did not help to abate the differences. The "Lefts" with all their energy and persistence pursued a policy of disrupting this decision. The Moscow Regional Bureau of the Party, at its meeting on February 24, expressed "its lack of confidence in the Central Committee in view of its political line and composition" and declared that "it will at the first opportunity insist on the election of a new Central Committee." The resolution of the Bureau concluded with the statement that "it was of the opinion that a split in the Party was hardly to be avoided in the near future." The "Left" members of the Central Committee, at the meeting of the latter held on February 23, declared that they "resigned from all responsible Soviet and Party posts and reserved the liberty to carry on agitation within the Party and outside of it."

But even before the Seventh Congress of the Party (March 1918) a number of organisations which had formerly supported the proposal of the "Lefts" expressed themselves in favour of the line of the Central Committee. On March 3 the Soviet delegation in Brest-Litovsk signed the peace treaty and on March 4 the Moscow City Conference of the Party, by a vote of 64 against 52, adopted a resolution supporting the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty, passed a vote of confidence in the Central Committee, instructed its delegates to the Seventh Congress to support Party unity and condemned the attempt of the "Lefts" to cause a split. On March 7 a similar resolution was adopted by the Petrograd Party Conference and by a number of Petrograd District Party Conferences.

Lenin's report on war and peace at the Seventh Party Congress was decisive. By an overwhelming majority the Party Congress adopted Lenin's point of view, and shortly after, the Fourth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, also on the report of Lenin, ratified the peace treaty. But even after these two congresses, right up to the summer of 1918, the "Left" Communists continued their policy of opposing the Leninist Party line, not only on the question of peace, but also on a number of fundamental questions of socialist construction. (See article: "Left-Wing" Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" and note to p. 351* in this volume.) And in this also Bukharin acted as their leader and theoretician.

In this new period of the struggle against the Party the "Left" Communists again entered into a *bloc* with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the Soviets and thus more than ever corroborated the class characterisation which Lenin gave of them as those expressing the strivings and waverings of the petty bourgeois driven to a frenzy by the horrors of war.

The acuteness and protracted nature of the "Lefts'" differences with the Party are to be explained by the fact that the "Lefts," like typical "frenzied" petty bourgeois, took as their starting point the petty-bourgeois opportunist appraisal of the important problems of the proletarian revolution.

Notwithstanding their verbal revolutionariness, the "Lefts" adopted the

Menshevik-Trotskyist point of view on the main question, *viz.*, the question of building socialism in a single country. They were of the opinion that it was impossible for Soviet Russia to build socialism with its own forces unaided by the victorious proletariat of the West. For example, Ossinsky wrote: "Only the intervention of international Socialism, only the assistance of the workers who are at a higher stage of development, can create an absolute revival of Russian economy. There is no other way out, and only by transforming . . . the civil war into a world civil war can we achieve the respite that we need."

These pronouncements by the "Lefts" were in fact simply a repetition of those of Trotsky, who, fully in accordance with his theory of permanent revolution, declared at the Seventh Party Congress: "A certain disparity has become revealed, the roots of which lie very deep: the backwardness of our country. . . . It [the revolution.—*Ed.*], at the very first stage of its development, has not obtained the necessary support. . . . Only a European revolution can save us in the full sense of the word."

Bukharin said that the socialist revolution could "either come to a standstill or spread out, because it is not developing in a corked bottle."

In opposition to the Party line and in complete agreement with Trotskyism, the "Left" Communists asserted that the socialist revolution in Soviet Russia could develop only in the event of a victory of the proletariat in the West, that only this victory could create the possibilities of socialist construction in Soviet Russia and that in the event of the world revolution being delayed, Soviet Russia was doomed.

Regarding the effort to obtain a respite as a departure from the fundamental principles of internationalism, the "Lefts" were totally incapable of understanding the relation between the Russian revolution and the world revolution. In their declaration to the Central Committee they wrote that agreeing to peace "pushes the Russian revolution out of the course of the international movement." They were of the opinion that the only way in which international obligations could be fulfilled was by an immediate offensive against the world bourgeoisie. Jointly with the Trotskyists, and in opposition to Lenin and the Party, they denied the enormous importance for the development of the world revolution of preserving the proletarian dictatorship in Soviet Russia by concluding peace with Germany and thus obtaining a respite. Having slipped into this nationally restricted conception of the role and significance of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian dictatorship in Soviet Russia, the Moscow "Lefts" were prepared to take the risk of having the Soviet power destroyed by the bayonets of German imperialism; for in their opinion peace with German imperialism was a shameful bargain with the imperialists which deprived the Soviet power of all revolutionary significance, made it "purely formal" and therefore superfluous. This is exactly what the Moscow Regional Bureau of the Party, in a memorandum accompanying the vote of no confidence in the Central Committee referred to above, wrote: "*In the interests of the inter-*

national revolution we consider it expedient to risk the possible loss of the Soviet power which has now become purely formal."

The "Left" Communists recognised only one method of action toward the imperialists, *viz.*, direct attack; they refused to take into account the forces of the proletarian revolution. They did not understand that ". . . only expedient resistance to reaction serves the revolution." (Lenin.) The "Lefts" denied that it was permissible for the proletariat to enter into compromises and to manœuvre. In opposition to Lenin and the Party, they failed to understand that there are compromises and "compromises," that it is possible and necessary to make great sacrifices in territory and material if the task of preserving the base of the world revolution, *i.e.*, the Land of the Soviets, demands it; and they failed to understand that to rush into a fight without having forces means aiding the imperialists who are interested in smashing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In essence, the position Trotsky took up on the question of signing the Brest Peace did not differ in any way from that of the "Left" Communists. In essence, his adventurist formula "We stop the war, but we do not conclude peace" was also a "Left" repudiation of peace on the grounds that it meant compromising with the imperialists. Moreover, even when at last voting in favour of accepting the German peace terms he said that if the Germans demanded the surrender of the Ukraine it would be necessary to declare a revolutionary war against them. Like the "Left" Communists, Trotsky denied that it was possible to agree to any sacrifice, however severe, in order to preserve the proletarian dictatorship.

In effect, both the "Left" Communists and Trotsky expressed the same Menshevik point of view on the question of the character and perspectives of the Russian revolution. Under the cloak of extreme "revolutionary" phraseology they tried to impose upon the Party a policy that could only have led to the doom of the proletarian dictatorship.

For further details on the "Left" Communists and their fight against the Party see note to p. 351.*

PAGE 283.** On May 3 and 4 [April 20 and 21], 1917, demonstrations of workers and soldiers took place in Petrograd and Moscow to protest against the note sent to the Allied governments by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Milyukov, in which he informed the Allied governments that the Provisional Government adhered to the treaties concerning the objects of the war concluded by the tsarist government with Great Britain and France. As a result of this protest Milyukov was compelled to resign. For Lenin's appraisal of this demonstration and the political crisis caused by it see the articles: "Lessons of the Crisis" and "The 'Crisis of Power,'" and the explanatory notes thereto in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.

PAGE 283.*** The July events were the events of July 16-18 [July 3-5 old style], 1917; when in connection with the temporary resignation of the Constitutional-

Democrats from the Provisional Government, the masses of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd demonstrated in the streets under the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets," and called upon the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets to take political power. For two days armed mass demonstrations took place in Petrograd. The demonstrations were of a peaceful character, but the Provisional Government called out troops which fired on the demonstrators, and this led to armed conflicts. On the evening of July 18, counter-revolutionary military units arrived in Petrograd from the front and suppressed the movement. House to house searches were made, many Bolsheviks were arrested, and the editorial and printing offices of *Pravda* were wrecked. The July days were followed by a period of the actual counter-revolutionary dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. This dictatorship was exercised through the medium of the military clique operating under the protection of the Kerensky government and "the leaders of the Soviets and of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties headed by Tseretelli and Chernov," who, as Lenin said at the time, "had definitely betrayed the cause of the revolution by placing it in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries and transforming themselves, their parties and the Soviets into fig-leaves for the counter-revolution." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, "The Political Situation.") The July days marked the turning point in the revolution; they marked the end of the dual power and of the "peaceful" period of the revolution. From that moment the immediate task became to prepare the Party, the workers and the masses of the soldiers for the *violent* seizure of power by the proletariat, for the armed uprising. In this connection the treachery of the Soviets, which were then led by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, their transformation into "fig-leaves" of the bourgeois counter-revolution, led to the Bolsheviks temporarily withdrawing the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" until the Bolshevik Party had won the Soviets and transformed them into organs of the struggle for the power of the proletariat, into organs of insurrection. For Lenin's appraisal of the July events and the political situation that arose after them, see the article "On Slogans" in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.

