

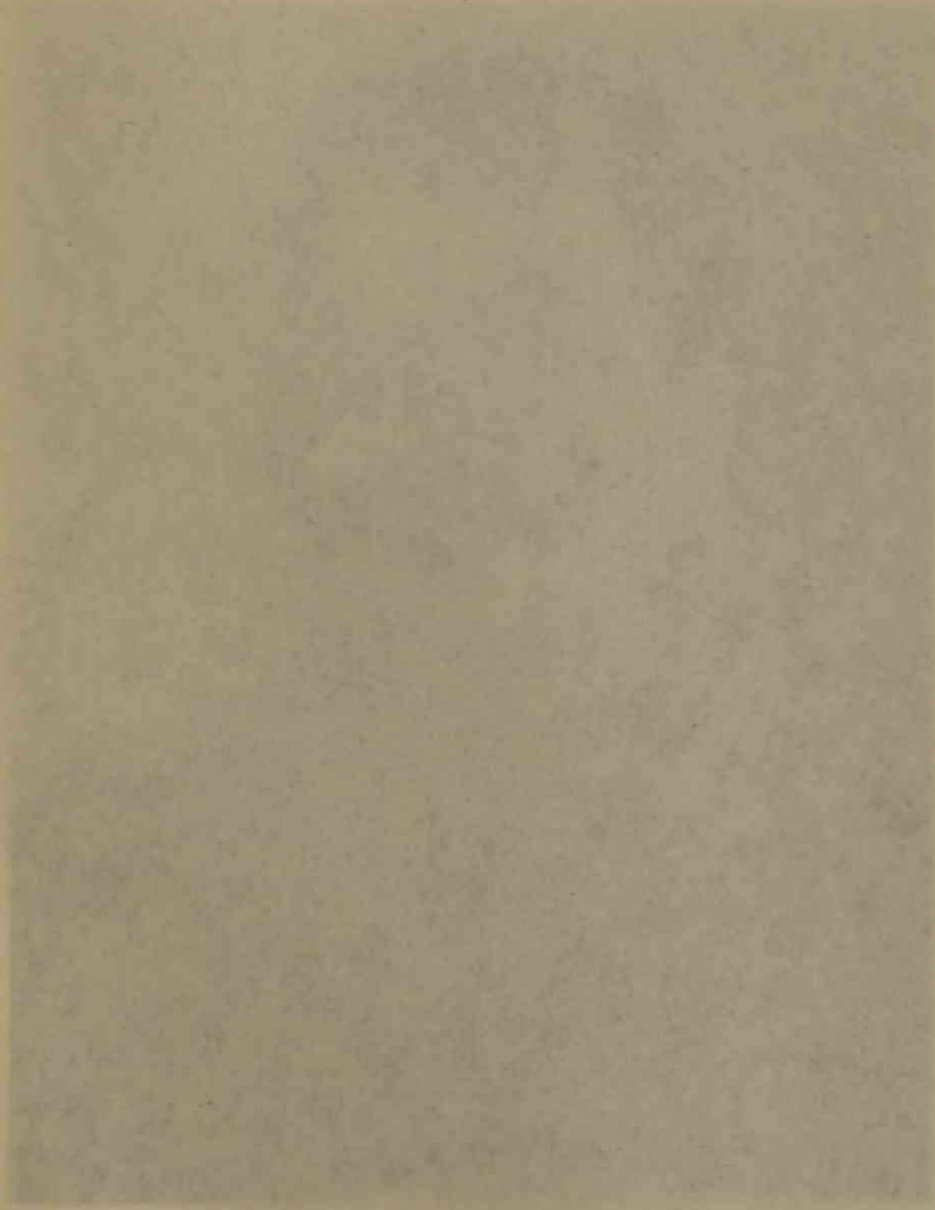
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J. V. STALIN

ON

THE

OPPOSITION

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!





M. G. Luen.

First Edition 1974

J. V. STALIN

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

ON

THE OPPOSITION

(1921-27)

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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OUR DISAGREEMENTS

Our disagreements on the trade-union question are not disagreements in principle about appraisal of the trade unions. The well-known points of our programme on the role of the trade unions, and the resolution of the Ninth Party Congress on the trade unions,¹ which Trotsky often quotes, remain (and will remain) in force. Nobody disputes that the trade unions and the economic organisations ought to and will permeate each other ("coalescence"). Nobody disputes that the present period of the country's economic revival dictates the necessity of gradually transforming the as yet nominal industrial unions into real industrial unions, capable of putting our basic industries on their feet. In short, our disagreements are not disagreements about matters of principle.

Nor do we disagree about the necessity of labour discipline in the trade unions and in the working class generally. The talk about a section of our Party "letting the reins slip out of its hands," and leaving the masses to the play of elemental forces, is foolish. The fact that Party elements play the leading role in the trade unions and that the trade unions play the leading role in the working class remains indisputable.

Still less do we disagree on the question of the quality of the membership of the Central Committees of the trade unions, and of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions. All agree that the membership of these institutions is far from ideal, that the ranks of the trade unions have been depleted by a number of military and other mobilisations, that the trade unions must get back their old officials and also get new ones, that they must be provided with technical resources, and so forth.

No, our disagreements are not in this sphere.

I

TWO METHODS OF APPROACH TO THE MASS OF THE WORKERS

Our disagreements are about questions of the *means* by which to strengthen labour discipline in the working class, the *methods* of approach to the mass of the workers who are being drawn into the work of reviving industry, the *ways* of transforming the present weak trade unions into powerful, genuinely industrial unions, capable of reviving our industry.

There are two methods: the method of *coercion* (the military method), and the method of *persuasion* (the trade-union method). The first method by no means precludes elements of persuasion, but these are subordinate to the requirements of the coercion method and are auxiliary to the latter. The second method, in turn, does not preclude elements of coercion, but these are subordinate to the requirements of the persuasion method and are auxiliary to the latter. It is just as impermissible to confuse these two methods as it is to confuse the army with the working class.

A group of Party workers headed by Trotsky, intoxicated by the successes achieved by military methods in the army, supposes that those methods can, and must, be adopted among the workers, in the trade unions, in order to achieve similar successes in strengthening the unions and in reviving industry. But this group forgets that the army and the working class are two different spheres, that a method that is suitable for the army may prove to be unsuitable, harmful, for the working class and its trade unions.

The army is not a homogeneous mass; it consists of two main social groups, peasants and workers, the former being several times more numerous than the latter. In urging the necessity of employing chiefly methods of coercion in the army, the Eighth Party Congress² based itself on the fact that our army consists mainly of peasants, that the peasants will not go to fight for socialism, that they can, and must, be compelled to fight for socialism by employing methods of coercion. This explains the rise of such purely military methods as the system of Commissars and Political Departments, Revolutionary Tribunals, disciplinary measures, appointment and not election to all posts, and so forth.

In contrast to the army, the working class is a homogeneous social sphere; its economic position disposes it towards socialism, it is easily influenced by communist agitation, it voluntarily organises in trade unions and, as a consequence of all this, constitutes the foundation, the salt of the earth, of the Soviet state. It is not surprising, therefore, that the practical work of our industrial unions has been based chiefly on methods of persuasion. This explains the rise of such purely trade-union methods as explanation, mass propaganda, encouragement of initiative and independent activity among the mass of the workers, election of officials, and so forth.

The mistake Trotsky makes is that he underrates the difference between the army and the working class, he puts the trade unions on a par with the military organisations, and tries, evidently by inertia, to transfer military methods from the army into the trade unions, into the working class. Trotsky writes in one of his documents:

"The bare contrasting of military methods (orders, punishment) with trade-union methods (explanation, propaganda, independent activity) is a manifestation of Kautskian-Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary prejudices. . . . The very contrasting of labour organisations with military organisation in a workers' state is shameful surrender to Kautskyism."

That is what Trotsky says.

Disregarding the irrelevant talk about "Kautskyism," "Menshevism," and so forth, it is evident that Trotsky fails to understand the difference between labour organisations and military organisations, that he fails to understand that *in the period of the termination of the war and the revival of industry* it becomes necessary, inevitable, to contrast military with democratic (trade-union) methods, and that, therefore, to transfer military methods into the trade unions is a mistake, is harmful.

Failure to understand that lies at the bottom of the recently published polemical pamphlets of Trotsky on the trade unions.

Failure to understand that is the source of Trotsky's mistakes.

II

CONSCIOUS DEMOCRACY AND FORCED "DEMOCRACY"

Some think that talk about democracy in the trade unions is mere declamation, a fashion, called forth by certain phe-

nomena in internal Party life, that, in time, people will get tired of "chatter" about democracy and everything will go on in the "old way."

Others believe that democracy in the trade unions is, essentially, a concession, a forced concession, to the workers' demands, that it is diplomacy rather than real, serious business.

Needless to say, both groups of comrades are profoundly mistaken. Democracy in the trade unions, i.e., what is usually called "normal methods of proletarian democracy in the unions," is the conscious democracy characteristic of mass working-class organisations, which presupposes *consciousness* of the necessity and utility of systematically employing methods of persuasion among the millions of workers organised in the trade unions. If that consciousness is absent, democracy becomes an empty sound.

While war was raging and danger stood at the gates, the appeals to "aid the front" that were issued by our organisations met with a ready response from the workers, for the mortal danger we were in was only too palpable, for that danger had assumed a very concrete form evident to everyone in the shape of the armies of Kolchak, Yudenich, Denikin, Pilsudski and Wrangel, which were advancing and restoring the power of the landlords and capitalists. It was not difficult to rouse the masses at that time. But today, when the war danger has been overcome and the new, economic danger (economic ruin) is far from being so palpable to the masses, the broad masses cannot be roused merely by appeals. Of course, everybody feels the shortage of bread and textiles; but firstly, people do contrive to obtain both bread and textiles in one way or another and, consequently, the danger of a food and goods famine does not spur the masses to the same extent as the war danger did; secondly, nobody will assert that the masses

are as conscious of the reality of the economic danger (shortage of locomotives and of machines for agriculture, for textile mills and iron and steel plants, shortage of equipment for electric power stations, and so forth) as they were of the war danger in the recent past. To rouse the millions of the working class for the struggle against economic ruin it is necessary to heighten their initiative, consciousness and independent activity; it is necessary by means of concrete facts to *convince* them that economic ruin is just as real and mortal a danger as the war danger was yesterday; it is necessary to draw millions of workers into the work of reviving industry through the medium of trade unions built on democratic lines. Only in this way is it possible to make the entire working class vitally interested in the struggle which the economic organisations are waging against economic ruin. If this is not done, victory on the economic front cannot be achieved.

In short, conscious democracy, the method of proletarian democracy in the unions, is the only correct method for the industrial unions.

Forced "democracy" has nothing in common with this democracy.

Reading Trotsky's pamphlet *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions*, one might think that he, in essence, is "also" in favour of the "democratic" method. This has caused some comrades to think that we do not disagree about the methods of work in the trade unions. But that is absolutely wrong, for Trotsky's "democracy" is forced, half-hearted and unprincipled, and, as such, merely supplements the military-bureaucratic method, which is unsuitable for the trade unions.

Judge for yourselves.

At the beginning of November 1920, the Central Committee adopted, and the Communist group at the Fifth All-Russian

Conference of Trade Unions carried through, a resolution stating that the "most vigorous and systematic struggle must be waged against the degeneration of centralism and militarised forms of work into bureaucracy, tyranny, officialdom and petty tutelage over the trade unions . . . that also for the Tsektran (the Central Committee of the Transport Workers Union, led by Trotsky) the time for the specific methods of administration for which the Central Political Administration of the Railways was set up, owing to special circumstances, is beginning to pass away," that, in view of this, the Communist group at the conference "advises the Tsektran to strengthen and develop normal methods of proletarian democracy in the union," and instructs the Tsektran "to take an active part in the general work of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions and to be represented in it on an equal footing with other trade-union associations" (see *Pravda*, No. 255). In spite of that decision, however, during the whole of November, Trotsky and the Tsektran continued to pursue the old, semi-bureaucratic and semi-military line, continued to rely on the Central Political Administration of the Railways and the Central Political Administration of Water Transport, strove to "shake up," to blow up, the A.R.C.C.T.U. and upheld the privileged position of the Tsektran compared with other trade-union associations. More than that. In a letter "to the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee," dated November 30, Trotsky, just as "unexpectedly," stated that "the Central Political Administration of Water Transport . . . cannot possibly be dissolved within the next two or three months." But what happened? Six days after that letter was written (on December 7), the same Trotsky, just as "unexpectedly," voted in the Central Committee for "the immediate abolition of the Central Political Administration of the

Railways and the Central Political Administration of Water Transport, and the transfer of all their staffs and funds to the trade-union organisation on the basis of normal democracy." And he was one of the eight members of the Central Committee who voted for this against the seven who considered that the abolition of these institutions was no longer enough, and who demanded, in addition, that the existing composition of the Tsektran be changed. To save the existing composition of the Tsektran, Trotsky voted for the abolition of the Central Political Administrations in the Tsektran.

What had changed during those six days? Perhaps the railway and water transport workers had matured so much during those six days that they no longer needed the Central Political Administration of the Railways and the Central Political Administration of Water Transport? Or, perhaps, an important change in the internal or external political situation had taken place in that short period? Of course not. The fact is that the water transport workers were vigorously demanding that the Tsektran should dissolve the Central Political Administrations and that the composition of the Tsektran itself should be changed; and Trotsky's group, fearing defeat and wishing at least to retain the existing composition of the Tsektran, was compelled to retreat, to make partial concessions, which, however, satisfied nobody.

Such are the facts.

It scarcely needs proof that this forced, half-hearted, unprincipled "democracy" has nothing in common with the "normal methods of proletarian democracy in the unions," which the Central Committee of the Party had recommended already at the beginning of November, and which are so essential for the revival of our industrial trade unions.

* * *

In his reply to the discussion at the meeting of the Communist group at the Congress of Soviets,³ Trotsky protested against the introduction of a political element into the controversy about the trade unions, on the ground that politics had nothing to do with the matter. It must be said that in this Trotsky is quite wrong. It scarcely needs proof that in a workers' and peasants' state, not a single important decision affecting the whole country, and especially if it directly concerns the working class, can be carried through without in one way or another affecting the political condition of the country. And, in general, it is ridiculous and shallow to separate politics from economics. For that very reason every such decision must be weighed up in advance *also* from the political point of view.

Judge for yourselves.

It can be now taken as proved that the methods of the Tsektran, which is led by Trotsky, have been condemned by the practical experience of the Tsektran itself. Trotsky's aim in directing the Tsektran and influencing the other unions through it was to reanimate and revive the unions, to draw the workers into the task of reviving industry. But what has he actually achieved? A conflict with the majority of the Communists in the trade unions, a conflict between the majority of the trade unions and the Tsektran, a virtual split in the Tsektran, the resentment of the rank-and-file workers organised in trade unions against the "Commissars." In other words, far from a revival of the unions taking place, the Tsektran itself is disintegrating. There can be no doubt that if the methods of the Tsektran were introduced in the other unions, we would get the same picture of conflict, splits and disintegration. And the result would be that we would have dissension and a split in the working class.

Can the political party of the working class ignore these facts? Can it be asserted that it makes no difference to the political condition of the country whether we have a working class solidly united in integral trade unions, or whether it is split up into different, mutually hostile groups? Can it be said that the political factor ought not to play any role in appraising the methods of approach to the masses, that politics have nothing to do with the matter?

Obviously not.

The R.S.F.S.R. and its associated republics now have a population of about 140,000,000. Of this population, 80 per cent are peasants. To be able to govern such a country, the Soviet power must enjoy the firm confidence of the working class, for such a country can be directed only through the medium of the working class and with the forces of the working class. But in order to retain and strengthen the confidence of the majority of the workers, it is necessary systematically to develop the consciousness, independent activity and initiative of the working class, systematically to educate it in the spirit of communism by organising it in trade unions and drawing it into the work of building a communist economy.

Obviously, it is impossible to do this by coercive methods and by "shaking up" the unions from above, for such methods split the working class (the Tsektran!) and engender distrust of the Soviet power. Moreover, it is not difficult to understand that, speaking generally, it is inconceivable that either the consciousness of the masses or their confidence in the Soviet power can be developed by coercive methods.

Obviously, only "normal methods of proletarian democracy in the unions," only methods of persuasion, can make it possible to unite the working class, to stimulate its independent activity and strengthen its confidence in the Soviet power,

the confidence that is needed so much now in order to rouse the country for the struggle against economic ruin.

As you see, politics also speak in favour of methods of persuasion.

January 5, 1921

Pravda, No. 12,

January 19, 1921

Signed: J. Stalin

THE PARTY'S TASKS

*Report Delivered at an Enlarged Meeting of the Krasnaya
Presnya District Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)
with Group Organisers, Members of the Debating Society
and of the Bureau of the Party Units*

December 2, 1923

Comrades, first of all I must say that I am delivering a report here in my personal capacity and not in the name of the Central Committee of the Party. If the meeting is willing to hear such a report, I am at your service. (*Voices: "Yes."*) This does not mean that I disagree with the Central Committee in any way on this question; not at all. I am speaking here in my personal capacity only because the commission of the Central Committee for drafting measures to improve the internal situation in the Party⁴ is to present its findings to the Central Committee in a day or two; these findings have not yet been presented, and therefore I have as yet no formal right to speak in the name of the Central Committee, although I am sure

that what I am about to say to you will, in the main, express the Central Committee's position on these questions.

DISCUSSION — A SIGN OF THE PARTY'S STRENGTH

The first question I would like to raise here is that of the significance of the discussion that is now taking place in the press and in the Party units. What does this discussion show? What does it indicate? Is it a storm that has burst into the calm life of the Party? Is this discussion a sign of the Party's disintegration, its decay, as some say, or of its degeneration, as others say?

I think, comrades, that it is neither one nor the other: there is neither degeneration nor disintegration. The fact of the matter is that the Party has grown more mature during the past period; it has adequately rid itself of useless ballast; it has become more proletarian. You know that two years ago we had not less than 700,000 members; you know that several thousand members have dropped out, or have been kicked out, of the Party. Further, the Party membership has improved, its quality has risen in this period as a result of the improvement in the conditions of the working class due to the revival of industry, as a result of the return of the old skilled workers from the countryside, and as a result of the new wave of cultural development that is spreading among the industrial workers.

In short, owing to all these circumstances, the Party has grown more mature, its quality has risen, its needs have grown, it has become more exacting, it wants to know more than it has known up to now, and it wants to decide more than it has up to now.

The discussion which has opened is not a sign of the Party's weakness, still less is it a sign of its disintegration or degeneration; it is a sign of strength, a sign of firmness, a sign of the improvement in the quality of the Party's membership, a sign of its increased activity.

CAUSES OF THE DISCUSSION

The second question that confronts us is: what has caused the question of internal Party policy to become so acute precisely in the present period, in the autumn of this year? How is this to be explained? What were the causes? I think, comrades, that there were two causes.

The first cause was the wave of discontent and strikes over wages that swept through certain districts of the republic in August of this year. The fact of the matter is that this strike wave exposed the defects in our organisations; it revealed the isolation of our organisations — both Party and trade-union — from the events taking place in the factories. And in connection with this strike wave the existence was discovered within our Party of several secret organisations of an essentially anti-communist nature, which strove to disintegrate the Party. All these defects revealed by the strike wave were exposed to the Party so glaringly, and with such a sobering effect, that it felt the necessity for internal Party changes.

The second cause of the acuteness of the question of internal Party policy precisely at the present moment was the wholesale release of Party comrades to go on vacation. It is natural, of course, for comrades to go on vacation, but this assumed such a mass character, that Party activity became considerably weaker precisely at the time when the discontent arose in the

factories, and that greatly helped to expose the accumulated defects just at this period, in the autumn of this year.

DEFECTS IN INTERNAL PARTY LIFE

I have mentioned defects in our Party life that were exposed in the autumn of this year, and which brought up the question of improving internal Party life. What are these defects in internal Party life? Is it that the Party line was wrong, as some comrades think; or that, although the Party's line was correct, in practice it departed from the right road, was distorted because of certain subjective and objective conditions?

I think that the chief defect in our internal Party life is that, although the Party's line, as expressed in the decisions of our congresses, is correct, in the localities (not everywhere, of course, but in certain districts) it was put into practice in an incorrect way. While the proletarian-democratic line of our Party was correct, the way it was put into practice in the localities resulted in cases of bureaucratic distortion of this line.

That is the chief defect. The existence of contradictions between the basic Party line as laid down by the Congresses (Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth), and the way our organisations put this line into practice in the localities — that is the foundation of all the defects in internal Party life.

The Party line says that the major questions of our Party activities, except, of course, those that brook no delay, or those that are military or diplomatic secrets, must without fail be discussed at Party meetings. That is what the Party line says. But in Party practice in the localities, not everywhere, of course, it was considered that there is really no great need for a number of questions concerning internal Party practice to be discussed

at Party meetings since the Central Committee and the other leading organisations will decide these questions.

The Party line says that our Party officials must without fail be elected unless there are insuperable obstacles to this, such as absence of the necessary Party standing, and so forth. You know that, according to the Party rules, secretaries of Gubernia Committees must have a pre-October Party standing, secretaries of Uyezds Committees must have at least three years', and units secretaries a year's, Party standing. In Party practice, however, it was often considered that since a certain Party standing was needed, no real elections were needed.

The Party line says that the Party membership must be kept informed about the work of the economic organisations, the factories and trusts, for, naturally, our Party units are morally responsible to the non-Party masses for the defects in the factories. Nevertheless, in Party practice it was considered that since there is a Central Committee which issues directives to the economic organisations, and since these economic organisations are bound by those directives, the latter will be carried out without control from below by the mass of the Party membership.

The Party line says that responsible workers in different branches of work, whether Party, economic, trade-union, or military workers, notwithstanding their specialisation in their own particular work, are interconnected, constitute inseparable parts of one whole, for they are all working in the common cause of the proletariat, which cannot be torn into parts. In Party practice, however, it was considered that since there is specialisation, division of labour according to properly Party activity and economic, military, etc., activity, the Party officials are not responsible for those working in the economic sphere, the latter are not responsible for the Party officials,

and, in general, that the weakening and even loss of connection between them are inevitable.

Such, comrades, are, in general, the contradictions between the Party line, as registered in a number of decisions of our Congresses, from the Tenth to the Twelfth, and Party practice.

I am far from blaming the local organisations for this distortion of the Party line, for, when you come to examine it, this is not so much the fault as the misfortune of our local organisations. The nature of this misfortune, and how things could have taken this turn, I shall tell you later on, but I wanted to register this fact in order to reveal this contradiction to you and then try to propose measures for improvement.

I am also far from considering our Central Committee to be blameless. It, too, has sinned, as has every institution and organisation; it, too, shares part of the blame and part of the misfortune: blame, at least, for not, whatever the reason, exposing these defects in time, and for not taking measures to eliminate them.

But that is not the point now. The point now is to ascertain the causes of the defects I have just spoken about. Indeed, how did these defects arise, and how can they be removed?

THE CAUSES OF THE DEFECTS

The first cause is that our Party organisations have not yet rid themselves, or have still not altogether rid themselves, of certain survivals of the war period, a period that has passed, but has left in the minds of our responsible workers vestiges of the military regime in the Party. I think that these survivals find expression in the view that our Party is not an independently acting organism, not an independently acting, militant

organisation of the proletariat, but something in the nature of a system of institutions, something in the nature of a complex of institutions in which there are officials of lower rank and officials of higher rank. That, comrades, is a profoundly mistaken view that has nothing in common with Marxism; that view is a survival that we have inherited from the war period, when we militarised the Party, when the question of the independent activity of the mass of the Party membership had necessarily to be shifted into the background and military orders were of decisive importance. I do not remember that this view was ever definitely expressed; nevertheless, it, or elements of it, still influences our work. Comrades, we must combat such views with all our might, for they are a very real danger and create favourable conditions for the distortion in practice of the essentially correct line of our Party.

The second cause is that our state apparatus, which is bureaucratic to a considerable degree, exerts a certain amount of pressure on the Party and the Party workers. In 1917, when we were forging ahead, towards October, we imagined that we would have a Commune, a free association of working people, that we would put an end to bureaucracy in government institutions, and that it would be possible, if not in the immediate period, then within two or three short periods, to transform the state into a free association of working people. Practice has shown, however, that this is still an ideal which is a long way off, that to rid the state of the elements of bureaucracy, to transform Soviet society into a free association of working people, the people must have a high level of culture, peace conditions must be fully guaranteed all around us so as to remove the necessity of maintaining a large standing army, which entails heavy expenditure and cumbersome administrative departments, the very existence of which leaves its im-

press upon all the other state institutions. Our state apparatus is bureaucratic to a considerable degree, and it will remain so for a long time to come. Our Party comrades work in this apparatus, and the situation — I might say the atmosphere — in this bureaucratic apparatus is such that it helps to bureaucratisé our Party workers and our Party organisations.

The third cause of the defects, comrades, is that some of our units are not sufficiently active, they are backward, and in some cases, particularly in the border regions, they are even wholly illiterate. In these districts, the units display little activity and are politically and culturally backward. That circumstance, too, undoubtedly creates a favourable soil for the distortion of the Party line.

The fourth cause is the absence of a sufficient number of trained Party comrades in the localities. Recently, in the Central Committee, I heard the report of a representative of one of the Ukrainian organisations. The reporter was a very capable comrade who shows great promise. He said that of 130 units, 80 have secretaries who were appointed by the Gubernia Committee. In answer to the remark that this organisation was acting wrongly in this respect, the comrade pleaded that there were no literate people in the units, that they consisted of new members, that the units themselves ask for secretaries to be sent them, and so forth. I may grant that half of what this comrade said was an overstatement, that the matter is not only that there are no trained people in the units, but also that the Gubernia Committee was overzealous and followed the old tradition. But even if the Gubernia Committee was correct only to the extent of fifty per cent, is it not obvious that if there are such units in the Ukraine, how many more like them must there be in the border regions, where the organisations are young, where there are fewer Party cadres

and less literacy than in the Ukraine? That is also one of the factors that create favourable conditions for the distortion in practice of the essentially correct Party line.

Lastly, the fifth cause — insufficient information. We sent out too little information, and this applies primarily to the Central Committee, possibly because it is overburdened with work. We receive too little information from the localities. This must cease. This is also a serious cause of the defects that have accumulated within the Party.

HOW SHOULD THE DEFECTS IN INTERNAL PARTY LIFE BE REMOVED?

What measures must be adopted to remove these defects?

The first thing is tirelessly, by every means, to combat the survivals and habits of the war period in our Party, to combat the erroneous view that our Party is a system of institutions, and not a militant organisation of the proletariat, which is intellectually vigorous, acts independently, lives a full life, is destroying the old and creating the new.

Secondly, the activity of the mass of the Party membership must be increased; all questions of interest to the membership in so far as they can be openly discussed must be submitted to it for open discussion, and the possibility ensured of free criticism of all proposals made by the different Party bodies. Only in this way will it be possible to convert Party discipline into really conscious, really iron discipline; only in this way will it be possible to increase the political, economic and cultural experience of the mass of Party members; only in this way will it be possible to create the conditions necessary to

enable the Party membership, step by step, to promote new active workers, new leaders, from its ranks.

Thirdly, the principle of election must be applied in practice to all Party bodies and official posts, if there are no insuperable obstacles to this such as lack of the necessary Party standing, and so forth. We must eliminate the practice of ignoring the will of the majority of the organisations in promoting comrades to responsible Party posts, and we must see to it that the principle of election is actually applied.

Fourthly, there must exist under the Central Committee and the Gubernia and Regional Committees permanently functioning conferences of responsible workers in all fields of work — economic, Party, trade-union and military; these conferences must be held regularly and discuss any question they consider it necessary to discuss; the interconnection between the workers in all fields must not be broken; all these workers must feel that they are all members of a single Party family, working in a common cause, the cause of the proletariat, which is indivisible; the Central Committee and the local organisations must create an environment that will enable the Party to acquire and test the experience of our responsible workers in all spheres of work.

Fifthly, our Party units in the factories must be drawn into dealing with the various questions relating to the course of affairs in the respective enterprises and trusts. Things must be so arranged that the units are kept informed about the work of the administrations of our enterprises and trusts and are able to exert an influence on this work. You, as representatives of units, are aware how great is the moral responsibility of our factory units to the non-Party masses for the course of affairs in the factories. For the unit to be able to lead and win the following of the non-Party masses in the factory, for it to be

able to bear responsibility for the course of affairs in the factory — and it certainly has a moral responsibility to the non-Party masses for defects in the work of the factory — the unit must be kept informed about these affairs, it must be possible for it to influence them in one way or another. Therefore, the units must be drawn into the discussion of economic questions relating to their factories, and economic conferences of representatives of the factory units in a given trust must be called from time to time to discuss questions relating to the affairs of the trust. This is one of the surest ways both of enlarging the economic experience of the Party membership and of organising control from below.

Sixthly, the quality of the membership of our Party units must be improved. Zinoviev has already said in an article of his that here and there the quality of the membership of our Party units is below that of the surrounding non-Party masses.

That statement, of course, must not be generalised and applied to all the units. It would be more exact to say the following for example: our Party units would be on a much higher cultural level than they are now, and would have much greater authority among non-Party people, if we had not denuded these units, if we had not taken from them people we needed for economic, administrative, trade-union and all sorts of other work. If our working-class comrades, the cadres we have taken from the units during the past six years, were to return to their units, does it need proof that those units would stand head and shoulders above all the non-Party workers, even the most advanced? Precisely because the Party has no other cadres with which to improve the state apparatus, precisely because the Party will be obliged to continue using that source, our units will remain on a somewhat unsatisfactory cultural level unless we take urgent measures to improve the

quality of their membership. First of all, Party educational work in the units must be increased to the utmost; furthermore, we must get rid of the excessive formalism our local organisations sometimes display in accepting working-class comrades into the Party. I think that we must not allow ourselves to be bound by formalism; the Party can, and must, create easier conditions for the acceptance of new members from the ranks of the working class. That has already begun in the local organisations. The Party must take this matter in hand and launch an organised campaign for creating easier access to the Party for new members from workers at the bench.

Seventhly, work must be intensified among the non-Party workers. This is another means of improving the internal Party situation, of increasing the activity of the Party membership. I must say that our organisations are still paying little attention to the task of drawing non-Party workers into our Soviets. Take, for example, the elections to the Moscow Soviet that are being held now. I consider that one of the big defects in these elections is that too few non-Party people are being elected. It is said that there exists a decision of the organisation to the effect that at least a certain number, a certain percentage, etc., of non-Party people are to be elected; but I see that, in fact, a far smaller number is being elected. It is said that the masses are eager to elect only Communists. I have my doubts about that, comrades. I think that unless we show a certain degree of confidence in the non-Party people they may answer by becoming very distrustful of our organisations. This confidence in the non-Party people is absolutely necessary, comrades. Communists must be induced to withdraw their candidatures. Speeches must not be delivered urging the election only of Communists; non-Party people must be encouraged, they must be drawn into the work of administering

the state. We shall gain by this and in return receive the reciprocal confidence of the non-Party people in our organisations. The elections in Moscow are an example of the degree to which our organisations are beginning to isolate themselves within their Party shell instead of enlarging their field of activity and, step by step, rallying the non-Party people around themselves.

Eighthly, work among the peasants must be intensified. I do not know why our village units, which in some places are wilting, are losing their members and are not trusted much by the peasants (this must be admitted) — I do not know why, for instance, two practical tasks cannot be set these units: firstly, to interpret and popularise the Soviet laws which affect peasant life; secondly, to agitate for and disseminate elementary agronomic knowledge, if only the knowledge that it is necessary to plough the fields in proper time, to sift seed, etc. Do you know, comrades, that if every peasant were to decide to devote a little labour to the sifting of seed, it would be possible without land improvement, and without introducing new machines, to obtain an increase in crop yield amounting to about ten poods per dessiatin? And what does an increase in crop yield of ten poods per dessiatin mean? It means an increase in the gross crop of a thousand million poods per annum. And all this could be achieved without great effort. Why should not our village units take up this matter? Is it less important than talking about Curzon's policy? The peasants would then realise that the Communists have stopped engaging in empty talk and have got down to real business; and then our village units would win the boundless confidence of the peasants.

There is no need for me to stress how necessary it is, for improving and reviving Party life, to intensify Party and political

educational work among the youth, the source of new cadres, in the Red Army, among women delegates, and among non-Party people in general.

Nor will I dwell upon the importance of increasing the interchange of information, about which I have already spoken, of increasing the supply of information from the top downwards and from below upwards.

Such, comrades, are the measures for improvement, the course towards internal Party democracy which the Central Committee set as far back as September of this year, and which must be put into practice by all Party organisations from top to bottom.

I would now like to deal with two extremes, two obsessions, on the question of workers' democracy that were to be noted in some of the discussion articles in *Pravda*.

The first extreme concerns the election principle. It manifests itself in some comrades wanting to have elections "throughout." Since we stand for the election principle, let us go the whole hog in electing! Party standing? What do we want that for? Elect whomever you please. That is a mistaken view, comrades. The Party will not accept it. Of course, we are not now at war; we are in a period of peaceful development. But we are now living under the NEP. Do not forget that, comrades. The Party began the purge not during, but after the war. Why? Because, during the war, fear of defeat drew the Party together into one whole, and some of the disruptive elements in the Party were compelled to keep to the general line of the Party, which was faced with the question of life or death. Now these bonds have fallen away, for we are not now at war; now we have the NEP, we have permitted a revival of capitalism, and the bourgeoisie is reviving. True, all this helps to purge the Party, to strengthen it; but on

the other hand, we are being enveloped in a new atmosphere by the nascent and growing bourgeoisie, which is not very strong yet, but which has already succeeded in beating some of our co-operatives and trading organisations in internal trade. It was precisely after the introduction of the NEP that the Party began the purge and reduced its membership by half; it was precisely after the introduction of the NEP that the Party decided that, in order to protect our organisations from the contagion of the NEP, it was necessary, for example, to hinder the influx of non-proletarian elements into the Party, that it was necessary that Party officials should have a definite Party standing, and so forth. Was the Party right in taking these precautionary measures, which restricted "expanded" democracy? I think it was. That is why I think that we must have democracy, we must have the election principle, but the restrictive measures that were adopted by the Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses, at least the chief ones, must still remain in force.

The second extreme concerns the question of the limits of the discussion. This extreme manifests itself in some comrades demanding unlimited discussion; they think that the discussion of problems is the be all and end all of Party work and forget about the other aspect of Party work, namely, action, which calls for the *implementation* of the Party's decisions. At all events, this was the impression I gained from the short article by Radzin, who tried to substantiate the principle of unlimited discussion by a reference to Trotsky, who is alleged to have said that "the Party is a voluntary association of like-minded people." I searched for that sentence in Trotsky's works, but could not find it. Trotsky could scarcely have uttered it as a finished formula for the definition of the Party; and if he did utter it, he could scarcely have stopped there.

The Party is not only an association of like-minded people; it is also an association of like-acting people, it is a militant association of like-acting people who are fighting on a common ideological basis (programme, tactics). I think that the reference to Trotsky is out of place, for I know Trotsky as one of the members of the Central Committee who most of all stress the active side of Party work. I think, therefore, that Radzin himself must bear responsibility for this definition. But what does this definition lead to? One of two possibilities: *either* that the Party will degenerate into a sect, into a philosophical school, for only in such narrow organisations is complete like-mindedness possible; *or* that it will become a permanent debating society, eternally discussing and eternally arguing, until the point is reached where factions form and the Party is split. Our Party cannot accept either of these possibilities. This is why I think that the discussion of problems is needed, a discussion is needed, but limits must be set to such discussion in order to safeguard the Party, to safeguard this fighting unit of the proletariat, against degenerating into a debating society.

In concluding my report, I must warn you, comrades, against these two extremes. I think that if we reject both these extremes and honestly and resolutely steer the course towards internal Party democracy that the Central Committee set already in September of this year, we shall certainly achieve an improvement in our Party work. (*Applause.*)

Pravda, No. 277,
December 6, 1923

THE DISCUSSION, RAFAIL, THE ARTICLES BY PREOBRAZHENSKY AND SAPRONOV, AND TROTSKY'S LETTER

THE DISCUSSION

The discussion on the situation within the Party that opened a few weeks ago is evidently drawing to a close; that is, as far as Moscow and Petrograd are concerned. As is known, Petrograd has declared in favour of the line of the Party. The principal districts of Moscow have also declared in favour of the Central Committee's line. The general city meeting of active workers of the Moscow organisation held on December 11 fully endorsed the organisational and political line of the Central Committee of the Party. There is no ground for doubting that the forthcoming general Party conference of the Moscow organisation will follow in the footsteps of its districts. The opposition, which is a bloc of a section of the "Left" Communists (Preobrazhensky, Stukov, Pyatakov, and others) with the so-called Democratic Centralists (Rafail, Sapronov, and others), has suffered a crushing defeat.

The course of the discussion, and the changes that the opposition went through during the period of the discussion, are interesting.

The opposition began by demanding nothing more nor less than a revision of the main line in internal Party affairs and internal Party policy which the Party has been pursuing during the past two years, during the whole NEP period. While demanding the full implementation of the resolution passed by the Tenth Congress on internal Party democracy, the opposition at the same time insisted on the removal of the restrictions (prohibition of groups, the Party-standing rule, etc.) that were adopted by the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Party Congresses. But the opposition did not stop at this. It asserted that the Party has practically been turned into an army type of organisation, that Party discipline has been turned into military discipline, and demanded that the entire staff of the Party apparatus be shaken up from top to bottom, that the principal responsible workers be removed from their posts, etc. Of strong language and abuse of the Central Committee there was, of course, no lack. The columns of *Pravda* were replete with articles, long and short, accusing the Central Committee of all the mortal sins. It is a wonder that it was not accused of causing the earthquake in Japan.

During this period the Central Committee as a whole did not intervene in the discussion in the columns of *Pravda*, leaving the members of the Party full freedom to criticise. It did not even think it necessary to repudiate the absurd charges that were often made by critics, being of the opinion that the members of the Party are sufficiently politically conscious to decide the questions under discussion themselves.

That was, so to speak, the first period of the discussion.

Later, when people got tired of strong language, when abuse ceased to have effect and the members of the Party demanded a business-like discussion of the question, the second period of the discussion set in. This period opened with the publication of the resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on Party affairs.⁵ On the basis of the decision of the October Plenum of the Central Committee,⁶ which endorsed the course towards internal Party democracy, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Central Control Commission drew up the well-known resolution indicating the conditions for giving effect to internal Party democracy. This marked a turning point in the discussion. It now became impossible to keep to general criticism. When the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission presented their concrete plan the opposition was faced with the alternative of either accepting this plan or of presenting a parallel, equally concrete, plan of its own for giving effect to internal Party democracy. At once it was discovered that the opposition was unable to counter the Central Committee's plan with a plan of its own that would satisfy the demands of the Party organisations. The opposition began to retreat. The demand for cancellation of the main line of the past two years in internal Party affairs ceased to be part of the opposition's arsenal. The demand of the opposition for the removal of the restrictions on democracy that were adopted by the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Party Congresses also paled and faded. The opposition pushed into the background and moderated its demand that the apparatus be shaken up from top to bottom. It deemed it wise to substitute for all these demands the proposals that it was necessary "to formulate precisely the question of factions," "to arrange for the election of

all Party bodies which hitherto have been appointed," "to abolish the appointment system," etc. It is characteristic that even these much moderated proposals of the opposition were rejected by the Krasnaya Presnya and Zamoskvorechye district Party organisations, which endorsed the resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission by overwhelming majorities.

This was, so to speak, the second period of the discussion.

We have now entered the third period. The characteristic feature of this period is the further retreat, I would say the disorderly retreat, of the opposition. This time, even the latter's faded and much moderated demands have dropped out of its resolution. Preobrazhensky's last resolution (the third, I think), which was submitted to the meeting of active workers of the Moscow organisation (over 1,000 present), reads as follows:

"Only the speedy, unanimous and sincere implementation of the Political Bureau's resolutions and, in particular, the renovation of the internal Party apparatus by means of new elections, can guarantee our Party's transition to the new course without shocks and internal struggle, and strengthen the actual solidarity and unity of its ranks."

The fact that the meeting rejected even this very innocuous proposal of the opposition cannot be regarded as accidental. Nor was it an accident that the meeting, by an overwhelming majority, adopted a resolution "to endorse the political and organisational line of the Central Committee."

RAFAIL

I think that Rafail is the most consistent and thorough-going representative of the present opposition, or, to be more

exact, of the present opposition bloc. At one of the discussion meetings Rafail said that our Party has practically been turned into an army organisation, that its discipline is army discipline, and that, in view of this, it is necessary to shake up the entire Party apparatus from top to bottom, because it is unfit and alien to the genuine Party spirit. It seems to me that these or similar thoughts are floating in the minds of the members of the present opposition, but for various reasons they dare not express them. It must be admitted that in this respect Rafail has proved to be bolder than his colleagues in the opposition.

Nevertheless, Rafail is absolutely wrong. He is wrong not only from the formal aspect, but also, and primarily, in substance. If our Party has indeed been turned, or is even only beginning to be turned, into an army organisation, is it not obvious that we would now have neither a Party in the proper sense of the term, nor the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor the revolution?

What is an army?

An army is a self-contained organisation built from above. The very nature of an army presupposes the existence at its head of a General Staff, which is appointed from above, and which forms the army on the principle of compulsion. The General Staff not only forms the army, but also supplies it with food, clothing, footwear, etc. The material dependence of the entire army on the General Staff is complete. This, incidentally, is the basis of that army discipline, breach of which entails a specific form of the supreme penalty — death by shooting. This also explains the fact that the General Staff can move the army wherever and whenever it pleases, guided only by its own strategic plans.

What is the Party?

The Party is the advanced detachment of the proletariat, built from below on the voluntary principle. The Party also has its General Staff, but it is not appointed from above, it is elected from below by the whole Party. The General Staff does not form the Party; on the contrary, the Party forms its General Staff. The Party forms itself on the voluntary principle. Nor does there exist that material dependence of the Party as a whole upon its General Staff that we spoke of above in relation to the army. The Party General Staff does not provide the Party with supplies, does not feed and clothe it. This, incidentally, explains the fact that the Party General Staff cannot move the ranks of the Party arbitrarily wherever and whenever it pleases, that the Party General Staff can lead the Party as a whole only in conformity with the economic and political interests of the class of which the Party is itself a part. Hence the specific character of Party discipline, which, in the main, is based on the method of persuasion, as distinct from army discipline, which, in the main, is based on the method of compulsion. Hence the fundamental difference between the supreme penalty in the Party (expulsion) and the supreme penalty in the army (death by shooting).

It is sufficient to compare these two definitions to realise how monstrous is Rafail's mistake.

The Party, he says, has been turned into an army organisation. But how is it possible to turn the Party into an army organisation if it is not materially dependent upon its General Staff, if it is built from below on the voluntary principle, and if it itself forms its General Staff? How, then, can one explain the influx of workers into the Party, the growth of its influence among the non-Party masses, its popularity among working people all over the world?

One of two things:

Either the Party is utterly passive and voiceless — but then how is one to explain the fact that such a passive and voiceless party is the leader of the most revolutionary proletariat in the world and for several years already has been governing the most revolutionary country in the world?

Or the Party is active and displays initiative — but then one cannot understand why a party, which is so active, which displays such initiative, has not by now overthrown the military regime in the Party, assuming that such a regime actually reigns in the Party.

Is it not clear that our Party, which has made three revolutions, which routed Kolchak and Denikin, and is now shaking the foundations of world imperialism, that this Party would not have tolerated for one week that military regime and order-and-obey system that Rafail talks about so lightly and recklessly, that it would have smashed them in a trice, and would have introduced a new regime without waiting for a call from Rafail?

But: a frightful dream, but thank God only a dream. The fact of the matter is, firstly, that Rafail confused the Party with an army and an army with the Party, for, evidently, he is not clear in his mind about what the Party and what an army is. Secondly, the fact of the matter is that, evidently, Rafail himself does not believe in his discovery; he is forced to utter "frightful" words about an order-and-obey system in the Party so as to justify the principal slogans of the present opposition: a) freedom to form factional groups; and b) removal from their posts of the leading elements of the Party from top to bottom.

Evidently, Rafail feels that it is impossible to push through these slogans without the aid of "frightful" words.

That is the whole essence of the matter.

PREOBRAZHENSKY'S ARTICLE

Preobrazhensky thinks that the chief cause of the defects in internal Party life is that the main Party line in Party affairs is wrong. He asserts that "for two years now, the Party has been pursuing an essentially wrong line in its internal Party policy," that "the Party's main line in internal Party affairs and internal Party policy during the NEP period" has proved to be wrong.

What has been the Party's main line since the NEP was introduced? At its Tenth Congress, the Party adopted a resolution on workers' democracy. Was the Party right in adopting such a resolution? Preobrazhensky thinks it was right. At the same Tenth Congress the Party imposed a very severe restriction on democracy in the shape of the ban on the formation of groups. Was the Party right in imposing such a restriction? Preobrazhensky thinks that the Party was wrong, because, in his opinion, such a restriction shackles independent Party thinking. At the Eleventh Congress the Party imposed further restrictions on democracy in the shape of the definite Party-standing rule, etc. The Twelfth Party Congress only reaffirmed these restrictions. Was the Party right in imposing these restrictions as a safeguard against petty-bourgeois tendencies under the conditions created by the NEP? Preobrazhensky thinks that the Party was wrong, because, in his opinion, these restrictions shackled the initiative of the Party organisations. The conclusion is obvious: Preobrazhensky proposes that the Party's main line in this sphere that was adopted at the Tenth and Eleventh Congresses under the conditions created by the NEP should be rescinded.

The Tenth and Eleventh Congresses, however, took place under the direct leadership of Comrade Lenin. The resolution

of the Tenth Congress prohibiting the formation of groups (the resolution on unity) was moved and steered through the congress by Comrade Lenin. The subsequent restrictions on democracy in the shape of the definite Party-standing rule, etc., were adopted by the Eleventh Congress with the close participation of Comrade Lenin. Does not Preobrazhensky realise that, in effect, he is proposing that the Party line under the conditions created by the NEP, the line that is organically connected with Leninism, should be rescinded? Is not Preobrazhensky beginning to understand that his proposal to rescind the Party's main line in Party affairs under the conditions created by the NEP is, in effect, a repetition of some of the proposals in the notorious "anonymous platform,"⁷ which demanded the revision of Leninism?

It is sufficient to put these questions to realise that the Party will not follow in Preobrazhensky's footsteps.

What, indeed, does Preobrazhensky propose? He proposes nothing more nor less than a reversion to Party life "on the lines of 1917-18." What distinguished the years 1917-18 in this respect? The fact that, at that time, we had groups and factions in our Party, that there was an open fight between the groups at that time, that the Party was then passing through a critical period, during which its fate hung in the balance. Preobrazhensky is demanding that this state of affairs in the Party, a state of affairs that was abolished by the Tenth Congress, should be restored, at least "partly." Can the Party take this path? No, it cannot. Firstly, because the restoration of Party life on the lines that existed in 1917-18, when there was no NEP, does not, and cannot, meet the Party's needs under the conditions prevailing in 1923, when there is the NEP. Secondly, because the restoration of the former situation of factional struggle

would inevitably result in the disruption of Party unity, especially now that Comrade Lenin is absent.

Preobrazhensky is inclined to depict the conditions of internal Party life in 1917-18 as something desirable and ideal. But we know of a great many dark sides of this period of internal Party life, which caused the Party very severe shocks. I do not think that the internal Party struggle among the Bolsheviks ever reached such intensity as it did in that period, the period of the Brest Peace. It is well known, for example, that the "Left" Communists, who at that time constituted a separate faction, went to the length of talking seriously about replacing the existing Council of People's Commissars by another Council of People's Commissars consisting of new people belonging to the "Left" communist faction. Some of the members of the present opposition — Preobrazhensky, Pyatakov, Stukov and others — then belonged to the "Left" communist faction.

Is Preobrazhensky thinking of "restoring" those old "ideal" conditions in our Party?

It is obvious, at all events, that the Party will not agree to this "restoration."

SAPRONOV'S ARTICLE

Sapronov thinks that the chief cause of the defects in internal Party life is the presence in the Party's apparatuses of "Party pedants," "schoolmistresses," who are busy "teaching the Party members" according to "the school method," and are thus hindering the real training of the Party members in the course of the struggle. Although dubbing the responsible workers in our Party apparatus "schoolmistresses," Sapronov

does not think of asking where these people came from, and how it came to pass that "Party pedants" gained control of the work of our Party. Advancing this more than reckless and demagogic proposition as proved, Sapronov forgot that a Marxist cannot be satisfied with mere assertions, but must first of all understand a phenomenon, if it really exists at all, and explain it, in order then to propose effective measures for improvement. But evidently Sapronov does not care a rap about Marxism. He wants at all costs to malign the Party apparatus — and all the rest will follow. And so, in Sapronov's opinion, the evil will of "Party pedants" is the cause of the defects in our internal Party life. An excellent explanation, it must be admitted.

Only we do not understand:

1) How could these "schoolmistresses" and "Party pedants" retain the leadership of the most revolutionary proletariat in the world?

2) How could our "Party schoolchildren" who are being taught by these "schoolmistresses" retain the leadership of the most revolutionary country in the world?

At all events it is clear that it is easier to talk about "Party pedants" than to understand and appreciate the very great merit of our Party apparatus.

How does Sapronov propose to remedy the defects in our internal Party life? His remedy is as simple as his diagnosis. "Re-examine the composition of our staff," remove the present responsible workers from their posts — such is Sapronov's remedy. This he regards as the principal guarantee that internal Party democracy will be practised. From the point of view of democracy, I am far from denying the importance of new elections as a means of improving our internal Party life; but to regard that as the principal guarantee means to under-

stand neither internal Party life nor its defects. In the ranks of the opposition there are men like Byeloborodov, whose "democracy" is still remembered by the workers in Rostov; Rosenholtz, whose "democracy" was a misery to our water-transport workers and railwaymen; Pyatakov, whose "democracy" made the whole of the Donets Basin not only cry out, but positively howl; Alsky, with the nature of whose "democracy" everybody is familiar; Byk, from whose "democracy" Khorezm is still groaning. Does Sapronov think that if the places of the "Party pedants" are taken by the "esteemed comrades" enumerated above, democracy will triumph in the Party? Permit me to have some doubts about that.

Evidently, there are two kinds of democracy: the democracy of the mass of Party members, who are eager to display initiative and to take an active part in the work of Party leadership, and the "democracy" of disgruntled Party big-wigs who think that dismissing some and putting others in their place is the essence of democracy. The Party will stand for the first kind of democracy and will carry it out with an iron hand. But the Party will throw out the "democracy" of the disgruntled Party big-wigs, which has nothing in common with genuine internal Party democracy, workers' democracy.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, first of all, to rid the minds of some of our responsible workers of the survivals and habits of the war period, which cause them to regard the Party not as an independently acting organism, but as a system of official institutions. But these survivals cannot be got rid of in a short space of time.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, secondly, to do away with the pressure exerted by our bureaucratic state apparatus, which has about a million employees, upon our Party apparatus, which has no more than 20,000-30,000

workers. But it is impossible to do away with the pressure of this cumbersome machine and gain mastery over it in a short space of time.

To ensure internal Party democracy it is necessary, thirdly, to raise the cultural level of our backward units, of which there are quite a number, and to distribute our active workers correctly over the entire territory of the Union; but that, too, cannot be achieved in a short space of time.

As you see, to ensure complete democracy is not so simple a matter as Sapronov thinks, that is, of course, if by democracy we mean not Sapronov's empty, formal democracy, but real, workers', genuine democracy.

Obviously, the entire Party from top to bottom must exert its will to ensure and put into effect genuine internal Party democracy.

TROTSKY'S LETTER

The resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission on internal Party democracy, published on December 7, was adopted unanimously. Trotsky voted for this resolution. It might have been expected, therefore, that the members of the Central Committee, including Trotsky, would come forward in a united front with a call to Party members for unanimous support of the Central Committee and its resolution. This expectation, however, has not been realised. The other day Trotsky issued a letter to the Party conferences which cannot be interpreted otherwise than as an attempt to weaken the will of the Party membership for unity in supporting the Central Committee and its position.

Judge for yourselves.

After referring to bureaucracy in the Party apparatus and the danger of degeneration of the old guard, i. e., the Leninists, the main core of our Party, Trotsky writes:

"The degeneration of the 'old guard' has been observed in history more than once. Let us take the latest and most glaring historical example: the leaders and the parties of the Second International. We know that Wilhelm Liebknecht, Bebel, Singer, Victor Adler, Kautsky, Bernstein, Lafargue, Guesde, and others, were the immediate and direct pupils of Marx and Engels. We know, however, that all those leaders — some partly, and others wholly — degenerated into opportunism." . . . "We, that is, we 'old ones,' must say that our generation, which naturally plays a leading role in the Party, has no self-sufficient guarantee against the gradual and imperceptible weakening of the proletarian and revolutionary spirit, assuming that the Party tolerates a further growth and consolidation of the bureaucratic-apparatus methods of policy which are transforming the younger generation into passive educational material and are inevitably creating estrangement between the apparatus and the membership, between the old and the young." . . . "The youth — the Party's truest barometer — react most sharply of all against Party bureaucracy." . . . "The youth must capture the revolutionary formulas by storm. . . ."

First, I must dispel a possible misunderstanding. As is evident from his letter, Trotsky includes himself among the Bolshevik old guard, thereby showing readiness to take upon himself the charges that may be hurled at the old guard if it does indeed take the path of degeneration. It must be admitted that this readiness for self-sacrifice is undoubtedly a noble trait. But I must protect Trotsky from Trotsky, because, for obvious reasons, he cannot, and should not, bear responsibility for the possible degeneration of the principal cadres of the Bolshevik old guard. Sacrifice is a good thing, of course, but do the old Bolsheviks need it? I think that they do not.

Secondly, it is impossible to understand how opportunists and Mensheviks like Bernstein, Adler, Kautsky, Guesde, and the others, can be put on a par with the Bolshevik old guard,

which has always fought, and I hope will continue to fight with honour, against opportunism, the Mensheviks and the Second International. What is the cause of this muddle and confusion? Who needs it, bearing in mind the interests of the Party and not ulterior motives that by no means aim at defence of the old guard? How is one to interpret these insinuations about opportunism in relation to the old Bolsheviks, who matured in the struggle against opportunism?

Thirdly, I do not by any means think that the old Bolsheviks are absolutely guaranteed against the danger of degeneration any more than I have grounds for asserting that we are absolutely guaranteed against, say, an earthquake. As a *possibility*, such a danger can and should be assumed. But does this mean that such a danger is *real*, that it exists? I think that it does not. Trotsky himself has adduced no evidence to show that the danger of degeneration is a real danger. Nevertheless, there are a number of elements within our Party who are capable of giving rise to a real danger of degeneration of certain ranks of our Party. I have in mind that section of the Mensheviks who joined our Party *unwillingly*, and who have not yet got rid of their old opportunist habits. The following is what Comrade Lenin wrote about these Mensheviks, and about this danger, at the time of the Party purge:

"Every opportunist is distinguished for his adaptability . . . and the Mensheviks, as opportunists, adapt themselves 'on principle,' so to speak, to the prevailing trend among the workers and assume a protective colouring, just as a hare's coat turns white in the winter. It is necessary to know this specific feature of the Mensheviks and take it into account. And taking it into account means purging the Party of approximately ninety-nine out of every hundred of the Mensheviks who joined the Russian Communist Party after 1918, i.e., when the victory of the Bolsheviks first became probable and then certain" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 13).^[1]

[1] Lenin, *Purging the Party*. (1921)

How could it happen that Trotsky, who lost sight of this and similar, really existing dangers, pushed into the foreground a possible danger, the danger of the degeneration of the Bolshevik old guard? How can one shut one's eyes to a real danger and push into the foreground an unreal, possible danger, if one has the interests of the Party in view and not the object of undermining the prestige of the majority in the Central Committee, the leading core of the Bolshevik old guard? Is it not obvious that "approaches" of this kind can only bring grist to the mill of the opposition?

Fourthly, what reasons did Trotsky have for *contrasting* the "old ones," who may degenerate, to the "youth," the Party's "truest barometer"; for *contrasting* the "old guard," who may become bureaucratic, to the "young guard," which must "capture the revolutionary formulas by storm"? What grounds had he for drawing this contrast, and what did he need it for? Have not the youth and the old guard always marched in a united front against internal and external enemies? Is not the unity between the "old ones" and the "young ones" the basic strength of our revolution? What was the object of this attempt to discredit the old guard and demagogically to flatter the youth if not to cause and widen a fissure between these principal detachments of our Party? Who needs all this, if one has the interests of the Party in view, its unity and solidarity, and not an attempt to shake this unity for the benefit of the opposition?

Is that the way to defend the Central Committee and its resolution on internal Party democracy, which, moreover, was adopted unanimously?

But evidently, that was not Trotsky's object in issuing his letter to the Party conferences. Evidently there was a different intention here, namely: diplomatically to support the opposi-

tion in its struggle against the Central Committee of the Party while pretending to support the Central Committee's resolution.

That, in fact, explains the stamp of duplicity that Trotsky's letter bears.

Trotsky is in a bloc with the Democratic Centralists and with a section of the "Left" Communists — therein lies the political significance of Trotsky's action.

Pravda, No. 285,
December 15, 1923

Signed: *J. Stalin*

A NECESSARY COMMENT

(Concerning Rafail)

In my article in *Pravda* (No. 285) "The Discussion, Rafail, etc." I said that according to a statement Rafail made at a meeting in the Presnya District "our Party has practically been turned into an army organisation, its discipline is army discipline and, in view of this, it is necessary to shake up the entire Party apparatus from top to bottom, because it is unfit." Concerning this, Rafail says in his article in *Pravda* that I did not correctly convey his views, that I "simplified" them "in the heat of debate," and so forth. Rafail says that he merely drew an analogy (comparison) between the Party and an army, that analogy is not identity. "The system of administration in the Party is analogous to the system of administration in an army — this does not mean," he says, "that it is an exact copy; it only draws a parallel."

Is Rafail right?

No. And for the following reasons.

Firstly. In his speech at the meeting in the Presnya District, Rafail did not simply compare the Party with an army, as he

now asserts, but actually identified it with an army, being of the opinion that the Party is built on the lines of an army. I have before me the verbatim report of Rafail's speech, revised by the speaker. There it is stated: "Our entire Party is built on the lines of an army from top to bottom." It can scarcely be denied that we have here not simply an analogy, but an identification of the Party's structure with that of an army; the two are placed on a par.

Can it be asserted that our Party is built on the lines of an army? Obviously not, for the Party is built from below, on the voluntary principle; it is not materially dependent on its General Staff, which the Party elects. An army, however, is, of course, built from above, on the basis of compulsion; it is completely dependent materially upon its General Staff, which is not elected, but appointed from above. Etc., etc.

Secondly. Rafail does not simply compare the system of administration in the Party with that in an army, but puts one on a par with the other, identifies them, without any "verbal frills." This is what he writes in his article: "We assert that the system of administration in the Party is *identical* with the system of administration in an army not on any extraneous grounds, but on the basis of an objective analysis of the state of the Party." It is impossible to deny that here Rafail does not confine himself to drawing an analogy between the administration of the Party and that of an army, for he "simply" identifies them, "without verbal frills."

Can these two systems of administration be identified? No, they cannot; for the system of administration in an army, as a system, is incompatible with the very nature of the Party and with its methods of influencing both its own members and the non-Party masses.

Thirdly. Rafail asserts in his article that, in the last analysis, the fate of the Party as a whole, and of its individual members, depends upon the Registration and Distribution Department of the Central Committee, that "the members of the Party are regarded as mobilised, the Registration and Distribution Department puts *everybody* in his job, *nobody* has the slightest right to choose his work, and it is the Registration and Distribution Department, or 'General Staff,' that determines the amount of supplies, i.e., pay, form of work, etc." Is all this true? Of course not! In peace time, the Registration and Distribution Department of the Central Committee usually deals in the course of a year with barely eight to ten thousand people. We know from the Central Committee's report to the Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.⁸ that, in 1922, the Registration and Distribution Department of the Central Committee dealt with 10,700 people (i.e., half the number it dealt with in 1921). If from this number we subtract 1,500 people sent by their local organisations to various educational institutions, and the people who went on sick leave (over 400), there remain something over 8,000. Of these, the Central Committee, in the course of the year, distributed 5,167 responsible workers (i.e., less than half of the total number dealt with by the Registration and Distribution Department). But at that time the Party as a whole had not 5,000, and not 10,000, but about 500,000 members, the bulk of whom were not, and could not, be affected by the distribution work of the Registration and Distribution Department of the Central Committee. Evidently, Rafail has forgotten that in peace time the Central Committee usually distributes only responsible workers, that the Registration and Distribution Department of the Central Committee does not, cannot, and should not, determine the "pay" of all the members of the Party, who now number over 400,000. Why did

Rafail have to exaggerate in this ridiculous way? Evidently, in order to prove "with facts" the "identity" between the system of administration in the Party and that in an army.

Such are the facts.

That is why I thought, and still think, that Rafail "is not clear in his mind about what the Party and what an army is."

As regards the passages Rafail quotes from the decisions of the Tenth Congress, they have nothing to do with the present case, for they apply only to the survivals of the war period in our Party and not to the alleged "identity between the system of administration in the Party and that in an army."

Rafail is right when he says that mistakes must be corrected, that one must not persist in one's mistakes. And that is precisely why I do not lose hope that Rafail will, in the end, correct the mistakes he has made.

Pravda, No. 294,
December 28, 1923

Signed: *J. Stalin*

THE THIRTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)⁹

January 16-18, 1924

I. REPORT ON IMMEDIATE TASKS IN PARTY AFFAIRS

January 17

Comrades, it is customary for our speakers at discussion meetings to begin with the history of the question: how the issue of inner-Party democracy arose, who was the first to say "A," who followed by saying "B," and so on. This method, I think, is not suitable for us, for it introduces an element of squabbling and mutual recrimination and leads to no useful results. I think that it will be much better to begin with the question of how the Party reacted to the Political Bureau resolution on democracy¹⁰ that was subsequently confirmed by the C.C. plenum.

I must place on record that this resolution is the only one, I believe, in the whole history of our Party to have received the full — I would say the absolutely unanimous — approval of

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

approval, and not only of the majority, but virtually of the entire Party membership.

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

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

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

to make inner-Party democracy possible. Without them it is vain to speak of democracy.

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

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

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

To obviate undesirable infatuation and unfounded accusations in future, I must also remind you of the obstacles confronting the Party in the exercise of democracy — obstacles

which hinder the implementation of democracy even when the two basic favourable conditions outlined above, internal and external, obtain. Comrades, these obstacles exist, they profoundly influence our Party's activities, and I have no right to pass them over in silence. What are these obstacles?

These obstacles, comrades, consist, firstly, in the fact that in the minds of a section of our Party functionaries there still persist survivals of the old, war period, when the Party was militarised. And these survivals engender certain un-Marxist views: that our Party is not an independently acting organism, independent in its ideological and practical activities, but something in the nature of a system of institutions — lower, intermediate and higher. This absolutely un-Marxist view has nowhere, it is true, been given final form and has nowhere been expressed definitely, but elements of it exist among a section of our Party functionaries and deter them from the consistent implementation of inner-Party democracy. That is why the struggle against such views, the struggle against survivals of the war period, both at the centre and in the localities, is an immediate task of the Party.

