

# **THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**



# THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

BY V. I. LENIN AND JOSEPH STALIN

*Writings and Speeches from the February Revolution  
to the October Revolution, 1917*



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THE present volume contains articles, speeches, reports and letters by V. I. Lenin and Joseph Stalin covering the period from the February to the October Revolution of 1917. The selection begins with Lenin's April Theses, presented immediately upon his return to Russia from Switzerland; the first selection from Stalin's numerous writings in this period is his speech in favour of Lenin's resolution on the current situation at the April Conference of the Bolsheviks. The writings, arranged chronologically, cover all the important problems of the revolution as it developed, and extend into the second month of Soviet Power.

The reader's attention is called to two additional items which should be consulted in connection with this volume. "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," which Lenin proposed as a "platform of a proletarian party" (April 13, 1917), is a comprehensive presentation of his position on the various national and international problems arising from the imperialist war and the Russian Revolution (Little Lenin Library, Vol. 9). In "Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" (October 14, 1917) Lenin disposes of the principal question raised by his opponents: Will the Bolsheviks dare to attempt to take power, and if they do and succeed in taking power, will they be able to hold it? (Little Lenin Library, Vol. 12.)



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# THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION



## V. I. Lenin

### THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE PRESENT REVOLUTION

I ARRIVED in Petrograd only on the night of April 16 \* and I could therefore, of course, deliver a report at the meeting on April 17 on the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat only upon my own responsibility, and with reservations as to insufficient preparation.

The only thing I could do to facilitate matters for myself and for *honest* opponents was to prepare *written* theses. I read them, and gave the text to Comrade Tsereteli. I read them very slowly, *twice*: first at a meeting of Bolsheviks and then at a meeting of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

#### THESES

I publish these personal theses with only the briefest explanatory comments, which were developed in far greater detail in the report.

1. In our attitude towards the war, which also under the new government of Lvov and Co. unquestionably remains on Russia's part a predatory imperialist war owing to the capitalist nature of that government, not the slightest concession must be made to "revolutionary defencism."

The class conscious proletariat could consent to a revolutionary war, which would really justify revolutionary defencism, only on condition: (a) that the power of government pass to the proletariat and the poor sections of the peasantry bordering on the proletariat; (b) that all annexations be renounced in deed and not only in word; (c) that a complete and real break be made with all capitalist interests.

In view of the undoubted honesty of the broad strata of the mass believers in revolutionary defencism, who accept the war as a necessity only and not as a means of conquest, in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary very

\* April 3, according to the Gregorian calendar then used in Russia which was 13 days behind the present calendar. The old-style dates have been changed throughout this book to conform with the modern calendar.—Ed.

thoroughly, persistently and patiently to explain their error to them, to explain the inseparable connection between capital and the imperialist war, and to prove that *it is impossible* to end the war by a truly democratic, non-coercive peace without the overthrow of capital.

The widespread propaganda of this view among the army on active service must be organised.

#### Fraternisation.

2. The specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed power into the hands of the bourgeoisie—to the *second* stage, which must place power into the hands of the proletariat and the poor strata of the peasantry.

This transition is characterised, on the one hand, by a maximum of freedom (Russia is *now* the freest of all the belligerent countries in the world); on the other, by the absence of violence in relation to the masses, and, finally, by the unreasoning confidence of the masses in the government of capitalists, the worst enemies of peace and socialism.

This specific situation demands of us the ability to adapt ourselves to the *specific* requirements of Party work among unprecedentedly large masses of proletarians who have just awakened to political life.

3. No support must be given to the Provisional Government; the utter falsity of all its promises must be explained, particularly those relating to the renunciation of annexations. Exposure, and not the unpardonable, illusion-breeding “demand” that *this* government, a government of capitalists, should *cease* to be an imperialist government.

4. The fact must be recognised that in most of the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies our Party is in a minority, and so far in a small minority, as against a *bloc of all* the petty-bourgeois opportunist elements, who have yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie and convey its influence to the proletariat, from the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries down to the Organisation Committee \* (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc.), Steklov, etc., etc.

\* The leading committee of the Mensheviks.—Ed.



It must be explained to the masses that the Soviet of Workers' Deputies is the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and that therefore our task is, as long as *this* government yields to the influence of the bourgeoisie, to present a patient, systematic and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses.

As long as we are in the minority we carry on the work of criticising and explaining errors and at the same time advocate the necessity of transferring the entire power of state to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, so that the masses may by experience overcome their mistakes.

5. Not a parliamentary republic—to return to a parliamentary republic from the Soviets of Workers' Deputies would be a retrograde step—but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom.

Abolition of the police, the army \* and the bureaucracy.

The salaries of all officials, who are to be elected and subject to recall at any time, not to exceed the average wage of a competent worker.

6. In the agrarian programme the emphasis must be laid on the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

Confiscation of all landed estates.

Nationalisation of *all* lands in the country, the disposal of the land to be put in charge of the local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies. The organisation of separate Soviets of Deputies of Poor Peasants. The creation of model farms on each of the large estates (varying from 100 to 300 dessiatins, in accordance with local and other conditions, at the discretion of the local institutions), under the control of the Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and for the public account.

7. The immediate amalgamation of all banks in the country into a single national bank, control over which shall be exercised by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

8. Our immediate task is not to "introduce" socialism, but only to bring social production and distribution of products at once under the *control* of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

\* *I.e.*, the standing army to be replaced by the universally armed people.

## 9. Party tasks:

- (a) Immediate summoning of a Party congress.
- (b) Alteration of the Party programme, mainly:
  - (1) On the question of imperialism and the imperialist war;
  - (2) On the question of our attitude towards the state and our demand for a "commune state." \*
  - (3) Amendment of our antiquated minimum programme.
- (c) A new name for the Party.\*\*

## 10. A new International.

We must take the initiative in creating a revolutionary International, an International directed against the *social-chauvinists* and against the "Centre." \*\*\*

In order that the reader may understand what induced me to emphasise as a rare exception the "case" of honest opponents, I invite him to compare the above theses with the following objection of Mr. Goldenberg: Lenin, he said, "has planted the banner of civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy" (quoted in No. 5 of Mr. Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo* [*Unity*]).

A gem, is it not?

I write, announce and elaborately explain:

In view of the undoubted honesty of the *broad* strata of the *mass* believers in revolutionary defencism . . . in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary *very* thoroughly, persistently and *patiently* to explain their error to them.

Yet the bourgeois gentlemen who call themselves Social-Democrats, who *do not* belong either to the *broad* strata or to the *mass* of believers in defencism, have the effrontery to present my views thus: "The banner [!] of civil war [of which there is not a word

\* *I.e.*, a state of which the Paris Commune was the prototype.

\*\* Instead of "Social-Democrats," whose official leaders *throughout* the world have betrayed socialism by deserting to the bourgeoisie (the "defencists" and the vacillating "Kautskians"), we must call ourselves a *Communist Party*.

\*\*\* The "Centre" in the international Social-Democratic movement is the tendency which vacillates between the chauvinists (= "defencists") and internationalists, *i.e.*, Kautsky and Co. in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Chkheidze and Co. in Russia, Turati and Co. in Italy, MacDonald and Co. in England, etc.

in the theses and not a word in my speech!] has been planted [!] in the midst [!!] of revolutionary democracy....”

What does this mean? In what way does this differ from pogrom agitation, from *Russkaya Volya* [*The Russian Will*]?

I write, announce and elaborately explain:

The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and therefore our task is to present a patient, systematic and persistent *explanation* of its errors and tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses.

Yet opponents of a certain type present my views as a call to “civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy”!!

I attacked the Provisional Government for *not* having appointed an early date, or any date at all, for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly and for confining itself to promises. I argued that *without* the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is not guaranteed and its success is impossible.

And the view is attributed to me that I am opposed to the earliest convocation of the Constituent Assembly!!!

I would call this “raving,” had not long years of political struggle taught me to regard honesty in opponents as a rare exception.

Mr. Plekhanov in his paper called my speech “raving.” Very good, Mr. Plekhanov! But see how awkward, uncouth and slow-witted you are in your polemics! If I delivered a raving speech for two hours, how is it that an audience of hundreds tolerated this “raving”? Further, why does your paper devote a whole column to an account of the “raving”? Clumsy, very clumsy!

It is, of course, much easier to shout, scold and rave than to attempt to relate, to explain, to recall *what* Marx and Engels said in 1871, 1872 and 1875 of the experience of the Paris Commune and of the *kind* of state the proletariat needs.

Mr. Plekhanov, the former Marxist, presumably does not care to recall Marxism.

I quoted the words of Rosa Luxemburg, who, on August 4, 1914, called *German Social-Democracy* a “stinking corpse.” And Messrs. Plekhanov, Goldenberg and Co. are “offended.” On whose account? On account of the *German* chauvinists, because they were called chauvinists!

They have got into a muddle, these poor Russian social-chauvinists—Socialists in word, and chauvinists in deed.

*Pravda* [Truth], April 20, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### A DUAL POWER

THE basic question in any revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood, there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, let alone guidance of the revolution.

The highly remarkable feature of our revolution is that it has established a *dual power*. This fact must be grasped first and foremost; unless it is understood, we cannot advance. We must know, for instance, how to supplement and amend old "formulas," for example, those of Bolshevism, for, as it proved, they were sound in general, but their concrete realisation *turned out to be* different. *Nobody* hitherto thought, or could have thought, of dual power.

In what does this dual power consist? In the fact that side by side with the Provisional Government, the government of the *bourgeoisie*, there has developed *another government*, weak and embryonic as yet, but undoubtedly an actually existing and growing government—the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

What is the class composition of this other government? It consists of the proletariat and the peasantry (clad in army uniform). What is the political character of this government? It is a revolutionary dictatorship, *i.e.*, a power directly based on revolutionary seizure, on the direct initiative of the masses from below, and *not on a law* passed by a centralised government. It is an entirely different power from that of the general type of parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republic which has hitherto usually prevailed in the advanced countries of Europe and America. This circumstance is often forgotten, often not reflected on, yet it is the crux of the matter. *This power is of exactly the same type* as the Paris Commune of 1871. The fundamental characteristics of this type are: (1) The source of power is not a law previously discussed and passed by parliament, but the direct initiative of the masses from below, in

their localities—outright “seizure,” to use a current expression; (2) the direct arming of the whole people in place of the police and the army, which are institutions separated from the people and opposed to the people; order in the state under such a power is maintained by the armed workers and peasants *themselves*, by the armed people *itself*; (3) officials and bureaucrats are either displaced by the direct rule of the people itself or at least placed under special control; they not only become elected officials, but are also *subject to recall* at the first demand of the people; they are reduced to the position of simple agents; from a privileged stratum occupying highly remunerative “posts,” remunerated on a bourgeois scale, they become workers handling a special “kind of weapon,” and remunerated at a salary not *exceeding* the ordinary pay of a competent worker.

This, and this *alone*, constitutes the *essence* of the Paris Commune as a specific type of state. This essence was forgotten and perverted by the Plekhanovs (out-and-out chauvinists who have betrayed Marxism), the Kautskys (the people of the “Centre,” *i.e.*, those who vacillate between chauvinism and Marxism), and generally by all those Social-Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries, etc., etc., who are now in control.

They confine themselves to phrases, evasions, subterfuges; they congratulate each other a thousand times upon the revolution, but they refuse to *ponder over what* the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies *are*. They refuse to recognise the obvious truth that inasmuch as the Soviets exist, *inasmuch as* they are a power, we have in Russia a state of the *type* of the Paris Commune.

I have underscored the words *inasmuch as*, for it is only an incipient power. By direct agreement with the bourgeois Provisional Government and by a series of actual concessions, it has itself *surrendered and is surrendering* its position to the bourgeoisie.

Why? Is it because Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov and Co. are making a “mistake”? Nonsense. Only a philistine can think so, not a Marxist. The reason is *lack of class consciousness* and organisation among the workers and peasants. The “mistake” of the leaders mentioned lies in their petty-bourgeois position, in the fact that instead of clarifying the minds of the workers, they are *befogging* them; instead of dispersing petty-bourgeois illusions, they are *instilling*

them; instead of freeing the masses from bourgeois influence, they are *strengthening* that influence.

It should be clear from this why our comrades too are so mistaken in putting the question "simply": Should the Provisional Government be overthrown immediately?

My answer is: (1) It should be overthrown, for it is an oligarchical, bourgeois, and not a people's government, and *cannot* provide peace, or bread, or full freedom; (2) it cannot be overthrown now, for it is being maintained by a direct and indirect, a formal and actual *agreement* with the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and particularly with the chief Soviet, the Petrograd Soviet; (3) generally, it cannot be "overthrown" by any ordinary method, for it rests on the "*support*" given to the bourgeoisie by the *second* government—the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and this government is the only possible revolutionary government, which directly expresses the mind and the will of the majority of the workers and peasants. Humanity has not yet evolved and we do not as yet know a type of government superior to and better than the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.

In order to become a power the class-conscious workers must win the majority to their side. *As long as* no violence is used against the masses, there is no other road to power. We are not Blanquists, we do not favour the seizure of power by a minority. We are Marxists, we stand for a proletarian class struggle against petty-bourgeois intoxication, against chauvinist defencism, phrasemongering and dependence on the bourgeoisie.

Let us create a proletarian Communist Party; its elements have already been created by the best adherents of Bolshevism; let us rally our ranks for proletarian class work; then from among the proletarians, from among the *poor* peasants ever greater numbers will come over to our side. For *actual experience* will from day to day shatter the petty-bourgeois illusions of the "Social-Democrats"—Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, and the rest—of the "Socialist Revolutionaries," petty-bourgeois of a still purer water, and so on and so forth.