PAGE 284.* By the Kornilov affair is meant the attempt to bring about a bourgeois counter-revolution for the purpose of establishing the military dictatorship of General Kornilov. The plot to bring about this counter-revolution was organised by the tsarist generals led by Kornilov; at that time Commander-in-Chief of the forces, the Constitutional-Democratic Party, and the upper stratum of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. The plot failed owing to the fact that the Bolshevik Party succeeded in widely mobilising against it the masses of the workers and soldiers, which, in turn, caused the compromising petty bourgeoisie, led by Kerensky, to waver. The military units which Kornilov withdrew from the front in order to attack Petrograd (the Cossack Corps and the so-called Savage Division) never reached Petrograd; they became demoralised on the way. Under the pressure of the

masses the Kerensky government was compelled to declare Kornilov a traitor and arrest him (soon after Kornilov escaped). For Kornilovism and the tactics that were to be used in fighting against it, see Lenin's "A Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P." in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.

PAGE 284.** This refers to the July offensive on the Russian Western and Southwestern front undertaken by the Coalition Provisional Government in July 1917 in the effort to bring the imperialist war to a victorious conclusion. In this they received the unreserved support of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who were represented in the government. Kerensky made a special tour of the front and at meetings of the soldiers tried to persuade them to take up the offensive. The offensive was started on July 1. The first days of the offensive were successful, but then followed a disastrous retreat; the army suffered enormous losses in killed, wounded and prisoners. This "offensive," and its results, gave a tremendous impetus to the rapid revolutionisation of the masses at the front and in the rear, and particularly to the July demonstrations in Petrograd referred to in note to p. 283.***

PAGE 295.* Trotsky did not sign the peace treaty on February 10, 1918, but announced that the Soviet government was withdrawing from the war and declared the state of war with Germany at an end. In this he was prompted by the utterly adventurist position he took up that the Germans could not attack. Nevertheless, on February 18, the German army took the offensive, which continued until March 2. During that period the German troops, without encountering any resistance, occupied Dvinsk, Minsk, Polotsk, Rezhitzka, Orsha, Wolmar, Wenden, Hopsal, Pskov, Dorpat, Reval, Borissov and Narva. They occupied the towns and railway stations with small units of 60, 100 and 200 men. They captured a large quantity of provisions, equipment, shells, artillery, etc. After this offensive the German imperialists dictated peace conditions that were far more harsh than those they had offered before.

PAGE 296.* On June 16 [3], 1907, the tsarist government, headed by the Prime Minister, Stolypin, dispersed the Second State Duma, arrested and tried the Social-Democratic members of the Duma, and issued a new electoral law which greatly reduced the rate of representation of the working class and the peasants, which was very restricted even under the preceding electoral law. The dispersion of the Second Duma marked a further stage in the government's determined attack upon all the gains of the Revolution of 1905-1907, and it was accompanied by unprecedented terror against all the Party, trade union and educational organisations of the working class. Lenin, recognising the temporary defeat of the revolution, insisted upon a change in the methods of the struggle against tsarism for the purpose of preparing for a fresh revival of the revolution. In opposition to the "Lefts" (the *otzovists*, *ultimatists* and *Vperyodists*; see note to p. 296**) he urged the

necessity of taking part in the elections and of utilising the Third State Duma. The Bolsheviks took part in the elections, and secured the return of a number of deputies. This is what Lenin calls the "shameful internal treaty with Stolypin." "Undertaking obligations by signing monarchist documents" is a reference to the declaration of loyalty to the tsar which every member of the Duma had to sign on taking his seat. Refusal to sign this declaration meant that the deputy would not have been allowed to take his seat. The Bolsheviks, not wishing for the sake of a formality to lose the opportunity of using the tribune of the Duma for the purpose of mobilising the working class for the further revolutionary struggle against tsarism, signed this declaration together with all other deputies on the opening of the Duma on November 14 [1], 1907.

PAGE 296.** Lenin here refers to the "Left" Bolsheviks who were opposed to participation in the Third Duma, and who argued that participation in the Duma would hinder the exposure of the counter-revolutionary nature of this institution and by that assist tsarism to smash the revolution under cover of the Duma. The "Left" Bolsheviks were divided into two trends: the otzovist trend and the ultimatumist trend. The otzovists demanded the unconditional recall of the Social-Democratic members from the Duma (hence the term otzovist, from the Russian word *otzvat*, meaning recall). The ultimatumists concealed their otzovist position by putting a number of demands to the Social-Democratic members of the Duma (in the form of an ultimatum), which the latter could not carry out in the midst of the tsarist reaction that was then raging. In July 1909 the otzovists broke away from the Bolsheviks and at the end of the year they, together with the ultimatumists, formed the *Vperyod* group (from the name of their paper *Vperyod—Forward*). This paper bore an anti-Marxian, semi-anarchist character; but it had no influence among the masses of the workers. For further details about the otzovists, ultimatumists and *Vperyod*-ists, see Lenin's "Resolutions of the Meeting of the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary*. 1. Otzovism and Ultimatumism" and also the article "Notes of a Publicist. 1. The Platform of the Adherents and Defenders of Otzovism" and the explanatory notes thereto in *Selected Works*, Vol. IV.

PAGE 299.* The Peace of Tilsit was signed in the town of Tilsit in East Prussia in 1807 between France on the one side and Prussia and Russia on the other, after the war of 1806-07 in which Russia was the ally of Prussia. The terms of this peace were very harsh and degrading for Prussia. France annexed more than half the territory of Prussia and imposed upon her an indemnity of 200,000,000 marks. In addition, the King of Prussia undertook to equip a special auxiliary corps to assist Napoleon's army.

After concluding the Peace of Tilsit, Prussia continued to improve her armies and when the European coalition of feudal landlord states, headed by Russia, defeated France in the wars of 1813-15, Prussia recovered her territory and acquired new territorial possessions.

PAGE 300.* The workers in the Putilov Works in Petrograd were the most advanced section of the Russian working class, and in all the decisive moments of the revolution they supported the Bolsheviks. On October 24 [11], 1917, the Putilov workers passed a resolution calling for the transfer of all power to the Soviets and for active support for all the Bolshevik demands. During the German offensive in February 1918, the Putilov workers organised several Red Guard detachments for the front. The Red Putilov Works, as it was called until recently (now called the Kirov Works), is one of the largest engineering plants in the U.S.S.R., and one of the important branches of its activity is the manufacture of tractors.

PAGE 306.* The meeting of the Central Committee of February 17 took place after the Germans had intimated that the armistice would cease at noon on February 18. The manner in which the "Left" Communists, headed by Bukharin, voted at this meeting showed that they were unsteady in principles and inconsistent in practice. For example, they had been advocating a revolutionary war, but when the question: "Those in favour of a revolutionary war" was put to the meeting, the "Lefts" dared not raise their hands. They voted in favour of "postponing the resumption of peace negotiations until the German offensive had manifested itself sufficiently and until its influence on the labour movement had become revealed." Nevertheless, when the following question was put: "If the German offensive becomes a fact and the revolutionary upsurge in Germany and Austria does not take place, shall we conclude peace?"—they abstained from voting.

PAGE 307.* Canossa, an ancient castle in Emilia, Italy, of which the ruins only remain. This castle became celebrated in history from the fact that Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, who for many years had been waging war against Pope Gregory VII and was defeated by the latter in January 1077, went to Canossa, where the Pope was then in residence, to express submission and repentance. Hence, when a person throws himself on the mercy of another it is said that he "goes to Canossa."

PAGE 309.* This refers to the Fourth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets which was to have opened in Moscow on March 12, 1918, but which opened on March 14 and lasted until March 16. There were present altogether 1,172 delegates with decisive votes and 80 delegates with consultative votes. Of these, 814 were Bolsheviks, 238 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 14 Anarchists, 24 Mensheviks, 16 Internationalist-Social-Democrats, 24 Maximalists and 15 Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. The congress discussed only two questions: 1) the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Peace and 2) the transfer of the capital to Moscow. Peace was ratified on March 15 by 784 votes against 261, and 115 abstaining. Among the latter were the "Left" Communists. The voting of the Bolshevik fraction of the congress was as follows: for ratification of the peace treaty, 453; against, 36; abstentions, 8.