The second obstacle to the implementation of democracy in the Party is the pressure of the bureaucratic state apparatus on the Party apparatus, on our Party workers. The pressure of this unwieldy apparatus on our Party workers is not always noticeable, not always does it strike the eye, but it never relaxes for an instant. The ultimate effect of this pressure of the unwieldy bureaucratic state apparatus is that a number of our functionaries, both at the centre and in the localities, often involuntarily and quite unconsciously, deviate from inner-Party democracy, from the line which they believe to be correct, but which they are often unable to carry out completely. You can well visualise it: the bureaucratic state apparatus with not less

than a million employees, largely elements alien to the Party, and our Party apparatus with not more than 20,000-30,000 people, who are called upon to bring the state apparatus under the Party's sway and make it a socialist apparatus. What would our state apparatus be worth without the support of the Party? Without the assistance and support of our Party apparatus, it would not be worth much, unfortunately. And every time our Party apparatus extends its feelers into the various branches of the state administration, it is quite often obliged to adapt Party activities there to those of the state apparatus. Concretely: the Party has to carry on work for the political education of the working class, to heighten the latter's political understanding, but at the same time there is the tax in kind to be collected, some campaign or other that has to be carried out; for without these campaigns, without the assistance of the Party, the state apparatus cannot cope with its duties. And here our Party functionaries find themselves between two fires — they must rectify the line of the state apparatus, which still works according to old patterns, and at the same time they must retain contact with the workers. And often enough they themselves become bureaucratised.

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

Lastly, there is yet a third obstacle in the way of realising democracy. It is the low cultural level of a number of our organisations, of our units, particularly in the border regions (no offence to them meant), which hampers our Party organisations in fully implementing inner-Party democracy. You know that democracy requires a certain minimum of cultural development on the part of the members of the unit, and of the organisation as a whole; it requires a certain minimum of active

members who can be elected and placed in executive posts. And if there is no such minimum of active members in the organisation, if the cultural level of the organisation itself is low, what then? Naturally, in that case we are obliged to deviate from democracy, resorting to appointment of officials and so on.

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

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

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

The first period, when the opposition attacked the C.C., with the accusation that in these past two years, in fact throughout the NEP period, the whole line of the C.C. has been wrong. This was the period prior to the publication of the Political Bureau and C.C.C. Presidium resolution. I shall

not deal here with the question of who was right and who wrong. The attacks were violent ones, and as you know, not always warranted. But one thing is clear: this period can be described as one in which the opposition levelled its bitterest attacks on the C.C.

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

But then came the third period. It opened with Trotsky's pronouncement, his appeal to the districts, which, at one stroke, wiped out the reconciliation tendencies and turned everything topsy-turvy. Trotsky's pronouncement opened a period of most violent inner-Party struggle — a struggle which would

not have occurred had Trotsky not come out with his letter on the very next day after he had voted for the Political Bureau resolution. You know that this first pronouncement of Trotsky's was followed by a second, and the second by a third, with the result that the struggle grew still more acute.

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

Trotsky's first error lies in the very fact that he came out with an article on the next day after the publication of the C.C. Political Bureau and C.C.C. resolution; with an article which can only be regarded as a platform advanced in opposition to the C.C. resolution. I repeat and emphasise that this article can only be regarded as a new platform, advanced in opposition to the unanimously adopted C.C. resolution. Just think of it, comrades: on a certain date the Political Bureau and the Presidium of the C.C.C. meet and discuss a resolution on inner-Party democracy. The resolution is adopted unanimously, and only a day later, independently of the C.C., disregarding its will and over its head, Trotsky's article is circulated to the districts. It is a new platform and raises anew the issues of the apparatus and the Party, cadres and youth, factions and Party unity, and so on and so forth — a platform immediately seized upon by the entire opposition and advanced as a counterblast to the C.C. resolution. This can only be regarded as opposing oneself to the Central Committee. It means that Trotsky puts himself in open and outright opposition to the entire C.C. The Party was confronted with the question: have we a C.C. as our directing body, or does it no longer exist; is there a C.C. whose unanimous decisions are respected by its members, or is there only a superman standing above the C.C., a superman for whom no laws are

valid and who can permit himself to vote for the C.C. resolution today, and to put forward and publish a new platform in opposition to this resolution tomorrow? Comrades, we cannot demand that workers submit to Party discipline if a C.C. member, openly, in the sight of all, ignores the Central Committee and its unanimously adopted decision. We cannot apply two disciplines: one for workers, the other for big-wigs. There must be a single discipline.

Trotsky's error consists in the fact that he has set himself up in opposition to the C.C. and imagines himself to be a superman standing above the C.C., above its laws, above its decisions, thereby providing a certain section of the Party with a pretext for working to undermine confidence in the C.C.

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

Trotsky's second error is his ambiguous behaviour during the whole period of the discussion. He has grossly ignored the will of the Party, which wants to know what his real position is, and has diplomatically evaded answering the question put point-blank by many organisations: for whom, in the final analysis, does Trotsky stand — for the C.C. or for the opposition? The discussion is not being conducted for evasions but in order that the whole truth may be placed frankly and honestly before the Party, as Ilyich does and as every Bolshevik is obliged to do. We are told that Trotsky is seriously ill. Let us assume he is; but during his illness he has written three

articles and four new chapters of the pamphlet which appeared today. Is it not clear that Trotsky could perfectly well write a few lines in reply to the question put to him by various organisations and state whether he is *for* the opposition or *against* the opposition? It need hardly be said that this ignoring of the will of a number of organisations was bound to aggravate the inner-Party struggle.

Trotsky's third error is that in his pronouncements he puts the Party apparatus in opposition to the Party and advances the slogan of combating the "apparatus men." Bolshevism cannot accept such contrasting of the Party to the Party apparatus. What, actually, does our Party apparatus consist of? It consists of the Central Committee, the Regional Committees, the Gubernia Committees, the Uyezd Committees. Are these subordinated to the Party? Of course they are, for to the extent of 90 per cent they are elected by the Party. Those who say that the Gubernia Committees have been appointed are wrong. They are wrong, because, as you know, comrades, our Gubernia Committees are elected, just as the Uyezd Committees and the C.C. are. They are subordinated to the Party. But once elected, they must direct the work, that is the point. Is Party work conceivable without direction from the Central Committee, after its election by the congress, and from the Gubernia Committee, after its election by the Gubernia conference? Surely, Party work is inconceivable without this. Surely, this is an irresponsible anarcho-Menshevik view which renounces the very principle of direction of Party activities. I am afraid that by contrasting the Party apparatus to the Party, Trotsky, whom, of course, I have no intention of putting on a par with the Mensheviks, impels some of the inexperienced elements in our Party towards the standpoint of anarcho-Menshevik indiscipline

and organisational laxity. I am afraid that this error of Trotsky's may expose our entire Party apparatus — the apparatus without which the Party is inconceivable — to attack by the inexperienced members of the Party.

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

It is sometimes said that old people must be respected, for they have lived longer than the young, know more and can give better advice. I must say, comrades, that this is an absolutely erroneous view. It is not every old person we must

respect, and it is not every experience that is of value to us. What matters is the kind of experience. German Social-Democracy has its cadres, very experienced ones too: Scheidemann, Noske, Wels and the rest; men with the greatest experience, men who know all the ins and outs of the struggle. . . . But struggle against what, and against whom? What matters is the kind of experience. In Germany these cadres were trained in the struggle against the revolutionary spirit, not in the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but against it. Their experience is vast; but it is the wrong kind of experience. Comrades, it is the duty of the youth to explode this experience, demolish it and oust these old ones. There, in German Social-Democracy, the youth, being free of the experience of struggle against the revolutionary spirit, is closer to this revolutionary spirit or closer to Marxism, than the old cadres. The latter are burdened with the experience of struggle against the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, they are burdened with the experience of struggle for opportunism, against revolutionism. Such cadres must be routed, and all our sympathies must be with that youth which, I repeat, is free of this experience of struggle against the revolutionary spirit and for that reason can the more easily assimilate the new ways and methods of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, against opportunism. There, in Germany, I can understand the question being put in that way. If Trotsky were speaking of German Social-Democracy and the cadres of such a party, I would be wholeheartedly prepared to endorse his statement. But we are dealing with a different party, the Communist Party, the Bolshevik Party, whose cadres came into being in the struggle against opportunism, gained strength in that struggle, and which matured and captured power in the struggle against imperialism, in the struggle against all the

opportunist hangers-on of imperialism. Is it not clear that there is a fundamental difference here? Our cadres matured in the struggle to assert the revolutionary spirit; they carried that struggle through to the end, they came to power in battles against imperialism, and they are now shaking the foundations of world imperialism. How can these cadres — if one approaches the matter honestly, without duplicity — how can these cadres be put on a par with those of German Social-Democracy, which in the past worked hand in glove with Wilhelm against the working class, and is now working hand in glove with Seeckt; a party which grew up and was formed in the struggle against the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat? How can these cadres, fundamentally different in nature, be put on a par, how can they be confused? Is it so difficult to realise that the gulf between the two is unbridgeable? Is it so difficult to see that Trotsky's gross misrepresentation, his gross confusion, are calculated to undermine the prestige of our revolutionary cadres, the core of our Party? Is it not clear that this misrepresentation could only inflame passions and render the inner-Party struggle more acute?

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

student youth in our Party; open wide the doors of our Party to the student youth."

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

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

"It has been pointed out that usually splits have been headed by intellectuals. This is a very important point, but it is not decisive. . . . I believe we must take a broader view of the matter. The bringing of workers on to the committees is not only a pedagogical, but also a political task. Workers have class instinct, and given a little political experience they fairly soon develop into staunch Social-Democrats. I would be very much in sympathy with the idea that our committees should contain eight workers to every two intellectuals" (see Vol. VII, p. 282).^[1]

That is how the question stood as early as 1905. Ever since, this injunction of Comrade Lenin's has been our guiding

^[1] Lenin, *Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* April 12 (25)-April 27 (May 10), 1905. 18. *Speech on the Question of the Relations Between Workers and Intellectuals Within the Social-Democratic Organisations.* April 20 (May 3).

principle in building the Party. But now Trotsky proposes, in effect, that we break with the organisational line of Bolshevism.

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

"Even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism were apparent in the Party, namely, the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate themselves and to establish a group discipline of their own" (see Stenographic Report of the Tenth Congress, R.C.P.(B.), p. 309).^[1]

As you see, there is essentially no difference here between factions and groups. And when the opposition set up its own bureau here in Moscow, with Serebryakov as its head; when it began to send out speakers with instructions to address such and such meetings and raise such and such objections; and when, in the course of the struggle, these oppositionists were compelled to retreat and changed their resolutions by command; this, of course, was evidence of the existence of a group

[1] Lenin, *Preliminary Draft of the Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party on Party Unity*. (1921)

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

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

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

If we were to allow groups in this situation, under these complex conditions, we would ruin the Party, convert it from the monolithic, united organisation that it is into a union of groups and factions contracting with one another and entering

into temporary alliances and agreements. That would not be a party. It would be the collapse of the Party. Never, for a single moment, have the Bolsheviks conceived of the Party as anything but a monolithic organisation, hewed from a single block, possessing a single will and in its work uniting all shades of thought into a single current of practical activities.

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

What are the conclusions?

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

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

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

"In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the maximum unanimity, doing away with all factionalism, the congress authorises the Central Committee, in case (cases) of breach of discipline or of a revival or toleration of factionalism, to apply all Party penalties, up to and including expulsion from the Party and, in regard to members of the Central Committee, to reduce them to the status of candidate members and even, as an extreme measure, to expel them from the Party. A condition for the application of such an extreme measure (to members and candidate members of the C.C. and members of the Control Commission) must be the convocation of a plenum of the Central Committee, to which all candidate members of the Central Committee and all members of the Control Commission shall be invited. If such a general assembly of the most responsible leaders of the Party, by a two-thirds majority, considers it necessary to reduce a member of the Central Committee to the status of a candidate member, or to expel him from the Party, this measure shall be put into effect immediately."¹¹

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

Lastly, a question which the opposition keeps raising and to which, apparently, they do not always receive a satisfactory reply. The opposition often asks: Whose sentiments do we, the opposition, express? I believe that the opposition expresses the sentiments of the non-proletarian section of our Party. I believe that the opposition, perhaps unconsciously and invol-

untarily, serves as the unwitting vehicle of the sentiments of the non-proletarian elements in our Party. I believe that the opposition, in its unrestrained agitation for democracy, which it so often makes into an absolute and a fetish, is unleashing petty-bourgeois elemental forces.

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

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

for in his opinion they have saddled themselves on the proletariat.

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

II. REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

January 18

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

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

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

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

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

Act II began with the plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. in October. The opposition, headed by Trotsky, seeing that the question of shortcomings in the Party was in the air, that the C.C. had already taken the matter in hand and had formed commissions, and lest — God forbid — the initiative would remain with the C.C., tried, took as its aim, to wrest the initiative from the C.C. and get astride the hobby-horse of democracy. As you know, it is a spry sort of horse and could be used in an attempt to outride the C.C. And so there ap-

peared the documents on which Preobrazhensky spoke here at such length — the document of the 46¹² and Trotsky's letter. That same Trotsky, who in September, a few days before his factional pronouncement, had been silent at the plenum, at any rate had not objected to the C.C. decisions, two weeks later suddenly discovered that the country and the Party were going to rack and ruin and that he, Trotsky, this patriarch of bureaucrats, could not live without democracy.

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

For, if the opposition really wanted to help matters, to approach the issue in a business-like and comradely way, it should have submitted its statement first of all to the commissions set up by the September plenum, and should have said something like this: "We consider your work unsatisfactory; we demand a report on its results to the Political Bureau, we demand a plenum of the C.C., to which we have new proposals of ours to present," etc. And if the commissions had refused to give them a hearing, or if the Political Bureau had refused to hear their case, if it had ignored the opinion of the opposition, or refused to call a plenum to examine Trotsky's proposals and the opposition proposals generally, then — and only then

— would the opposition have been fully justified in coming out openly, over the head of the C.C., with an appeal to the Party membership and in saying to the Party: "The country is facing disaster; economic crisis is developing; the Party is on the road to ruin. We asked the C.C. commissions to go into these questions, but they refused to give us a hearing, we tried to lay the matter before the Political Bureau, but nothing came of that either. We are now forced to appeal to the Party, in order that the Party itself may take things in hand." I do not doubt that the response of the Party would have been: "Yes, these are practical revolutionaries, for they place the essence of the matter above the form."

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

Such are the facts.

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

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

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

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

"The plenums instruct the Political Bureau to do everything necessary to expedite the work of the commissions appointed by the Political Bureau and the September plenum: 1) the commission on the 'scissors,' 2) on wages, 3) on the inner-Party situation.

"When the necessary measures on these questions have been worked out, the Political Bureau must immediately begin to put them into effect and report to the next plenum of the C.C."

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

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

"The plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., attended also by representatives of ten Party organisations, regard Trotsky's pronouncement, made at the present highly important moment for the world revolution and the Party, as a grave political error, especially because his attack on the Political Bureau has, objectively, assumed the character of a factional move which threatens to strike a blow at Party unity and creates a crisis in the Party. The plenums note with regret that, in order to raise the questions touched on by him, Trotsky chose the method of appealing to individual Party members, instead of the only permissible method, — that of first submitting these questions for discussion by the bodies of which Trotsky is a member.

"The method chosen by Trotsky served as the signal for the appearance of a factional group (statement of the 46).

"The plenums of the C.C. and C.C.C., and representatives of ten Party organisations, resolutely condemn the statement of the 46 as a factional and schismatic step; for that is its nature, whatever the intentions of those who signed it. That statement threatens to subject the entire Party in the coming months to an inner-Party struggle and thereby weaken the Party at a supremely important moment for the destinies of the world revolution."

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

Act III, or the third stage, in the history of the issue was the period following the October plenum. The October plenum had voted to instruct the Political Bureau that it take every

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

That is how things stood.

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

That is the history of the issue.

It follows from what has been said that the opposition has been concerned not so much with democracy as with using the idea of democracy to undermine the C.C.; that in the case of the opposition we are dealing not with people who want to

help the Party, but with a faction which has been stealthily watching the C.C. in the hope that "it may slip up, or overlook something, and then we'll pounce on it." For it is a faction when one group of Party members tries to trap the central agencies of the Party in order to exploit a crop failure, a depreciation of the chervonets or any other difficulty confronting the Party, and then to attack the Party unexpectedly, from ambush, and to hit it on the head. Yes, the C.C. was right when in October it said to you, comrades of the opposition, that democracy is one thing and intriguing against the Party quite another; that democracy is one thing and exploiting clamour about democracy against the Party majority quite another.

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

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

And Sapronov, who now insincerely and hypocritically lauds Comrade Lenin, that same Sapronov who had the im-

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

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

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

Preobrazhensky has reproached the C.C., asserting that as long as Ilyich stood at our head questions were solved in good time, not belatedly, for Ilyich was able to discern new events in the embryo, and give slogans that anticipated events; whereas now, he claims, with Ilyich absent, the Central Committee has begun to lag behind events. What does Preobrazhen-

sky wish to imply? That Ilyich is superior to his disciples? But does anyone doubt that? Does anyone doubt that, compared with his disciples, Ilyich stands out as a veritable Goliath? If we are to speak of the Party's leader, not a press-publicised leader receiving a heap of congratulatory messages, but its real leader, then there is only one — Comrade Lenin. That is precisely why it has been stressed time and again that in the present circumstances, with Comrade Lenin temporarily absent, we must keep to the line of collective leadership. As for Comrade Lenin's disciples, we might point, for example, to the events connected with the Curzon ultimatum,¹³ which were a regular test, an examination, for them. The fact that we emerged from our difficulties then without detriment to our cause undoubtedly shows that Comrade Lenin's disciples had already learned a thing or two from their teacher.

Preobrazhensky is wrong in asserting that our Party did not lag behind events in previous years. He is wrong because this assertion is untrue factually and incorrect theoretically. Several examples can be cited. Take, for instance, the Brest Peace. Were we not late in concluding it? And did it not require such facts as the German offensive and the wholesale flight of our soldiers to make us realise, at last, that we had to have peace? The disintegration of the front, Hoffmann's offensive,¹⁴ his approach to Petrograd, the pressure exerted on us by the peasants — did it not take all these developments to make us realise that the tempo of the world revolution was not as rapid as we would have liked, that our army was not as strong as we had thought, that the peasantry was not as patient as some of us had thought, and that it wanted peace, and would achieve it by force?

Or take the repeal of the surplus-appropriation system. Were we not late in repealing the surplus-appropriation sys-

tem? Did it not require such developments as Kronstadt and Tambov¹⁵ to make us understand that it was no longer possible to retain the conditions of War Communism? Did not Ilyich himself admit that on this front we had sustained a more serious defeat than any we had suffered at the Denikin or Kolchak fronts?

Was it accidental that in all these instances the Party lagged behind events and acted somewhat belatedly? No, it was not accidental. There was a natural law at work here. Evidently, in so far as it is a matter not of general theoretical predictions, but of direct practical leadership, the ruling party, standing at the helm and involved in the events of the day, cannot immediately perceive and grasp processes taking place below the surface of life. It requires some impulse from outside and a definite degree of development of the new processes for the Party to perceive them and orientate its work accordingly. For that very reason our Party lagged somewhat behind events in the past, and will lag behind them in future too. But the point here does not at all concern lagging behind, but understanding the significance of events, the significance of new processes, and then skilfully directing them in accordance with the general trend of development. That is how the matter stands if we approach things as Marxists and not as factionalists who go about searching everywhere for culprits.

Preobrazhensky is indignant that representatives of the C.C. speak of Trotsky's deviations from Leninism. He is indignant, but has presented no arguments to the contrary and has made no attempt at all to substantiate his indignation, forgetting that indignation is no argument. Yes, it is true that Trotsky deviates from Leninism on questions of organisation. That has been, and still is, our contention. The articles in *Pravda* entitled "Down with Factionalism," written by Bukharin, are entirely

devoted to Trotsky's deviations from Leninism. Why has not Preobrazhensky challenged the basic ideas of these articles? Why has he not tried to support his indignation by arguments, or a semblance of arguments? I said yesterday, and I must repeat it today, that such actions of Trotsky's as setting himself up in opposition to the Central Committee; ignoring the will of a number of organisations that are demanding a clear answer from him; contrasting the Party to the Party apparatus, and the young Party members to the Party cadres; his attempt to orientate the Party on the student youth, and his proclamation of freedom of groups — I say that these actions are incompatible with the organisational principles of Leninism. Why then has Preobrazhensky not tried to refute this statement of mine?

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

There is also the other fact, that Trotsky definitely refuses to work in the central Soviet bodies, in the Council of Labour and Defence and the Council of People's Commissars, despite the twice-adopted C.C. decision that he at last take up his duties in the Soviet bodies. You know that Trotsky has not as

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

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

And why are you so frightened by point seven, on Party unity? What is there to be frightened about? Point seven

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

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

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

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

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

What is there terrible in that? If you are not factionalists, if you are against freedom of groups, and if you are for unity, then you, comrades of the opposition, should vote for point seven of the Tenth Congress resolution, for it is directed solely against factionalists, solely against those who violate the Party's unity, its strength and discipline. Is that not clear?

I now pass to Radek. There are people who can master and manage their tongues; these are ordinary people. There are also people who are slaves of their tongues; their tongues manage them. These are peculiar people. And it is to this category of peculiar people that Radek belongs. A man who has a tongue he cannot manage and who is the slave of his own tongue, can never know what and when his tongue is liable to blurt out. If you had been able to hear Radek's speeches at various meetings, you would have been astonished by what he said today. At one discussion meeting Radek asserted that the question of inner-Party democracy was a trivial one, that actually he, Radek, was against democracy, that, at bottom the issue now was not one of democracy, but of what the C.C. intended to do with Trotsky. At another discussion meeting this same Radek declared that democracy within the Party was not a serious matter, but that democracy within the C.C. was a matter of the utmost importance, for in his opinion a Directory had been set up inside the C.C. And today this same Radek tells us in all innocence that inner-Party democracy

is as indispensable as air and water, for without democracy, it appears, leadership of the Party is impossible. Which of these three Radeks are we to believe — the first, second or third? And what guarantee is there that Radek, or rather his tongue, will not in the immediate future make new unexpected statements that refute all his previous ones? Can one rely on a man like Radek? Can one, after all this, attach any value to Radek's statement, for instance, about Boguslavsky and Antonov being removed from certain posts out of "factional considerations"?

I have already spoken, comrades, about Boguslavsky. . . . As for Antonov-Ovseyenko, permit me to report the following. Antonov was removed from the Political Department of the Red Army by decision of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee, a decision confirmed by a plenum of the Central Committee. He was removed, first of all, for having issued a circular about a conference of Party units in military colleges and the air fleet, with the international situation, Party affairs, etc., as items on the agenda, without the knowledge and agreement of the C.C., although Antonov knew that the status of the Political Department of the Red Army is that of a department of the C.C. He was removed from the Political Department, in addition, for having sent to all Party units of the army a circular concerning the forms in which inner-Party democracy was to be applied, doing so against the will of the C.C. and in spite of its warning that the circular must be coordinated with the plans of the C.C. He was removed, lastly, for having sent to the C.C. and C.C.C. a letter, altogether indecent in tone and absolutely impermissible in content, threatening the C.C. and C.C.C. that the "overweening leaders" would be called to account.

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

Finally, I must say a few words on the subject of whose are the sentiments that are expressed in the pronouncements of the comrades of the opposition. I must return to the "incident" of Comrades Kazaryan and Martynov, students at the People's Commissariat of Transport college. This "incident" is evidence that all is not well among a certain section of our students, that what they had of the Party spirit in them has already become rotten, that intrinsically they have already broken with the Party and precisely for that reason willingly vote for the opposition. You will forgive me, comrades, but such people, rotten through and through from the Party standpoint, are not to be found, and could not possibly be found, among those who voted for the C.C. resolution. There are no such people on our side, comrades. There are none in our ranks who would ask: "What have we got, a dictatorship of the proletariat or a dictatorship of the Communist Party over the proletariat?" That is a phrase of Martov and Dan; it is a phrase of the Socialist-Revolutionary *Dni*,¹⁶ and if among you, in your ranks, there are those who take this line, then what is your position worth, comrades of the opposition? Or there is, for instance, the other comrade, Comrade Martynov, who thinks that the C.C. should keep quiet while the Party units

decide. He says in effect: You, the C.C., can carry out what we, the units, decide. But we have 50,000 Party units, and if they are going to decide, say, the question of the Curzon ultimatum, then we shall not arrive at a decision in two years. That is indeed anarcho-Menshevism of the first water. These people have lost their heads; from the Party standpoint they are rotten through and through, and if you have them in your faction, then I ask you, what is this faction of yours worth? (*Voice*: "Are they Party members?")

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

But perhaps you would like to hear other, fresh witnesses? I can give you that pleasure. Let me cite, for instance, the evidence of S. Ivanovich, a name you have all heard. Who is this S. Ivanovich? He is a Menshevik, a former Party member, of the days when we and the Mensheviks comprised a single party. Later on he disagreed with the Menshevik C.C. and became a Right-wing Menshevik. The Right-wing Mensheviks are a group of Menshevik interventionists, and their immediate object is to overthrow Soviet power, even if with the aid of foreign bayonets. Their organ is *Zarya*¹⁷ and its editor is S. Ivanovich. How does he regard our opposition, this Right-wing Menshevik? What sort of testimonial has he given it? Listen to this:

"Let us be thankful to the opposition for having so luridly depicted that horrifying moral cesspool that goes by the name of the R.C.P. Let us be thankful to it for having dealt a serious blow, morally and organisationally, to the R.C.P. Let us be thankful to it for its activities, because they help all those who regard the overthrow of Soviet power as the task of the Socialist parties."

There you have your testimonial, comrades of the opposition!

In conclusion, I would like nevertheless to wish the comrades of the opposition that this kiss of S. Ivanovich will not stick to them too closely. (*Prolonged applause.*)

*Thirteenth Conference of the Russian
Communist Party (Bolsheviks),
Bulletin, Moscow, 1924*

THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)¹⁸

May 23-31, 1924

REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

May 27

Comrades, I found no objections in any of the speeches to the Central Committee's organisational report. I take this to mean that the congress agrees with the conclusions of that report. (*Applause.*)

In my report, I deliberately refrained from discussing our inner-Party disagreements. I did not touch on them because I did not wish to re-open wounds which, so it seemed, had healed. But since Trotsky and Preobrazhensky have touched on these questions, making a number of inaccurate statements and throwing down a challenge — it would not be right to be silent. In this situation silence would not be understood.

Comrade Krupskaya has objected here to repetition of the debate on our disagreements. I am absolutely opposed to such repetition and that is precisely why I did not touch on the

disagreements in my report. But since the comrades of the opposition have brought up the subject and have thrown down a challenge, we have no right to be silent.

In speaking of our disagreements, both Trotsky and Preobrazhensky try to focus the attention of the congress on one resolution, that of December 5. They forget that there is another resolution as well, on the results of the discussion.¹⁹ They forget that there has been a Party conference and that the Central Committee's December 5 resolution was followed by a new wave of discussion, the results of which were appraised in a special resolution of the Thirteenth Conference. They forget that hushing up the Thirteenth Conference cannot but have its repercussions for the opposition.

I draw the attention of the congress to the fact that the conference adopted one resolution on economic policy and two on Party affairs. Why? There was one resolution, endorsed by the entire Party and adopted by the Central Committee on December 5, and then it was found necessary to adopt a second resolution on the same question, on the petty-bourgeois deviation. Why this affliction? What is the explanation? The explanation is that the whole discussion went through two periods. The first concluded with the unanimously adopted resolution of December 5, and the second with the resolution on the petty-bourgeois deviation. At that time, i.e., in the first period, we believed that the December 5 resolution would probably put an end to the controversy in the Party, and that was why last time, in my report at the Thirteenth Conference, when dealing with this period, I said that, if the opposition had so wished, the December 5 resolution could have terminated the struggle within the Party. That was what I said, and that was what we all believed. But the point is that the discussion was not brought to a close with that period. After the

December 5 resolution Trotsky's letters appeared — a new platform which raised new issues; and this ushered in a fresh wave of discussion, more violent than the preceding one. It was this that destroyed the opportunity of establishing peace in the Party. This was the second period, which the oppositionists now try to hush up and by-pass.

The point is that there is a vast difference between the discussion in the second period and that in the first, where the discussion found its reflection in the December 5 resolution. That resolution did not raise the question of a degeneration of the cadres. Trotsky, with whom we jointly framed that resolution, did not so much as hint at a degeneration of the cadres. Evidently, he was saving this additional issue for his later pronouncements. Further, the December 5 resolution does not raise the question of the student youth being the truest barometer. This question, too, Trotsky was apparently keeping in reserve for fresh discussion pronouncements. In the December 5 resolution there is nothing of the tendency to attack the apparatus, nor of the demands for punitive measures against the Party apparatus, about which Trotsky spoke at such length in his subsequent letters. Lastly, in the December 5 resolution there is not even a hint about groups being necessary, although this question, the question of groups, is one on which Trotsky spoke at great length in his subsequent letters.

There you have the immense difference between the stand taken by the opposition prior to December 5 and the stand its leaders took after December 5.

Now Trotsky and Preobrazhensky try to hush up and hide their second platform, the one that figured in the second period of the discussion, in the belief, evidently, that they can outwit the Party. No, you will not succeed! You cannot deceive the congress with your none-too-clever stratagems and diplomacy.

I do not doubt that the congress will state its opinion both on the first stage of the discussion, summed up in the December 5 resolution, and on the second stage, summed up in the conference resolution on the petty-bourgeois deviation.

These two resolutions are two parts of a single whole — the discussion. And whoever thinks he can deceive the congress by confusing these two parts is mistaken. The Party has matured; its political understanding is at a higher level, and it is not to be tricked by diplomacy. This the opposition fails to understand, and that is the sum and substance of its mistake.

Let us examine who has proved right on the issues raised in the opposition platform after December 5. Who has proved right on the four new issues brought up in Trotsky's letters?

First issue — degeneration of the cadres. We have all demanded and continue to demand that facts be adduced to prove that the cadres are degenerating. But no facts have been produced, nor could they be, because no such facts exist. And when we looked into the matter properly we all found that there was no degeneration, but that there was undoubtedly a deviation towards petty-bourgeois policy on the part of certain opposition leaders. Who, then, has proved to be right? Not the opposition, it would seem.

Second issue — the student youth which, supposedly, is the truest barometer. Who has proved right on this point? Again, it would seem, not the opposition. If we look at the growth of our Party in this period, at the admission of 200,000 new members, it follows that the barometer must be sought not among the student youth, but in the ranks of the proletariat, and that the Party must orientate itself not on the student youth, but on the proletarian core of the Party. Two hundred thousand new members — that is the barometer. Here, too, the opposition has proved wrong.

Third issue — punitive measures against the apparatus, attack on the Party apparatus. Who has proved right? Again, not the opposition. It furled its flag of attack on the apparatus and passed to the defensive. All of you here have seen how it tried to wriggle out, how it beat a disorderly retreat in the fight against the Party apparatus.

Fourth issue — factions and groups. Trotsky has announced that he is resolutely opposed to groups. That is all well and good. But if we must go into the history of the issue, then allow me to re-establish certain facts. In December a sub-commission of the Party Central Committee framed the resolution published on December 5. This sub-commission consisted of three members: Trotsky, Kamenev, Stalin. Have you noticed that there is no mention of groups in the December 5 resolution? It deals with the prohibition of factions but says nothing about prohibiting groups. There is only a reference to the well-known Tenth Congress resolution on Party unity. How is this to be explained? Was it an accident? No, it was not. Kamenev and I firmly insisted on the prohibition of groups. Trotsky protested against their prohibition, and his protest was tantamount to an ultimatum, for he declared that in such a case he could not vote for the resolution. And so we confined ourselves to a reference to the Tenth Congress resolution, which Trotsky, apparently, had not read at the time, and which provides not only for the prohibition of factions, but for the prohibition of groups as well. (*Laughter, applause.*) At that time Trotsky was in favour of freedom of groups. At this congress he has praised the December 5 resolution. But in his letter to the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee of December 9, that is four days after the adoption of the resolution on Party affairs, Trotsky wrote: "I am especially alarmed by the purely formal attitude of the Political Bureau members on the ques-

tion of groups and factional formations." What do you think of that? Here is a man who extols the resolution but who, it turns out, is especially alarmed in his soul by the Political Bureau's attitude on the question of groups and factions. This does not seem to indicate that he was then in favour of prohibiting groups. No, Trotsky at that time was in favour of the formation and freedom of groups.

Further, who does not remember the resolution Preobrazhensky submitted in Moscow, demanding that the question of factions, which had been decided by the Tenth Party Congress, be given a more precise formulation in the sense of removing some of the restrictions? Here in Moscow, everyone remembers this. And is there anyone of you who does not remember the newspaper articles in which Preobrazhensky demanded that we revive the order of things which existed in the Party at the time of the Brest Peace? Yet we know that in the Brest period the Party was compelled to permit the existence of factions — as we all know very well. And who does not remember that at the Thirteenth Conference, when I proposed the simplest thing — to remind the Party membership of point seven of the resolution on unity, on the prohibition of groups — who does not remember how all the oppositionists raged, insisting that this point should not be introduced? Consequently, on this issue the opposition's attitude has been wholly and entirely one of freedom for groups. It thought that it could lull the vigilance of the Party by declaring that it was demanding freedom not for factions, but for groups. If today we are told that the opposition is against groups, that is all well and good. But this certainly cannot be called an offensive on their part: it is a disorderly retreat, it is a sign that the Central Committee was right on this issue too.

After this review of the facts, permit me, comrades, to say a few words on certain fundamental mistakes made by Trotsky and Preobrazhensky in their utterances on questions of Party organisation.

Trotsky has said that the essence of democracy can be reduced to the question of generations. That is wrong, wrong in principle. The essence of democracy can by no means be reduced to that. The question of generations is a secondary one. The life of our Party, and figures relating to it, show that the younger generation of the Party is being drawn step by step into the cadres — the cadres are being extended from the ranks of the youth. That always has been, and will continue to be, the Party's line. Only those who regard our cadres as a closed entity, as a privileged caste which does not admit new members to its ranks; only those who regard our cadres as a sort of officer corps of the old regime which looks down on all other Party members as "beneath its dignity," only those who want to drive a wedge between the cadres and the younger Party members — only they can make the question of generations in the Party the pivotal question of democracy. The essence of democracy lies not in the question of generations, but in the question of independent activity, of members of the Party taking an active part in its leadership. It is in this way, and in this way alone, that the question of democracy can be presented if, of course, we are discussing not a party with formal democracy, but a genuinely proletarian party linked by indissoluble bonds with the mass of the working class.

The second question. The greatest danger, Trotsky says, is bureaucratisation of the Party apparatus. This too is wrong. The danger resides not in this, but in the possibility of the Party's actual isolation from the non-Party masses. You can have a party with a democratically constructed apparatus, but

if the Party is not linked with the working class this democracy will be worthless, it won't be worth a brass farthing. The Party exists *for* the class. So long as it is linked with the class, maintains contact with it, enjoys prestige and respect among the non-Party masses, it can exist and develop even if it has bureaucratic shortcomings. But in the absence of all this the Party is doomed, no matter what kind of Party organisation you build — bureaucratic or democratic. The Party is part of the class; it exists for the class, not for itself.

The third contention, also erroneous in principle: the Party, Trotsky says, makes no mistakes. That is wrong. The Party not infrequently makes mistakes. Ilyich taught us to teach the Party, on the basis of its own mistakes, how to exercise correct leadership. If the Party made no mistakes there would be nothing from which to teach it. It is our task to detect these mistakes, to lay bare their roots and to show the Party and the working class how we came to make them and how we should avoid repeating them in future. The development of the Party would be impossible without this. The development of Party leaders and cadres would be impossible without this, for they are developed and trained in the struggle to combat and overcome their mistakes. It seems to me that this statement of Trotsky's is a kind of compliment, accompanied by an attempt — an unsuccessful one it is true — to jeer at the Party.

Next — about Preobrazhensky. He spoke of the purge. Preobrazhensky feels that the purge is a weapon used by the Party majority against the opposition. Evidently he does not approve of the methods employed in the purge. This is a question of principle. Preobrazhensky's profound mistake is his failure to understand that the Party cannot strengthen its ranks without periodical purges of unstable elements. Comrade Lenin taught us that the Party can strengthen itself only if it

steadily rids itself of the unstable elements which penetrate, and will continue to penetrate, its ranks. We would be going against Leninism if we were to repudiate Party purges in general. As for the present purge, what is wrong with it? It is said that individual mistakes have been made. Certainly they have. But has there ever been a big undertaking that was free from individual mistakes? Never. Individual mistakes may and will occur; but in the main the purge is correct. I have been told with what fear and trepidation some non-proletarian elements among the intellectuals and office employees awaited the purge. Here is a scene that was described to me: a group of people are sitting in an office, waiting to be called before the purging commission. It is a Party unit in a Soviet institution. In another room is the purging commission. One of the members of the Party unit comes rushing out of the commission room, perspiring. He is asked what happened, but all he can say is: "Let me get my breath, let me get my breath. I'm all in." (*Laughter.*) The purge may be bad for the kind of people who suffer and perspire like that; but for the Party it is a very good thing. (*Applause.*) We still have, unfortunately, a certain number of Party members receiving 1,000 or 2,000 rubles a month, who are considered to be Party members but who forget that the Party exists. I know of a Party unit at one of the Commissariats, in which men of this type work. The members of this unit include several chauffeurs, and the unit selected one of them to sit on the purging commission. This evoked no little grumbling, such as saying that a chauffeur should not be allowed to purge Soviet big-wigs. There have been cases like that here in Moscow. Party members who have evidently lost contact with the Party are indignant, they cannot stomach the fact that "some chauffeur" will put them through the purge. Such Party members must be educated and re-educated, some-

times by expulsion from the Party. The chief thing about the purge is that it makes people of this kind feel that there exists a master, that there is the Party, which can call them to account for all sins committed against it. It seems to me absolutely necessary that this master go through the Party ranks with a broom every now and again. (*Applause.*)

Preobrazhensky says: Your policy is correct, but your organisational line is wrong, and therein lies the basis of the possible ruin of the Party. That is nonsense, comrades. That a party with a correct policy should perish because of shortcomings in its organisational line is something that does not happen. It never works out that way. The foundation of Party life and Party work resides not in the organisational forms it adopts or may adopt at any given moment, but in its policy, in its home and foreign policy. If the Party's policy is correct, if it has a correct approach to the political and economic issues that are of decisive significance for the working class — then organisational defects cannot be of decisive significance; its policy will pull it through. That has always been the case, and will continue to be so in the future. People who fail to understand this are bad Marxists; they forget the very rudiments of Marxism.

Was the Party right on the issues involved in the discussion — on the economic questions and on the questions of Party affairs? Anyone who wants to obtain an immediate, concise answer to that should turn to the Party and the mass of the workers and put the question: how does the mass of non-Party workers regard the Party? Is it sympathetic or unsympathetic? If the members of the opposition were to put the question that way, if they were to ask themselves: how does the working class regard the Party — is it sympathetic or unsympathetic? — they would realise that the Party is on the correct path. The

Lenin Enrolment is the key to an understanding of everything involved in the results of the discussion. If the working class sends 200,000 of its members into the Party, selecting the most upright and staunch, this signifies that such a party is invincible because it has, in fact, become the elected organ of the working class, one that enjoys the undivided confidence of the working class. Such a party will live and strike fear into its enemies; such a party cannot disintegrate. The trouble with our opposition is that it did not approach Party problems and the results of the discussion from the standpoint of the Marxist, who appraises the weight of the Party in the light of its influence among the masses — for the Party exists for the masses, and not vice versa — but approached them from the formal standpoint, from the standpoint of “pure” apparatus. To find a simple and direct clue to understanding the results of the discussion one must turn not to this babbling about the apparatus, but to the 200,000 who have joined the Party and who have demonstrated its profound democracy. References to democracy in the speeches of the oppositionists are just empty talk. But when the working class sends 200,000 new members into the Party, that is real democracy. Our Party has become the elected organ of the working class. Point me out another such party. You cannot point one out because so far there does not exist one. But, strange as it may seem, even such a powerful party as ours is not to the liking of the oppositionists. Where on this earth will they find a better one? I am afraid they will have to migrate to Mars in their search for a better party. (*Applause.*)

The last question — that of the opposition’s petty-bourgeois deviation; the assertion that the charge of a petty-bourgeois deviation is unjust. Is that true? No, it is not. How did the charge arise, what is the foundation for it? It is founded on the

fact that in their unbridled agitation for democracy in the Party the oppositionists have unwittingly, without so desiring, served as a sort of mouthpiece for that new bourgeoisie which does not care a hang about democracy in our Party, but which would like, and very much like, to obtain democracy for itself in the country. The section of the Party which has raised such a clamour over questions of democracy has unwittingly served as a mouthpiece and vehicle for the agitation in the country that emanates from the new bourgeoisie and aims at weakening the dictatorship, at "broadening" the Soviet constitution and at re-establishing political rights for the exploiters. That is the mainspring and secret why members of the opposition, who undoubtedly love the Party and so on and so forth, have without themselves noticing it become a mouthpiece for elements outside the Party, elements which seek to weaken and disintegrate the dictatorship.

No wonder the sympathies of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are with the opposition. Is that accidental? No, it is not. The alignment of forces internationally is such that every attempt to weaken the authority of our Party and the stability of the dictatorship in our country will inevitably be seized upon by the enemies of the revolution as a definite gain for them, irrespective of whether such attempts are made by our opposition or by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Whoever fails to understand this, fails to grasp the logic of factional struggle within our Party, fails to realise that the outcome of this struggle depends not on personalities and desires, but on the results produced in the sum total of the struggle between the Soviet and anti-Soviet elements. That is the basis of the fact that in the opposition we are dealing with a petty-bourgeois deviation.

Lenin once said about Party discipline and the unity of our ranks: "Whoever weakens in the least the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 190).^[1] Is there any need to prove, after this, that the comrades of the opposition, by their attacks on the Moscow organisation and the Party's Central Committee, have been weakening Party discipline and undermining the foundations of the dictatorship, for the Party is the basic core of the dictatorship?

That is why I think that the Thirteenth Conference was right in declaring that we are dealing here with a deviation towards petty-bourgeois policy. This is not as yet a petty-bourgeois policy. By no means! At the Tenth Congress, Lenin explained that a deviation is something as yet unconsummated, something that has not assumed definite shape. And if you, comrades of the opposition, do not persist in this petty-bourgeois deviation, in these small mistakes — everything will be rectified and the Party's activities will go forward. But if you do persist, the petty-bourgeois deviation may develop into a petty-bourgeois policy. Consequently, it all depends on you, comrades of the opposition.

What are the conclusions? The conclusions are that we must continue to conduct inner-Party work on the basis of the complete unity of the Party. Look at this congress, at its solid support of the Central Committee line — there you have Party unity. The opposition represents an insignificant minority in our Party. That our Party is united, that it will continue to be united, is demonstrated by the present congress, by its

[1] Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. V. *"Left-Wing" Communism in Germany: Leaders — Party — Class — Masses*. (1920)

unanimity and solidity. Whether we will have unity with that insignificant group in the Party known as the opposition, depends on them. We want to work in harmony with the opposition. Last year, at the height of the discussion, we said that joint work with the opposition was necessary. We re-affirm this here today. But whether this unity will be achieved, I do not know, for in future unity will depend entirely on the opposition. In the present instance unity comes as the result of the interaction of two factors, the Party majority and minority. The majority wants united activity. Whether the minority sincerely wants it, I do not know. That depends entirely on the comrades of the opposition.

Conclusion. The conclusion is that we must endorse the Thirteenth Conference resolutions and approve the activity of the Central Committee. I do not doubt that the congress will endorse these resolutions and approve the political and organisational activity of the Central Committee. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Pravda, Nos. 118 and 119,
May 27 and 28, 1924

THE RESULTS OF THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

*Excerpts from the Report Delivered at the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)
Courses for Secretaries of Uyezd Party Committees*

June 17, 1924

a) *The opposition.* Now that the question of the opposition has been decided by the congress and the whole matter, consequently, is settled, one might ask: What is the opposition, and what, essentially, was the issue involved in the discussion? I think, comrades, that the issue was one of life or death for the Party. Perhaps the opposition itself did not realise this, but that is not the point. The important thing is not what aims particular comrades or opposition groups set themselves. The important thing is the objective results that are bound to follow from the actions of such a group. What does declaring war on the Party apparatus mean? It means working to destroy the Party. What does inciting the youth against the cadres mean? It means working to disintegrate the Party. What does fighting for freedom of groups mean? It means attempting to

demolish the Party, its unity. What does the effort to discredit the Party cadres by talk about degeneration mean? It means trying to disrupt the Party, to break its backbone. Yes, comrades, the issue was one of life or death for the Party. And that, indeed, explains the passion of the discussion. It also explains the fact, unparalleled in our Party's history, that the congress *unanimously* condemned the opposition platform. The gravity of the danger welded the Party into a solid ring of iron.

It is interesting to trace the history of the opposition. We can begin with the Seventh Party Congress, the first after the establishment of Soviet power (in the early part of 1918). There was an opposition at that congress, and it was headed by the same people who led the opposition at the Thirteenth Congress. The issue was war or peace, the Brest Peace. At that time the opposition had one quarter of the whole congress on its side — no mean proportion. No wonder there was talk then of a split.

Two years later, at the Tenth Congress, the inner-Party struggle flared up anew, this time over the trade-union issue, and the opposition was headed by the same people. The opposition mustered one-eighth of the congress, which, of course, was less than the quarter it had before.

Another two years passed, and a new struggle flared up at the Thirteenth Congress, the one that has just concluded. Here, too, there was an opposition, but it failed to muster a single vote at the congress. This time, as you see, its showing was a sorry one indeed.

And so, on three occasions the opposition has tried to wage war against the Party's basic cadres. The first time at the Seventh Congress, the second time at the Tenth, and the third time at the Thirteenth Congress. It met with defeat on all

these occasions, each time losing some of its following and with every new step diminishing the strength of its army.

What do all these facts show? Firstly, that the history of our Party in these past six years has been one of progressive rallying of the majority of our Party around its basic cadres. Secondly, that the opposition's supporters have been steadily breaking away from it to join the basic core of the Party and swell its ranks. The conclusion that follows is this: it is not precluded that from the opposition, which had no delegates at the Thirteenth Congress (we do not have proportional representation) but which undoubtedly has followers in the Party, a number of comrades will break away and join the basic core of the Party, as has happened in the past.

What should our policy be with regard to these oppositionists, or, more precisely, with regard to these former oppositionists? It should be an exceptionally comradely one. Every measure must be taken to help them to come over to the basic core of the Party and to work jointly and in harmony with this core.

Pravda, Nos. 136 and 137,
June 19 and 20, 1924

TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM?

*Speech Delivered at the Plenum
of the Communist Group in the A.U.C.C.T.U.*

November 19, 1924

Comrades, after Kamenev's comprehensive report there is little left for me to say. I shall therefore confine myself to exposing certain legends that are being spread by Trotsky and his supporters about the October uprising, about Trotsky's role in the uprising, about the Party and the preparation for October, and so forth. I shall also touch upon Trotskyism as a peculiar ideology that is incompatible with Leninism, and upon the Party's tasks in connection with Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

I

THE FACTS ABOUT THE OCTOBER UPRISING

First of all about the October uprising. Rumours are being vigorously spread among members of the Party that the Cen-

tral Committee as a whole was opposed to an uprising in October 1917. The usual story is that on October 10, when the Central Committee adopted the decision to organise the uprising, the majority of the Central Committee at first spoke against an uprising, but, so the story runs, at that moment a worker burst in on the meeting of the Central Committee and said: "You are deciding against an uprising, but I tell you that there will be an uprising all the same, in spite of everything." And so, after that threat, the story runs, the Central Committee, which is alleged to have become frightened, raised the question of an uprising afresh and adopted a decision to organise it.

This is not merely a rumour, comrades. It is related by the well-known John Reed in his book *Ten Days*. Reed was remote from our Party and, of course, could not know the history of our secret meeting on October 10, and, consequently, he was taken in by the gossip spread by people like Sukhanov. This story was later passed round and repeated in a number of pamphlets written by Trotskyites, including one of the latest pamphlets on October written by Syrkin. These rumours have been strongly supported in Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

It scarcely needs proof that all these and similar "Arabian Nights" fairy tales are not in accordance with the truth, that in fact nothing of the kind happened, nor could have happened, at the meeting of the Central Committee. Consequently, we could ignore these absurd rumours; after all, lots of rumours are fabricated in the office rooms of the oppositionists or those who are remote from the Party. Indeed, we have ignored them till now; for example, we paid no attention to John Reed's mistakes and did not take the trouble to rectify them. After Trotsky's latest pronouncements, however, it is no longer pos-

sible to ignore such legends, for attempts are being made now to bring up our young people on them and, unfortunately, some results have already been achieved in this respect. In view of this, I must counter these absurd rumours with the actual facts.

I take the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party on October 10 (23), 1917. Present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov, Lomov. The question of the current situation and the uprising was discussed. After the discussion, Comrade Lenin's resolution on the uprising was put to the vote. The resolution was adopted by a majority of 10 against 2. Clear, one would think: by a majority of 10 against 2, the Central Committee decided to proceed with the immediate, practical work of organising the uprising. At this very same meeting the Central Committee elected a *political* centre to direct the uprising; this centre, called the Political Bureau, consisted of Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokolnikov and Bubnov.

Such are the facts.

These minutes at one stroke destroy several legends. They destroy the legend that the majority on the Central Committee was opposed to an uprising. They also destroy the legend that on the question of the uprising the Central Committee was on the verge of a split. It is clear from the minutes that the opponents of an immediate uprising — Kamenev and Zinoviev — were elected to the body that was to exercise political direction of the uprising on a par with those who were in favour of an uprising. There was no question of a split, nor could there be.

Trotsky asserts that in October our Party had a Right wing in the persons of Kamenev and Zinoviev, who, he says, were almost Social-Democrats. What one cannot understand then

is how, under those circumstances, it could happen that the Party avoided a split; how it could happen that the disagreements with Kamenev and Zinoviev lasted only a few days; how it could happen that, in spite of those disagreements, the Party appointed these comrades to highly important posts, elected them to the political centre of the uprising, and so forth. Lenin's implacable attitude towards Social-Democrats is sufficiently well known in the Party; the Party knows that Lenin would not for a single moment have agreed to have Social-Democratically-minded comrades in the Party, let alone in highly important posts. How, then, are we to explain the fact that the Party avoided a split? The explanation is that in spite of the disagreements, these comrades were old Bolsheviks who stood on the common ground of Bolshevism. What was that common ground? Unity of views on the fundamental questions: the character of the Russian revolution, the driving forces of the revolution, the role of the peasantry, the principles of Party leadership, and so forth. Had there not been this common ground, a split would have been inevitable. There was no split, and the disagreements lasted only a few days, because, and only because, Kamenev and Zinoviev were Leninists, Bolsheviks.

Let us now pass to the legend about Trotsky's special role in the October uprising. The Trotskyites are vigorously spreading rumours that Trotsky inspired and was the sole leader of the October uprising. These rumours are being spread with exceptional zeal by the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, Lentsner. Trotsky himself, by consistently avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the Party, by saying nothing about the leading role of these organisations in the uprising and vigorously pushing himself forward as the central figure in the October uprising,

voluntarily or involuntarily helps to spread the rumours about the special role he is supposed to have played in the uprising. I am far from denying Trotsky's undoubtedly important role in the uprising. I must say, however, that Trotsky did not play any special role in the October uprising, nor could he do so; being chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, he merely carried out the will of the appropriate Party bodies, which directed every step that Trotsky took. To philistines like Sukhanov, all this may seem strange, but the facts, the true facts, wholly and fully confirm what I say.

Let us take the minutes of the next meeting of the Central Committee, the one held on October 16 (29), 1917. Present: the members of the Central Committee, plus representatives of the Petrograd Committee, plus representatives of the military organisation, factory committees, trade unions and the railwaymen. Among those present, besides the members of the Central Committee, were: Krylenko, Shotman, Kalinin, Volodarsky, Shlyapnikov, Lacis, and others, twenty-five in all. The question of the uprising was discussed from the purely practical-organisational aspect. Lenin's resolution on the uprising was adopted by a majority of 20 against 2, three abstaining. A *practical* centre was elected for the organisational leadership of the uprising. Who was elected to this centre? The following five: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov, Uritsky. The functions of the practical centre: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising in conformity with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something "terrible" happened at this meeting of the Central Committee, i.e., "strange to relate," the "inspirer," the "chief figure," the "sole leader" of the uprising, Trotsky, was not elected to the practical centre, which was called upon to direct the uprising. How is this to be reconciled with the

current opinion about Trotsky's special role? Is not all this somewhat "strange," as Sukhanov, or the Trotskyites, would say? And yet, strictly speaking, there is nothing strange about it, for neither in the Party, nor in the October uprising, did Trotsky play any *special* role, nor could he do so, for he was a relatively new man in our Party in the period of October. He, like all the responsible workers, merely carried out the will of the Central Committee and of its organs. Whoever is familiar with the mechanics of Bolshevik Party leadership will have no difficulty in understanding that it could not be otherwise: it would have been enough for Trotsky to have gone against the will of the Central Committee to have been deprived of influence on the course of events. This talk about Trotsky's special role is a legend that is being spread by obliging "Party" gossips.

This, of course, does not mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. It did have its inspirer and leader, but this was Lenin, and none other than Lenin, that same Lenin whose resolutions the Central Committee adopted when deciding the question of the uprising, that same Lenin who, in spite of what Trotsky says, was not prevented by being in hiding from being the actual inspirer of the uprising. It is foolish and ridiculous to attempt now, by gossip about Lenin having been in hiding, to obscure the indubitable fact that the inspirer of the uprising was the leader of the Party, V. I. Lenin.

Such are the facts.

Granted, we are told, but it cannot be denied that Trotsky fought well in the period of October. Yes, that is true, Trotsky did, indeed, fight well in October; but Trotsky was not the only one who fought well in the period of October. Even people like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who then stood

side by side with the Bolsheviks, also fought well. In general, I must say that in the period of a victorious uprising, when the enemy is isolated and the uprising is growing, it is not difficult to fight well. At such moments even backward people become heroes.

The proletarian struggle is not, however, an uninterrupted advance, an unbroken chain of victories. The proletarian struggle also has its trials, its defeats. The genuine revolutionary is not one who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising, but one who, while fighting well during the victorious advance of the revolution, also displays courage when the revolution is in retreat, when the proletariat suffers defeat; who does not lose his head and does not funk when the revolution suffers reverses, when the enemy achieves success; who does not become panic-stricken or give way to despair when the revolution is in a period of retreat. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries did not fight badly in the period of October, and they supported the Bolsheviks. But who does not know that those "brave" fighters became panic-stricken in the period of Brest, when the advance of German imperialism drove them to despair and hysteria? It is a very sad but indubitable fact that Trotsky, who fought well in the period of October, did not, in the period of Brest, in the period when the revolution suffered temporary reverses, possess the courage to display sufficient staunchness at that difficult moment and to refrain from following in the footsteps of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Beyond question, that moment was a difficult one; one had to display exceptional courage and imperturbable coolness not to be dismayed, to retreat in good time, to accept peace in good time, to withdraw the proletarian army out of range of the blows of German imperialism, to preserve the

peasant reserves and, after obtaining a respite in this way, to strike at the enemy with renewed force. Unfortunately, Trotsky was found to lack this courage and revolutionary staunchness at that difficult moment.

In Trotsky's opinion, the principal lesson of the proletarian revolution is "not to funk" during October. That is wrong, for Trotsky's assertion contains only a *particle* of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The *whole* truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution is "not to funk" not only when the revolution is advancing, but also when it is in retreat, when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and the revolution is suffering reverses. The revolution did not end with October. October was only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad to funk when the tide of insurrection is rising; but it is worse to funk when the revolution is passing through severe trials after power has been captured. To retain power on the morrow of the revolution is no less important than to capture power. If Trotsky funk during the period of Brest, when our revolution was passing through severe trials, when it was almost a matter of "surrendering" power, he ought to know that the mistakes committed by Kamenev and Zinoviev in October are quite irrelevant here.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the October uprising.

II

THE PARTY AND THE PREPARATION FOR OCTOBER

Let us now pass to the question of the preparation for October.

Listening to Trotsky, one might think that during the whole of the period of preparation, from March to October, the Bolshevik Party did nothing but mark time; that it was being corroded by internal contradictions and hindered Lenin in every way; that had it not been for Trotsky, nobody knows how the October Revolution would have ended. It is rather amusing to hear this strange talk about the Party from Trotsky, who declares in this same "preface" to Volume III that "the chief instrument of the proletarian revolution is the Party," that "without the Party, apart from the Party, by-passing the Party, with a substitute for the Party, the proletarian revolution cannot be victorious." Allah himself would not understand how our revolution could have succeeded if "its chief instrument" proved to be useless, while success was impossible, as it appears, "by-passing the Party." But this is not the first time that Trotsky treats us to oddities. It must be supposed that this amusing talk about our Party is one of Trotsky's usual oddities.

Let us briefly review the history of the preparation for October according to periods.

1) *The period of the Party's new orientation (March-April).*
The major facts of this period:

- a) the overthrow of tsarism;
- b) the formation of the Provisional Government (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie);
- c) the appearance of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry);
- d) dual power;
- e) the April demonstration;
- f) the first crisis of power.

The characteristic feature of this period is the fact that there existed together, side by side and simultaneously, both the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry; the latter trusts the former, believes that it is striving for peace, voluntarily surrenders power to the bourgeoisie and thereby becomes an appendage of the bourgeoisie. There are as yet no serious conflicts between the two dictatorships. On the other hand, there is the "Contact Committee."²⁰

This was the greatest turning point in the history of Russia and an unprecedented turning point in the history of our Party. The old, pre-revolutionary platform of direct overthrow of the government was clear and definite, but it was no longer suitable for the new conditions of the struggle. It was now no longer possible to go straight out for the overthrow of the government, for the latter was connected with the Soviets, then under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war against both the government and the Soviets, a war that would have been beyond its strength. Nor was it possible to pursue a policy of supporting the Provisional Government, for it was the government of imperialism. Under the new conditions of the struggle the Party had to adopt a new orientation. The Party (its majority) groped its way towards this new orientation. It adopted the policy of pressure on the Provisional Government through the Soviets on the question of peace and did not venture to step forward at once from the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the new slogan of power to the Soviets. The aim of this halfway policy was to enable the Soviets to discern the actual imperialist nature of the Provisional Government on the basis of the concrete questions of peace, and in this way to wrest the Soviets from the Provisional Government. But

this was a profoundly mistaken position, for it gave rise to pacifist illusions, brought grist to the mill of defencism and hindered the revolutionary education of the masses. At that time I shared this mistaken position with other Party comrades and fully abandoned it only in the middle of April, when I associated myself with Lenin's theses. A new orientation was needed. This new orientation was given to the Party by Lenin, in his celebrated April Theses.²¹ I shall not deal with these theses, for they are known to everybody. Were there any disagreements between the Party and Lenin at that time? Yes, there were. How long did these disagreements last? Not more than two weeks. The City Conference of the Petrograd organisation²² (in the latter half of April), which adopted Lenin's theses, marked a turning point in our Party's development. The All-Russian April Conference²³ (at the end of April) merely completed on an all-Russian scale the work of the Petrograd Conference, rallying nine-tenths of the Party around this united Party position.

Now, seven years later, Trotsky gloats maliciously over the past disagreements among the Bolsheviks and depicts them as a struggle waged as if there were almost two parties within Bolshevism. But, firstly, Trotsky disgracefully exaggerates and inflates the matter, for the Bolshevik Party lived through these disagreements without the slightest shock. Secondly, our Party would be a caste and not a revolutionary party if it did not permit different shades of opinion in its ranks. Moreover, it is well known that there were disagreements among us even before that, for example, in the period of the Third Duma, but they did not shake the unity of our Party. Thirdly, it will not be out of place to ask what was *then* the position of Trotsky himself, who is *now* gloating so eagerly over the past disagree-

ments among the Bolsheviks. Lentsner, the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, assures us that Trotsky's letters from America (March) "wholly anticipated" Lenin's *Letters from Afar*²⁴ (March), which served as the basis of Lenin's April Theses. That is what he says: "wholly anticipated." Trotsky does not object to this analogy; apparently, he accepts it with thanks. But, firstly, Trotsky's letters "do not in the least resemble" Lenin's letters either in spirit or in conclusions, for they wholly and entirely reflect Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik slogan of "no tsar, but a workers' government," a slogan which implies a revolution *without* the peasantry. It is enough to glance through these two series of letters to be convinced of this. Secondly, if what Lentsner says is true, how are we to explain the fact that Lenin on the very next day after his arrival from abroad considered it necessary to dissociate himself from Trotsky? Who does not know of Lenin's repeated statements that Trotsky's slogan of "no tsar, but a workers' government" was an attempt "to skip the still unexhausted peasant movement," that this slogan meant "playing at the seizure of power by a workers' government"?*

What can there be in common between Lenin's Bolshevik theses and Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik scheme with its "playing at the seizure of power"? And what prompts this passion that some people display for comparing a wretched hovel with Mont Blanc? For what purpose did Lentsner find it necessary to make this risky addition to the heap of old legends about our revolution of still another legend, about Trotsky's letters

* See Lenin's *Letters on Tactics, First Letter, Assessment of the Present Situation* (1917). See also the reports made at the Petrograd City Conference and at the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) (middle and end of April 1917).

from America "anticipating" Lenin's well-known *Letters from Afar*?*

No wonder it is said that an obliging fool is more dangerous than an enemy.

2) *The period of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses (May-August)*. The major facts of this period:

a) the April demonstration in Petrograd and the formation of the coalition government with the participation of "Socialists";

b) the May Day demonstrations in the principal centres of Russia with the slogan of "a democratic peace";

c) the June demonstration in Petrograd with the principal slogan: "Down with the capitalist ministers!";

d) the June offensive at the front and the reverses of the Russian army;

e) the July armed demonstration in Petrograd; the Cadet ministers resign from the government;

f) counter-revolutionary troops are called in from the front; the editorial offices of *Pravda* are wrecked; the counter-revolution launches a struggle against the Soviets and a new coalition government is formed, headed by Kerensky;

* Among these legends must be included also the very widespread story that Trotsky was the "sole" or "chief organiser" of the victories on the fronts of the Civil War. I must declare, comrades, in the interest of truth, that this version is quite out of accord with the facts. I am far from denying that Trotsky played an important role in the Civil War. But I must emphatically declare that the high honour of being the organiser of our victories belongs not to individuals, but to the great collective body of advanced workers in our country, the Russian Communist Party. Perhaps it will not be out of place to quote a few examples. You know that Kolchak and Denikin were regarded as the principal enemies of the Soviet Republic. You know that our country breathed freely only after those enemies were defeated. Well, history shows that

g) the Sixth Congress of our Party, which issues the slogan to prepare for an armed uprising;

h) the counter-revolutionary Conference of State and the general strike in Moscow;

i) Kornilov's unsuccessful march on Petrograd, the revitalising of the Soviets; the Cadets resign and a "Directory" is formed.

The characteristic feature of this period is the intensification of the crisis and the upsetting of the unstable equilibrium between the Soviets and the Provisional Government which, for good or evil, had existed in the preceding period. Dual power has become intolerable for both sides. The fragile edifice of the "Contact Committee" is tottering. "Crisis of power" and "ministerial re-shuffle" are the most fashionable catch-words of the day. The crisis at the front and the disruption in the rear are doing their work, strengthening the extreme flanks and squeezing the defencist compromisers from both sides. The revolution is mobilising, causing the mobilisation of the

both those enemies, i.e., Kolchak and Denikin, were routed by our troops *in spite* of Trotsky's plans.

Judge for yourselves.