The bourgeoisie stands for the undivided power of the bourgeoisie.

The class-conscious workers stand for the undivided power of the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers'

Deputies—for undivided power made possible not by dubious ventures, but by the *enlightenment* of the proletarian consciousness, by its *emancipation* from the influence of the bourgeoisie.

The petty-bourgeoisie—"Social-Democrats," Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., etc.—vacillates and *hinders* this enlightenment and emancipation.

Such is the actual, the *class* alignment of forces that is determining the tasks facing us.

*Pravda*, April 22, 1917.

## V. I. Lenin

### LETTERS ON TACTICS

#### FIRST LETTER:

##### AN ESTIMATE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

**MARKISM** demands that we should make an extremely precise and objectively verifiable analysis of the relation of classes and of the concrete peculiarities of each historical moment. We Bolsheviks have always tried faithfully to fulfil this demand, which is absolutely imperative for a scientific foundation of politics.

"Our teaching is not a dogma, but a guide to action," Marx and Engels used to say; and they ridiculed, and rightly ridiculed, the learning and repetition by rote of "formulas" which at best are capable of giving only an outline of *general* tasks that are necessarily liable to be modified by the *concrete* economic and political conditions of each particular *phase* of the historical process.

What, then, are the precisely established objective *facts* that must guide the party of the revolutionary proletariat at present in defining the tasks and forms of its activity?

Both in my first *Letter from Afar* ("The First Stage of the First Revolution"),\* published in Nos. 14 and 15 of *Pravda*, of April 3 and 4, 1917, and in my theses, I define as the "specific feature of the present situation in Russia" the fact that it is a period of *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second. And I

\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book 1, p. 27.—Ed.

therefore considered the basic slogan, the "task of the day," at *this* moment to be:

Workers, you have displayed marvels of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsarism; you must display marvels of organisation, organisation of the proletariat and the people, in order to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution. (*Pravda*, No. 15.)

In what does the first stage consist?

In the transfer of the power of state to the bourgeoisie.

Before the February-March Revolution of 1917, the state power in Russia was in the hands of one old class, namely, the feudal landed nobility, headed by Nicholas Romanov.

Now, after that revolution, the power is in the hands of *another* class, a new class, namely, the *bourgeoisie*.

The transfer of state power from one class to another *class* is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a *revolution*, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of the term.

To this extent, the bourgeois, or the bourgeois-democratic, revolution in Russia *has been completed*.

At this point we hear the clamour of the objectors, of those who so readily call themselves "old Bolsheviks": Did we not always maintain, they say, that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed only by the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry"? Has the agrarian revolution, which is also a bourgeois-democratic revolution, been completed? On the contrary, is it not a fact that it *has not even begun*?

My answer is: The Bolshevik slogans and ideas *in general* have been fully corroborated by history; but *concretely*, things have turned out *differently* from what could have been anticipated (by anyone): they are more original, more peculiar, more variegated.

Had we ignored or forgotten this fact, we should have resembled those "old Bolsheviks" who have more than once played so sorry a part in the history of our Party by repeating a formula meaninglessly *learned by rote*, instead of *studying* the specific features of the new and living reality.

"The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" has *already* become a reality\* in the Russian Revolution; for this "formula" envisages only a *relation of classes*, and

\* In a certain form and to a certain extent.



not a *concrete political institution giving effect* to this relation, to this co-operation. The "Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies"—here you have the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" already accomplished in reality.

This formula is already antiquated. Events have removed it from the realm of formulas to the realm of reality, clothed it in flesh and blood, lent it concrete form, and have *thereby* modified it.

A new and different task now faces us: [to effect a split between the proletarian elements (the anti-defencist, internationalist, "Communist" elements, who stand for a transition to the commune) *within* this dictatorship and the petty-proprietor or *petty-bourgeois* elements (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and other revolutionary defencists, who are opposed to the movement towards the commune and who favour "supporting" the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government).

Whoever speaks *now* of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" only is behind the times, and has consequently in effect *gone over* to the side of the petty-bourgeoisie and is against the proletarian class struggle. He deserves to be consigned to the museum of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiques (which might be called the museum of "old Bolsheviks").

The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry has already been realized, but in an extremely original form, and with a number of highly important modifications. I will deal with them separately in one of my subsequent letters. For the present it is essential to realize the incontestable truth that a Marxist must take cognizance of actual events, of the precise facts of *reality*, and must not cling to a theory of yesterday, which, like all theories, at best only outlines the main and general, and only *approximates* to an inclusive grasp of the complexities of life.

"Theory, my friend, is grey, but green in the eternal tree of life."

He who continues to regard the "completion" of the bourgeois revolution *in the old way* sacrifices living Marxism to the dead letter.

According to the old conception, the rule of the proletariat and peasantry, their dictatorship, can and must come *after* the rule of the bourgeoisie.

But in actual fact, it has *already* turned out *differently*: an ex-

tremely original, novel and unprecedented *interlacing of the one with the other* has taken place. We have existing side by side, together, simultaneously, *both* the rule of the bourgeoisie (the government of Lvov and Guchkov) *and* a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, the latter *voluntarily* ceding power to the bourgeoisie and voluntarily transforming itself into an appendage of the bourgeoisie.

For it must not be forgotten that in Petrograd the power is actually in the hands of the workers and soldiers: the new government is *not* using and cannot use violence against them, for there is *no* police, *no* army separate from the people, *no* officialdom standing omnipotently *above* the people. This is a fact; and it is precisely the kind of fact that is characteristic of a state of the type of the Paris Commune. This fact does not fit into the old schemes. One must know how to adapt schemes to facts, rather than repeat words regarding a "dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" *in general* that have become meaningless.

In order the better to illuminate the question, let us approach it from another angle.

A Marxist must not abandon the ground of careful analysis of class relations. The bourgeoisie is in power. But is not the mass of the peasants *also* a bourgeoisie, only of a different stratum, a different kind, a different character? Whence does it follow that *this* stratum *cannot* come to power and thus "complete" the bourgeois-democratic revolution? Why should this be impossible?

That is how the old Bolsheviks often argue.

My reply is that it is quite possible. But, when analysing any given situation, a Marxist must proceed *not from the possible*, but from the actual.

And actuality reveals the *fact* that the freely elected soldiers' and peasants' deputies freely enter the second, parallel government and freely supplement, develop and complete it. And, just as freely, they *surrender* power to the bourgeoisie—which phenomenon does not in the least "contravene" the theory of Marxism, for, as we have always known and have repeatedly pointed out, the bourgeoisie maintains itself *not* only by force but also by virtue of the lack of class consciousness, the clinging to old habits, the browbeaten state and lack of organisation of the masses.

In view of this present-day actuality it is simply ridiculous to turn one's back on this fact and to talk about "possibilities."

It is possible that the peasantry may seize all the land and the entire power. Far from forgetting this possibility, far from confining my outlook to the present moment only, I definitely and clearly formulate the agrarian programme in accordance with the *new* phenomenon, *viz.*, the profounder cleavage between the agricultural labourers and the poor peasants, on the one hand, and the peasant owners, on the other.

But there is another possibility; it is possible that the peasants will hearken to the advice of the petty-bourgeois party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, which has succumbed to the influence of the bourgeoisie, has gone over to defencism, and which advises waiting until the Constituent Assembly, even though the date of its convocation has not yet been fixed.\*

It is possible that the peasants will *preserve* and prolong their pact with the bourgeoisie, a pact which they have now concluded through the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies both in form and in fact.

Many things are possible. It would be a profound mistake to forget the agrarian movement and the agrarian programme. But it would be equally mistaken to forget *reality*, and reality reveals the *fact* that an *agreement*, or—to use a more exact, less legal, but more class-economic expression—that *class collaboration* exists between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

When this fact ceases to be a fact, when the peasantry severs itself from the bourgeoisie, seizes the land and the power in spite of the bourgeoisie, that will be a new stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and of that we shall speak separately.

A Marxist who, in view of the possibility of such a stage in the future, were to forget his duties *at the present moment*, when the peasantry is *compromising* with the bourgeoisie, would become a

\* Lest my words be misinterpreted, I shall anticipate and state at once that I am absolutely in favour of the *Soviets* of Agricultural Labourers and Peasants *immediately* taking over *all* the land; but they should *themselves* observe the strictest order and discipline, not permit the slightest damage to machinery, structures or livestock, and in no case disorganise agriculture and the production of cereals, but rather develop them, for the soldiers need *twice as much* bread, and the people must not be allowed to starve.

petty-bourgeois. For he would in practice be preaching to the proletariat *confidence* in the petty-bourgeoisie ("the petty-bourgeoisie, the peasantry, must already separate itself from the bourgeoisie in the bourgeois-democratic revolution"). Because of the "possibility" of so charming and sweet a future, in which the peasantry would *not* form the tail of the bourgeoisie, in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis and Steklovs would *not* be an appendage of the bourgeois government—because of the "possibility" of so pleasant a future, he would be forgetting *the unpleasant present*, in which the peasantry still forms the tail of the bourgeoisie, and in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats have not yet ceased to be appendages of the bourgeois government, His Majesty Lvov's Opposition.

This hypothetical person would resemble a meek Louis Blanc, or a suave Kautskian, but not a revolutionary Marxist.

But are we not in danger of succumbing to subjectivism, of wanting to "skip" over the bourgeois-democratic revolution—which has not yet been completed and has not yet put an end to the peasant movement—to the socialist revolution?

I should be incurring this danger had I said: "No tsar, but a *workers' government*." But I did not say that; I said something else. I said that there *can be no* government (apart from a bourgeois government) in Russia *other than* a government of the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. I said that power in Russia can now pass from Guchkov and Lvov *only* to these Soviets. And the fact is that in these Soviets the peasants predominate, the soldiers predominate—the petty-bourgeoisie predominates, to use a scientific, Marxist term, to give a class designation and not a commonplace, lay, professional designation.

I absolutely insured myself in my theses against skipping over the still existing peasant movement, or the petty-bourgeois movement in general, against the workers' government *playing* at the "seizure of power," against any kind of Blanquist adventurism; for I directly referred to the experience of the Paris Commune. And this experience, as we know, and as was shown in detail by Marx in 1871 and by Engels in 1891, absolutely excluded Blanquism, absolutely ensured the direct, immediate and unconditional rule of the *majority*

and the activity of the masses, but only to the extent of the *conscious* action of the majority itself.

In the theses I very definitely reduced the question to one of a *struggle for influence within* the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. In order to leave no shadow of doubt in this respect, I *twice* emphasised in the theses the necessity for patient and persistent "explanatory" work "adapted to the *practical* needs of the masses."

Ignorant persons or renegades from Marxism, such as Mr. Plekhanov, may cry anarchism, Blanquism, and so forth. But those who really want to think and learn cannot fail to understand that Blanquism means the seizure of power by a minority, whereas the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are *admittedly* the direct and immediate organisation of the *majority* of the people. Work confined to a struggle for influence *within* these Soviets cannot, absolutely *cannot*, blunder into the swamp of Blanquism. Nor can it blunder into the swamp of anarchism, for anarchism denies *the necessity for a state and for state power* in the period of *transition* from the rule of the bourgeoisie to the rule of the proletariat, whereas I, with a precision that precludes all possibility of misunderstanding, *insist* on the necessity for a state in this period, although, in accordance with Marx and the experience of the Paris Commune, not the usual bourgeois parliamentary state, but a state *without* a standing army, *without* a police opposed to the people, *without* an officialdom placed above the people.

When Mr. Plekhanov in his newspaper *Yedinstvo* clamours so furiously about anarchism, he is only giving one more proof of his rupture with Marxism. In reply to my challenge in *Pravda* (No. 26) that he should tell what Marx and Engels taught on the subject of the state in 1871, 1872 and 1875, Mr. Plekhanov is and will be obliged to preserve silence on the essence of the question, and indulges instead in outcries after the manner of the enraged bourgeoisie.

Mr. Plekhanov, the ex-Marxist, has *absolutely* failed to understand the Marxist doctrine of the state. By the way, the germs of this lack of understanding are to be observed in his German pamphlet on anarchism.

Let us now see how Comrade Kamenev in his article in *Pravda*, No. 27, formulates his "differences" with my theses and the views expressed above. It will help us to understand them more clearly.

As regards Comrade Lenin's general scheme—writes Comrade Kamenev—it appears to us unacceptable, inasmuch as it proceeds from the assumption that the bourgeois-democratic revolution *has been completed*, and is calculated on the immediate transformation of that revolution into a socialist revolution...

Here we have two major errors.

The first is that the question of the "completeness" of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is wrongly *formulated*. It is formulated in an abstract, simplified, monochromatic way, if we may so express it, which *does* not correspond to objective reality. Those who formulate the question *thus*, those who ask *now*, "Is the bourgeois-democratic revolution completed?" *and nothing more*, deprive themselves of the possibility of understanding the real situation, which is extraordinarily complicated and, at least, "bichromatic." This, as regards theory. In practice, they impotently capitulate to *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*.

And, indeed, in reality we find *both* the transfer of power to the bourgeoisie (a "completed" bourgeois-democratic revolution of the usual type) *and* the existence, side by side with the actual government, of a parallel government, which represents a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." This "also-government" has *voluntarily* ceded power to the bourgeoisie and has *voluntarily* chained itself to the bourgeois government.

Is this reality covered by Comrade Kamenev's old-Bolshevik formula, which declares that "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed"?

No, that formula is antiquated. It is worthless. It is dead. And all attempts to revive it will be vain.