PAGE 311.* The émigré Russian bourgeois press abroad very strongly opposed the Brest-Litovsk Peace and tried to instigate Russia to continue the war against German imperialism in the expectation that the continuation of this war would lead to the downfall of the Soviet government. In this the émigré Russian bourgeoisie tried to play on patriotic sentiments, and they set up a howl about the Bolsheviks betraying and selling Russia to the Germans. The petty-bourgeois parties such as the *Dyelo Naroda*-ists (i.e., the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries who published a newspaper called *Dyelo Naroda—The People's Cause*), the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Right Mensheviks and the "Left" variety of Menshevism known as the *Novaya Zhizn*-ists, from the newspaper which they published, *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*), and who called themselves Internationalist-Social-Democrats, all echoed the protests of the émigré bourgeoisie. The "Left" Communists, in fighting against the Party on the question of peace, and themselves expressing the vacillations of the "frenzied" petty bourgeois, dropped into the arguments of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties. Lenin repeatedly pointed to the solidarity between the "Left" Communists and the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties. He wrote: "In their theses" (i.e., the theses of the "Left" Communists) "as well as in the theses of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, we see, primarily, the same thing that we see in the camp of the Rights, in the camp of the bourgeoisie, from Milyukov to Martov."

PAGE 313.* The article, "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," was written in March-April 1918 and published in *Izvestiya* of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, No. 85, on April 28, 1918. In it Lenin develops the plan of socialist construction which in Russian Soviet literature is known as "Lenin's economic plan of the spring of 1918." It is from *this* point of view that all the tasks which Lenin outlines in this article are "immediate," i.e., tasks that logically follow from the specific features of the situation which Lenin indicates in his article, and particularly from the "precarious" respite obtained as a result of the Brest-Litovsk Peace. In drawing up his economic plan Lenin set the task of utilising this respite for the purpose of marching further forward towards creating the necessary prerequisites for the transition to socialism, viz., the organisation of the administration of the country and its economy, the organisation of production and distribution, national accounting and control of production and distribution, the development of self-discipline and socialist competition among the toilers, the combination of proletarian Soviet democracy with individual management in industry, the utilisation of bourgeois specialists and capitalists in the organisation of production and distribution, etc. He gave the reasons for and expressed these tasks in very concrete forms on the basis of a strict calculation of the peculiar features of Russia at that time and of the specific situation then prevailing, and on the basis of a Marxian application to these conditions of the teachings of scientific communism concerning the transitional period and paths to socialism. In this respect, all the points that he deals with in this article are

directly linked up with the tasks indicated at the Third Congress of Soviets (see Lenin's "Report to the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets, January 24 [11], 1918 [The Activities of the Council of People's Commissars]" in this volume, in which, as in the present article, he points to the *organisational task* of the revolution as one which had already come up on the order of the day). The same tasks are indicated at the Fourth Congress of Soviets at which, in a resolution on the Brest-Litovsk Peace proposed by Lenin (see note to p. 313**), the organisational tasks of the revolution are very strongly and persistently emphasised. Lenin's reports and proposals at the Third and Fourth Congresses of Soviets link up his "economic plan of the spring of 1918" with the plan of transitional measures, with the programme of the proletarian revolution in Russia, which Lenin outlined even *before* the October Revolution (see "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution," "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," "The Aims of the Revolution" and "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI), and which began to be put into operation in the revolutionary measures of the October Revolution and immediately afterwards. It is sufficient to recall the fact that even in 1917 Lenin placed the organisation of accounting and control of production and distribution (i.e., the very point which lay at the basis of his "economic plan of the spring of 1918") at the basis of the programme of the revolution as a transitional measure to socialism, as a measure which was to lead to the creation of the prerequisites of socialism. The difference was that in 1918 the organisation of accounting and control of production and distribution was presented in a number of new concrete forms corresponding to the conditions prevailing in the spring of that year.

It would be quite wrong, however, to regard the article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" merely from the point of view of the tasks dictated by the application of the programme of the proletarian revolution to the conditions prevailing in the spring of 1918. In 1921, when the transition from War Communism to the New Economic Policy, or N.E.P., as it was generally known, was taking place, Lenin more than once emphasised the fact that, in effect, the New Economic Policy was the *old* policy; and in doing so he referred to the policy he had proposed in the spring of 1918 in this article and in the resolution adopted on his report by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on April 29, 1918. He did not mean by this, of course, that the New Economic Policy was literally the same as the policy outlined in this and other of his articles and speeches in defence of his proposals. It could not be literally the same because the conditions in 1921 differed in many respects from the conditions in the spring of 1918, if only for the reason that between 1918 and 1921 lies the period of War Communism, which resulted in a number of achievements in socialist construction, in a number of class changes (for example, the raising of large masses of the poor peasantry to the position of middle peasants), in an immeasurably greater amount of economic ruin, and in the interruption of economic relations between town and country. In essence, however, the policies were

the same. The task of socialist construction from the point of view of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie of the transitional period and against the petty-bourgeois element runs equally through Lenin's speeches and articles on the New Economic Policy in 1921 and his speeches and articles on economic policy in the spring of 1918. This is particularly the case in the present article and in "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," also in this volume. Both in the spring of 1918 and in the spring of 1921 there is the same emphasis on the struggle against the petty-bourgeois element as the "principal enemy" in the given period; there is the same denial of the possibility at the given moment of a direct transition to socialism, and emphasis is laid on the need for a number of transitional measures and means of economic construction, particularly *state capitalism under the proletarian state* as a weapon in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and against the petty-bourgeois element, and as a higher form of economy compared with non-state-regulated private capitalism and with small production.

Lenin does not employ the term "state capitalism" in this article, but the "national accounting and control" of capitalist industry, to which he refers, is precisely state capitalism. In his "Report on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" at the April session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (*Collected Works*, Vol. XXII), and in his article "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," in this volume, he employs the term "state capitalism" in defending his economic plan against the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries and "Left" Communists. A number of the fundamental points of the economic policy of the spring of 1918 and of the first stages of the New Economic Policy are undoubtedly similar. It is therefore not surprising that in presenting his arguments in favour of the New Economic Policy in his pamphlet *The Food Tax* (*Selected Works*, Vol. IX), he reproduces a considerable part of his article "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," and this is precisely the part in which, in fighting against "Left" Communism, he gives the theoretical grounds for the economic policy of the spring of 1918.

It goes without saying, however, that the concrete forms of the measures proposed in the spring of 1918 differed from those of the spring of 1921. For example, the policy of state capitalism under the proletarian state which was pursued in the spring of 1918 in relation to the capitalist enterprises not yet nationalised assumes the form of concessions in 1921 (see Lenin's "Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Nuclei Secretaries of the Moscow Organisation of the R.C.P., November 26, 1920," in *Selected Works*, Vol. VIII) and the leasing to capitalists of enterprises in the now entirely nationalised industries. Hence, in this respect, state capitalism under the proletarian state assumed new forms. In the spring of 1918, the national accounting and control of the distribution of products was carried out by establishing control over the co-operative societies, which were then entirely bourgeois and packed with Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. In 1921, however, it was

carried out by the state regulation of co-operative societies. During the period of War Communism membership of co-operative societies was *compulsory*. In 1921 the Soviet government *itself* re-organised the co-operative societies on a voluntary basis, but in the conditions that prevailed in the first stages of the New Economic Policy they inevitably contained ("chemically produced") capitalist as well as Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary elements. However, accounting and control in 1918 and the state regulation of the activities of the co-operative societies (state co-operative capitalism, as Lenin called it then) in 1921 pursued the same aim according to Lenin's plan, *viz.*, the organisation of the whole of the population in co-operative societies which, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and with the land and the means of production in the hands of the proletarian state, is already socialism. Lenin laid equal emphasis on this in 1918, 1921 and 1923.

These examples are sufficient to show what was common to the New Economic Policy of 1921 and the policy of the spring of 1918, which Lenin outlined in this article, and what connects the two. But it is not sufficient to point to what is common to both in order to understand the enormous significance of this article. If the reader peruses it at all carefully he will readily see that a number of fundamental propositions developed in it are being applied by the Party and the Soviet government at the present stage of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., *i.e.*, in the period when the foundations of socialist economy have already been laid, when the country has "entered the period of socialism," when, from the period of transitional stages to socialism it has, on a number of sectors of construction (particularly in the rural districts, where the victory of collective farming has been achieved), passed to the "period of directly expanded socialist construction along the whole front." (Stalin.) It is precisely in this period that "national accounting and control of production and distribution" assumes a new and most striking form. It assumes the form of planned construction of socialism carried out by the masses themselves under the leadership of the Party and its local organisations in the factories; the plan of construction is brought to the knowledge of even the smallest industrial unit (to the workers at each machine in the factory, to every single worker in the Soviet farms and farmer in the collective farms). It is precisely in this period that the necessity, which Lenin emphasises in this article, of fighting to raise the productivity of labour acquires special importance. This fight to raise the productivity of labour is expressed in the Party slogan, which has been adopted by the vast masses of the workers, of mastering modern technique and of ruthlessly fighting against loitering and for stern labour discipline along the whole front of socialist construction. One of the greatest implements for raising the productivity of labour and for stimulating the fulfilment of the plans of the Party and of the Soviet government along the whole front, in town and country, in the factories, in the Soviet farms and collective farms, is the fulfilment of Lenin's behest regarding socialist competition. Socialist competition has developed on an enormous scale in the