1) *Kolchak*. This is in the summer of 1919. Our troops are advancing against Kolchak and are operating near Ufa. A meeting of the Central Committee is held. Trotsky proposes that the advance be halted along the line of the River Belaya (near Ufa), leaving the Urals in the hands of Kolchak, and that part of the troops be withdrawn from the Eastern Front and transferred to the Southern Front. A heated debate takes place. The Central Committee disagrees with Trotsky, being of the opinion that the Urals, with its factories and railway network, must not be left in the hands of Kolchak, for the latter could easily recuperate there, organise a strong force and reach the Volga again; Kolchak must first be driven beyond the Ural range into the Siberian steppes, and only after that has been done should forces be transferred to the South. The Central Committee rejects Trotsky's plan. Trotsky hands in his

counter-revolution. The counter-revolution, in its turn, is spurring on the revolution, stirring up new waves of the revolutionary tide. The question of transferring power to the new class becomes the immediate question of the day.

Were there disagreements in our Party then? Yes, there were. They were, however, of a purely practical character, despite the assertions of Trotsky, who is trying to discover a "Right" and a "Left" wing in the Party. That is to say, they were such disagreements as are inevitable where there is vigorous Party life and real Party activity.

Trotsky is wrong in asserting that the April demonstration in Petrograd gave rise to disagreements in the Central Committee. The Central Committee was absolutely united on this question and condemned the attempt of a group of comrades to arrest the Provisional Government at a time when the Bolsheviks were in a minority both in the Soviets and in the army. Had Trotsky written the "history" of October not according to Sukhanov, but according to authentic documents,

resignation. The Central Committee refuses to accept it. Commander-in-Chief Vatsetis, who supported Trotsky's plan, resigns. His place is taken by a new Commander-in-Chief, Kamenev. From that moment Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Eastern Front.

2) *Denikin*. This is in the autumn of 1919. The offensive against Denikin is not proceeding successfully. The "steel ring" around Mamontov (Mamontov's raid) is obviously collapsing. Denikin captures Kursk. Denikin is approaching Orel. Trotsky is summoned from the Southern Front to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. The Central Committee regards the situation as alarming and decides to send new military leaders to the Southern Front and to withdraw Trotsky. The new military leaders demand "no intervention" by Trotsky in the affairs of the Southern Front. Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Southern Front. Operations on the Southern Front, right up to the capture of Rostov-on-Don and Odessa by our troops, proceed without Trotsky.

Let anybody try to refute these facts.

he would easily have convinced himself of the error of his assertion.

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in asserting that the attempt, "on Lenin's initiative," to arrange a demonstration on June 10 was described as "adventurism" by the "Right-wing" members of the Central Committee. Had Trotsky not written according to Sukhanov he would surely have known that the June 10 demonstration was postponed with the full agreement of Lenin, and that he urged the necessity of postponing it in a big speech he delivered at the well-known meeting of the Petrograd Committee (see minutes of the Petrograd Committee²⁵).

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in speaking about "tragic" disagreements in the Central Committee in connection with the July armed demonstration. Trotsky is simply inventing in asserting that some members of the leading group in the Central Committee "could not but regard the July episode as a harmful adventure." Trotsky, who was then not yet a member of our Central Committee and was merely our Soviet parliamentary, might, of course, not have known that the Central Committee regarded the July demonstration only as a means of sounding the enemy, that the Central Committee (and Lenin) did not want to convert, did not even think of converting, the demonstration into an uprising at a time when the Soviets in the capitals still supported the defencists. It is quite possible that some Bolsheviks did whimper over the July defeat. I know, for example, that some of the Bolsheviks who were arrested at the time were even prepared to desert our ranks. But to draw inferences from this against certain supposed "Rights," supposed to be members of the Central Committee, is a shameful distortion of history.

Trotsky is wrong in declaring that during the Kornilov days a section of the Party leaders inclined towards the formation of a bloc with the defencists, towards supporting the Provisional Government. He, of course, is referring to those same alleged "Rights" who keep him awake at night. Trotsky is wrong, for there exist documents, such as the Central Organ of the Party of that time, which refute his statements. Trotsky refers to Lenin's letter to the Central Committee warning against supporting Kerensky; but Trotsky fails to understand Lenin's letters, their significance, their purpose. In his letters Lenin sometimes deliberately ran ahead, pushing into the forefront mistakes that might *possibly* be committed, and criticising them in advance with the object of warning the Party and of safeguarding it against mistakes. Sometimes he would even magnify a "trifle" and "make a mountain out of a molehill" for the same pedagogical purpose. The leader of the Party, especially if he is in hiding, cannot act otherwise, for he must see further than his comrades-in-arms, he must sound the alarm over every possible mistake, even over "trifles." But to infer from such letters of Lenin's (and he wrote quite a number of such letters) the existence of "tragic" disagreements and to trumpet them forth means not to understand Lenin's letters, means not to know Lenin. This, probably, explains why Trotsky sometimes is wide of the mark. In short: there were no disagreements in the Central Committee during the Kornilov revolt, absolutely none.

After the July defeat disagreement did indeed arise between the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the future of the Soviets. It is known that Lenin, wishing to concentrate the Party's attention on the task of preparing the uprising outside the Soviets, warned against any infatuation with the latter, for he was of the opinion that, having been

defiled by the defencists, they had become useless. The Central Committee and the Sixth Party Congress took a more cautious line and decided that there were no grounds for excluding the possibility that the Soviets would revive. The Kornilov revolt showed that this decision was correct. This disagreement, however, was of no great consequence for the Party. Later, Lenin admitted that the line taken by the Sixth Congress had been correct. It is interesting that Trotsky has not clutched at this disagreement and has not magnified it to "monstrous" proportions.

A united and solid party, the hub of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses — such was the picture presented by our Party in that period.

3) *The period of organisation of the assault (September-October).* The major facts of this period:

a) the convocation of the Democratic Conference and the collapse of the idea of a bloc with the Cadets;

b) the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets go over to the side of the Bolsheviks;

c) the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region;²⁶ the Petrograd Soviet decides against the withdrawal of the troops;

d) the decision of the Central Committee on the uprising and the formation of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet;

e) the Petrograd garrison decides to render the Petrograd Soviet armed support; a network of commissars of the Revolutionary Military Committee is organised;

f) the Bolshevik armed forces go into action; the members of the Provisional Government are arrested;

g) the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet takes power; the Second Congress of Soviets sets up the Council of People's Commissars.

The characteristic feature of this period is the rapid growth of the crisis, the utter consternation reigning among the ruling circles, the isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and the mass flight of the vacillating elements to the side of the Bolsheviks. A peculiar feature of the tactics of the revolution in this period must be noted, namely, that the revolution strove to take every, or nearly every, step in its attack in the guise of defence. Undoubtedly, the refusal to allow the troops to be withdrawn from Petrograd was an important step in the revolution's attack; nevertheless, this attack was carried out under the slogan of protecting Petrograd from possible attack by the external enemy. Undoubtedly, the formation of the Revolutionary Military Committee was a still more important step in the attack upon the Provisional Government; nevertheless, it was carried out under the slogan of organising Soviet control over the actions of the Headquarters of the Military Area. Undoubtedly, the open transition of the garrison to the side of the Revolutionary Military Committee and the organisation of a network of Soviet Commissars marked the beginning of the uprising; nevertheless, the revolution took these steps under the slogan of protecting the Petrograd Soviet from possible action by the counter-revolution. The revolution, as it were, masked its actions in attack under the cloak of defence in order the more easily to draw the irresolute, vacillating elements into its orbit. This, no doubt, explains the outwardly defensive character of the speeches, articles and slogans of that period, the inner content of which, none the less, was of a profoundly attacking nature.

Were there disagreements in the Central Committee in that period? Yes, there were, and fairly important ones at that. I have already spoken about the disagreements over the uprising. They are fully reflected in the minutes of the meetings

of the Central Committee of October 10 and 16. I shall, therefore, not repeat what I have already said. Three questions must now be dealt with: participation in the Pre-parliament, the role of the Soviets in the uprising, and the date of the uprising. This is all the more necessary because Trotsky, in his zeal to push himself into a prominent place, has "inadvertently" misrepresented the stand Lenin took on the last two questions.

Undoubtedly, the disagreements on the question of the Pre-parliament were of a serious nature. What was, so to speak, the aim of the Pre-parliament? It was: to help the bourgeoisie to push the Soviets into the background and to lay the foundations of bourgeois parliamentarism. Whether the Pre-parliament could have accomplished this task in the revolutionary situation that had arisen is another matter. Events showed that this aim could not be realised, and the Pre-parliament itself was a Kornilovite abortion. There can be no doubt, however, that it was precisely this aim that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries pursued in setting up the Pre-parliament. What could the Bolsheviks' participation in the Pre-parliament mean under those circumstances? Nothing but deceiving the proletarian masses about the true nature of the Pre-parliament. This is the chief explanation for the passion with which Lenin, in his letters, scourged those who were in favour of taking part in the Pre-parliament. There can be no doubt that it was a grave mistake to have taken part in the Pre-parliament.

It would be a mistake, however, to think, as Trotsky does, that those who were in favour of taking part in the Pre-parliament went into it for the purpose of constructive work, for the purpose of "directing the working-class movement" "into the channel of Social-Democracy." That is not at all the case.

It is not true. Had that been the case, the Party would not have been able to rectify this mistake "in two ticks" by demonstratively walking out of the Pre-parliament. Incidentally, the swift rectification of this mistake was an expression of our Party's vitality and revolutionary might.

And now, permit me to correct a slight inaccuracy that has crept into the report of Lentsner, the "editor" of Trotsky's works, about the meeting of the Bolshevik group at which a decision on the question of the Pre-parliament was taken. Lentsner says that there were two reporters at this meeting, Kamenev and Trotsky. That is not true. Actually, there were four reporters: two in favour of boycotting the Pre-parliament (Trotsky and Stalin), and two in favour of participation (Kamenev and Nogin).

Trotsky is in a still worse position when dealing with the stand Lenin took on the question of the form of the uprising. According to Trotsky, it appears that Lenin's view was that the Party should take power in October "independently of and behind the back of the Soviet." Later on, criticising this nonsense, which he ascribes to Lenin, Trotsky "cuts capers" and finally delivers the following condescending utterance: "That would have been a mistake." Trotsky is here uttering a falsehood about Lenin, he is misrepresenting Lenin's views on the role of the Soviets in the uprising. A pile of documents can be cited, showing that Lenin proposed that power be taken *through* the Soviets, either the Petrograd or the Moscow Soviet, and not *behind the back* of the Soviets. Why did Trotsky have to invent this more than strange legend about Lenin?

Nor is Trotsky in a better position when he "analyses" the stand taken by the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the date of the uprising. Reporting the famous meeting of the Central Committee of October 10, Trotsky asserts that

at that meeting "a resolution was carried to the effect that the uprising should take place not later than October 15." From this it appears that the Central Committee fixed October 15 as the date of the uprising and then itself violated that decision by postponing the date of the uprising to October 25. Is that true? No, it is not. During that period the Central Committee passed only two resolutions on the uprising — one on October 10 and the other on October 16. Let us read these resolutions.

The Central Committee's resolution of October 10:

"The Central Committee recognises that the international position of the Russian revolution (the mutiny in the German navy, which is an extreme manifestation of the growth throughout Europe of the world socialist revolution, and the threat of peace* between the imperialists with the object of strangling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the indubitable decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans), and the fact that the proletarian party has gained a majority in the Soviets — all this, taken in conjunction with the peasant revolt and the swing of popular confidence towards our Party (the elections in Moscow), and, finally, the obvious preparations being made for a second Kornilov affair (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the dispatch of Cossacks to Petrograd, the surrounding of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.) — all this places an armed uprising on the order of the day.

"Considering, therefore, that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organisations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the actions of the people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view."²⁷

The resolution adopted by the conference of the Central Committee with responsible workers on October 16:

* Obviously, this should be "a separate peace." — *J. St.*

"This meeting fully welcomes and wholly supports the Central Committee's resolution, calls upon all organisations and all workers and soldiers to make thorough and most intense preparations for an armed uprising and for support of the centre set up by the Central Committee for this purpose, and expresses complete confidence that the Central Committee and the Soviet will in good time indicate the favourable moment and the suitable means for launching the attack."²⁸

You see that Trotsky's memory betrayed him about the date of the uprising and the Central Committee's resolution on the uprising.

Trotsky is absolutely wrong in asserting that Lenin underrated Soviet legality, that Lenin failed to appreciate the great importance of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets taking power on October 25, and that this was the reason why he insisted that power be taken before October 25. That is not true. Lenin proposed that power be taken before October 25 for two reasons. Firstly, because the counter-revolutionaries might have surrendered Petrograd at any moment, which would have drained the blood of the developing uprising, and so every day was precious. Secondly, because the mistake made by the Petrograd Soviet in *openly* fixing and announcing the day of the uprising (October 25) could not be rectified in any other way than by actually launching the uprising *before* the legal date set for it. The fact of the matter is that Lenin regarded insurrection as an art, and he could not help knowing that the enemy, informed about the date of the uprising (owing to the carelessness of the Petrograd Soviet) would certainly try to prepare for that day. Consequently, it was necessary to forestall the enemy, i.e., without fail to launch the uprising *before* the legal date. This is the chief explanation for the passion with which Lenin in his letters scourged those who made a fetish of the date — October 25. Events showed that Lenin was absolutely right. It is well known that the uprising

was launched prior to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It is well known that power was actually taken before the opening of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and it was taken not by the Congress of Soviets, but by the Petrograd Soviet, by the Revolutionary Military Committee. The Congress of Soviets merely *took over* power from the Petrograd Soviet. That is why Trotsky's lengthy arguments about the importance of Soviet legality are quite beside the point.

A virile and mighty party standing at the head of the revolutionary masses who were storming and overthrowing bourgeois rule — such was the state of our Party in that period.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the preparation for October.

III

TROTSKYISM OR LENINISM?

We have dealt above with the legends directed against the Party and those about Lenin spread by Trotsky and his supporters in connection with October and the preparation for it. We have exposed and refuted these legends. But the question arises: For what purpose did Trotsky need all these legends about October and the preparation for October, about Lenin and the Party of Lenin? What is the purpose of Trotsky's new literary pronouncements against the Party? What is the sense, the purpose, the aim of these pronouncements now, when the Party does not want a discussion, when the Party is busy with a host of urgent tasks, when the Party needs united efforts to restore our economy and not a new struggle around old questions? For what purpose does Trotsky need to drag the Party back, to new discussions?

Trotsky asserts that all this is needed for the purpose of "studying" October. But is it not possible to study October without giving another kick at the Party and its leader Lenin? What sort of a "history" of October is it that begins and ends with attempts to discredit the chief leader of the October uprising, to discredit the Party, which organised and carried through the uprising? No, it is not a matter here of studying October. *That* is not the way to study October. *That* is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously, there is a different "design" here, and everything goes to show that this "design" is that Trotsky by his literary pronouncements is making another (yet another!) attempt to create the conditions for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism. Trotsky needs "desperately" to discredit the Party, and its cadres who carried through the uprising, in order, after discrediting the Party, to proceed to discredit Leninism. And it is necessary for him to discredit Leninism in order to drag in Trotskyism as the "sole" "proletarian" (don't laugh!) ideology. All this, of course (oh, of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the dragging operation may be performed "as painlessly as possible."

That is the essence of Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

That is why those literary pronouncements of Trotsky's sharply raise the question of Trotskyism.

And so, what is Trotskyism?

Trotskyism possesses three specific features which bring it into irreconcilable contradiction with Leninism.

What are these features?

Firstly. Trotskyism is the theory of "permanent" (uninterrupted) revolution. But what is permanent revolution in its Trotskyist interpretation? It is revolution that fails to take the poor peasantry into account as a revolutionary force.

Trotsky's "permanent" revolution is, as Lenin said, "skipping" the peasant movement, "playing at the seizure of power." Why is it dangerous? Because such a revolution, if an attempt had been made to bring it about, would inevitably have ended in failure, for it would have divorced from the Russian proletariat its ally, the poor peasantry. This explains the struggle that Leninism has been waging against Trotskyism ever since 1905.

How does Trotsky appraise Leninism from the standpoint of this struggle? He regards it as a theory that possesses "anti-revolutionary features." What is this indignant opinion about Leninism based on? On the fact that at the proper time Leninism advocated and upheld the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and *peasantry*.

But Trotsky does not confine himself to this indignant opinion. He goes further and asserts: "The entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and bears within itself the poisonous elements of its own decay" (see Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze, 1913). As you see, we have before us two opposite lines.

Secondly. Trotskyism is distrust of the Bolshevik Party principle, of the monolithic character of the Party, of its hostility towards opportunist elements. In the sphere of organisation, Trotskyism is the theory that revolutionaries and opportunists can co-exist and form groups and coteries within a single party. You are, no doubt, familiar with the history of Trotsky's August bloc, in which the Martovites and Otzovists, the Liquidators and Trotskyites, happily co-operated, pretending that they were a "real" party. It is well known that this patchwork "party" pursued the aim of destroying the Bolshevik Party. What was the nature of "our disagreements" at that time? It was that Leninism regarded the destruction of the

August bloc as a guarantee of the development of the proletarian party, whereas Trotskyism regarded that bloc as the basis for building a "real" party.

Again, as you see, we have two opposite lines.

Thirdly. Trotskyism is distrust of the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt to discredit, to defame them. I do not know of a single trend in the Party that could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism or the central institutions of the Party. For example, what should be said of Trotsky's "polite" opinion of Lenin, whom he described as "a professional exploiter of every kind of backwardness in the Russian working-class movement" (*ibid.*)? And this is far from being the most "polite" of the "polite" opinions Trotsky has expressed.

How could it happen that Trotsky, who carried such a nasty stock-in-trade on his back, found himself, after all, in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? It happened because at that time Trotsky abandoned (actually did abandon) that stock-in-trade; he hid it in the cupboard. Had he not performed that "operation," real co-operation with him would have been impossible. The theory of the August bloc, i.e., the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been shattered and thrown overboard by the revolution, for how could there be any talk about unity when an armed struggle was raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? Trotsky had no alternative but to admit that this theory was useless.

The same misadventure "happened" to the theory of permanent revolution, for not a single Bolshevik contemplated the immediate seizure of power on the morrow of the February Revolution, and Trotsky could not help knowing that the Bolsheviks would not allow him, in the words of Lenin, "to play

at the seizure of power." Trotsky had no alternative but recognise the Bolsheviks' policy of fighting for influence in the Soviets, of fighting to win over the peasantry. As regards the third specific feature of Trotskyism (distrust of the Bolshevik leaders), it naturally had to retire into the background owing to the obvious failure of the first two features.

Under those circumstances, could Trotsky do anything else but hide his stock-in-trade in the cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, considering that he had no group of his own of any significance, and that he came to the Bolsheviks as a political individual, without an army? Of course, he could not!

What is the lesson to be learnt from this? Only one: that prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely abandons his old stock-in-trade, only if he completely accepts Leninism. Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets that, in addition to all the other lessons, there is one more lesson of October, the one I have just mentioned, which is of prime importance for Trotskyism. Trotskyism ought to learn that lesson of October too.

It is evident, however, that Trotskyism has not learnt that lesson. The fact of the matter is that the old stock-in-trade of Trotskyism that was hidden in the cupboard in the period of the October movement is now being dragged into the light again in the hope that a market will be found for it, seeing that the market in our country is expanding. Undoubtedly, Trotsky's new literary pronouncements are an attempt to revert to Trotskyism, to "overcome" Leninism, to drag in, implant, all the specific features of Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism is not a mere repetition of the old Trotskyism; its feathers have been plucked and it is rather bedraggled; it is incomparably milder in spirit and more moderate in form than the old Trots-

kyism; but, in essence, it undoubtedly retains all the specific features of the old Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism does not dare to come out as a militant force against Leninism; it prefers to operate under the common flag of Leninism, under the slogan of interpreting, improving Leninism. That is because it is weak. It cannot be regarded as an accident that the appearance of the new Trotskyism coincided with Lenin's departure. In Lenin's lifetime it would not have dared to take this risky step.

What are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism?

1) *On the question of "permanent" revolution.* The new Trotskyism does not deem it necessary openly to uphold the theory of "permanent" revolution. It "simply" asserts that the October Revolution fully confirmed the idea of "permanent" revolution. From this it draws the following conclusion: the important and acceptable part of Leninism is the part that came after the war, in the period of the October Revolution; on the other hand, the part of Leninism that existed before the war, before the October Revolution, is wrong and unacceptable. Hence, the Trotskyites' theory of the division of Leninism into two parts: pre-war Leninism, the "old," "useless" Leninism with its idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and the new, post-war, October Leninism, which they count on adapting to the requirements of Trotskyism. Trotskyism needs this theory of the division of Leninism as a first, more or less "acceptable" step that is necessary to facilitate further steps in its struggle against Leninism.

But Leninism is not an eclectic theory stuck together out of diverse elements and capable of being cut into parts. Leninism is an integral theory, which arose in 1903, has passed the test of

three revolutions, and is now being carried forward as the battle-flag of the world proletariat.

"Bolshevism," Lenin said, "as a trend of political thought and as a political party, has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *whole* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and to maintain under most difficult conditions the iron discipline needed for the victory of the proletariat" (see Vol. XXV, p. 174).^[1]

Bolshevism and Leninism are one. They are two names for one and the same thing. Hence, the theory of the division of Leninism into two parts is a theory intended to destroy Leninism, to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque theory.

2) *On the question of the Party principle.* The old Trotskyism tried to undermine the Bolshevik Party principle by means of the theory (and practice) of unity with the Mensheviks. But that theory has suffered such disgrace that nobody now even wants to mention it. To undermine the Party principle, present-day Trotskyism has invented the new, less odious and almost "democratic" theory of contrasting the old cadres to the younger Party members. According to Trotskyism, our Party has not a single and integral history. Trotskyism divides the history of our Party into two parts of unequal importance: pre-October and post-October. The pre-October part of the history of our Party is, properly speaking, not history, but "pre-history," the unimportant or, at all events, not very important preparatory period of our Party. The post-October part of the history of our Party, however, is real, genuine history. In the former, there are the "old," "pre-

[1] Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. II. One of the Fundamental Conditions for the Bolsheviks' Success. (1920)

historic," unimportant cadres of our Party. In the latter there is the new, real, "historic" Party. It scarcely needs proof that this singular scheme of the history of the Party is a scheme to disrupt the unity between the old and the new cadres of our Party, a scheme to destroy the Bolshevik Party principle.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque scheme.

3) *On the question of the leaders of Bolshevism.* The old Trotskyism tried to discredit Lenin more or less openly, without fearing the consequences. The new Trotskyism is more cautious. It tries to achieve the purpose of the old Trotskyism by pretending to praise, to exalt Lenin. I think it is worth while quoting a few examples.

The Party knows that Lenin was a relentless revolutionary; but it knows also that he was cautious, that he disliked reckless people and often, with a firm hand, restrained those who were infatuated with terrorism, including Trotsky himself. Trotsky touches on this subject in his book *On Lenin*, but from his portrayal of Lenin one might think that all Lenin did was "at every opportunity to din into people's minds the idea that terrorism was inevitable." The impression is created that Lenin was the most bloodthirsty of all the bloodthirsty Bolsheviks.

For what purpose did Trotsky need this uncalled-for and totally unjustified exaggeration?

The Party knows that Lenin was an exemplary Party man, who did not like to settle questions alone, without the leading collective body, on the spur of the moment, without careful investigation and verification. Trotsky touches upon this aspect, too, in his book. But the portrait he paints is not that of Lenin, but of a sort of Chinese mandarin, who settles important questions in the quiet of his study, by intuition.

Do you want to know how our Party settled the question of dispersing the Constituent Assembly? Listen to Trotsky:

“‘Of course, the Constituent Assembly will have to be dispersed,’ said Lenin, ‘but what about the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries?’

“‘But our apprehensions were greatly allayed by old Natanson. He came in to ‘take counsel’ with us, and after the first few words he said:

“‘We shall probably have to disperse the Constituent Assembly by force.’

“‘Bravo!’ exclaimed Lenin. ‘What is true is true! But will your people agree to it?’

“‘Some of our people are wavering, but I think that in the end they will agree,’ answered Natanson.”

That is how history is written.

Do you want to know how the Party settled the question about the Supreme Military Council? Listen to Trotsky:

“‘Unless we have serious and experienced military experts we shall never extricate ourselves from this chaos,’ I said to Vladimir Ilyich after every visit to the Staff.

“‘That is evidently true, but they might betray us. . . .’

“‘Let us attach a commissar to each of them.’

“‘Two would be better,’ exclaimed Lenin, ‘and strong-handed ones. There surely must be strong-handed Communists in our ranks.’

“That is how the structure of the Supreme Military Council arose.”

That is how Trotsky writes history.

Why did Trotsky need these “Arabian Nights” stories derogatory to Lenin? Was it to exalt V. I. Lenin, the leader of the Party? It doesn’t look like it.

The Party knows that Lenin was the greatest Marxist of our times, a profound theoretician and a most experienced revolutionary, to whom any trace of Blanquism was alien. Trotsky touches upon this aspect, too, in his book. But the portrait he paints is not that of the giant Lenin, but of a dwarf-like Blanquist who, in the October days, advises the Party "to take power by its own hand, independently of and behind the back of the Soviet." I have already said, however, that there is not a scrap of truth in this description.

Why did Trotsky need this flagrant . . . inaccuracy? Is this not an attempt to discredit Lenin "just a little"?

Such are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism.

What is the danger of this new Trotskyism? It is that Trotskyism, owing to its entire inner content, stands every chance of becoming the centre and rallying point of the non-proletarian elements who are striving to weaken, to disintegrate the proletarian dictatorship.

You will ask: what is to be done now? What are the Party's immediate tasks in connection with Trotsky's new literary pronouncements?

Trotskyism is taking action now in order to discredit Bolshevism and to undermine its foundations. It is the duty of the Party *to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend*.

There is talk about repressive measures against the opposition and about the possibility of a split. That is nonsense, comrades. Our Party is strong and mighty. It will not allow any splits. As regards repressive measures, I am emphatically opposed to them. What we need now is not repressive measures, but an extensive ideological struggle against renascent Trotskyism.

We did not want and did not strive for this literary discussion. Trotskyism is forcing it upon us by its anti-Leninist pronouncements. Well, we are ready, comrades.

Pravda, No. 269,
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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS

Preface to the Book "On the Road to October",²⁹

I

THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL SETTING FOR THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

Three circumstances of an external nature determined the comparative ease with which the proletarian revolution in Russia succeeded in breaking the chains of imperialism and thus overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Firstly, the circumstance that the October Revolution began in a period of desperate struggle between the two principal imperialist groups, the Anglo-French and the Austro-German; at a time when, engaged in mortal struggle between themselves, these two groups had neither the time nor the means to devote serious attention to the struggle against the October Revolution. This circumstance was of tremendous importance for the

October Revolution, for it enabled it to take advantage of the fierce conflicts within the imperialist world to strengthen and organise its own forces.

Secondly, the circumstance that the October Revolution began during the imperialist war, at a time when the labouring masses, exhausted by the war and thirsting for peace, were by the very logic of facts led up to the proletarian revolution as the only way out of the war. This circumstance was of extreme importance for the October Revolution, for it put into its hands the mighty weapon of peace, made it easier for it to link the Soviet revolution with the ending of the hated war, and thus created mass sympathy for it both in the West, among the workers, and in the East, among the oppressed peoples.

Thirdly, the existence of a powerful working-class movement in Europe and the fact that a revolutionary crisis was maturing in the West and in the East, brought on by the protracted imperialist war. This circumstance was of inestimable importance for the revolution in Russia, for it ensured the revolution faithful allies outside Russia in its struggle against world imperialism.

But in addition to circumstances of an external nature, there were also a number of favourable internal conditions which facilitated the victory of the October Revolution.

Of these conditions, the following must be regarded as the chief ones:

Firstly, the October Revolution enjoyed the most active support of the overwhelming majority of the working class in Russia.

Secondly, it enjoyed the undoubted support of the poor peasants and of the majority of the soldiers, who were thirsting for peace and land.

Thirdly, it had at its head, as its guiding force, such a tried and tested party as the Bolshevik Party, strong not only by reason of its experience and discipline acquired through the years, but also by reason of its vast connections with the labouring masses.

Fourthly, the October Revolution was confronted by enemies who were comparatively easy to overcome, such as the rather weak Russian bourgeoisie, a landlord class which was utterly demoralised by peasant "revolts," and the compromising parties (the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), which had become completely bankrupt during the war.

Fifthly, it had at its disposal the vast expanses of the young state, in which it was able to manoeuvre freely, retreat when circumstances so required, enjoy a respite, gather strength, etc.

Sixthly, in its struggle against counter-revolution the October Revolution could count upon sufficient resources of food, fuel and raw materials within the country.

The combination of these external and internal circumstances created that peculiar situation which determined the comparative ease with which the October Revolution won its victory.

This does not mean, of course, that there were no unfavourable features in the external and internal setting of the October Revolution. Think of such an unfavourable feature as, for example, the isolation, to some extent, of the October Revolution, the absence near it, or bordering on it, of a Soviet country on which it could rely for support. Undoubtedly, the future revolution, for example, in Germany, will be in a more favourable situation in this respect, for it has in close proximity a powerful Soviet country like our Soviet Union. I need not mention so

unfavourable a feature of the October Revolution as the absence of a proletarian majority within the country.

But these unfavourable features only emphasise the tremendous importance of the peculiar internal and external conditions of the October Revolution of which I have spoken above.

These peculiar conditions must not be lost sight of for a single moment. They must be borne in mind particularly in analysing the events of the autumn of 1923 in Germany. Above all, they should be borne in mind by Trotsky, who draws an unfounded analogy between the October Revolution and the revolution in Germany and lashes violently at the German Communist Party for its actual and alleged mistakes.

"It was easy for Russia," says Lenin, "in the specific, historically very special situation of 1917, to start the socialist revolution, but it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to continue the revolution and carry it through to the end. I had occasion to point this out already at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view. Such specific conditions, as (1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending, as a consequence of this revolution, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree; (2) the possibility of taking advantage for a certain time of the mortal conflict between two world-powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; (3) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to take the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of the members of which were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realise them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat — such specific conditions do not exist in Western Europe at present; and a repetition of such or similar conditions will not come so easily. That, by the way, apart from a number of other causes, is why it will be more difficult for

Western Europe to *start* a socialist revolution than it was for us" (see Vol. XXV, p. 205).^[1]

These words of Lenin's should not be forgotten.

II

TWO SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION — OR OCTOBER AND TROTSKY'S THEORY OF "PERMANENT" REVOLUTION

There are two specific features of the October Revolution which must be understood first of all if we are to comprehend the inner meaning and the historical significance of that revolution.

What are these features?

Firstly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat was born in our country as a power which came into existence on the basis of an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry, the latter being led by the proletariat. Secondly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat became established in our country as a result of the victory of socialism in one country — a country in which capitalism was little developed — while capitalism was preserved in other countries where capitalism was more highly developed. This does not mean, of course, that the October Revolution has no other specific features. But it is precisely these two specific features that are important for us at the present moment, not only because they distinctly express the

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VII. *Should We Participate in Bourgeois Parliaments?* (1920)

essence of the October Revolution, but also because they brilliantly reveal the opportunist nature of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Let us briefly examine these features.

The question of the labouring masses of the petty bourgeoisie, both urban and rural, the question of winning these masses to the side of the proletariat, is highly important for the proletarian revolution. Whom will the labouring people of town and country support in the struggle for power, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat; whose reserve will they become, the reserve of the bourgeoisie or the reserve of the proletariat — on this depend the fate of the revolution and the stability of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The revolutions in France in 1848 and 1871 came to grief chiefly because the peasant reserves proved to be on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October Revolution was victorious because it was able to deprive the bourgeoisie of its peasant reserves, because it was able to win these reserves to the side of the proletariat, and because in this revolution the proletariat proved to be the only guiding force for the vast masses of the labouring people of town and country.

He who has not understood this will never understand either the character of the October Revolution, or the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the specific characteristics of the internal policy of our proletarian power.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not simply a governmental top stratum "skilfully" "selected" by the careful hand of an "experienced strategist," and "judiciously relying" on the support of one section or another of the population. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for achieving the final victory

of socialism, on the condition that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat.

Thus, it is not a question of "slightly" underestimating or "slightly" overestimating the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement, as certain diplomatic advocates of "permanent revolution" are now fond of expressing it. It is a question of the nature of the new proletarian state which arose as a result of the October Revolution. It is a question of the character of the proletarian power, of the foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat," says Lenin, "is a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of working people (the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these; it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital, at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and of any attempt on its part at restoration, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of socialism" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).^[1]

And further on:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat, if we translate this Latin, scientific, historical-philosophical term into simpler language, means the following:

"Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited in the struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, in the process of the overthrow itself, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system, in the whole struggle for the complete abolition of classes" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 336).^[2]

Such is the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat given by Lenin.

[1] Lenin, *Foreword to the Published Speech "Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality."* (1919)

[2] Lenin, *A Great Beginning.* (1919)

One of the specific features of the October Revolution is the fact that this revolution represents a classic application of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Some comrades believe that this theory is a purely "Russian" theory, applicable only to Russian conditions. That is wrong. It is absolutely wrong. In speaking of the labouring masses of the non-proletarian classes which are led by the proletariat, Lenin has in mind not only the Russian peasants, but also the labouring elements of the border regions of the Soviet Union, which until recently were colonies of Russia. Lenin constantly reiterated that without an alliance with these masses of other nationalities the proletariat of Russia could not achieve victory. In his articles on the national question and in his speeches at the congresses of the Comintern, Lenin repeatedly said that the victory of the world revolution was impossible without a revolutionary alliance, a revolutionary bloc, between the proletariat of the advanced countries and the oppressed peoples of the enslaved colonies. But what are colonies if not the oppressed labouring masses, and, primarily, the labouring masses of the peasantry? Who does not know that the question of emancipating the colonies is *essentially* a question of emancipating the labouring masses of the non-proletarian classes from the oppression and exploitation of finance capital?

But from this it follows that Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a purely "Russian" theory, but a theory which necessarily applies to all countries. Bolshevism is not only a Russian phenomenon. "Bolshevism," says Lenin, is "a model of tactics for all" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 386).^[1]

[1] Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky. What Is Internationalism?* (1918)

Such are the characteristics of the first specific feature of the October Revolution.

How do matters stand with regard to Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" in the light of this specific feature of the October Revolution?

We shall not dwell at length on Trotsky's position in 1905, when he "simply" forgot all about the peasantry as a revolutionary force and advanced the slogan of "no tsar, but a workers' government," that is, the slogan of revolution without the peasantry. Even Radek, that diplomatic defender of "permanent revolution," is now obliged to admit that "permanent revolution" in 1905 meant a "leap into the air" away from reality. Now, apparently everyone admits that it is not worth while bothering with this "leap into the air" any more.

Nor shall we dwell at length on Trotsky's position in the period of the war, say, in 1915, when, in his article "The Struggle for Power," proceeding from the fact that "we are living in the era of imperialism," that imperialism "sets up not the bourgeois nation in opposition to the old regime, but the proletariat in opposition to the bourgeois nation," he arrived at the conclusion that the revolutionary role of the peasantry was bound to subside, that the slogan of the confiscation of the land no longer had the same importance as formerly. It is well known that at that time, Lenin, examining this article of Trotsky's, accused him of "denying" "the role of the peasantry," and said that "Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal labour politicians in Russia who understand 'denial' of the role of the peasantry to mean *refusal* to rouse the peasants to revolution!" (See Vol. XVIII, p. 318.)^[1]

^[1] Lenin, *On the Two Lines in the Revolution*. (1915)

Let us rather pass on to the later works of Trotsky on this subject, to the works of the period when the proletarian dictatorship had already become established and when Trotsky had had the opportunity to test his theory of "permanent revolution" in the light of actual events and to correct his errors. Let us take Trotsky's "Preface" to his book *The Year 1905*, written in 1922. Here is what Trotsky says in this "Preface" concerning "permanent revolution":

"It was precisely during the interval between January 9 and the October strike of 1905 that the views on the character of the revolutionary development of Russia which came to be known as the theory of 'permanent revolution' crystallised in the author's mind. This abstruse term represented the idea that the Russian revolution, whose immediate objectives were bourgeois in nature, could not, however, stop when these objectives had been achieved. The revolution would not be able to solve its immediate bourgeois problems except by placing the proletariat in power. And the latter, upon assuming power, would not be able to confine itself to the bourgeois limits of the revolution. On the contrary, precisely in order to ensure its victory, the proletarian vanguard would be forced in the very early stages of its rule to make deep inroads not only into feudal property but into bourgeois property as well. In this it would come into *hostile collision* not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also *with the broad masses of the peasantry* with whose assistance it came into power. The contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population could be solved *only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution.*"*

That is what Trotsky says about his "permanent revolution."

One need only compare this quotation with the above quotations from Lenin's works on the dictatorship of the proletariat to perceive the great chasm that separates Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat from Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution."

* My italics. — J. St.

Lenin speaks of the alliance between the proletariat and the labouring strata of the peasantry as the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotsky sees a "hostile collision" between "the proletarian vanguard" and "the broad masses of the peasantry."

Lenin speaks of the leadership of the toiling and exploited masses by the proletariat. Trotsky sees "contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population."

According to Lenin, the revolution draws its strength primarily from among the workers and peasants of Russia itself. According to Trotsky, the necessary strength can be found only "in the arena of the world proletarian revolution."

But what if the world revolution is fated to arrive with some delay? Is there any ray of hope for our revolution? Trotsky offers no ray of hope, for "the contradictions in the position of a workers' government . . . could be solved only . . . in the arena of the world proletarian revolution." According to this plan, there is but one prospect left for our revolution: to vegetate in its own contradictions and rot away while waiting for the world revolution.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Lenin?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which rests on an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for "the complete overthrow of capital" and for "the final establishment and consolidation of socialism."

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Trotsky?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which comes "into hostile collision" with "the broad masses of the peas-

antry" and seeks the solution of its "contradictions" *only* "in the arena of the world proletarian revolution."

What difference is there between this "theory of permanent revolution" and the well-known theory of Menshevism which repudiates the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. "Permanent revolution" is not a mere underestimation of the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. "Permanent revolution" is an underestimation of the peasant movement which leads to the repudiation of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is a variety of Menshevism.

This is how matters stand with regard to the first specific feature of the October Revolution.

What are the characteristics of the second specific feature of the October Revolution?

In his study of imperialism, especially in the period of the war, Lenin arrived at the law of the uneven, spasmodic, economic and political development of the capitalist countries. According to this law, the development of enterprises, trusts, branches of industry and individual countries proceeds not evenly — not according to an established sequence, not in such a way that one trust, one branch of industry or one country is always in advance of the others, while other trusts or countries keep consistently one behind the other — but spasmodically, with interruptions in the development of some countries and leaps ahead in the development of others. Under these circumstances the "quite legitimate" striving of the countries that have slowed down to hold their old positions, and the equally "legitimate" striving of the countries that have leapt ahead to

seize new positions, lead to a situation in which armed clashes among the imperialist countries become an inescapable necessity. Such was the case, for example, with Germany, which half a century ago was a backward country in comparison with France and Britain. The same must be said of Japan as compared with Russia. It is well known, however, that by the beginning of the twentieth century Germany and Japan had leapt so far ahead that Germany had succeeded in overtaking France and had begun to press Britain hard on the world market, while Japan was pressing Russia. As is well known, it was from these contradictions that the recent imperialist war arose.

This law proceeds from the following:

1) "Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of 'advanced' countries" (see Preface to French edition of Lenin's *Imperialism*, Vol. XIX, p. 74);^[1]

2) "This 'booty' is shared between two or three powerful world robbers armed to the teeth (America, Britain, Japan), who involve the whole world in *their* war over the sharing of *their* booty" (*ibid.*);

3) The growth of contradictions within the world system of financial oppression and the inevitability of armed clashes lead to the world front of imperialism becoming easily vulnerable to revolution, and to a breach in this front in individual countries becoming probable;

4) This breach is most likely to occur at those points, and in those countries, where the chain of the imperialist front is

[1] Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Preface to the French and German Editions. (1920)

weakest, that is to say, where imperialism is least consolidated, and where it is easiest for a revolution to expand;

5) In view of this, the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is less developed in the capitalist sense, while capitalism remains in other countries, even if those countries are more highly developed in the capitalist sense — is quite possible and probable.

Such, briefly, are the foundations of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

What is the second specific feature of the October Revolution?

The second specific feature of the October Revolution lies in the fact that this revolution represents a model of the practical application of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

He who has not understood this specific feature of the October Revolution will never understand either the international nature of this revolution, or its colossal international might, or the specific features of its foreign policy.

"Uneven economic and political development," says Lenin, "is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised its own socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." For "the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states" (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).^[1]

The opportunists of all countries assert that the proletarian revolution can begin — if it is to begin anywhere at all, accord-

^[1] Lenin, *The United States of Europe Slogan*. (1915)

ing to their theory — only in industrially developed countries, and that the more highly developed these countries are industrially the more chances there are for the victory of socialism. Moreover, according to them, the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, and one in which capitalism is little developed at that, is excluded as something absolutely improbable. As far back as the period of the war, Lenin, taking as his basis the law of the uneven development of the imperialist states, opposed to the opportunists his theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is one in which capitalism is less developed.

It is well known that the October Revolution fully confirmed the correctness of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

How do matters stand with Trotsky's "permanent revolution" in the light of Lenin's theory of the victory of the proletarian revolution in one country?

Let us take Trotsky's pamphlet *Our Revolution* (1906).

Trotsky writes:

"Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant."

What does this quotation mean? It means that the victory of socialism in one country, in this case Russia, is impossible "without direct state support from the European proletariat," i.e., before the European proletariat has conquered power.

What is there in common between this "theory" and Lenin's thesis on the possibility of the victory of socialism "in one capitalist country taken separately"?

Clearly, there is nothing in common.

But let us assume that Trotsky's pamphlet, which was published in 1906, at a time when it was difficult to determine

the character of our revolution, contains inadvertent errors and does not fully correspond to Trotsky's views at a later period. Let us examine another pamphlet written by Trotsky, his *Peace Programme*, which appeared before the October Revolution of 1917 and has now (1924) been republished in his book *The Year 1917*. In this pamphlet Trotsky criticises Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country and opposes to it the slogan of a United States of Europe. He asserts that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, that the victory of socialism is possible only as the victory of several of the principal countries of Europe (Britain, Russia, Germany), which combine into a United States of Europe; otherwise it is not possible at all. He says quite plainly that "a victorious revolution in Russia or in Britain is inconceivable without a revolution in Germany, and vice versa."

"The only more or less concrete historical argument," says Trotsky, "advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Sotsial-Demokrat* (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks — *J. St.*) in the following sentence: 'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' From this the *Sotsial-Demokrat* draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible argument. But this unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of Britain, Austria, Germany or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe,' which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no country in its struggle must 'wait' for others, is an elementary thought which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporising international inaction. Without waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if

this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think — as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify — that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe, or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world."

As you see, we have before us the same theory of the simultaneous victory of socialism in the principal countries of Europe which, as a rule, excludes Lenin's theory of revolution about the victory of socialism in one country.

It goes without saying that for the *complete* victory of socialism, for a *complete* guarantee against the restoration of the old order, the united efforts of the proletarians of several countries are necessary. It goes without saying that, without the support given to our revolution by the proletariat of Europe, the proletariat of Russia could not have held out against the general onslaught, just as without the support given by the revolution in Russia to the revolutionary movement in the West the latter could not have developed at the pace at which it has begun to develop since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. It goes without saying that we need support. But what does support of our revolution by the West-European proletariat imply? Is not the sympathy of the European workers for our revolution, their readiness to thwart the imperialists' plans of intervention — is not all this support, real assistance? Unquestionably it is. Without such support, without such assistance, not only from the European workers but also from the colonial and dependent countries, the proletarian dictatorship in Russia would have been hard pressed. Up to now, has this sympathy and this assistance, coupled with the might of our Red Army and the readiness of the workers and peasants of Russia to defend their socialist fatherland to the last — has all this been sufficient to beat off the attacks of the imperialists and to win us

the necessary conditions for the serious work of construction? Yes, it has been sufficient. Is this sympathy growing stronger, or is it waning? Unquestionably, it is growing stronger. Hence, have we favourable conditions, not only for pushing on with the organising of socialist economy, but also, in our turn, for giving support to the West-European workers and to the oppressed peoples of the East? Yes, we have. This is eloquently proved by the seven years' history of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. Can it be denied that a mighty wave of labour enthusiasm has already risen in our country? No, it cannot be denied.

After all this, what does Trotsky's assertion that a revolutionary Russia could not hold out in the face of a conservative Europe signify?

It can signify only this: firstly, that Trotsky does not appreciate the inherent strength of our revolution; secondly, that Trotsky does not understand the inestimable importance of the moral support which is given to our revolution by the workers of the West and the peasants of the East; thirdly, that Trotsky does not perceive the internal infirmity which is consuming imperialism today.

Carried away by his criticism of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution, Trotsky unwittingly dealt himself a smashing blow in his pamphlet *Peace Programme* which appeared in 1917 and was republished in 1924.

But perhaps this pamphlet, too, has become out of date and has ceased for some reason or other to correspond to Trotsky's present views? Let us take his later works, written after the victory of the proletarian revolution in *one country*, in Russia. Let us take, for example, Trotsky's "Postscript," written in 1922, for the new edition of his pamphlet *Peace Programme*. Here is what he says in this "Postscript":

"The assertion reiterated several times in the *Peace Programme* that a proletarian revolution cannot culminate victoriously within national bounds may perhaps seem to some readers to have been refuted by the nearly five years' experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would be unwarranted. The fact that the workers' state has held out against the whole world in one country, and a backward country at that, testifies to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other, more advanced, more civilised countries will be truly capable of performing miracles. But while we have held our ground as a state politically and militarily, we have not arrived, or even begun to arrive, at the creation of a socialist society. . . . As long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries we shall be compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to strive for agreements with the capitalist world; at the same time it may be said with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to mitigate some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory** of the proletariat in the major European countries."

Thus speaks Trotsky, plainly sinning against reality and stubbornly trying to save his "permanent revolution" from final shipwreck.

It appears, then, that, twist and turn as you like, we not only have "not arrived," but we have "not even begun to arrive" at the creation of a socialist society. It appears that some people have been hoping for "agreements with the capitalist world," but it also appears that nothing will come of these agreements, for, twist and turn as you like, "real progress of a socialist economy" will not be possible until the proletariat has been victorious in the "major European countries."

Well, then, since there is still no victory in the West, the only "choice" that remains for the revolution in Russia is: either to rot away or to degenerate into a bourgeois state.

It is no accident that Trotsky has been talking for two years now about the "degeneration" of our Party.

* My italics. — J. St.

It is no accident that last year Trotsky prophesied the "doom" of our country.

How can this strange "theory" be reconciled with Lenin's theory of the "victory of socialism in one country"?

How can this strange "prospect" be reconciled with Lenin's view that the New Economic Policy will enable us "to build the foundations of socialist economy"?

How can this "permanent" hopelessness be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

"Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. We still retain our old bad opinion of icons. We have dragged socialism into everyday life, and here we must find our way. This is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing the conviction that, difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and no matter how many difficulties it may entail, we shall all — not in one day, but in the course of several years — all of us together fulfil it whatever happens so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 366). [1]

How can this "permanent" gloominess of Trotsky's be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

"As a matter of fact, state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc. — is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under the NEP? Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society? This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for this building" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 392). [2]

[1] Lenin, *Speech at a Plenary Session of the Moscow Soviet*. November 20, 1922.

[2] Lenin, *On Co-operation*. (1923)

It is plain that these two views are incompatible and cannot in any way be reconciled. Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is the repudiation of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution; and conversely, Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution is the repudiation of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Lack of faith in the strength and capacities of our revolution, lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the Russian proletariat — that is what lies at the root of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Hitherto only *one* aspect of the theory of "permanent revolution" has usually been noted — lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. Now, in fairness, this must be supplemented by *another* aspect — lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the proletariat in Russia.

What difference is there between Trotsky's theory and the ordinary Menshevik theory that the victory of socialism in one country, and in a backward country at that, is impossible without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution "in the principal countries of Western Europe"?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" is a variety of Menshevism.

Of late rotten diplomats have appeared in our press who try to palm off the theory of "permanent revolution" as something compatible with Leninism. Of course, they say, this theory proved to be worthless in 1905; but the mistake Trotsky made was that he ran too far ahead at that time, in an attempt to apply to the situation in 1905 what could not then be applied. But later, they say, in October 1917, for example, when the revolution had had time to mature completely, Trotsky's theory proved to be quite appropriate. It is not difficult to

guess that the chief of these diplomats is Radek. Here, if you please, is what he says:

"The war created a chasm between the peasantry, which was striving to win land and peace, and the petty-bourgeois parties; the war placed the peasantry under the leadership of the working class and of its vanguard, the Bolshevik Party. This rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class relying on the peasantry. What Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky advanced against Lenin in 1905 (i.e., "permanent revolution" — *J. St.*) proved, as a matter of fact, to be the second stage of the historic development."

Here every statement is a distortion.

It is not true that the war "rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class relying on the peasantry." Actually, the February Revolution of 1917 was the materialisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, interwoven in a peculiar way with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It is not true that the theory of "permanent revolution," which Radek bashfully refrains from mentioning, was advanced in 1905 by Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky. Actually, this theory was advanced by Parvus and Trotsky. Now, ten months later, Radek corrects himself and deems it necessary to castigate Parvus for the theory of "permanent revolution." But in all fairness Radek should also castigate Parvus' partner, Trotsky.

It is not true that the theory of "permanent revolution," which was brushed aside by the 1905 revolution, proved to be correct in the "second stage of the historic development," that is, during the October Revolution. The whole course of the October Revolution, its whole development, demonstrated and proved the utter bankruptcy of the theory of "permanent

revolution" and its absolute incompatibility with the foundations of Leninism.

Honeyed speeches and rotten diplomacy cannot hide the yawning chasm which lies between the theory of "permanent revolution" and Leninism.

III

CERTAIN SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE TACTICS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS DURING THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION FOR OCTOBER

In order to understand the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks during the period of preparation for October we must get a clear idea of at least some of the particularly important features of those tactics. This is all the more necessary since in numerous pamphlets on the tactics of the Bolsheviks precisely these features are frequently overlooked.

What are these features?

(First specific feature.) If one were to listen to Trotsky, one would think that there were only two periods in the history of the preparation for October: the period of reconnaissance and the period of uprising, and that all else comes from the evil one. What was the April demonstration of 1917? "The April demonstration, which went more to the 'Left' than it should have, was a reconnoitring sortie for the purpose of probing the disposition of the masses and the relations between them and the majority in the Soviets." And what was the July demonstration of 1917? In Trotsky's opinion "this, too, was in fact another, more extensive, reconnaissance at a new and higher phase of the movement." Needless to say, the June demonstration of 1917, which was organised at the demand of our Party,

Strategy

should, according to Trotsky's idea, all the more be termed a "reconnaissance."

This would seem to imply that as early as March 1917, the Bolsheviks had ready a political army of workers and peasants, and that if they did not bring this army into action for an uprising in April, or in June, or in July, but engaged merely in "reconnaissance," it was because, and only because, "the information obtained from the reconnaissance" at the time was unfavourable.

Needless to say, this oversimplified notion of the political tactics of our Party is nothing but a confusion of ordinary military tactics with the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks.

Actually, all these demonstrations were primarily the result of the spontaneous pressure of the masses, the result of the fact that the indignation of the masses against the war had boiled over and sought an outlet in the streets.

Actually, the task of the Party at that time was to shape and to guide the spontaneously arising demonstrations of the masses along the line of the revolutionary slogans of the Bolsheviks.

Actually, the Bolsheviks had no political army ready in March 1917, nor could they have had one. The Bolsheviks built up such an army (and had finally built it up by October 1917) only in the course of the struggle and conflicts of the classes between April and October 1917, through the April demonstration, the June and July demonstrations, the elections to the district and city Dumas, the struggle against the Kornilov revolt, and the winning over of the Soviets. A political army is not like a military army. A military command begins a war with an army ready to hand, whereas the Party has to create its army in the course of the struggle itself, in the course of class

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conflicts, as the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of the Party's slogans and policy.

Of course, every such demonstration at the same time threw a certain amount of light on the hidden inter-relations of the forces involved, provided certain reconnaissance information, but this reconnaissance was not the motive for the demonstration, but its natural result.

In analysing the events preceding the uprising in October and comparing them with the events that marked the period from April to July, Lenin says:

"The situation now is not at all what it was prior to April 20-21, June 9, July 3, for then there was *spontaneous excitement* which we, as a party, either failed to perceive (April 20) or tried to restrain and shape into a peaceful demonstration (June 9 and July 3). For at that time we were fully aware that the Soviets were *not yet* ours, that the peasants *still* trusted the Lieber-Dan-Chernov course and not the Bolshevik course (uprising), and that, consequently, we could not have the majority of the people behind us, and hence, an uprising was premature" (see Vol. XXI, p. 345).^[1]

It is plain that "reconnaissance" alone does not get one very far.

Obviously, it was not a question of "reconnaissance," but of the following:

1) all through the period of preparation for October the Party invariably relied in its struggle upon the spontaneous upsurge of the mass revolutionary movement;

2) while relying on the spontaneous upsurge, it maintained its own undivided leadership of the movement;

3) this leadership of the movement helped it to form the mass political army for the October uprising;

^[1] Lenin, *Letter to Comrades*. (1917)

4) this policy was bound to result in the entire preparation for October proceeding under the leadership of *one* party, the Bolshevik Party;

5) this preparation for October, in its turn, brought it about that as a result of the October uprising power was concentrated in the hands of *one* party, the Bolshevik Party.

Thus, the undivided leadership of *one* party, the Communist Party, as the principal factor in the preparation for October — such is the characteristic feature of the October Revolution, such is the first specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

It scarcely needs proof that without this feature of Bolshevik tactics the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of imperialism would have been impossible.

In this the October Revolution differs favourably from the revolution of 1871 in France, where the leadership was divided between two parties, neither of which could be called a Communist party.

*Strategy
actually
should be
a tactic*

Second specific feature. The preparation for October thus proceeded under the leadership of one party, the Bolshevik Party. But how did the Party carry out this leadership, along what line did the latter proceed? This leadership proceeded along the line of isolating the *compromising* parties, as the most dangerous groupings in the period of the outbreak of the revolution, the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

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What is the fundamental strategic rule of Leninism?

It is the recognition of the following:

1) the *compromising* parties are the most dangerous social support of the enemies of the revolution in the period of the approaching revolutionary outbreak;

unclear whether this is particular to that situation, or whether generally applicable

2) it is impossible to overthrow the enemy (tsarism or the bourgeoisie) unless these parties are isolated;

3) the main weapons in the period of preparation for the revolution must therefore be directed towards isolating these parties, towards winning the broad masses of the working people away from them.

In the period of the struggle against tsarism, in the period of preparation for the bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905-16), the most dangerous social support of tsarism was the liberal-monarchist party, the Cadet Party. Why? Because it was the compromising party, the party of compromise between tsarism and the majority of the people, i.e., the peasantry as a whole. Naturally, the Party at that time directed its main blows at the Cadets, for unless the Cadets were isolated there could be no hope of a rupture between the peasantry and tsarism, and unless this rupture was ensured there could be no hope of the victory of the revolution. Many people at that time did not understand this specific feature of Bolshevik strategy and accused the Bolsheviks of excessive "Cadetophobia"; they asserted that with the Bolsheviks the struggle against the Cadets "overshadowed" the struggle against the principal enemy — tsarism. But these accusations, for which there was no justification, revealed an utter failure to understand the Bolshevik strategy, which called for the isolation of the compromising party *in order* to facilitate, to hasten the victory over the principal enemy.

1905 → 17

It scarcely needs proof that without this strategy the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution would have been impossible.

In the period of preparation for October the centre of gravity of the conflicting forces shifted to another plane. The tsar was gone. The Cadet Party had been transformed from

1917 Feb
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a compromising force into a governing force, into the ruling force of imperialism. Now the fight was no longer between tsarism and the people, but between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In this period the petty-bourgeois democratic parties, the parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were the most dangerous social support of imperialism. Why? Because these parties were then the compromising parties, the parties of compromise between imperialism and the labouring masses. Naturally, the Bolsheviks at that time directed their main blows at these parties, for unless these parties were isolated there could be no hope of a *rupture* between the labouring masses and imperialism, and unless this rupture was ensured there could be no hope of the victory of the Soviet revolution. Many people at that time did not understand this specific feature of the Bolshevik tactics and accused the Bolsheviks of displaying "excessive hatred" towards the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and of "forgetting" the principal goal. But the entire period of preparation for October eloquently testifies to the fact that only by pursuing these tactics could the Bolsheviks ensure the victory of the October Revolution.

The characteristic feature of this period was the further revolutionisation of the labouring masses of the peasantry, their disillusionment with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, their defection from these parties, their turn towards rallying directly around the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary force, capable of leading the country to peace. The history of this period is the history of the struggle between the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, on the one hand, and the Bolsheviks, on the other, for the labouring masses of the peasantry, for winning over these masses. The outcome of this struggle was decided by the coalition period, the

Kerensky period, the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks to confiscate the landlords' land, the fight of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to continue the war, the June offensive at the front, the introduction of capital punishment for soldiers, the Kornilov revolt. And they decided the issue of this struggle entirely in favour of the Bolshevik strategy; for had not the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks been isolated it would have been impossible to overthrow the government of the imperialists, and had this government not been overthrown it would have been impossible to break away from the war. The policy of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks proved to be the only correct policy.

Thus, isolation of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties as the main line in directing the preparations for October — such was the second specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks.

It scarcely needs proof that without this feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks, the alliance of the working class and the labouring masses of the peasantry would have been left hanging in the air.

It is characteristic that in his *The Lessons of October* Trotsky says nothing, or next to nothing, about this specific feature of the Bolshevik tactics.

(Third specific feature.) Thus, the Party, in directing the preparations for October, pursued the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, of winning the broad masses of the workers and peasants away from them. But how, concretely, was this isolation effected by the Party — in what form, under what slogan? It was effected in the form of the revolutionary mass movement for the power of the Soviets, under the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!", by

Tactics

means of the struggle to convert the Soviets from organs for mobilising the masses into organs of the uprising, into organs of power, into the apparatus of a new proletarian state power.

Why was it precisely the Soviets that the Bolsheviks seized upon as the principal organisational lever that could facilitate the task of isolating the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, that was capable of advancing the cause of the proletarian revolution, and that was destined to lead the millions of labouring masses to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

What are the Soviets?

"The Soviets," said Lenin as early as September 1917, "are a new state apparatus, which, in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants; and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army, but is most closely bound up with the people. From the military standpoint, this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces; from the revolutionary standpoint, it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly, this apparatus provides a bond with the masses, with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble, so readily controllable and renewable, that there was nothing even remotely like it in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly, this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that its personnel is elected and subject to recall at the will of the people without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly, it provides a close contact with the most diverse professions, thus facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most profound reforms without bureaucracy. Fifthly, it provides a form of organisation of the vanguard, i.e., of the most politically conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the oppressed classes, the workers and peasants, and thus constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, train, educate, and lead the entire vast mass of these classes, which has hitherto stood quite remote from political life, from history. Sixthly, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of parliamentarism with the advantages of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to unite in the persons of the elected representatives of the people both legislative and executive functions. Compared with bourgeois parliamen-

tarism, this represents an advance in the development of democracy which is of world-wide historic significance. . . .

"Had not the creative spirit of the revolutionary classes of the people given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would be a hopeless affair, for the proletariat undoubtedly could not retain power with the old state apparatus, and it is impossible to create a new apparatus immediately" (see Vol. XXI, pp. 258-59).^[1]

That is why the Bolsheviks seized upon the Soviets as the principal organisational link that could facilitate the task of organising the October Revolution and the creation of a new, powerful apparatus of the proletarian state power.

From the point of view of its internal development, the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" passed through two stages: the first (up to the July defeat of the Bolsheviks, during the period of dual power), and the second (after the defeat of the Kornilov revolt).

During the first stage this slogan meant breaking the bloc of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries with the Cadets, the formation of a Soviet Government consisting of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (for at that time the Soviets were Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik), the right of free agitation for the opposition (i.e., for the Bolsheviks), and the free struggle of parties within the Soviets, in the expectation that by means of such a struggle the Bolsheviks would succeed in capturing the Soviets and changing the composition of the Soviet Government in the course of a peaceful development of the revolution. This plan, of course, did not signify the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it undoubtedly facilitated the preparation of the conditions required for ensuring the dictatorship, for, by putting the Mensheviks and

[1] Lenin, *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* (1917)

Socialist-Revolutionaries in power and compelling them to carry out in practice their anti-revolutionary platform, it hastened the exposure of the true nature of these parties, hastened their isolation, their divorce from the masses. The July defeat of the Bolsheviks, however, interrupted this development, for it gave preponderance to the generals' and Cadets' counter-revolution and threw the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks into the arms of that counter-revolution. This compelled the Party temporarily to withdraw the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!", only to put it forward again in the conditions of a fresh revolutionary upsurge.

Aug. middle peasants
 The defeat of the Kornilov revolt ushered in the ^{8/25} *move of Petrograd* ^{Soviet} second stage. The slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" became again the immediate slogan. But now this slogan had a different meaning from that in the first stage. Its content had radically changed. Now this slogan meant a complete rupture with imperialism and the passing of power to the Bolsheviks, for the majority of the Soviets were already Bolshevik. Now this slogan meant the revolution's direct approach towards the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of an uprising. More than that, this slogan now meant the organisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and giving it a state form.

The inestimable significance of the tactics of transforming the Soviets into organs of state power lay in the fact that they caused millions of working people to break away from imperialism, exposed the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties as the tools of imperialism, and brought the masses by a direct route, as it were, to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thus, the policy of transforming the Soviets into organs of state power, as the most important condition for isolating the compromising parties and for the victory of the dictatorship of

the proletariat — such is the third specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

Fourth specific feature. The picture would not be complete if we did not deal with the question of how and why the Bolsheviks were able to transform their Party slogans into slogans for the vast masses, into slogans which pushed the revolution forward; how and why they succeeded in convincing not only the vanguard, and not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the people, of the correctness of their policy.

*tactics
in 2nd stage
(possibly)*

The point is that for the victory of the revolution, if it is really a people's revolution embracing the masses in their millions, correct Party slogans alone are not enough. For the victory of the revolution one more necessary condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of these slogans. Only then do the slogans of the Party become the slogans of the masses themselves. Only then does the revolution really become a people's revolution. One of the specific features of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October was that they correctly determined the paths and turns which would naturally lead the masses to the Party's slogans — to the very threshold of the revolution, so to speak — thus helping them to feel, to test, to realise by their own experience the correctness of these slogans. In other words, one of the specific features of the tactics of the Bolsheviks is that they do not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses; that they clearly see the difference between the first sort of leadership and the second; that they, therefore, represent the science, not only of leadership of the Party, but of leadership of the vast masses of the working people.

A graphic example of the manifestation of this feature of Bolshevik tactics was provided by the experience of convening and dispersing the Constituent Assembly.

It is well known that the Bolsheviks advanced the slogan of a Republic of Soviets as early as April 1917. It is well known that the Constituent Assembly was a bourgeois parliament, fundamentally opposed to the principles of a Republic of Soviets. How could it happen that the Bolsheviks, who were advancing towards a Republic of Soviets, at the same time demanded that the Provisional Government should immediately convene the Constituent Assembly? How could it happen that the Bolsheviks not only took part in the elections, but themselves convened the Constituent Assembly? How could it happen that a month before the uprising, in the transition from the old to the new, the Bolsheviks considered a temporary combination of a Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly possible?