Secondly, a practical question. It is uncertain whether a *separate* "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," *detached* from the bourgeois government, is now still possible in Russia. Marxist tactics must not be based on unknown factors.

But *if* it is still possible, then there is one, and only one way to obtain it, namely, the immediate, decisive and irrevocable sev-

erance of the proletarian, Communist elements of the movement from the petty-bourgeois elements.

Why?

Because it is not by chance but by necessity that the whole petty-bourgeoisie has turned towards chauvinism (= defencism), towards "supporting" the bourgeoisie, that it has accepted dependence on the bourgeoisie and *fears* to do without the bourgeoisie, and so on and so forth.

How can the petty-bourgeoisie be "pushed" into power, when the petty-bourgeoisie could assume power now, but *does not wish to*?

Only the severance of the proletarian, Communist Party, the proletarian class struggle, *exempt* from the timidity of the petty-bourgeois, only the consolidation of proletarians really exempt from the influence of the petty bourgeoisie, can make things so "hot" for the petty-bourgeoisie that, under certain circumstances, it will be *obliged* to assume power. It is not even impossible that Guchkov and Milyukov—again under certain circumstances—will be in favour of full and undivided power being assumed by Chkheidze, Tsereteli, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Steklov, because, after all, they are all "*defencists*"!

Those who at once, immediately and irrevocably, separate the proletarian elements of the Soviets (*i.e.*, the proletarian, Communist Party) from the petty-bourgeois elements, will correctly express the interests of the movement in both eventualities: *both* in the eventuality that Russia will still pass through a special and independent "dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" not subordinated to the bourgeoisie, *and* in the eventuality that the petty-bourgeoisie will not be able to sever itself from the bourgeoisie and will forever (that is, until socialism is established) waver between it and us.

Those who in their activities are guided by the simple formula, "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed," give, as it were, something in the nature of a guarantee that the petty-bourgeoisie is assuredly capable of becoming independent of the bourgeoisie; and by that very fact they hopelessly surrender themselves to the tender mercies of the petty-bourgeoisie.

Incidentally, on the subject of the "formula," the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, it would not be amiss to recall

that in my article "Two Tactics" (July 1905) I particularly pointed out (*Twelve Years*, p. 435) that:

Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy and privileges.... Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage worker against the master, the struggle for Socialism....\*

The mistake made by Comrade Kamenev is that even now, in 1917, he sees only the *past* of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, whereas, in *fact*, its *future* has already begun, for the interests and policies of the wage worker and the master have already become sundered *in fact*, and, moreover, on such an important question as "defencism," the attitude towards the imperialist war.

And this brings me to the second mistake in the remarks of Comrade Kamenev quoted above. He reproaches me with the fact that my scheme "is calculated on the immediate transformation of that [bourgeois-democratic] revolution into a socialist revolution."

That is not true. Far from "calculating" on the "immediate transformation" of our revolution into a *socialist* revolution, I actually caution against it, and in Thesis No. 8 plainly declare: "Our *immediate* task is 'not' to introduce socialism...."

Is it not obvious that if one calculates on the immediate transformation of our revolution into a socialist revolution one cannot be opposed to the introduction of socialism as an immediate task?

Moreover, it is *impossible* to introduce even a "commune state" (i.e., a state organised on the type of the Paris Commune) in Russia "immediately," for that would require that the *majority* of the deputies in all (or in most of) the Soviets should clearly recognise the utter erroneousness and perniciousness of the tactics and policy of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, etc. And I explicitly declared that in this respect I "calculate" only on "patient" explanation (is it necessary to be patient in order to bring about a change which can be realised "immediately"?)!

Comrade Kamenev rather "impatiently" let himself go and repeated the bourgeois prejudice regarding the Paris Commune, namely, that it wanted to introduce socialism "immediately." That is

\* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 99.—Ed.



not so. The Commune, unfortunately, was far too slow in introducing socialism. The real essence of the Commune lies not where the bourgeois usually looks for it, but in the creation of a special type of *state*. And a state of this type has *already* been born in Russia: it is the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!

Comrade Kamenev has not pondered over the *fact* and the significance of the *existing* Soviets, their identity as to type and social and political character with the state of the Commune; and instead of studying a *fact*, he began to talk of what I allegedly "calculated" on as a thing of the "immediate" future. The result was, unfortunately, a repetition of the trick practised by many bourgeois: attention is diverted from the question of the *nature* of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, of whether they are a type *superior* to the parliamentary republic, whether they are more *beneficial* to the people, more *democratic* and more *adapted*, for instance, to the struggle for bread, etc.—attention is diverted from this essential and immediate question, rendered urgent by the force of events, to the frivolous, pseudo-scientific, but in reality hollow and professorially lifeless question of "calculations on an immediate transformation."

A frivolous question falsely stated. I "calculate" *solely* and *exclusively* on the workers, soldiers and peasants being able to cope better than the officials, better than the police, with the *practical* and difficult problems of increasing the production of foodstuffs and their better distribution, the better provisioning of the soldiers, etc., etc.

I am profoundly convinced that the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies will open the way to the independent activity of the *masses* of the people far more quickly and far more effectively than a parliamentary republic (I will make a comparison of the two types of state in greater detail in another letter). They will decide more effectively, more practically and more correctly what *steps* can be taken towards socialism and how. Control over a bank, amalgamation of all banks into one, is *not yet* socialism, but it is a *step towards* socialism. Today such steps are being taken in Germany by the Junkers and the bourgeoisie to the detriment of the people. Tomorrow, if the entire power of the state is in its hands,

the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies will take these steps more effectively to the advantage of the people.

And what renders these steps *essential*?

Famine. Economic disorganisation. Impending collapse. The horrors of war. The horror of the wounds inflicted on mankind by the war.

Comrade Kamenev concludes his article with the statement that he "hopes in a broad discussion to carry his point of view, the only possible point of view for the revolutionary Social-Democratic Party, if it wishes, as it must, to remain to the end the party of the revolutionary masses of the proletariat, and not become transformed into a group of Communist propagandists."

It seems to me that these words betray a profoundly erroneous estimate of the situation. Comrade Kamenev contrasts a "party of the masses" with a "group of propagandists." But just now the "masses" have yielded to the intoxication of "revolutionary" defencism. Is it not more worthy of internationalists at such a moment to be able to resist "mass" intoxication than to "wish to remain" with the masses, *i.e.*, to succumb to the general epidemic? Have we not seen how the chauvinists in all the belligerent countries of Europe justified themselves on the grounds that they wished to "remain with the masses"? Is it not essential to be able for a while to remain in a minority as against the "mass" intoxication? Is not the work of propagandists at the present moment the main factor in *clearing* the proletarian line of defencist and petty-bourgeois "mass" intoxication? It was just the fusion of the mass, proletarian and non-proletarian, without distinction of class differences within the mass, that constituted one of the conditions for the epidemic of defencism. To speak with contempt of a "group of propagandists" of the *proletarian* line is perhaps not altogether becoming.

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THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN  
SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS),  
MAY 6-11, 1917

## I.

J. Stalin

SPEECH IN FAVOUR OF COMRADE LENIN'S RESOLUTION  
ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

COMRADES, Comrade Lenin's resolution provides for what Comrade Bubnov proposes. Comrade Lenin does not reject mass action, demonstrations. But this is not the point at present. The disagreements centre around the question of control. Control presupposes a controller and controlled, and also some sort of agreement between the controller and the controlled. We had control and we had an agreement. What were the results of control? Nil. After Milyukov's pronouncement (of May 2) its shadowy nature is particularly clear.

Guchkov says: "I regard the revolution as a means of fighting better; *let us make a small revolution for a big victory.*" But now the army is permeated with pacifist ideas and it is impossible to fight. The government tells us: "Abolish propaganda against war, otherwise we shall resign."

On the agrarian question the government is also unable to meet the interests of the peasants, the interests of seizing the landlords' land. We are told: "Help us to curb the peasants, otherwise we shall resign."

Milyukov says: "The unity of the front must be preserved, we must advance against the enemy. Inspire the soldiers with enthusiasm, otherwise we shall resign."

And after this, control is proposed to us. This is ridiculous! At first the Soviet outlined the program, now the Provisional Government is doing this. The alliance concluded between the Soviet and the Government on the day after the crisis (Milyukov's pronouncement) signifies that the Soviet is following the government. The government is attacking the Soviet, the Soviet is retreating. After this it is idle to talk about control. This is why I propose that the amendment on control be rejected.

*The Road to October, Articles and Speeches, March-October, 1917, Lenin-grad, 1925.*

## II.

V. I. Lenin

## ON THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION \*

THE World War, brought about by the struggle of world trusts and bank capital for domination over the world market, has already resulted in a mass destruction of material values, in an exhaustion of production forces, and in such a growth of war industry that even the production of an absolutely necessary minimum of goods for consumption and means of production proves impossible.

Thus the present war has brought humanity to a blind alley; it has placed it on the brink of ruin.

The objective conditions for a socialist revolution that undoubtedly existed even before the war in the more developed and advanced countries, have been and are ripening with tremendous rapidity as a result of the war. The crowding-out and ruin of small and medium-sized economic enterprises is proceeding at an accelerated pace. The concentration and internationalisation of capital are making gigantic strides, monopoly capitalism is changing into state monopoly capitalism. Social regulation of production and distribution is, under the pressure of circumstances, being introduced in many countries. Some are introducing universal labour service.

When private property in the means of production is retained, all these steps towards a greater monopolisation and nationalisation of production are inevitably accompanied by an increased exploitation of the labouring masses, by an increase of oppression, by a growing difficulty in offering resistance to the exploiters, by a growth of reaction and military despotism. At the same time these steps lead to a gigantic increase in the profits of large capitalists at the expense of all the other strata of the population; they deliver the labouring masses to the bondage of capitalists through tributes imposed on them in the form of billions of interest to be paid on war loans for many decades to come. The same measures, however, when private property in the means of production has been abolished, when state power has completely passed into the hands of the pro-

\* Resolution of the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.-D.L.P.—*Ed.*

letariat, are the guarantee for the success of a transformation of society that will do away with the exploitation of man by man and insure the well-being of one and all.

On the other hand, the forecast of the Socialists of the whole world who unanimously declared in the Basle Manifesto of 1912 the inevitability of a proletarian revolution in connection with the imperialist war that was then approaching and is now raging, has been fully confirmed by the course of events.

The Russian Revolution is only the first stage of the first of the proletarian revolutions that are inevitably being brought about by the war.

In all the countries there grows a rebellious spirit among large masses of the people against the capitalist class, and there grows the consciousness of the proletariat that only the passing of power into its hands, and the abolition of private property in the means of production, will save humanity from ruin.

In all countries, especially in the most advanced, England and Germany, hundreds of Socialists who have not gone over to the side of "their" national bourgeoisie, have been thrown into prison by the governments of capitalism which have thus given an object lesson that they are afraid of the proletarian revolution which is growing in the depths of the masses of the people. The rise of the revolution in Germany is seen both in the mass struggles which have assumed particularly large proportions in the last weeks, and in the growth of fraternisation between the German and the Russian soldiers at the front.

Thus, fraternal confidence and a fraternal unity among the workers of the various countries, the very same workers who, at present, are exterminating each other for the interests of the capitalists, is gradually being restored. This, in its turn, will create prerequisites for concerted revolutionary actions of the workers of the various countries. Only such actions are capable of guaranteeing the development of the world socialist revolution according to the best conceived plan, and the success of such a revolution on the most unflinching basis.

The proletariat of Russia operating in one of the most backward countries of Europe, surrounded by a vast petty peasant popula-

tion, cannot make its aim the immediate realisation of a socialist transformation.

Yet it would be a grave error to infer from the foregoing that the proletariat must support the bourgeoisie, or that we must keep our activities within the boundaries acceptable to the petty bourgeoisie, or that the proletariat must renounce its leading rôle in the matter of explaining to the people the imperative urgency of a number of measures that are ripe to be put into practice and that lead to socialism.

Such inference would be in practice equivalent to going over to the side of the bourgeoisie.

Such steps are, first, nationalisation of the land. Such a measure which does not directly overstep the boundaries of the bourgeois system would, at the same time, be a hard blow to private property in the means of production, and to the same degree it would strengthen the influence of the socialist proletariat over the semi-proletarians of the village.

Such measures are, further, the establishment of government control over all the banks which are to be united into a single central bank, also control over insurance companies and the large capitalist syndicates (for example, the sugar syndicate, the coal syndicate, the metal syndicate, etc.), all this to be accomplished by a change to a more just and progressive taxation of income and property. Economic conditions are ripe for such measures. From the technical point of view they can be carried out immediately. From the political point of view they are likely to get the support of the overwhelming majority of the peasants who in every respect will gain by such reforms.

The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and other Deputies now covering Russia with an ever-growing network would introduce not only the above measures but also universal labour service, for the character of these institutions guarantees, on the one hand, that all these reforms would be introduced only in so far as an overwhelming majority of the people has realised clearly and firmly their practical necessity, on the other hand, the character of these institutions guarantees, not a realisation of reforms through a system of police and officials, but a voluntary participation of

organised and armed masses of the proletariat and the peasantry in regulating their own economic life. All the measures just indicated as well as others of the same nature could and should be not merely discussed and prepared so that they might be carried out on a national scale in case the proletarians and semi-proletarians gain power, but, whenever opportunity presents itself, should be carried into life immediately by local revolutionary organs of people's power.

In carrying out the above measures it is necessary to exercise extreme circumspection and caution and to win a solid majority of the population as well as its intelligent conviction that the country is ready for the practical introduction of this or that measure, but it is in this direction that we must rivet the attention and the efforts of the class-conscious vanguard of the proletarian masses who are in duty bound to help the peasant masses find an escape from the present economic chaos.