Soviet Union under the firm leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet government. In this socialist competition and particularly in its higher form, shock brigade work, is expressed the "activity and self-sacrifice, the enthusiasm and initiative of the vast masses of the workers and collective farmers" (Stalin) and the "colossal energy developed by them in conjunction with the engineering and technical forces" without which it would have been impossible to achieve the results of the First Five-Year Plan and to carry out the tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan. At the same time this socialist competition and shock brigade work was one of the highest manifestations of the development of proletarian democracy. It is precisely at the present time that broad proletarian democracy, *i.e.*, the enlistment of the broad masses of the workers and peasants (primarily those in collective farms) in the work of administering the state and of managing industry, combined with individual management and individual responsibility in management, has produced such splendid results as the achievements of the First Five-Year Plan and of the first years of the Second Five-Year Plan. Lenin outlined his "economic plan of the spring of 1918" in his article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" in the light of the *principles* of the socialist reconstruction of society, and these principles are finding increasingly striking expression in real life in proportion as the Soviet Union is approaching the complete state of classless socialist society. And it is precisely for this reason that the fundamental ideas contained in "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" are applied in real life on such a wide scale and in such a forceful and striking manner at the present stage of socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

Such is the historical, theoretical and modern practical significance of Lenin's "Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government."

Actually, this work was Lenin's written report for the session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee held in April 1918. At this session he proposed that his report be taken as read, and he devoted his speech to replying to the criticism that was levelled against the fundamental propositions in that report by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and "Left" Communists. In the course of this speech he devoted particular attention to the "Left" Communists who at that time, in spite of their defeat on the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, had not yet by far laid down their arms in their factional struggle against Lenin's leadership and the Leninist line of the Party (see note to p. 351*). In spite of the resistance of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and of the "Left" Communists, the Leninist line was victorious also on the questions of socialist construction. In particular, at its meeting of April 29, 1918, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, after hearing Lenin's report, adopted his "Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," which contained all the main points of the article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" just reviewed.

PAGE 313.** Lenin here refers to the resolution adopted on his report by the Fourth, Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets on the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. The part of the resolution to which Lenin refers reads as follows: "The congress most urgently submits to all workers, soldiers and peasants, to all the toilers and oppressed masses, the most important, immediate and necessary task of the present moment, *viz.*, to increase the activity and self-discipline of the toilers, to create everywhere strong and symmetrical organisations embracing as far as possible the whole of the production and distribution of products, to ruthlessly combat the chaos, disorganisation and ruin which were the historically inevitable heritage of the torturous war, but which at the same time are a primary obstacle to the cause of the final victory of socialism and the consolidation of the foundations of socialist society."

PAGE 319.* By saying "at the present moment" (March-April 1918) "we are approximately at the level reached in 1793 and 1871" Lenin meant, on the one hand, the level reached by the Paris Commune in 1871 in regard to breaking up the state machine of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the first dictatorship of the proletariat ever to be set up, and the creation of the first model of a state of a new proletarian type. On the other hand, he meant the level reached by the revolutionary dictatorship of the petty bourgeoisie represented by the Jacobins during the French Revolution of 1789-93 in regard to the destruction of the remnants of feudalism. Lenin makes this twofold comparison because the October socialist revolution in Soviet Russia, in establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, in breaking the state machine of the bourgeoisie and developing the socialist transformation of the *whole* national economy, at the same time, "by the way, in passing," fulfilled the hitherto unfulfilled tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, among these being the abolition of the remnants of serfdom.

PAGE 322.* Lenin here refers to the decree of the Paris Commune of April 2, 1871, which read as follows:

"Whereas, high public positions, owing to their being hitherto highly paid positions, have been the object of universal aspiration and were granted as posts of honour;

"Whereas, in a real democratic republic there can be no sinecures or extremely high salaries;

"The Paris Commune decrees:

"That the salaries of the public officials of the Commune shall not exceed 6,000 francs per annum."

Following Marx, Lenin attached great importance to this decree because it was one of the practical manifestations of the "breaking up of the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie" and of the creation of a new proletarian state.

PAGE 329.* This refers to the Decree on Co-operation issued April 22, 1918, in which the following concessions were made to bourgeois co-operative societies and to workers' co-operative societies which retained the bourgeois point of view: their representatives were actually given the right to vote on the issuing of the Decree; membership of the co-operative societies on a voluntary basis and the payment of membership dues was preserved; "working class" co-operative societies which, in fact, retained the bourgeois point of view were preserved; the proposal of the Soviet government to expel the bourgeoisie from the management bodies of the co-operative societies was applied only to owners of private capitalist commercial and industrial enterprises, and even then with certain modifications in regard to those "who, after ceasing their trading activities, revealed themselves as useful co-operators."

In the period of the Civil War which followed after the Brest respite, the concessions made to the co-operative societies in April 1918 were gradually withdrawn. On March 20, 1919, a decree was issued making it compulsory for the whole of the population to join co-operative societies without the payment of membership dues, and ordering the creation of a single All-Russian consumers' co-operative society with a single centre of management. At the end of 1919 the opinion recorded in the decisions of the Party adopted on June 18 and October 17, 1919, that it was necessary to create a single centralised consumers' co-operative apparatus and to secure a Communist majority in it, received universal recognition and became predominant in the Russian Communist Party. However, it was found impossible to capture the central and local apparatus of the co-operative societies, and the Party had once again to raise the question of the co-operative societies at the Ninth Party Congress in 1920.

PAGE 332.* Lenin refers to the Statutes on Labour Discipline drawn up by the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions. In these Statutes it is declared that one of the main causes of the decline in the productivity of labour was "the absence of all industrial discipline." The Statutes indicated a number of practical measures for the purpose of improving labour discipline, such as: the introduction of a card system for registering the productivity of each worker; the introduction of factory regulations in every enterprise, the establishment of rate of output bureaux for the purpose of fixing the rate of output of each worker, and the payment of bonuses for increased productivity.

PAGE 340.* This refers to the decree issued by the Council of People's Commissars on the centralisation of railway management, the protection of railroads and increasing their carrying capacity, published in *Izvestiya* of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on March 26, 1918. It was called forth by the serious state of the transport system which threatened to bring

about the collapse of the already severely shaken economy of the country.

At that time the Commissariat of Ways of Communication had at its disposal about 650,000 cars and 20,000 locomotives. Even at the end of 1917 the number of locomotives and cars out of repair had reached the enormous figure of 30 per cent of the total; and the rapid increase in the per cent of locomotives out of repair was particularly marked. For instance, at the beginning of 1916 the number of locomotives out of repair was 16.8 per cent of the total, whereas at the beginning of 1917 it was 16.5 per cent, in April 1917, 17.2 per cent, and by April 1, 1918, it reached 38.5 per cent. Stocks of fuel catastrophically declined. In 1916 these stocks amounted to 50,000,000 poods (60 poods equal one ton). On January 1, 1918, they amounted to 9,000,000 poods and on April 1, 1918, to 5,400,000 poods. As a result of all this the carrying capacity of the railways rapidly declined.

The introduction of iron labour discipline was an absolutely necessary prerequisite for the improvement of the condition of the transport system. It was for the purpose of creating this discipline that the decree on the reorganisation of the management of the railways was issued. The main point of this decree was the introduction of individual management and the strict centralisation of the management of transport. The following are several points of the decree:

"...5. No federal, regional or other local Soviet organisation has the right to interfere in transport affairs in view of the fact that although the railways pass through definite territories, they are by their very nature extra-territorial, for they serve the needs of the whole republic. All federal, regional and other local Soviet organisations must render every assistance to the railway workers, including armed assistance in the event of any attempt on the part of any organisations to refuse to submit to the present decree.

"...6. Every local, district or regional railway centre shall elect from its midst a worker who is most active and loyal to the Soviet government and has a knowledge of railway affairs, who shall be placed at the head of its centre in the capacity of administrative-technical executive responsible to the People's Commissar of Ways of Communication. *This person shall be the embodiment of the whole of the dictatorial power of the proletariat in the given railway centre.*

"The appointment of such a person shall be endorsed by the People's Commissar of Ways of Communication. . . ."

This decree on the management of the railways was severely criticised by the petty-bourgeois parties as well as by the "Left" Communists. The main point that united these opponents was their petty-bourgeois attitude towards labour discipline and individual management. In particular, the "Left" Communists failed to understand the importance of either of these in the struggle against economic ruin and for socialist construction, and they regarded this decree as a reversion from the "commune state" to bureaucratic administration. In their "Theses on the Present Situation"

(see next note) they wrote: "The form of state administration must inevitably develop in the direction of bureaucratic centralism, the domination of various commissars, depriving the local Soviets of independence and the actual abandonment of the 'commune state,' i.e., the type of administration from below. Numerous facts go to show that there are already definite tendencies in this direction (the decree on the administration of the railways, the articles by Latsis, etc.)." In this and similar pronouncements, the "Left" Communists were the expression of the petty-bourgeois element, the struggle against which was one of the most important tasks of the time.