This "happened" because:

- 1) the idea of a Constituent Assembly was one of the most popular ideas among the broad masses of the population;
- 2) the slogan of the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly helped to expose the counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional Government;
- 3) in order to discredit the idea of a Constituent Assembly in the eyes of the masses, it was necessary to lead the masses to the walls of the Constituent Assembly with their demands for land, for peace, for the power of the Soviets, thus bringing them face to face with the actual, live Constituent Assembly;
- 4) only this could help the masses to become convinced through their own experience of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Constituent Assembly and of the necessity of dispersing it;

5) all this naturally presupposed the possibility of a temporary combination of the Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly, as one of the means for eliminating the Constituent Assembly;

6) such a combination, if brought about under the condition that all power was transferred to the Soviets, could only signify the subordination of the Constituent Assembly to the Soviets, its conversion into an appendage of the Soviets, its painless extinction.

It scarcely needs proof that had the Bolsheviks not adopted such a policy the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly would not have taken place so smoothly, and the subsequent actions of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks under the slogan "All Power to the Constituent Assembly!" would not have failed so signally.

"We took part," says Lenin, "in the elections to the Russian bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? . . . Did not we, the Russian Bolsheviks, have more right in September-November 1917 than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we had, for the point is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long or a short time, but how far the broad masses of the working people are prepared (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to disperse the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dispersed). That, owing to a number of special conditions, the working class of the towns and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were in September-November 1917 exceptionally well prepared to accept the Soviet system and to disperse the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments, is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did *not* boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before the proletariat conquered political power and *after*" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 201-02).^[1]

^[1]Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VII. Should We Participate in Bourgeois Parliaments? (1920)

Why then did they not boycott the Constituent Assembly? Because, says Lenin:

"participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet Republic, and even *after* such a victory, not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but actually helps it to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be dispersed; it *helps* their successful dispersal, and *helps* to make bourgeois parliamentarism 'politically obsolete' " (*ibid.*).

It is characteristic that Trotsky does not understand this feature of Bolshevik tactics and snorts at the "theory" of combining the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, qualifying it as Hilferdingism.

He does not understand that to permit such a combination, *accompanied* by the slogan of an uprising and the probable victory of the Soviets, in connection with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, was the only revolutionary tactics, which had nothing in common with the Hilferding tactics of converting the Soviets into an appendage of the Constituent Assembly; he does not understand that the mistake committed by some comrades in *this* question gives him no grounds for disparaging the absolutely correct position taken by Lenin and the Party on the "combined type of state power" *under* certain conditions (*cf.* Vol. XXI, p. 338).^[1]

He does not understand that if the Bolsheviks had not adopted this special policy towards the Constituent Assembly they would not have succeeded in winning over to their side the vast masses of the people; and if they had not won over these masses they could not have transformed the October uprising into a profound people's revolution.

[1] Lenin, *Letter to Comrades*. (1917)

It is interesting to note that Trotsky even snorts at the words "people," "revolutionary democracy," etc., occurring in articles by Bolsheviks, and considers them improper for a Marxist to use.

Trotsky has evidently forgotten that even in September 1917, a month before the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin, that unquestionable Marxist, wrote of "the necessity of the immediate transfer of the whole power to *the revolutionary democracy headed by the revolutionary proletariat*" (see Vol. XXI, p. 198).^[1]

Trotsky has evidently forgotten that Lenin, that unquestionable Marxist, quoting the well-known letter of Marx to Kugelmann³⁰ (April 1871) to the effect that the smashing of the bureaucratic-military state machine is the preliminary condition for every real *people's* revolution on the continent, writes in black and white the following lines:

"Particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is 'the preliminary condition for every real *people's* revolution.' This concept of a 'people's' revolution seems strange coming from Marx, and the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a 'slip of the pen' on Marx's part. They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretchedly liberal distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution — and even this antithesis they interpret in an extremely lifeless way. . . .

"In Europe, in 1871, there was not a single country on the continent in which the proletariat constituted the majority of the people. A 'people's' revolution, one that actually brought the majority into movement, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasantry. These two classes then constituted the 'people.' These two classes are

[1] Lenin, *Marxism and Insurrection. A Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.* (1917)

united by the fact that the 'bureaucratic-military state machine' oppresses, crushes, exploits them. To break up this machine, to smash it — this is truly in the interest of the 'people,' of the majority, of the workers and most of the peasants, this is 'the preliminary condition' for a free alliance between the poor peasants and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible" (see Vol. XXI, pp. 395-96).^[1]

These words of Lenin's should not be forgotten.

Thus, ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party slogans on the basis of their own experience, by bringing them to the revolutionary positions, as the most important condition for the winning over of the millions of working people to the side of the Party — such is the fourth specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

I think that what I have said is quite sufficient to get a clear idea of the characteristic features of these tactics.

IV

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AS THE BEGINNING OF AND THE PRE-CONDITION FOR THE WORLD REVOLUTION

There can be no doubt that the universal theory of a simultaneous victory of the revolution in the principal countries of Europe, the theory that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, has proved to be an artificial and untenable theory. The seven years' history of the proletarian revolution

^[1] Lenin, *The State and Revolution*. Chapter III. *The State and Revolution. Experience of the Paris Commune of 1871. Marx's Analysis*. 1. *Wherein Lay the Heroism of the Communards' Attempt?* (1917)

in Russia speaks not for but against this theory. This theory is unacceptable not only as a scheme of development of the world revolution, for it contradicts obvious facts. It is still less acceptable as a slogan, for it fetters, rather than releases, the initiative of individual countries which, by reason of certain historical conditions, obtain the opportunity to break through the front of capital independently; for it does not stimulate an active onslaught on capital in individual countries, but encourages passive waiting for the moment of the "universal denouement"; for it cultivates among the proletarians of the different countries not the spirit of revolutionary determination, but the mood of Hamlet-like doubt over the question as to "what if the others fail to back us up?" Lenin was absolutely right in saying that the victory of the proletariat in one country is the "typical case," that "a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries" can only be a "rare exception" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 354).^[1]

But, as is well known, Lenin's theory of revolution is not limited only to this side of the question. It is also the theory of the development of the world revolution.* The victory of socialism in one country is not a self-sufficient task. The revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means for hastening the victory of the proletariat in all countries. For the victory of the revolution in one country, in the present case Russia, is not only the product of the uneven development and progressive decay of imperialism; it is at the same time the beginning of and the pre-condition for the world revolution.

* See "The Foundations of Leninism" in my collection *Problems of Leninism*. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky. Can There Be Equality Between the Exploited and the Exploiter?* (1918)

Undoubtedly, the paths of development of the world revolution are not as plain as it may have seemed previously, before the victory of the revolution in one country, before the appearance of developed imperialism, which is "the eve of the socialist revolution." For a new factor has arisen — the law of the uneven development of the capitalist countries, which operates under the conditions of developed imperialism, and which implies the inevitability of armed collisions, the general weakening of the world front of capital, and the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries. For a new factor has arisen — the vast Soviet country, lying between the West and the East, between the centre of the financial exploitation of the world and the arena of colonial oppression, a country which by its very existence is revolutionising the whole world.

All these are factors (not to mention other less important ones) which cannot be left out of account in studying the paths of development of the world revolution.

Formerly, it was commonly thought that the revolution would develop through the even "maturing" of the elements of socialism, primarily in the more developed, the "advanced," countries. Now this view must be considerably modified.

"The system of international relationships," says Lenin, "has now taken a form in which one of the states of Europe, viz., Germany, has been enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, a number of states, which are, moreover, the oldest states in the West, find themselves in a position, as the result of their victory, to utilise this victory to make a number of insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes — concessions which nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of 'social peace.'"

"At the same time, precisely as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries — the East, India, China, etc. — have been completely dislodged from their groove. Their development has definitely shifted to the general European capitalist lines. The general European

ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that cannot but lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism."

In view of this fact, and in connection with it, "the West-European capitalist countries will consummate their development towards socialism . . . not as we formerly expected. They are consummating it not by the even 'maturing' of socialism in them, but by the exploitation of some countries by others, by the exploitation of the first of the countries to be vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has definitely come into revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement" (see Vol. XXVII, pp. 415-16).^[1]

If we add to this the fact that not only the defeated countries and colonies are being exploited by the victorious countries, but that some of the victorious countries are falling into the orbit of financial exploitation at the hands of the most powerful of the victorious countries, America and Britain; that the contradictions among all these countries are an extremely important factor in the disintegration of world imperialism; that, in addition to these contradictions, very profound contradictions exist and are developing within each of these countries; that all these contradictions are becoming more profound and more acute because of the existence, alongside these countries, of the great Republic of Soviets — if all this is taken into consideration, then the picture of the special character of the international situation will become more or less complete.

Most probably, the world revolution will develop by the breaking away of a number of new countries from the system of the imperialist states as a result of revolution, while the proletarians of these countries will be supported by the proletariat of the imperialist states. We see that the first country to break

^[1] Lenin, *Better Fewer, But Better*. (1923)

away, the first victorious country, is already being supported by the workers and the labouring masses of other countries. Without this support it could not hold out. Undoubtedly, this support will increase and grow. But there can also be no doubt that the very development of the world revolution, the very process of the breaking away from imperialism of a number of new countries will be the more rapid and thorough, the more thoroughly socialism becomes consolidated in the first victorious country, the faster this country is transformed into a base for the further unfolding of the world revolution, into a lever for the further disintegration of imperialism.

While it is true that the *final* victory of socialism in the first country to emancipate itself is impossible without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several countries, it is equally true that the unfolding of the world revolution will be the more rapid and thorough, the more effective the assistance rendered by the first socialist country to the workers and labouring masses of all other countries.

In what should this assistance be expressed?

It should be expressed, firstly, in the victorious country achieving "the utmost possible in one country *for* the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*" (see Lenin, Vol. XXIII, p. 385).^[1]

It should be expressed, secondly, in that the "victorious proletariat" of one country, "having expropriated the capitalists and organised its own socialist production, would stand up. . . *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the

[1] Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky. What Is Internationalism?* (1918)

event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states" (see Lenin, Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).^[1]

The characteristic feature of the assistance given by the victorious country is not only that it hastens the victory of the proletarians of other countries, but also that, by facilitating this victory, it ensures the *final* victory of socialism in the first victorious country.

Most probably, in the course of development of the world revolution, side by side with the centres of imperialism in individual capitalist countries and with the system of these countries throughout the world, centres of socialism will be created in individual Soviet countries and a system of these centres throughout the world, and the struggle between these two systems will fill the history of the unfolding of the world revolution.

For, says Lenin, "the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states" (*ibid.*).

The world significance of the October Revolution lies not only in the fact that it constitutes a great beginning made by one country in causing a breach in the system of imperialism and that it is the first centre of socialism in the ocean of imperialist countries, but also in that it constitutes the first stage of the world revolution and a mighty base for its further development.

Therefore, not only those are wrong who forget the international character of the October Revolution and declare the victory of socialism in one country to be a purely national, and only a national, phenomenon, but also those who, although

[1] Lenin, *The United States of Europe Slogan*. (1915)

they bear in mind the international character of the October Revolution, are inclined to regard this revolution as something passive, merely destined to accept help from without. Actually, not only does the October Revolution need support from the revolution in other countries, but the revolution in those countries needs the support of the October Revolution in order to accelerate and advance the cause of overthrowing world imperialism.

December 17, 1924

J. Stalin, *On the Road to October*,
GIZ, 1925

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT A PLENUM
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
AND THE CENTRAL CONTROL COMMISSION
OF THE R.C.P.(B.)³¹**

January 17, 1925

Comrades, on the instructions of the Secretariat of the Central Committee I have to give you certain necessary information on matters concerning the discussion and on the resolutions connected with the discussion. Unfortunately, we shall have to discuss Trotsky's action in his absence because, as we have been informed today, he will be unable to attend the plenum owing to illness.

You know, comrades, that the discussion started with Trotsky's action, the publication of his *The Lessons of October*.

The discussion was started by Trotsky. The discussion was forced on the Party.

The Party replied to Trotsky's action by making two main charges. Firstly, that Trotsky is trying to revise Leninism; secondly, that Trotsky is trying to bring about a radical change in the Party leadership.

Trotsky has not said anything in his own defence about these charges made by the Party.

It is hard to say why he has not said anything in his own defence. The usual explanation is that he has fallen ill and has not been able to say anything in his own defence. But that is not the Party's fault, of course. It is not the Party's fault if Trotsky begins to get a high temperature after every attack he makes upon the Party.

Now the Central Committee has received a statement by Trotsky (statement to the Central Committee dated January 15) to the effect that he has refrained from making any pronouncement, that he has not said anything in his own defence, because he did not want to intensify the controversy and to aggravate the issue. Of course, one may or may not think that this explanation is convincing. I, personally, do not think that it is. Firstly, how long has Trotsky been aware that his attacks upon the Party aggravate relations? When, precisely, did he become aware of this truth? This is not the first attack that Trotsky has made upon the Party, and it is not the first time that he is surprised, or regrets, that his attack aggravated relations. Secondly, if he really wants to prevent relations within the Party from deteriorating, why did he publish his *The Lessons of October*, which was directed against the leading core of the Party, and was intended to worsen, to aggravate relations? That is why I think that Trotsky's explanation is quite unconvincing.

A few words about Trotsky's statement to the Central Committee of January 15, which I have just mentioned, and which has been distributed to the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission. The first thing that must be observed and taken note of is Trotsky's statement that he is willing to take any post to which the Party

appoints him, that he is willing to submit to any kind of control as far as future actions on his part are concerned, and that he thinks it absolutely necessary in the interests of our work that he should be removed from the post of Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council as speedily as possible.

All this must, of course, be taken note of.

As regards the substance of the matter, two points should be noted: concerning "permanent revolution" and change of the Party leadership. Trotsky says that if at any time after October he happened on particular occasions to revert to the formula "permanent revolution," it was only as something appertaining to the History of the Party Department, appertaining to the past, and not with a view to elucidating present political tasks. This question is important, for it concerns the fundamentals of Leninist ideology. In my opinion, this statement of Trotsky's cannot be taken either as an explanation or as a justification. There is not even a hint in it that he admits his mistakes. It is an evasion of the question. What is the meaning of the statement that the theory of "permanent revolution" is something that appertains to the History of the Party Department? How is this to be understood? The History of the Party Department is not only the repository, but also the interpreter of Party documents. There are documents there that were valid at one time and later lost their validity. There are also documents there that were, and still are, of great importance for the Party's guidance. And there are also documents there of a purely negative character, of a negative significance, to which the Party cannot become reconciled. In which category of documents does Trotsky include his theory of "permanent revolution"? In the good or in the bad category? Trotsky said nothing about that in his statement. He wriggled out of the

question. He avoided it. Consequently, the charge of revising Leninism still holds good.

Trotsky says further that on the questions settled by the Thirteenth Congress he has never, either in the Central Committee, or in the Council of Labour and Defence, and certainly not to the country at large, made any proposals which directly or indirectly raised the questions already settled. That is not true. What did Trotsky say before the Thirteenth Congress? That the cadres were no good, and that a radical change in the Party leadership was needed. What does he say now, in his *The Lessons of October*? That the main core of the Party is no good and must be changed. Such is the conclusion to be drawn from *The Lessons of October*. *The Lessons of October* was published in substantiation of this conclusion. That was the purpose of *The Lessons of October*. Consequently, the charge of attempting to bring about a radical change in the Party leadership still holds good.

In view of this, Trotsky's statement as a whole is not an explanation in the true sense of the term, but a collection of diplomatic evasions and a renewal of old controversies already settled by the Party.

That is not the kind of document the Party demanded from Trotsky.

Obviously, Trotsky does not understand, and I doubt whether he will ever understand, that the Party demands from its former and present leaders not diplomatic evasions, but an honest admission of mistakes. Trotsky, evidently, lacks the courage frankly to admit his mistakes. He does not understand that the Party's sense of power and dignity has grown, that the Party feels that it is the master and demands that we should bow our heads to it when circumstances demand. That is what Trotsky does not understand.

How did our Party organisations react to Trotsky's action? You know that a number of local Party organisations have passed resolutions on this subject. They have been published in *Pravda*. They can be divided into three categories. One category demands Trotsky's expulsion from the Party. Another category demands Trotsky's removal from the Revolutionary Military Council and his expulsion from the Political Bureau. The third category, which also includes the last draft resolution sent to the Central Committee today by the comrades from Moscow, Leningrad, the Urals and the Ukraine, demands Trotsky's removal from the Revolutionary Military Council and his conditional retention in the Political Bureau.

Such are the three main groups of resolutions on Trotsky's action.

The Central Committee and the Central Control Commission have to choose between these resolutions.

That is all I had to tell you about matters concerning the discussion.

J. Stalin, *Trotskyism*.
Moscow, 1925

THE RESULTS OF THE WORK OF THE FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

*Report Delivered at a Meeting of the Activists of
the Moscow Organisation of the R.C.P.(B.)*

May 9, 1925

Comrades, I do not think there is any point in examining here in detail the resolutions adopted at the Fourteenth Conference of our Party.³² That would take up a great deal of time, and besides, there is no need to do so. I think it will be enough to note the main lines that stand out in these resolutions. That will enable us to emphasise the main conclusions of the resolutions that were adopted. And this, in its turn, will facilitate a further study of these resolutions.

If we turn to the resolutions we shall find that the diverse questions touched upon in them can be reduced to six main groups of questions. The first group consists of questions concerning the international situation. The second group consists of questions concerning the immediate tasks of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries. The third group

consists of questions concerning the immediate tasks of the communist elements in the colonial and dependent countries. The fourth group consists of questions concerning the fate of socialism in our country in connection with the present international situation. The fifth group consists of questions concerning our Party policy in the countryside and the tasks of Party leadership under the new conditions. And, lastly, the sixth group consists of questions concerning the vital nerve of all our industry, namely, the metal industry.

I

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

What is new and specific in the international situation, which, in the main, determines the character of the present period?

The new feature that has revealed itself lately, and which has laid its impress upon the international situation, is that the revolution in Europe has begun to ebb, that a certain lull has set in, which we call the temporary stabilisation of capitalism, *while* at the same time the economic development and political might of the Soviet Union are increasing.

What is the ebb of the revolution, the lull? Is it the beginning of the end of the world revolution, the beginning of the liquidation of the world proletarian revolution? Lenin said that the victory of the proletariat in our country ushered in a new epoch, the epoch of world revolution, an epoch replete with conflicts and wars, advances and retreats, victories and defeats, an epoch leading to the victory of the proletariat in the major capitalist countries. Does the fact that the revolution in Europe has begun to ebb mean that Lenin's thesis concerning

a new epoch, the epoch of world revolution, no longer holds good? Does it mean that the proletarian revolution in the West has been cancelled?

No, it does not.

The epoch of world revolution is a new stage of the revolution, a whole strategic period, which will last for a number of years, perhaps even a number of decades. During this period there can and must be ebbs and flows of the revolution.

Our revolution passed through two stages, two strategic periods, in the course of its development, and after October it entered a third stage, a third strategic period. The first stage (1900-17) lasted over fifteen years. The aim then was to overthrow tsarism, to achieve the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. During that period we had a number of ebbs and flows of the revolution. The tide of revolution flowed in 1905. That tide ended with the temporary defeat of the revolution. After that we had an ebb, which lasted a number of years (1907-12). Then the tide flowed anew, beginning with the Lena events (1912), and later it ebbed again, during the war. In 1917 (February) the tide began to flow once again and it culminated in the victory of the people over tsarism, the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. With each ebb the Liquidators asserted that the revolution was done for. After ebbing and flowing several times, however, the revolution swept on to victory in February 1917.

The second stage of the revolution began in February 1917. The aim then was to extricate the country from the imperialist war, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to achieve the victory of the proletarian dictatorship. That stage, or strategic period, lasted only eight months, but these were eight months of profound revolutionary crisis, during which war and economic ruin spurred on the revolution and quickened its pace to the

utmost. Precisely for that reason, those eight months of revolutionary crisis can and should be counted as being equal to at least eight years of ordinary constitutional development. That strategic period, like the preceding one, was not marked by a steady rise of the revolution in a straight ascending line, as the philistines of revolution usually picture it, but by alternating ebbs and flows. During that period we had an immense rise in the tide of the revolutionary movement in the days of the July demonstration. Then the revolutionary tide ebbed after the July defeat of the Bolsheviks. The tide flowed again immediately after the Kornilov revolt and it carried us to the victory of the October Revolution. The Liquidators of that time talked of the complete liquidation of the revolution after the July defeat. After passing through a number of trials and ebbs, however, the revolution, as is known, culminated in the victory of the proletarian dictatorship.

After the October victory we entered the third strategic period, the third stage of the revolution, in which the aim is to overcome the bourgeoisie on a world scale. How long this period will last it is difficult to say. At all events, there is no doubt that it will be a long one, and there is no doubt also that it will contain ebbs and flows. The world revolutionary movement at the present time has entered a period of ebb of the revolution, but, for a number of reasons, of which I shall speak later, the tide must turn again, and it may end in the victory of the proletariat. On the other hand, it may not end in victory, but be replaced by a new ebb, which in its turn is bound to be followed by another rise in the tide of the revolution. The present-day Liquidators say that the lull that has now set in marks the end of the world revolution. But they are mistaken, just as they were mistaken before, in the periods of the first and second stages of our revolution, when

they regarded every ebb of the revolutionary movement as the utter defeat of the revolution.

Such are the fluctuations within each stage of the revolution, within each strategic period.

What do those fluctuations show? Do they show that Lenin's thesis about the new epoch of world revolution has lost, or may lose, its significance? Of course not! They merely show that, usually, revolution develops not in a straight ascending line, not in a continuously growing upsurge, but in zigzags, in advances and retreats, in flows and ebbs, which in the course of development steel the forces of the revolution and prepare for its final victory.

Such is the historical significance of the present ebb of the revolution, the historical significance of the lull we are now experiencing.

But the ebb is only one aspect of the matter. The other aspect is that simultaneously with the ebb of the revolution in Europe we have the impetuous growth of the economic development of the Soviet Union and its increasing political might. In other words, we have not only the stabilisation of capitalism; we also have the stabilisation of the Soviet system. Thus, we have two stabilisations: the temporary stabilisation of capitalism and the stabilisation of the Soviet system. A certain temporary equilibrium between these two stabilisations has been reached — such is the characteristic feature of the present international situation.

But what is stabilisation? Is it not stagnation? And if it means stagnation, can that term be applied to the Soviet system? No. Stabilisation is not stagnation. Stabilisation is the consolidation of a given position and further development. World capitalism has not only consolidated itself in its present position; it is going on and developing further, expanding its

sphere of influence and increasing its wealth. It is wrong to say that capitalism cannot develop, that the theory of the decay of capitalism advanced by Lenin in his *Imperialism*³³ precludes the development of capitalism. Lenin fully proved in his pamphlet *Imperialism* that the growth of capitalism does not cancel, but presupposes and prepares the progressive decay of capitalism.

Thus, we have two stabilisations. At one pole capitalism is becoming stabilised, consolidating the position it has achieved and developing further. At the other pole the Soviet system is becoming stabilised, consolidating the positions it has won and advancing further along the road to victory.

Who will win? That is the essence of the question.

Why are there two stabilisations, one parallel with the other? Why are there two poles? Because there is no longer a single, all-embracing capitalism in the world. Because the world has split into two camps — the capitalist camp, headed by Anglo-American capital, and the socialist camp, headed by the Soviet Union. Because the international situation will to an increasing degree be determined by the relation of forces between these two camps.

Thus, the characteristic feature of the present situation is not only that capitalism and the Soviet system have become stabilised, but also that the forces of these two camps have reached a certain temporary equilibrium, with a slight advantage for capital, and hence, a slight disadvantage for the revolutionary movement; for, compared with a revolutionary upsurge, the lull that has now set in is undoubtedly a disadvantage for socialism, although a temporary one.

What is the difference between these two stabilisations? Where does the one and where does the other lead to?

Stabilisation under capitalism, while temporarily strengthening capital, at the same time inevitably leads to the aggravation of the contradictions of capitalism: a) between the imperialist groups of the various countries; b) between the workers and the capitalists in each country; c) between imperialism and the peoples of all colonial countries.

Stabilisation under the Soviet system, however, while strengthening socialism, at the same time inevitably leads to an alleviation of contradictions and to an improvement in the relations: a) between the proletariat and the peasantry in our country; b) between the proletariat and the colonial peoples of the oppressed countries; c) between the proletarian dictatorship and the workers of all countries.

The fact of the matter is that capitalism cannot develop without intensifying the exploitation of the working class, without a semi-starvation existence for the majority of the working people, without intensifying the oppression of the colonial and dependent countries, without conflicts and clashes between the different imperialist groups of the world bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the Soviet system and the proletarian dictatorship can develop only if there is a continuous rise in the material and cultural level of the working class, if there is a continuous improvement in the conditions of all the working people in the Land of Soviets, if the workers of all countries draw closer and closer together and unite, if the oppressed peoples of the colonial and dependent countries rally around the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

The path of development of capitalism is the path of impoverishment and a semi-starvation existence for the vast majority of the working people, while a small upper stratum of these working people is bribed and pampered.

The path of development of the proletarian dictatorship, on the contrary, is the path of continuous improvement in the welfare of the vast majority of the working people.

Precisely for this reason the development of capitalism is bound to create conditions which aggravate the contradictions of capitalism. Precisely for this reason capitalism cannot resolve these contradictions.

Of course, if there were no law of the uneven development of capitalism, leading to conflicts and wars between the capitalist countries on account of colonies; if capitalism could develop without exporting capital to backward countries, countries where raw materials and labour are cheap; if the surplus capital accumulated in the "metropolises" were used not for export of capital, but for seriously developing agriculture and for improving the material conditions of the peasantry; and lastly, if this surplus were used for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the entire mass of the working class, there would be no intensification of the exploitation of the working class, no impoverishment of the peasantry under capitalism, no intensification of oppression in colonial and dependent countries, and no conflicts and wars between capitalists.

But then, capitalism would not be capitalism.

The whole point is that capitalism cannot develop without aggravating all these contradictions, and without thereby developing the conditions which, in the final analysis, facilitate the downfall of capitalism.

The whole point is that the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the contrary, cannot develop further without creating the conditions which raise the revolutionary movement in all countries to a higher stage and prepare for the final victory of the proletariat.

Such is the difference between the two stabilisations.

That is why the stabilisation of capitalism cannot be either lasting or firm.

Let us now examine the question of the stabilisation of capitalism concretely.

In what way has the stabilisation of capitalism found concrete expression?

Firstly, in the fact that America, Britain and France have temporarily succeeded in striking a deal on the methods of robbing Germany and on the scale on which she is to be robbed. In other words, they have struck a deal on what they call the Dawesation of Germany. Can that deal be regarded as being at all durable? No, it cannot. Because, firstly, it was arrived at without reckoning with the host, i.e., the German people; secondly, because this deal means imposing a double yoke upon the German people, the yoke of the national bourgeoisie and the yoke of the foreign bourgeoisie. To think that a cultured nation like the German nation and a cultured proletariat like the German proletariat will consent to bear this double yoke without making repeated serious attempts at a revolutionary upheaval means believing in miracles. Even such an essentially reactionary fact as the election of Hindenburg as President,³⁴ leaves no doubt that the Entente's temporary deal directed against Germany is unstable, ridiculously unstable.

Secondly, the stabilisation of capitalism has found expression in the fact that British, American and Japanese capital have temporarily succeeded in striking a deal about the division of spheres of influence in China, that vast market for international capital, about the methods for plundering that country. Can that deal be regarded as being at all durable? Again, no! Firstly, because the partners to it are fighting, and will fight to the death, over the division of the spoils; secondly,

because that deal was struck behind the back of the Chinese people, who have no wish to submit to the laws of the alien robbers, and will not do so. Does not the growth of the revolutionary movement in China show that the machinations of the foreign imperialists are doomed to failure?

Thirdly, the stabilisation of capitalism has found expression in the fact that the imperialist groups of the advanced countries have temporarily succeeded in striking a deal about mutual non-intervention in the plunder and oppression of "their" respective colonies. Can that deal, or that attempt at a deal, be regarded as being at all durable? No, it cannot. Firstly, because each imperialist group is striving, and will go on striving, to snatch a piece of the others' colonies; secondly, because the pressure the imperialist groups exercise in the colonies and the policy of oppression they pursue there only serve to steel and revolutionise those colonies and thereby intensify the revolutionary crisis. The imperialists are trying to "pacify" India, to curb Egypt, to tame Morocco, to tie Indo-China and Indonesia hand and foot, and are resorting to all sorts of cunning devices and machinations. They may succeed in achieving some "results" in this respect, but there can scarcely be any doubt that these machinations will not, and cannot, suffice for long.

Fourthly, the stabilisation of capitalism may find expression in an attempt on the part of the imperialist groups of the advanced countries to strike a deal concerning the formation of a united front against the Soviet Union. Let us assume that the deal comes off. Let us assume that they succeed in establishing something in the nature of a united front by resorting to all sorts of trickery, including the scoundrelly forgeries in connection with the explosion in Sofia,³⁵ etc. Are there any grounds for assuming that a deal directed against

our country, or stabilisation in this sphere, can be at all durable, at all successful? I think that there are no such grounds. Why? Because, firstly, the threat of a capitalist united front and united attack would act like a gigantic hoop that would bind the whole country around the Soviet Government more tightly than ever before and transform it into an even more impregnable fortress than it was, for instance, during the invasion of the "fourteen states." Recall the threat of an invasion by fourteen states uttered by the notorious Churchill. You know that the mere utterance of that threat was enough to unite the entire country around the Soviet Government against the imperialist vultures. Because, secondly, a crusade against the Land of Soviets would certainly set in motion a number of revolutionary key points in our enemies' rear, which would disintegrate and demoralise the ranks of imperialism. There can scarcely be any doubt that a host of such key points have developed of late, and they bode imperialism no good. Because, thirdly, our country no longer stands alone; it has allies in the shape of the workers in the West and the oppressed peoples in the East. There can scarcely be any doubt that war against the Soviet Union will mean for imperialism that it will have to wage war against its own workers and colonies. Needless to say, if our country is attacked we shall not sit with folded arms; we shall take all measures to unleash the revolutionary lion in all countries of the world. The leaders of the capitalist countries cannot but know that we have some experience in this matter.

Such are the facts and considerations which show that the stabilisation of capitalism cannot be durable, that this stabilisation signifies the creation of conditions that lead to the defeat of capitalism, while the stabilisation of the Soviet system, on the contrary, signifies the continuous accumulation of condi-

tions that strengthen the proletarian dictatorship, raise the revolutionary movement in all countries and lead to the victory of socialism.

This fundamental antithesis between the two stabilisations, capitalist and Soviet, is an expression of the antithesis between the two systems of economy and government, between the capitalist system and the socialist system.

Whoever fails to understand this antithesis will never understand the basic character of the present international situation.

Such is the general picture of the international situation at the present time.

II

THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES IN THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

I pass to the second group of questions.

The new and specific feature of the present position of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries is that the period of the flow of the revolutionary tide has given way to a period of its ebb, a period of lull. The task is to take advantage of the period of lull that we are passing through to strengthen the Communist Parties, to Bolshevise them, to transform them into genuine mass parties relying on the trade unions, to rally the labouring elements among the non-proletarian classes, above all among the peasantry, around the proletariat, and lastly, to educate the proletarians in the spirit of revolution and proletarian dictatorship.

I shall not enumerate all the immediate tasks that confront the Communist Parties in the West. If you read the resolu-

tions on this subject, especially the resolution on Bolshevisation passed by the enlarged plenum of the Comintern,³⁶ it will not be difficult for you to understand what these tasks are concretely.

I should like to deal with the main task, with that task confronting the Communist Parties in the West, the elucidation of which will facilitate the fulfilment of all the other immediate tasks.

What is that task?

That task is to link the Communist Parties in the West with the trade unions. That task is to develop and bring to a successful conclusion the campaign for trade-union unity, to see that all Communists without fail join the trade unions, to work systematically in them for combining the workers in a united front against capital, and in this way to create the conditions that will enable the Communist Parties to have the backing of the trade unions.

If this task is not carried out it will be impossible to transform the Communist Parties into genuine mass parties or to create the conditions necessary for the victory of the proletariat.

The trade unions and parties in the West are not what the trade unions and the Party are here in Russia. The relations between the trade unions and the parties in the West are quite different from those that have been established here in Russia. In our country the trade unions arose after the Party, and around the Party of the working class. Trade unions had not yet arisen in our country when the Party and its organisations were already leading not only the political but also the economic struggle of the working class, down to small and very small strikes. That, mainly, explains the exceptional prestige of our Party among the workers prior to the February Revolution, in contrast to the rudimentary trade unions which

then existed here and there. Real trade unions appeared in our country only after February 1917. Before October we already had definitely formed trade-union organisations, which enjoyed tremendous prestige among the workers. Already at that time Lenin said that without trade-union support it would be impossible either to achieve or to maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat. The most powerful development of the trade unions in our country was reached after the capture of power, particularly under the conditions of NEP. There is no doubt that our powerful trade unions now constitute one of the chief supports of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The most characteristic feature of the history of the development of our trade unions is that they arose, developed and became strong after the Party, around the Party, and in friendship with the Party.

The trade unions in Western Europe developed under entirely different circumstances. Firstly, they arose and became strong long before working-class parties appeared. Secondly, there it was not the trade unions that developed around the working-class parties; on the contrary, the working-class parties themselves emerged from the trade unions. Thirdly, since the economic sphere of the struggle, the one that is closest to the working class, had already been captured, so to speak, by the trade unions, the parties were obliged to engage mainly in the parliamentary political struggle, and that could not but affect the character of their activities and the importance attached to them by the working class. And precisely because the parties there arose after the trade unions, precisely because the trade unions came into being long before the parties, and in fact became the proletariat's principal fortresses in its struggle against capital — precisely for that reason, the

parties, as independent forces that did not have the backing of the trade unions, were pushed into the background.

From this it follows, however, that if the Communist Parties want to become a real mass force, capable of pushing the revolution forward, they must link up with the trade unions and get their backing.

Failure to take this specific feature of the situation in the West into account means leading the cause of the communist movement to certain doom.

Over there, in the West, there are still individual "Communists" who refuse to understand this specific feature and continue to make play with the anti-proletarian and anti-revolutionary slogan: "Leave the trade unions!" It must be said that nobody can do more harm to the communist movement in the West than these and similar "Communists." Regarding the trade unions as an enemy camp, these people contemplate "attacking" them from without. They fail to understand that if they pursue such a policy the workers will indeed regard them as enemies. They fail to understand that the trade unions, whether good or bad, are regarded by the rank-and-file worker as his fortresses, which help him to protect his wages, hours, and so forth. They fail to understand that such a policy, far from facilitating, hinders Communists from penetrating among the vast working-class masses.

The average rank-and-file worker may say to such "Communists": "You are attacking my fortress. You want to wreck the organisations that took me decades to build, and are trying to prove to me that communism is better than trade-unionism. I don't know, perhaps your theoretical arguments about communism are right. How can I, an ordinary working man, grasp the meaning of your theories? But one thing I do know: I have my trade-union fortresses; they have led me into the strug-

gle, they have protected me, well or ill, from the attacks of the capitalists, and whoever thinks of destroying these fortresses wants to destroy my own cause, the workers' cause. Stop attacking my fortresses, join the trade unions, work in them for five years or so, help to improve and strengthen them. In the meantime I shall see what sort of fellows you are, and if you turn out to be real good fellows, I, of course, will not refuse to support you," and so forth.

That is the attitude, or approximately the attitude, of the average rank-and-file workers in the West today towards the anti-trade-unionists.

Whoever fails to understand this specific feature of the mentality of the average worker in Europe will understand nothing about the position of our Communist Parties at the present time.

Wherein lies the strength of Social-Democracy in the West?

In the fact that it has the backing of the trade unions.

Wherein lies the weakness of our Communist Parties in the West?

In the fact that they have not yet linked up with the trade unions, and certain elements in these Communist Parties do not wish to link up with them.

Hence, the main task of the Communist Parties in the West at the present time is to develop and bring to a successful conclusion the campaign for trade-union unity, to see that all Communists without exception join the trade unions, to work in them systematically and patiently for uniting the working class against capital, and in this way to enable the Communist Parties to have the backing of the trade unions.

Such is the meaning of the decisions of the enlarged plenum of the Comintern concerning the immediate tasks of the Communist Parties in the West at the present time.

III

THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST
ELEMENTS IN THE COLONIAL AND
DEPENDENT COUNTRIES

I pass to the third group of questions.

The new features in this sphere are the following:

a) owing to the increase in the export of capital from the advanced to the backward countries, an increase encouraged by the stabilisation of capitalism, capitalism in the colonial countries is developing and will continue to develop at a rapid rate, breaking down the old social and political conditions and implanting new ones;

b) the proletariat in these countries is growing and will continue to grow at a rapid rate;

c) the revolutionary working-class movement and the revolutionary crisis in the colonies are growing and will continue to grow;

d) in this connection, there is a growth, which will continue, of certain strata of the national bourgeoisie, the richest and most powerful strata, which, fearing revolution in their countries more than they fear imperialism, will prefer a deal with imperialism to the liberation of their countries from imperialism and will thereby betray their own native lands (India, Egypt, etc.);

e) in view of all this, those countries can be liberated from imperialism only if a struggle is waged against the compromising national bourgeoisie;

f) but from this it follows that the question of the alliance between the workers and peasants and of the hegemony of the proletariat in the industrially developed and developing

colonies is bound to become an urgent one, as it did before the first revolution in Russia in 1905.

Until now the situation has been that the East was usually spoken of as a homogeneous whole. It is now obvious to everybody that there is no longer a single, homogeneous East, that there are now capitalistically developed and developing colonies and backward and lagging colonies, and they cannot all be measured with the same yardstick.

Until now the national-liberation movement has been regarded as an unbroken front of all the national forces in the colonial and dependent countries, from the most reactionary bourgeois to the most revolutionary proletarians. Now, after the national bourgeoisie has split into a revolutionary and an anti-revolutionary wing, the picture of the national movement is assuming a somewhat different aspect. Parallel with the revolutionary elements of the national movement, compromising and reactionary elements which prefer a deal with imperialism to the liberation of their countries are emerging from the bourgeoisie.

Hence the task of the communist elements in the colonial countries is to link up with the revolutionary elements of the bourgeoisie, and above all with the peasantry, against the bloc of imperialism and the compromising elements of "their own" bourgeoisie, in order, under the leadership of the proletariat, to wage a genuinely revolutionary struggle for liberation from imperialism.

Only one conclusion follows: a number of colonial countries are now approaching their 1905.

The task is to unite the advanced elements of the workers in the colonial countries in a single Communist Party that will be capable of leading the growing revolution.

Here is what Lenin said about the growing revolutionary movement in the colonial countries as far back as 1922:

"The present 'victors' in the first imperialist massacre are unable to vanquish even a small, insignificantly small, country like Ireland; they are not even able to unravel the tangle they have got themselves into in financial and currency questions. And India and China are seething. They have a population of over seven hundred million. With the surrounding Asiatic countries quite like them they account for more than half the population of the world. In these countries, 1905 is approaching, irresistibly and with ever increasing speed, but with this essential and enormous difference: in 1905 the revolution in Russia could still (at the outset at any rate) proceed in isolation, that is to say, without immediately drawing other countries into the revolution, whereas the revolutions that are growing in India and China are already being drawn, and have been drawn, into the revolutionary struggle, into the revolutionary movement, into the international revolution" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 293).^[1]

The colonial countries are on the threshold of their 1905 — such is the conclusion.

Such is also the meaning of the resolutions on the colonial question adopted by the enlarged plenum of the Comintern.

IV

THE FATE OF SOCIALISM IN THE SOVIET UNION

I pass to the fourth group of questions.

So far I have spoken about the resolutions of our Party conference on questions directly concerning the Comintern. We shall now pass to questions which directly concern both the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.), and thus serve as a link between the external and internal problems.

[1] Lenin, *On the Tenth Anniversary of "Pravda."* (1922)

How will the temporary stabilisation of capitalism affect the fate of socialism in our country? Does that stabilisation mark the end, or the beginning of the end, of the building of socialism in our country?

Is it at all possible to build socialism by our own efforts in our technically and economically backward country if capitalism continues to exist in the other countries for a more or less prolonged period?

Is it possible to create a complete guarantee against the dangers of intervention, and hence, against the restoration of the old order of things in our country, while we are encircled by capitalism, and, at the present moment, by stabilised capitalism at that?

All these are questions which inevitably confront us as a result of the new situation in the sphere of international relations, and which we cannot ignore. They demand a precise and definite answer.

Our country exhibits two groups of contradictions. One group consists of the internal contradictions that exist between the proletariat and the peasantry. The other group consists of the external contradictions that exist between our country, as the land of socialism, and all the other countries, as lands of capitalism.

Let us examine these two groups of contradictions separately.

That certain contradictions exist between the proletariat and the peasantry cannot, of course, be denied. It is sufficient to recall everything that has taken place, and is still taking place, in our country in connection with the price policy for agricultural produce, in connection with the price limits, in connection with the campaign to reduce the prices of manufactured goods, and so forth, to understand how very real these

contradictions are. We have two main classes before us: the proletarian class and the class of private-property-owners, i.e., the peasantry. Hence, contradictions between them are inevitable. The whole question is whether we shall be able by our own efforts to overcome the contradictions that exist between the proletariat and the peasantry. When the question is asked: can we build socialism by our own efforts? what is meant is: can the contradictions that exist between the proletariat and the peasantry in our country be overcome or not?

Leninism answers that question in the affirmative: yes, we can build socialism, and we will build it together with the peasantry under the leadership of the working class.

What is the basis, the grounds, for such an answer?

The grounds are that, besides contradictions between the proletariat and the peasantry, there are also common interests between them on fundamental problems of development, interests which outweigh, or, at all events, can outweigh, those contradictions, and are the basis, the foundation, of the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

What are those common interests?

The point is that there are two paths along which agriculture can develop: the capitalist path and the socialist path. The capitalist path means development by impoverishing the majority of the peasantry for the sake of enriching the upper strata of the urban and rural bourgeoisie. The socialist path, on the contrary, means development by a continuous improvement in the well-being of the majority of the peasantry. It is in the interest of both the proletariat and the peasantry, particularly of the latter, that development should proceed along the second path, the socialist path, for that is the peasantry's only salvation from impoverishment and a semi-starvation existence. Needless to say, the proletarian dictatorship, which

holds in its hands the main threads of economic life, will take all measures to secure the victory of the second path, the socialist path. It goes without saying, on the other hand, that the peasantry is vitally interested in development proceeding along this second path.

Hence the community of interests of the proletariat and the peasantry which outweighs the contradictions between them.

That is why Leninism says that we can and must build a complete socialist society together with the peasantry on the basis of the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

That is why Leninism says, basing itself on the common interests of the proletarians and the peasants, that we can and must by our own efforts overcome the contradictions that exist between the proletariat and the peasantry.

That is how Leninism regards the matter.

But, evidently, not all comrades agree with Leninism. The following, for example, is what Trotsky says about the contradictions between the proletariat and the peasantry:

"The contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population could be solved *only** on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution" (see preface to Trotsky's book *The Year 1905*).

In other words, it is not within our power, we are not in a position, by our own efforts to overcome, to eliminate the internal contradictions in our country, the contradictions between the proletariat and the peasantry, because, it appears, only as a result of a world revolution, and only on the basis of a world revolution, can we eliminate those contradictions and, at last, build socialism.

* My italics. — J. St.

Needless to say, this proposition has nothing in common with Leninism.

The same Trotsky goes on to say:

"Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant" (see Trotsky's *Our Revolution*, p. 278).

In other words, we cannot even dream of maintaining power for any length of time unless the Western proletariat takes power and renders us state support.

Further:

"It would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe" (see Trotsky's *Works*, Vol. III, Part I, p. 90).

In other words, it appears that not only are we unable to build socialism, but we cannot even hold out albeit for a brief period "in the face of a conservative Europe," although the whole world knows that we have not only held out, but have repulsed a number of furious attacks upon our country by a conservative Europe.

And lastly:

"Real progress of a socialist economy in Russia," says Trotsky, "will become possible *only after the victory** of the proletariat in the major European countries" (*ibid.*, p. 93).

Clear, one would think.

I have quoted these passages, comrades, in order to contrast them with passages from the works of Lenin, and thus to enable you to grasp the quintessence of the question of the possibility of building a complete socialist society in the land of

* My italics. — J. St.

the proletarian dictatorship, which is surrounded by capitalist states.

Let us now turn to passages from the works of Lenin.

Here is what Lenin wrote as far back as 1915, during the imperialist war:

"Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible, first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised its own socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity, coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." . . . Because "the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states" (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).^[1]

In other words, the land of the proletarian dictatorship, which is surrounded by capitalists, can, it appears, not only by its own efforts eliminate the internal contradictions between the proletariat and the peasantry, but can and must, in addition, build socialism, organise its own socialist economy and establish an armed force in order to go to the aid of the proletarians in the surrounding countries in their struggle to overthrow capital.

Such is the fundamental thesis of Leninism on the victory of socialism in one country.

Lenin said the same thing, although in a slightly different way, in 1920, at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, in connection with the question of the electrification of our country:

"Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country. Otherwise, the country will remain a small peasant country, and

[1] Lenin, *The United States of Europe Slogan*. (1915)

we have got to understand that clearly. We are weaker than capitalism, not only on a world scale, but also within the country. Everybody knows this. We are conscious of it, and we shall see to it that our economic base is transformed from a small peasant base into a large-scale industrial base. Only when the country has been electrified, only when our industry, our agriculture, our transport system have been placed upon the technical basis of modern large-scale industry, shall we achieve *final** victory" (see Vol. XXVI, pp. 46-47).^[1]

In other words, Lenin was fully aware of the technical difficulties connected with the building of socialism in our country, but he did not by any means draw from this the absurd conclusion that "real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the major European countries"; on the contrary, he was of the opinion that we could by our own efforts surmount those difficulties and achieve "final victory," i.e., build complete socialism.

And here is what Lenin said a year later, in 1921:

"Ten or twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry, and victory *on a world scale** is assured (even if the proletarian revolutions, which are growing, are delayed)" ("Outline and Synopsis of the Pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*," 1921 — see Vol. XXVI, p. 313).

In other words, Lenin was fully aware of the political difficulties connected with the building of socialism in our country, but he did not by any means draw from this the false conclusion that "without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power"; on the contrary, he was of the opinion that, given a correct policy towards the peasantry, we

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets*. December 22-29, 1920. 2. *Report on the Work of the Council of People's Commissars*. December 22.

would be quite able to ensure "victory on a world scale," meaning that we could build complete socialism.

But what is a correct policy towards the peasantry? A correct policy towards the peasantry is something that depends wholly and entirely upon us, and upon us alone, as the Party which directs the building of socialism in our country.

Lenin said the same thing, but still more definitely, in 1923, in his notes on co-operation:

"As a matter of fact, state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc. — is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under the NEP? *Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society?** This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is *all that is necessary and sufficient** for this building" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 392).^[1]

In other words, under the dictatorship of the proletariat we possess, it appears, all that is needed to build a complete socialist society, overcoming all internal difficulties, for we can and must overcome them by our own efforts.

Clear, one would think.

As regards the objection that the relative economic backwardness of our country precludes the possibility of building socialism, Lenin attacked and refuted it as something incompatible with socialism:

"Infinitely hackneyed is the argument," says Lenin, "that they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain 'learned'

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *On Co-operation*. (1923)

gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 399).^[1]

Had it been otherwise, there was no point in taking power in October and carrying out the October Revolution. For if the possibility and necessity of building a complete socialist society is precluded for some reason or other, the October Revolution becomes meaningless. Anyone who denies the possibility of building socialism in one country must necessarily deny that the October Revolution was justified; and vice versa, anyone who has no faith in the October Revolution cannot admit the possibility of the victory of socialism in the conditions of capitalist encirclement. The connection between lack of faith in October and denial of the socialist potentialities in our country is complete and direct.

"I know," says Lenin, "that there are, of course, sages who think they are very clever and even call themselves Socialists, who assert that power should not have been seized until the revolution had broken out in all countries. They do not suspect that by speaking in this way they are deserting the revolution and going over to the side of the bourgeoisie. To wait until the toiling classes bring about a revolution on an international scale means that everybody should stand stock-still in expectation. That is nonsense" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 9).^[2]

That is how the matter stands with the contradictions of the first order, with the internal contradictions, with the question of the possibility of building socialism in the conditions of capitalist encirclement.

Let us now pass to the contradictions of the second order, to the external contradictions that exist between our country,

[1] Lenin, *Our Revolution*. (1923)

[2] Lenin, *Report on Foreign Policy Delivered at a Joint Meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet*. May 14, 1918.

as the country of socialism, and all the other countries, as the countries of capitalism.

What are these contradictions?

They are that, as long as capitalist encirclement exists, there is bound to be the danger of intervention by the capitalist countries, and as long as such a danger exists, there is bound to be the danger of restoration, the danger of the capitalist order being re-established in our country.

Can those contradictions be fully overcome by one country? No, they cannot; for the efforts of one country, even if that country is the land of the proletarian dictatorship, are insufficient for the purpose of fully guaranteeing it against the danger of intervention. Therefore, a full guarantee against intervention, and hence the final victory of socialism, are possible only on an international scale, only as a result of the joint efforts of the proletarians of a number of countries, or — still better — only as a result of the victory of the proletarians in a number of countries.

What is the final victory of socialism?

The final victory of socialism is the full guarantee against attempts at intervention, and hence against restoration, for any serious attempt at restoration can take place only with serious support from outside, only with the support of international capital. Therefore, the support of our revolution by the workers of all countries, and still more the victory of the workers in at least several countries, is a necessary condition for fully guaranteeing the first victorious country against attempts at intervention and restoration, a necessary condition for the final victory of socialism.

"As long as our Soviet Republic," says Lenin, "remains an isolated borderland of the entire capitalist world, just so long will it be quite ludicrously fantastic and utopian to hope . . . for the disappearance of

all danger. Of course, as long as such fundamental opposites remain, dangers will remain too, and we cannot escape them" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 29).^[1]

And further:

"We are living not merely in a state, but *in a system of states*, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 122).^[2]

That is why Lenin says that:

"Final victory can be achieved only on a world scale, and only by the joint efforts of the workers of all countries" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 9).^[3]

That is how the matter stands with the contradictions of the second order.

Anyone who confuses the first group of contradictions, which can be overcome entirely by the efforts of one country, with the second group of contradictions, the solution of which requires the efforts of the proletarians of several countries, commits a gross error against Leninism. He is either a muddle-head or an incorrigible opportunist.

An example of such confusion is provided by a letter I received from a comrade in January this year on the question of the victory of socialism in one country. He writes in perplexity:

[1] Lenin, *Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets*. December 22-29, 1920. 2. *Report on the Work of the Council of People's Commissars*. December 22.

[2] Lenin, *Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 18-23, 1919. 2. *Report of the Central Committee*. March 18.

[3] Lenin, *Report on Foreign Policy Delivered at a Joint Meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet*. May 14, 1918.

"You say that the Leninist theory . . . is that *socialism can triumph in one country*. I regret to say that I have not found in the relevant passages of Lenin's works any references to the victory of socialism in one country."

The trouble, of course, is not that this comrade, whom I regard as one of the best of our young student comrades, "has not found in the relevant passages of Lenin's works any references to the victory of socialism in one country." He will read and, some day, will at last find such references. The trouble is that he confused the internal contradictions with the external contradictions and got entirely muddled up in this confusion. Perhaps it will not be superfluous to inform you of the answer I sent to this comrade's letter. Here it is:

"The point at issue is not *complete* victory, but the victory of socialism in general, i.e., driving away the landlords and capitalists, taking power, repelling the attacks of imperialism and beginning to build a socialist economy. In all this, the proletariat in one country can be fully successful; but a complete guarantee against restoration can be ensured only by the 'joint efforts of the proletarians in several countries.'

"It would have been foolish to have begun the October Revolution in Russia with the conviction that the victorious proletariat of Russia, obviously enjoying the sympathy of the proletarians of other countries, but in the absence of victory in several countries, 'cannot hold out in the face of a conservative Europe.' That is not Marxism, but the most ordinary opportunism, Trotskyism, and whatever else you please. If Trotsky's theory were correct, Ilyich, who stated that we shall convert NEP Russia into socialist Russia, and that we have '*all* that is necessary for building a *complete* socialist society'* (see the article "On Co-operation"), would be wrong. . . .

"The most dangerous thing in our political practice is the attempt to regard the victorious proletarian country as something passive, capable only of marking time until the moment when assistance comes from the victorious proletarians in other countries. Let us assume that the Soviet system will exist in Russia for five or ten years without a revolution taking place in the West; let us assume that, nevertheless, during that

* All italics mine. — J. St.

period our Republic goes on existing as a Soviet Republic, building a socialist economy under the conditions of NEP — do you think that during those five or ten years our country will merely spend the time in collecting water with a sieve and not in organising a socialist economy? It is enough to ask this question to realise how very dangerous is the theory that denies the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

“But does that mean that this victory will be complete, final? No, it does not . . . for as long as capitalist encirclement exists there will always be the danger of military intervention” (January 1925).

That is how the matter stands with the question of the fate of socialism in our country from the standpoint of the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Conference of our Party.

V

THE PARTY'S POLICY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

I pass to the fifth group of questions.

Before passing to the resolutions of the Fourteenth Conference dealing with the Party's policy in the countryside, I should like to say a few words about the hullabaloo raised by the bourgeois press in connection with the criticism which our Party has made of our own shortcomings in the countryside. The bourgeois press leaps and dances and assures all and sundry that the open criticism of our own shortcomings is a sign of the weakness of the Soviet power, a sign of its disintegration and decay. Needless to say, all this hullabaloo is thoroughly false and mendacious.

Self-criticism is a sign of our Party's strength and not of its weakness. Only a strong party, which has its roots in life and is marching to victory, can afford the ruthless criticism of its own shortcomings that it has permitted, and always will permit, in front of the whole people. A party which hides

the truth from the people, which fears the light and fears criticism, is not a party, but a clique of impostors, whose doom is sealed. Messieurs the bourgeois measure us with their own yardstick. They fear the light and assiduously hide the truth from the people, covering up their shortcomings with ostentatious proclamation of well-being. And so they think that we Communists, too, must hide the truth from the people. They fear the light, for it would be enough for them to permit anything like serious self-criticism, anything like free criticism of their own shortcomings, to cause the downfall of the bourgeois system. And so they think that if we Communists permit self-criticism, it is a sign that we are surrounded and that the ground is slipping from under our feet. Those honourable gentlemen, the bourgeois and Social-Democrats, measure us with their own yardsticks. Only parties which are departing into the past and whose doom is sealed can fear the light and fear criticism. We fear neither the one nor the other, we do not fear them because we are a party that is in the ascendant, that is marching to victory. That is why the self-criticism that has been going on for several months already is a sign of our Party's immense strength, and not of its weakness, it is a means of consolidating and not of disintegrating the Party.

Let us now pass to the question of the Party's policy in the countryside.

What new facts are to be noted in the countryside in connection with the new internal and international situation?

I think that four chief facts are to be noted:

1) the change in the international situation and the slowing down of the tempo of the revolution, which compel us to choose the least painful, although slower, methods of drawing the peasantry into socialist construction, of building socialism together with the peasantry;

2) the economic progress in the countryside and the process of differentiation among the peasantry, which call for the elimination of the survivals of War Communism in the countryside;

3) the political activity of the peasantry, which requires that the old methods of leadership and administration in the countryside be changed;

4) the elections to the Soviets, which revealed the indubitable fact that in a number of districts in our country *the middle peasants were found to be on the side of the kulaks against the poor peasants.*

In view of these new facts, what is the Party's main task in the countryside?

Proceeding from the fact that differentiation is going on in the countryside, some comrades draw the conclusion that the Party's main task is to foment class struggle there. That is wrong. That is idle talk. That is not our main task now. That is a rehash of the old Menshevik songs taken from the old Menshevik encyclopedia.

To foment class struggle in the countryside is not by any means the main task at present. *The main task at present is to rally the middle peasants around the proletariat, to win them over to our side again.* The main task at present is to link up with the main masses of the peasantry, to raise their material and cultural level, and to move forward together with those main masses along the road to socialism. The main task is to build socialism together with the peasantry, without fail together with the peasantry, and without fail under the leadership of the working class; for the leadership of the working class is the basic guarantee that our work of construction will proceed along the path to socialism.

That is now the Party's main task.

Perhaps it will not be superfluous to recall Ilyich's words on this subject, the words he uttered at the time NEP was introduced, and which remain valid to this day:

"The whole point now is to advance as an immeasurably wider and larger mass, and only together with the peasantry" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 272).^[1]

And further:

"Link up with the peasant masses, with the rank-and-file toiling peasants, and begin to move forward immeasurably, infinitely, more slowly than we imagined, but in such a way that the entire mass will actually move forward with us. If we do that we shall in time get such an acceleration of progress as we cannot dream of now" (*ibid.*, pp. 231-32).^[2]

In view of this, two main tasks confront us in the countryside.

1) Firstly, we must see to it that peasant economy is included in the general system of Soviet economic development. Formerly things proceeded in such a way that we had two parallel processes: the town went its own way and the country went its way. The capitalist strove to include peasant economy in the system of capitalist development, but that inclusion took place through the impoverishment of the peasant masses and the enrichment of the upper stratum of the peasantry. As is known, that path was fraught with revolution. After the victory of the proletariat the inclusion of peasant economy in the general system of Soviet economic development must be brought about by creating conditions that can promote the progress of our national economy on the basis of

^[1] Lenin, *Speech in Closing the Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*. April 2, 1922.

^[2] Lenin, *Political Report of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) to the Eleventh Party Congress*. March 27, 1922.

a gradual but steady improvement of the welfare of the majority of the peasants, that is, along a road which is the very opposite to the one along which the capitalists led the peasantry and proposed that they should go prior to the revolution.

But how is peasant economy to be included in the system of economic construction? Through the co-operatives. Through the credit co-operatives, agricultural co-operatives, consumers' co-operatives and artisans' co-operatives.

Such are the roads and paths by which peasant economy must be slowly but thoroughly drawn into the general system of socialist construction.

2) The second task consists in gradually but steadily pursuing the line of eliminating the old methods of administration and leadership in the countryside, the line of revitalising the Soviets, the line of transforming the Soviets into genuinely elected bodies, the line of implanting the principles of Soviet democracy in the countryside. Ilyich said that the proletarian dictatorship is the highest type of democracy for the majority of the working people. Ilyich said that this highest type of democracy can be introduced only after the proletariat has taken power and after we have obtained the opportunity of consolidating this power. Well, this phase of consolidating the Soviet power and of implanting Soviet democracy has already begun. We must proceed along this path cautiously and unhurriedly, and in the course of our work we must create around the Party a numerous body of activists consisting of non-Party peasants.

While the first task, the task of including peasant economy in the general system of economic construction, makes it possible for us to put the peasantry in joint harness with the

proletariat on the road of building socialism, the second task, the task of implanting Soviet democracy and revitalising the Soviets in the countryside, should make it possible for us to reconstruct our state apparatus, to link it with the masses of the people, to make it sound and honest, simple and inexpensive, in order to create the conditions that will facilitate the gradual transition from a society with a dictatorship of the proletariat to communist society.

Such are the main lines of the resolutions adopted by the Fourteenth Conference of our Party on the question of our Party's policy in the countryside.

Hence, the methods of Party leadership in the countryside must change accordingly.

We have people in the Party who assert that since we have NEP, and since capitalism is beginning to be temporarily stabilised, our task is to pursue a policy of the utmost pressure both in the Party and in the state apparatus, pressure so strong as to make everything creak. I must say that such a policy would be wrong and fatal. What we need now is not the utmost pressure, but the utmost flexibility in both policy and organisation, the utmost flexibility in both political and organisational leadership. Unless we have that we shall be unable to remain at the helm under the present complicated conditions. We need the utmost flexibility in order to keep the Party at the helm and to ensure that the Party exercises complete leadership.

Further. The Communists in the countryside must refrain from improper forms of administration. We must not rely merely on giving orders to the peasants. We must learn to explain to the peasants patiently the questions they do not understand, we must learn to convince the peasants, sparing neither time nor effort for this purpose. Of course, it is much

easier and simpler to issue an order and leave it at that, as some of our Volost Executive Committee Chairmen often do. But not all that is simple and easy is good. Not long ago, it appears, when the representative of a Gubernia Committee asked the secretary of a volost Party unit why there were no newspapers in his volost, the answer was given: "What do we want newspapers for? It's quieter and better without them. If the peasants begin reading newspapers they will start asking all sorts of questions and we shall have no end of trouble with them." And this secretary calls himself a Communist! It scarcely needs proof that he is not a Communist, but a calamity. The point is that nowadays it is utterly impossible to lead without "trouble," let alone without newspapers. This simple truth must be understood and assimilated if we want the Party and the Soviet power to retain the leadership in the countryside.

Further. To lead, nowadays, one must be a good manager, one must be familiar with and understand economic affairs. Merely talking about "world politics," about Chamberlain and MacDonald, will not carry one very far now. We have entered the period of economic construction. Hence, the one who can lead is one who understands economic affairs, who is able to give the peasant useful advice about economic development, who can give the peasant assistance in economic construction. To study economic affairs, to be directly linked with economic affairs, to go into all the details of economic construction — such is now the task of the Communists in the countryside. Unless they do that, it is no use even dreaming of leadership.

It is now impossible to lead in the old way, because the peasants are displaying more political activity, and it is necessary that this activity should assume a Soviet form, that it should flow through the Soviets and not past them. A leader

is one who revitalises the Soviets and creates a peasant active around the Party in the countryside.

It is impossible to lead in the old way nowadays, because the economic activity of the rural population has increased, and it is necessary that this activity should assume the form of co-operation, that it should flow through the co-operatives and not past them. A leader is one who implants a co-operative communal life in the countryside.

Such, in general, are the concrete tasks of Party leadership in the countryside.

VI

THE METAL INDUSTRY

I pass to the last group of questions dealt with at the Fourteenth Conference of our Party.

What is new and specific in our economic leadership?

It is that our economic plans have begun to lag behind the actual development of our economy, they turn out to be inadequate and quite often fail to keep pace with the actual growth of our economy.

A striking expression of this fact is our state budget. You know that in the course of half a year we were obliged to revise our state budget three times owing to rapid increases in the revenue side of our budget not foreseen in our estimates. In other words, our estimates and our budget plans failed to keep pace with the increase in state revenues, as a result of which the state treasury found itself with a surplus. That means that the sap of economic life in our country is surging upward with irresistible force, upsetting all the scientific plans of our financial experts. That means that we are experiencing

an upsurge of economic and labour activity, at least as powerful as that which America, for example, experienced after the Civil War.

The growth of our metal industry can be taken as the most striking expression of this new phenomenon in our economic life. Last year the output of the metal industry amounted to 191,000,000 pre-war rubles. In November last year the annual output plan for 1924-25 was fixed at 273,000,000 pre-war rubles. In January this year, in view of the discrepancy between that figure and the actual growth of the metal industry, the plan was revised and the figure brought up to 317,000,000. In April this year, even this enlarged plan proved to be unsound and, as a consequence, the figure had to be raised again, this time to 350,000,000. Now we are told that this plan has also proved to be inadequate, for it will have to be enlarged once again and the figure raised to 360-370 millions.

In other words, the output of the metal industry this year has almost doubled compared with that of last year. That is apart from the colossal growth of our light industry, of the growth of our transport system, fuel industry, and so forth.

What does all this show? It shows that as regards the organisation of industry, which is the chief basis of socialism, we have already entered the broad high road of development. As regards the metal industry, the mainspring of all industry, the period of stagnation has passed, and our metal industry now has every opportunity of going ahead and flourishing. Comrade Dzerzhinsky is right in saying that our country can and must become a land of metal.

The enormous importance of this fact both for the internal development of our country and for the international revolution scarcely needs proof.