*Soldatskaia Pravda* [Soldiers' Truth], May 16, 1917.

### III.

## V. I. Lenin

### ON THE WAR \*

#### 1.

THE present war, on the part of both belligerent groups, is an imperialist war, *i.e.*, it is waged by capitalists for the division of the benefits derived from the domination of the world, for markets, for finance (bank) capital, for the subjection of weak nationalities, etc. Each day of war enriches the financial and industrial bourgeoisie and impoverishes and saps the strength of the proletariat and the peasantry of all the belligerents, as well as of the neutral countries. In Russia, moreover, the prolongation of the war involves a grave danger to the conquests of the revolution and its further development.

The passing of state power, in Russia, into the hands of the Provisional Government, a government of the landowners and capi-

\* Resolution of the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.-D.L.P.—*Ed.*

talists, did not and could not alter the character and meaning of Russia's participation in the war.

This fact became particularly apparent when the new government not only failed to publish the secret treaties concluded between Tsar Nicholas II and the capitalist governments of England, France, etc., but even formally and without consulting the people confirmed these secret treaties, which promised Russian capitalists freedom to rob China, Persia, Turkey, Austria, etc. The concealment of these treaties from the people completely deceived them as to the true character of the war.

For this reason a proletarian party can support neither the present war, nor the present government, nor its loans, without breaking completely with internationalism, *i.e.*, with the fraternal solidarity of the workers of all lands in their struggle against the yoke of capital.

No confidence can be placed in the promises of the present government to renounce annexations, *i.e.*, conquests of foreign countries, or in the promise to renounce forcible retention within the confines of Russia of this or that nationality. For, in the first place, the capitalists, bound by thousands of threads of bank capital, cannot renounce annexations in the present war without renouncing the profits on the billions invested in loans, in concessions, in war industries, etc. And, in the second place, the new government, having renounced annexations in order to deceive the people, declared through Milyukov (Moscow, April 27, 1917) that it had no intention of renouncing annexations, and, in the note of May 1, and in the explanations of it of May 5, confirmed the annexationist character of its policies. In warning the people against the empty promises of the capitalists, the Conference therefore declares that it is necessary to distinguish sharply between a renunciation of annexations in words and a renunciation of annexations in deeds, *i.e.*, the immediate publication and abrogation of all the secret predatory treaties and the immediate granting to all the nationalities of the right to determine by free voting whether they wish to be independent states or to be part of another state.



## 2.

The so-called "revolutionary defencism" which in Russia has permeated all the Narodnik parties (the Popular Socialists, Trudoviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries) as well as the opportunist party of the Social-Democratic Mensheviks of the Organisation Committee (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc.) and the majority of the unaffiliated revolutionists, represents, by its class character, on the one hand the interests and the standpoint of the wealthier peasants and a part of the small proprietors who, like the capitalists, profit by oppressing weak peoples; on the other hand "revolutionary defencism" is the outcome of the deception by the capitalists of part of the city and village proletarians, who, by their class position, have no interest in the profits of the capitalists and in the imperialist war.

The Conference declares that any concessions to "revolutionary defencism" are absolutely not permissible and would actually signify a complete break with internationalism and socialism. As for the defencist tendencies present among the great masses, our party will struggle against these tendencies by ceaselessly emphasising the truth that any attitude of uncritical confidence in the government of the capitalists at the present moment is one of the greatest obstacles to a speedy conclusion of the war.

## 3.

As for the most important question of the manner of concluding as soon as possible the present capitalist war, not by an oppressive peace but by a truly democratic one, the Conference recognises and declares the following:

This war cannot be ended by a refusal of the soldiers of one side only to continue the war, by a simple cessation of war activities on the part of one side only.

The Conference reiterates its protest against the base slander circulated by the capitalists against our Party to the effect that we are in favour of a separate peace with Germany. We consider the German capitalists robbers no less than the capitalists of Russia, England, France, etc., and Emperor Wilhelm just as much of a crowned bandit as Nicholas II and the monarchs of England, Italy, Rumania and all the rest.

Our Party will patiently and persistently explain to the people the truth that wars are carried on by governments, that wars are always indissolubly bound up with the policies of certain classes, that this war may be terminated by a democratic peace only if the entire state power, in at least several of the belligerent states, has passed to the class of the proletarians and semi-proletarians who are really capable of putting an end to the bondage of capitalism.

In Russia, the revolutionary class, upon having seized the state power, would inaugurate a series of measures to undermine the economic rule of the capitalists, as well as of measures that would render the capitalists completely harmless politically, and would immediately and frankly offer to all the peoples a democratic peace on the basis of a complete relinquishment of every possible form of annexation or indemnity. Such measures and such an offer of peace would bring about an attitude of complete confidence of the workers of the belligerent countries towards each other and would inevitably lead to uprisings of the proletariat against such imperialist governments as might resist the offered peace.

Until the revolutionary class in Russia shall have taken over the entire state power, our Party will, by all means, support those proletarian parties and groups in foreign countries as are, already during the continuance of the war, conducting a revolutionary struggle against their own imperialist governments and their own bourgeoisie. Particularly will our Party support the mass fraternisation of the soldiers of all the belligerent countries that has already begun at the front, thereby endeavouring to transform this instinctive expression of solidarity of the oppressed into a class-conscious, well-organised movement for the taking over of all state power in all the belligerent countries by the revolutionary proletariat.

*Soldatskaia Pravda*, May 16, 1917.

## IV.

V. I. Lenin

## ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION \*

THE existence of landed estates in Russia is the material basis of the power of the semi-feudal landowners and augurs for the possibility of re-establishing the monarchy. This landownership inevitably dooms an overwhelming mass of the population of Russia, namely, the peasantry, to poverty, serfdom and dumbness, and the entire country to backwardness in all realms of life.

Peasant landownership in Russia, both *nadels* \*\* (of the village communities and of homesteads) and private lands (rented or bought), is from top to bottom and in every other direction enmeshed in old semi-feudal connections and relationships, the peasants being divided into categories inherited from the times of bondage, the land representing a maze of strips, etc., etc. The necessity of breaking all these antiquated and injurious partitions, to "unfence" the land, to reconstruct all relationships of landownership and agriculture on a new basis, in accordance with the new conditions of Russian and world economy, forms the material basis for the peasantry's striving to nationalise all land in the state.

Whatever the petty-bourgeois utopias, in which all the Narodnik parties and groups clothe the struggle of the peasant masses against the feudal landed estates and against all feudal fetters imposed on all landownership and land usage in Russia in general,—this struggle by itself expresses a true bourgeois-democratic, absolutely progressive and economically necessary tendency to break these fetters.

Nationalisation of the land, being a bourgeois measure, signifies the very maximum of freedom for the class struggle thinkable in capitalist society and freedom of landownership from all non-bourgeois remnants of the past. Nationalisation of the land as abolition of private property on land would, besides, signify in practice such a powerful blow to private property in all means of produc-

\* Resolution of the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.-D.L.P.—Ed.

\*\* *Nadel* was the share which the individual peasant received of the land owned by the village community collectively. The *nadel* was held by the peasant for a number of years, pending the redistribution of the community land according to the changes in the village population.—Ed.

tion in general, that the party of the proletariat must offer every possible assistance to such a reform.

On the other hand, the well-to-do peasantry of Russia has long produced elements of a peasant bourgeoisie, and the Stolypin agrarian reform has undoubtedly strengthened, multiplied and fortified those elements. At the other pole of the village there have equally become strengthened and multiplied the agricultural wage-workers, the proletarians and the mass of semi-proletarian peasantry which is close to the former.

The more resolute and consistent the breaking up and elimination of noble landownership, the more resolute and consistent the bourgeois-democratic agrarian reform in Russia in general, the more vigorous and speedy will be the development of the class struggle of the agricultural proletariat against the well-to-do peasantry (the peasant bourgeoisie).

Whether the city proletariat will succeed in leading the village proletariat and in allying with itself the mass of semi-proletarians of the village, or whether this mass will follow the peasant bourgeoisie which gravitates towards a union with Guchkov, Milyukov, with the capitalists, landowners and the counter-revolution in general, the answer to this question will determine the fate and the outcome of the Russian Revolution, provided the incipient proletarian revolution in Europe does not exercise a direct powerful influence on our country.

Proceeding from this class situation and relationship of forces, the Conference decides that:

1. The Party of the proletariat fights with all its might for a full and immediate confiscation of all landed estates in Russia (as well as appanages, church lands, crown lands, etc.)

2. The Party is decisively in favour of immediate passing of all lands into the hands of the peasantry organised into Soviets of Peasant Deputies or in other organs of local self-government that are elected on a really democratic basis and are entirely independent of the landowners and officials.

3. The Party of the proletariat demands the nationalisation of all land in the state, which means giving the state title to all the land, with the right of local democratic institutions to manage the land.

4. The Party must wage a decisive struggle; first, against the

Provisional Government which, through Shingarev's declarations and through its own collective actions saddles the peasants with "voluntary agreements between peasants and landowners," *i.e.*, in practice with a land reform after the landowners' desire, and threatens with punishment for "willful acts," *i.e.*, with violent measures on the part of the minority of the population (landowners and capitalists) against the majority; second, against the petty bourgeois vacillations of a majority of Narodniks and Menshevik Social-Democrats who counsel the peasants to refrain from taking over the land pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

5. The Party counsels the peasants to take the land in an organised way, by no means allowing the slightest damage to property and taking care to increase production.

6. All agrarian reforms generally can be successful and of abiding value only when the whole state is democratized, *i.e.*, when on the one hand the police, the standing army and the actually privileged bureaucracy have been abolished,—on the other hand there is the most comprehensive local self-government entirely free from control and tutelage from above.

7. It is necessary immediately and everywhere to start organising a separate organisation of the agricultural proletariat both in the form of Soviets of Agricultural Workers' Deputies (as well as separate Soviets of Deputies from the semi-proletarian peasantry) and in the form of proletarian groups or fractions organised within the general Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, within all the organs of local and city government, etc.

8. The Party must support the initiative of those peasant committees who, in a number of localities of Russia, give over the landowners' property and agricultural implements in the hands of the peasantry organised into those committees, for the purpose of cultivating all the land under social control and regulation.

9. The party of the proletariat must counsel the proletarians and semi-proletarians of the village to strive to form out of every landowner's estate a sufficiently large model farm which would be managed at public expense by the Soviets of Agricultural Workers' Deputies under the direction of agriculturists and with the application of the best technical methods.

## V.

J. Stalin

## REPORT ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

AN extensive report on the national question should rightly be given, but time is short and I must make my report brief.

Before the draft resolution is considered certain premises must first be laid down. What is national oppression? National oppression is that system of exploitation and plunder of subject peoples, those measures of forcible restriction of the sovereign rights of subject peoples, which are resorted to by imperialist circles. These, taken together, present the policy generally known as a policy of national oppression.

The first question is, on what classes does any particular government depend in carrying out its policy of national oppression? In order to obtain an answer to this question it must first be understood why different forms of national oppression exist in different states, why in one state national oppression is more severe and crude than in other states. For instance, in Great Britain and Austria-Hungary national oppression never took the form of pogroms, but existed in the form of restrictions on the national rights of the subject peoples; whereas in Russia it not infrequently assumes the form of pogroms and massacres. In certain states, on the other hand, no specific measures against national minorities are practised at all. For instance, there is no national oppression in Switzerland, where French, Italians and Germans all live freely.

How are we to explain the difference in attitude towards nationalities existing in different states?

The difference depends on the degree of democracy in these states. When in former years the old landed aristocracy controlled the state power in Russia, national oppression could assume, and actually did assume, the monstrous form of massacres and pogroms. In Great Britain, where there is a definite degree of democracy and political freedom, national oppression bears a less brutal character. Switzerland, for her part, approximates to a democratic society, and in that country the small nations have more or less complete

freedom. In a word, the more democratic a country, the less the national oppression, and *vice versa*. And since by democracy we mean that definite classes are in control of state power, it may be said from this point of view that the closer the old landed aristocracy stands to power, as was the case in old tsarist Russia, the more severe is the oppression and the more monstrous the forms it assumes.

However, national oppression is maintained not only by the landed aristocracy. There is, in addition, another force—the imperialist groups, who introduce the methods of enslaving peoples acquired by them in the colonies into their own country and thus become the natural allies of the landed aristocracy. They are followed by the petty bourgeoisie, a section of the intelligentsia, a section of the upper strata of the workers, who also enjoy the fruits of the plunder. Thus, there is a whole chorus of social forces headed by the landed and financial aristocracy which support national oppression. In order to create a real democratic system, it is first of all necessary to clear the ground and remove this chorus from the political stage. [*Reads the resolution.*]

The first question is, how are we to arrange the political life of the oppressed nations? In answer to this question it must be said that the oppressed nations forming part of Russia must be allowed the right to decide for themselves whether they wish to remain part of the Russian state or to secede and form an independent state. We are at present witnessing a definite conflict between the Finnish people and the Provisional Government. The representatives of the Finnish people, the representatives of Social-Democracy, are demanding that the Provisional Government should return to the people the rights they enjoyed before they were annexed to Russia. The Provisional Government refuses because it will not recognise the sovereignty of the Finnish people. On whose side must we range ourselves? Obviously, on the side of the Finnish people, for it is inconceivable for us to recognise the forcible retention of any people whatsoever within the bounds of one state. When we put forward the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination we thereby raise the struggle against national oppression to the level of a struggle against imperialism, our common foe. If we fail to do this we may find ourselves in the position of people who bring grist to the mill of the imperialists.