PACE 351.* The article "Left-Wing Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" was written in the beginning of May 1918 and published in *Pravda*, Nos. 88-90 of May 9-11, 1918. It rounds off a series of written and verbal pronouncements by Lenin against the "Left" Communists headed by Bukharin, who at that time represented a separate factional group within the Party. Starting their struggle against Lenin's leadership and the Leninist line of the Party on the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace (see note to p. 283*), they began to act as a definite factional group after the acceptance by the Central Committee on February 23, 1918, of the ultimatum of the German government. At the next session of the Central Committee, on February 24, the prominent "Left" Communists handed in a statement to the effect that they resigned from "responsible Party and Soviet posts." At first they postponed their actual resignation until the Seventh Congress of the Party, but they resigned on March 3, immediately after the Soviet delegation signed the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. On February 24, the Moscow Regional Bureau of the Party, which was then in the hands of the "Left" Communists, adopted the resolution mentioned in note to p. 283,* expressing *no confidence* in the Central Committee and *refusing* to submit to its decision of February 23 concerning the acceptance of the German peace terms. In a memorandum accompanying this resolution they threatened to *split the Party*. Taking advantage of the leading position they held on the Moscow Regional Bureau of the R.C.P., the "Left" Communists published their own factional organ, *Kommunist*, in the name of the Bureau. The first issue appeared on April 20, 1918. At the Seventh Congress of the Party and at the Fourth, Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, which ratified the Brest-Litovsk Peace, the "Left" Communists came out as a definitely organised faction, and notwithstanding the direct instructions of the Central Committee to the contrary, they made their own "declaration of the group of Communists (Bolsheviks) who are opposed to the conclusion of peace." After the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty was definitely signed and ratified by the Fourth Congress of Soviets, the "Left" Communists still further intensified their factional struggle. The Moscow Regional Bureau of the Party was actually transformed into their factional centre. It issued instructions to the local groups of "Left" Communists, it called conferences of "Lefts" (two such conferences are known to have taken place, one in the

beginning of April and the other in the middle of May 1918) and published the factional organ of the "Left" Communists, *Kommunist* (April-May). The "Left" Communists opposed Lenin's economic policy as outlined in his article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (in this volume) and in his Theses, which were adopted by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on April 29, 1918. As against Lenin's line they advanced their own "Theses on the Present Situation," to which Lenin refers at the beginning of this article. Just as they did during their struggle against the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, the "Left" Communists in these Theses accused the Leninist line of the Central Committee of the Party and the enormous majority of the members of the Party of being *Right opportunist*. Having, willy-nilly, to reconcile themselves to the fact that peace had been signed, they argued that "the majority of the soldiers' and peasants' organisations" accepted the peace because the latter consisted of representatives of the "backward masses of declassed soldiers" and also of the "declassed strata of the proletariat" and the "emaciated" (owing to the war, the failure of the harvest, the food difficulties, and the dislocation of industry) sections of the peasantry. Thus, they regarded the line of Lenin, of the Central Committee and of the Party as a whole on the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace as nothing more nor less than an expression of opportunism, of dragging at the tail of the weary and demoralised strata of the proletariat and peasantry. Regarding the results of the conclusion of peace with German imperialism as extremely fatal and as having a demoralising effect upon the international revolutionary movement and on the internal situation in the country, the "Left" Communists in their Theses speak of the "diminution of class activity and the increased declassing of the proletariat"; and they go to the length of saying that "in connection with the growing class *rapprochement* between the proletariat and the poor peasantry (who, after peace was signed under pressure of their demands and influence, must become the bulwark of the Soviet power), the tendency to *divert the majority of the Communist Party*, and the Soviet power guided by it, *into the channels of petty-bourgeois policy* of a new type becomes quite possible." (Thesis 9, our italics.) Thus, from the point of view of the "Left" Communists, the "*rapprochement* between the proletariat and the poor peasantry," the transformation of the poor peasants into a "bulwark of the Soviet power," i.e., what for Bolshevism had long been one of the fundamental slogans of the proletarian revolution ("joining with the rural poor" and "relying on them") threatened to divert the majority of the Party "into the channels of petty-bourgeois policy," into the channels of Right opportunism. In their opinion, the Right deviation was already manifested in the sphere of internal politics in the very methods of creating the extremely necessary conditions for the transition to socialism which Lenin outlined in his "Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (although in their Theses they do not say a word about Lenin) and particularly in those forms of state capitalism

under the proletarian state which Lenin spoke of. They saw a Right deviation in the utilising of capitalists for the organisation of production, in the introduction of individual management in industry, and even in "instilling discipline under the guise of 'self-discipline.'" (Thesis 11.) They declared that "the path, taken as a whole, as well as the tendency to deviate to this path, are extremely dangerous" because they lead to "petty-bourgeois conditions" and hence, in the final analysis, to the restoration of capitalism. (Thesis 12.) This false appraisal of the Leninist line of policy of the Party as well as the position the "Left" Communists occupied in the period of the Brest-Litovsk Peace (see note to p. 283*), followed logically from the view they held, in common with Trotsky, that socialism could not be built in a single country and that without an immediate victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries a reversion to capitalism was inevitable. In the conclusion of their Theses they once again, as in the period of their struggle against the Brest-Litovsk Peace, threatened to *split the Party*. In Thesis 15 they wrote: "The proletarian Communists" (this is what the "Lefts" called themselves) "define their attitude towards the majority of the Party as that of a Left wing of the Party and of the vanguard of the Russian proletariat, which preserves complete unity with the Party to the extent that the policy of the majority *does not create an unavoidable split within the ranks* of the proletariat itself." (Our italics.) Declaring that they would render "every assistance" to the Soviet government at the present moment "by taking part in it," the "Lefts" made the following reservation: "This participation is possible only on the basis of a definite political programme that will prevent the Soviet power and the majority of the Party from deviating to the fatal path of petty-bourgeois politics. In the event of such a deviation, the Left wing of the Party will be obliged to take up the position of a businesslike and responsible proletarian opposition." The "Left" Communists tried to draw up such a programme, but as Lenin shows in the present article it consisted of nothing but general revolutionary phrases, suspended in the air, as it were, and having no basis in the objective conditions of the historical situation then prevailing. This was the schismatic factional document which the "Left" Communists opposed to Lenin's plan of transitional measures to socialism, and which was published in No. 1 of *Kommunist*.

The intensification of the factional work of the "Left" Communists led to the decision of the Central Committee instructing Lenin to oppose them, and Lenin did so in his report on "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" at the April session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (see note to p. 313*) and in the present article. Repeating the main arguments against the position of the "Left" Communists developed in previous articles and speeches in connection with the Brest Peace (see "Report on War and Peace at the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party [Bolsheviks]" and "Speech in Reply to the Debate" on this report in this volume), Lenin enlarges and gives the grounds for these arguments. Summing up all the disagreements with the "Left" Communists,

he gives an exhaustive class characterisation of this alleged "proletarian" opposition. The "Left" Communists accused Lenin, the Central Committee and the Party as a whole of being Right opportunists and claimed to be the real revolutionary wing of the Party. Lenin, in his article, shows that in fact they were *revolutionary phrasemongers*, that their "Left" revolutionary phrases did not take into account either the real relation of class forces in the country or the totality of the specific features of the situation at the time, and that therefore their "revolutionary" phrases and slogans in fact concealed *real petty-bourgeois mentality*, the real *kinship* of their position (on the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace and on questions of internal policy) not only with the position of the petty-bourgeois Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party, but also with that of the direct hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. The "Left" Communists declared themselves to be the true representatives of the revolutionary proletariat. Lenin shows (again using the example of their position on the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace and on questions of internal policy) that they were in fact representatives of petty-bourgeois vacillation, of the petty-bourgeois element, the expression of the striving of the petty bourgeois "driven to a frenzy by the horrors of the imperialist war," and that this was precisely the source of the vapidness of their revolutionary phrases, of the closeness and kinship of their position with that of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The "Left" Communists asserted that they and not the majority of the Party were serving the cause of really developing the proletarian revolution in Soviet Russia and the world revolution. Lenin shows that in fact their petty-bourgeois mentality led them to serve the bourgeoisie, that objectively, owing to the kinship of their position with that of the petty-bourgeois parties, they were, to a certain extent, linking up with the bourgeois counter-revolution represented by Milyukov and Co., for example on the question of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, by repeating what the Milyukovs had been howling about. This characterisation of the "Left" Communists runs like a red thread through all Lenin's pronouncements against them. Lenin had applied a similar characterisation before this to the "Left" trends known as otzovists, ultimatumists and *Vperyod*-ists in the period of reaction after the Revolution of 1905-07 (see note to p. 296**), and in the main it was later applied to the "Left" Communists in the West (see *Selected Works*, Vol. X, "Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder"); and this characterisation was applicable to the so-called "Left" trends and trendlets, groups and grouplets in the C.P.S.U. and other Communist Parties. This characterisation fully applied to the "Left" so-called "new opposition" (1925-26), and to the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc (1926-27), which drifted into the camp of the bourgeois counter-revolution and actually became its vanguard. It also fully applied to the semi-Trotskyist "Leftism" of 1928-30, this smallest and least influential "Left" trend in the C.P.S.U. which, through the medium of the Right-Leftist double-dealing bloc of the Syrtsov and Lominadze groups, became a link in the

chain which sooner or later inevitably had to unite every struggle against the Leninist leadership and the Leninist line of the Party with bourgeois counter-revolution.