There is no doubt that, from the standpoint of our internal development, the development of our metal industry and the significance of its growth are colossal, for this development means the growth of our entire industry and of our economy as a whole, for the metal industry is the chief basis of industry as a whole, for neither light industry, nor transport, nor the fuel industry, nor electrification, nor agriculture can be put on their feet unless the metal industry is powerfully developed. The growth of the metal industry is the basis of the growth of industry as a whole, and of our national economy as a whole.

Here is what Lenin says about "heavy industry," meaning by that mainly the metal industry:

"The salvation of Russia lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms — that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumer goods — that, too, is not enough; we also need *heavy* industry. And to put it in good condition will require many years of work."

And further:

"Unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up any industry; and without that we shall be doomed altogether as an independent country" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 349).^[1]

As for the international significance of the development of our metal industry, we may say that it is immeasurable. For what is the surging growth of the metal industry under the proletarian dictatorship if not direct proof that the proletariat is capable not only of destroying the old, but also of building the new, that it is capable of building by its own efforts a new industry, and a new society free from the exploitation of man

[1] Lenin, *Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution*. (1922)

by man? To prove this in actual fact and not from books means advancing the cause of the international revolution surely and finally. The pilgrimages of West-European workers to our country are not accidental. They are of enormous agitational and practical significance for the development of the revolutionary movement throughout the world. The fact that workers come here and probe every corner at our factories and works shows that they do not believe books, but want to convince themselves by their own experience that the proletariat is capable of building a new industry, of creating a new society. And when they convince themselves of this, you may be sure that the cause of the international revolution will make enormous strides forward.

"At the present time," says Lenin, "we are exercising our main influence on the *international* revolution by our economic policy. All eyes are turned on the Soviet Russian Republic, the eyes of all toilers in all countries of the world without exception and without exaggeration. . . . That is the field to which the struggle has been transferred on a world-wide scale. If we solve this problem, we shall have won on an international scale *surely and finally*. That is why questions of economic construction assume absolutely exceptional significance for us. On this front we must win victory by slow, gradual — it cannot be fast — but steady progress upward and forward"* (see Vol. XXVI, pp. 410-11).^[1]

Such is the international significance of the growth of our industry in general, and of our metal industry in particular.

At the present time we have an industrial proletariat of about 4,000,000. A small number, of course, but it is something to go on with in building socialism and in building up the defence of our country to the terror of the enemies of the

* All italics mine. — J. St.

^[1] Lenin, *Tenth All-Russian Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)*. May 26-28, 1921. 5. *Speech in Closing the Conference*. May 28.

proletariat. But we cannot and must not stop there. We need 15-20 million industrial proletarians, we need the electrification of the principal regions of our country, the organisation of agriculture on co-operative lines, and a highly developed metal industry. And then we need fear no danger. And then we shall triumph on an international scale.

The historical significance of the Fourteenth Conference lies precisely in the fact that it clearly mapped the road to that great goal.

And that road is the right road, for it is Lenin's road, and it will lead us to final victory.

Such, in general, are the results of the work of the Fourteenth Conference of our Party.

Pravda, Nos. 106 and 107,
May 12 and 13, 1925

**THE FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
OF THE C.P.S.U.(B.)³⁷**

December 18-31, 1925

**REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE POLITICAL
REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

December 23

Comrades, I shall not answer separately the notes on particular questions, because the whole of my speech in reply to the discussion will in substance be an answer to these notes.

Nor do I intend to answer personal attacks or any verbal thrusts of a purely personal character, for I think that the congress is in possession of sufficient material with which to verify the motives of those attacks and what is behind them.

Nor shall I deal with the "cave men," the people who gathered somewhere near Kislovodsk and devised all sorts of schemes in regard to the organs of the Central Committee. Well, let them make schemes, that is their business. I should only like to emphasise that Lashevich, who spoke here with aplomb against politics of scheming, was himself found to be

one of the schemers and, it turns out, at the "cave men's" conference near Kislovodsk he played a role that was far from unimportant. Well, so much for him. (*Laughter.*)

I pass to the matter in hand.

1. SOKOLNIKOV AND THE DAWESATION OF OUR COUNTRY

First of all, a few rejoinders. First rejoinder — to Sokolnikov. He said in his speech: "When Stalin indicated two general lines, two lines in the building of our economy, he misled us, because he should have formulated these two lines differently, he should have talked not about importing equipment, but about importing finished goods." I assert that this statement of Sokolnikov's utterly exposes him as a supporter of Shanin's theses. I want to say that here Sokolnikov in point of fact speaks as an advocate of the Dawesation of our country. What did I speak about in my report? Did I speak about the exports and imports plan? Of course not. Everybody knows that we *are obliged at present* to import equipment. But Sokolnikov converts this necessity into a principle, a theory, a prospect of development. That is where Sokolnikov's mistake lies. In my report I spoke about two fundamental, guiding, general lines in building our national economy. I spoke about that in order to clear up the question of the ways of ensuring for our country independent economic development in the conditions of capitalist encirclement. In my report I spoke about our general line, about our prospects as regards transforming our country from an agrarian into an industrial country. What is an agrarian country? An agrarian country is one that exports agricultural produce and imports equipment, but does not itself manufacture, or manufactures very little, equipment

(machinery, etc.) by its own efforts. If we get stranded at the stage of development at which we have to import equipment and machinery and do not produce them by our own efforts, we can have no guarantee against the conversion of our country into an appendage of the capitalist system. That is precisely why we must steer a course towards the development of the production of the means of production in our country. Can it be that Sokolnikov fails to understand such an elementary thing? Yet it was only about this that I spoke in my report.

What does the Dawes Plan demand? It demands that Germany should pump out money for the payment of reparations from markets, chiefly from our Soviet markets. What follows from this? From this it follows that Germany will supply us with equipment, we shall import it and export agricultural produce. We, i.e., our industry, will thus find itself tethered to Europe. That is precisely the basis of the Dawes Plan. Concerning that, I said in my report, in so far as it affects our country, the Dawes Plan is built on sand. Why? "Because," I said, "we have not the least desire to be converted into an agrarian country for the benefit of any other country whatsoever, including Germany," because, "we ourselves will manufacture machinery and other means of production." The conversion of our country from an agrarian into an industrial country able to produce the equipment it needs by its own efforts — that is the essence, the basis of our general line. We must so arrange things that the thoughts and strivings of our business executives are directed precisely towards this aspect, the aspect of transforming our country from one that imports equipment into one that manufactures this equipment. For that is the chief guarantee of the economic independence of our country. For that is the guarantee that our country will not be converted into an appendage of the capitalist countries. Sokolnikov

refuses to understand this simple and obvious thing. They, the authors of the Dawes Plan, would like to restrict us to the manufacture of, say, calico; but that is not enough for us, for we want to manufacture not only calico, but also the machinery needed for manufacturing calico. They would like us to restrict ourselves to the manufacture of, say, automobiles; but that is not enough for us, for we want to manufacture not only automobiles, but also the machinery for making automobiles. They want to restrict us to the manufacture of, say, shoes; but that is not enough for us, for we want to manufacture not only shoes, but also the machinery for making shoes. And so on, and so forth.

That is the difference between the two general lines; and that is what Sokolnikov refuses to understand.

To abandon our line means abandoning the tasks of socialist construction, means adopting the standpoint of the Dawesation of our country.

2. KAMENEV AND OUR CONCESSIONS TO THE PEASANTRY

Second rejoinder — to Kamenev. He said that by adopting at the Fourteenth Party Conference the well-known decisions on economic development, on revitalising the Soviets, on eliminating the survivals of War Communism, on precise regulation of the question of renting and leasing land and hiring labour, we had made concessions to the kulaks and not to the peasants, that these are concessions not to the peasantry, but to the capitalist elements. Is that true? I assert that it is not true; that it is a slander against the Party. I assert that a Marxist cannot approach the question in that way; that only a Liberal can approach the question in that way.

What are the concessions that we made at the Fourteenth Party Conference? Do those concessions fit into the framework of NEP, or not? Undoubtedly they do. Perhaps we expanded NEP at the April Conference? Let the opposition answer: Did we expand NEP in April, or not? If we expanded it, why did they vote for the decisions of the Fourteenth Conference? And is it not well known that we are all opposed to an expansion of NEP? What is the point, then? The point is that Kamenev has got himself mixed up; for NEP includes permission of trade, capitalism, hired labour; and the decisions of the Fourteenth Conference are an expression of NEP, which was introduced when Lenin was with us. Did Lenin know that in the first stages, NEP would be taken advantage of primarily by the capitalists, the merchants, the kulaks? Of course he knew. But did Lenin say that in introducing NEP we were making concessions to the profiteers and capitalist elements and not to the peasantry? No, he did not and could not say that. On the contrary, he always said that, in permitting trade and capitalism, and in changing our policy in the direction of NEP, we were making concessions to the peasantry for the sake of maintaining and strengthening our bond with it; since under the given conditions, the peasantry could not exist without trade, without some revival of capitalism being permitted; since at the given time we could not establish the bond in any way except through trade; since only in that way could we strengthen the bond and build the foundations of a socialist economy. That is how Lenin approached the question of concessions. That is how the question of the concessions made in April 1925 should be approached.

Allow me to read to you Lenin's opinion on this subject. This is how he substantiated the Party's transition to the new policy, to the policy of NEP, in his address on "The Tax in

Kind" at the conference of secretaries of Party units of the Moscow Gubernia:

"I want to dwell on the question how this policy can be reconciled with the point of view of communism, and how it comes about that the communist Soviet state is facilitating the development of free trade. Is this good from the point of view of communism? In order to answer this question we must carefully examine the changes that have taken place in peasant economy. At first the position was that we saw the whole of the peasantry fighting against the rule of the landlords. The landlords were equally opposed by the poor peasants and the kulaks, although, of course, with different intentions: the kulaks fought with the aim of taking the land from the landlords and developing their own farming on it. It was then that it became revealed that the kulaks and the poor peasants had different interests and different aims. In the Ukraine, even today, we see this difference of interests much more clearly than here. The poor peasants could obtain very little direct advantage from the transfer of the land from the landlords because they had neither the materials nor the implements for that. And we saw the poor peasants organising to prevent the kulaks from seizing the land that had been taken from the landlords. The Soviet Government assisted the Poor Peasants' Committees that sprang up in Russia and in the Ukraine. What was the result? *The result was that the middle peasants became the predominant element in the countryside. . . .* The extremes of kulaks and poor peasants have diminished; the majority of the population has come nearer to the position of the middle peasant. If we want to raise the productivity of our peasant economy we must first of all reckon with the middle peasant. *It was in accordance with this circumstance that the Communist Party had to mould its policy. . . . Thus, the change in the policy towards the peasantry is to be explained by the change in the position of the peasantry itself. The countryside has become more middle-peasant, and in order to increase the productive forces we must reckon with this*"* (see Vol. XXVI, pp. 304-05).^[1]

* All italics mine. — J. St.

^[1] Lenin, *Report on the Tax in Kind Delivered at a Meeting of Secretaries and Responsible Representatives of R.C.P.(B.) Cells of Moscow and Moscow Gubernia*. April 9, 1921.

And in the same volume, on page 247,^[1] Lenin draws the general conclusion:

"We must build our state economy in relation to the economy of the middle peasants, which we have been unable to transform in three years, and will not be able to transform in ten years."*

In other words, we introduced freedom of trade, we permitted a revival of capitalism, we introduced NEP, in order to accelerate the growth of productive forces, to increase the quantity of products in the country, to strengthen the bond with the peasantry. The bond, the interests of the bond with the peasantry as the basis of our concessions along the line of NEP — such was Lenin's approach to the subject.

Did Lenin know at that time that the profiteers, the capitalists, the kulaks would take advantage of NEP, of the concessions to the peasantry? Of course he did. Does that mean that these concessions were in point of fact concessions to the profiteers and kulaks? No, it does not. For NEP in general, and trade in particular, is being taken advantage of not only by the capitalists and kulaks, but also by the state and co-operative bodies; for it is not only the capitalists and kulaks who trade, but also the state bodies and co-operatives; and when our state bodies and co-operatives learn how to trade, they will gain (they are already gaining!) the upper hand over the private traders, linking our industry with peasant economy.

What follows from this? It follows from this that our concessions proceed basically in the direction of strengthening our bond, and for the sake of our bond, with the peasantry.

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8-16, 1921. 6. *Report on the Substitution of a Tax in Kind for the Surplus-Grain Appropriation System*. March 15.

Whoever fails to understand that, approaches the subject not as a Leninist, but as a Liberal.

3. WHOSE MISCALCULATIONS?

Third rejoinder — to Sokolnikov. He says: "The considerable losses that we have sustained on the economic front since the autumn are due precisely to an overestimation of our forces, to an overestimation of our socialist maturity, an overestimation of our ability, the ability of our state economy, to guide the whole of the national economy already at the present time."

It turns out, then, that the miscalculations in regard to procurement and foreign trade — I have in mind the unfavourable balance of trade in 1924-25 — that those miscalculations were due not to the error of our regulating bodies, but to an overestimation of the socialist maturity of our economy. And it appears that the blame for this rests upon Bukharin, whose "school" deliberately cultivates exaggerated ideas about the socialist maturity of our economy.

Of course, in making speeches one "can" play all sorts of tricks, as Sokolnikov often does. But, after all, one should know how far one can go. How can one talk such utter nonsense and downright untruth at a congress? Does not Sokolnikov know about the special meeting of the Political Bureau held in the beginning of November, at which procurement and foreign trade were discussed, at which the errors of the regulating bodies were rectified by the Central Committee, by the majority of the Central Committee, which is alleged to have overestimated our socialist potentialities? How can one talk such nonsense at a congress? And what has Bukharin's "school," or Bukharin himself, to do with it? What a way of

behaving — to blame others for one's own sins! Does not Sokolnikov know that the stenographic report of the speeches delivered at the meeting of the Central Committee on the question of miscalculations was sent to all the Gubernia Party Committees? How can one fly in the face of obvious facts? One "can" play tricks when making speeches, but one should know how far one can go.

4. HOW SOKOLNIKOV PROTECTS THE POOR PEASANTS

Fourth rejoinder — also to Sokolnikov. He said here that he, as People's Commissar of Finance, don't you see, strives in every way to ensure that our agricultural tax is collected in proportion to income, but he is hindered in this, he is hindered because he is not allowed to protect the poor peasants and to curb the kulaks. That is not true, comrades. It is a slander against the Party. The question of officially revising the agricultural tax on the basis of income — I say officially, because actually it is an income tax — this question was raised at the plenum of the Central Committee in October this year, but nobody except Sokolnikov supported the proposal that it be raised at the congress, because it was not yet ready for presentation at the congress. At that time Sokolnikov did not insist on his proposal. But now it turns out that Sokolnikov is not averse to using this against the Central Committee, not in the interests of the poor peasants, of course, but in the interests of the opposition. Well, since Sokolnikov talks here about the poor peasants, permit me to tell you a fact which exposes the actual stand taken by Sokolnikov, this alleged thoroughgoing protector of the poor peasants. Not so long ago, Comrade Milyutin, People's Commissar of Finance of the R.S.F.S.R.,

took a decision to exempt poor peasant farms from taxation in cases where the tax amounts to less than a ruble. From Comrade Milyutin's memorandum to the Central Committee it is evident that the total revenue from taxation of less than a ruble, taxation which irritates the peasantry, amounts to about 300-400 thousand rubles for the whole of the R.S.F.S.R., and that the cost alone of collecting this tax is only a little less than the revenue from it. What did Sokolnikov, this protector of the poor peasants, do? He annulled Comrade Milyutin's decision. The Central Committee received protests about this from fifteen Gubernia Party Committees. Sokolnikov would not give way. The Central Committee had to exercise pressure to compel Sokolnikov to rescind his veto on the absolutely correct decision of the People's Commissar of Finance of the R.S.F.S.R. not to collect taxes of less than a ruble. That is what Sokolnikov calls "protecting" the interests of the poor peasants. And people like that, with such a weight on their conscience, have the — what's the mildest way of putting it? — the audacity to speak against the Central Committee. It is strange, comrades, strange.

5. IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE OR SLANDER?

Lastly, one more rejoinder. I have in mind a rejoinder to the authors of *A Collection of Materials on Controversial Questions*. Yesterday, *A Collection of Materials on Controversial Questions*, only just issued, was secretly distributed here, for members of the congress only. In this collection it is stated, among other things, that in April this year I received a delegation of village correspondents and expressed sympathy with the idea of restoring private property in land. It appears that analogous "impressions" of one of the village correspond-

ents were published in *Bednota*,³⁸ I did not know about these "impressions," I did not see them. I learned about them in October this year. Earlier than that, in April, the Riga news agency, which is distinguished from all other news agencies by the fact that it fabricates all the false rumours about us, had circulated a similar report to the foreign press, about which we were informed by our people in Paris, who telegraphed to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs demanding that it be refuted. At the time I answered Comrade Chicherin, through my assistant, saying: "If Comrade Chicherin thinks it necessary to refute all kinds of nonsense and slander, let him refute it" (see archives of the Central Committee).

Are the authors of this sacramental "*Collection*" aware of all that? Of course they are. Why, then, do they continue to circulate all kinds of nonsense and fable? How can they, how can the opposition, resort to the methods of the Riga news agency? Have they really sunk so low as that? (*A voice*: "Shame!")

Further, knowing the habits of the "cave men," knowing that they are capable of repeating the methods of the Riga news agency, I sent a refutation to the editorial board of *Bednota*. It is ridiculous to refute such nonsense, but knowing with whom I have to deal, I, for all that, sent a refutation. Here it is:

"To the Editorial Board of *Bednota*.

"Comrade editor, recently I learned from some comrades that in a sketch, published in *Bednota* of 5/IV, 1925, of a village correspondent's impressions of an interview with me by a delegation of village correspondents, which I had not the opportunity to read at the time, it is reported that I expressed sympathy with the idea of guaranteeing ownership of land for 40 years or more, with the idea of private property in land, etc. Although this fantastic report needs no refutation because of its obvious absurdity, nevertheless, perhaps it will not be superfluous to ask your permission to state in *Bednota* that this report is a gross mistake and must be attributed entirely to the author's imagination.

"J. Stalin"

Are the authors of the "*Collection*" aware of this letter? Undoubtedly they are. Why, then, do they continue to circulate tittle-tattle, fables? What method of fighting is this? They say that this is an ideological struggle. But no, comrades, it is not an ideological struggle. In our Russian language it is called simply *slander*.

Permit me now to pass to the fundamental questions of principle.

6. CONCERNING NEP

The question of NEP. I have in mind Comrade Krupskaya and the speech she delivered on NEP. She says: "In essence, NEP is capitalism permitted under certain conditions, capitalism that the proletarian state keeps on a chain. . . ." Is that true? Yes, and no. That we are keeping capitalism on a chain, and will keep it so as long as it exists, is a fact, that is true. But to say that NEP is capitalism — that is nonsense, utter nonsense. NEP is a special policy of the proletarian state aimed at permitting capitalism while the commanding positions are held by the proletarian state, aimed at a struggle between the capitalist and socialist elements, aimed at increasing the role of the socialist elements to the detriment of the capitalist elements, aimed at the victory of the socialist elements over the capitalist elements, aimed at the abolition of classes and the building of the foundations of a socialist economy. Whoever fails to understand this transitional, dual nature of NEP departs from Leninism. If NEP were capitalism, then NEP Russia that Lenin spoke about would be capitalist Russia. But is present-day Russia a capitalist country and not a country that is in transition from capitalism to socialism? Why then, did Lenin not say simply: "*Capitalist* Russia will be socialist

Russia," but preferred a different formula: "NEP Russia will become socialist Russia"? Does the opposition agree with Comrade Krupskaya that NEP is capitalism, or does it not? I think that not a single member of this congress will be found who would agree with Comrade Krupskaya's formula. Comrade Krupskaya (may she forgive me for saying so) talked utter nonsense about NEP. One cannot come out here in defence of Lenin against Bukharin with nonsense like that.

7. CONCERNING STATE CAPITALISM

Connected with this question is Bukharin's mistake. What was his mistake? On what questions did Lenin dispute with Bukharin? Lenin maintained that the category of state capitalism is compatible with the system of the proletarian dictatorship. Bukharin denied this. He was of the opinion, and with him the "Left" Communists, too, including Safarov, were of the opinion that the category of state capitalism is incompatible with the system of the proletarian dictatorship. Lenin was right, of course. Bukharin was wrong. He admitted this mistake of his. Such was Bukharin's mistake. But that was in the past. If now, in 1925, in May, he repeats that he disagrees with Lenin on the question of state capitalism, I suppose it is simply a misunderstanding. Either he ought frankly to withdraw that statement, or it is a misunderstanding; for the line he is now defending on the question of the nature of state industry is Lenin's line. Lenin did not come to Bukharin; on the contrary, Bukharin came to Lenin. And precisely for that reason we back Bukharin. (*Applause.*)

The chief mistake of Kamenev and Zinoviev is that they regard the question of state capitalism scholastically, undialec-

tically, divorced from the historical situation. Such an approach to the question is abhorrent to the whole spirit of Leninism. How did Lenin present the question? In 1921, Lenin, knowing that our industry was under-developed and that the peasantry needed goods, knowing that it (industry) could not be raised at one stroke, that the workers, because of certain circumstances, were engaged not so much in industry as in making cigarette lighters — in that situation Lenin was of the opinion that the best of all possibilities was to invite foreign capital, to set industry on its feet with its aid, to introduce state capitalism in this way and *through* it to establish a bond between Soviet power and the countryside. That line was absolutely correct at that time, because we had no other means then of satisfying the peasantry; for our industry was in a bad way, transport was at a standstill, or almost at a standstill, there was a lack, a shortage, of fuel. Did Lenin at that time consider state capitalism permissible and desirable as the predominant form in our economy? Yes, he did. But that was then, in 1921. What about now? Can we now say that we have no industry, that transport is at a standstill, that there is no fuel, etc.? No, we cannot. Can it be denied that our industry and trade are already establishing a bond between industry (*our* industry) and peasant economy *directly*, by their own efforts? No, it cannot. Can it be denied that in the sphere of industry “state capitalism” and “socialism” have already exchanged roles, for socialist industry has become predominant and the relative importance of concessions and leases (the former have 50,000 workers and the latter 35,000) is minute? No, it cannot. Already in 1922 Lenin said that nothing had come of concessions and leases in our country.

What follows from this? From this it follows that since 1921, the situation in our country has undergone a substantial change,

that in this period our socialist industry and Soviet and co-operative trade have already succeeded in becoming the predominant force, that we have already learned to establish a bond between town and country by our own efforts, that the most striking forms of state capitalism — concessions and leases — have not developed to any extent during this period, that to speak *now*, in 1925, of state capitalism as the predominant form in our economy, means distorting the socialist nature of our state industry, means failing to understand the whole difference between the past and the present situation, means approaching the question of state capitalism not dialectically, but scholastically, metaphysically.

Would you care to hear Sokolnikov? In his speech he said:

"Our foreign trade is being conducted as a state-capitalist enterprise. . . . Our internal trading companies are also state-capitalist enterprises. And I must say, comrades, that the State Bank is just as much a state-capitalist enterprise. What about our monetary system? Our monetary system is based on the fact that in Soviet economy, under the conditions in which socialism is being built, there has been adopted a monetary system which is permeated with the principles of capitalist economy."

That is what Sokolnikov says.

Soon he will go to the length of declaring that the People's Commissariat of Finance is also state capitalism. Up to now I thought, and we all thought, that the State Bank is part of the state apparatus. Up to now I thought, and we all thought, that our People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, not counting the state-capitalist institutions that encompass it, is part of the state apparatus, that our state apparatus is the apparatus of a proletarian type of state. We all thought so up to now, for the proletarian state is the *sole* master of these institutions. But now, according to Sokolnikov, it turns out that these institutions, which are part of our state apparatus, are state-capitalist

institutions. Perhaps our Soviet apparatus is also state capitalism and not a proletarian type of state, as Lenin declared it to be? Why not? Does not our Soviet apparatus utilise a "monetary system which is permeated with the principles of capitalist economy?" Such is the nonsense a man can talk himself into.

Permit me first of all to quote Lenin's opinion on the nature and significance of the State Bank. I should like, comrades, to refer to a passage from a book written by Lenin in 1917. I have in mind the pamphlet: *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* in which Lenin still held the viewpoint of control of industry (and not nationalisation) and, notwithstanding that, regarded the State Bank in the hands of the proletarian state as being nine-tenths a socialist apparatus. This is what he wrote about the State Bank:

"The big banks *are* the 'state apparatus' we *need* for bringing about socialism, and which we *take ready-made* from capitalism; our task here is merely to *lop off* what *capitalistically distorts* this excellent apparatus, to make it *still bigger*, still more democratic, still more all-embracing. Quantity will be transformed into quality. A single State Bank, the biggest of the biggest, with branches in every volost, in every factory, will already be nine-tenths of the *socialist* apparatus. That will be nation-wide *book-keeping*, nation-wide *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods, that will be, so to speak, something in the nature of the *skeleton* of socialist society" (see Vol. XXI, p. 260).

Compare these words of Lenin's with Sokolnikov's speech and you will understand what Sokolnikov is slipping into. I shall not be surprised if he declares the People's Commissariat of Finance to be state capitalism.

What is the point here? Why does Sokolnikov fall into such errors?

The point is that Sokolnikov fails to understand the dual nature of NEP, the dual nature of trade under the present conditions of the struggle between the socialist elements and

the capitalist elements; he fails to understand the dialectics of development in the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship, in the conditions of the transition period, in which the methods and weapons of the bourgeoisie are utilised by the socialist elements for the purpose of overcoming and eliminating the capitalist elements. The point is not at all that trade and the monetary system are methods of "capitalist economy." The point is that in fighting the capitalist elements, the socialist elements of our economy master these methods and weapons of the bourgeoisie for the purpose of overcoming the capitalist elements, that they *successfully* use them *against* capitalism, *successfully* use them for the purpose of building the socialist foundation of our economy. Hence, the point is that, thanks to the dialectics of our development, the functions and purpose of those instruments of the bourgeoisie change *in principle*, fundamentally; they change in favour of socialism to the detriment of capitalism. Sokolnikov's mistake lies in his failure to understand all the complexity and contradictory nature of the processes that are taking place in our economy.

Permit me now to refer to Lenin on the question of the historical character of state capitalism, to quote a passage on the question as to when and why he proposed state capitalism as the chief form, as to what induced him to do that, and as to precisely under what concrete conditions he proposed it. (A voice: "Please do!")

"We cannot under any circumstances forget what we very often observe, namely, the socialist attitude of the workers in factories belonging to the state, where they themselves collect fuel, raw materials and produce, or when the workers try properly to distribute the products of industry among the peasantry and to deliver them by means of the transport system. *That is socialism.* But side by side with it there is small economy, which very often exists *independently* of it. Why can it exist independently of it? *Because* large-scale industry has not been restored,

because the socialist factories can receive only one-tenth, perhaps, of what they should receive; and in so far as they do not receive what they should, small economy remains independent of the socialist factories. The incredible state of ruin of the country, and the shortage of fuel, raw materials and transport facilities, lead to small production existing *separately* from socialism. And I say: Under these circumstances, what is state capitalism? It will mean the amalgamation of small production. Capital amalgamates small production, capital grows out of small production. It is no use closing our eyes to this fact. Of course, *freedom of trade means the growth of capitalism*; one cannot get away from it. And whoever thinks of getting away from it and brushing it aside is only consoling himself with words. If small economy exists, if there is freedom of exchange, capitalism will appear. But has this capitalism any terrors for us *if we hold the factories, works, transport and foreign trade in our hands*? And so I said then, and will say now, and I think it is incontrovertible, that this capitalism has no terrors for us. Concessions are capitalism of that kind"* (see Vol. XXVI, p. 306).^[1]

That is how Lenin approached the question of state capitalism.

In 1921, when we had scarcely any industry of our own, when there was a shortage of raw materials, and transport was at a standstill, Lenin proposed state capitalism as a means by which he thought of linking peasant economy with industry. And that was correct. But does that mean that Lenin regarded this line as desirable *under all* circumstances? Of course not. He was willing to establish the bond through the medium of state capitalism because we had no developed socialist industry. But now? Can it be said that we have no developed state industry now? Of course not. Development proceeded along a different channel, concessions scarcely took root, state industry grew, state trade grew, the co-operatives grew, and

* All italics mine. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Report on the Tax in Kind Delivered at a Meeting of Secretaries and Responsible Representatives of R.C.P.(B.) Cells of Moscow and Moscow Gubernia*. April 9, 1921.

the bond between town and country began to be established through socialist industry. We found ourselves in a better position than we had expected. How can one, after this, say that state capitalism is the chief form of managing our economy?

The trouble with the opposition is that it refuses to understand these simple things.

8. ZINOVIEV AND THE PEASANTRY

The question of the peasantry. I said in my report, and speakers here have asserted, that Zinoviev is deviating in the direction of underestimating the middle peasants; that only recently he definitely held the viewpoint of neutralising the middle peasants, and is only now, after the struggle in the Party, trying to go over to, to establish himself on, the other viewpoint, the viewpoint of a stable alliance with the middle peasants. Is all that true? Permit me to quote some documents.

In an article on "Bolshevisation," Zinoviev wrote this year:

"There are a number of tasks which are *absolutely common to all the Parties of the Comintern*. Such, for example, are . . . the proper approach to the peasantry. There are three strata among the agricultural population of the whole world, which can and must be won over by us and become the allies of the proletariat (the agricultural proletariat, the semi-proletarians — the small-holder peasants and the small peasantry who do not hire labour). There is another stratum of the peasantry (the middle peasants), which must be at least *neutralised by us*"* (*Pravda*, January 18, 1925).

That is what Zinoviev writes about the middle peasantry six years after the Eighth Party Congress, at which Lenin rejected the slogan of neutralising the middle peasants and sub-

* All italics mine. — J. St.

stituted for it the slogan of a stable alliance with the middle peasants. Bakayev asks, what is there terrible about that? But I will ask you to compare Zinoviev's article with Lenin's thesis on staking on the middle peasants and to answer the question: Has Zinoviev departed from Lenin's thesis or not. . . ? (*A voice from the hall*: "It refers to countries other than Russia." *Commotion*.) It is not so, comrade, because in Zinoviev's article it says: "tasks which are *absolutely* common to *all* the Parties of the Comintern." Will you really deny that our Party is also a part of the Comintern? Here it is directly stated: "*to all* the Parties." (*A voice from the benches of the Lenin-grad delegation*: "At definite moments." *General laughter*.)

Compare this passage from Zinoviev's article *about neutralisation* with the passage from Lenin's speech at the Eighth Party Congress in which he said that we must have a *stable alliance* with the middle peasants, and you will realise that there is nothing in common between them.

It is characteristic that after reading these lines in Zinoviev's article, Comrade Larin, that advocate of "a second revolution" in the countryside, hastened to associate himself with them. I think that although Comrade Larin spoke in opposition to Kamenev and Zinoviev the other day, and spoke rather well, this does not exclude the fact that there are points on which we disagree with him and that we must here dissociate ourselves from him. Here is the opinion Comrade Larin expressed about this article of Zinoviev's:

"'The proper approach to the peasantry' from the point of view of the common tasks of *all** the Parties of the Comintern was quite correctly formulated by its chairman, Zinoviev" (Larin, *The Soviet Countryside*, p. 80).

* My italics. — J. St.

I see that Comrade Larin protests, saying that he makes a reservation in his book about his disagreeing with Zinoviev in so far as Zinoviev extends the slogan of neutralising the middle peasants to Russia as well. It is true that in his book he makes this reservation and says that neutralisation is not enough for us, that we must take "a step farther" in the direction of "agreement with the middle peasants against the kulaks." But here, unfortunately, Comrade Larin drags in his scheme of "a second revolution" against kulak domination, with which we disagree, which brings him near to Zinoviev and compels me to dissociate myself from him to some extent.

As you see, in the document I have quoted, Zinoviev speaks openly and definitely in favour of the slogan of neutralising the middle peasants, in spite of Lenin, who proclaimed that neutralisation was not enough, and that a stable alliance with the middle peasants was necessary.

The next document. In his book *Leninism*, Zinoviev, quoting from Lenin the following passage dating from 1918: "With the peasantry to the end of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; with the poor, the proletarian and the semi-proletarian section of the peasantry, forward to the socialist revolution!", draws the following conclusion:

"The fundamental . . . problem that is engaging our minds at the present moment . . . is elucidated fully and to the end in the above-quoted theses of Lenin's. *To this nothing can be added, not a single word can be subtracted.*"* Here everything is said with Ilyich's terseness and explicitness, concisely and clearly, so that it simply asks to be put into a textbook" (*Leninism*, p. 60).

Such, according to Zinoviev, is the *exhaustive* characterisation of the peasant question given by Leninism. With the

* My italics. — J. St.

peasantry as a whole against the tsar and the landlords — that is the bourgeois revolution. With the poor peasants against the bourgeoisie — that is the October Revolution. That is all very well. It gives two of Lenin's slogans. But what about Lenin's third slogan — with the middle peasants against the kulaks for building socialism? What has become of Lenin's third slogan? It is not in Zinoviev's book. It has disappeared. Although Zinoviev asserts that "to this nothing can be added," nevertheless, if we do not add here Lenin's third slogan about a stable alliance of the proletariat and poor peasants with the middle peasants, we run the risk of distorting Lenin, as Zinoviev distorts him. Can we regard it as an accident that Lenin's third slogan, which is our most urgent slogan today, has disappeared, that Zinoviev has lost it? No, it cannot be regarded as an accident, because he holds the viewpoint of neutralising the middle peasants. The only difference between the first and second document is that in the first he opposed the slogan of a stable alliance with the middle peasants, while in the second he kept silent about this slogan.

The third document is Zinoviev's article "The Philosophy of the Epoch." I am speaking of the original version of that article, which does not contain the changes and additions that were made later by members of the Central Committee. The characteristic feature of that article is that, like the second document, it is completely silent about the question of the middle peasants and, evading this most urgent question, talks about some kind of indefinite, Narodnik equality, without pointing to the class background of equality. You will find in it the rural poor, the kulaks, the capitalists, attacks on Bukharin, Socialist-Revolutionary equality, and Ustryalov; but you will not find the middle peasants or Lenin's co-operative plan, although the article is entitled "The Philosophy of the Epoch."

When Comrade Molotov sent me that article (I was away at the time), I sent back a blunt and sharp criticism. Yes, comrades, I am straightforward and blunt; that's true, I don't deny it. (*Laughter.*) I sent back a blunt criticism, because it is intolerable that Zinoviev should for a whole year systematically ignore or distort the most characteristic features of Leninism in regard to the peasant question, our Party's present-day slogan of alliance with the bulk of the peasantry. Here is the answer that I sent then to Comrade Molotov:

"Zinoviev's article 'The Philosophy of the Epoch' is a distortion of the Party line in the Lenin spirit. It treats of the Fourteenth Conference, but the main theme of this conference — the middle peasants and the co-operatives — is evaded. The middle peasants and Lenin's co-operative plan have vanished. That is no accident. To talk, after this, about a 'struggle around the interpretation' of the decisions of the Fourteenth Conference — means pursuing a line towards the violation of those decisions. To mix up Bukharin with Stolypin, as Zinoviev does — means slandering Bukharin. On such lines it would be possible to mix up with Stolypin even Lenin, who said: 'trade, and learn to trade.' At the present time the slogan about equality is Socialist-Revolutionary demagoguery. There can be no equality so long as classes exist, and so long as skilled and unskilled labour exist (see Lenin's *State and Revolution*). We must speak not about an indefinite equality, but about abolishing classes, about socialism. To say that our revolution is 'not classical' means slipping into Menshevism. In my opinion, the article must be thoroughly revised in such a way that it should not bear the character of a platform for the Fourteenth Congress.

"J. Stalin

"September 12, 1925"

I am ready to defend the whole of this today. Every word, every sentence.

One must not speak about equality in a principal leading article without strictly defining what kind of equality is meant — equality between the peasantry and the working class, equality among the peasantry, equality within the working

class, between skilled and unskilled workers, or equality in the sense of abolishing classes. One must not in a leading article keep silent about the Party's immediate slogans on work in the countryside. One must not play with phrases about equality, because that means playing with fire, just as one must not play with phrases about Leninism while keeping silent about the immediate slogan of Leninism on the question of the peasantry.

Such are the three documents: Zinoviev's article (January 1925) in favour of neutralising the middle peasants, Zinoviev's book *Leninism* (September 1925), which kept silent about Lenin's third slogan about the middle peasants, and Zinoviev's new article "The Philosophy of the Epoch" (September 1925), which kept silent about the middle peasants and Lenin's co-operative plan.

Is this constant wobbling of Zinoviev's on the peasant question accidental?

You see that it is not accidental.

Recently, in a speech delivered by Zinoviev in Leningrad on the report of the Central Committee, he at last made up his mind to speak in favour of the slogan of a stable alliance with the middle peasants. That was after the struggle, after the friction, after the conflicts in the Central Committee. That is all very well. But I am not sure that he will not repudiate it later on. For, as facts show, Zinoviev has never displayed the firmness of line on the peasant question that we need. (*Applause.*)

Here are a few facts illustrating Zinoviev's vacillations on the peasant question. In 1924, at a plenum of the Central Committee, Zinoviev insisted on a "peasant" policy of organising non-Party peasant groups, at the centre and in the localities, with a weekly newspaper. That proposal was rejected because

of the objections raised in the Central Committee. Shortly before that, Zinoviev had even boasted that he had a "peasant deviation." Here is what he said, for example, at the Twelfth Congress of the Party: "When I am told: You have a 'deviation,' you are deviating towards the peasantry — I answer: Yes, we should not only 'deviate' towards the peasantry and its economic requirements, but *bow down* and, if need be, *kneel down* before the economic requirements of the peasant who follows our proletariat." Do you hear: "deviate," "bow down," "kneel down." (*Laughter, applause.*) Later, when things improved with the peasantry, when our position in the countryside improved, Zinoviev made a "turn" from his infatuation, cast suspicion upon the middle peasants and proclaimed the slogan of neutralisation. A little later he made a new "turn" and demanded what was in point of fact a revision of the decisions of the Fourteenth Conference ("The Philosophy of the Epoch") and, accusing almost the whole of the Central Committee of a peasant deviation, began to "deviate" more emphatically against the middle peasants. Finally, just before the Fourteenth Congress of the Party he once more made a "turn," this time in favour of alliance with the middle peasants and, perhaps, he will yet begin to boast that he is again ready to "adore" the peasantry.

What guarantee is there that Zinoviev will not vacillate once again?

But, comrades, this is wobbling, not politics. (*Laughter, applause.*) This is hysterics, not politics. (*Voices: "Quite right!"*)

We are told that there is no need to pay special attention to the struggle against the second deviation. That is wrong. Since there are two deviations among us — Bogushevsky's deviation and Zinoviev's deviation — you must understand that Bogu-

shevsky is not to be compared with Zinoviev. Bogushevsky is done for. (*Laughter.*) Bogushevsky does not have an organ of the press. But the deviation towards neutralising the middle peasants, the deviation against a stable alliance with the middle peasants, the Zinoviev deviation, has its organ of the press and continues to fight against the Central Committee to this day. That organ is called *Leningradskaya Pravda*.³⁹ For what is the term "middle-peasant Bolshevism" recently concocted in Leningrad, and about which *Leningradskaya Pravda* foams at the mouth, if not an indication that that newspaper has departed from Leninism on the peasant question? Is it not clear, if only from this circumstance alone, that the struggle against the second deviation is more difficult than the struggle against the first, against Bogushevsky's deviation? That is why, being confronted by such a representative of the second deviation, or such a defender and protector of the second deviation, as *Leningradskaya Pravda*, we must adopt all measures to make the Party specially prepared to fight that deviation, which is strong, which is complex, and against which we must concentrate our fire. That is why this second deviation must be the object of our Party's special attention. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*)

9. CONCERNING THE HISTORY OF THE DISAGREEMENTS

Permit me now to pass to the history of our internal struggle within the majority of the Central Committee. What did our disaccord start from? It started from the question: "What is to be done with Trotsky?" That was at the end of 1924. The group of Leningrad comrades at first proposed that Trotsky be expelled from the Party. Here I have in mind the period

of the discussion in 1924. The Leningrad Gubernia Party Committee passed a resolution that Trotsky be expelled from the Party. We, i.e., the majority on the Central Committee, did not agree with this (*voices*: "Quite right!"), we had some struggle with the Leningrad comrades and persuaded them to delete the point about expulsion from their resolution. Shortly after this, when the plenum of the Central Committee met and the Leningrad comrades, together with Kamenev, demanded Trotsky's immediate expulsion from the Political Bureau, we also disagreed with this proposal of the opposition, we obtained a majority on the Central Committee and restricted ourselves to removing Trotsky from the post of People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs. We disagreed with Zinoviev and Kamenev because we knew that the policy of amputation was fraught with great dangers for the Party, that the method of amputation, the method of blood-letting — and they demanded blood — was dangerous, infectious: today you amputate one limb, tomorrow another, the day after tomorrow a third — what will we have left in the Party? (*Applause.*)

This first clash within the majority on the Central Committee was the expression of the fundamental difference between us on questions of organisational policy in the Party.

The second question that caused disagreements among us was that connected with Sarkis' speech against Bukharin. That was at the Twenty-First Leningrad Conference in January 1925. Sarkis at that time accused Bukharin of syndicalism. Here is what he said:

"We have read in the Moscow *Pravda* Bukharin's article on worker and village correspondents. The views that Bukharin develops have no supporters in our organisation. But one might say that such views, which in their way are *syndicalist, un-Bolshevik*, anti-Party, are held even by a number of responsible comrades (I repeat, not in the Leningrad organisation, but in others). Those views treat of the independence and extra-

territoriality of various mass public organisations of workers and peasants in relation to the Communist Party" (Stenographic Report of the Twenty-First Leningrad Conference).

That speech was, firstly, a fundamental mistake on Sarkis' part, for Bukharin was absolutely right on the question of the worker and village correspondent movement; secondly, it was, not without the encouragement of the leaders of the Leningrad organisation, a gross violation of the elementary rules of comradely discussion of a question. Needless to say, this circumstance was bound to worsen relations within the Central Committee. The matter ended with Sarkis' open admission of his mistake in the press.

This incident showed that open admission of a mistake is the best way of avoiding an open debate and of eliminating disagreements internally.

The third question was that of the Leningrad Young Communist League. There are members of Gubernia Party Committees here, and they probably remember that the Political Bureau adopted a decision relating to the Leningrad Gubernia Committee of the Young Communist League, which had tried to convene in Leningrad almost an all-Russian conference of the Young Communist League without the knowledge and consent of the Central Committee of the youth league. With the decision of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) you are familiar. We could not permit the existence, parallel with the Central Committee of the Young Communist League, of another centre, competing with and opposing the first. We, as Bolsheviki, could not permit the existence of two centres. That is why the Central Committee considered it necessary to take measures to infuse fresh blood into the Central Committee of the youth league, which had tolerated this separatism, and to remove

Safarov from the post of leader of the Leningrad Gubernia Committee of the Young Communist League.

This incident showed that the Leningrad comrades have a tendency to convert their Leningrad organisation into a centre of struggle against the Central Committee.

The fourth question was the question, raised by Zinoviev, of organising in Leningrad a special magazine to be called *Bolshevik*, the editorial board of which was to consist of Zinoviev, Safarov, Vardin, Sarkis and Tarkhanov. We did not agree with this and said that such a magazine, running parallel with the Moscow *Bolshevik*, would inevitably become the organ of a group, a factional organ of the opposition; that such a step was dangerous and would undermine the unity of the Party. In other words, we prohibited the publication of that magazine. Now, attempts are being made to frighten us with the word "prohibition." But that is nonsense, comrades. We are not Liberals. For us, the interests of the Party stand above formal democracy. Yes, we prohibited the publication of a factional organ, and we shall prohibit things of that kind in future. (*Voices: "Quite right! Of course!" Loud applause.*)

This incident showed that the Leningrad leadership wants to segregate itself in a separate group.

Next, the question of Bukharin. I have in mind the slogan "enrich yourselves." I have in mind the speech Bukharin delivered in April, when he let slip the phrase "enrich yourselves." Two days later the April Conference of our Party opened. It was I who, in the Conference Presidium, in the presence of Sokolnikov, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Kalinin, stated that the slogan "enrich yourselves" was not our slogan. I do not remember Bukharin making any rejoinder to that protest. When Comrade Larin asked for the floor at the conference, to speak against Bukharin, I think, it was Zinoviev who then

demanding that no speeches be permitted against Bukharin. However, after that, Comrade Krupskaya sent in an article against Bukharin, demanding that it be published. Bukharin, of course, gave tit for tat, and, in his turn, wrote an article against Comrade Krupskaya. The majority on the Central Committee decided not to publish any discussion articles, not to open a discussion, and to call on Bukharin to state in the press that the slogan "enrich yourselves" was a mistake; Bukharin agreed to that and later did so, on his return from holiday, in an article against Ustryalov. Now, Kamenev and Zinoviev think they can frighten somebody with the "prohibition" bogey, expressing indignation like Liberals at our having prohibited the publication of Comrade Krupskaya's article. You will not frighten anybody with that. Firstly, we refrained from publishing not only Comrade Krupskaya's article, but also Bukharin's. Secondly, why not prohibit the publication of Comrade Krupskaya's article if the interests of Party unity demand that of us? In what way is Comrade Krupskaya different from every other responsible comrade? Perhaps you think that the interests of individual comrades should be placed above the interests of the Party and its unity? Are not the comrades of the opposition aware that for us, for Bolsheviks, formal democracy is an empty shell, but the real interests of the Party are everything? (*Applause.*)

Let the comrades point to a single article in the Party's Central Organ, in *Pravda*, that directly or indirectly approves of the slogan "enrich yourselves." They cannot do so, because no such articles exist. There was one case, the only one, when *Komsomolskaya Pravda* published an article by Stetsky, in which he tried to justify the "enrich yourselves" slogan in a mild and barely perceptible way. But what happened? The very next day the Secretariat of the Central Committee called

the editorial board of that newspaper to order in a special letter signed by Molotov, Andreyev and Stalin. That was on June 2, 1925. Several days later, the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee, with the full consent of Bukharin, adopted a resolution to the effect that the editor of that newspaper be removed. Here is an excerpt from that letter:

"Moscow, June 2, 1925. To all the members of the editorial board of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*.

"We are of the opinion that certain passages in Stetsky's articles 'A New Stage in the New Economic Policy' evoke doubts. In those articles, in a mild form it is true, countenance is given to the slogan 'enrich yourselves.' That is not our slogan, it is incorrect, it gives rise to a whole series of doubts and misunderstandings and has no place in a leading article in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. Our slogan is socialist accumulation. We are removing the administrative obstacles to an improvement of the welfare of the countryside. That operation will undoubtedly facilitate all accumulation, both private-capitalist and socialist. But the Party has never yet said that it makes private accumulation its slogan." . . .

Is the opposition aware of all these facts? Of course it is. In that case, why don't they stop baiting Bukharin? How much longer are they going to shout about Bukharin's mistake?

I know of mistakes made by some comrades, in October 1917, for example, compared with which Bukharin's mistake is not even worth noticing. Those comrades were not only mistaken then, but they had the "audacity," on two occasions, to violate a vital decision of the Central Committee adopted under the direction and in the presence of Lenin. Nevertheless, the Party forgot about those mistakes as soon as those comrades admitted them. But compared with those comrades, Bukharin committed an insignificant error. And he did not violate a single Central Committee decision. How is it to be explained that, in spite of this, the unrestrained baiting of Bukharin still continues? What do they really want of Bukharin?

That is how the matter stands with Bukharin's mistake.

Next came the question of Zinoviev's article "The Philosophy of the Epoch" and Kamenev's report at the meeting of the Moscow Plenum in the autumn of this year, at the end of the summer — a question which also strained our internal Party relations. I spoke about this in my speech and I shall not repeat myself. The issue then was "The Philosophy of the Epoch," the mistakes in that article, how we rectified those mistakes, Kamenev's mistakes in connection with the Central Statistical Board's balance of output of grain and fodder, how Kamenev credulously accepted the C.S.B.'s figure of 61 per cent as being the proportion of the market grain in the hands of the upper groups of the peasantry, and how, later, under pressure of our comrades, he was obliged to rectify his mistake in a special statement he made in the Council of Labour and Defence, and which was published in the newspapers, to the effect that more than half of the market grain was in the hands of the middle peasants. All this undoubtedly strained our relations.

Then came questions connected with the October Plenum — new complications, where the opposition demanded an open discussion, where the question of Zalutsky's so-called "Thermidor" came up, and at the end of all this the Leningrad Conference, which on the very first day opened fire on the Central Committee. I have in mind the speeches delivered by Safarov, Sarkis, Shelavin and others. I have in mind Zinoviev's speech, one of his last speeches at the close of the conference, in which he called upon the conference to wage war against the Moscow comrades and proposed that a delegation be elected consisting of people who were willing to fight the Central Committee. That is how it was. And that is precisely why the Bolshevik workers Komarov and Lobov were not included in the

Leningrad delegation (they refused to accept the platform of struggle against the Central Committee). Their places in the delegation were filled by Gordon and Tarkhanov. Put Gordon and Tarkhanov in one scale and Komarov and Lobov in the other, and any unbiassed person will say that the former are not to be compared with the latter. (*Applause.*) What were Lobov and Komarov guilty of? All they were guilty of was that they refused to go against the Central Committee. That was their entire guilt. But only a month before that, the Leningrad comrades nominated Komarov as first secretary of their organisation. That is how it was. Was it so or not? (*Voices from the Leningrad delegation: "It was! It was!"*) What could have happened to Komarov in a month? (*Bukharin: "He degenerated in a month."*) What could have happened in a month to bring it about that a member of the Central Committee, Komarov, whom you yourselves nominated as first secretary of your organisation, was kicked out of the Secretariat of the Leningrad Committee, and that it was not considered possible to elect him as a delegate to the congress? (*A voice from the Leningrad benches: "He insulted the conference." A voice: "That's a lie, Naumov!" Commotion.*)

10. THE OPPOSITION'S PLATFORM

Let us now pass to the platform advanced by Zinoviev and Kamenev, Sokolnikov and Lashevich. It is time to say something about the opposition's platform. It is rather an original one. Many speeches of different kinds have been delivered here by the opposition. Kamenev said one thing, he pulled in one direction; Zinoviev said another thing, he pulled in another direction; Lashevich a third, Sokolnikov a fourth. But in spite of the diversity, all were agreed on one thing. On what

were they agreed? What indeed is their platform? Their platform is — reform of the Secretariat of the Central Committee. The only thing they have in common and that completely unites them is the question of the Secretariat. That is strange and ridiculous, but it is a fact.

This question has a history. In 1923, after the Twelfth Congress, the people who gathered in the "cave" (*laughter*) drew up a platform for the abolition of the Political Bureau and for politicising the Secretariat, i.e., for transforming the Secretariat into a political and organisational directing body to consist of Zinoviev, Trotsky and Stalin. What was the idea behind that platform? What did it mean? It meant leading the Party without Kalinin, without Molotov. Nothing came of that platform, not only because it was unprincipled at that time, but also because, without the comrades I have mentioned, it is impossible to lead the Party at the present time. To a question sent to me in writing from the depths of Kislovodsk I answered in the negative, stating that, if the comrades were to insist, I was willing to clear out without a fuss, without a discussion, open or concealed, and without demanding guarantees for the rights of the minority. (*Laughter.*)

That was, so to speak, the first stage.

And now, it appears, the second stage has been ushered in, opposite to the first. Now they are demanding not the politicisation, but the technicalisation of the Secretariat; not the abolition of the Political Bureau, but full powers for it.

Well, if the transformation of the Secretariat into a simple technical apparatus is really convenient for Kamenev, perhaps we ought to agree to it. I am afraid, however, that the Party will not agree to it. (*A voice: "Quite right!"*) Whether a technical Secretariat would prepare, whether it would be capable of preparing, the questions it would have to prepare both

for the Organising Bureau and for the Political Bureau, I have my doubts.

But when they talk about a Political Bureau with full powers, such a platform deserves to be made into a laughing-stock. Hasn't the Political Bureau full powers? Are not the Secretariat and the Organising Bureau subordinate to the Political Bureau? And what about the plenum of the Central Committee? Why does not our opposition speak about the plenum of the Central Committee? Is it thinking of giving the Political Bureau fuller powers than those possessed by the Plenum?

No, the opposition is positively unlucky with its platform, or platforms, concerning the Secretariat.

11. THEIR "DESIRE FOR PEACE"

What is to be done now, you will ask; what must we do to extricate ourselves from the situation that has been created? This question has engaged our minds all the time, during the congress as well as before it. We need unity of the Party ranks — that is the question now. The opposition is fond of talking about difficulties. But there is one difficulty that is more dangerous than all others, and which the opposition has created for us — the danger of confusion and disorganisation in the Party. (*Applause.*) We must above all overcome that difficulty. We had this in mind when, two days before the congress, we offered the opposition terms of a compromise agreement aimed at a possible reconciliation. Here is the text of our offer:

"The undersigned members of the Central Committee believe that the preparation for the Party congress by a number of leading comrades of the Leningrad organisation was conducted contrary to the line of the Central Committee of the Party and in opposition to the supporters of this line in Leningrad. The undersigned members of the Central Com-

mittee regard the resolution of the Moscow Conference as being absolutely correct both in substance and in form, and believe that it is the Central Committee's duty to rebuff all tendencies that run counter to the Party line and disorganise the Party.

"However, for the sake of maintaining the unity of the Party, peace within the Party, of averting the possible danger of alienating the Leningrad organisation, one of the best organisations in the R.C.P., from the Party's Central Committee — the undersigned consider it possible, if the congress endorses the Central Committee's distinct and clear political line, to make a number of concessions. With this in view we make the following proposals:

"1. In drafting the resolution on the Central Committee's report, to take the resolution of the Moscow Conference as a basis, but to tone down some of its formulations.

"2. The publication in the newspapers, or in bulletins, of the letter of the Leningrad Conference and of the Moscow Committee's reply to that letter to be regarded as inexpedient in the interests of unity.

"3. Members of the Political Bureau . . . are not to speak against each other at the congress.

"4. In speeches at the congress, to dissociate ourselves from Sarkis (on regulating the composition of the Party) and from Safarov (on state capitalism).

"5. The mistake in connection with Komarov, Lobov and Moskvina to be rectified by organisational measures.

"6. The Central Committee's decision to include a Leningrad comrade in the Secretariat of the Central Committee to be put into effect immediately after the congress.

"7. With the view to strengthening connection with the Central Organ, one Party worker from Leningrad to be included in the editorial board of the Central Organ.

"8. In view of the incompetence of the editor of *Leningradskaya Pravda* (Gladnev), to recognise the need to replace him by a more competent comrade by agreement with the Central Committee.

"*Kalinin, Stalin, Molotov, Dzerzhinsky, and others.*

"December 15, 1925"

That is the compromise we offered, comrades.

But the opposition was unwilling to come to an agreement. Instead of peace, it preferred an open and fierce struggle at the congress. Such is the opposition's "desire for peace."

12. THE PARTY WILL ACHIEVE UNITY

In the main, we still adhere to the viewpoint of that document. In our draft resolution, as you know, we have already toned down some of the formulations in the interests of peace in the Party.

We are against amputation. We are against the policy of amputation. That does not mean that leaders will be permitted with impunity to give themselves airs and ride roughshod over the Party. No, excuse us from that. There will be no obeisances to leaders. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*) We stand for unity, we are against amputation. The policy of amputation is abhorrent to us. The Party wants unity, and it will achieve it *with* Kamenev and Zinoviev, if they are willing, *without them* if they are unwilling. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*)

What is needed for unity? That the minority should submit to the majority. Without that there is no unity of the Party, nor can there be.

We are opposed to the publication of a special discussion sheet. *Bolshevik* has a discussion section. That will be quite enough. We must not allow ourselves to be carried away by discussions. We are a Party that is governing a country — do not forget that. Do not forget that every disaccord at the top finds an echo in the country that is harmful to us, not to speak of the effect it has abroad.

The organs of the Central Committee will probably remain in their present shape. The Party is hardly likely to agree to break them up. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*) The

Political Bureau has full powers as it is, it is superior to all the organs of the Central Committee except the plenum. But the supreme organ is the plenum — that is sometimes forgotten. Our plenum decides everything, and it calls its leaders to order when they begin to lose their balance. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Laughter. Applause.*)

There must be unity among us, and there will be if the Party, if the congress displays firmness of character and does not allow itself to be scared. (*Voices: "We won't. We are seasoned people."*) If any of us go too far, we shall be called to order — that is essential, that is necessary. To lead the Party otherwise than collectively is impossible. Now that Ilyich is not with us it is silly to dream of such a thing (*applause*), it is silly to talk about it.

Collective work, collective leadership, unity in the Party, unity in the organs of the Central Committee, with the minority submitting to the majority — that is what we need now.

As regards the Leningrad communist workers, I have no doubt that they will always be in the front ranks of our Party. With them we built the Party, with them we reared it, with them we raised the banner of the uprising in October 1917, with them we defeated the bourgeoisie, with them we combated, and will combat, the difficulties in the path of our work of construction. I am sure that the Leningrad communist workers will not lag behind their friends in the other industrial centres in the struggle for iron, Leninist unity in the Party. (*Stormy applause. The "Internationale" is sung.*)

Pravda, Nos. 291, 292 and 296,
December 20, 22 and 29, 1925

CONCERNING QUESTIONS OF LENINISM

DEDICATED TO THE LENINGRAD
ORGANISATION OF THE C.P.S.U.(B.)

J. STALIN

I

THE DEFINITION OF LENINISM

The pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* contains a definition of Leninism which seems to have received general recognition. It runs as follows:

"Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular."⁴⁰

Is this definition correct?

I think it is correct. It is correct, firstly, because it correctly indicates the historical roots of Leninism, characterising it as Marxism of the *era of imperialism*, as against certain critics of Lenin who wrongly think that Leninism originated after the imperialist war. It is correct, secondly, because it correctly

notes the international character of Leninism, as against Social-Democracy, which considers that Leninism is applicable only to Russian national conditions. It is correct, thirdly, because it correctly notes the organic connection between Leninism and the teachings of Marx, characterising Leninism as *Marxism* of the era of imperialism, as against certain critics of Leninism who consider it not a further development of Marxism, but merely the restoration of Marxism and its application to Russian conditions.

All that, one would think, needs no special comment.

Nevertheless, it appears that there are people in our Party who consider it necessary to define Leninism somewhat differently. Zinoviev, for example, thinks that:

"Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialist wars and of the world revolution *which began directly in a country where the peasantry predominates.*"

What can be the meaning of the words underlined by Zinoviev? What does introducing the backwardness of Russia, its peasant character, into the definition of Leninism mean?

It means transforming Leninism from an international proletarian doctrine into a product of specifically Russian conditions.

It means playing into the hands of Bauer and Kautsky, who deny that Leninism is suitable for other countries, for countries in which capitalism is more developed.

It goes without saying that the peasant question is of very great importance for Russia, that our country is a peasant country. But what significance can this fact have in characterising the foundations of Leninism? Was Leninism elaborated only on Russian soil, for Russia alone, and not on the soil of imperialism, and for the imperialist countries generally? Do such works of Lenin as *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capi-*

talism,³³ *The State and Revolution*,⁴¹ *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*,⁴² "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*,⁴³ etc., apply only to Russia, and not to all imperialist countries in general? Is not Leninism the generalisation of the experience of the revolutionary movement of *all* countries? Are not the fundamentals of the theory and tactics of Leninism suitable, are they not obligatory, for the proletarian parties of *all* countries? Was not Lenin right when he said that "*Bolshevism can serve as a model of tactics for all*"? (See Vol. XXIII, p. 386.)^[1] Was not Lenin right when he spoke about the "*international significance*"* of Soviet power and of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics"? (See Vol. XXV, pp. 171-72.)^[2] Are not, for example, the following words of Lenin correct?

"In Russia, the dictatorship of the proletariat must inevitably differ in certain specific features from that in the advanced countries, owing to the very great backwardness and petty-bourgeois character of our country. But the basic forces — and the basic forms of social economy — are the same in Russia as in any capitalist country, so that *these specific features can relate only to what is not most important*"* (see Vol. XXIV, p. 508).^[3]

But if all that is true, does it not follow that Zinoviev's definition of Leninism cannot be regarded as correct?

How can this nationally restricted definition of Leninism be reconciled with internationalism?

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky. What Is Internationalism?* (1918)

[2] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. I. *In What Sense Can We Speak of the International Significance of the Russian Revolution?* (1920)

[3] Lenin, *Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. (1919)

II

THE MAIN THING IN LENINISM

In the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*, it is stated:

"Some think that the fundamental thing in Leninism is the peasant question, that the point of departure of Leninism is the question of the peasantry, of its role, its relative importance. This is absolutely wrong. The fundamental question of Leninism, its point of departure, is not the peasant question, but the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the conditions under which it can be achieved, of the conditions under which it can be consolidated. The peasant question, as the question of the ally of the proletariat in its struggle for power, is a derivative question."⁴⁴

Is this thesis correct?

I think it is correct. This thesis follows entirely from the definition of Leninism. Indeed, if Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution, and the basic content of the proletarian revolution is the dictatorship of the proletariat, then it is clear that the main thing in Leninism is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the elaboration of this question, the substantiation and concretisation of this question.

Nevertheless, Zinoviev evidently does not agree with this thesis. In his article "In Memory of Lenin," he says:

"As I have already said, the question of the role of the peasantry is the *fundamental question** of Bolshevism, of Leninism."

As you see, Zinoviev's thesis follows entirely from his wrong definition of Leninism. It is therefore as wrong as his definition of Leninism.

Is Lenin's thesis that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the "root content of the proletarian revolution" correct? (See

* My italics. — J. St.

Vol. XXIII, p. 337.)^[1] It is unquestionably correct. Is the thesis that Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution correct? I think it is correct. But what follows from this? From this it follows that the fundamental question of Leninism, its point of departure, its foundation, is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Is it not true that the question of imperialism, the question of the spasmodic character of the development of imperialism, the question of the victory of socialism in one country, the question of the proletarian state, the question of the Soviet form of this state, the question of the role of the Party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of the paths of building socialism — that all these questions were elaborated precisely by Lenin? Is it not true that it is precisely these questions that constitute the basis, the foundation of the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat? Is it not true that without the elaboration of these fundamental questions, the elaboration of the peasant question from the standpoint of the dictatorship of the proletariat would be inconceivable?

It goes without saying that Lenin was an expert on the peasant question. It goes without saying that the peasant question as the question of the ally of the proletariat is of the greatest significance for the proletariat and forms a constituent part of the fundamental question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But is it not clear that if Leninism had not been faced with the fundamental question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the derivative question of the ally of the proletariat, the question of the peasantry, would not have arisen either? Is it not clear that if Leninism had not been faced with the

[1] Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky. How Kautsky Transformed Marx into an Ordinary Liberal.* (1918)

practical question of the conquest of power by the proletariat, the question of an alliance with the peasantry would not have arisen either?

Lenin would not have been the great ideological leader of the proletariat that he unquestionably is — he would have been a simple “peasant philosopher,” as foreign literary philistines often depict him — had he elaborated the peasant question, not on the basis of the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but independently of this basis, apart from this basis.

One or the other:

Either the peasant question is the main thing in Leninism, and in that case Leninism is not suitable, not obligatory, for capitalistically developed countries, for those which are not peasant countries.

Or the main thing in Leninism is the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in that case Leninism is the international doctrine of the proletarians of all lands, suitable and obligatory for all countries without exception, including the capitalistically developed countries.

Here one must choose.