If we, the Social-Democrats, were to deny the Finnish people the right to declare its will on the subject of secession and the right to give effect to its will, we would thereby put ourselves in the position of people who continue the policy of tsarism.

The question of the *right* of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the question of whether a nation must *necessarily* secede at any given moment. This latter question must be settled by the party of the proletariat in each particular case independently, according to circumstances. When we recognise the right of oppressed peoples to secede, the *right* to determine their political destiny, we do not thereby settle the question of whether particular nations *should* secede from the Russian state at the given moment. I may recognise the right of a nation to secede, but that does not mean that I compel it to secede. A people has a right to secede, but it may or may not exercise that right, according to circumstances. Thus we are at liberty to agitate for or against secession, according to the interests of the proletariat, of the proletarian revolution. Hence, the question of secession must be determined in each particular case independently, in accordance with existing circumstances, and for this reason the question of recognising the right to secede must not be confused with the expediency of secession in any given circumstances. For instance, I personally would be opposed to the secession of Transcaucasia, bearing in mind the general level of development in Transcaucasia and in Russia, the conditions of the struggle of the proletariat, and so forth. But if, nevertheless, the peoples of Transcaucasia were to demand secession, they would, of course, secede, and would not encounter opposition from us. [*Continues to read the resolution.*]

Further, what is to be done with those peoples which may desire to remain within the Russian state? The mistrust of Russia which existed among the peoples was fostered chiefly by the policy of tsarism. But now that tsarism no longer exists, its policy of oppression no longer exists, this mistrust is bound to diminish and the attraction towards Russia increase. I believe that now, after the overthrow of tsarism, nine-tenths of the peoples will not desire secession. The Party therefore proposes to institute regional autonomy for regions which may not desire secession and which are distinguished by peculiarities of social life and language, as, for



instance, Transcaucasia, Turkestan and the Ukraine. The geographical boundaries of these autonomous regions must be determined by the population itself with due regard for the conditions of economic life, social life, etc.

In contradistinction to regional autonomy there exists another plan, one which has long been recommended by the Bund, and particularly by Springer and Bauer, who advocate the principle of national cultural autonomy. I consider this plan unacceptable for the Social-Democratic Party. Its essence is that Russia should be transformed into a union of nations, and nations into unions of persons drawn into a common society irrespective of place of domicile, irrespective of territory. All Russians, all Armenians, and so on, are to be organised into separate national unions, irrespective of territory, and only then are they to enter the union of nations of the whole of Russia. This plan is extremely inconvenient and inexpedient. The fact is that the development of capitalism has dispersed whole groups of people, severed them from their nations and scattered them over the various corners of Russia. In view of the dispersion of nations resulting from economic conditions, to draw the various individuals of a given nation together is to organise and build a nation artificially. And to draw people together into nations artificially is to adopt the standpoint of nationalism. This plan, advanced by the Bund, cannot be endorsed by the Social-Democratic Party. It was rejected at the conference of our Party held in 1912, and generally enjoys no popularity in Social-Democratic circles with the exception of the Bund. This plan is also known as cultural autonomy, because from among the numerous and varied questions which interest a nation it singles out the purely cultural group of questions and places them under the charge of national unions. The basis for this selection is the proposition that what unites a nation into a single whole is its culture. It is assumed that within a nation there are, on the one hand, interests which tend to disintegrate the nation, for instance economic interests, and, on the other hand, interests which tend to weld it into a single whole, and that the cultural question is a question of the latter kind.

Lastly, there is the question of the national minorities. Their rights must be specially protected. The Party therefore demands

complete equality of status in educational, religious and other matters and the removal of all restrictions on national minorities.

There is Paragraph 9, which proclaims the equality of nations. The conditions required for its realisation can arise only when the whole of society has been fully democratised.

We have still to settle the question of how to organise the proletariat of the various nations into a single, common party. One plan is that the workers should be organised according to nationality—so many nations, so many parties. This plan was rejected by the Social-Democratic Party. Experience has shown that the organisation of the proletariat of a given state according to nationality only leads to the destruction of the idea of class solidarity. All the proletarian members of all the nations in a given state must be organised in a single, indivisible proletarian collective body.

Thus, our views on the national question reduce themselves to the following propositions: (a) the recognition of the right of peoples to secession; (b) regional autonomy for peoples which remain within the given state; (c) special legislation guaranteeing freedom of development for national minorities; (d) a single, indivisible proletarian body, a single party, for the proletarians of all the nationalities in the given state.

*The Road to October, Articles and Speeches, March-October, 1917, Lenin-grad, 1925.*

## VI.

### J. Stalin

#### SPEECH IN REPLY TO THE DEBATE

THE two resolutions are on the whole similar. Comrade Pyatakov has copied all the points of our resolution except one—"the recognition of the right of secession." One thing or the other: either we deny the nations the right of secession, in which case it must be stated explicitly, or we do not deny that right.

There is at present a movement in Finland for securing national freedom, and there is also the fight waged against it by the Provisional Government. The question arises, whom are we to support?

Either we support the policy of the Provisional Government, the forcible retention of Finland and the reduction of her rights to a minimum—in which case we are annexationists, for we are bringing grist to the mill of the Provisional Government—or we favour independence for Finland.

We must express ourselves definitely one way or the other; to limit ourselves to a statement of rights is impossible. There is a movement for independence in Ireland. On whose side are we, comrades? Either on the side of Ireland or of the British Empire. And I ask—and the facts of life also ask—are we on the side of the peoples which are resisting oppression, or on the side of the classes which are oppressing them?

We say that the Social-Democrats who are steering a course towards the socialist revolution, must support the revolutionary movement of the peoples, which is directed against imperialism. Either we consider that we must create a rear for the vanguard of the socialist revolution in the shape of the peoples which are rising up against national oppression—and in that case we shall build a bridge between the West and the East and shall indeed be steering a course towards the world socialist revolution; or we do not do this—and in that case we shall find ourselves isolated and we shall be abandoning the tactics of utilising every revolutionary movement among the oppressed nationalities for the purpose of destroying imperialism. We must support every movement directed against imperialism. Otherwise, what will the Finnish workers say to us? Comrades Pyatakov and Dzerzhinsky say that every national movement is a reactionary movement. That is not true, comrades. Is not the Irish movement against British imperialism a democratic movement which is striking a blow at imperialism? And are we not to support that movement? . . .

*The Road to October, Articles and Speeches, March-October, 1917, Lenin-grad, 1925.*

## VII.

V. I. Lenin

## RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

THE policy of national oppression, inherited from the autocracy and monarchy, is supported by the landlords, capitalists and petty bourgeoisie in order to protect their class privileges and to cause disunity among the workers of the various nationalities. Modern imperialism, which accentuates the tendency to subjugate feeble nations, is a new factor intensifying national oppression.

To the extent that the elimination of national oppression is achievable at all in capitalist society, it is possible only under a consistently democratic republican structure and state administration that guarantees complete equality of status for all nations and languages.

The right of all the nations forming part of Russia to freely secede and form independent states shall be recognised. To deny this right, or to fail to take measures guaranteeing its practical realisation, is equivalent to supporting a policy of seizure and annexation. The recognition by the proletariat of the right of nations to secede can alone bring about complete solidarity among the workers of the various nations and help to bring the nations closer together on truly democratic lines.

The conflict which has at present arisen between Finland and the Russian Provisional Government is a striking illustration of the fact that the denial of the right of unhindered secession leads to a direct continuation of the policy of tsarism.

The question of the right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the question of whether it would be expedient for any given nation to secede at any given moment. This latter question must be settled by the Party of the proletariat in each particular case independently, from the point of view of the interests of social development as a whole and the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism.

The Party demands wide regional autonomy, the abolition of tutelage from above, the abolition of a compulsory state language

and the determination of the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions by the local population itself based on economic and social conditions, the national composition of the population, and so forth.

The Party of the proletariat emphatically rejects what is known as "national cultural autonomy," under which education and so on is removed from the competence of the state and placed within the competence of something in the nature of National Diets. National cultural autonomy artificially divides the workers living in one locality, and even working in the same industrial enterprises, in accordance with their membership of a particular "national culture"; in other words it strengthens the ties between the workers and the bourgeois culture of individual nations, whereas the aim of Social-Democracy is to strengthen the international culture of the proletariat of the world.

The Party demands that a fundamental law shall be embodied in the Constitution declaring null and void all privileges enjoyed by any nation whatsoever and all violations of the rights of national minorities.

The interests of the working class demand the amalgamation of the workers of all the nationalities of Russia into common proletarian organisations, political, trade union, co-operative, cultural and so forth. Only such amalgamation of the workers of the various nationalities into common organisations will enable the proletariat to wage a successful struggle against international capital and bourgeois nationalism. [*Carried by 55 against 16, 18 abstaining.*]

*Soldatskaia Pravda, May 16, 1917.*

## V. I. Lenin

### THE MEANING OF FRATERNISATION

THE capitalists either poke fun at fraternisation, or wrathfully attack it with lies and calumny, reducing it all to "deception" practised by the Germans upon the Russians; they threaten—through *their* generals and officers—to punish severely all those guilty of fraternisation.

From the point of view of safeguarding the "sacred property right" of capital and profits, this policy of the capitalists is quite sound: indeed, in order that the proletarian socialist revolution be crushed at its very inception, it is necessary to regard fraternisation in the light in which the capitalists regard it.

The class-conscious workers and the vast masses of semi-proletarians and poor peasants who, guided by the true instinct of oppressed classes, follow in the steps of class-conscious workers, regard fraternisation with the deepest sympathy. It is obvious that fraternisation is a road to peace. It is obvious that this road leads not to the capitalist governments, not to harmony with them, but, on the contrary, it leads against them. It is obvious that this road develops, strengthens, consolidates the feeling of brotherly confidence among the workers of various countries. It is obvious that this road is beginning to undermine the damnable discipline of the barrack prisons, the discipline requiring the absolute submission of soldiers to "their" officers and generals, to their capitalists (for officers and generals are for the most part either members of the capitalist class or defenders of its interests). It is obvious that fraternisation is the revolutionary initiative of the *masses*, that it is the awakening of the conscience, the mind, the courage of the oppressed classes, that it is, in other words, one of the links in the chain of steps leading towards the socialist proletarian revolution.

Long live fraternisation! Long live the rising world socialist revolution of the proletariat!

To expedite fraternisation, to make the attainment of our goal as easy and certain as possible, we must take care that it be well organised and based on a clear political programme.

However maliciously the press of the capitalists and their friends may slander us, denouncing us as anarchists, we still repeat: we are not anarchists, we are ardent upholders of the best organisation of the masses and of a most firm "state" authority—but the state we want is not a bourgeois parliamentary republic, but a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

We have always counselled and we still counsel that fraternisation be carried on according to an organised plan; that it be tested in the light of the ideas, experiences, observations of the soldiers

themselves, so that there may be no deception; that officers and generals, who are for the most part bitterly opposed to fraternisation, be kept away from the meetings.

We are endeavouring to make fraternisation go beyond the limits of general peace parleys. We want it to become an issue on a definite political programme, we want it to turn into a consideration of the question as to how to end the war, how to throw off the yoke of capitalism which is responsible for the war and its prolongation.

Accordingly, our Party has issued a proclamation to the soldiers of all the warring countries (see its text in *Pravda*, No. 37), giving our definite and clear answer to these questions, and our precise political programme.

It is well that the soldiers curse the war. It is well that they clamour for peace. It is well that they begin to feel that the war benefits the capitalists. It is well that they, breaking the prison discipline, themselves begin to fraternise on all the fronts. It is all very well.

But this is not enough.

It is necessary that fraternisation be accompanied by the discussion of a definite political programme. We are not anarchists. We do not think that war can be terminated by a simple "refusal" to fight, a refusal of individuals, groups or "mobs." We hold that the war should and will be brought to a finish through a *revolution* in several countries, i.e., through the conquests of *state* power by a new class, not the capitalists, not the small proprietors (invariably half-dependent upon the capitalists), but proletarians and semi-proletarians.

In our proclamation to the soldiers of all the warring countries we presented our programme for a workers' revolution in all the countries: transfer of all state power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Comrades, soldiers! Discuss this programme among yourselves together with the German soldiers! Such discussions will help you discover the true, the most effective and shortest way for the termination of the war and the overthrow of the yoke of capital.

Just a few words about one of the servants of capital, Plekhanov. It is pitiful to see how low this former Socialist has fallen! He

puts fraternisation next to "treason"!! His argument is that fraternisation, if successful, will lead to a separate peace.

No, Mr. ex-Socialist, fraternisation, carried on by us on *all* fronts, will lead not to a "separate" peace among capitalists of a few countries, but to a universal peace among the revolutionary workers of all countries, *despite* the capitalists, against the capitalists, for the overthrow of their yoke.

*Pravda*, May 11, 1917.

### J. Stalin

#### LAGGING BEHIND THE REVOLUTION

THE revolution is marching on. Becoming deeper and wider, it is spreading from one sphere to another, revolutionising the whole social and economic life of the country from top to bottom.

Invading industry, the revolution is raising the question of the control and regulation of production by the workers (Donetz Basin).

Spreading to agriculture, the revolution is pushing towards the collective cultivation of neglected lands, towards supplying the peasants with implements and livestock (Schlusselburg Uyezd).

Exposing the ulcers of the war and the economic chaos which has arisen under the conditions of war, the revolution is bursting into the sphere of distribution and is raising, on the one hand, the question of the food supplies of the towns (the food crisis), on the other hand, the question of the supply of manufactured goods for the rural districts (the manufactured goods crisis).