After the severe blows delivered against them by the Party headed by Lenin at the end of April and beginning of May 1918, the "Left" Communist factional group rapidly declined and lost the last remnants of its influence in the ranks of the Party and of the working class. Even in this article Lenin is fully justified in referring to it as a "small group," to such an extent had it dwindled after its defeat at the Seventh Congress of the Party and at the Fourth, Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, notwithstanding the factional work it had been carrying on. On May 15, the Moscow Regional Conference of the Party adopted Lenin's Theses "On the Present Situation," and the "Lefts" thus lost their stronghold in the Moscow Regional Bureau. Soon after they lost their second stronghold, the Urals Regional Committee. They still made attempts to continue their factional struggle; they demanded that a special congress of the Party be convened, again threatened a split, etc.; but these were the last efforts of the dying opposition. By the end of the summer of 1918 the majority of the "Lefts" confessed their errors and dissolved their faction. It must be said, however, that many of the "Left" Communists subsequently joined new opposition groups, particularly the Group of Democratic Centralism of 1920-21 and the Trotskyist opposition of 1923-24 and 1926-28.

The significance of the article "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" is by no means confined to the enormous role it played in causing the dissolution of the "Left" Communist faction and as an indispensable theoretical weapon in the hands of the C.P.S.U. and of the Communist International in the fight against "Left" Communism. On the basis of the struggle against "Left" Communism, this article gives the profound theoretical foundation of the plan of socialist construction outlined in Lenin's "Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government." Even in 1921 it served as the finished theoretical basis for the transition to the New Economic Policy (in note to p. 313* it was pointed out that Lenin used this article for this purpose in his pamphlet *The Food Tax*, for which see *Selected Works*, Vol. IX). By its analysis of the social-economic systems existing in the country and of the fundamental economic and class antagonisms prevailing in it (Part III), it provided the theoretical basis for the Party's policy in socialist construction and for the class struggle against the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois element for the whole of the epoch of transition.

PAGE 356.* Nozdrev, a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, a boastful, quarrelsome, scandalmongering, cheating petty landlord who always got mixed up in shady affairs.

PAGE 365.* The main and characteristic feature of the class struggle in Germany during many decades of the nineteenth century was the fact that the

weak and cowardly urban bourgeoisie, frightened by the labour movement in France and England, and disturbed by the labour movement in its own country, submitted to the leadership of the *Junkers* (landlords) who, in pursuit of their own interests, remained at the head of the state, but gradually adapted the latter to the requirements of capitalist development and of the bourgeoisie. In 1871 the Bismarck government, which was a *Junker* government, succeeded in bringing about the unification of Germany in a single empire. This unification was called forth by the requirements of capitalist development. A *bloc* was formed between the *Junkers* and the bourgeoisie; and this *bloc* was possible because the *Junker* class was gradually being drawn into capitalist production and itself assumed a bourgeois hue.

Engels wrote: "The *Junkers* are a landlord class only to the extent that they largely allow their land to be cultivated by tenant farmers; over and above that they are often owners of distilleries and beet-sugar refineries." Subsequently, with the development of German imperialism, the big landlords became directors of banks, joint stock companies, etc. Thus, a gradual merging of the interests of the *Junkers* and the bourgeoisie took place. This put its impress on the economics and politics of imperialist Germany of the twentieth century, which Lenin here characterises as "*Junker-bourgeois imperialism*."

PAGE 371.* By "the compromise of a section of the Bolsheviks in October-November 1917" Lenin means the position taken up at that time by a group of Rights headed by Kamenev, Zinoviev and Rykov. This position found expression in: 1) the notorious strike-breaking conduct of Kamenev and Zinoviev on the eve of the October Revolution; 2) their conduct immediately after the October Revolution, when they insisted that the Soviet government be made up of representatives "of all Socialist parties" including the Narodni-Socialists, who in fact were semi-Cadets; 3) the conduct of Kamenev, Zinoviev, Ryazanov and Larin, who, contrary to the instructions of the Central Committee of the Party, persisted in advocating this point of view during the negotiations concerning the composition of the government conducted with the representatives of other parties at the meetings of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and also at the meetings of the Bolshevik fraction of the latter; and 4) after the Central Committee of the Party had presented an ultimatum to the Rights in this connection, the resignation of Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Milyutin, Ryazanov, Larin, Nogin, Teodorovich and others from their responsible posts on the Central Committee and in the Soviet government. The same policy was pursued by this group later on, in December of that year, at the meetings of the Bolshevik fraction of the Constituent Assembly at which, also contrary to the instructions of the Central Committee of the Party, they urged that the Socialist-Revolutionary Constituent Assembly be preserved and that a "combined type of state" consisting of bourgeois democracy and the Soviets be established. The whole position taken up by the Rights in October-

December 1917 followed logically from their Menshevik-Trotskyist denial of the possibility of the socialist revolution and of building socialism in Soviet Russia alone, and from their striving at all costs to restrict the revolution within bourgeois-democratic limits. This point of view was expressed by Kamenev as early as April 1917 in his speeches in opposition to Lenin's April Theses, and in the speeches of the Rights (Kamenev, Rykov and others) at the All-Russian April Conference of the Party. These Menshevik-Trotskyist positions, as well as their lack of principle, their unscrupulousness in the choice of means, their adventurism and duplicity, of which they made a system, led Kamenev and Zinoviev through the "new" Leningrad opposition of 1926 to the Trotskyist *bloc* of 1926-27, with its counter-revolutionary demonstrations against the Party and the Soviet government. Subsequently Kamenev and Zinoviev sank to the role of organisers and leaders of illegal counter-revolutionary groups—the "Leningrad Centre," which committed the vile assassination of Comrade Kirov, and the "Moscow Centre"—became organisers and leaders of individual terrorism against leaders of the Party, acting in direct contact with the agents of capitalist governments. For Lenin's appraisal of the positions of the Rights in April and October-December 1917 see the following articles in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI: "Letters on Tactics," "Report on the Current Situation" delivered at the All-Russian April Conference of the Party, "A Letter to the Comrades," "A Letter to the Members of the Bolshevik Party," "A Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.," "From the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. to Comrades Kamenev, Zinoviev, Ryazanov and Larin," and "From the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. to All Party Members and to All the Toiling Classes of Russia," and also the explanatory notes to them.

PAGE 379.* One of the central points discussed at the Congress of Representatives of Finance Departments of the local Soviets, at which Lenin delivered this speech, was the question of the introduction of an income and property tax. The necessity for this measure was called forth by the very severe financial position of the country. In the first half of 1918 revenues amounted to 3,294,000,000 rubles, while expenditures amounted to 20,480,000,000 rubles, not counting expenditure on the maintenance of the commissariats, the Supreme Council of National Economy, and the railways. Emphasising that "in the first period the proletariat could not dispense with contributions," *i.e.*, imposition of levies on the bourgeoisie, Lenin considered it necessary in the spring of 1918, in connection with his plan of creating the prerequisites for the transition to socialism, outlined in his article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (in this volume), to pass from the system of contributions to obtaining revenues by means of an income tax.

The "Left" Communists could not understand the need for this change and believed that the abandonment of contributions was a turn to the Right,

a concession to the class enemy. The proposal to introduce an income and property tax was contained in a report submitted by the Commissar for Finance, Gukovsky, at a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, who in the main supported Lenin's financial proposals. During the debate on this report Bukharin declared that Gukovsky's proposals meant renunciation of the line the Party had been pursuing all the time. And yet it was precisely from the point of view of the struggle against the class enemy that the introduction of an income and property tax was the most correct thing to do at that time. Lenin dealt with this question in his speech to the delegates of the congress and emphasised the significance in principle of an income and property tax as a weapon in the fight against the bourgeoisie.