III

THE QUESTION OF “PERMANENT” REVOLUTION

In the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*, the “theory of permanent revolution” is appraised as a “theory” which underestimates the role of the peasantry. There it is stated:

“Consequently, Lenin fought the adherents of ‘permanent’ revolution, not over the question of uninterruptedness, for Lenin himself maintained

the point of view of uninterrupted revolution, but because they underestimated the role of the peasantry, which is an enormous reserve of the proletariat."⁴⁵

This characterisation of the Russian "permanentists" was considered as generally accepted until recently. Nevertheless, although in general correct, it cannot be regarded as exhaustive. The discussion of 1924, on the one hand, and a careful analysis of the works of Lenin, on the other hand, have shown that the mistake of the Russian "permanentists" lay not only in their underestimation of the role of the peasantry, but also in their underestimation of the strength of the proletariat and its capacity to lead the peasantry, in their disbelief in the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat.

That is why, in my pamphlet *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists* (December 1924), I broadened this characterisation and replaced it by another, more complete one. Here is what is stated in that pamphlet:

"Hitherto only *one* aspect of the theory of 'permanent revolution' has usually been noted — lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. Now, in fairness, this must be supplemented by *another* aspect — lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the proletariat in Russia."⁴⁶

This does not mean, of course, that Leninism has been or is opposed to the idea of permanent revolution, without quotation marks, which was proclaimed by Marx in the forties of the last century.⁴⁷ On the contrary, Lenin was the only Marxist who correctly understood and developed the idea of permanent revolution. What distinguishes Lenin from the "permanentists" on this question is that the "permanentists" distorted Marx's idea of permanent revolution and transformed it into lifeless, bookish wisdom, whereas Lenin took it in its pure form and made it one of the foundations of his own theory of revolu-

tion. It should be borne in mind that the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, propounded by Lenin as long ago as 1905, is one of the forms of the embodiment of Marx's theory of permanent revolution. Here is what Lenin wrote about this as far back as 1905:

"From the democratic revolution we shall at once, and just to the extent of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. *We stand for uninterrupted revolution.** We shall not stop halfway. . . .

"Without succumbing to adventurism or going against our scientific conscience, without striving for cheap popularity, we can and do say *only one thing*: we shall put every effort into assisting the entire peasantry to carry out the democratic revolution *in order thereby to make it easier* for us, the party of the proletariat, to pass on, as quickly as possible, to the new and higher task — the socialist revolution" (see Vol. VIII, pp. 186-87).^[1]

And here is what Lenin wrote on this subject sixteen years later, after the conquest of power by the proletariat:

"The Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis, and other heroes of 'Two-and-a-Half' Marxism were incapable of understanding . . . the relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. *The first grows over into the second.** The second, in passing, solves the questions of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 26).^[2]

I draw special attention to the first of the above quotations, taken from Lenin's article entitled "The Attitude of Social-

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The Attitude of Social-Democracy Towards the Peasant Movement*. (1905)

[2] Lenin, *The Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution*. (1921)

Democracy Towards the Peasant Movement," published on September 1, 1905. I emphasise this for the information of those who still continue to assert that Lenin arrived at the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, that is to say, the idea of permanent revolution, after the imperialist war. This quotation leaves no doubt that these people are profoundly mistaken.

IV

THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

What are the characteristic features of the proletarian revolution as distinct from the bourgeois revolution?

The distinction between the proletarian revolution and the bourgeois revolution may be reduced to five main points.

1) The bourgeois revolution usually begins when there already exist more or less ready-made forms belonging to the capitalist order, forms which have grown and matured within the womb of feudal society prior to the open revolution, whereas the proletarian revolution begins when ready-made forms belonging to the socialist order are either absent, or almost absent.

2) The main task of the bourgeois revolution consists in seizing power and making it conform to the already existing bourgeois economy, whereas the main task of the proletarian revolution consists, after seizing power, in building a new, socialist economy.

3) The bourgeois revolution is usually *consummated* with the seizure of power, whereas in the proletarian revolution the seizure of power is only the *beginning*, and power is used as

a lever for transforming the old economy and organising the new one.

4) The bourgeois revolution limits itself to replacing one group of exploiters in power by another group of exploiters, in view of which it need not smash the old state machine; whereas the proletarian revolution removes all exploiting groups from power and places in power the leader of all the toilers and exploited, the class of proletarians, in view of which it cannot manage without smashing the old state machine and substituting a new one for it.

5) The bourgeois revolution cannot rally the millions of the toiling and exploited masses around the bourgeoisie for any length of time, for the very reason that they are toilers and exploited; whereas the proletarian revolution can and must link them, precisely as toilers and exploited, in a durable alliance with the proletariat, if it wishes to carry out its main task of consolidating the power of the proletariat and building a new, socialist economy.

Here are some of Lenin's main theses on this subject:

"One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution," says Lenin, "is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, the new economic organisations are gradually created in the womb of the old order, gradually changing all the aspects of feudal society. Bourgeois revolution was confronted by only one task — to sweep away, to cast aside, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding society. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfils 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 history, has proved to be the one to start the socialist revolution, the more difficult it is for it to pass from the old capitalist relations to socialist relations. To the tasks of destruction are added new tasks of unprecedented difficulty — organisational tasks" (see Vol. XXII, p. 315).^[1]

[1] Lenin, *Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 6-8, 1918. 1. *Report on War and Peace*. March 7.

"Had not the popular creative spirit of the Russian revolution," continues Lenin, "which had gone through the great experience of the year 1905, given rise to the Soviets as early as February 1917, they could not under any circumstances have seized power in October, because success depended entirely upon the existence of ready-made organisational forms of a movement embracing millions. These ready-made forms were the Soviets, and that is why in the political sphere there awaited us those brilliant successes, the continuous triumphant march, that we experienced; for the new form of political power was ready to hand, 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 existed in the first months of the revolution into a legally recognised form which has become established in the Russian state — i.e., into the Russian Soviet Republic" (*ibid.*).

"But two problems of enormous difficulty still remained," says Lenin, "the solution of which could not possibly be the triumphant march which our revolution experienced in the first months . . ." (*ibid.*).

"Firstly, there were the problems of internal organisation, which confront every socialist revolution. The difference between socialist revolution and bourgeois revolution lies precisely in the fact that the latter finds ready-made forms of capitalist relationships, while Soviet power — proletarian power — does not inherit such ready-made relationships, if we leave out of account the most developed forms of capitalism, which, strictly speaking, extended to but a small top layer of industry and hardly touched agriculture. The organisation of accounting, the control of large enterprises, the transformation of the whole of the state economic mechanism into a single huge machine, into an economic organism that works in such a way that hundreds of millions of people are guided by a single plan — such was the enormous organisational problem that rested on our shoulders. Under the present conditions of labour this problem could not possibly be solved by the 'hurrah' methods by which we were able to solve the problems of the Civil War" (*ibid.*, p. 316).^[1]

"The second enormous difficulty . . . was the international question. The reason why we were able to cope so easily with Kerensky's gangs, why we so easily established our power and without the slightest difficulty passed the decrees on the socialisation of the land and on workers' control, the reason why we achieved all this so easily was only that a fortunate combination of circumstances protected us for a short time from

[1] *Ibid.*

international imperialism. International imperialism, with the entire might of its capital, with its highly organised military technique, which is a real force, a real fortress of international capital, could in no case, under no circumstances, live side by side with the Soviet Republic, both because of its objective position and because of the economic interests of the capitalist class which is embodied in it — it could not do so because of commercial connections, of international financial relations. In this sphere a conflict is inevitable. Therein lies the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its greatest historical problem: the necessity of solving the international tasks, the necessity of calling forth an international revolution" (see Vol. XXII, p. 317).^[1]

Such is the intrinsic character and the basic meaning of the proletarian revolution.

Can such a radical transformation of the old bourgeois order be achieved without a violent revolution, without the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Obviously not. To think that such a revolution can be carried out peacefully, within the framework of bourgeois democracy, which is adapted to the rule of the bourgeoisie, means that one has either gone out of one's mind and lost normal human understanding, or has grossly and openly repudiated the proletarian revolution.

This thesis must be emphasised all the more strongly and categorically for the reason that we are dealing with the proletarian revolution which for the time being has triumphed only in one country, a country which is surrounded by hostile capitalist countries and the bourgeoisie of which cannot fail to receive the support of international capital.

That is why Lenin says that:

"The emancipation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, *but also without the destruction*

[1] *Ibid.*

of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class" (see Vol. XXI, p. 373).^[1]

"First let the majority of the population, while private property still exists, i.e., while the rule and yoke of capital still exists, express themselves in favour of the party of the proletariat, and only then can and should the party take power — *so say the petty-bourgeois democrats who call themselves 'Socialists' but who are in reality the servitors of the bourgeoisie*"* (see Vol. XXIV, p. 647).^[2]

"*We say:** Let the revolutionary proletariat first overthrow the bourgeoisie, break the yoke of capital, and smash the bourgeois state apparatus, then the victorious proletariat will be able rapidly to gain the sympathy and support of the majority of the toiling non-proletarian masses by satisfying their needs at the expense of the exploiters" (*ibid.*).

"In order to win the majority of the population to its side," Lenin says further, "the proletariat must, in the first place, overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize state power; secondly, it must introduce Soviet power and smash the old state apparatus to bits, whereby it immediately undermines the rule, prestige and influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the non-proletarian toiling masses. Thirdly, it must *entirely destroy* the influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the *majority* of the non-proletarian toiling masses by satisfying *their* economic needs in a revolutionary way at the expense of the exploiters" (*ibid.*, p. 641).^[3]

Such are the characteristic features of the proletarian revolution.

What, in this connection, are the main features of the dictatorship of the proletariat, once it is admitted that the

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The State and Revolution*. Chapter I. *Class Society and the State*. 1. *The State as the Product of the Irreconcilability of Class Antagonisms*. (1917)

[2] Lenin, *The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. VI. (1919)

[3] Lenin, *The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. IV. (1919)

dictatorship of the proletariat is the basic content of the proletarian revolution?

Here is the most general definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat given by Lenin:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is not the end of the class struggle, but its continuation in new forms. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class struggle of the proletariat, which has won victory and has seized political power, against the bourgeoisie, which although vanquished has not been annihilated, has not disappeared, has not ceased its resistance, has increased its resistance" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).^[1]

Arguing against confusing the dictatorship of the proletariat with "popular" government, "elected by all," with "non-class" government, Lenin says:

"The class which took political power into its hands did so knowing that it took power *alone*.* That is a part of the concept dictatorship of the proletariat. This concept has meaning only when this one class knows that it alone is taking political power in its hands, and does not deceive itself or others with talk about 'popular' government, 'elected by all, sanctified by the whole people'" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 286).^[2]

This does not mean, however, that the power of one class, the class of the proletarians, which does not and cannot share power with other classes, does not need aid from, and an alliance with, the labouring and exploited masses of other classes for the achievement of its aims. On the contrary. This power, the power of one class, can be firmly established and exercised to the full only by means of a special form of alliance between the class of proletarians and the labouring masses of

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Foreword to the Published Speech "Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality."* (1919)

[2] Lenin, *Speech Delivered at the All-Russian Congress of Transport Workers.* March 27, 1921.

the petty-bourgeois classes, primarily the labouring masses of the peasantry.

What is this special form of alliance? What does it consist in? Does not this alliance with the labouring masses of other, non-proletarian, classes wholly contradict the idea of the dictatorship of one class?

This special form of alliance consists in that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat. This special form of alliance consists in that the leader of the state, the leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat is *one* party, the party of the proletariat, the Party of the Communists, which *does not and cannot share* leadership with other parties.

As you see, the contradiction is only an apparent, a seeming one.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat," says Lenin, "*is a special form of class alliance* between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of working people (the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these; it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital, at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and of any attempt on its part at restoration, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of socialism. It is a special type of alliance, which is being built up in special circumstances, namely, in the circumstances of fierce civil war; it is an alliance of the firm supporters of socialism with the latter's wavering allies and sometimes with 'neutrals' (then instead of an agreement for struggle, the alliance becomes an agreement for neutrality), *an alliance between classes which differ economically, politically, socially and ideologically*"* (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).^[1]

In one of his instructional reports, Kamenev, disputing this conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat, states:

* My italics. — J. St.

^[1] Lenin, *Foreword to the Published Speech "Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality."* (1919)

"The dictatorship *is not** an alliance of one class with another."

I believe that Kamenev here has in view, primarily, a passage in my pamphlet *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*, where it is stated:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is not simply a governmental top stratum 'skilfully' 'selected' by the careful hand of an 'experienced strategist,' and 'judiciously relying' on the support of one section or another of the population. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the class alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for achieving the final victory of socialism, on the condition that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat."⁴⁸

I wholly endorse this formulation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for I think that it fully and entirely coincides with Lenin's formulation, just quoted.

I assert that Kamenev's statement that "the dictatorship is *not* an alliance of one class with another," in the categorical form in which it is made, has nothing in common with Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

I assert that such statements can be made only by people who have failed to understand the meaning of the idea of the bond, the idea of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry, the idea of the *hegemony* of the proletariat within this alliance.

Such statements can be made only by people who have failed to understand Lenin's thesis:

"*Only an agreement with the peasantry** can save the socialist revolution in Russia as long as the revolution in other countries has not taken place" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 238).^[1]

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8-16, 1921. 6. *Report on the Substitution of a Tax in Kind for the Surplus-Grain Appropriation System*. March 15.

Such statements can be made only by people who have failed to understand Lenin's thesis:

"*The supreme principle of the dictatorship** is the maintenance of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and state power" (*ibid.*, p. 460).^[1]

Pointing out one of the most important aims of the dictatorship, the aim of suppressing the exploiters, Lenin says:

"The scientific concept of dictatorship means nothing more nor less than completely unrestricted power, absolutely unimpeded by laws or regulations and resting directly on the use of force" (see Vol. XXV, p. 441).^[2]

"Dictatorship means — note this once and for all, Messrs. Cadets — unrestricted power, based on force and not on law. In time of civil war any victorious power can be only a dictatorship" (see Vol. XXV, p. 436).^[3]

But of course, the dictatorship of the proletariat does not mean only the use of force, although there is no dictatorship without the use of force.

"Dictatorship," says Lenin, "does not mean only the use of force, although it is impossible without the use of force; it also means the organisation of labour on a higher level than the previous organisation" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 305).^[4]

"The dictatorship of the proletariat . . . is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this revolutionary use of force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism.

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Third Congress of the Communist International*. June 22-July 12, 1921. 4. *Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P.* July 5.

[2] Lenin, *A Contribution to the History of the Question of the Dictatorship*. (1920)

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Lenin, *First All-Russian Congress on Adult Education*. May 6-19, 1919. 2. *Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality*. May 19. V.

This is the essence. This is the source of the strength and the guarantee of the inevitable complete triumph of communism" (see Vol. XXIV, pp. 335-36).^[1]

"Its quintessence (i.e., of the dictatorship — *J. St.*) is the organisation and discipline of the advanced detachment of the working people, of its vanguard, its sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, to abolish the division of society into classes, to make all members of society working people, to remove the basis for any exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because the reorganisation of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois conduct of economy can be overcome only by a long and stubborn struggle. That is why Marx spoke of an entire period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the period of transition from capitalism to socialism" (*ibid.*, p. 314).^[2]

Such are the characteristic features of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Hence the three main aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

1) The utilisation of the rule of the proletariat for the suppression of the exploiters, for the defence of the country, for the consolidation of the ties with the proletarians of other lands, and for the development and victory of the revolution in all countries.

2) The utilisation of the rule of the proletariat in order to detach the labouring and exploited masses once and for all from the bourgeoisie, to consolidate the alliance of the proletariat with these masses, to draw these masses into the work of socialist construction, and to ensure the state leadership of these masses by the proletariat.

[1] Lenin, *A Great Beginning*. (1919)

[2] Lenin, *Greetings to the Hungarian Workers*. (1919)

3) The utilisation of the rule of the proletariat for the organisation of socialism, for the abolition of classes, for the transition to a society without classes, to a socialist society.

The proletarian dictatorship is a combination of all these three aspects. No single one of these aspects can be advanced as the *sole* characteristic feature of the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the other hand, in the circumstances of capitalist encirclement, the absence of even one of these features is sufficient for the dictatorship of the proletariat to cease being a dictatorship. Therefore, not one of these three aspects can be omitted without running the risk of distorting the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only all these three aspects taken together give us the complete and finished concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The dictatorship of the proletariat has its periods, its special forms, diverse methods of work. During the period of civil war, it is the forcible aspect of the dictatorship that is most conspicuous. But it by no means follows from this that no constructive work is carried on during the period of civil war. Without constructive work it is impossible to wage civil war. During the period of socialist construction, on the other hand, it is the peaceful, organisational and cultural work of the dictatorship, revolutionary law, etc., that are most conspicuous. But, again, it by no means follows from this that the forcible aspect of the dictatorship has ceased to exist or can cease to exist in the period of construction. The organs of suppression, the army and other organisations, are as necessary now, at the time of construction, as they were during the period of civil war. Without these organs, constructive work by the dictatorship with any degree of security would be impossible. It should not be forgotten that for the time being the revolution has been victorious in only one country. It should not be forgotten

that as long as capitalist encirclement exists the danger of intervention, with all the consequences resulting from this danger, will also exist.

V

THE PARTY AND THE WORKING CLASS IN THE SYSTEM OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

I have dealt above with the dictatorship of the proletariat from the point of view of its historical inevitability, from the point of view of its class content, from the point of view of its state nature, and, finally, from the point of view of the destructive and creative tasks which it performs throughout the entire historical period that is termed the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Now we must say something about the dictatorship of the proletariat from the point of view of its structure, from the point of view of its "mechanism," from the point of view of the role and significance of the "transmission belts," the "levers," and the "directing force" which in their totality constitute "the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*Lenin*), and with the help of which the daily work of the dictatorship of the proletariat is accomplished.

What are these "transmission belts" or "levers" in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat? What is this "directing force"? Why are they needed?

The levers or transmission belts are those very mass organisations of the proletariat without the aid of which the dictatorship cannot be realised.

The directing force is the advanced detachment of the proletariat, its vanguard, which is the main guiding force of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The proletariat needs these transmission belts, these levers, and this directing force, because without them, in its struggle for victory, it would be a weaponless army in face of organised and armed capital. The proletariat needs these organisations because without them it would suffer inevitable defeat in its fight for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in its fight for the consolidation of its rule, in its fight for the building of socialism. The systematic help of these organisations and the directing force of the vanguard are needed because in the absence of these conditions it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be at all durable and firm.

What are these organisations?

Firstly, there are the workers' *trade unions*, with their central and local ramifications in the shape of a whole series of organisations concerned with production, culture, education, etc. These unite the workers of all trades. They are non-Party organisations. The trade unions may be termed the all-embracing organisation of the working class, which is in power in our country. They are a school of communism. They promote the best people from their midst for the work of leadership in all branches of administration. They form the link between the advanced and the backward elements in the ranks of the working class. They connect the masses of the workers with the vanguard of the working class.

Secondly, there are the *Soviets*, with their numerous central and local ramifications in the shape of administrative, economic, military, cultural and other state organisations, plus the innumerable mass associations of the working people which have sprung up of their own accord and which encompass these

organisations and connect them with the population. The Soviets are a mass organisation of all the working people of town and country. They are a non-Party organisation. The Soviets are the direct expression of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is through the Soviets that all measures for strengthening the dictatorship and for building socialism are carried out. It is through the Soviets that the state leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat is exercised. The Soviets connect the vast masses of the working people with the vanguard of the proletariat.

Thirdly, there are the *co-operatives* of all kinds, with all their ramifications. These are a mass organisation of the working people, a non-Party organisation, which unites the working people primarily as consumers, and also, in the course of time, as producers (agricultural co-operatives). The co-operatives acquire special significance after the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, during the period of extensive construction. They facilitate contact between the vanguard of the proletariat and the mass of the peasantry and make it possible to draw the latter into the channel of socialist construction.

Fourthly, there is the *Youth League*. This is a mass organisation of young workers and peasants; it is a non-Party organisation, but is linked with the Party. Its task is to help the Party to educate the young generation in the spirit of socialism. It provides young reserves for all the other mass organisations of the proletariat in all branches of administration. The Youth League has acquired special significance since the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the period of extensive cultural and educational work carried on by the proletariat.

Lastly, there is the *Party* of the proletariat, its vanguard. Its strength lies in the fact that it draws into its ranks all the best elements of the proletariat from all the mass organisations of the latter. Its function is to *combine* the work of all the mass organisations of the proletariat without exception and to *direct* their activities towards a single goal, the goal of the emancipation of the proletariat. And it is absolutely necessary to combine and direct them towards a single goal, for otherwise unity in the struggle of the proletariat is impossible, for otherwise the guidance of the proletarian masses in their struggle for power, in their struggle for building socialism, is impossible. But only the vanguard of the proletariat, its Party, is capable of combining and directing the work of the mass organisations of the proletariat. Only the party of the proletariat, only the Communist Party, is capable of fulfilling this role of main leader in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Why?

“... because, in the first place, it is the rallying centre of the finest elements in the working class, who have direct connections with the non-Party organisations of the proletariat and very frequently lead them; because, secondly, the Party, as the rallying centre of the finest members of the working class, is the best school for training leaders of the working class, capable of directing every form of organisation of their class; because, thirdly, the Party, as the best school for training leaders of the working class, is, by reason of its experience and prestige, the only organisation capable of centralising the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat, thus transforming each and every non-Party organisation of the working class into an auxiliary body and transmission belt linking the Party with the class” (see *The Foundations of Leninism*⁴⁹).

The Party is the main guiding force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

“The Party is the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat” (*Lenin*).

To sum up: the *trade unions*, as the mass organisation of the proletariat, linking the Party with the class primarily in the sphere of production; the *Soviets*, as the mass organisation of the working people, linking the Party with the latter primarily in the sphere of state administration; the *co-operatives*, as the mass organisation mainly of the peasantry, linking the Party with the peasant masses primarily in the economic sphere, in the sphere of drawing the peasantry into the work of socialist construction; the *Youth League*, as the mass organisation of young workers and peasants, whose mission it is to help the vanguard of the proletariat in the socialist education of the new generation and in training young reserves; and, finally, the *Party*, as the main directing force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, whose mission it is to lead all these mass organisations — such, in general, is the picture of the “mechanism” of the dictatorship, the picture of “the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.”

Without the Party as the main guiding force, it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be at all durable and firm.

Thus, in the words of Lenin, “taken as a whole, we have a formally non-communist, flexible and relatively wide, and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely linked with the *class* and with the *masses*, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the *dictatorship of the class* is exercised” (see Vol. XXV, p. 192).^[1]

Of course, this must not be understood in the sense that the Party can or should take the place of the trade unions, the Soviets, and the other mass organisations. The Party exercises

[1] Lenin, “*Left-Wing*” Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VI. Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions? (1920)

the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, it exercises it not directly, but with the help of the trade unions, and through the Soviets and their ramifications. Without these "transmission belts," it would be impossible for the dictatorship to be at all firm.

"It is impossible to exercise the dictatorship," says Lenin, "without having a number of 'transmission belts' from the vanguard to the mass of the advanced class, and from the latter to the mass of the working people" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 65).^[1]

"The Party, so to speak, draws into its ranks the vanguard of the proletariat, and this vanguard exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. Without a foundation like the trade unions the dictatorship cannot be exercised, state functions cannot be fulfilled. And these functions have to be exercised *through** a number of special institutions also of a new type, namely, *through** the Soviet apparatus" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 64).^[2]

The highest expression of the leading role of the Party, here, in the Soviet Union, in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for example, is the fact that not a single important political or organisational question is decided by our Soviet and other mass organisations without guiding directives from the Party. *In this sense* it could be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat is, *in essence*, the "dictatorship" of its vanguard, the "dictatorship" of its Party, as the main guiding force of the proletariat. Here is what Lenin said on this subject at the Second Congress of the Comintern:⁵⁰

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The Trade Unions, the Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes. Speech Delivered at a Joint Meeting of Communist Delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, Communist Members of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions and Communist Members of the Moscow Gubernia Council of Trade Unions.* December 30, 1920.

[2] *Ibid.*

"Tanner says that he stands for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the dictatorship of the proletariat is not conceived quite in the same way as we conceive it. He says that by the dictatorship of the proletariat we mean, *in essence*,* the dictatorship of its organised and class-conscious minority.

"And, as a matter of fact, in the era of capitalism, when the masses of the workers are continuously subjected to exploitation and cannot develop their human potentialities, the most characteristic feature of working-class political parties is that they can embrace only a minority of their class. A political party can comprise only a minority of the class, in the same way as the really class-conscious workers in every capitalist society constitute only a minority of all the workers. That is why we must admit that only this class-conscious minority can guide the broad masses of the workers and lead them. And if Comrade Tanner says that he is opposed to parties, but at the same time is in favour of the minority consisting of the best organised and most revolutionary workers showing the way to the whole of the proletariat, then I say that there is really no difference between us" (see Vol. XXV, p. 347).^[1]

But this, however, must not be understood in the sense that a *sign of equality* can be put between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the Party (the "dictatorship" of the Party), that the former can be *identified* with the latter, that the latter can be *substituted* for the former. Sorin, for example, says that "*the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our Party*." This thesis, as you see, identifies the "dictatorship of the Party" with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Can we regard this identification as correct and yet remain on the ground of Leninism? No, we cannot. And for the following reasons:

Firstly. In the passage from his speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern quoted above, Lenin does not by any

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Second Congress of the Communist International*. July 19-August 7, 1920. 2. *Speech on the Role of the Communist Party*. July 23.

means identify the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat. He merely says that "only this class-conscious minority (i.e., the Party — *J. St.*) can guide the broad masses of the workers and lead them," that it is *precisely in this sense* that "by the dictatorship of the proletariat we mean, *in essence*,* the dictatorship of its organised and class-conscious minority."

To say "in essence" does not mean "wholly." We often say that the national question is, in essence, a peasant question. And this is quite true. But this does not mean that the national question is covered by the peasant question, that the peasant question is equal in scope to the national question, that the peasant question and the national question are identical. There is no need to prove that the national question is wider and richer in its scope than the peasant question. The same must be said by analogy as regards the leading role of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Although the Party carries out the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in this sense the dictatorship of the proletariat is, *in essence*, the "dictatorship" of its Party, this does not mean that the "dictatorship of the Party" (its leading role) is *identical* with the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the former is *equal* in scope to the latter. There is no need to prove that the dictatorship of the proletariat is wider and richer in its scope than the leading role of the Party. The Party carries out the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it carries out the dictatorship of the *proletariat*, and not any other kind of dictatorship. Whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes "dictatorship" of the Party for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

* My italics. — *J. St.*

Secondly. Not a single important decision is arrived at by the mass organisations of the proletariat without guiding directives from the Party. That is perfectly true. But does that mean that the dictatorship of the proletariat *consists entirely* of the guiding directives given by the Party? Does that mean that, in view of this, the guiding directives of the Party can be identified with the dictatorship of the proletariat? Of course not. The dictatorship of the proletariat consists of the guiding directives of the Party plus the carrying out of these directives by the mass organisations of the proletariat, plus their fulfilment by the population. Here, as you see, we have to deal with a whole series of transitions and intermediary steps which are by no means unimportant elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence, between the guiding directives of the Party and their fulfilment lie the will and actions of those who are led, the will and actions of the class, its willingness (or unwillingness) to support such directives, its ability (or inability) to carry out these directives, its ability (or inability) to carry them out in strict accordance with the demands of the situation. It scarcely needs proof that the Party, having taken the leadership into its hands, cannot but reckon with the will, the condition, the level of political consciousness of those who are led, cannot leave out of account the will, the condition, and level of political consciousness of its class. Therefore, whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes the directives given by the Party for the will and actions of the class.

Thirdly. "The dictatorship of the proletariat," says Lenin, "is the class struggle of the proletariat, which has won victory

and has seized political power" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 311).^[1] How can this *class* struggle find expression? It may find expression in a series of armed actions by the proletariat against the sorties of the overthrown bourgeoisie, or against the intervention of the foreign bourgeoisie. It may find expression in civil war, if the power of the proletariat has not yet been consolidated. It may find expression, after power has already been consolidated, in the extensive organisational and constructive work of the proletariat, with the enlistment of the broad masses in this work. In all these cases, the acting force is the proletariat as *a class*. It has never happened that the Party, the Party alone, has undertaken all these actions with only its own forces, without the support of the class. Usually it only directs these actions, and it can direct them only to the extent that it has the support of the class. For the Party cannot cover, cannot replace the class. For, despite all its important leading role, the Party still remains *a part* of the class. Therefore, whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes the Party for the class.

Fourthly. The Party exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. "The Party is the direct governing vanguard of the proletariat; it is the leader" (*Lenin*).⁵¹ In this sense the Party *takes* power, the Party *governs the country*. But this must not be understood in the sense that the Party exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat separately from the state power, without the state power; that the Party governs the country separately from the Soviets, not through the Soviets. This does not mean that the Party can be identified with the Soviets, with the state

[1] Lenin, *Foreword to the Published Speech "Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality."* (1919)

power. The Party is the core of this power, but it is not and cannot be identified with the state power.

"As the ruling Party," says Lenin, "we could not but merge the Soviet 'top leadership' with the Party 'top leadership' — in our country they are merged and will remain so" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 208).^[1] This is quite true. But by this Lenin by no means wants to imply that our Soviet institutions as a whole, for instance our army, our transport, our economic institutions, etc., are Party institutions, that the Party can replace the Soviets and their ramifications, that the Party can be identified with the state power. Lenin repeatedly said that "the system of Soviets is the dictatorship of the proletariat," and that "the Soviet power is the dictatorship of the proletariat" (see Vol. XXIV, pp. 15, 14);^[2] but he never said that the Party is the state power, that the Soviets and the Party are one and the same thing. The Party, with a membership of several hundred thousand, guides the Soviets and their central and local ramifications, which embrace tens of millions of people, both Party and non-Party, but it cannot and should not supplant them. That is why Lenin says that "the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organised in the Soviets, the proletariat led by the Communist Party of Bolsheviki"; that "all the work of the Party is carried on *through** the Soviets, which embrace the labouring masses irrespective of occupation" (see

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8-16, 1921. 2. *Report on the Political Work of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8.

[2] Lenin, *First Congress of the Communist International*. March 2-6, 1919. 2. *Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. March 4.

Vol. XXV, pp. 192, 193);^[1] and that the dictatorship "has to be exercised . . . *through** the Soviet apparatus" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 64).^[2] Therefore, whoever identifies the leading role of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat substitutes the Party for the Soviets, i.e., for the state power.

Fifthly. The concept of dictatorship of the proletariat is a state concept. The dictatorship of the proletariat necessarily includes the concept of force. There is no dictatorship without the use of force, if dictatorship is to be understood in the strict sense of the word. Lenin defines the dictatorship of the proletariat as "power based directly on the *use of force*" (see Vol. XIX, p. 315).^[3] Hence, to talk about dictatorship of the Party *in relation to the proletarian class*, and to identify it with the dictatorship of the proletariat, is tantamount to saying that in relation to its class the Party must be not only a guide, not only a leader and teacher, but also a sort of dictator employing force against it, which, of course, is quite incorrect. Therefore, whoever identifies "dictatorship of the Party" with the dictatorship of the proletariat tacitly proceeds from the assumption that the prestige of the Party can be built up on force employed against the working class, which is absurd and quite incompatible with Leninism. The prestige of the Party is sustained by the confidence of the working class. And the confidence of the working class is gained not by force — force

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VI. Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions? (1920)

[2] Lenin, *The Trade Unions, the Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes. Speech Delivered at a Joint Meeting of Communist Delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, Communist Members of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions and Communist Members of the Moscow Gubernia Council of Trade Unions.* December 30, 1920.

[3] Lenin, *The "Disarmament" Slogan.* I. (1916)

only kills it — but by the Party's correct theory, by the Party's correct policy, by the Party's devotion to the working class, by its connection with the masses of the working class, by its readiness and ability to *convince* the masses of the correctness of its slogans.

What, then, follows from all this?

From this it follows that:

1) Lenin uses the word *dictatorship* of the Party not in the strict sense of the word ("power based on the use of force"), but in the figurative sense, in the sense of its undivided leadership.

2) Whoever identifies the leadership of the Party with the *dictatorship* of the proletariat distorts Lenin, wrongly attributing to the Party the function of employing force against the working class as a whole.

3) Whoever attributes to the Party the function, which it does not possess, of employing force against the working class as a whole, violates the elementary requirements of correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class, between the Party and the proletariat.

Thus, we have come right up to the question of the mutual relations between the Party and the class, between Party and non-Party members of the working class.

Lenin defines these mutual relations as "*mutual confidence** between the vanguard of the working class and the mass of the workers" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 235).^[1]

What does this mean?

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8-16, 1921. 5. *Speech on the Trade Unions*. March 14.

It means, firstly, that the Party must closely heed the voice of the masses; that it must pay careful attention to the revolutionary instinct of the masses; that it must study the practice of the struggle of the masses and on this basis test the correctness of its own policy; that, consequently, it must not only teach the masses, but also learn from them.

It means, secondly, that the Party must day by day win the confidence of the proletarian masses; that it must by its policy and work secure the support of the masses; that it must not command but primarily convince the masses, helping them to realise through their own experience the correctness of the policy of the Party; that, consequently, it must be the guide, the leader and teacher of its class.

To violate these conditions means to upset the correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class, to undermine "mutual confidence," to shatter both class and Party discipline.

"Certainly," says Lenin, "almost everyone now realises that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, without the strictest, truly iron discipline in our Party, and *without the fullest and unreserved support of the latter by the whole mass of the working class*,* that is, by all its thinking, honest, self-sacrificing and influential elements, capable of leading or of carrying with them the backward strata" (see Vol. XXV, p. 173).^[1]

"The dictatorship of the proletariat," says Lenin further, "is a stubborn struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party *enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given*

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. II. One of the Fundamental Conditions for the Bolsheviks' Success. (1920)

*class,** without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully" (see Vol. XXV, p. 190).^[1]

But how does the Party acquire this confidence and support of the class? How is the iron discipline necessary for the dictatorship of the proletariat built up within the working class; on what soil does it grow up?

Here is what Lenin says on this subject:

"How is the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? Firstly, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its stamina, self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent, if you like, *to merge with the broadest masses of the working people** — primarily with the proletarian, *but also with the non-proletarian*, labouring masses. Thirdly, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided that the broadest masses have been convinced *through their own experience* of this correctness. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party that is really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, attempts to establish discipline inevitably become a cipher, an empty phrase, mere affectation. On the other hand, these conditions cannot arise all at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated only by correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement" (see Vol. XXV, p. 174).^[2]

And further:

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. V. "*Left-Wing*" Communism in Germany: Leaders — Party — Class — Masses. (1920)

[2] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. II. One of the Fundamental Conditions for the Bolsheviks' Success. (1920)

"Victory over capitalism requires the correct correlation between the leading, Communist, Party, the revolutionary class — the proletariat — and the masses, i.e., the working people and exploited as a whole. Only the Communist Party, if it is really the vanguard of the revolutionary class, if it contains all the best representatives of that class, if it consists of fully class-conscious and devoted Communists who have been educated and steeled by the experience of stubborn revolutionary struggle, if this Party has succeeded in linking itself inseparably with the whole life of its class and, through it, with the whole mass of exploited, and if it has succeeded in inspiring *the complete confidence* of this class and *this mass** — only such a party is capable of leading the proletariat in the most ruthless, resolute and final struggle against all the forces of capitalism. On the other hand, only under the leadership of such a party can the proletariat develop the full might of its revolutionary onslaught and nullify the inevitable apathy and, partly, resistance of the small minority of the labour aristocracy corrupted by capitalism, and of the old trade-union and co-operative leaders, etc. — only then will it be able to display its full strength, which, owing to the very economic structure of capitalist society, is immeasurably greater than the proportion of the population it constitutes" (see Vol. XXV, p. 315).^[1]

From these quotations it follows that:

1) The prestige of the Party and the iron discipline within the working class that are necessary for the dictatorship of the proletariat are built up not on fear or on "unrestricted" rights of the Party, but on the confidence of the working class in the Party, on the support which the Party receives from the working class.

2) The confidence of the working class in the Party is not acquired at one stroke, and not by means of force against the working class, but by the Party's prolonged work among the masses, by the correct policy of the Party, by the ability of the

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Theses on the Fundamental Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International*. I. *The Essence of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and of Soviet Power*. (1920)

Party to convince the masses through their own experience of the correctness of its policy, by the ability of the Party to secure the support of the working class and to take the lead of the masses of the working class.

3) Without a correct Party policy, reinforced by the experience of the struggle of the masses, and without the confidence of the working class, there is not and cannot be real leadership by the Party.

4) The Party and its leadership, if the Party enjoys the confidence of the class, and if this leadership is real leadership, cannot be counterposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, because without the leadership of the Party (the "dictatorship" of the Party), enjoying the confidence of the working class, it is impossible for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be at all firm.

Without these conditions, the prestige of the Party and iron discipline within the working class are either empty phrases or boastfulness and adventurism.

It is impossible to counterpose the dictatorship of the proletariat to the leadership (the "dictatorship") of the Party. It is impossible because the leadership of the Party is the principal thing in the dictatorship of the proletariat, if we have in mind a dictatorship that is at all firm and complete, and not one like the Paris Commune, for instance, which was neither a complete nor a firm dictatorship. It is impossible because the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leadership of the Party lie, as it were, on the same line of activity, operate in the same direction.

"The mere presentation of the question," says Lenin, "'dictatorship of the Party *or* dictatorship of the class? dictatorship (Party) of the leaders *or* dictatorship (Party) of the masses?' testifies to the most incredible and hopeless confusion of thought. . . . Everyone knows that the masses are

divided into classes. . . ; that usually, and in the majority of cases, at least in modern civilised countries, classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders. . . . To go so far . . . as to counterpose, in general, dictatorship of the masses to dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd and stupid" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 187, 188).^[1]

That is absolutely correct. But that correct statement proceeds from the premise that correct mutual relations exist between the vanguard and the masses of the workers, between the Party and the class. It proceeds from the assumption that the mutual relations between the vanguard and the class remain, so to say, normal, remain within the bounds of "mutual confidence."

But what if the correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class, the relations of "mutual confidence" between the Party and the class are upset?

What if the Party itself begins, in some way or other, to counterpose itself to the class, thus upsetting the foundations of its correct mutual relations with the class, thus upsetting the foundations of "mutual confidence"?

Are such cases at all possible?

Yes, they are.

They are possible:

1) if the Party begins to build its prestige among the masses, not on its work and on the confidence of the masses, but on its "unrestricted" rights;

2) if the Party's policy is obviously wrong and the Party is unwilling to reconsider and rectify its mistake;

^[1] Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. V. "Left-Wing" Communism in Germany: Leaders — Party — Class — Masses. (1920)

3) *if* the Party's policy is correct on the whole but the masses are not yet ready to make it their own, and the Party is either unwilling or unable to bide its time so as to give the masses an opportunity to become convinced through their own experience that the Party's policy is correct, and seeks to impose it on the masses.

The history of our Party provides a number of such cases. Various groups and factions in our Party have come to grief and disappeared because they violated one of these three conditions, and sometimes all these conditions taken together.

But it follows from this that counterposing the dictatorship of the proletariat to the "dictatorship" (leadership) of the Party can be regarded as incorrect only:

1) *if* by dictatorship of the Party in relation to the working class we mean not a dictatorship in the proper sense of the word ("power based on the use of force"), but the leadership of the Party, which precludes the use of force against the working class as a whole, against its majority, precisely as Lenin meant it;

2) *if* the Party has the qualifications to be the real leader of the class, i.e., if the Party's policy is correct, if this policy accords with the interests of the class;

3) *if* the class, if the majority of the class, accepts that policy, makes that policy its own, becomes convinced, as a result of the work of the Party, that that policy is correct, has confidence in the Party and supports it.

The violation of these conditions inevitably gives rise to a conflict between the Party and the class, to a split between them, to their being counterposed to each other.

Can the Party's leadership be imposed on the class by force? No, it cannot. At all events, *such* a leadership cannot be at all durable. If the Party wants to remain the Party of the pro-

letariat it must know that it is, primarily and principally, the *guide*, the *leader*, the *teacher* of the working class. We must not forget what Lenin said on this subject in his pamphlet *The State and Revolution*:

"By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, which is capable of taking power and of *leading the whole people* to socialism, of directing and organising the new order, of being the *teacher*, the *guide*, the *leader** of all the toilers and exploited in building up their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie" (see Vol. XXI, p. 386).^[1]

Can one consider the Party as the real leader of the class if its policy is wrong, if its policy comes into collision with the interests of the class? Of course not. In such cases the Party, if it wants to remain the leader, must reconsider its policy, must correct its policy, must acknowledge its mistake and correct it. In confirmation of this thesis one could cite, for example, such a fact from the history of our Party as the period of the abolition of the surplus-appropriation system, when the masses of workers and peasants were obviously discontented with our policy and when the Party openly and honestly decided to reconsider this policy. Here is what Lenin said at the time, at the Tenth Party Congress, on the question of abolishing the surplus-appropriation system and introducing the New Economic Policy:

"We must not try to conceal anything, but must say straightforwardly that the peasantry is not satisfied with the form of relations that has been established with it, that it does not want this form of relations and will not go on living in this way. That is indisputable. It has definitely expressed this will. This is the will of the vast mass of the labouring

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The State and Revolution*. Chapter II. *The State and Revolution. The Experience of 1848-51*. I. *The Eve of Revolution*. (1917)

population. We must reckon with this; and we are sufficiently sober politicians to say straightforwardly: *Let us reconsider our policy towards the peasantry*''* (see Vol. XXVI, p. 238).^[1]

Can one consider that the Party should take the initiative and leadership in organising decisive actions by the masses merely on the ground that its policy is correct on the whole, *if* that policy does not yet meet the confidence and support of the class because, say, of the latter's political backwardness; *if* the Party has not yet succeeded in convincing the class of the correctness of its policy because, say, events have not yet matured? No, one cannot. In such cases the Party, if it wants to be a real leader, must know how to bide its time, must convince the masses that its policy is correct, must help the masses to become convinced through their own experience that this policy is correct.

"If the revolutionary party," says Lenin, "has not a majority in the advanced detachments of the revolutionary classes and in the country, an uprising is out of the question" (see Vol. XXI, p. 282).^[2]

"Revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses" (see Vol. XXV, p. 221).^[3]

"The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without this not even the first step towards victory can be made. But it is still a fairly long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8-16, 1921. 6. *Report on the Substitution of a Tax in Kind for the Surplus-Grain Appropriation System*. March 15.

[2] Lenin, *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* (1917)

[3] Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. IX. "Left-Wing" Communism in Great Britain. (1920)

of benevolent neutrality towards it, and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy, would be not merely folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of the working people and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience" (*ibid.*, p. 228).^[1]

We know that this is precisely how our Party acted during the period from Lenin's April Theses to the October uprising of 1917. And it was precisely because it acted according to these directives of Lenin's that it was successful in the uprising.

Such, basically, are the conditions for correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class.

What does *leadership* mean when the policy of the Party is correct and the correct relations between the vanguard and the class are not upset?

Leadership under these circumstances means the ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party's policy; the ability to put forward and to carry out such slogans as bring the masses to the Party's positions and help them to realise through their own experience the correctness of the Party's policy; the ability to raise the masses to the Party's level of political consciousness, and thus secure the support of the masses and their readiness for the decisive struggle.

Therefore, the method of persuasion is the principal method of the Party's leadership of the working class.

"If we, in Russia today," says Lenin, "after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make 'recognition of the dictatorship' a condition of trade-union membership, we should be committing a folly, we should be damaging our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. X. Some Conclusions. (1920)

the whole task of the Communists is to be able to *convince* the backward elements, to be able to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childish 'Left' slogans" (see Vol. XXV, p. 197).^[1]

This, of course, must not be understood in the sense that the Party must convince all the workers, down to the last man, and that only after this is it possible to proceed to action, that only after this is it possible to start operations. Not at all! It only means that before entering upon decisive political actions the Party must, by means of prolonged revolutionary work, secure for itself the support of the majority of the masses of the workers, or at least the benevolent neutrality of the majority of the class. Otherwise Lenin's thesis, that a necessary condition for victorious revolution is that the Party should win over the majority of the working class, would be devoid of all meaning.

Well, and what is to be done with the minority, if it does not wish, if it does not agree voluntarily to submit to the will of the majority? Can the Party, must the Party, enjoying the confidence of the majority, compel the minority to submit to the will of the majority? Yes, it can and it must. Leadership is ensured by the method of persuading the masses, as the principal method by which the Party influences the masses. This, however, does not preclude, but presupposes, the use of coercion, if such coercion is based on confidence in the Party and support for it on the part of the majority of the working class, if it is applied to the minority after the Party has convinced the majority.

It would be well to recall the controversies around this subject that took place in our Party during the discussion on

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. VI. *Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions?* (1920)

the trade-union question. What was the mistake of the opposition, the mistake of the Tsektran,⁵² at that time? Was it that the opposition then considered it possible to resort to coercion? No! It was not that. The mistake of the opposition at that time was that, being unable to convince the majority of the correctness of its position, having lost the confidence of the majority, it nevertheless began to apply coercion, began to insist on "shaking up" those who enjoyed the confidence of the majority.

Here is what Lenin said at that time, at the Tenth Congress of the Party, in his speech on the trade unions:

"In order to establish mutual relations and mutual confidence between the vanguard of the working class and the masses of the workers, it was necessary, if the Tsektran had made a mistake . . . to correct this mistake. But when people begin to defend this mistake, it becomes a source of political danger. Had not the utmost possible been done in the way of democracy in heeding the moods expressed here by Kutuzov, we would have met with political bankruptcy. *First we must convince, and then coerce. We must at all costs first convince, and then coerce.** We were not able to convince the broad masses, and we upset the correct relations between the vanguard and the masses" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 235).^[1]

Lenin says the same thing in his pamphlet *On the Trade Unions*.⁵³

"We applied coercion correctly and successfully only when we were able to create beforehand a basis of conviction for it" (*ibid.*, p. 74).

And that is quite true, for without those conditions no leadership is possible. For only in that way can we ensure unity of action in the Party, if we are speaking of the Party, or unity of action of the class, if we are speaking of the class as a whole.

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 8-16, 1921. 5. *Speech on the Trade Unions*. March 14.

Without this there is splitting, confusion and demoralisation in the ranks of the working class.

Such in general are the fundamentals of correct leadership of the working class by the Party.

Any other conception of leadership is syndicalism, anarchism, bureaucracy — anything you please, but not Bolshevism, not Leninism.

The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be counterposed to the leadership ("dictatorship") of the Party if correct mutual relations exist between the Party and the working class, between the vanguard and the masses of the workers. But from this it follows that it is all the more impermissible to identify the Party with the working class, the leadership ("dictatorship") of the Party with the dictatorship of the working class. *On the ground* that the "dictatorship" of the Party cannot be counterposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, Sorin arrived at the wrong conclusion that "*the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our Party.*"

But Lenin not only speaks of the impermissibility of such counterposition, he also speaks of the impermissibility of counterposing "the dictatorship of the masses to the dictatorship of the leaders." Would you, *on this ground*, have us identify the dictatorship of leaders with the dictatorship of the proletariat? If we took that line, we would have to say that "*the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our leaders.*" But it is precisely to this absurdity that we are led, properly speaking, by the policy of identifying the "dictatorship" of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . .

Where does Zinoviev stand on this subject?

In essence, Zinoviev shares Sorin's point of view of identifying the "dictatorship" of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat — with the difference, however, that Sorin

expresses himself more openly and clearly, whereas Zinoviev "wriggles." One need only take, for instance, the following passage in Zinoviev's book *Leninism* to be convinced of this:

"What," says Zinoviev, "is the system existing in the U.S.S.R. from the standpoint of its class content? It is the dictatorship of the proletariat. What is the direct mainspring of power in the U.S.S.R.? Who exercises the power of the working class? The Communist Party! In this sense, *we have* the dictatorship of the Party*. What is the juridical form of power in the U.S.S.R.? What is the new type of state system that was created by the October Revolution? The Soviet system. The one does not in the least contradict the other."

That the one does not contradict the other is, of course, correct *if* by the dictatorship of the Party in relation to the working class as a whole we mean the leadership of the Party. But how is it possible, *on this ground*, to place a sign of equality between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the "dictatorship" of the Party, between the Soviet system and the "dictatorship" of the Party? Lenin identified the system of Soviets with the dictatorship of the proletariat, and he was right, for the Soviets, *our* Soviets, are organisations which rally the labouring masses around the proletariat under the leadership of the Party. But when, where, and in which of his writings did Lenin place a sign of equality between the "dictatorship" of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat, between the "dictatorship" of the Party and the system of Soviets, as Zinoviev does now? Neither the leadership ("dictatorship") of the Party nor the leadership ("dictatorship") of the leaders contradicts the dictatorship of the proletariat. Would you, *on this ground*, have us proclaim that our country is the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat, *that is to say*, the country of the dictatorship of the Party, *that is to say*, the country of the

* My italics. — J. St.

dictatorship of the leaders? And yet the "principle" of identifying the "dictatorship" of the Party with the dictatorship of the proletariat, which Zinoviev enunciates surreptitiously and uncourageously, leads precisely to this absurdity.

In Lenin's numerous works I have been able to note only five cases in which he touches, in passing, on the question of the dictatorship of the Party.

The first case is in his controversy with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, where he says:

"When we are reproached with the dictatorship of one party, and when, as you have heard, a proposal is made to establish a united socialist front, we reply: 'Yes, the dictatorship of one party! We stand by it, and cannot depart from it, for it is that Party which, in the course of decades, has won the position of vanguard of the whole factory and industrial proletariat' " (see Vol. XXIV, p. 423).^[1]

The second case is in his "Letter to the Workers and Peasants in Connection with the Victory over Kolchak," in which he says:

"Some people (especially the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries — all of them, even the 'Lefts' among them) are trying to scare the peasants with the bogey of the 'dictatorship of one party,' the Party of Bolsheviks, Communists.

"The peasants have learned from the instance of Kolchak not to be afraid of this bogey.

"Either the dictatorship (i.e., iron rule) of the landlords and capitalists, or the dictatorship of the working class" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 436).^[2]

The third case is Lenin's speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern in his controversy with Tanner. I have quoted it above.*

* See this volume, p. 293. — Ed.

[1] Lenin, *Speech at the First All-Russian Congress of Workers in Education and Socialist Culture*. July 31, 1919.

[2] Lenin, *Letter to the Workers and Peasants in Connection with the Victory over Kolchak*. (1919)

The fourth case is a few lines in the pamphlet "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. The passages in question have already been quoted above.*

And the fifth case is in his draft outline of the dictatorship of the proletariat, published in the *Lenin Miscellany*, Volume III, where there is a sub-heading "Dictatorship of One Party" (see *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. III, p. 497).

It should be noted that in two out of the five cases, the last and the second, Lenin puts the words "dictatorship of one party" in quotation marks, thus clearly emphasising the inexact, figurative sense of this formula.

It should also be noted that in every one of these cases, by the "dictatorship of the Party" Lenin meant dictatorship ("iron rule") over the "landlords and capitalists," and not over the working class, contrary to the slanderous fabrications of Kautsky and Co.

It is characteristic that in *none* of his works, major or secondary, in which Lenin discusses or merely alludes to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the role of the Party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is there any hint whatever that "the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of our Party." On the contrary, every page, every line of these works cries out against such a formula (see *The State and Revolution*, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, etc.).

Even more characteristic is the fact that in the theses of the Second Congress of the Comintern⁵⁴ on the role of a political party, which were drawn up under the direct guidance of Lenin, and to which Lenin repeatedly referred in his speeches

* See this volume, pp. 300-01, 303-04, 307-09. — Ed.

as a model of the correct formulation of the role and tasks of the Party, we find *not one word*, literally *not one word*, about dictatorship of the Party.

What does all this indicate?

It indicates that:

a) Lenin did not regard the formula "dictatorship of the Party" as irreproachable and exact, for which reason it is very rarely used in Lenin's works, and is sometimes put in quotation marks;

b) on the few occasions that Lenin was obliged, in controversy with opponents, to speak of the dictatorship of the Party, he usually referred to the "dictatorship of *one* party," i.e., to the fact that our Party holds power *alone*, that it *does not share* power with *other* parties. Moreover, he always made it clear that the dictatorship of the Party *in relation to the working class* meant the leadership of the Party, its leading role;

c) in all those cases in which Lenin thought it necessary to give a scientific definition of the role of the Party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he spoke *exclusively* of the leading role of the Party in relation to the working class (and there are thousands of such cases);

d) that is why it never "occurred" to Lenin to include the formula "dictatorship of the Party" in the fundamental resolution on the role of the Party — I have in mind the resolution adopted at the Second Congress of the Comintern;

e) the comrades who identify, or try to identify, the "dictatorship" of the Party and, therefore, the "dictatorship of the leaders" with the dictatorship of the proletariat are wrong from the point of view of Leninism, and are politically shortsighted, for they thereby violate the conditions for correct mutual relations between the vanguard and the class.

This is apart from the fact that the formula "dictatorship of the Party," when taken without the above-mentioned reservations, can give rise to quite a number of dangers and political set-backs in our practical work. This formula, taken without reservations, says, as it were:

a) *to the non-Party masses*: don't dare to contradict, don't dare to argue, for the Party can do everything, for we have the dictatorship of the Party;

b) *to the Party cadres*: act more boldly, tighten the screw, there is no need to heed what the non-Party masses say, we have the dictatorship of the Party;

c) *to the top leadership of the Party*: you may indulge in the luxury of a certain amount of complacency, you may even become conceited, for we have the dictatorship of the Party, and, "consequently," the dictatorship of the leaders.

It is opportune to call attention to these dangers precisely at the present moment, in a period when the political activity of the masses is rising, when the readiness of the Party to heed the voice of the masses is of particular value to us, when attention to the requirements of the masses is a fundamental precept of our Party, when it is incumbent upon the Party to display particular caution and particular flexibility in its policy, when the danger of becoming conceited is one of the most serious dangers confronting the Party in its task of correctly leading the masses.

One cannot but recall Lenin's golden words at the Eleventh Congress of our Party:

"Among the mass of the people we (the Communists — *J. St.*) are after all but a drop in the ocean, and we can administer only when we properly express what the people are conscious of. Unless we do this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the proletariat will not

lead the masses, and the whole machine will collapse" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 256).^[1]

"*Properly express what the people are conscious of*" — this is precisely the necessary condition that ensures for the Party the honourable role of the principal guiding force in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

VI

THE QUESTION OF THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

The pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* (May 1924, first edition) contains two formulations on the question of the victory of socialism in one country. The first of these says:

"Formerly, the victory of the revolution in one country was considered impossible, on the assumption that it would require the combined action of the proletarians of all or at least of a majority of the advanced countries to achieve victory over the bourgeoisie. Now this point of view no longer fits in with the facts. Now we must proceed from the possibility of such a victory, for the uneven and spasmodic character of the development of the various capitalist countries under the conditions of imperialism, the development within imperialism of catastrophic contradictions leading to inevitable wars, the growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries of the world — all this leads, not only to the possibility, but also to the necessity of the victory of the proletariat in individual countries" (see *The Foundations of Leninism*⁵⁵).

This thesis is quite correct and needs no comment. It is directed against the theory of the Social-Democrats, who regard the seizure of power by the proletariat in one country,

[1] Lenin, *Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 27-April 2, 1922. 2. *Political Report of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 27.

without the simultaneous victory of the revolution in other countries, as utopian.

But the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* contains a second formulation, which says:

"But the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and establishment of the power of the proletariat in one country does not yet mean that the complete victory of socialism has been ensured. The principal task of socialism — the organisation of socialist production — has still to be fulfilled. Can this task be fulfilled, can the final victory of socialism be achieved in one country, without the joint efforts of the proletarians in several advanced countries? No, it cannot. To overthrow the bourgeoisie the efforts of one country are sufficient; this is proved by the history of our revolution. For the final victory of socialism, for the organisation of socialist production, the efforts of one country, particularly of a peasant country like Russia, are insufficient; for that, the efforts of the proletarians of several advanced countries are required" (see *The Foundations of Leninism*, first edition⁵⁶).

This second formulation was directed against the assertions of the critics of Leninism, against the Trotskyists, who declared that the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, in the absence of victory in other countries, could not "hold out in the face of a conservative Europe."

To that extent — but only to that extent — this formulation was then (May 1924) adequate, and undoubtedly it was of some service.

Subsequently, however, when the criticism of Leninism in this sphere had already been overcome in the Party, when a new question had come to the fore — the question of the possibility of building a complete socialist society by the efforts of our country, without help from abroad — the second formulation became obviously inadequate, and therefore incorrect.

What is the defect in this formulation?

Its defect is that it joins two different questions into one: it joins the question of the *possibility* of building socialism by the

efforts of one country — which must be answered in the affirmative — with the question whether a country in which the dictatorship of the proletariat exists can consider itself *fully guaranteed* against intervention, and consequently against the restoration of the old order, without a victorious revolution in a number of other countries — which must be answered in the negative. This is apart from the fact that this formulation may give occasion for thinking that the organisation of a socialist society by the efforts of one country is impossible — which, of course, is incorrect.

On this ground I modified and corrected this formulation in my pamphlet *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists* (December 1924); I divided the question into two — into the question of a *full guarantee against the restoration of the bourgeois order*, and the question of the *possibility of building a complete socialist society* in one country. This was effected, in the first place, by treating the “complete victory of socialism” as a “full guarantee against the restoration of the old order,” which is possible only through “the joint efforts of the proletarians of several countries”; and, secondly, by proclaiming, on the basis of Lenin’s pamphlet *On Co-operation*,⁵⁷ the indisputable truth that we have all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society (see *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*).*

It was this new formulation of the question that formed the basis for the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference “The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.),”⁵⁸ which examines the question of the victory of

* This new formulation of the question was substituted for the old one in subsequent editions of the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism*. — Ed.

socialism in one country in connection with the stabilisation of capitalism (April 1925), and considers that the building of socialism by the efforts of our country is possible and necessary.

This new formulation also served as the basis for my pamphlet *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)* published in May 1925, immediately after the Fourteenth Party Conference.

With regard to the presentation of the question of the victory of socialism in one country, this pamphlet states:

"Our country exhibits two groups of contradictions. One group consists of the internal contradictions that exist between the proletariat and the peasantry (this refers to the building of socialism in one country — *J. St.*). The other group consists of the external contradictions that exist between our country, as the land of socialism, and all the other countries, as lands of capitalism (this refers to the final victory of socialism — *J. St.*)." . . . "Anyone who confuses the first group of contradictions, which can be overcome entirely by the efforts of one country, with the second group of contradictions, the solution of which requires the efforts of the proletarians of several countries, commits a gross error against Leninism. He is either a muddle-head or an incorrigible opportunist" (see *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.)* ⁵⁹).

On the question of the *victory* of socialism in our country, the pamphlet states:

"We can build socialism, and we will build it together with the peasantry under the leadership of the working class" . . . for "under the dictatorship of the proletariat we possess . . . all that is needed to build a complete socialist society, overcoming all internal difficulties, for we can and must overcome them by our own efforts" (*ibid.* ⁶⁰).

On the question of the *final* victory of socialism, it states:

"The final victory of socialism is the full guarantee against attempts at intervention, and hence against restoration, for any serious attempt at restoration can take place only with serious support from outside, only with the support of international capital. Therefore, the support of our revolution by the workers of all countries, and still more the victory of the

workers in at least several countries, is a necessary condition for fully guaranteeing the first victorious country against attempts at intervention and restoration, a necessary condition for the final victory of socialism" (*ibid.*⁶¹).

Clear, one would think.

It is well known that this question was treated in the same spirit in my pamphlet *Questions and Answers* (June 1925) and in the political report of the Central Committee to the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)⁶² (December 1925).

Such are the facts.

These facts, I think, are known to all the comrades, including Zinoviev.

If now, nearly two years after the ideological struggle in the Party and after the resolution that was adopted at the Fourteenth Party Conference (April 1925), Zinoviev finds it possible in his reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress (December 1925) to dig up the old and quite inadequate formula contained in Stalin's pamphlet written in April 1924, and to make it the basis for deciding the already decided question of the victory of socialism in one country — then this peculiar trick of his only goes to show that he has got completely muddled on this question. To drag the Party back after it has moved forward, to evade the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference after it has been confirmed by a plenum of the Central Committee,⁶³ means to become hopelessly entangled in contradictions, to have no faith in the cause of building socialism, to abandon the path of Lenin, and to acknowledge one's own defeat.

What is meant by the *possibility* of the victory of socialism in one country?

It means the possibility of solving the contradictions between the proletariat and the peasantry by means of the internal

forces of our country, the possibility of the proletariat seizing power and using that power to build a complete socialist society in our country, with the sympathy and the support of the proletarians of other countries, but without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries.

Without such a possibility, building socialism is building without prospects, building without being sure that socialism will be completely built. It is no use engaging in building socialism without being sure that we can build it completely, without being sure that the technical backwardness of our country is not an *insuperable* obstacle to the building of a complete socialist society. To deny such a possibility means disbelief in the cause of building socialism, departure from Leninism.

What is meant by the *impossibility* of the complete, final victory of socialism in one country without the victory of the revolution in other countries?

It means the impossibility of having a full guarantee against intervention, and consequently against the restoration of the bourgeois order, without the victory of the revolution in at least a number of countries. To deny this indisputable thesis means departure from internationalism, departure from Leninism.

"We are living," says Lenin, "not merely in a state, but *in a system of states*, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end comes, a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable. That means that if the ruling class, the proletariat, wants to, and will hold sway, it must prove this by its military organisation also" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 122).^[1]

^[1] Lenin, *Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 18-23, 1919. 2. *Report of the Central Committee*. March 18.

"We have before us," says Lenin in another passage, "a certain equilibrium, which is in the highest degree unstable, but an unquestionable, an indisputable equilibrium nevertheless. Will it last long? I do not know and, I think, it is impossible to know. And therefore we must exercise very great caution. And the first precept of our policy, the first lesson to be learned from our governmental activities during the past year, the lesson which all the workers and peasants must learn, is that we must be on the alert, we must remember that we are surrounded by people, classes and governments who openly express their intense hatred for us. We must remember that we are at all times but a hair's breadth from every manner of invasion" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 117).^[1]

Clear, one would think.

Where does Zinoviev stand as regards the question of the victory of socialism in one country?

Listen:

"By the final victory of socialism is meant, at least: 1) the abolition of classes, and therefore 2) the abolition of the dictatorship of one class, in this case the dictatorship of the proletariat." . . . "In order to get a clearer idea of how the question stands here, in the U.S.S.R., in the year 1925," says Zinoviev further, "we must distinguish between two things: 1) the assured *possibility* of engaging in building socialism — such a possibility, it stands to reason, is quite conceivable within the limits of one country; and 2) the final construction and consolidation of socialism, i.e., the achievement of a socialist system, of a socialist society."

What can all this signify?

It signifies that by the final victory of socialism in one country Zinoviev understands, not a guarantee against intervention and restoration, but the possibility of completely building socialist society. And by the victory of socialism in one country Zinoviev understands the kind of building socialism which cannot and should not lead to completely building socialism. Building at haphazard, without prospects, building socialism

^[1]Lenin, *Ninth All-Russian Congress of Soviets*. December 23-28, 1921.
1. *The Home and Foreign Policy of the Republic*.

although completely building a socialist society is impossible — such is Zinoviev's position.

To engage in building socialism *without the possibility of completely building it, knowing that it cannot be completely built* — such are the absurdities in which Zinoviev has involved himself.

But this is a mockery of the question, not a solution of it!