The solution of all these and similar problems which have now matured call for the display of the maximum initiative on the part of the revolutionary masses, for the active intervention of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies in the work of building up the new life, and finally, for the transfer of all power to the hands of the new class which is capable of leading the country onto the broad revolutionary road.

The revolutionary masses in the local districts are already taking this path. In some places the revolutionary organisations have al-



ready taken power in their hands (Urals, Schlusselfburg), ignoring the so-called "Committees of Public Salvation."

Meanwhile, the Petrograd Executive Committee, whose business it is to lead the revolution, is helplessly marking time, lagging behind and drifting away from the masses; and for the cardinal question of taking all power it substitutes the piffling question of "candidates" for the Provisional Government. By lagging behind the masses, the Executive Committee is lagging behind the revolution, hindering its advance.

Before us lie two documents from the Executive Committee: the "Hints for Workers' Delegates at the Front" who are taking presents to the soldiers, and "An Appeal to the Soldiers at the Front." Well, what do these documents indicate? They indicate this very same backwardness of the Executive Committee, for on the most important question of the day the Executive Committee, in these documents, gives the most revolting, the most anti-revolutionary replies.

*The question of the war.* While the Executive Committee was wrangling with the Provisional Government about annexations and indemnities, while the Provisional Government was fabricating "notes" and the Executive Committee was enjoying the rôle of "victor," while the war of conquest was continuing in the old way, life in the trenches, the real life of the soldiers, brought forth a new means of struggle, *viz.*, mass fraternisation. There is no doubt that, taken by itself, fraternisation is merely a spontaneous form of the striving for peace. Nevertheless, organised and conscious fraternisation can be transformed into a mighty instrument in the hands of the working class for revolutionising the situation in the belligerent countries.

What is the attitude of the Executive Committee towards fraternisation?

Listen:

Comrades, soldiers! Not by means of fraternisation will you achieve peace. . . . The people who are assuring you that fraternisation is the road to peace are leading you to your doom, to the doom of Russian freedom. Do not believe them. (See the "Appeal.")

Instead of fraternisation the Executive Committee proposes to the soldiers "not to abstain from offensive operations which the military situation may demand" (see the "Appeal"). It transpires that "de-

fence in the political sense does not preclude strategical offensives, the occupation of new sectors, etc. In the interests of defence . . . it is absolutely necessary to engage in offensives, to occupy new positions" (see "Hints").

In short: in order to achieve peace it is necessary to start an offensive and capture foreign "sectors."

This is how the Executive Committee argues.

But what is the difference between these imperialist arguments of the Executive Committee and the counter-revolutionary "order" of General Alexeyev, in which fraternising at the front is declared to be "treachery" and in which the soldiers are ordered "to wage a merciless struggle against the enemy"?

Or again: what is the difference between these arguments and the counter-revolutionary speech delivered by Milyukov at the conference at the Mariinsky Palace, in which he demanded from the soldiers "offensive operations" and discipline in the interests of the "unity of the front"?

*The question of the land.* Everybody knows about the conflict that has arisen between the peasants and the Provisional Government. The peasants demand the immediate ploughing up of the land which is neglected by the landlords, considering this step to be the only means of ensuring bread, not only for the population in the rear, but also for the army at the front. In reply to this the Provisional Government has declared resolute war on the peasants and has "outlawed" the agrarian movement; moreover, Commissars have been sent to the districts to protect the landlords' interests from "infringement" on the part of the "arbitrary" peasants. The Provisional Government has ordered the peasants to refrain from confiscation until the Constituent Assembly meets, which, it says, will settle everything.

What is the attitude of the Executive Committee to this question? Whom does it support, the peasants or the Provisional Government?

Listen:

Revolutionary democracy will most emphatically insist upon . . . the uncompensated alienation . . . of the landlords' land . . . in the *future* Constituent Assembly. At *present*, however, bearing in mind that the immediate confiscation of the landlords' land may cause . . . serious economic shocks in the country . . . revolutionary democracy warns the peasants against the unauthorised settlement of the land question, for agrarian disorders will benefit, not the peas-

antry, but the counter-revolution; in view of this, it is recommended that "the landlords' property be not arbitrarily seized until the Constituent Assembly decides." (See "Hints.")

This is what the Executive Committee says.

Evidently, the Executive Committee supports, not the peasants, but the Provisional Government.

Is it not clear that in taking such a stand the Executive Committee has slipped into Shingarev's counter-revolutionary slogan: "Curb the peasants!"

And generally speaking, since when have agrarian movements become "agrarian disorders," and the "unauthorised settlement" of questions become impermissible? What are the Soviets, including the Petrograd Soviet, if not organisations which have arisen in an "unauthorised" manner? Does the Executive Committee think that the time for "unauthorised" organisations and decisions has passed?

The Executive Committee raises the bogey of "food chaos" in connection with the unauthorised ploughing of the landlords' land. But for the purpose of increasing the food resources of the population the "unauthorised" Uyezd Revolutionary Committee in Schlus-selburg has resolved the following:

In order to obtain a larger quantity of grain products for which a really great need is felt, the village communities must plough unoccupied lands belonging to the churches, to the monasteries, to the former appanage estates and to private owners.

What objection can the Executive Committee have to this "unauthorised" decision?

What can it offer in place of this wise decision except empty phrases about "unauthorised action," "agrarian disorders," "unauthorised settlements," etc., copied from the orders of Mr. Shingarev?

Is it not clear that the Executive Committee is lagging behind the revolutionary movement in the provinces, and lagging behind, has come into contradiction with it?

Thus a new picture is unfolding before us. The revolution is growing in breadth and depth, invading new spheres: industry, agriculture, the sphere of distribution; and it is raising the question of taking all power. At the head of the movement the provinces are marching. While Petrograd marched in front in the first days of

the revolution, now, it is beginning to lag behind. In this connexion one gets the impression that the Executive Committee is trying to halt at the point at present reached. But it is impossible to stop at one point in a revolutionary epoch: it is only possible to move—either forward or backward. Therefore whoever strives to halt during a revolution must inevitably lag behind; and whoever lags behind receives no mercy: the revolution pushes him into the camp of the counter-revolution.

*Pravda*, May 17, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### OPEN LETTER TO THE DELEGATES OF THE ALL- RUSSIAN SOVIET OF PEASANT DEPUTIES

COMRADES, peasant deputies!

The Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks), to which I have the honour to belong, wished to give me authority to represent our Party at the Peasant Congress. As, until now, illness has prevented me from fulfilling this commission, I take the liberty of addressing this open letter to you, in order to greet the All-Russian Union of the Peasantry and briefly to point out the far-reaching differences of opinion which separate our Party from those of the "Socialist Revolutionaries" and the "Mensheviks."

These far-reaching differences of opinion concern three highly important questions, those of the land, the war and the structure of the state.

The whole land must belong to the people. All landed property must be handed over to the peasants without any compensation. This is clear. The question in dispute is: Shall the peasants in each locality take possession of the land at once, without paying rent to the landowners and without waiting until the Constituent Assembly is called, or shall they not?

Our Party holds to the point of view that the peasants should adopt the former plan, and recommends the peasants settled in a

locality to take possession of the land at once, to carry out these measures as systematically as possible, permitting in no circumstances any destruction of property, and using every effort to increase the production of grain and meat, for our soldiers at the front are suffering terribly from hunger. The Constituent Assembly will work out the final laws with regard to the soil. Preliminary regulations must, however, be made by the local institutions at once, before the spring sowing; for our Provisional Government, the government of the landowners and capitalists, is postponing calling the Constituent Assembly and has not yet announced the date for which it will be summoned.

The provisional land measures can be taken only by the local institutions. The cultivation of the fields is absolutely essential. The majority of the resident peasants will know how best to administer and work the soil systematically. This is necessary in order to improve the provisioning of the soldiers at the front. For this reason it is out of the question to wait until the Constituent Assembly is called. We do not in any way dispute the right of the Constituent Assembly to determine in detail the final laws regarding the handing over of the land to the whole people and the forms of its administration. For the time being, however, now, this spring, the peasants on the spot must themselves take the initiative. The soldiers at the front can and must send delegates to the villages.

Further, a close alliance between the urban proletariat and the poorest peasants (semi-proletarians) is necessary if the whole land is to be placed in the hands of the toilers. Without such an alliance it is impossible to defeat the capitalists, and unless they are defeated the transfer of the land into the hands of the people will not save the people from distress. The soil cannot be eaten, and it is impossible, without money, without means, to get hold of tools, cattle and seed for the sowing. The peasants must not put their trust in the capitalists nor in the rich peasants (for they are capitalists too), but only in the urban proletariat. Only in alliance with the latter, can the poor peasants insist on the lands, the railways, the banks and the factories being recognised as the property of all toilers; without such measures the mere handing over of the land to the people will not remove misery and distress.

In some districts of Russia the workers are introducing a kind of

supervision (control) of the factories. This supervision on the part of the workers greatly benefits the peasants, for in this way production is increased and the goods become cheaper. The peasants, to the best of their ability, must support this action of the workers, and refuse to believe the calumnies spread by the capitalists concerning the workers.

The second question is that of the war.

This war is a war of conquest. The capitalists of all countries are carrying it on in order to make conquests and to increase their own profits. This war can and will bring nothing but destruction, horror, devastation and brutalisation to the working people. That is why our Party, the Party of the class-conscious workers and the poorest peasants, condemns this war positively and unqualifiedly; it refuses to support the capitalists of one country against those of another; it refuses to support the capitalists of any country. It attempts to bring about a speedy end of the war by overthrowing the capitalists in all countries, by kindling the proletarian world revolution.

Ten of the Ministers in our present new Provisional Government belong to the parties of the large landowners and capitalists, six to the parties of the "Narodniks" ("Socialist-Revolutionaries") and the "Mensheviks." In our opinion, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are committing a serious and fatal mistake in taking part in a government of the capitalists and altogether consenting to support it. Men like Tsereteli and Chernov hope to persuade the capitalists to put an end to this criminal war of conquest as soon and as honestly as possible. The leaders of the Narodniks and the Mensheviks, however, are in error; for, in reality, they are helping the capitalists to prepare a new offensive against Germany, which means that they are helping prolong the war and to multiply tenfold the terrible sufferings of the Russian people caused by the war.

We are convinced that the capitalists of all countries are deceiving the people; they promise an early and a just peace, and nevertheless they prolong the war of conquest. The Russian capitalists, who were supreme in the old Provisional Government and who have the new government in their hands, even refused to publish the secret predatory treaties concluded by the former Tsar, Nicholas Romanov, with the capitalists of England, France and other countries—treaties from which it is evident that he intended to rob the Turks of Con-

stantinople, the Austrians of Galicia, the Turks of Armenia, etc. The Provisional Government has ratified and is continuing to ratify these treaties. In the opinion of our Party, these treaties are just as criminal and predatory as are those of the German criminal capitalists and their bandit Kaiser Wilhelm and his accomplices.

The blood of the workers and peasants must not flow in order that these predatory aims of the capitalists be realised.

This terrible war must be terminated as soon as possible—not by a separate peace with Germany but by a general peace, not by a peace concluded by the capitalists, but by one forced on the capitalists by the working masses. There is only one way to do this, that of transferring the whole power of the state into the hands of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies in Russia and other countries. Such Soviets alone are capable of putting an end to the frauds of the capitalists and of preventing the capitalists from prolonging the war.

This brings me to the third and last question I raised, that of the form of government.

Russia must be a democratic republic. Even the majority of the landowners and capitalists agree to this,—they who were always in favour of the monarchy, but have now realised that the people of Russia will never permit the monarchy to be re-established. The capitalists are now exerting every effort to make the republic resemble a monarchy as closely as possible, so that, at any given moment, the monarchy can be restored (we have examples enough of this sort of thing in many countries). For this reason, the capitalists wish to maintain the officialdom which is to be *above* the people; they wish to maintain the police and standing army which is to be separated from the people and under the command of generals and officers. Unless, however, the generals and officers are chosen by the people, they will certainly be recruited from the class of capitalists and landowners. This we know from the experiences of all the republics in the world.

Our Party, the Party of the class-conscious workers and poorest peasants, is therefore aiming at a different kind of democratic republic. We aim at a republic in which there is no police hostile to the people, in which all officials, from the highest to the lowest, are elected and are liable to be dismissed at any time if the people

demand it, their salary not being higher than the wages of a skilled worker. We demand that the officers in the army be elected and that the standing army which is alien to the people and is commanded by a class hostile to the people, should be replaced by a general arming of the people, by a people's militia.

We aim at a republic in which the whole power of the state, from top to bottom, belongs exclusively and entirely to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

The workers and peasants form the majority of the population. Power must belong to them, not to the landowners and capitalists.

The workers and peasants form the majority of the population. Power and administration must be entrusted to *their Soviets* and not to the officials.

These are our views, comrades, peasant delegates! We are firmly convinced that experience will soon show the broad masses that the policy of the Narodniks and the Mensheviks is wrong. The masses will soon learn from experience that the salvation of Russia, which is on the edge of a precipice just as are Germany and the other belligerent countries, that the rescue of the peoples, tortured by the war, cannot be achieved by working in common with the capitalists. All peoples can be saved only if the power of the state is transferred into the hands of the majority of the population.

*Soldatskaia Pravda, May 24, 1917.*

## J. Stalin

### THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

THE elections for the District Dumas are approaching. The lists of candidates have been adopted and published. The election campaign is in full swing.

Candidates are being put up by the most diverse "parties," genuine and false, old and newly-baked, real and toy parties. Alongside the C.D.\* Party, there is the "Party of Honesty, Responsibility and

\* Constitutional-Democrats; also known as the Party of People's Freedom. Commonly referred to as the Cadets.—Ed.