PAGE 384.* In April 1918 a plan called the "Meshchersky plan" was being discussed by the Council of People's Commissars and by the Soviet economic organisations. This was a plan to combine the principal iron and steel enterprises in Russia into a single enterprise, the shares of which were to be distributed between the manufacturers and the state. Meshchersky was a big capitalist manufacturer at that time. On April 18 the Council of People's Commissars finally rejected the "Meshchersky plan" and adopted a decision to nationalise the iron and steel and engineering industries. On May 12-18 a conference of representatives of nationalised enterprises was held for the purpose of discussing the questions connected with the nationalisation of the large enterprises such as the Sormovo Works, Kolomna Works, Baltic Works, etc., and it is to this conference that Lenin's letter was addressed. The conference passed a resolution in favour of the nationalisation of the iron and steel works and elected a provisional committee for the purpose of organising the combined state iron and steel works. However, there were differences of opinion on this question at the conference. For example, Professor Grinevetsky, a violent opponent of the Soviet system of economy, demanded the adoption of the "Meshchersky plan," while a number of engineers attending the conference abstained from voting. Subsequently, in the course of the wreckers' trial in 1930, it was disclosed that Meshchersky, in conjunction with a large group of ex-manufacturers, had adopted a number of measures for the purpose of paralysing the work of the nationalised industry.

PAGE 386.* This speech was delivered at the First Congress of Councils of National Economy held in Moscow, May 26 to June 4, 1918. The following points were on the agenda: 1) Opening speech by Lenin; 2) The economic consequences of the Brest Treaty; 3) The general economic state of Russia and economic policy; 4) The activities of the Supreme Council of National Economy; 5) The financial position of Russia; 6) The state budget; 7) Foreign trade; 8) The Committee of Public Works; 9) Local reports.

This congress was held about three months after the signing of the Brest Peace, which gave Soviet Russia "a very, very small, a tiny, precarious and far from complete respite" (Lenin). Even at that time, this "temporary respite seemed to be coming to an end." "We have to be ready at any moment, any day; we must expect a change of policy in the interests of the extreme military party," *i.e.*, an attack upon Soviet Russia. This change in the international position of the Soviet power "created alarm and panic during the past few days and has enabled the counter-revolutionaries to resume their work of undermining the Soviet power." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII, "Report on Foreign Policy at the Joint Meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet on May 14, 1918.")

The capitalists, encouraged by the first signs of an offensive military policy on the part of imperialism against the Soviets, refused to come to an economic agreement with the Soviet power on the basis of state capitalism (see Parts III-V of "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" in this volume). Instead of submitting to the decrees of the Soviet government, they began to organise civil war against the victorious proletariat, under the leadership and with the assistance of Anglo-French imperialism. That is why, in the sphere of national economy, the task was to accelerate the transition from the policy of "workers' accounting and control," which allowed controlled capitalists to take part in the management of industry on the basis of state capitalism under the proletarian state, to the workers' management of industry, by steadily nationalising industry branch by branch, starting with the most important. On this question the First Congress of Councils of National Economy at which Lenin delivered this speech resolved: "In the sphere of the organisation of production it is necessary to complete the process of nationalisation and from the process of nationalising individual enterprises (in the course of which 304 enterprises were nationalised and sequestered) it is necessary to pass to the steady nationalisation of branches of industry, in the first place in the iron and steel, engineering, chemical, oil and textile industries." Up to that time, the banks, water transport, the sugar industry and a number of enterprises, principally those abandoned by the capitalists, had been nationalised. In every enterprise that passed into the possession of the state, two-thirds of the management was appointed either by the Regional or the All-Russian Councils of National Economy. Half the number of candidates for these posts were nominated either by the Regional or the All-Russian Executive Committees of the trade unions. One-third of the members of the management board of each enterprise was elected for six months by the members of trade unions employed in the particular enterprise. An obligatory rule was that one-third of the management board of the enterprise shall consist of specialists from the ranks of the technical and commercial staff. The regional management boards of the nationalised industries were elected at joint regional conferences of representatives of factory management boards and of regional committees of trade unions, and were endorsed by the

Regional Councils of National Economy. Gubernia management boards were built up on the same principle as the regional management boards. The regional management boards were represented on the Regional Councils of National Economy. The central management boards of the nationalised enterprises were elected at joint All-Russian conferences of factory management boards and of All-Russian Executive Committees of trade unions, and were endorsed by the Supreme Council of National Economy. The Supreme Council of National Economy consisted of ten representatives of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, thirty representatives of All-Russian industrial unions, twenty representatives of Regional Councils of National Economy, two representatives of the co-operative societies, and one representative each of the Commissariats of Food, Ways of Communication, Labour, Agriculture, Finance, and Trade and Industry. The Supreme Council of National Economy was the supreme economic body in the R.S.F.S.R., and as the economic organ of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee was responsible to the latter and to the Council of People's Commissars. The function of the Supreme Council of National Economy and of its local organs was to organise the whole of production, distribution and the financing of national economy. The wider the nationalisation of industry was to be introduced, the more important and responsible was to be the role of the Supreme Council of National Economy as the organiser and builder of large-scale *socialist* industry, which is the foundation of socialism. In greeting the First Congress of Councils of National Economy, Lenin starts his speech with an explanation of the role of the Supreme Council of National Economy and of its local organs as the organisers of socialist economy, as organs which, even in their rudimentary form, are the prototype of the organs of management of national economy in socialist society. Emphasising the enormous importance of the organisational tasks confronting the Supreme Council of National Economy and the local Councils of National Economy, Lenin, in complete accord with the fundamental line concerning the socialist sector of national economy as laid down in his article "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (in this volume), calls the attention of the congress particularly to the necessity of utilising bourgeois specialists and to the development of labour discipline.

In concluding his speech he warned the delegates not to allow themselves "to be misled by those people, by those classes, by the bourgeoisie . . . whose sole task is to sow panic, to cause despondency, to cause complete despondency concerning the whole of our work, to make it appear to be hopeless." Incidentally, Lenin had in mind here the "Left" Communists who were then still attacking the Party line, although this was their last attack. On the question of the economic situation and economic policy that was before the congress, the "Left" Communists put up Ossinsky as a co-reporter to oppose the main report. All the principles he enunciated on questions of economic policy were a repetition of those contained in the platform of the "Left" Communists, which Lenin criticised in his article "Left-Wing'

Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" (in this volume). Ossinsky's main argument was as follows: "The industrial apparatus is so dislocated that every sensible man must admit that international intervention is necessary to restore it." "The only way to restore the productive forces of our country and of the whole world is to stop the war in all parts of the world in the way we stopped it in Russia, i.e., overthrow the power of finance capital in all countries; if this is done, then, with the energetic international intervention of the world proletariat, the wounds inflicted by the war will be healed. From this a practical conclusion must be drawn. We cannot indulge in rosy dreams about being able to do anything with the aid of our own internal, domestic resources, by demobilising the army, and by organisational work." Thus, according to Ossinsky, unless the assistance of the victorious world proletariat was obtained, the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia was doomed either to fall or to degenerate. This panicky speech strikingly confirmed the kinship of the fundamental principles of the "Left" Communists with those of Menshevism and its other variety, Trotskyism, for it copied the Trotskyist theory that the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. was impossible without a victory of the proletariat in the West; and it anticipated Trotsky's chatter of 1926-28 about the degeneration of the Soviet power. It was against such criticism of the Party line on the part of the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and "Left" Communists that Lenin, in his speech, warned the delegates at this congress.

PAGE 394.* The Conference of Moscow Trade Unions and Factory Committees of June 27-28, 1918, at which this "Report on the Present Situation" was made was held at one of the most acute moments in the history of the Soviet power. The Civil War had entered into the second stage of its development when the Anglo-French imperialists were taking a direct and leading part in it.

The Czecho-Slovak mutiny organised by the French Mission with the aid of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in May 1918 enabled the counter-revolutionary forces to be concentrated along the whole length of the Siberian Railway. Under their protection a Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik government was set up in Samara, a Siberian government was set up in Siberia, Ataman Dutov again appeared in Orenburg, and Ataman Semyonov in Trans-Baikal. The Japanese, who at the end of July occupied Vladivostok and Nikolsk-Ussuriisk, were in command of the Far East. In the Far North the British were in command, and in the beginning of August they occupied Archangel and Murmansk. In the course of March-April the Germans occupied the Ukraine and Donbas. Under their protection the Volunteer Army of Krasnov and Denikin consolidated itself and developed. In July-August the Soviet power in the Kuban, on the Terek and in Daghestan was broken. With the direct assistance at first of Kaiser Germany and Turkey, and later of the Entente, the Mensheviks came into power in

Georgia, the Dashnaks in Armenia, and the Mussavatists in Azerbaidjan (the two latter parties being the respective bourgeois nationalist parties).