Here is another extract from Zinoviev's reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress:

"Take a look, for instance, at what Comrade Yakovlev went so far as to say at the last Kursk Gubernia Party Conference. He asks: 'Is it possible for us, surrounded as we are on all sides by capitalist enemies, to completely build socialism in one country under such conditions?' And he answers: 'On the basis of all that has been said we have the right to say not only that we are building socialism, but that in spite of the fact that for the time being we are alone, that for the time being we are the only Soviet country, the only Soviet state in the world, we shall completely build socialism' (*Kurskaya Pravda*, No. 279, December 8, 1925). *Is this the Leninist method of presenting the question,*" Zinoviev asks, "*does not this smack of national narrow-mindedness?*"*

Thus, according to Zinoviev, to recognise the possibility of completely building socialism in one country means adopting the point of view of national narrow-mindedness, while to deny such a possibility means adopting the point of view of internationalism.

But if that is true, is it at all worth while fighting for victory over the capitalist elements in our economy? Does it not follow from this that such a victory is impossible?

Capitulation to the capitalist elements in our economy — that is what the inherent logic of Zinoviev's line of argument leads us to.

* My italics. — J. St.

“And this absurdity, which has nothing in common with Leninism, is presented to us by Zinoviev as “internationalism,” as “100 per cent Leninism”!

I assert that on this most important question of building socialism Zinoviev is deserting Leninism and slipping to the standpoint of the Menshevik Sukhanov.

Let us turn to Lenin. Here is what he said about the victory of socialism in one country even before the October Revolution, in August 1915:

“Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists *and organised its own socialist production*,* would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states” (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).^[1]

What is meant by Lenin’s phrase “having . . . organised socialist production” which I have stressed? It means that the proletariat of the victorious country, having seized power, *can* and *must* organise socialist production. And what does to “organise socialist production” mean? It means completely building a socialist society. It scarcely needs proof that this clear and definite statement of Lenin’s requires no further comment. Otherwise Lenin’s call for the seizure of power by the proletariat in October 1917 would be incomprehensible.

You see that this clear thesis of Lenin’s, in comparison with Zinoviev’s muddled and anti-Leninist “thesis” that we can

* My italics. — J. St.

^[1] Lenin, *The United States of Europe Slogan*. (1915)

engage in building socialism "within the limits of one country," although it is *impossible* to build it completely, is as different from the latter as the heavens from the earth.

The statement quoted above was made by Lenin in 1915, before the proletariat had taken power. But perhaps he modified his views after the experience of taking power, after 1917? Let us turn to Lenin's pamphlet *On Co-operation*, written in 1923.

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

In other words, we can and must build a complete socialist society, for we have at our disposal all that is necessary and sufficient for this building.

I think it would be difficult to express oneself more clearly.

Compare this classical thesis of Lenin's with the anti-Leninist rebuke Zinoviev administered to Yakovlev, and you will realise that Yakovlev was only repeating Lenin's words about the possibility of completely building socialism in one country, whereas Zinoviev, by attacking this thesis and castigating Yakovlev, deserted Lenin and adopted the point of view of the Menshevik Sukhanov, the point of view that it is impossible to build socialism completely in our country owing to its technical backwardness.

* My italics. — J. St.

One can only wonder why we took power in October 1917 if we did not count on completely building socialism.

We should not have taken power in October 1917 — this is the conclusion to which the inherent logic of Zinoviev's line of argument leads us.

I assert further that in the highly important question of the victory of socialism Zinoviev has gone *counter* to the definite decisions of our Party, as registered in the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference "The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I."

Let us turn to this resolution. Here is what it says about the victory of socialism in one country:

"The existence of two directly opposite social systems gives rise to the constant menace of capitalist blockade, of other forms of economic pressure, of armed intervention, of restoration. Consequently, the only guarantee of the *final victory of socialism*, i.e., *the guarantee against restoration*,* is a victorious socialist revolution in a number of countries. . . ." "Leninism teaches that the *final victory of socialism, in the sense of a full guarantee against the restoration** of bourgeois relationships, is possible only on an international scale. . . ." "But it *does not follow** from this that it is impossible to build a *complete socialist society** in a backward country like Russia, without the 'state aid' (Trotsky) of countries more developed technically and economically" (see the resolution⁶⁴).

As you see, the resolution interprets the final victory of socialism as a guarantee against intervention and restoration, *in complete contrast* to Zinoviev's interpretation in his book *Leninism*.

As you see, the resolution recognises the possibility of building a complete socialist society in a backward country like

* My italics. — J. St.

Russia without the "state aid" of countries more developed technically and economically, *in complete contrast* to what Zinoviev said when he rebuked Yakovlev in his reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress.

How else can this be described if not as a struggle on Zinoviev's part *against* the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference?

Of course, Party resolutions are sometimes not free from error. Sometimes they contain mistakes. Speaking generally, one may assume that the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference also contains certain errors. Perhaps Zinoviev thinks that this resolution is erroneous. But then he should say so clearly and openly, as befits a Bolshevik. For some reason or other, however, Zinoviev does not do so. He preferred to choose another path, that of attacking the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference from the rear, while keeping silent about this resolution and refraining from any open criticism of the resolution. Zinoviev evidently thinks that this will be the best way of achieving his purpose. And he has but one purpose, namely — to "improve" the resolution, and to amend Lenin "just a little bit." It scarcely needs proof that Zinoviev has made a mistake in his calculations.

What is Zinoviev's mistake due to? What is the root of this mistake?

The root of this mistake, in my opinion, lies in Zinoviev's conviction that the technical backwardness of our country is an *insuperable* obstacle to the building of a complete socialist society; that the proletariat cannot completely build socialism owing to the technical backwardness of our country. Zinoviev and Kamenev once tried to raise this argument at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Party prior to the April Party Conference.⁶⁵ But they received a rebuff and were compelled

to retreat, and *formally* they submitted to the opposite point of view, the point of view of the majority of the Central Committee. But although he formally submitted to it, Zinoviev has continued to wage a struggle against it all the time. Here is what the Moscow Committee of our Party says about this "incident" in the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) in its "Reply" to the letter of the Leningrad Gubernia Party Conference:⁶⁶

"Recently, in the Political Bureau, Kamenev and Zinoviev advocated the point of view that we cannot cope with the internal difficulties due to our technical and economic backwardness unless an international revolution comes to our rescue. We, however, with the majority of the members of the Central Committee, think that we can build socialism, are building it, and will completely build it, notwithstanding our technical backwardness and in spite of it. We think that the work of building will proceed far more slowly, of course, than in the conditions of a world victory; nevertheless, we are making progress and will continue to do so. We also believe that the view held by Kamenev and Zinoviev expresses disbelief in the internal forces of our working class and of the peasant masses who follow its lead. We believe that it is a departure from the Leninist position" (see "Reply").

This document appeared in the press during the first sittings of the Fourteenth Party Congress. Zinoviev, of course, had the opportunity of attacking this document at the congress. It is characteristic that Zinoviev and Kamenev found no arguments against this grave accusation directed against them by the Moscow Committee of our Party. Was this accidental? I think not. The accusation, apparently, hit the mark. Zinoviev and Kamenev "replied" to this accusation by silence, because they had no "card to beat it."

The "New Opposition" is offended because Zinoviev is accused of disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country. But if after a whole year of discussion on the question of the victory of socialism in one country; after

Zinoviev's viewpoint has been rejected by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee (April 1925); after the Party has arrived at a definite opinion on this question, recorded in the well-known resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference (April 1925) — if, after all this, Zinoviev ventures to oppose the point of view of the Party in his book *Leninism* (September 1925), if he then repeats this opposition at the Fourteenth Party Congress — how can all this, this stubbornness, this persistence in his error, be explained if not by the fact that Zinoviev is infected, hopelessly infected, with disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country?

It pleases Zinoviev to regard this disbelief of his as internationalism. But since when have we come to regard departure from Leninism on a cardinal question of Leninism as internationalism?

Will it not be more correct to say that it is not the Party but Zinoviev who is sinning against internationalism and the international revolution? For what is our country, the country "that is building socialism," if not the base of the world revolution? But can it be a real base of the world revolution if it is incapable of completely building a socialist society? Can it remain the mighty centre of attraction for the workers of all countries that it undoubtedly is now, if it is incapable of achieving victory at home over the capitalist elements in our economy, the victory of socialist construction? I think not. But does it not follow from this that disbelief in the victory of socialist construction, the dissemination of such disbelief, will lead to our country being discredited as the base of the world revolution? And if our country is discredited the world revolutionary movement will be weakened. How did Messrs. the Social-Democrats try to scare the workers away from us? By preaching that "the Russians will not get anywhere." What are we

beating the Social-Democrats with now, when we are attracting a whole series of workers' delegations to our country and thereby strengthening the position of communism all over the world? By our successes in building socialism. Is it not obvious, then, that whoever disseminates disbelief in our successes in building socialism thereby indirectly helps the Social-Democrats, reduces the sweep of the international revolutionary movement, and inevitably departs from internationalism?

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You see that Zinoviev is in no better position in regard to his "internationalism" than in regard to his "100 per cent Leninism" on the question of building socialism in one country.

That is why the Fourteenth Party Congress rightly defined the views of the "New Opposition" as "disbelief in the cause of socialist construction," as "a distortion of Leninism."⁶⁷

VII

THE FIGHT FOR THE VICTORY OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

I think that disbelief in the victory of socialist construction is the principal error of the "New Opposition." In my opinion, it is the principal error because from it spring all the other errors of the "New Opposition." The errors of the "New Opposition" on the questions of NEP, state capitalism, the nature of our socialist industry, the role of the co-operatives under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the methods of fighting the kulaks, the role and importance of the middle peasantry — all these errors are to be traced to the principal error of the opposition, to disbelief in the possibility of completely building a socialist society by the efforts of our country.

What is disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country?

It is, first of all, lack of confidence that, owing to certain conditions of development in our country, the main mass of the peasantry *can be drawn* into the work of socialist construction.

It is, secondly, lack of confidence that the proletariat of our country, which holds the key positions in our national economy, *is capable* of drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction.

It is from these theses that the opposition tacitly proceeds in its arguments about the paths of our development — no matter whether it does so consciously or unconsciously.

Can the main mass of the Soviet peasantry be drawn into the work of socialist construction?

In the pamphlet *The Foundations of Leninism* there are two main theses on this subject:

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

2) "Agriculture in Russia must not be confused with agriculture in the West. There, agriculture is developing along the ordinary lines of capitalism, under conditions of profound differentiation among the peasantry,

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

"It scarcely needs proof that the vast majority of the peasantry will eagerly take this new path of development, rejecting the path of private capitalist latifundia and wage slavery, the path of destitution and ruin."⁶³

Are these theses correct?

I think that both theses are correct and incontrovertible for the whole of our construction period under the conditions of NEP.

They are merely the expression of Lenin's well-known theses on the bond between the proletariat and the peasantry, on the inclusion of the peasant farms in the system of socialist development of our country; of his theses that the proletariat must march towards socialism together with the main mass of the peasantry, that the organisation of the vast masses of the peasantry in co-operatives is the high road of socialist construction in the countryside, that with the growth of our socialist industry, "for us, the mere growth of co-operation is identical . . . with the growth of socialism" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 396).^[1]

[1] Lenin, *On Co-operation*. (1923)

Indeed, along what path can and must the development of peasant economy in our country proceed?

Peasant economy is not capitalist economy. Peasant economy, if you take the overwhelming majority of the peasant farms, is small commodity economy. And what is peasant small commodity economy? It is economy standing at the cross-roads between capitalism and socialism. It may develop in the direction of capitalism, as it is now doing in capitalist countries, or in the direction of socialism, as it must do here, in our country, under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Whence this instability, this lack of independence of peasant economy? How is it to be explained?

It is to be explained by the scattered character of the peasant farms, their lack of organisation, their dependence on the towns, on industry, on the credit system, on the character of the state power in the country, and, lastly, by the well-known fact that the countryside follows, and necessarily must follow, the town both in material and in cultural matters.

The capitalist path of development of peasant economy means development through profound differentiation among the peasantry, with large latifundia at one extreme and mass impoverishment at the other. Such a path of development is inevitable in capitalist countries, because the countryside, peasant economy, is dependent on the towns, on industry, on credit concentrated in the towns, on the character of the state power — and in the towns it is the bourgeoisie, capitalist industry, the capitalist credit system and the capitalist state power that hold sway.

Is this path of development of peasant farms obligatory for our country, where the towns have quite a different aspect, where industry is in the hands of the proletariat, where transport, the credit system, the state power, etc., are concentrated

in the hands of the proletariat, where the nationalisation of the land is a universal law of the country? Of course not. On the contrary. Precisely because the towns do lead the countryside, while we have in the towns the rule of the proletariat, which holds all the key positions of national economy — precisely for this reason the peasant farms in their development must proceed along a different path, the path of socialist construction.

What is this path?

It is the path of the mass organisation of millions of peasant farms into co-operatives in all spheres of co-operation, the path of uniting the scattered peasant farms around socialist industry, the path of implanting the elements of collectivism among the peasantry at first in the sphere of *marketing* agricultural produce and *supplying* the peasant farms with the products of urban industry and later in the sphere of agricultural *production*.

And the further we advance the more this path becomes inevitable under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, because co-operative marketing, co-operative supplying, and, finally, co-operative credit and production (agricultural co-operatives) are the only way to promote the welfare of the countryside, the only way to save the broad masses of the peasantry from poverty and ruin.

It is said that our peasantry, by its position, is not socialist, and, therefore, incapable of socialist development. It is true, of course, that the peasantry, by its position, is not socialist. But this is no argument against the development of the peasant farms along the path of socialism, once it has been proved that the countryside follows the town, and in the towns it is socialist industry that holds sway. The peasantry, by its position, was not socialist at the time of the October Revolution either, and it did not by any means want to establish socialism in our

country. At that time it strove mainly for the abolition of the power of the landlords and for the ending of the war, for the establishment of peace. Nevertheless, it followed the lead of the socialist proletariat. Why? Because the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of power by the socialist proletariat was at that time the only way of getting out of the imperialist war, the only way of establishing peace. Because there was no other way at that time, nor could there be any. Because our Party was able to hit upon that degree of the combination of the specific interests of the peasantry (the overthrow of the landlords, peace) with, and their subordination to, the general interests of the country (the dictatorship of the proletariat) which proved acceptable and advantageous to the peasantry. And so the peasantry, in spite of its non-socialist character, at that time followed the lead of the socialist proletariat.

The same must be said about socialist construction in our country, about drawing the peasantry into the channel of this construction. The peasantry is non-socialist by its position. But it must, and certainly will, take the path of socialist development, for there is not, and cannot be, any other way of saving the peasantry from poverty and ruin except the bond with the proletariat, except the bond with socialist industry, except the inclusion of peasant economy in the common channel of socialist development by the mass organisation of the peasantry in co-operatives.

But why precisely by the mass organisation of the peasantry in co-operatives?

Because in the mass organisation in co-operatives "we have found that degree of the combination of private interest, private trading interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the general

interests" (*Lenin*)⁶⁹ which is acceptable and advantageous to the peasantry and which ensures the proletariat the possibility of drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction. It is precisely because it is advantageous to the peasantry to organise the sale of its products and the purchase of machines for its farms through co-operatives, it is precisely for that reason that it should and will proceed along the path of mass organisation in co-operatives.

What does the mass organisation of peasant farms in co-operatives mean when we have the supremacy of socialist industry?

It means that peasant small commodity economy *abandons* the old capitalist path, which is fraught with mass ruin for the peasantry, and *goes over* to the new path of development, the path of socialist construction.

This is why the fight for the new path of development of peasant economy, the fight to draw the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction, is the immediate task facing our Party.

The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), therefore, was right in declaring:

"The main path of building socialism in the countryside consists in using the growing economic leadership of socialist state industry, of the state credit institutions, and of the other key positions in the hands of the proletariat to draw the main mass of the peasantry into co-operative organisation and to ensure for this organisation a socialist development, while utilising, overcoming and ousting its capitalist elements" (see Resolution of the Congress on the Report of the Central Committee⁷⁰).

The profound mistake of the "New Opposition" lies in the fact that it does not believe in this new path of development of the peasantry, that it does not see, or does not understand, the absolute inevitability of this path under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And it does not understand this

because it does not believe in the victory of socialist construction in our country, it does not believe in the capacity of our proletariat to lead the peasantry along the path to socialism.

Hence the failure to understand the dual character of NEP, the exaggeration of the negative aspects of NEP and the treatment of NEP as being mainly a retreat.

Hence the exaggeration of the role of the capitalist elements in our economy, and the belittling of the role of the levers of our socialist development (socialist industry, the credit system, the co-operatives, the rule of the proletariat, etc.).

Hence the failure to understand the socialist nature of our state industry, and the doubts concerning the correctness of Lenin's co-operative plan.

Hence the inflated accounts of differentiation in the countryside, the panic in face of the kulak, the belittling of the role of the middle peasant, the attempts to thwart the Party's policy of securing a firm alliance with the middle peasant, and, in general, the wobbling from one side to the other on the question of the Party's policy in the countryside.

Hence the failure to understand the tremendous work of the Party in drawing the vast masses of the workers and peasants into building up industry and agriculture, revitalising the co-operatives and the Soviets, administering the country, combating bureaucracy, improving and remodelling our state apparatus — work which marks a new stage of development and without which no socialist construction is conceivable.

Hence the hopelessness and consternation in face of the difficulties of our work of construction, the doubts about the possibility of industrialising our country, the pessimistic chatter about degeneration of the Party, etc.

Over there, among the bourgeoisie, all is going on fairly well, but here, among the proletarians, things are fairly bad;

unless the revolution in the West takes place pretty soon, our cause is lost — such is the general tone of the “New Opposition” which, in my opinion, is a liquidationist tone, but which, for some reason or other (probably in jest), the opposition tries to pass off as “internationalism.”

NEP is capitalism, says the opposition. NEP is mainly a retreat, says Zinoviev. All this, of course, is untrue. In actual fact, NEP is the Party's policy, permitting a struggle between the socialist and the capitalist elements and aimed at the victory of the socialist elements over the capitalist elements. In actual fact, NEP only began as a retreat, but it aimed at regrouping our forces during the retreat and launching an offensive. In actual fact, we have been on the offensive for several years now, and are attacking successfully, developing our industry, developing Soviet trade, and ousting private capital.

But what is the meaning of the thesis that NEP is capitalism, that NEP is mainly a retreat? What does this thesis proceed from?

It proceeds from the wrong assumption that what is now taking place in our country is simply the restoration of capitalism, simply a “return” to capitalism. This assumption alone can explain the doubts of the opposition regarding the socialist nature of our industry. This assumption alone can explain the panic of the opposition in face of the kulak. This assumption alone can explain the haste with which the opposition seized upon the inaccurate statistics on differentiation in the peasantry. This assumption alone can explain the opposition's special forgetfulness of the fact that the middle peasant is the central figure in our agriculture. This assumption alone can explain the underestimation of the importance of the middle peasant

and the doubts concerning Lenin's co-operative plan. This assumption alone can serve to "substantiate" the "New Opposition's" disbelief in the new path of development of the countryside, the path of drawing it into the work of socialist construction.

As a matter of fact, what is taking place in our country now is not a one-sided process of restoration of capitalism, but a double process of development of capitalism and development of socialism — a contradictory process of struggle between the socialist and the capitalist elements, a process in which the socialist elements are overcoming the capitalist elements. This is equally incontestable as regards the towns, where state industry is the basis of socialism, and as regards the countryside, where the main foothold for socialist development is mass co-operation linked up with socialist industry.

The simple restoration of capitalism is impossible, if only for the reason that the proletariat is in power, that large-scale industry is in the hands of the proletariat, and that transport and credit are in the possession of the proletarian state.

Differentiation in the countryside cannot assume its former dimensions, the middle peasants still constitute the main mass of the peasantry, and the kulak cannot regain his former strength, if only for the reason that the land has been nationalised, that it has been withdrawn from circulation, while our trade, credit, tax and co-operative policy is directed towards restricting the kulaks' exploiting proclivities, towards promoting the welfare of the broad mass of the peasantry and levelling out the extremes in the countryside. That is quite apart from the fact that the fight against the kulaks is now proceeding not only along the old line of organising the poor peasants against the kulaks, but also along the new line of strengthening the

alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasants with the mass of the middle peasants against the kulaks. The fact that the opposition does not understand the meaning and significance of the fight against the kulaks along this second line once more confirms that the opposition is straying towards the old path of development in the countryside — the path of capitalist development, when the kulaks and the poor peasants constituted the main forces in the countryside, while the middle peasants were “melting away.”

Co-operation is a variety of state capitalism, says the opposition, citing in this connection Lenin's pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*;⁷¹ and, consequently, it does not believe it possible to utilise the co-operatives as the main foothold for socialist development. Here, too, the opposition commits a gross error. Such an interpretation of co-operation was adequate and satisfactory in 1921, when *The Tax in Kind* was written, when we had no developed socialist industry, when Lenin conceived of state capitalism as the possible basic form of conducting our economy, and when he considered co-operation in conjunction with state capitalism. But this interpretation has now become inadequate and has been rendered obsolete by history, for times have changed since then: our socialist industry has developed, state capitalism never took hold to the degree expected, whereas the co-operatives, which now have over ten million members, have begun to link up with socialist industry.

How else are we to explain the fact that already in 1923, two years after *The Tax in Kind* was written, Lenin began to regard co-operation in a different light, and considered that “co-operation, under our conditions, very often entirely coincides with socialism” (see Vol. XXVII, p. 396).^[1]

[1] Lenin, *On Co-operation*. (1923)

How else can this be explained except by the fact that during those two years socialist industry had grown, whereas state capitalism had failed to take hold to the required extent, in view of which Lenin began to consider co-operation, not in conjunction with state capitalism, but in conjunction with socialist industry?

The conditions of development of co-operation had changed. And so the approach to the question of co-operation had to be changed also.

Here, for instance, is a remarkable passage from Lenin's pamphlet *On Co-operation* (1923), which throws light on this matter:

"*Under state capitalism,* co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, in that they are private enterprises and, secondly, in that they are collective enterprises. Under our present system,* co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but they do not differ* from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, i.e., the working class*" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 396).^[1]

In this short passage two big questions are solved. Firstly, that "our present system" is not state capitalism. Secondly, that co-operative enterprises taken in conjunction with "our system" "do not differ" from socialist enterprises.

I think it would be difficult to express oneself more clearly.

Here is another passage from the same pamphlet of Lenin's:

"... for us, the mere growth of co-operation (with the 'slight' exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of socialism, and at the same time we must admit that a radical change has taken place in our whole outlook on socialism" (*ibid.*).

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] *Ibid.*

Obviously, the pamphlet *On Co-operation* gives a new appraisal of the co-operatives, a thing which the "New Opposition" does not want to admit, and which it is carefully hushing up, in defiance of the facts, in defiance of the obvious truth, in defiance of Leninism.

Co-operation taken in conjunction with state capitalism is one thing, and co-operation taken in conjunction with socialist industry is another.

From this, however, it must not be concluded that a gulf lies between *The Tax in Kind* and *On Co-operation*. That would, of course, be wrong. It is sufficient, for instance, to refer to the following passage in *The Tax in Kind* to discern immediately the inseparable connection between *The Tax in Kind* and the pamphlet *On Co-operation* as regards appraisal of the co-operatives. Here it is:

"The transition from concessions to socialism is a transition from one form of large-scale production to another form of large-scale production. The transition from small-proprietor co-operatives to socialism is a transition from small production to large-scale production, i.e., it is a more complicated transition, but, if successful, is capable of embracing wider masses of the population, is capable of pulling up the deeper and more tenacious roots of the old, *pre-socialist** and even pre-capitalist relations, which most stubbornly resist all 'innovations'" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 337).^[1]

From this quotation it is evident that even during the time of *The Tax in Kind*, when we had as yet no developed socialist industry, Lenin was of the opinion that, *if successful*, co-operation could be transformed into a powerful weapon

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *The Tax in Kind*. *The Tax in Kind, Free Trade and Concessions*. (1921)

in the struggle against "pre-socialist," and, hence, against *capitalist relations*. I think it was precisely this idea that subsequently served as the point of departure for his pamphlet *On Co-operation*.

But what follows from all this?

From all this it follows that the "New Opposition" approaches the question of co-operation, not in a Marxist way, but metaphysically. It regards co-operation not as a historical phenomenon taken in conjunction with other phenomena, in conjunction, say, with state capitalism (in 1921) or with socialist industry (in 1923), but as something constant and immutable, as a "thing in itself."

Hence the mistakes of the opposition on the question of co-operation, hence its disbelief in the development of the countryside towards socialism through co-operation, hence its turning back to the old path, the path of capitalist development in the countryside.

Such, in general, is the position of the "New Opposition" on the practical questions of socialist construction.

There is only one conclusion: the line of the opposition, so far as it has a line, its wavering and vacillation, its disbelief in our cause and its consternation in face of difficulties, lead to capitulation to the capitalist elements of our economy.

For, if NEP is mainly a retreat, if the socialist nature of state industry is doubted, if the kulak is almost omnipotent, if little hope can be placed in the co-operatives, if the role of the middle peasant is progressively declining, if the new path of development in the countryside is open to doubt, if the Party is almost degenerating, while the revolution in the West is not very near — then what is there left in the arsenal of the opposition, what can it count on in the struggle against

the capitalist elements in our economy? You cannot go into battle armed only with "The Philosophy of the Epoch."⁷²

It is clear that the arsenal of the "New Opposition," if it can be termed an arsenal at all, is an unenviable one. It is not an arsenal for battle. Still less is it one for victory.

It is clear that the Party would be doomed "in no time" if it entered the fight equipped with such an arsenal; it would simply have to capitulate to the capitalist elements in our economy.

That is why the Fourteenth Congress of the Party was absolutely right in deciding that "the fight for the victory of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. is the main task of our Party"; that one of the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of this task is "to combat disbelief in the cause of building socialism in our country and the attempts to represent our enterprises, which are of a 'consistently socialist type' (*Lenin*), as state capitalist enterprises"; that "such ideological trends, which prevent the masses from adopting a conscious attitude towards the building of socialism in general and of a socialist industry in particular, can only serve to hinder the growth of the socialist elements in our economy and to facilitate the struggle of private capital against them"; that "the congress therefore considers that wide-spread educational work must be carried on for the purpose of overcoming these distortions of Leninism" (see Resolution on the Report of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.)⁷³).

The historical significance of the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) lies in the fact that it was able radically to expose the mistakes of the "New Opposition," that it rejected their disbelief and whining, that it clearly and precisely indicated the path of the further struggle for socialism, opened

before the Party the prospect of victory, and thus armed the proletariat with an invincible faith in the victory of socialist construction.

January 25, 1926

J. V. Stalin, *Concerning Questions of Leninism*,
Moscow and Leningrad, 1926

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN UNITY COMMITTEE*⁷⁴

*Speech Delivered at a Joint Plenum of the Central Committee
and the Central Control Commission, C.P.S.U.(B.)*⁷⁵

July 15, 1926

Comrades, we are passing through a period of the accumulation of forces, a period of winning over the masses and of preparing the proletariat for new battles. But the masses are in the trade unions. And in the West the trade unions, the majority of them, are now more or less reactionary. What, then, should be our attitude towards the trade unions? Should we, can we, as Communists, work in the reactionary trade unions? It is essentially this question that Trotsky put to us in his letter recently published in *Pravda*. There is nothing new, of course, in this question. It was raised before Trotsky by the "ultra-Lefts" in Germany, some five years ago. But Trotsky has seen fit to raise it again. How does he answer it? Permit me to quote a passage from Trotsky's letter:

* The speech is given here in abbreviated form.

"The entire present 'superstructure' of the British working class, in all its shades and groupings without exception, is an apparatus for putting a brake on the revolution. This presages for a long time to come the pressure of the spontaneous and semi-spontaneous movement *on the framework of the old organisations and the formation of new, revolutionary organisations* as the result of this pressure" (see *Pravda*, No. 119, May 26, 1926).

It follows from this that we ought not to work in the "old" organisations, if we do not want to "retard" the revolution. Either what is meant here is that we are already in the period of a direct revolutionary situation and ought at once to set up self-authorized organisations of the proletariat *in place of* the "old" ones, *in place of* the trade unions — which, of course, is incorrect and foolish. Or what is meant here is that "for a long time to come" we ought to work to replace the old trade unions by "*new, revolutionary organisations.*"

This is a signal to organise, *in place of* the existing trade unions, that same "Revolutionary Workers' Union" which the "ultra-Left" Communists in Germany advocated some five years ago, and which Comrade Lenin vigorously opposed in his pamphlet "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. It is in point of fact a signal to replace the present trade unions by "new," supposedly "revolutionary" organisations, a signal, consequently, to *withdraw* from the trade unions.

Is that policy correct? It is fundamentally incorrect. It is fundamentally incorrect because it runs counter to the Leninist method of leading the masses. It is incorrect because, for all their reactionary character, the trade unions of the West are the most elementary organisations of the proletariat, those best understood by the most backward workers, and therefore the most comprehensive organisations of the proletariat. We cannot find our way to the masses, we cannot win them over if we by-pass these trade unions. To adopt Trotsky's stand-

point would mean that the road to the vast masses would be barred to the Communists, that the working-class masses would be handed over to the tender mercies of Amsterdam,⁷⁶ to the tender mercies of the Sassenbachs and the Oudegeests.⁷⁷

The oppositionists here have quoted Comrade Lenin. Allow me, too, to quote what Lenin said:

"We cannot but regard also as ridiculous and childish nonsense the pompous, very learned, and frightfully revolutionary talk of the German Lefts to the effect that Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary trade unions, that it is permissible to turn down such work, that it is necessary to leave the trade unions and to create without fail a brand-new, immaculate 'Workers' Union' invented by very nice (and, probably, for the most part very youthful) Communists" (see Vol. XXV, pp. 193-94).^[1]

And further:

"We wage the struggle against the 'labour aristocracy' in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them to our side; we wage the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class to our side. To forget this most elementary and most self-evident truth would be stupid. And it is precisely this stupidity that the German 'Left' Communists are guilty of when, *because* of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the trade-union *top leadership*, they jump to the conclusion that — we must leave the trade unions!! that we must refuse to work in them!! that we must create new, *artificial* forms of labour organisation!! This is such unpardonable stupidity that it is equivalent to the greatest service the Communists could render the bourgeoisie" (*ibid.*, p. 196).^[2]

I think, comrades, that comment is superfluous.

This raises the question of skipping over the reactionary character of the trade unions in the West, which has not yet been outlived. This question was brought forward at the

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VI. Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions? (1920)

[2] *Ibid.*

rostrum here by Zinoviev. He quoted Martov and assured us that the point of view opposed to skipping over, the point of view that it is not permissible for Marxists to skip over and ignore the backwardness of the masses, the backwardness and reactionariness of their leaders, is a Menshevik point of view.

I affirm, comrades, that this unscrupulous manoeuvre of Zinoviev's in citing Martov is evidence of one thing only — Zinoviev's *complete departure* from the Leninist line.

I shall endeavour to prove this in what follows.

Can we, as Leninists, as Marxists, at all skip over and ignore a movement that has not outlived its day, can we skip over and ignore the backwardness of the masses, can we turn our back on them and pass them by; or *ought we to get rid of* such features by carrying on an unrelaxing fight against them among the masses? That is one of the fundamental questions of communist policy, one of the fundamental questions of Leninist leadership of the masses. The oppositionists spoke here of Leninism. Let us turn to the prime source, to Lenin.

It was in April 1917. Lenin was in controversy with Kamenev. Lenin did not agree with Kamenev, who overestimated the role of petty-bourgeois democracy. But Lenin was not in agreement with Trotsky either, who underestimated the role of the peasant movement and "skipped over" the peasant movement in Russia. Here are Lenin's words:

"Trotskyism says: 'No tsar, but a workers' government.' That is incorrect. The petty bourgeoisie exists, and it cannot be left out of account. But it consists of two sections. The poorer section follows the working class" (see Lenin's speech in the minutes of the Petrograd Conference of April 1917, p. 17⁷⁸).

"Now, if we were to say, 'no tsar, but a dictatorship of the proletariat,' that would be *skipping over** the petty bourgeoisie" (see Lenin's speech in the minutes of the All-Russian Conference of April 1917, p. 76⁷⁹).

* My italics. — J. St.

And further:

"But are we not incurring the danger of succumbing to subjectivism, of desiring to '*skip over*' the uncompleted bourgeois-democratic revolution — which has not yet outlived the peasant movement — to a socialist revolution? I should be incurring that danger if I had said: 'No tsar, but a *workers*' government.' But I did *not* say that; I said something else. . . . I absolutely insured myself in my theses against any *skipping over the peasant movement, or the petty-bourgeois movement generally, which has not yet outlived its day*, against any *playing* at the 'seizure of power' by a workers' government, against Blanquist *adventurism* in any shape or form, for I pointed directly to the experience of the Paris Commune"* (see Vol. XX, p. 104).^[1]

That is clear, one would think. The theory of *skipping over* a movement which has not outlived its day is a Trotskyist theory. Lenin does not agree with this theory. He considers it an adventurist one.

And here are a few more quotations, this time from other writings — from those of a "very prominent" Bolshevik whose name I do not want to mention for the present, but who also takes up arms against the skipping-over theory.

"In the question of the peasantry, which Trotsky is always trying to 'skip over,' we would have committed the most egregious blunders. Instead of the beginnings of a bond with the peasants, there would now be thoroughgoing estrangement from them."

Further:

"Such is the 'theoretical' foundation of Parvusism and Trotskyism. This 'theoretical' foundation was later minted into political slogans, such as: 'no tsar, but a workers' government.' This slogan sounds very plausible now that after a lapse of fifteen years we have achieved Soviet power in alliance with the peasantry. No tsar — that's fine! A workers' government — better still! But if it be recalled that this slogan was put forward

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Letters on Tactics. First Letter, Assessment of the Present Situation*. (1917)

in 1905, every Bolshevik will agree that at that time it meant '*skipping over*' the peasantry altogether."

Further:

"But in 1905 the 'permanentists' wanted to foist on us the slogan: 'Down with the tsar and up with a *workers*' government!' But what about the peasantry? Does it not stare one in the face, this complete non-comprehension and ignoring of the peasantry in a country like Russia? If this is not '*skipping over*' the peasantry, then what is it?"

Further:

"Failing to understand the role of the peasantry in Russia, '*skipping over*' the peasantry in a peasant country, Trotskyism was all the more incapable of understanding the role of the peasantry in the international revolution."

Who, you will ask, is the author of these formidable passages against Trotskyism and the Trotskyist skipping-over theory? The author of these formidable passages is none other than Zinoviev. They are taken from his book *Leninism*, and from his article "Bolshevism or Trotskyism?"

How could it happen that a year ago Zinoviev realised the anti-Leninist character of the skipping-over theory, but has ceased to realise it now, a year later? The reason is that he was then, so to speak, a Leninist, but has now got himself hopelessly bogged, with one leg in Trotskyism and the other in Shlyapnikovism, in the "Workers' Opposition."⁸⁰ And here he is, floundering between these two oppositions, and compelled now to speak here from this rostrum, quoting Martov. Against whom is he speaking? Against Lenin. And for whom is he speaking? For the Trotskyists.

To such depths has Zinoviev fallen.

It may be said that all this concerns the question of the peasantry, but has no bearing on the British trade unions. But that is not so, comrades. What has been said about the unsuitability

in politics of the skipping-over theory has a direct bearing on the trade unions in Britain, and in Europe generally; it has a direct bearing on the question of leadership of the masses, on the question of the ways and means of emancipating them from the influence of reactionary, reformist leaders. Pursuing their skipping-over theory, Trotsky and Zinoviev are trying to skip over the backwardness, the reactionariness of the British trade unions, trying to get *us* to overthrow the General Council from Moscow, *without* the British trade-union masses. But we affirm that such a policy is stupidity, adventurism; that the reactionary leaders of the British trade-union movement must be overthrown by the British trade-union masses *themselves*, *with our help*; that we must not skip over the reactionary character of the trade-union leaders, but must *help* the British trade-union masses to *get rid of it*.

You will see that there certainly is a connection between policy in general and policy towards the trade-union masses.

Has Lenin anything on this point?

Listen to this:

"The trade unions were a tremendous step forward for the working class in the early days of capitalist development, as marking the transition from the disunity and helplessness of the workers to the *rudiments* of class organisation. When the *highest* form of proletarian class association began to develop, viz., the *revolutionary party of the proletariat* (which will not deserve the name until it learns to bind the leaders with the class and the masses into one single indissoluble whole), the trade unions inevitably began to reveal *certain* reactionary features, a certain craft narrowness, a certain tendency to be non-political, a certain inertness, etc. But the development of the proletariat did not, and could not, proceed anywhere in the world otherwise than through the trade unions, through interaction between them and the party of the working class' (see Vol. XXV, p. 194).^[1]

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VI. Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions? (1920)

And further:

"To fear *this* 'reactionariness,' to try to *avoid* it, to *skip over** it, is the height of folly, for it means fearing that role of the proletarian vanguard which consists in training, educating, enlightening and drawing into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and peasantry" (*ibid.*, p. 195).

That is how matters stand with the skipping-over theory as applied to the trade-union movement.

Zinoviev would have done better not to come forward here quoting Martov. He would have done better to say nothing about the skipping-over theory. That would have been much better for his own sake. There was no need for Zinoviev to swear by Trotsky: we know as it is that he has deserted Leninism for Trotskyism.

That is how matters stand, comrades, with the Trotskyist theory of skipping over the backwardness of the trade unions, the backwardness of the trade-union movement, and the backwardness of the mass movement in general.

Leninism is one thing, Trotskyism is another.

This brings us to the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee. It has been said here that the Anglo-Russian Committee is an agreement, a bloc between the trade unions of our country and the British trade unions. That is perfectly true. The Anglo-Russian Committee is the expression of a bloc, of an agreement between our unions and the British unions, and this bloc is not without its political character.

This bloc sets itself two tasks. The first is to establish contact between our trade unions and the British trade unions, to organise a united movement against the capitalist offensive, to widen the fissure between Amsterdam and the British trade-

* My italics. — J. St.

union movement, a fissure which exists and which we shall widen in every way, and, lastly, to bring about the conditions essential for ousting the reformists from the trade unions and for winning over the trade unions of the capitalist countries to the side of communism.

The second task of the bloc is to organise a broad movement of the working class against new imperialist wars in general, and against intervention in our country by (especially) the most powerful of the European imperialist powers, by Britain in particular.

The first task was discussed here at adequate length, and, therefore, I shall not dwell upon it. I should like to say a few words here about the second task, especially as regards intervention in our country by the British imperialists. Some of the oppositionists say that this second task of the bloc between our trade unions and the British is not worth talking about, that it is of no importance. Why, one asks? Why is it not worth talking about? Is not the task of safeguarding the security of the first Soviet Republic in the world, which is moreover the bulwark and base of the international revolution, a revolutionary task? Are our trade unions independent of the Party? Is our view that of the independence of our trade unions — that the state is one thing, and the trade unions another? No, as Leninists, we do not and cannot hold that view. It should be the concern of every worker, of every worker organised in a trade union, to protect the first Soviet Republic in the world from intervention. And if in this the trade unions of our country have the support of the British trade unions, although they are reformist unions, is that not obviously something to be welcomed?

Those who think that our unions cannot deal with state matters go over to the standpoint of Menshevism. That is the

standpoint of *Sotsialistichesky Vestnik*.⁸¹ It is not one we can accept. And if the reactionary trade unions of Britain are prepared to join with the revolutionary trade unions of our country in a bloc against the counter-revolutionary imperialists of their country, why should we not welcome such a bloc? I stress this aspect of the matter in order that our opposition may at last understand that in trying to torpedo the Anglo-Russian Committee it is playing into the hands of the interventionists.

Hence, the Anglo-Russian Committee is a bloc of our trade unions with the reactionary trade unions of Britain, the object of which is, firstly, to strengthen the connections between our trade unions and the trade-union movement of the West and to revolutionise the latter, and, secondly, to wage a struggle against imperialist wars in general, and intervention in particular.

But — and this is a question of principle — are political blocs with reactionary trade unions possible at all? Are such blocs permissible at all for Communists?

This question faces us squarely, and we have to answer it here. There are some people — our oppositionists — who consider such blocs impossible. The Central Committee of our Party, however, considers them permissible.

The oppositionists have invoked here the name of Lenin. Let us turn to Lenin:

“Capitalism would not be capitalism if the ‘pure’ proletariat were not surrounded by a mass of exceedingly motley intermediate types between the proletarian and the semi-proletarian (who earns his livelihood in part by the sale of his labour power), between the semi-proletarian and the small peasant (and the petty artisan, handicraft worker and small proprietor in general), between the small peasant and the middle peasant, and so on, and if the proletariat itself were not divided into more developed and less developed strata, if it were not divided according to place of birth, trade, sometimes according to religion, and so on. And from all

this follows the necessity, the absolute necessity for the vanguard of the proletariat, for its class-conscious section, for the Communist Party, to resort to manoeuvres, arrangements and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and small proprietors. The whole point lies in *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*, and not lower, the *general* level of proletarian political consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win" (see Vol. XXV, p. 213).^[1]

And further:

"That the Hendersons, Clyneses, MacDonalds and Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary is true. It is equally true that they want to take power into their own hands (though, incidentally, they prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to 'rule' on the old bourgeois lines, and that when they do get into power they will unfailingly behave like the Scheidemanns and Noskes. All that is true. But it by no means follows that to support them is treachery to the revolution, but rather that in the interests of the revolution the working-class revolutionaries should give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support" (*ibid.*, pp. 218-19).^[2]

Hence, it follows from what Lenin says that political agreements, political blocs between the Communists and reactionary leaders of the working class are quite possible and permissible.

Let Trotsky and Zinoviev bear this in mind.

But why are such agreements necessary at all?

In order to gain access to the working-class masses, in order to enlighten them as to the reactionary character of their political and trade-union leaders, in order to sever from the reactionary leaders the sections of the working class that are moving to the Left and becoming revolutionised, in order, consequently, to enhance the fighting ability of the working class as a whole.

[1] Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder. VIII. No Compromises? (1920)

[2] *Ibid.*, IX. "*Left-Wing*" Communism in Great Britain.

Accordingly, such blocs may be formed only on two basic conditions, viz., that we are ensured freedom to criticise the reformist leaders, and that the necessary conditions for severing the masses from the reactionary leaders are ensured.

Here is what Lenin says on this score:

"The Communist Party should propose a 'compromise' to the Hendersons and Snowdens, an election agreement: let us together fight the alliance of Lloyd George and the Conservatives, let us divide the parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of votes cast by the workers for the Labour Party or for the Communists (not at the elections, but in a special vote), and let us retain *complete liberty* of agitation, propaganda and political activity. Without this last condition, of course, we cannot agree to a bloc, for it would be treachery; the British Communists must absolutely insist on and secure complete liberty to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (*for fifteen years, 1903-17*) the Russian Bolsheviks insisted on and secured it in relation to the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e., the Mensheviks" (see Vol. XXV, p. 223).^[1]

And further:

"The petty-bourgeois democrats (including the Mensheviks) inevitably vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between bourgeois democracy and the Soviet system, between reformism and revolutionism, between love for the workers and fear of the proletarian dictatorship, etc. The correct tactics for the Communists must be to *utilise* these vacillations, not to ignore them; and to utilise them calls for concessions to those elements which turn towards the proletariat — whenever and to the extent that they turn towards the proletariat — in addition to fighting those who turn towards the bourgeoisie. The result of the application of correct tactics is that Menshevism *has disintegrated, and is increasingly disintegrating in our country, that the stubbornly opportunist leaders are being isolated, and that the best of the workers and the best elements among the petty-bourgeois democrats are being brought into our camp*"* (see Vol. XXV, pp. 213-14).^[2]

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] *Ibid.*, IX. "Left-Wing" Communism in Great Britain.

[2] *Ibid.*, VIII. No Compromises?

There you have the conditions without which no blocs or agreements with reactionary trade-union leaders are permissible.

Let the opposition bear that also in mind.

The question arises: Is the policy of our trade unions in conformity with the conditions Comrade Lenin speaks of?

I think that it is in full conformity. In the first place, we have completely reserved for ourselves full freedom to criticise the reformist leaders of the British working class and have availed ourselves of that freedom to a degree unequalled by any other Communist Party in the world. In the second place, we have gained access to the British working-class masses and strengthened our ties with them. And in the third place, we are effectively severing, and have already severed, whole sections of the British working class from the reactionary leaders. I have in mind the rupture of the miners with the leaders of the General Council.

Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev have studiously avoided saying anything here about the conference of Russian and British miners in Berlin and about their declaration.⁸² Yet, surely, that is a highly important fact of the recent period. Richardson, Cook, Smith, Richards — what are they? Opportunists, reformists. Some of them are called Lefts, others Rights. All right! Which of them are more to the Left is something history will decide. It is very difficult for us to make this out just now — the waters are dark and the clouds thick. But one thing is clear, and that is that we have severed these vacillating reformist leaders, who have the following of one million two hundred thousand striking miners, from the General Council and linked them with our trade unions. Is that not a fact? Why does the opposition say nothing about it?

Can it be that it does not rejoice at the success of our policy? And when Citrine now writes that the General Council and he are agreed to the Anglo-Russian Committee being convened, is that not a result of the fact that Schwartz and Akulov have succeeded in winning over Cook and Richardson, and that the General Council, being afraid of an *open* struggle with the miners, was therefore forced to agree to a meeting of the Anglo-Russian Committee? Who can deny that all these facts are evidence of the success of our policy, that all this is evidence of the utter bankruptcy of the policy of the opposition?

Hence, blocs with reactionary trade-union leaders are permissible. They are necessary, on certain conditions. Freedom of criticism is the first of them. Our Party is observing this condition. Severance of the working-class masses from the reactionary leaders is another condition. Our Party is observing this condition too. Our Party is right. The opposition is wrong.

The question arises: What more do Zinoviev and Trotsky want of us?

What they want is that our Soviet trade unions should either break with the Anglo-Russian Committee, or that they, acting from here, from Moscow, should overthrow the General Council. But that is stupid, comrades. To demand that we, acting from Moscow, and *by-passing* the British workers' trade unions, *by-passing* the British trade-union masses, *by-passing* the British trade-union officials, skipping over them, that we, acting from here, from Moscow, should overthrow the General Council — is not that stupid, comrades?

They demand a demonstrative rupture. Is it difficult to understand that if we did that, the only result would be our own discomfiture? Is it difficult to understand that in the

event of a rupture we lose contact with the British trade-union movement, we throw the British trade unions into the embraces of the Sassenbachs and Oudegeests, we shake the foundations of the united front tactics, and we delight the hearts of the Churchills and Thomases, without getting anything in return except discomfiture?

Trotsky takes as the starting point of his policy of theatrical gestures, not concrete human beings, not the concrete workers of flesh and blood who are living and struggling in Britain, but some sort of ideal and ethereal beings who are revolutionary from head to foot. Is it difficult, however, to understand that only persons devoid of common sense take ideal, ethereal beings as the starting point of their policy?

That is why we think that the policy of theatrical gestures, the policy of overthrowing the General Council from Moscow, by the efforts of Moscow alone, is a ridiculous and adventurist policy.

The policy of gestures has been the characteristic feature of Trotsky's whole policy ever since he joined our Party. We had a first application of this policy at the time of the Brest Peace, when Trotsky refused to sign the German-Russian peace agreement and countered it with a theatrical gesture, believing that a gesture was enough to rouse the proletarians of all countries against imperialism. That was a policy of gestures. And, comrades, you know very well how dear that gesture cost us. Into whose hands did that theatrical gesture play? Into the hands of the imperialists, the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and all who were then trying to strangle the Soviet power, which at that time was not firmly established.

Now we are asked to adopt the same policy of theatrical gestures towards the Anglo-Russian Committee. They demand

a demonstrative and theatrical rupture. But who would benefit from that theatrical gesture? Churchill and Chamberlain, Sassenbach and Oudegeest. That is what they want. That is what they are waiting for. They, the Sassenbachs and Oudegeests, want us to make a demonstrative break with the British labour movement and thus render things easier for Amsterdam. They, the Churchills and Chamberlains, want the break in order to make it easier for them to launch intervention, to provide them with a moral argument in favour of the interventionists.

These are the people into whose hands our oppositionists are playing.

No, comrades, we cannot adopt this adventurist course.

But such is the fate of "ultra-Left" phrasemongers. Their phrases are Leftist, but in practice it turns out that they are aiding the enemies of the working class. You go in on the Left and come out on the Right.

No, comrades, we shall not adopt this policy of theatrical gestures — we shall no more adopt it *today* than we did at the time of the Brest Peace. We shall not adopt it because we do not want our Party to become a plaything in the hands of our enemies.

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THE OPPOSITION BLOC IN THE C.P.S.U. (B.)

*Theses for the Fifteenth All-Union Conference
of the C.P.S.U.(B.), Adopted by the Conference and
Endorsed by the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.)*⁸³

The characteristic feature of the present period is the intensification of the struggle between the capitalist countries and our country, on the one hand, and between the socialist elements and the capitalist elements within our country, on the other.

While the attempts of world capital to encircle our country economically, to isolate it politically, to establish a masked blockade, and, lastly, to exact outright vengeance for the help given by the workers of the U.S.S.R. to the workers engaged in struggle in the West and to the oppressed peoples in the East, are creating difficulties of an external order, the fact that our country has passed from the period of restoration to a period of the reconstruction of industry on a new technical basis, and the consequent intensification of the struggle between the capitalist and socialist elements in our economy, are creating difficulties of an internal order.

The Party is aware of these difficulties and is in a position to overcome them. It is already overcoming them with the aid of the vast masses of the proletariat, and is confidently leading the country along the road to socialism. But not all sections of our Party believe in the possibility of further progress. There are sections in our Party — numerically small, it is true — which, being scared by the difficulties, are a prey to weariness and wavering, fall into despair and cultivate a spirit of pessimism, are infected by disbelief in the creative powers of the proletariat, and are coming to have a capitulatory mentality.

In this sense, the present period of radical change is to some extent reminiscent of the period of radical change of October 1917. Just as then, in October 1917, the complicated situation and the difficulties of the transition from a bourgeois to a proletarian revolution engendered in one section of the Party vacillation, defeatism and disbelief in the possibility of the proletariat taking power and retaining it (Kamenev, Zinoviev), so now, in the present period of radical change, the difficulties of the transition to the new phase of socialist construction are engendering in certain circles of our Party vacillation, disbelief in the possibility of the socialist elements in our country being victorious over the capitalist elements, disbelief in the possibility of victoriously building socialism in the U.S.S.R.

The opposition bloc is an expression of this spirit of pessimism and defeatism in the ranks of one section of our Party.

The Party is aware of the difficulties and is in a position to overcome them. But to fight these difficulties successfully requires, above all, that the pessimistic spirit and defeatist mentality in the ranks of one section of the Party shall be overcome.

In its statement of October 16, 1926, the opposition bloc renounces factionalism and dissociates itself from openly Menshevik groups inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.); but at the same time it declares that in principle it maintains its former stand, that it does not renounce its errors in matters of principle, and that it will defend these erroneous views within the limits permitted by the Party Rules.

It follows from this that the opposition bloc intends to go on cultivating a spirit of pessimism and capitulation in the Party, intends to go on propagating its erroneous views in the Party.

Hence, the immediate task of the Party is to expose the untenability in principle of the basic views of the opposition bloc, to make it clear that they are incompatible with the principles of Leninism, and to wage a determined ideological struggle against the opposition bloc's errors in matters of principle with a view to overcoming them completely.

I

THE PASSING OVER OF THE "NEW OPPOSITION" TO TROTSKYISM ON THE BASIC QUESTION OF THE CHARACTER AND PROSPECTS OF OUR REVOLUTION

The Party holds that our revolution is a socialist revolution, that the October Revolution is not merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West, but that at the same time it is, firstly, a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and, secondly, it ushers in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism in the U.S.S.R. (dictatorship of the proletariat), dur-

ing which the proletariat, if it pursues a correct policy towards the peasantry, can and will successfully build a complete socialist society, provided, of course, the power of the international revolutionary movement, on the one hand, and the power of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., on the other, are great enough to protect the U.S.S.R. from armed imperialist intervention.

Trotskyism holds an entirely different view of the character and prospects of our revolution. In spite of the fact that in October 1917 the Trotskyists marched together with the Party, they held, and still hold, that *in itself*, and *by its very nature*, our revolution is not a socialist one; that the October Revolution is *merely* a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West; that if the world revolution is delayed and a victorious socialist revolution in the West does not come about in the very near future, proletarian power in Russia is bound to fall or to degenerate (which is one and the same thing) under the impact of inevitable clashes between the proletariat and the peasantry.

Whereas the Party, in organising the October Revolution, held that "the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately," and that "the victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised its own socialist production," can and should stand up "*against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states" (Lenin, Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33)^[1] — the Trotskyists, on the other hand, although they co-operated with the Bolsheviks in the October

[1] Lenin, *The United States of Europe Slogan*. (1915)

period, held that "it would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe" (Trotsky, Vol. III, Part I, p. 90, *Peace Programme*, first published in August 1917).

Whereas our Party holds that the Soviet Union possesses "all that is necessary and sufficient" "for the building of a complete socialist society" (Lenin, *On Co-operation*), the Trotskyists, on the contrary, hold that "real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the major European countries" (Trotsky, Vol. III, Part I, p. 93, "Postscript" to *Peace Programme*, written in 1922).

Whereas our Party holds that "ten or twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry, and victory on a world scale is assured" (see Lenin's plan of his pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*⁸⁴), the Trotskyists, on the contrary, hold that the proletariat cannot have correct relations with the peasantry until the victory of the world revolution; that, having taken power, the proletariat "would come into hostile collision not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasantry with whose assistance it came into power," and that "the contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution" (Trotsky, in the "Preface," written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*).

The conference notes that these views of Trotsky and his followers on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution are totally at variance with the views of our Party, with Leninism.

The conference considers that these views — minimising the historical role and the importance of our revolution as a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and tending to weaken the determination of the Soviet proletariat to go on building socialism, and therefore to hinder the unleashing of the forces of international revolution — thereby run counter to the principles of genuine internationalism and to the fundamental line of the Communist International.

The conference considers that these views of Trotsky and his followers directly approximate to the views of Social-Democracy, as represented by its present leader, Otto Bauer, who asserts that "in Russia, where the proletariat is only a small minority of the nation, it can maintain its rule only temporarily," that "it must inevitably lose it again as soon as the peasant masses of the nation are culturally mature enough to take power into their own hands," that "the temporary rule of industrial socialism in agrarian Russia is only a beacon summoning the proletariat of the industrial West to battle," and that "only with the conquest of political power by the proletariat of the industrial West can the rule of industrial socialism be durably established" in Russia (see O. Bauer, *Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?*, in German).

The conference therefore qualifies these views of Trotsky and his followers as a *Social-Democratic deviation* in our Party on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

The principal fact in the development of inner-Party relations in the C.P.S.U.(B.) since the Fourteenth Congress (which condemned the basic views of the "New Opposition") is that the "New Opposition" (Zinoviev, Kamenev), which formerly contended against Trotskyism, against the Social-Democratic

deviation in our Party, has now gone over to the ideological standpoint of Trotskyism, that it has wholly and completely surrendered to Trotskyism the positions, common to the Party, to which it formerly adhered, and is now coming out with as much ardour *for* Trotskyism, as it formerly came out *against* it.

The "New Opposition's" passing over to Trotskyism was determined by two main circumstances:

a) the weariness, vacillation, and spirit of pessimism and defeatism, alien to the proletariat, among the adherents of the "New Opposition" in face of the new difficulties of the present period of radical change; furthermore, Kamenev's and Zinoviev's present vacillation and defeatism arose not by accident, but as a repetition, a recurrence of the vacillation and pessimism which they displayed nine years ago, in October 1917, in face of the difficulties of that period of radical change;

b) the complete defeat of the "New Opposition" at the Fourteenth Congress, and the resulting endeavour to unite at all costs with the Trotskyists, in order, by combining the two groups — the Trotskyists and the "New Opposition" — to compensate for the weakness of these groups and their isolation from the proletarian masses, all the more because the ideological views of Trotskyism fully harmonised with the present spirit of pessimism of the "New Opposition."

To this, too, must be attributed the fact that the opposition bloc has become a rallying centre for all the miscellaneous bankrupt trends inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.) which have been condemned by the Party and the Comintern — from the "Democratic Centralists"⁸⁵ and the "Workers' Opposition" in the C.P.S.U.(B.) to the "ultra-Left" opportunists in Germany and the Liquidators of the Souvarine variety⁸⁶ in France.

Hence the unscrupulousness in choice of means and unprincipledness in policy which form the basis of the bloc of the Trotskyists and the "New Opposition," and without which they could not have brought together these diverse anti-Party trends.

Thus, the Trotskyists, on the one hand, and the "New Opposition," on the other, quite naturally joined forces on the *common* platform of a Social-Democratic deviation and an unprincipled union of diverse anti-Party elements in the fight against the Party, thereby forming an opposition bloc which represents something like a recurrence — in a new form — of the August Bloc (1912-14).

II

THE PRACTICAL PLATFORM OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

The practical platform of the opposition bloc is a direct sequel to the basic error of this bloc on the character and prospects of our revolution.

The major features of the opposition bloc's practical platform may be summed up in the following principal points:

a) *Questions of the international movement.* The Party holds that the advanced capitalist countries are, on the whole, in a state of partial, temporary stabilisation; that the present period is an inter-revolutionary one, making it incumbent on the Communist Parties to prepare the proletariat for the coming revolution; that the offensive launched by capital in a vain effort to consolidate the stabilisation cannot but evoke an answering struggle on the part of the working class and the uniting of its forces against capital; that the Communist Parties

must intervene in this intensifying class struggle and turn the attacks of capital into counter-attacks of the proletariat, with a view to establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; that in order to achieve these aims the Communist Parties must win over the vast masses of the working class which still adhere to the reformist trade unions and the Second International; that, consequently, united front tactics are necessary and obligatory for the Communist Parties.

The opposition bloc starts out from entirely different premises. Having no faith in the internal forces of our revolution, and falling into despair owing to the delay of the world revolution, the opposition bloc slips away from the basis of a Marxist analysis of the class forces of the revolution to one consisting of "ultra-Left" self-deception and "revolutionary" adventurism; it denies the existence of a partial stabilisation of capitalism and, consequently, inclines towards putschism.

Hence the opposition's demand for a revision of the united front tactics and the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee, its failure to understand the role of the trade unions and its call to replace the latter by new, "revolutionary" proletarian organisations of its own invention.

Hence the opposition bloc's support of the "ultra-Left" ranters and opportunists in the Communist International (in the German Party, for example).

The conference considers that the policy of the opposition bloc in the international sphere is not in conformity with the interests of the international revolutionary movement.

b) *The proletariat and the peasantry in the U.S.S.R.* The Party holds that "the supreme principle of the dictatorship is the maintenance of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and

state power" (Lenin, Vol. XXVI, p. 460);^[1] that the proletariat can and should be the leader of the main mass of the peasantry in the economic sphere, in the sphere of socialist construction, just as in October 1917 it was the leader of the peasantry in the political sphere, in overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat; that industrialisation of the country can be carried out only if it is based upon a steady improvement of the material conditions of the majority of the peasantry (the poor and middle peasants), who constitute the principal market for our industry, and that, therefore, our economic policy (price policy, tax policy, etc.) must be such as strengthens the bond between industry and peasant economy and maintains the alliance between the working class and the main mass of the peasantry.

The opposition bloc starts out from entirely different premises. Abandoning the fundamental line of Leninism in the peasant question, not believing that the proletariat can be the leader of the peasantry in the work of socialist construction, and regarding the peasantry in the main as a hostile environment, the opposition bloc proposes economic and financial measures capable only of disrupting the bond between town and country, of shattering the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and thus undermining all possibility of real industrialisation. Such, for example, are: a) the opposition's proposal to raise the wholesale prices of manufactured goods, which would be bound to lead to an increase of retail prices, to the impoverishment of the poor peasants and a considerable section of the middle peasants, to a contraction of the home market, to discord between the proletariat and

[1] Lenin, *Third Congress of the Communist International*. June 22-July 12, 1921. 4. *Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P.* July 5.

the peasantry, to a fall in the exchange rate of the chervonets and, in the final analysis, to a decline in real wages; b) the opposition's proposal that the peasantry should be taxed to the maximum, which would be bound to result in a rift in the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

The conference considers that the policy of the opposition bloc towards the peasantry is not in conformity with the interests of the country's industrialisation and of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

c) *A fight against the Party apparatus under the guise of fighting bureaucracy in the Party.* The Party takes as its starting point that the Party apparatus and the mass of the Party members constitute an integral whole, that the Party apparatus (Central Committee, Central Control Commission, oblast Party committees, gubernia committees, okrug committees, uyezd committees, bureaus of Party units, etc.) embodies the leading element of the Party as a whole, that the Party apparatus comprises the finest members of the proletariat, who may be and should be criticised for errors, who may be and should be "freshened up," but who cannot be vilified without the risk of disrupting the Party and leaving it defenceless.

The opposition bloc, on the other hand, starts out by counterposing the mass of the Party members to the Party apparatus, tries to minimise the leading role of the Party apparatus, reducing its functions to registration and propaganda, incites the mass of the Party members against the Party apparatus, and thus discredits the latter, weakening its position in regard to leading the state.

The conference considers that this policy of the opposition bloc, a policy which has nothing in common with Leninism, can only result in the Party being disarmed in its fight against bureaucracy in the state apparatus, for a real transformation

of this apparatus, and hence for strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat.

d) *A fight against the "regime" in the Party under the guise of fighting for inner-Party democracy.* The Party takes as its starting point that "whoever weakens in the least the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat" (Lenin, Vol. XXV, p. 190);^[1] that inner-Party democracy is necessary not in order to weaken and shatter proletarian discipline in the Party, but in order to strengthen and consolidate it, and that without iron discipline in the Party, without a firm regime in the Party, backed by the sympathy and support of the vast masses of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible.

The opposition bloc, on the other hand, starts out by counterposing inner-Party democracy to Party discipline, confuses freedom of groups and factions with inner-Party democracy, and tries to make use of such democracy to shatter Party discipline and undermine the unity of the Party. It is natural that the opposition bloc's call for a fight against the "regime" in the Party, which leads in practice to advocacy of freedom of groups and factions in the Party, should be a call that is taken up with fervour by the anti-proletarian elements in our country as a means of salvation from the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The conference considers that the fight of the opposition bloc against the "regime" in the Party, a fight which has nothing in common with the organisational principles of Leninism, can only result in undermining the unity of the Party, weakening

[1] Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*. V. *"Left-Wing" Communism in Germany: Leaders — Party — Class — Masses*. (1920)

the dictatorship of the proletariat and unleashing the anti-proletarian forces in the country that are striving to undermine and shatter the dictatorship.

One of the means chosen by the opposition bloc for disrupting Party discipline and aggravating the struggle within the Party is the method of an all-Union discussion, such as it tried to force upon the Party in October of this year. While considering it necessary that questions of disagreement should be freely discussed in the theoretical journals of our Party, and while recognising the right of every Party member freely to criticise shortcomings in our Party work, the conference at the same time calls attention to the words of Lenin, who said that our Party is not a debating society but the fighting organisation of the proletariat. The conference considers that an all-Union discussion may be recognised as necessary only on condition: a) that such necessity is recognised by at least several local Party organisations of a gubernia or oblast level; b) that there is not a sufficiently firm majority in the Central Committee on major questions of Party policy; c) that, although there may be a firm majority holding a definite opinion in the C.C., the latter nevertheless considers it necessary to test the correctness of its policy through a general Party discussion. Moreover, in all such cases an all-Union discussion may be begun and carried through only after a decision of the C.C. to that effect.

The conference notes that not one of these conditions existed when the opposition bloc demanded the opening of an all-Union discussion.