Justice"; alongside the "Yedinstvo" group and the Bund there is the "party slightly to the left of the C.D."; alongside the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionary defencists there are all sorts of "non-party" and "above party" groups. The fantastic medley of colour of the flags is indescribable.

The first election meetings already show that the issue of the campaign is not municipal "reform" by itself, but the general political situation in the country. Municipal reform is merely the background against which the principal political platforms naturally unfold.

This is understandable. Today, when the war has brought the country to the verge of collapse, when the interests of the majority of the population demand revolutionary intervention in the whole economic life of the country, and when the Provisional Government is obviously incapable of leading the country out of the *impasse*, all local questions, including municipal questions, can be understood and decided only in inseparable connexion with the general questions of war and peace, of revolution and counter-revolution. Without this connexion with general politics, the municipal election campaign would degenerate into empty chatter about tin-plating wash-basins and "building good lavatories" (see the platform of the Defencist-Mensheviks).

This is why in this medley of innumerable party flags two main political lines will inevitably force their way in the course of the campaign: the line of the further development of the revolution, and the line of counter-revolution.

The stronger the campaign, the sharper will party criticism become, the sharper will these two lines stand out, the more intolerable will become the position of the intermediate groups which are striving to reconcile the irreconcilable, the clearer will it become to all that the defencists among the Mensheviks and Narodniks who are sitting between revolution and counter-revolution are actually hindering the revolution, are helping the cause of counter-revolution.

*The Party of "People's Freedom."* Since the overthrow of tsarism the parties of the Right have scattered. This is due to the fact that their existence in their old form became inexpedient. What has be-

come of them? They have gathered around the party of so-called "People's Freedom," around the party of Milyukov and Co.

Milyukov's party is now the party of the most extreme Right. This is a fact which nobody disputes. And precisely for this reason this party is now the rallying point of the counter-revolutionary forces.

Milyukov's party is in favour of curbing the peasants, for it is in favour of suppressing the agrarian movement.

Milyukov's party is in favour of curbing the workers, for it is opposed to the workers' "excessive" demands; and it declares all the serious demands of the workers to be "excessive."

Milyukov's party is in favour of curbing the soldiers, for it is in favour of "iron discipline," i.e., of restoring the rule of the officers over the soldiers.

Milyukov's party is in favour of the predatory war which has brought the country to the verge of collapse and ruin.

Milyukov's party is in favour of "resolute measures" against the revolution; it is "resolutely" opposed to the people's freedom, although it calls itself the Party of "People's Freedom"....

Is there any hope that such a party will restore the municipal economy in the interests of the poor strata of the population?

Can it be entrusted with the fate of the city?

Never! Not under any circumstances!

Our watchword is: no confidence in Milyukov's party; not a single vote for the party of "People's Freedom"!

*The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks).* Our party is the very opposite of the C.D. Party. The Cadets are the party of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and landlords. Our party is the party of the revolutionary workers of town and country. These are two irreconcilable parties; the victory of one means the defeat of the other. Our demands are well known. Our path is clear.

We are opposed to the present war because it is a predatory war, a war of conquest.

We are in favour of peace, a general and democratic peace, because such a peace provides the surest way out of economic chaos and food shortage.

There are complaints that there is not enough bread in the towns. But there is no bread because the sown area has diminished owing to the shortage of labour which has been "driven off" to the war. There is no bread because there are no means of transporting even the supplies that are available, for the railways are occupied for war purposes. Stop the war and you will have bread.

There are complaints about the shortage of manufactured goods in the rural districts. But the manufactured goods have disappeared because the majority of the factories are engaged on war production. Stop the war and you will have manufactured goods.

We are opposed to the present government because, by calling for an offensive, it is prolonging the war and aggravating chaos and famine.

We are opposed to the present government because, while protecting the profits of the capitalists, it is hindering the revolutionary intervention of the workers in the economic life of the country.

We are opposed to the present government because, by hindering the peasant committees in disposing of the landlords' land, it is hindering the liberation of the rural districts from landlord rule.

We are opposed to the government because, by starting the "business" by withdrawing the revolutionary troops from Petrograd, and proceeding now to withdraw the revolutionary workers (unloading Petrograd!), it is dooming the revolution to impotence.

We are opposed to the present government because, in general, it is incapable of leading the country out of the crisis.

We are in favour of all power being transferred to the hands of the revolutionary workers, soldiers and peasants.

Only such a power can put an end to the long drawn-out predatory war. Only such a power can lay hands on the profits of the capitalists and landlords for the purpose of advancing the revolution and of saving the country from utter collapse.

Lastly, we are opposed to the restoration of the police force, the old, hated police force, which was divorced from the people and was subordinated to "ranks" appointed from above.

We are in favour of a universal, elected and recallable militia; for only such a militia can serve as a bulwark of the people's interests.

Such are our immediate demands.

We assert that unless these demands are carried out, unless a fight is made for these demands, not a single serious municipal reform, no democratisation of municipal economy, is conceivable.

Whoever wants to ensure bread for the people, whoever wants to abolish the housing crisis, whoever wants to impose municipal taxes only on the rich, whoever wants to see these reforms carried out in actual practice and not merely in words, must vote for those who are opposed to the war of conquest, who are opposed to the government of landlords and capitalists, who are opposed to the restoration of the police force, who are in favour of a democratic peace, of transferring power to the hands of the people itself, of a people's militia, of the real democratisation of municipal economy.

Without these conditions "radical municipal reform" is a hollow sound.

*The Defencist bloc.* Between the C.D. and our Party there are a number of intermediate groups which are oscillating between revolution and counter-revolution. These are: the "Yedinstvo" group, the Bund, the defencists among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Trudoviks, the Popular "Socialists." In some districts they are putting up their candidates separately, but in others they have formed a *bloc* and have put up a joint ticket. Against whom have they formed this *bloc*? Ostensibly against the C.D. But is this actually the case?

The first thing that strikes one is the complete absence of underlying principles for this *bloc*. What is there in common, for example, between the radical-bourgeois Trudovik group and the group of Menshevik-Defencists who regard themselves as "Marxists" and "Socialists"? Since when have the Trudoviks, who preach war until victory is achieved, become the comrades-in-arms of the Mensheviks and Bundists who call themselves "opponents of the war" and "Zimmerwaldists"?... And Plekhanov's "Yedinstvo" group, the very Plekhanov who even in the epoch of tsarism furlled the flag of the International and definitely took his stand under an alien flag, under the yellow flag of imperialism—what is there in common between this inveterate chauvinist and, say, the "Zimmerwaldist" Tsereteli, the honorary chairman of the Defencist-Menshevik Conference? Is it so long since Plekhanov called for support for the

tsarist government in the war against Germany and since the "Zimmerwaldist" Tsereteli "fiercely attacked" the chauvinist Plekhanov for this? The war between *Yedinstvo* and *Rabochaya Gazeta* is at its height; but these, pretending that they see nothing, are already beginning to "fraternise."...

Such mixed elements could form only a casual *bloc* without any underlying principle; not principle, but fear of defeat prompted them to form the *bloc*. Is it not so?

The next thing that strikes one is the fact that in two districts, the Kazan and Spass districts (see list of candidates) the "*Yedinstvo*" group, the Bund and the defencists among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are not putting up any candidates, but the District Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in those districts, and only in those districts, are putting forward candidates, contrary to the decision of the Executive Committee. Evidently, our brave *bloc*-ites, fearing defeat at the elections, preferred to hide behind the back of the District Soviet and decided to utilise the prestige of the latter. It is amusing to note that these honourable gentlemen who boast about their "responsibility" lacked the courage to come out with open visor; they timidly preferred to escape "responsibility."...

But what, after all, united all these different groups in one *bloc*?

The fact that all of them equally diffidently, but continuously follow in the footsteps of the Cadets; that they equally definitely dislike our Party.

All of them, like the Cadets, are in favour of the war, not for conquest (God forbid!) but for a... "peace without annexations and indemnities." War for peace....

All of them, like the Cadets, are in favour of "iron discipline," not to curb the soldiers (of course not!), but in the interests... of the soldiers themselves....

All of them, like the Cadets, are in favour of an offensive, not in the interests of the Anglo-French bankers (God forbid!) but in the interests... of "our young freedom."

All of them, like the Cadets, are opposed to the "anarchist strivings of the workers to occupy the factories" (see *Rabochaya Gazeta* for May 21), not in the interests of the capitalists (perish the thought!), but to prevent the capitalists from being frightened away from the revolution, i.e., in the interests of the... revolution.

In general, they are all in favour of the revolution, but only to the extent (to the extent!) that it does not frighten the capitalists and landlords, to the extent that it does not run counter to the latter's interests.

In short: they are all in favour of the same practical steps that the Cadets are in favour of, but with reservations and catchwords about "freedom," "revolution," etc.

But as words and catchwords remain mere words, it follows that in fact they are pursuing the same line as the Cadets.

Their phrases about freedom and socialism merely conceal their Cadet nature.

And precisely for this reason their *bloc* is directed, not against the counter-revolutionary Cadets, but against the revolutionary workers, against the *bloc* between our Party, the Inter-Regionalists and the revolutionary Mensheviks.

After what has been said, can we expect these near-Cadet gentlemen to be capable of restoring and reorganising our dislocated municipal economy?

How can they be entrusted with the fate of the poor strata of the population when they are hourly trampling upon the interests of this population, supporting the predatory war and the government of the capitalists and landlords?

In order to democratise our municipal economy, to ensure food and houses for the population, to free the poor from municipal taxes and to transfer the burden of taxation to the rich, the policy of compromise must be abandoned, hands must be laid on the profits of the capitalists and houseowners. Is it not clear that the moderate gentlemen of the defencist *bloc* who are afraid of rousing the ire of the bourgeoisie are incapable of taking such revolutionary steps? . . .

In the present Petrograd Duma there is the so-called "Socialist Municipal Group," consisting mainly of defencist Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. This group set up a "finance committee" for the purpose of drawing up "immediate measures" for the restoration of the municipal economy. And what happened? These "restorators" arrived at the conclusion that in order to democratise the municipal economy it was necessary (1) "to increase the water tax"; (2) "to increase street-car fares." "It was decided to refer

the question of charging soldiers for riding on the street-cars to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies" (see *Novaya-Zhizn* [*New Life*], No. 26). Evidently the members of the committee had the idea of making the soldiers pay for riding on the street-cars, but dared not do this without the soldiers' consent.

Instead of abolishing taxes for the poor, the honourable members of the committee decided to increase them, not even sparing the soldiers!

These are examples of the municipal practices of the defencists among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

Pompous phrases and loud "municipal platforms" to cover up the miserable municipal practices of the defencists. Is it not so? So it was and so it will be. . . .

And the more cleverly they conceal themselves behind phrases about "freedom" and "revolution" the more determinedly and ruthlessly must they be fought.

To tear the Socialist mask from the defencist *bloc*; to bring its bourgeois Cadet nature to light—such is one of the immediate tasks of the present campaign.

No support for the defencist *bloc*; no confidence in the gentlemen of this *bloc*!

The workers must understand that those who are not for them are against them, that the defencist *bloc* is not for them, consequently, it is against them.

*The non-party groups.* Of all the bourgeois groups who are putting forward their own candidates, the most indefinite position is occupied by the non-party groups. There are not a few of these non-party groups; there is a heap of them, nearly thirty in all. They seem to have roped in everybody. "The United House Committees" and the "Educational Establishment Employees Group"; the "Non-Party Business Group" and the "Non-Party Electors Group"; the "House Administration Group" and the "Apartment Owners Society"; the "Above Party Republican Group" and the "Equal Rights for Women League"; the "Engineers' Union Group" and the "Commercial and Industry Union"; the "Honesty, Responsibility and Justice Group" and the "Democratic Construction Group"; the

Freedom and Order Group" and other groups—such is the motley picture of non-party confusion.

Who are they, where do they come from, and whither are they steering?

They are all bourgeois groups. The majority of them consist of merchants, manufacturers, houseowners, people belonging to the "free professions," intellectuals.

They have no program based on principles. The electors will never know what these groups which are soliciting ordinary people's votes are striving for.

They have no municipal platform. The electors will never know what improvements they demand in the sphere of municipal economy and why they should really vote for them.

They have no past, because they did not exist in the past.

They have no future, because they will disappear after the elections like last year's snow.

They sprang up only during the elections, and are living only at this moment, as long as the elections last: their aim is to get into the District Duma somehow and after that they don't care a hang what happens.

They are programless groups of bourgeois who fear the light and truth, and who are striving to smuggle their candidates into the District Dumas.

Dark are their aims, dark is their path.

What justifies the existence of these groups?

One can understand the existence of non-party groups in the past, under tsarism, when belonging to a party, belonging to a Left party, was ruthlessly punished by the "law"; when many people had to come out as non-party in order to avoid arrest and persecution; when being non-party served as a shield against the tsarist laws. But now, when the maximum of freedom prevails, when every party can come out openly and freely without fear of prosecution, when party definiteness and the open struggle of political parties have become a commandment and condition for the political education of the masses, how can the existence of non-party groups be justified? What are they afraid of; from whom are they hiding their real faces?

There is no doubt that many of the electors have not yet assim-



lated the programs of the political parties, that the political conservatism and backwardness bequeathed by tsarism is hindering the clarification of their minds. But is it not clear that being non-party and without a program only serves to strengthen and legitimatise this backwardness and conservativeness? Who would dare to deny that the open and honest struggle between political parties is a most important means of rousing the masses and of quickening their political activity?

Again: what are these non-party groups afraid of? Why do they shun the light? From whom are they really hiding? What is the secret?