The Land of the Soviets was surrounded by a close ring of counter-revolutionary rebellions and military fronts, and was cut off from the important sources of food (the Ukraine, Kuban, Siberia), of raw materials, coal, iron ore (Donbas), and from the oil sources of Baku and Grozny.

Industry and transport were in a state of crisis and the food crisis was particularly acute. Famine was marching against the towns, against the working class, against the as yet unconsolidated Red Army, which was created in the fire of the struggle against the counter-revolution, and famine threatened to disrupt the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship on the fronts of the raging Civil War. It is to this disaster of famine that Lenin devoted his report. In it he calls upon the working class to fight the famine, to organise workers' food detachments for the purpose of putting the state grain monopoly into actual operation, for the purpose of sequestering, with the aid of the rural poor, the grain from the rural kulaks, and for the purpose of confiscating the stocks of grain from the urban bourgeoisie. Indeed, the food front at that time was one of the fronts in the Civil War. The fight for bread was a fight against the counter-revolution and for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for socialism. Lenin devoted enormous attention to the struggle for bread throughout the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat during his lifetime precisely as a struggle for socialism; and in that period of raging civil war with which we are now dealing, the attention he paid to the struggle for bread was positively exceptional. The report now under review is only one of Lenin's reports, speeches, articles, and letters on this subject. In *Selected Works* Vol. VIII the reader will find another special report by Lenin on the fight against the famine, a telegram and letters to the workers about organising this fight in the same stage of the Civil War with which the present report deals, and other letters and articles by Lenin on the same subject dealing with other periods.

PAGE 395.* The unceasing imperialist war, the economic ruin caused by it, the acute food situation and the influence of the October Revolution in Russia all gave rise, in the beginning of 1918, to a broad movement of the toilers of Austria-Hungary under the slogan of "Bread and Peace." In January 1918 strikes broke out in Vienna, Brünn, Cracow, Budapest and other towns. In Vienna and Budapest, Soviets of Workers' Deputies were set up. Only with the aid of the Austrian Social-Democrats was the government able to suppress the strikes and disperse the Soviets.

PAGE 397.* The German troops occupied the Ukraine mainly for the purpose of obtaining food supplies. According to the first treaty concluded with the Ukrainian Rada, the latter undertook to supply Germany with 980,000 tons of grain; and by a supplementary agreement it undertook to deliver

1,050,000 tons of grain, 11,000,000 head of cattle, 30,000 live sheep, 1,000,000 geese, 1,000,000 of other poultry, 65,000 tons of sugar, 980 tons of butter, fats, etc. The Rada could not fulfil this undertaking. The government of Skoropadsky, which succeeded the Rada, could do no more. The German military command then resorted to requisitions and to the sending of military units to the rural districts to sequester the food. These measures failed, however, and only 9,132 carloads of grain were obtained. The incessant guerrilla war carried on by the workers and peasants, a number of uprisings of the population, and the increase of revolutionary ferment among the German occupational troops themselves, prevented German imperialism from plundering the food of the Ukraine.

PAGE 412.* The demand for the publication of the secret treaties in order to provide documental proof of the real character and aims of the imperialist war was advanced by the Bolsheviks immediately after the February Revolution. In his "Draft Theses of March 30 [17], 1917," Lenin wrote that the Provisional Government "is keeping secret the predatory treaties made by tsarism with England, France, Italy, Japan, etc. It wants to conceal from the people the truth about its war programme and the fact that it is for war, for victory over Germany" (*Collected Works*, Vol. XX). The fight the Bolsheviks waged for the publication of the secret treaties and the refusal of the Provisional Government and the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported it helped the masses to understand that the war was continuing to be waged for the annexation of new territories and for the oppression of new nationalities.

The publication of the secret treaties began soon after the October Revolution, notwithstanding the protests of the ambassadors of the "Allied" powers. As became evident after the publication of the secret treaties, the tsarist government counted on obtaining as a result of the war Constantinople and the Dardanelles Straits, and the regions of Trebizond, Erzerum, Van, Bitlis and South Kurdistan (all territories of Turkey) and a number of regions in Persia and Afghanistan.

PAGE 414.* In January 1918 owing to the food difficulties and the protracted nature of the peace negotiations, a strike broke out in the munitions works in Berlin and its suburbs, affecting 500,000 workers. A Council of Workers' Deputies was formed which put forward the following demands: 1) the conclusion of a general democratic peace, 2) the introduction of universal suffrage, 3) the release of all arrested persons, and 4) the reorganisation of the administration of food supplies. Simultaneously strikes broke out at the Krupp Works, at the Danzig shipyards, at the Vulcan Works in Hamburg and at the munitions works in Kiel.

PAGE 414.** This refers to the events of January 22 [9], 1905, which are regarded as the beginning of the Russian Revolution of 1905-07. On that

day, which has come to be known as Bloody Sunday, hundreds of thousands of workers of St. Petersburg, influenced by the Society of Russian Factory Workers organised with the aid of Zubatov, the Chief of the Secret Police, and led by the priest, Father Gapon, marched unarmed, carrying icons and sacred banners, to the Winter Palace to petition the tsar to improve the conditions of life of the working class and to grant political liberty. The demonstrators were shot down by troops which had been called out beforehand. About 3,000 persons were killed and injured. The events of January 22 [9] revealed even to the most backward workers that if they wanted to achieve any improvement in their conditions they would have to fight to overthrow the tsarist autocracy. For Lenin's appraisal of the significance of Bloody Sunday see his "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution" and the article "The Beginning of the Revolution in Russia" in *Selected Works*, Vol. III.

PAGE 415.* Lenin's forecast was very soon confirmed by events. At the end of October and beginning of November 1918 the revolution overthrew the monarchy in Austria-Hungary, which, in the process of the revolution, split up into a number of separate national republics; and in the beginning of November the revolution overthrew the monarchy in Germany. Certain details of the November revolution in Germany will be found in notes to pp. 210* and 231* in this volume.

PAGE 421.* Lenin raised the question of nationalising the large industrial combines and syndicates as early as April 1917 (see "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution" in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI). He was of the opinion that in addition to the nationalisation of the banks, this was a measure which was dictated by the economic state of the country and which the proletariat had to introduce after taking power; and that only in an extreme case was the proletariat to confine itself for a time to the introduction of *immediate* workers' control of the syndicates and banks. In his pamphlet *The Threatening Catastrophe and How To Fight It* he developed the idea of nationalising large-scale industry in greater detail. (See *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, and also the article "The Aims of the Revolution" in *Selected Works*, Vol. VI.) He was of the opinion that it would be possible immediately to nationalise only the more centralised branches of industry such as the oil, coal, iron and steel and sugar industries. In regard to the other branches of industry, he thought that workers' control should first be introduced as a transitional measure to nationalisation.

After the October Revolution the actual nationalisation of industry proceeded in the following way. In retaliation to the refusal of the capitalists to fulfil the orders of the Soviet government soon after the October Revolution the following large enterprises were nationalised: in the Urals—the Bogoslav, Sim, and Kishtim enterprises; in the Donbas—the Russo-Baltic Iron and Steel Company, and in Petrograd—the Putilov, Neva and Sestroretsk Works, the 1880 Company and the Electric Transmission Company. The

latter was nationalised "owing to the national importance of the enterprise."

In the beginning of 1918 it was proposed to nationalise the Donetz coal-mines, the Baku oilwells and the iron and steel industry in the south of Russia, but this was prevented by the occupation of the Ukraine by the Germans.

In May the remnants of the sugar industry were nationalised and in June the oil industry was nationalised. In the middle of June a group of large engineering and iron and steel works, such as the Sormovo-Kolomna Works (six works) and the group of large chemical works belonging to Ushkov and Co. were nationalised. By the middle of 1918 the government had in its possession 80 per cent of the mines and works in the Urals, and 50 per cent of all the metal-working enterprises in Russia. The further nationalisation of industry was greatly accelerated by the Civil War which flared up in the beginning of 1918 and by the necessity, in view of this, of economically disarming the bourgeoisie. On June 28 a decree was issued on the nationalisation of the medium and large industrial enterprises which affected over 2,000 enterprises. After the issue of this decree the process of nationalisation proceeded so rapidly that by the end of 1920 from 70 to 80 per cent of the scheduled industries were nationalised.

The process of nationalisation was completed after the issue of the Decree of November 29, 1920, on the nationalisation of all small industrial enterprises with mechanical driving power employing more than five workers, and those without mechanical driving power employing more than ten workers.