The conference therefore considers that the Central Committee of the Party acted quite rightly in deciding that a discussion was inexpedient and in condemning the opposition bloc for its attempt to force upon the Party an all-Union discussion on issues which had already been decided by the Party.

Summing up its analysis of the practical platform of the opposition bloc, the conference finds that this platform marks the opposition bloc's departure from the class line of the proletarian revolution on cardinal issues of international and home policy.

III

THE "REVOLUTIONARY" WORDS AND OPPORTUNIST DEEDS OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

It is a characteristic feature of the opposition bloc that, being in fact the expression of a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, and advocating what is in fact an opportunist policy, it tries, nevertheless, to clothe its pronouncements in revolutionary phraseology, to criticise the Party "from the Left" and to disguise itself in a "Left" garb. The reason for this is that the communist proletarians, to whom the opposition bloc is chiefly trying to appeal, are the most revolutionary proletarians in the world, and that, having been brought up in the spirit of revolutionary traditions, they would simply not listen to critics who are avowed Rights; and so, in order to palm off its opportunist wares, the opposition bloc is compelled to clap a revolutionary label on them, being well aware that only by such a ruse can it attract the attention of the revolutionary proletarians.

But since, nevertheless, the opposition bloc is the vehicle of a Social-Democratic deviation, since in fact it advocates an opportunist policy, its words and its deeds must inevitably conflict. Hence the inherently contradictory nature of the

activities of the opposition bloc. Hence the divergence between its words and its deeds, between its revolutionary phrases and its opportunist actions.

The opposition noisily criticises the Party and the Comintern "from the Left," and at the same time it calls for a revision of the united front tactics, the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee, withdrawal from the trade unions and their replacement by new, "revolutionary" organisations, thinking that all this will advance the revolution, whereas in fact the result would be to aid Thomas and Oudegeest, sever the Communist Parties from the trade unions, weaken the position of world communism and, consequently, retard the revolutionary movement. In words — "revolutionaries," but in deeds — abettors of the Thomases and Oudegeests.

The opposition with much clamour "dresses down" the Party "from the Left," and at the same time it demands the raising of wholesale prices of manufactured goods, thinking thereby to accelerate industrialisation, whereas in fact the result would be to disorganise the home market, shatter the bond between industry and peasant economy, cause a fall in the exchange rate of the chervonets and in real wages, and, consequently, wreck all possibility of industrialisation. In words — industrialisers, but in deeds — abettors of the opponents of industrialisation.

The opposition accuses the Party of being unwilling to fight against bureaucracy in the state apparatus, and at the same time it proposes that wholesale prices should be raised, evidently thinking that raising wholesale prices has no bearing on the question of bureaucracy in the state apparatus, whereas in fact it turns out that the result must be completely to bureaucratised the state economic apparatus, since high wholesale

prices are the surest means for causing industry to wilt, for converting it into a hothouse plant and for bureaucratising the economic apparatus. In words — opponents of bureaucracy, but in deeds — advocates and promoters of bureaucratising the state apparatus.

The opposition raises a hue and cry against private capital, and at the same time it proposes that state capital should be withdrawn from the sphere of circulation, for the benefit of industry, thinking thereby to undermine private capital, whereas in fact the result would be to strengthen private capital in every way, since the withdrawal of state capital from circulation, which is private capital's principal sphere of operation, cannot fail to put trade completely under the control of private capital. In words — a fight against private capital, but in deeds — aid for private capital.

The opposition raises a cry about degeneration of the Party apparatus, but in fact it turns out that when the Central Committee raises the question of the expulsion of one of the Communists who have really degenerated, Mr. Ossovsky, the opposition displays maximum loyalty to this gentleman and votes against his expulsion. In words — opponents of degeneration, but in deeds — abettors and defenders of degeneration.

The opposition raised a cry about inner-Party democracy, and at the same time it demanded an all-Union discussion, thinking thereby to put inner-Party democracy into effect, whereas in fact it turned out that, by forcing a discussion upon the overwhelming majority of the Party on behalf of a tiny minority, the opposition was guilty of an act of gross violation of all democracy. In words — for inner-Party democracy, but in deeds — the violation of the fundamental principles of all democracy.

In the present period of acute class struggle, there can be only one of two possible policies in the working-class movement: either the policy of Menshevism, or the policy of Leninism. The attempts of the opposition bloc to occupy a middle position between these two opposite lines, under cover of "Left," "revolutionary" phraseology and while intensifying criticism of the C.P.S.U.(B.), were bound to lead, and have actually led, to the opposition bloc slithering into the camp of the opponents of Leninism, into the camp of Menshevism.

The enemies of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and of the Comintern know just what value is to be attached to the "revolutionary" phraseology of the opposition bloc. Paying no attention to it, therefore, as being of no significance, they unanimously praise the opposition bloc for its unrevolutionary deeds, and take up the opposition's slogan of a fight against the main line of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Comintern as their own slogan. It cannot be considered accidental that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Cadets, the Russian Mensheviks and the German "Left" Social-Democrats have all found it possible to express openly their sympathy with the fight of the opposition bloc against our Party, since they calculate that this fight will lead to a split, and that a split will unleash the anti-proletarian forces in our country, to the glee of the enemies of the revolution.

The conference considers that the Party must pay special attention to tearing off the "revolutionary" mask from the opposition bloc and showing up the latter's opportunist nature.

The conference considers that the Party must protect the unity of its ranks like the apple of its eye, considering that the unity of our Party is the chief antidote to all counter-revolutionary attempts on the part of the enemies of the revolution.

IV

CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the stage of the inner-Party struggle that has been passed through, the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) notes that in this struggle the Party has shown its immense ideological growth, it has unhesitatingly rejected the basic views of the opposition and has scored a swift and decisive victory over the opposition bloc, compelling the latter publicly to renounce factionalism and to dissociate itself from the openly opportunist groups inside and outside the C.P.S.U.(B.).

The conference notes that the attempts of the opposition bloc to force a discussion upon the Party and undermine its unity have resulted in the Party masses rallying still more solidly around the Central Committee, thus isolating the opposition and ensuring real unity in the ranks of our Party.

The conference considers that only with the active support of the broad mass of the Party members was the Central Committee able to achieve these successes, that the activity and political understanding displayed by the Party masses in the struggle against the disruptive work of the opposition bloc are the best proofs that the Party is functioning and developing on the basis of genuine inner-Party democracy.

Fully approving the policy of the Central Committee in its struggle to ensure unity, the conference considers that the next tasks of the Party should be:

- 1) To see to it that the minimum conditions arrived at as necessary for the unity of the Party shall be actually observed.
- 2) To wage a determined ideological struggle against the Social-Democratic deviation in our Party, explaining to the masses the erroneousness of the basic views of the opposition

bloc and bringing to light the opportunist content of these views, whatever the "revolutionary" phrases under which they are disguised.

3) To work to ensure that the opposition bloc acknowledges the erroneousess of its views.

4) To safeguard the unity of the Party in every way, checking all attempts to revive factionalism and to violate discipline.

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THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC DEVIATION IN OUR PARTY

*Report Delivered at the Fifteenth All-Union
Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.)⁸⁷*

November 1, 1926

I

THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

Comrades, the first question that has to be dealt with in the report concerns the formation of the opposition bloc, the stages of its development, and, lastly, its collapse, which has already begun. This theme, in my opinion, is essential as an introduction to the substance of the theses on the opposition bloc.

Already at the Fourteenth Party Congress Zinoviev gave the signal for rallying all the opposition trends and for uniting them into a single force. You, comrades, who are delegates at this conference probably remember that speech of Zinoviev's. There cannot be any doubt that such a call was bound

to meet with a response among the Trotskyists, who from the very first held the opinion that groups should be more or less unrestricted, and that they should more or less unite for the purpose of carrying on a fight against the basic line of the Party, with which Trotsky had long been dissatisfied.

That was the preparatory work, so to speak, for the formation of the bloc.

1. THE FIRST STAGE

The opposition took the first serious step towards forming a bloc at the time of the April plenum of the Central Committee,⁸⁸ in connection with Rykov's theses on the economic situation. Full understanding between the "New Opposition" and the Trotskyists had not yet been reached at that time, but that in the main the bloc was already formed — of that there could be no doubt. Comrades who have read the verbatim report of the April plenum will know that that is quite true. In the main, the two groups had already managed to come to an understanding, but there were reservations, owing to which they were obliged to submit two parallel series of amendments to Rykov's theses, instead of common amendments of the whole opposition. One series of amendments came from the "New Opposition," headed by Kamenev, and the other series from the Trotskyist group. But that in the main they were hitting at the same mark, and that the plenum was already saying that they were reviving the August Bloc in a new form, is an undoubted fact.

What were the reservations made at that time?

Here is what Trotsky said then:

"I consider the defect of Comrade Kamenev's amendments is that they, as it were, treat differentiation in the countryside to a certain extent

independently of industrialisation. Yet the significance and social importance of peasant differentiation and its tempo are determined by the progress and tempo of industrialisation in relation to the countryside as a whole."

A reservation of no little importance.

In reply to this, Kamenev in his turn made a reservation in regard to the Trotskyists:

"I am not able," he said, "to associate myself with that part of them (i.e., Trotsky's amendments to Rykov's draft resolution) which assesses the past economic policy of the Party, which I supported one hundred per cent."

The "New Opposition" was not pleased at Trotsky criticising the economic policy which Kamenev had directed during the preceding period. And Trotsky, for his part, was not pleased at the "New Opposition" separating the question of peasant differentiation from the question of industrialisation.

2. THE SECOND STAGE

The second stage was the July plenum of the Central Committee.⁸⁹ At that plenum we already had a formally established bloc, a bloc without reservations. Trotsky's reservations had been withdrawn and shelved; so had Kamenev's. Now they already had a joint "declaration," which is well known to you all, comrades, as an anti-Party document. Such were the characteristic features of the second stage in the development of the opposition bloc.

The bloc was constructed and given shape in that period not only on the basis of a mutual withdrawal of amendments, but also on the basis of a mutual "amnesty." We had at that time Zinoviev's interesting statement to the effect that the opposition, its main core in 1923 — in other words, the Trotsky-

ists — was right regarding the degeneration of the Party, that is, the main plank of the practical platform of Trotskyism, which follows from its fundamental line. On the other hand, we had the no less interesting statement of Trotsky's to the effect that his *The Lessons of October* — which had been levelled specifically against Kamenev and Zinoviev as the Party's "Right wing" that was now repeating the October errors — had been a mistake, that the beginning of the Right deviation in the Party and of the degeneration had to be ascribed not to Kamenev and Zinoviev, but to, let us say, Stalin.

Here is what Zinoviev said in July of this year:

"We say that there can now be no doubt whatever that, as the evolution of the directing line of the faction (i.e., the majority of the Central Committee) has shown, the main core of the 1923 opposition *correctly warned* against the danger of a shift from the proletarian line, and against the ominous growth of the apparatus regime."

In other words, Zinoviev's recent assertions, and the resolution of the Thirteenth Congress,⁹⁰ stating that Trotsky was revising Leninism, and that Trotskyism was a petty-bourgeois deviation, were all a mistake, a misunderstanding, and that the danger lay not in Trotskyism, but in the Central Committee.

That is a most unprincipled "amnesty" of Trotskyism.

On the other hand, Trotsky declared in July:

"There is no doubt that in *The Lessons of October* I associated the opportunist shifts in policy with the names of Zinoviev and Kamenev. As experience of the ideological struggle in the Central Committee testifies, that was a gross mistake. This mistake is to be explained by the fact that I had had no opportunity of following the ideological struggle among the seven and of ascertaining in time that the opportunist shifts proceeded from the group headed by Comrade Stalin, in opposition to Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev."

This means that Trotsky was publicly repudiating his much-talked-of *The Lessons of October*, thereby issuing an "amnesty" to Zinoviev and Kamenev in return for the "amnesty" he had received from them.

A direct and unconcealed unprincipled deal!

Hence, a withdrawal of the April reservations and a mutual "amnesty" at the expense of the principles of the Party — these were the factors which determined the full shaping of the bloc, as an anti-Party bloc.

3. THE THIRD STAGE

The third stage in the development of the bloc was the opposition's open attacks on the Party at the end of September and in the beginning of October of this year in Moscow and Leningrad, the period when the leaders of the bloc, having had their holidays in the South and gained fresh vigour, returned to the centre and launched a direct attack on the Party. Before passing from underground forms to open forms of struggle against the Party, they, it appears, declared here in the Political Bureau (I myself was away from Moscow at the time): "We'll show you. We are going to address workers' meetings; let the workers decide who's right. We'll show you!" And they began to make the rounds of the Party units. But, as you know, the outcome of this move was deplorable for the opposition. You know that they suffered defeat. You know from the press that both in Leningrad and Moscow, both in the industrial and in the non-industrial areas of the Soviet Union, the opposition bloc met with a determined rebuff from the mass of the Party members. How many votes it received and how many were cast for the Central Committee, I shall not repeat here; you know that from the press.

One thing is clear: that the expectations of the opposition bloc were not fulfilled. From that moment the opposition made a turn in favour of peace in the Party. The opposition's defeat, evidently, did not fail to have its effect. That was on October 4, when the opposition submitted to the Central Committee its statement about peace, and when for the first time, after the abuse and assaults, we heard words from the opposition resembling the words of Party people — it was time to stop “inner-Party strife” and to organise “joint work.”

Thus the opposition was compelled by its defeat to face the question that the Central Committee had repeatedly called upon it to face — the question of peace in the Party.

Naturally, the Central Committee, true to the directives of the Fourteenth Congress on the need for unity, readily agreed to the opposition's proposal, although it knew that the proposal was not altogether sincere.

4. THE FOURTH STAGE

The fourth stage was the period when the opposition leaders drew up their “statement” of October 16 of this year. It is usually described as a capitulation. I shall not describe it in sharp terms, but it is clear that the statement is evidence not of any victories of the opposition bloc, but of its defeat. I shall not recount the history of our negotiations, comrades. A verbatim record of the negotiations was made, and you can learn all about them from it. I should like to dwell on one incident alone. The opposition bloc wanted to declare in the first paragraph of its “statement” that it still adhered to its views, and not simply that, but that it adhered to its old opinions “in their entirety.” We tried to persuade the opposition bloc not to insist on this. Why? For two reasons.

Firstly, for the reason that if the opposition, having renounced factionalism and with it the theory and practice of freedom of factions, had dissociated itself from Ossovsky, the "Workers' Opposition," and the Maslow-Urbahns group, that meant that it had renounced not only factional methods of struggle, but also some of its political opinions. Could the opposition bloc say after this that it still adhered to its erroneous views, to its ideological opinions, "in their entirety"? Of course not.

Secondly, we told the opposition that it was not in its own interest to shout that they, the oppositionists, adhered to their old opinions, and "in their entirety" at that, since the workers would have every justification for saying: "So the oppositionists want to go on scrapping! That means they haven't been whacked enough yet and will have to be given some more." (*Laughter, cries: "Quite right!"*) However, they did not agree with us and only accepted the proposal to delete the words "in their entirety," retaining the phrase about adhering to their old opinions. Well, they have made their bed and will have to lie in it. (*Voices: "Quite right!"*)

5. LENIN AND THE QUESTION OF BLOCS IN THE PARTY

Zinoviev said recently that the Central Committee's condemnation of their bloc was unwarranted, since supposedly Ilyich had approved in general of blocs in the Party. I must say, comrades, that Zinoviev's statement is totally at variance with Lenin's position. Lenin never approved of blocs in the Party indiscriminately. Lenin was in favour only of revolutionary blocs, based on principle, against the Mensheviks, Liquidators and Otzovists. Lenin always fought against un-

principled and anti-Party blocs in the Party. Does not everyone know that for three years Lenin fought against Trotsky's August Bloc, as being an anti-Party and unprincipled bloc, until complete victory over it was achieved? Ilyich was never in favour of blocs indiscriminately. He was in favour only of such blocs in the Party as were based on principle, in the first place, and, in the second place, had the purpose of strengthening the Party against the Liquidators, against the Mensheviks, against vacillating elements. The history of our Party knows of one such bloc, the bloc of the Leninists and the Plekhanovists (this was in 1910-12) against the bloc of the Liquidators when the anti-Party August Bloc was formed, which included Potresov and other Liquidators, Alexinsky and other Otzovists, and which was headed by Trotsky. There was one bloc, an anti-Party bloc, the unprincipled and adventurist August Bloc; and there was another bloc, the bloc of the Leninists with the Plekhanovists, that is, the revolutionary Mensheviks (at that time Plekhanov was a revolutionary Menshevik). That is the kind of bloc that Lenin recognised. And we all recognise such blocs.

If a bloc within the Party enhances the fighting capacity of the Party and helps it to advance, we are for such a bloc. But your bloc, worthy oppositionists — can it be said that this bloc of yours enhances the fighting capacity of our Party? Can it be said that this bloc of yours is based on principle? What principles unite you with the Medvedyev group, let us say? What principles unite you with, let us say, the Souvarine group in France or the Maslow group in Germany? What principles unite you, the "New Opposition," who only recently regarded Trotskyism as a variety of Menshevism, with the Trotskyists, who only recently regarded the leaders of the "New Opposition" as opportunists?

And then, can it be said that your bloc works in the interest and for the good of the Party, and not against the Party? Can it be said that it has enhanced the fighting capacity and revolutionary spirit of our Party even one iota? Why, all the world now knows that during the six or eight months your bloc has existed you have been trying to drag the Party back, back to "revolutionary" phrasemongering and unprincipledness, that you have been trying to disintegrate the Party and reduce it to a state of paralysis, to split it.

No, comrades, there is nothing in common between the opposition bloc and the bloc which Lenin concluded with the Plekhanovists in 1910 against the opportunists' August Bloc. On the contrary, the present opposition bloc is in the main reminiscent of Trotsky's August Bloc both by its unprincipledness and by its opportunist basis.

Thus, in forming such a bloc, the oppositionists have departed from the basic line which Lenin strove to pursue. Lenin always told us that the most correct policy is a policy based on principle. The opposition, on the contrary, when it banded itself together in one group, decided that the most correct policy is an unprincipled policy.

For that reason the opposition bloc cannot exist for long; it is inevitably bound to disintegrate and fall to pieces.

Such are the stages of development of the opposition bloc.

6. THE PROCESS OF DECOMPOSITION OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

What is the state of the opposition bloc today? It may be described as a state of gradual disintegration, as a state of the gradual falling away of its component elements, as a state of decomposition. That is the only way the present state of the

opposition bloc can be described. And that was only to be expected, because an unprincipled bloc, an opportunist bloc, cannot exist for long within the ranks of our Party. We already know that the Maslow-Urbahns group is falling away from the opposition bloc. Yesterday we heard that Medvedyev and Shlyapnikov have recanted their errors and are leaving the bloc. We know, further, that there is also a rift within the bloc, that is, between the "new" opposition and the "old," and it should make itself felt at this conference.

It turns out, therefore, that they formed a bloc, and formed it with great pomp, but the result has been the opposite of what they expected from it. Arithmetically, of course, they should have obtained an increase, for adding forces together should yield an increase; but the oppositionists forgot that, besides arithmetic, there is also algebra, and that in algebra adding forces together does not always result in an increase (*laughter*), because the result depends not only on adding forces together, but on the signs that stand in front of the items. (*Prolonged applause.*) It turns out that they are good at arithmetic but bad at algebra, with the result that by adding their forces together, far from having increased their army, they have reduced it to a minimum, to a state of collapse.

Wherein lay the strength of the Zinoviev group?

In the fact that it waged a determined fight against the fundamentals of Trotskyism. But as soon as the Zinoviev group gave up its fight against Trotskyism, it, so to speak, emasculated itself, rendered itself powerless.

Wherein lay the strength of the Trotsky group?

In the fact that it waged a determined fight against the errors of Zinoviev and Kamenev in October 1917 and against the repetition of those errors today. But as soon as the Trotsky

group gave up its fight against the Zinoviev-Kamenev deviation, it emasculated itself, rendered itself powerless.

The result is the adding together of emasculated forces. (*Laughter, prolonged applause.*)

Obviously, nothing was to be got from this but discomfiture. Obviously, the more honest elements of Zinoviev's group were bound after this to part ways with Zinoviev, just as the better elements among the Trotskyists were bound to desert Trotsky.

7. WHAT IS THE OPPOSITION BLOC COUNTING ON?

What are the prospects of the opposition? What are they counting on? I think that they are counting on a deterioration of the situation in the country and in the Party. Just now they are winding up their factional activity, because the times are "hard" for them. But if they do not renounce their fundamental views, if they have decided to adhere to their old opinions, it means that they will temporise, wait for "better times," when they have accumulated strength and are again in a position to come out against the Party. Of that there can be no doubt whatever.

Recently, one of the oppositionists who had come over to the side of the Party, a worker named Andreyev, gave us some interesting information about the opposition's plans which it is necessary, in my opinion, to mention at this conference. Here is what Comrade Yaroslavsky told us in his report at the October plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission:

"Andreyev, who had been active in the opposition for a fairly long time, in the end arrived at the conviction that he could not work with

it any longer. What chiefly decided him was two things he had heard the opposition say: the first was that it had found itself up against a 'reactionary' mood of the working class, and the second was that the economic situation had proved not so bad as it had thought."

I think that Andreyev, formerly an oppositionist and now pro-Party, has disclosed what the opposition believes at heart but does not venture to say aloud. It evidently senses that the economic situation is now better than it anticipated, and that the mood of the workers is not as bad as it would have liked it to be. Hence their policy of temporarily winding up their "work." It is clear that if later on the economic situation becomes somewhat more tense — as the oppositionists are convinced it will — and the mood of the workers deteriorates as a result — as they are also convinced it will — they will lose no time in resuming their "work," in resuming their old ideological opinions, which they have not abandoned, and in launching an open fight against the Party.

Such, comrades, are the prospects of the opposition bloc, which is disintegrating, but which has not yet disintegrated completely, and perhaps will not do so soon unless there is a determined and ruthless fight by the Party.

But since they are preparing for a struggle, and are only waiting for "better times" to resume their open fight against the Party, the Party must not be caught napping. Hence the tasks of the Party are: to wage a determined ideological struggle against the erroneous views of the opposition, to which it still adheres; to expose the opportunist nature of these ideas no matter what "revolutionary" phraseology is used to disguise them; and to work in such a way that the opposition is compelled to renounce its errors for fear of being routed utterly and completely.

II

THE PRINCIPAL ERROR OF
THE OPPOSITION BLOC

I pass to the second question, comrades, that of the principal error of the opposition bloc on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

The basic question on which the Party and the opposition bloc are divided is that of the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, or, what is the same thing, that of the character and prospects of our revolution.

That is not a new question: it was more or less thoroughly discussed, by the way, at the conference of April 1925, the Fourteenth Conference. Now, in a new situation, it has sprung up again and we shall have to consider it closely. And since at the recent joint meeting of the plenums of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, Trotsky and Kamenev levelled the charge that the theses on the opposition bloc set forth their views incorrectly, I am compelled in my report to adduce a number of documents and quotations confirming the basic propositions of the theses on the opposition bloc. I apologise in advance, comrades, but I am compelled to do this.

We are faced with three questions:

1) Is the victory of socialism possible in our country, bearing in mind that it is so far the only country of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the proletarian revolution has not yet been victorious in other countries, and that the tempo of the world revolution has slowed down?

2) If this victory is possible, can it be called a complete victory, a final victory?

3) If such a victory cannot be called final, then what conditions are necessary in order that it may become final?

Such are the three questions which are combined in the general question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, that is to say, in our country.

1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

How did the Marxists answer this question formerly, in the forties, say, or in the fifties and sixties of the last century, in the period in general when monopoly capitalism did not yet exist, when the law of uneven development of capitalism had not yet been discovered and could not have been discovered, and when, consequently, the question of the victory of socialism in individual countries was not yet presented from the angle from which it was presented subsequently? At that time all of us, Marxists, beginning with Marx and Engels, were of the opinion that the victory of socialism in one country taken separately was impossible, that for socialism to be victorious, a simultaneous revolution was necessary in a number of countries, at least in a number of the most developed, civilised countries. And at the time that was correct. In illustration of this view, I should like to quote a characteristic passage from Engels' outline *The Principles of Communism*, where the question is put in the sharpest possible form. This outline subsequently served as the basis for the *Communist Manifesto*. It was written in 1847. Here is what Engels says in this outline, which was published only a few years ago:

"Can this revolution (i.e., the proletarian revolution — J. St.) take place in one country alone?

"Answer: *No*. Large-scale industry has, by the very fact that it has created a world market, bound all the nations of the earth, and notably

the civilised nations, so closely together, that each depends on what is happening in the others. Further, in all the civilised countries it has evened up social development to such an extent that in all of them the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have become the two decisive classes of society, and the struggle between them the major struggle of our times. *Therefore, the communist revolution will not be simply a national revolution, but will take place simultaneously in all the civilised countries, that is, at least in England, America, France and Germany.* In each of these countries it will develop faster or more slowly depending on which has the more developed industry, the bigger accumulation of wealth, or the greater productive forces. It will therefore be slowest and hardest to accomplish in Germany, and fastest and easiest in England. It will also have a big influence on the other countries of the world, and will completely change and greatly accelerate their previous course of development. It is a universal revolution, and therefore will have a universal terrain"* (F. Engels, *The Principles of Communism*. See *Kommunistichesky Manifest*, State Publishing House, 1923, p. 317).

That was written in the forties of the last century, when monopoly capitalism did not yet exist. It is characteristic that there is not even a mention here of Russia; Russia is left out altogether. And that is quite understandable, since at that time Russia with its revolutionary proletariat, Russia as a revolutionary force, did not yet exist and could not have existed.

Was what is said here, in this quotation, correct in the conditions of pre-monopoly capitalism, in the period when Engels wrote it? Yes, it was correct.

Is this opinion correct now, in the new conditions, the conditions of monopoly capitalism and proletarian revolution? No, it is no longer correct.

In the old period, the period of pre-monopoly capitalism, the pre-imperialist period, when the globe had not yet been divided up among financial groups, when the forcible redivision of an already divided world was not yet a matter of life

* My italics. — J. St.

or death for capitalism, when unevenness of economic development was not, and could not be, as sharply marked as it became later, when the contradictions of capitalism had not yet reached that degree of development at which they convert flourishing capitalism into moribund capitalism thus opening up the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries — in that old period the formula of Engels was undeniably correct. In the new period, the period of the development of imperialism, when the unevenness of development of the capitalist countries has become the decisive factor in imperialist development, when inevitable conflicts and wars among the imperialists weaken the imperialist front and make it possible for it to be breached in individual countries, when the law of uneven development discovered by Lenin has become the starting point for the theory of the victory of socialism in individual countries — in these conditions the old formula of Engels becomes incorrect and must inevitably be replaced by another formula, one that affirms the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

Lenin's greatness as the continuer of the work of Marx and Engels consists precisely in the fact that he was never a slave to the letter of Marxism. In his investigations he followed the precept repeatedly uttered by Marx that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action. Lenin knew this and, drawing a strict distinction between the letter and the essence of Marxism, he never regarded Marxism as a dogma but endeavoured to apply Marxism, as a fundamental method, in the new circumstances of capitalist development. Lenin's greatness consists precisely in the fact that he openly and honestly, without any hesitation, raised the question of the necessity for a new formula about the possibility of the victory of the proletarian revolution in individual countries, undeterred by the

fact that the opportunists of all countries would cling to the old formula and try to use the names of Marx and Engels as a screen for their opportunist activity.

On the other hand, it would be strange to expect of Marx and Engels, geniuses though they were, that they, fifty or sixty years prior to developed monopoly capitalism, should have been able to foresee accurately all the potentialities of the class struggle of the proletariat which have shown themselves in the period of monopoly, imperialist capitalism.

And this was not the first instance where Lenin, basing himself on the method of Marx, continued the work of Marx and Engels without clinging to the letter of Marxism. I have in mind another and similar instance — namely, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know that on this question Marx expressed the opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat — as the smashing of the old state apparatus, and the creation of a new one, of a new, proletarian state — is an essential stage in the advance towards socialism in the continental countries making an exception in the case of England and America, since in those countries, Marx said, militarism and bureaucracy were weakly developed, or not developed at all, and, consequently, some other, “peaceful” path of transition to socialism was possible. That was quite correct in the seventies. (*Ryazanov*: “It was not correct even then.”) I think that in the seventies, when militarism was not so developed in England and America as it became subsequently, that proposition was absolutely correct. You may convince yourselves of that from the chapter in Comrade Lenin’s pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*⁹¹ where he says that in the seventies in England it was not excluded that socialism might develop by way of an agreement between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of that country, where the proletariat constituted the majority

and where the bourgeoisie was accustomed to making compromises, where militarism was weak, and where bureaucracy was weak. But while that proposition was correct in the seventies of the last century, it became incorrect after the nineteenth century, in the period of imperialism, when England became no less bureaucratic and no less, if not more, militaristic than any of the countries of the continent. Comrade Lenin therefore says in his pamphlet *The State and Revolution* that Marx's reservation as regards the continent is now invalid,⁹² since new conditions have arisen which render superfluous the exception made in the case of England.

Lenin's greatness consists precisely in the fact that he did not allow himself to be held prisoner by the letter of Marxism, that he was able to grasp the essence of Marxism and use it as a starting point for developing further the teachings of Marx and Engels.

That, comrades, is how the question of the victory of the socialist revolution in individual countries stood in the pre-imperialist, pre-monopoly period of capitalism.

2. LENINISM OR TROTSKYISM?

Lenin was the *first* Marxist who made a really Marxist analysis of imperialism, as a new and last phase of capitalism, who presented the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in *individual* capitalist countries in a new way and answered it in the *affirmative*. I have in mind Lenin's pamphlet *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. I have in mind also his article "The United States of Europe Slogan," which appeared in 1915. I have in mind the controversy between Trotsky and Lenin over the slogan of a United States of Europe, or of the whole world, in which Lenin first advanced

the thesis that the victory of socialism in one country is possible.

Here is what Lenin wrote in that article:

"As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, firstly, because it merges with socialism; secondly, because it may give rise to a wrong interpretation in the sense of the impossibility of the victory of socialism in a single country and about the relation of such a country to the rest. Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised its own socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, raising revolts in those countries against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity coming out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." . . . For "the free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states" (see Vol. XVIII, pp. 232-33).^[1]

That is what Lenin wrote in 1915.

What is this law of uneven development of capitalism whose operation under the conditions of imperialism leads to the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country?

Speaking of this law, Lenin held that the old, pre-monopoly capitalism has already passed into imperialism; that world economy is developing in the conditions of a frenzied struggle between the leading imperialist groups for territory, markets, raw materials, etc.; that the division of the world into spheres of influence of imperialist groups is already completed; that the development of the capitalist countries does not proceed evenly, not in such a way that one country follows after another or advances parallel with it, but spasmodically, through some countries which had previously outstripped the others being

[1] Lenin, *The United States of Europe Slogan*. (1915)

pushed back and new countries advancing to the forefront; that this manner of development of the capitalist countries inevitably engenders conflicts and wars between the capitalist powers for a fresh redivision of an already divided world; that these conflicts and wars lead to the weakening of imperialism; that owing to this the world imperialist front becomes easily liable to be breached in individual countries; and that, because of this, the victory of socialism in individual countries becomes possible.

We know that quite recently Britain was ahead of all the other imperialist states. We also know that Germany then began to overtake Britain, and demanded a "place in the sun" at the expense of other countries and, in the first place, at the expense of Britain. We know that it was precisely as a result of this circumstance that the imperialist war (1914-18) arose. Now, after the imperialist war, America has spurted far ahead and outdistanced both Britain and the other European powers. It can scarcely be doubted that this contains the seeds of new great conflicts and wars.

The fact that in consequence of the imperialist war the imperialist front was breached in Russia is evidence that, in the present-day conditions of capitalist development, the chain of the imperialist front will not necessarily break in the country where industry is most developed, but where the chain is weakest, where the proletariat has an important ally — such as the peasantry, for instance — in the fight against imperialist rule, as was the case in Russia.

It is quite possible that in the future the chain of the imperialist front will break in one of the countries — India, say — where the proletariat has an important ally in the shape of a powerful revolutionary liberation movement.

In affirming the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, Lenin, as we know, was in controversy with Trotsky, in the first place, and also with the Social-Democrats.

How did Trotsky react to Lenin's article and to his thesis that the victory of socialism is possible in one country?

Here is what Trotsky wrote then (in 1915) in reply to Lenin's article:

"The only more or less concrete historical argument," says Trotsky, "advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Sotsial-Demokrat* (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks, where Lenin's above-mentioned article was printed — *J. St.*) in the following sentence: 'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' From this the *Sotsial-Demokrat* draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible argument. But this unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of Britain, Austria, Germany or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe,' which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no country in its struggle must 'wait' for others, is an elementary thought which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporising international inaction. Without waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think — as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify — that, for example, *a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe*, or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world"* (see Trotsky's *Works*, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 89-90).

That is what Trotsky wrote in 1915 in the Paris newspaper *Nashe Slovo*,⁹³ the article being subsequently reprinted in

* My italics. — *J. St.*

Russia in a collection of Trotsky's articles entitled *Peace Programme*, first published in August 1917.

You see that in these two passages, Lenin's and Trotsky's, two entirely different theses stand contrasted. Whereas Lenin considers that the victory of socialism in one country is possible, that the proletariat when it has seized power can not only retain it, but can even go further, having expropriated the capitalists and organised a socialist economy, so as to render effective support to the proletarians of capitalist countries, Trotsky, on the contrary, considers that if a victorious revolution in one country does not very soon call forth a victorious revolution in other countries, the proletariat of the victorious country will not be able even to retain power (let alone organise a socialist economy); for, Trotsky says, it is hopeless to think that a revolutionary government in Russia can hold out in the face of a conservative Europe.

These are two entirely different points of view, two entirely different lines. With Lenin, a proletariat which has taken power represents a most active force displaying the highest initiative, which organises a socialist economy and goes further and supports the proletarians of other countries. With Trotsky, on the contrary, a proletariat which has taken power becomes a semi-passive force which requires immediate assistance in the shape of an immediate victory of socialism in other countries, and which feels itself, as it were, in a temporary encampment and in peril of immediately losing power. But if the victory of the revolution in other countries should not ensue immediately—what then? Then, chuck up the job. (*A voice from the audience: "And run to cover."*) Yes, and run to cover. That is perfectly correct. (*Laughter.*)

It may be said that this divergence between Lenin and Trotsky is a thing of the past, that later, in the course of the

work, it might have been reduced to a minimum and even wiped out altogether. Yes, it might have been reduced to a minimum and even wiped out. But, unfortunately, neither of these things happened. On the contrary, this divergence remained in full force right down to Comrade Lenin's death. It exists even now, as you can see for yourselves. I affirm that, on the contrary, this divergence between Lenin and Trotsky, and the controversy it gave rise to, continued all the time; articles on the subject by Lenin and Trotsky appeared one after another, and the concealed controversy continued, it is true, without mention of names.

Here are some facts on this score.

In 1921, when we introduced NEP, Lenin again raised the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism, this time in the more concrete form of the possibility of laying a socialist foundation for our economy along the lines of NEP. You will recall that when NEP was introduced in 1921, Lenin was accused by a section of our Party, especially by the "Workers' Opposition," that, by introducing NEP, he was swerving from the path of socialism. It was evidently in reply to this that Lenin repeatedly declared in his speeches and articles of that time that we were introducing NEP not as a departure from our course, but as a continuation of it under the new conditions, with a view to laying "a socialist foundation for our economy," "together with the peasantry," and "under the leadership of the working class" (see Lenin's *The Tax in Kind* and other articles on the subject of NEP).

As though in reply to this, Trotsky, in January 1922, published a "Preface" to his book *The Year 1905*, where he declared that in our country building socialism together with the peasantry was unfeasible, because the life of our country would be

a series of hostile collisions between the working class and the peasantry until the proletariat was victorious in the West.

Here is what Trotsky said in his "Preface":

"Having assumed power, the proletariat would come into *hostile collision** not only with all the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasantry with whose assistance it came into power. The contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution" (Trotsky, in the "Preface," written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*).

Here, too, as you see, two different theses stand contrasted. Whereas Lenin grants the possibility of laying a socialist foundation for our economy together with the peasantry and under the leadership of the working class, Trotsky, on the contrary, holds that it is impossible for the proletariat to lead the peasantry and for them to work together in laying a socialist foundation, since the political life of the country will be a series of *hostile* collisions between the workers' government and the peasant majority, and that these collisions can only be solved in the arena of the world revolution.

Further, we have Lenin's speech at the plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet a year later, in 1922, when he again reverts to the question of building socialism in our country. He says:

"Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. We still retain our old bad opinion of icons. We have dragged socialism into everyday life, and here we must find our way. This is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing the conviction that, difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and no matter how many difficulties it may entail, we shall all — not in one day, but

* My italics. — J. St.

in the course of several years — all of us together fulfil it whatever happens so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia" (see Vol. XXVII, p. 366).^[1]

As though in answer to this, or perhaps in explanation of what he had said in the passage from him quoted above, Trotsky published in 1922 a "Postscript" to his pamphlet *Peace Programme*, where he says:

"The assertion reiterated several times in the *Peace Programme* that a proletarian revolution cannot culminate victoriously within national bounds may perhaps seem to some readers to have been refuted by the nearly five years' experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would be unwarranted. The fact that the workers' state has held out against the whole world in one country, and a backward country at that, testifies to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other, more advanced, more civilised countries will be truly capable of performing miracles. But while we have held our ground as a state politically and militarily, we have not arrived, or even begun to arrive, at the creation of a socialist society. . . . As long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries we shall be compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to strive for agreement with the capitalist world; at the same time it may be said with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to mitigate some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but *real progress* of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory** of the proletariat in the major European countries" (see Trotsky's *Works*, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 92-93).

Here, too, as you see, two antithetical theses, Lenin's and Trotsky's, stand contrasted. Whereas Lenin considers that we have already dragged socialism into everyday life and that, in spite of the difficulties, we are fully in a position to turn NEP

* My italics. — J. St.

^[1] Lenin, *Speech at a Plenary Session of the Moscow Soviet*. November 20, 1922.

Russia into socialist Russia, Trotsky, on the contrary, believes that not only are we unable to turn present Russia into socialist Russia, but that we cannot even achieve real progress of socialist economy until the proletariat is victorious in other countries.

Lastly, we have Comrade Lenin's notes in the shape of the articles *On Co-operation* and *Our Revolution* (directed against Sukhanov) which he wrote before his death, and which have been left to us as his political testament. These notes are remarkable for the fact that in them Lenin again raises the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, and gives us formulations which leave no room for any doubt whatever. Here is what he says in his notes *Our Revolution*:

"... Infinitely hackneyed is the argument that they (the heroes of the Second International — *J. St.*) learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain 'learned' gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country. And to none of them does it occur to ask himself: But what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, under the influence of the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that offered it some chance, at least, of securing conditions, not quite ordinary, for the further development of its civilisation? . . .

"If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite 'level of culture' is), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for the definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and *then*, on the basis of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations? . . .

"You say that civilisation is necessary for the creation of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first create such prerequisites of civilisation in our country as the expulsion of the landlords and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? In what books have you read that such variations of the customary historical

procedure are impermissible or impossible?" (See Vol. XXVII, pp. 399-401.)^[1]

And here is what Lenin says in the article *On Co-operation*:

"As a matter of fact, state power over all large-scale means of production, state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, etc. — is not this all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society from the co-operatives, from the co-operatives alone, which we formerly looked down upon as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to look down upon as such now, under NEP? *Is this not all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society?* This is not yet the building of socialist society, but it is *all that is necessary and sufficient* for this building"* (see Vol. XXVII, p. 392).^[2]

And so, we have in this way two lines on the basic question of the possibility of victoriously building socialism in our country, of the possibility of the victory of the socialist elements in our economy over the capitalist elements — for, comrades, the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country means nothing more nor less than the possibility of the victory of the socialist elements in our economy over the capitalist elements — we have the line of Lenin and Leninism, in the first place, and the line of Trotsky and Trotskyism, in the second place. Leninism answers this question in the affirmative. Trotskyism, on the contrary, denies the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country through the internal forces of our revolution. While the first line is the line of our Party, the second line is an approximation to the views of Social-Democracy.

* My italics throughout. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Our Revolution*. (1923)

[2] Lenin, *On Co-operation*. (1923)

That is why it is said in the draft theses on the opposition bloc that Trotskyism is a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party.

But from this it follows incontestably that our revolution is a *socialist* revolution, that it represents not only a signal, an impulse, a starting point for the world revolution, but also a base, a necessary and sufficient base, for the building of a complete socialist society in our country.

And so, we can and must defeat the capitalist elements in our economy, we can and must build a socialist society in our country. But can that victory be termed complete, final? No, it cannot. We can defeat our capitalists, we are in a position to build and complete the building of socialism, but that does not mean that we are in a position by doing so to guarantee the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat against dangers from outside, against the danger of intervention, and, consequently, of restoration, re-establishment of the old order. We are not living on an island. We are living within a capitalist encirclement. The fact that we are building socialism, and thereby revolutionising the workers of the capitalist countries, cannot but evoke the hatred and enmity of the whole capitalist world. To think that the capitalist world can look on indifferently at our successes on the economic front, successes which are revolutionising the working class of the whole world, is to harbour an illusion. Therefore, so long as we remain within a capitalist encirclement, so long as the proletariat is not victorious in a number of countries at least, we cannot regard our victory as final; consequently, no matter what successes we may achieve in our constructive work, we cannot consider the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat guaranteed against dangers from outside. Therefore, to achieve final victory we must ensure that the present capitalist encirclement is replaced by

a socialist encirclement, that the proletariat is victorious at least in several other countries. Only then can our victory be regarded as final.

That is why we regard the victory of socialism in our country not as an end in itself, not as something self-sufficient, but as an aid, a means, a path towards the victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries.

Here is what Comrade Lenin wrote on this score:

"We are living," Lenin says, "not merely in a state, but *in a system of states*, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for a long time is unthinkable. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end comes, a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states will be inevitable. That means that if the ruling class, the proletariat, wants to, and will hold sway, it must prove this by its military organisation also" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 122).^[1]

It follows from this that the danger of armed intervention exists, and will continue to exist for a long time to come.

Whether the capitalists are just now in a position to undertake serious intervention against the Soviet Republic is another question. That remains to be seen. Here much depends on the behaviour of the workers of the capitalist countries, on their sympathy for the land of the proletarian dictatorship, on how far they are devoted to the cause of socialism. That at the present time the workers of the capitalist countries cannot support our revolution with a revolution against their own capitalists is so far a fact. But that the capitalists are not in a position to rouse "their" workers for a war against our republic is also a fact. And to make war on the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat without the workers is something which capitalism

^[1] Lenin, *Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*. March 18-23, 1919.
2. *Report of the Central Committee*. March 18.

cannot do nowadays without incurring mortal risk. That is evident from the numerous workers' delegations which come to our country to verify our work in building socialism. It is evident from the profound sympathy which the working class of the whole world cherishes for the Soviet Republic. It is on this sympathy that the international position of our republic now rests. Without it we should be having now a number of fresh attempts at intervention, our constructive work would be interrupted, and we should not be having a period of "respite."

But if the capitalist world is not in a position to undertake armed intervention against our country just now, that does not mean that it will never be in a position to do so. At any rate, the capitalists are not asleep; they are doing their utmost to weaken the international position of our republic and to prepare the way for intervention. Therefore, neither attempts at intervention, nor the consequent possibility of the restoration of the old order in our country, can be regarded as excluded.

Hence Lenin is right in saying:

"As long as our Soviet Republic remains an isolated borderland of the entire capitalist world, just so long will it be quite ludicrously fantastic and utopian to hope . . . for the disappearance of all danger. Of course, as long as such fundamental opposites remain, dangers will remain too, and we cannot escape them" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 29).^[1]

That is why Lenin says:

"Final victory can be achieved only on a world scale, and only by the joint efforts of the workers of all countries" (see Vol. XXIII, p. 9).^[2]

[1] Lenin, *Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets*. December 22-29, 1920. 2. *Report on the Work of the Council of People's Commissars*. December 22.

[2] Lenin, *Report on Foreign Policy Delivered at a Joint Meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet*. May 14, 1918.

And so, what is the victory of socialism in our country?

It means achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat and completely building socialism, thus overcoming the capitalist elements in our economy through the internal forces of our revolution.

And what is the final victory of socialism in our country?

It means the creation of a full guarantee against intervention and attempts at restoration, by means of a victorious socialist revolution in several countries at least.

While the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country means the possibility of resolving internal contradictions, which can be completely overcome by one country (meaning by that, of course, our country), the possibility of the final victory of socialism implies the possibility of resolving the external contradictions between the country of socialism and the capitalist countries, contradictions which can be overcome only as the result of a proletarian revolution in several countries.

Anyone who confuses these two categories of contradictions is either a hopeless muddle-head or an incorrigible opportunist.

Such is the basic line of our Party.

3. THE RESOLUTION OF THE FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

This line of our Party was first officially formulated in the resolution of the Fourteenth Conference on the international situation, the stabilisation of capitalism, and the building of socialism in one country. I consider that resolution one of the most important documents in the history of our Party, not only because it represents a grand demonstration in support of the Leninist line on the question of building socialism in our coun-

try, but also because it is at the same time a direct condemnation of Trotskyism. I think that it would not be superfluous to mention the most important points of this resolution, which, strangely enough, was adopted on the report of Zinoviev. (*Commotion in the hall.*)

Here is what the resolution says about the victory of socialism in one country:

"Generally, the victory of socialism in one country (*not* in the sense of *final* victory) is *unquestionably possible*."*⁹⁴

On the question of the final victory of socialism, the resolution says:

". . . The existence of two directly opposite social systems gives rise to the constant menace of capitalist blockade, of other forms of economic pressure, of armed intervention, of restoration. Consequently, the only guarantee of the *final victory of socialism*, i.e., the guarantee against restoration, is a victorious socialist revolution in a number of countries."⁹⁵

And here is what the resolution says about building a complete socialist society, and about Trotskyism:

"It by no means follows from this that it is impossible to build a complete socialist society in a backward country like Russia without the 'state aid' (Trotsky) of countries more developed technically and economically. An integral part of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is the assertion that 'real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory* of the proletariat in the major European countries' (Trotsky, 1922) — an assertion which in the present period condemns the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. to fatalistic passivity. In opposition to such 'theories,' Comrade Lenin wrote: 'Infinitely hackneyed is the argument that they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain "learned" gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country' (Notes on Sukhanov)." (Resolution of the Fourteenth Con-

* My italics. — J. St.

ference of the R.C.P.(B.) on "The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I." 96)

I think that these basic points of the Fourteenth Conference resolution need no explanation. It could not have been put more clearly and definitely. Particularly deserving of attention is the passage in the resolution which places Trotskyism on a par with Sukhanovism. And what is Sukhanovism? We know from Lenin's articles against Sukhanov that Sukhanovism is a variety of Social-Democracy, of Menshevism. This needs to be especially stressed in order that it may be understood why Zinoviev, who defended this resolution at the Fourteenth Conference, later departed from it and adhered to the standpoint of Trotsky, with whom he has now formed a bloc.

Further, in connection with the international situation the resolution notes two deviations from the basic line of the Party which might be a source of danger to the latter.

Here is what the resolution says about these dangers:

"In connection with the existing situation in the international arena, two dangers may threaten our Party in the present period: 1) a deviation towards passivity, arising from too broad an interpretation of the stabilisation of capitalism to be observed here and there, and from the slowing down of the tempo of the international revolution — the absence of a sufficient impulse to energetic and systematic work in building a socialist society in the U.S.S.R. despite the slowing down of the tempo of the international revolution, and 2) a deviation towards national narrow-mindedness, forgetfulness of the duties of *international* proletarian revolutionaries, an unconscious disregard for the intimate dependence of the fate of the U.S.S.R. on the international proletarian revolution, which is developing, although slowly, a failure to understand that not only does the international movement need the existence, consolidation and strengthening of the first proletarian state in the world, but also that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. needs the aid of the international proletariat." (Resolution of the Fourteenth Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) on "The Tasks of the Comintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.")

It is clear from this quotation that in speaking of the first deviation the Fourteenth Conference had in mind the deviation towards disbelief in the victory of socialist construction in our country, a deviation prevalent among the Trotskyists. Speaking of the second deviation, the conference had in mind the deviation towards forgetfulness of the international prospects of our revolution which to a certain extent prevails among some of our officials in the field of foreign policy, who sometimes tend to go over to the standpoint of establishing "spheres of influence" in dependent countries.

By stigmatising both these deviations, the Party as a whole and its Central Committee declared war on the dangers arising from them.

Such are the facts.

How could it happen that Zinoviev, who put the case for the Fourteenth Conference resolution in a special report, subsequently departed from the line of this resolution, which is at the same time the line of Leninism? How could it happen that, on departing from Leninism, he hurled at the Party the ludicrous charge of national narrow-mindedness, using it as a screen to cover up his departure from Leninism? — a trick which I shall endeavour to explain to you now, comrades.

4. THE PASSING OVER OF THE "NEW OPPOSITION" TO TROTSKYISM

The divergence between the present leaders of the "New Opposition," Kamenev and Zinoviev, and the Central Committee of our Party over the question of building socialism in our country first assumed open form on the eve of the Fourteenth Conference. I am referring to one of the meetings of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee on the eve of

the conference, where Kamenev and Zinoviev attempted to advocate a peculiar point of view on this question, one that has nothing in common with the line of the Party and in all fundamentals coincides with the position of Sukhanov.

Here is what the Moscow Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) wrote in this connection in reply to the statement of the former Leningrad top leadership in December 1925, that is, seven months later:

"Recently, in the Political Bureau, Kamenev and Zinoviev advocated the point of view that we cannot cope with the internal difficulties due to our technical and economic backwardness unless an international revolution comes to our rescue. We, however, with the majority of the members of the Central Committee, think that we can build socialism, are building it, and will completely build it, notwithstanding our technical backwardness and in spite of it. We think that the work of building will proceed far more slowly, of course, than in the conditions of a world victory; nevertheless, we are making progress and will continue to do so. We also believe that the view held by Kamenev and Zinoviev expresses disbelief in the internal forces of our working class and of the peasant masses who follow its lead. We believe that it is a departure from the Leninist position" (see "Reply").

I must observe, comrades, that Kamenev and Zinoviev did not even attempt to refute the Moscow Committee's statement, which was printed in *Pravda* during the early sittings of the Fourteenth Congress, thereby tacitly admitting that the charges the Moscow Committee levelled against them correspond to the facts.

At the Fourteenth Conference itself, Kamenev and Zinoviev formally acknowledged the correctness of the Party's line as regards building socialism in our country. They were evidently compelled to do so because their standpoint had found no sympathy among the members of the Central Committee. More than that, as I have already said, Zinoviev even put the case for the Fourteenth Conference resolution — which, as you have

had the opportunity to convince yourselves, expresses the line of our Party — in a special report at the Fourteenth Conference. But subsequent events showed that Zinoviev and Kamenev had supported the Party line at the Fourteenth Conference only formally, outwardly, while actually continuing to adhere to their own opinion. In this respect, the appearance in September 1925 of Zinoviev's book *Leninism* constituted an "event" which drew a dividing line between the Zinoviev who put the case for the Party line at the Fourteenth Conference and the Zinoviev who has departed from the Party line, from Leninism, for the ideological position of Trotskyism.

Here is what Zinoviev writes in his book:

"By the final victory of socialism is meant, at least: 1) the abolition of classes, and therefore 2) the abolition of the dictatorship of one class, in this case the dictatorship of the proletariat." . . . "In order to get a clearer idea of how the question stands here, in the U.S.S.R., in the year 1925," says Zinoviev further, "we must distinguish between two things: 1) the assured *possibility* of engaging in building socialism — such a possibility, it stands to reason, *is* quite conceivable within the limits of one country; and 2) the final construction and consolidation of socialism, i.e., the achievement of a socialist system, of a socialist society" (see Zinoviev's *Leninism*, pp. 291 and 293).

Here, as you see, everything is muddled up and turned upside down. According to Zinoviev, what is meant by victory — that is, the victory of socialism in one country — is having the possibility of building socialism, but not the possibility of completely building it. To engage in building, but with the certainty that we shall not be able to complete what we are building. That, it appears, is what Zinoviev means by the victory of socialism in one country. (*Laughter.*) As to the question of completely building a socialist society, he confuses it with the question of final victory, thus demonstrating his complete lack of understanding of the whole question of the victory

of socialism in our country. To engage in building a socialist economy, knowing that it cannot be completely built — that is the depth to which Zinoviev has sunk.

It need hardly be said that this attitude is totally at variance with the fundamental line of Leninism on the question of building socialism. It need hardly be said that such an attitude, which tends to weaken the proletariat's will to build socialism in our country, and therefore to retard the outbreak of the revolution in other countries, turns upside down the very principles of internationalism. It is an attitude which directly approaches, and extends a hand to, the ideological position of Trotskyism.

The same must be said of Zinoviev's statements at the Fourteenth Congress in December 1925. Here is what he said there, criticising Yakovlev:

"Take a look, for instance, at what Comrade Yakovlev went so far as to say at the last Kursk Gubernia Party Conference. He asks: 'Is it possible for us, surrounded as we are on all sides by capitalist enemies, to completely build socialism in one country under such conditions?' And he answers: 'On the basis of all that has been said we have the right to say not only that we are building socialism, but that in spite of the fact that for the time being we are alone, that for the time being we are the only Soviet country, the only Soviet state in the world, we shall completely build socialism' (*Kurskaya Pravda*, No. 279, December 8, 1925). *"Is this the Leninist method of presenting the question,"* Zinoviev asks, *"does not this smack of national narrow-mindedness?"** (Zinoviev, Reply to the discussion at the Fourteenth Party Congress.)

It follows that, because Yakovlev in the main upheld the line of the Party and of Leninism, he has earned the charge of national narrow-mindedness. It follows that to uphold the Party line, as formulated in the Fourteenth Conference resolution, is to be guilty of national narrow-mindedness. People

* My italics. — J. St.

would say of that: what a depth to sink to! Therein lies the whole trick that Zinoviev is playing, which consists in levelling the ludicrous charge of national narrow-mindedness at the Leninists in an endeavour to cover up his own departure from Leninism.

The theses on the opposition bloc are therefore telling the exact truth when they assert that the "New Opposition" has passed over to Trotskyism on the basic question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, or on — what is the same thing — the question of the character and prospects of our revolution.

It should be observed here that, *formally*, Kamenev holds a somewhat special position on this question. It is a fact that both at the Fourteenth Party Conference and at the Fourteenth Party Congress, Kamenev, unlike Zinoviev, publicly proclaimed his solidarity with the Party line on the question of building socialism in our country. Nevertheless, the Fourteenth Party Congress did not take Kamenev's statement seriously, did not take his word for it, and in its resolution on the Central Committee's report it included him in the group of people who had departed from Leninism. Why? Because Kamenev refused, saw no need, to back his statement of solidarity with the Party line with action. And what does backing his statement with action mean? It means breaking with those who are waging a fight against the Party line. The Party knows plenty of cases where people who declared in words their solidarity with the Party at the same time continued to maintain political friendship with elements who were waging a fight against the Party. Lenin used to say in cases like this that such "supporters" of the Party line are worse than opponents. We know, for example, that in the period of the imperialist war Trotsky repeatedly professed his solidarity with, and loyalty to, the principles of

internationalism. But Lenin called him at that time an "abettor of the social-chauvinists." Why? Because, while professing internationalism, Trotsky at the same time refused to break with Kautsky and Martov, Potresov and Chkheidze. And Lenin, of course, was right. Do you want your statement to be taken seriously? — then back it with action, and give up political friendship with people who are waging a fight against the Party line.

That is why I think that Kamenev's statements about his solidarity with the Party line on the question of building socialism cannot be taken seriously, seeing that he declines to back his word with action and continues to remain in a bloc with the Trotskyists.

5. TROTSKY'S EVASION. SMILGA. RADEK

All this, it may be said, is good and correct, but are there no grounds or documents showing that the leaders of the opposition bloc would not be unwilling to turn away from the Social-Democratic deviation and return to Leninism? Take, for example, Trotsky's book *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?* Is not this book a sign that Trotsky is not unwilling to renounce his errors of principle? Some even think that Trotsky in this book really has renounced, or is trying to renounce, his errors of principle. I, sinner that I am, suffer from a certain scepticism on this point (*laughter*), and I must say that, unfortunately, such assumptions are absolutely unwarranted by the facts.

Here, for instance, is the most salient passage in Trotsky's *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?*

"The State Planning Commission (Gosplan) has published a tabulated summary of the 'control' figures for the national economy of the U.S.S.R. in the year 1925-26. All this sounds very dry and, so to speak, bureau-

cratic. But in these dry statistical columns and the almost equally dry and terse explanations to them, we hear the splendid historical music of growing socialism" (L. Trotsky, *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?*, Planovoye Khozyaistvo Publishing House, 1925, p. 1).

What is this "splendid historical music of growing socialism"? What is the meaning of this "splendid" phrase, if it has any meaning at all? Does it give an answer, or even a hint of an answer, to the question whether the victory of socialism is possible in our country? One might have spoken of the historical music of growing socialism both in 1917, when we overthrew the bourgeoisie, and in 1920, when we ejected the interventionists from our country. For it really was the splendid historical music of growing socialism when we overthrew the bourgeoisie in 1917 and drove out the interventionists and thereby furnished the whole world with splendid evidence of the strength and might of growing socialism in our country. But has it, can it have, any bearing at all on the question of the possibility of victoriously building socialism in our country? We can, Trotsky says, move towards socialism. But can we *arrive* at socialism? — that is the question. To move towards socialism knowing that you cannot arrive there — is that not folly? No, comrades, Trotsky's "splendid" phrase about the music and the rest of it is not an answer to the question, but a lawyer's subterfuge and a "musical" evasion of the question. (*Voices from the audience*: "Quite right!")

I think that this splendid and musical evasion of Trotsky's may be put on a par with the evasion he resorted to in his pamphlet *The New Course*, when defining Leninism. Please listen to this:

"Leninism, as a system of revolutionary action, presumes a revolutionary instinct trained by reflection and experience which, in the social

sphere, is equivalent to muscular sensation in physical labour" (L. Trotsky, *The New Course*, Krasnaya Nov Publishing House, 1924, p. 47).

Leninism as "muscular sensation in physical labour." New and original and very profound, is it not? Can you make head or tail of it? (*Laughter.*) All that is very colourful and musical, and, if you like, even splendid. Only one "trifle" is lacking: a simple and understandable definition of Leninism.

It was just such instances of Trotsky's special fondness for musical phrases that Lenin had in mind when he wrote, for example, the following bitter but truthful words about him:

"All that glitters is not gold. There is much glitter and sound in Trotsky's phrases, but they are meaningless" (see Vol. XVII, p. 383).^[1]

So much for Trotsky's *Towards Socialism or Capitalism?*, which was published in 1925.

As to more recent times, 1926, for instance, we have a document signed by Trotsky of September 1926 which leaves no doubt whatever that he continues to adhere to his view, which has been repudiated by the Party. I have in mind Trotsky's letter to the oppositionists.

Here is what this document says:

"The Leningrad opposition promptly raised the alarm at the slurring over of differentiation in the countryside, at the increase of the kulaks and the growth of their influence not only on the elemental economic processes, but also on the policy of the Soviet Government; at the fact that in the ranks of our own Party there has arisen, under Bukharin's patronage, a school of theory which clearly reflects the pressure of the elemental forces of the petty bourgeoisie in our economy; *the Leningrad opposition vigorously opposed the theory of socialism in one country, as being a theoretical justification of national narrow-mindedness. . . .*"*

* My italics. — J. St.

[1] Lenin, *Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity*. I. "Factionalism." (1914)

(From the appendices to the verbatim report of the sittings of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), October 8 and 11, 1926, on the question of the inner-Party situation.)

Here, in this document signed by Trotsky, everything is admitted: the fact that the leaders of the "New Opposition" have deserted Leninism for Trotskyism, and the fact that Trotsky continues to adhere fully and unreservedly to his old position, which is a Social-Democratic deviation in our Party.

Well, and what about the other leaders of the opposition bloc — Smilga or Radek, for example? These people, I think, are also leaders of the opposition bloc. Smilga and Radek — don't they rank as leaders? How do they appraise the position of the Party, the position of Leninism, on the question of building socialism in our country?

Here is what Smilga, for instance, said in September 1926 in the Communist Academy:

*"I affirm," he said, "that he (Bukharin — J. St.) is completely under the sway of the rehabilitation ideology, that he takes it as proven that the economic backwardness of our country cannot be an obstacle to completely building a socialist system in Russia. . . . I consider that, inasmuch as we are engaged in socialist construction, we are certainly building socialism. But, the question arises: Does the rehabilitation period furnish any basis for testing and revising the cardinal tenet of Marxism and Leninism, which is that socialism cannot be completely built in one, technically backward country?"** (Smilga's speech in the Communist Academy on the control figures, September 26, 1926.)

That, as you see, is also a "position" which fully coincides with Mr. Sukhanov's on the basic question of the character and prospects of our revolution. Is it not true that Smilga's position fully corresponds with Trotsky's, which I have called, and rightly called, the position of a Social-Democratic deviation? (*Voices*: "Quite right!")

* My italics. — J. St.

Can the opposition bloc be held answerable for such pronouncements of Smilga's? It can, and must. Has the opposition bloc ever attempted to repudiate Smilga? No, it has not. On the contrary, it has given him every encouragement in his pronouncements in the Communist Academy.

Then there is the other leader, Radek, who, along with Smilga, delivered a speech in the Communist Academy and reduced us to "dust and ashes." (*Laughter.*) We have a document which shows that Radek scoffed and jeered at the theory that socialism can be built in our country, called it a theory of building socialism "in one uyezd," or even "in one street." And when comrades in the audience interjected that this theory is "Lenin's idea," Radek retorted:

"You haven't read Lenin very carefully. If Vladimir Ilyich were alive today he would say that it is a Shchedrin idea. In Shchedrin's *The Pompadours* there is a unique pompadour who had the idea of building liberalism in one uyezd" (Radek's speech in the Communist Academy).

Can Radek's vulgar liberalistic scoffing at the idea of building socialism in one country be regarded as anything but a complete rupture with Leninism? Is the opposition bloc answerable for this vulgar sally of Radek's? It certainly is. Why, then, does it not repudiate it? Because the opposition bloc has no intention of abandoning its position of departure from Leninism.

6. THE DECISIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION OF THE PROSPECTS OF OUR CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

It may be asked: Why all these disputes over the character and prospects of our revolution? Why these disputes over what

will or may happen in the future? Would it not be better to cast all these disputes aside and get down to practical work?

I consider, comrades, that such a formulation of the question is fundamentally wrong.

We cannot move forward without knowing where we are to move to, without knowing the aim of our movement. We cannot build without prospects, without the certainty that having begun to build a socialist economy we can complete it. Without clear prospects, without clear aims, the Party cannot direct the work of construction. We cannot live according to Bernstein's prescription: "The movement is everything, the aim is nothing." On the contrary, as revolutionaries, we must subordinate our forward movement, our practical work, to the basic class aim of the proletariat's constructive work. If not, we shall certainly and inevitably land in the quagmire of opportunism.

Further, if the prospects of our constructive work are not clear, if there is no certainty that the building of socialism can be completed, the working masses cannot *consciously* participate in this constructive work, and cannot *consciously* lead the peasantry. If there is no certainty that the building of socialism can be completed, there can be no will to build socialism. Who wants to build knowing that he cannot complete what he is building? Hence, the absence of socialist prospects for our constructive work certainly and inevitably leads to the proletariat's will to build being weakened.

Further, if the proletariat's will to build socialism is weakened, that is bound to have the effect of strengthening the capitalist elements in our economy. For what does building socialism mean, if not overcoming the capitalist elements in our economy? Pessimistic and defeatist sentiments in the