The point is that under the conditions at present prevailing in Russia, with the rapid development of the revolution and the maximum of freedom, when the masses are becoming politically mature daily and hourly, it becomes extremely risky for the bourgeoisie to come out openly. To come out with an avowed bourgeois platform under such conditions means courting certain defeat in the eyes of the masses. The only way of "saving the situation" is to don the non-party mask and pretend to be an innocent group like the "Honesty, Responsibility and Justice Group." This is so convenient for fishing in troubled waters. There is no doubt that behind the flag of the non-party tickets are concealed the Cadet and Cadet-like bourgeois who are afraid to come out with open visor and are trying to smuggle themselves into the District Dumas. It is characteristic that among them there is not a single proletarian group; that all these non-party groups are recruited from the ranks of the bourgeoisie, and only from these ranks.

And undoubtedly they will be able to catch in their net not a few confiding simpletons among the electors unless they meet with a proper rebuff from the revolutionary elements.

This is the whole secret.

Hence, the "*non-party*" danger is one of the most real dangers in the present municipal election campaign.

Hence, to tear the non-party mask from their faces, to compel them to reveal their real faces so as to enable the masses to appraise them properly is one of the most important tasks of our campaign.

Down with the non-party masks! Long live clarity and definiteness of political line! Such is our watchword.

Comrades! The elections take place tomorrow. March to the ballot boxes in serried ranks and vote unanimously for the Bolshevik ticket!

Not a single vote for the Cadets, the enemies of the Russian Revolution!

Not a single vote for the defencists, the advocates of compromise with the Cadets!

Not a single vote for the non-party groups, the concealed friends of your enemies!

*Pravda*, June 3, 6, and 8, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### SPEECH ON THE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, AT THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS, JUNE 17, 1917

COMRADES! In the short time allotted to me, I am able—and I deem it more advisable—to dwell only on those questions of fundamental principle that have been brought up by the speaker from the Executive Committee and by the speakers that followed him.

The first fundamental question we have been confronted with is this: *Where* are we? What are these Soviets that have assembled here in an All-Russian Congress? What is this revolutionary democracy that has been discussed here so endlessly as to conceal the speakers' ignorance of its meaning and their absolute abandonment of its principles? For to speak of revolutionary democracy before the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and to overlook the nature of the latter, its class composition, its part in the revolution, to say nothing about this and still claim to be democrats—is rather strange! One shows us a programme for a bourgeois parliamentary republic, the kind known all over Western Europe; one shows us a programme of reforms, the kind accepted now by all bourgeois governments—and still one speaks of revolutionary democracy!

To whom does one say it? To the Soviets. Let me ask you this: Is there any European country, bourgeois, democratic or republican, where anything resembling our Soviets exists? Your answer is

bound to be—no. There is no other place where such institutions do or can exist, and for this reason: there can be *either* a bourgeois government with such reform “plans” as have been exhibited to us here and as have dozens of times been proposed in all countries only to remain on paper; or an institution like the one we are now appealing to, a new type of “government,” created by the revolution and having its prototypes in the history of the greatest revolutionary upheavals, as, for example, in France in 1792 and 1871, in Russia in 1905. The Soviets are an institution that does not and cannot exist within, or alongside of, the ordinary bourgeois-parliamentary state. They are the new, the more democratic type of state which we in our party resolutions call the workers’ and peasants’ democratic republic, where all authority should belong to the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies. Vain is the thought that this is only a theoretical question, vain is the attempt to regard this matter as something that can be easily side-tracked, vain is the argument that we have at the present moment certain institutions of certain kinds existing side by side with the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies. Yes, they do exist side by side. But this is just the cause of an unheard-of number of misunderstandings, conflicts and frictions. This is just the thing that is pulling the Russian Revolution from its initial ascent, from its first forward movement, down to stagnation, back to the reaction now observable in our coalition government and its entire domestic and foreign policy connected with the impending imperialist offensive.

It is one thing or the other: either we have an ordinary bourgeois government—then there is no need for peasants’, workers’, soldiers’, or any other kind of Soviets, then they will be dispersed by the generals, the counter-revolutionary generals, who control the army, paying no heed whatever to Minister Kerensky’s oratory, then they will die an ignominious death otherwise—or we have a real government of the Soviets. There is no other way open for these institutions; they can neither go backward nor remain in the same place if they are to live; they can only exist going forward. Here is a type of state not of the Russian’s invention but created by the revolution itself which could not be victorious in any other way. Friction, party struggle for power within the All-Russian Soviet are inevitable. But that will mean that the masses themselves are

overcoming possible errors and illusions through their own political experience (*Noise*) and not through reports by Ministers who quote what they said yesterday, what they are going to write to-morrow and what they are going to promise the day after to-morrow. This, comrades, is ridiculous, if one looks at things from the point of view of this institution which sprang from the revolution itself and is now facing the question: to be or not to be. The Soviets cannot continue to exist as they exist now. Adult people, workers and peasants, must come together, pass resolutions, listen to reports, without being able to verify them by studying the original documents! Institutions of this kind are a transition to a republic which, in deeds, not in words, will establish a firm power without police, without a standing army—the kind of power that cannot as yet exist in Europe, that is, however, indispensable for a victory of the Russian Revolution if we mean by it a victory over the landowners, a victory over imperialism.

Without such a power, we cannot even dream of ourselves ever gaining such a victory; and the more we ponder the programme that is being urged upon us here, and the facts confronting us, the more crying appears the basic contradiction. We have been told by the main speaker and the other orators that the first Provisional Government was no good! But when the Bolsheviki, the ill-fated Bolsheviki, said: "Neither support nor confidence to this government," how many accusations of "anarchism" were hurled against us. Now everybody says that the former government was bad, but what about the coalition government of near-Socialist Ministers? Wherein does it differ from the former one? Has not there been enough talk about programmes and projects? Haven't we had enough of it? Isn't it high time to get down to work? A whole month has passed since the coalition government was formed on the nineteenth of May. Look at the state of affairs, see the economic chaos spreading in Russia and in the other countries involved in this imperialist war!

How can this chaos be accounted for? Capitalist depredation. Here we have real anarchy! This is evident from admissions published not by our paper, not, God forbid, by a Bolshevik sheet, but by the ministerial *Rabochaya Gazeta*. It appears that prices on coal contracts have been raised by the "revolutionary government." The

coalition government has made no change in this respect, either. We are told that it is impossible to introduce socialism in Russia, to make radical changes at once; this, comrades, is an idle excuse. The doctrine of Marx and Engels, as they themselves always expounded it, is: "Our teaching is not a dogma, but a guide to action." Pure capitalism transformed into pure socialism does not and cannot exist anywhere in time of war. What does exist is something intermediate, something new, unheard-of, caused by the fact that hundreds of millions of people, drawn into this criminal war among the capitalists, are perishing. It is not a question of promising reforms—these are empty words; it is a question of taking the step that must be taken now.

If you wish to refer to "revolutionary" democracy, then please differentiate between this conception and that of *reformist* democracy under a capitalist cabinet, for it is high time we passed from phrases about "revolutionary democracy," from mutual congratulations upon "revolutionary democracy," to a class characterisation as taught by Marxism and scientific socialism in general. What we are offered is a reformist democracy under a capitalist cabinet. This may be excellent from the point of view of the ordinary patterns of Western Europe. Now, however, a number of countries are on the verge of ruin, and those practical measures, which, according to the preceding orator, citizen-Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, are so complicated that it is difficult to introduce them, that they need special study,—those measures are perfectly clear. He said that there is no political party in Russia that would express willingness to take all state power into its hands. I say: "Such a party exists! No party has a right to refuse power, and our party does not refuse it. Our party is ready at any moment to take all power into its hands." (*Applause, laughter.*)

You may laugh, but if the citizen-Minister confronts us with this question side by side with a party of the Right, he will receive the proper reply. No party has a right to refuse power. At the present time while we will have freedom, while the threats of arrest and Siberian exile, made by the counter-revolutionists with whom our near-Socialist Ministers sit in one cabinet, are only threats as yet—at this moment each party should say: give us your confidence, and we shall give you our programme.

Our Conference of May 12 gave such a programme. Unfortunately, one does not reckon with it, one is not guided by it. Apparently it needs a more popular presentation. I shall try to give to the citizen-Minister of Posts and Telegraphs a popular explanation of our resolutions, our programme. With regard to the economic crisis, our programme demands that all the unheard-of profits, reaching 500-800 per cent, which the capitalists get, not in the open market, under conditions of "pure" capitalism, but on army contracts, be immediately made public, without any delay. This is exactly where workers' control is needed and possible! This is exactly the kind of measure which you, who claim to be "revolutionary" democrats, must carry out in the name of the Soviet, and which can be carried out within a day or two. This is not socialism. It simply means opening the eyes of the people to the real anarchy, to the imperialist game that is being played with the people's wealth, with hundreds of thousands of lives which are to perish to-morrow as a result of our continued oppression of Galicia. Make the profits of the capitalists known, imprison 50 or 100 of the biggest millionaires. It would be sufficient to keep them a few weeks under the same conditions as Nicholas Romanov, to make them disclose all the wire-pulling, the fraudulent transactions, the filth, the greed that cost our country even under the new government thousands and millions of rubles daily. This is the basic cause of anarchy and ruin, this is why we say: everything with us has remained as of old, the coalition cabinet has changed nothing, it has only added a heap of declarations and pretty pronouncements. However sincere these people be, however sincerely they might wish for the toilers' welfare, matters have remained unchanged—the *same class* has remained in power. The policy that is being carried on now is not a democratic policy.

We are being told of the "democratisation of the central and local governments." Is it possible that you do not know that these words are new only in Russia, and that in other countries dozens of near-Socialist Ministers have been giving their countries similar promises? What value have they in face of a concrete fact like this: while local populations elect their own government, the ABC of democracy is being destroyed by the pretensions of the central government to the right of appointing or confirming local officials.

Capitalist depredation of the people's wealth is still going on. The imperialist war is still going on, while we are being promised reforms, reforms and reforms, which cannot at all be realised within the present framework, for the war crushes, weighs down everything, determines everything. Why do you not agree with those who maintain that the war is *not* fought for capitalist profits? What is the criterion? The criterion is, first of all: which class is in power, which class continues to rule, which class continues to make hundreds of millions in banking and financial operations? The same old capitalist class does it, and the war therefore continues to be an imperialist war. Both the first Provisional Government and the government embracing near-Socialist Ministers have changed nothing. The secret treaties are still secret. Russia is fighting for the Straits, for a continuation of Liakhov's policy in Persia, etc.

I know that you do not want these things, that the majority of you do not want them, that the Ministers do not want them, because it is impossible to want them, because they mean the slaughter of hundreds of millions of people. But look at the offensive, so much talked of now by the Milyukovs and Maklakovs. They understand perfectly well what it is in essence. They know that the offensive is tied up with the question of power, with the question of the revolution. We are told to distinguish between politics and war strategy. It is ridiculous even to bring this up. The Cadets know full well that this is a political question.

That the revolutionary struggle for peace begun from below may lead to a separate peace is sheer calumny. Our first step, were we in power, would be to arrest the biggest capitalists, to sever all the threads of their intrigues. Unless this is done, all talk about peace without annexations and indemnities is sheer piffle. Our second act would be to address ourselves to all peoples, over the heads of their governments, and to tell them that we consider all capitalists as robbers: both Tereschenko (who is not a whit better than Milyukov, only a little more foolish) and the capitalists of France, England and all other countries.

Your own *Izvestia* [News] is off the track, for instead of peace without annexations and indemnities it proposes the *status quo*. No, it is not thus that we understand peace "without annexations." Much nearer the truth in this respect is the Peasant Congress, which

speaks of a "federated" republic, thereby expressing the idea that the Russian republic does not wish to oppress any people either in the old or in the new way, that it does not wish to live on a basis of violence either with our own people, or with Finland, or with the Ukraine, with which countries our War Minister quarrels for no reason, creating inadmissible and unforgivable conflicts. We want a single indivisible Russian republic, with a firm government, but firm government can be achieved only through the consent of the peoples. "Revolutionary democracy" are big words, but we are applying them to a government which by petty annoyances is complicating the situation with the Ukraine and Finland, which do not even wish to break away, which merely say: "Do not postpone the application of the ABC of democracy until the Constituent Assembly!"

Peace without annexations and indemnities cannot be concluded unless you yourselves renounce your own annexations. This is simply ridiculous, it is a joke! The workers of Europe laugh at it, they say: "In words they are eloquent, they call upon the nations to overthrow the bankers, but they themselves put their native bankers into the cabinet." Arrest them, expose their tricks, uncover their machinations! You do not do this, although you have the organisations of power which cannot be resisted. You have lived through the years of 1905 and 1917, you know that a revolution is not made to order, that revolutions in other countries have proceeded along the hard and bloody road of insurrection, while in Russia there is no such group, there is no such class that could offer resistance to the authority of the Soviets. In Russia this revolution is possible, by way of exception, as a peaceful revolution. Let our revolution offer this day peace to all the peoples by way of a breach with all the capitalist classes, and within the shortest time we would receive the consent of the peoples of Germany, as well as of France, because these countries are perishing, because the situation of Germany is hopeless, because it cannot save itself, because France...

(CHAIRMAN: *Your time is up.*)

I'll be through in half a minute... (*Noise, requests that the speech be continued, protests, applause.*)

(CHAIRMAN: *The presidium proposes to the Congress that the*



*time of the speaker be extended. Any objections? The majority is for extending the time.)*

I have maintained that if revolutionary democracy in Russia were democratic in deeds and not merely in words, then, instead of entering into an agreement with the capitalists, it would move the revolution forward; instead of talking about peace without annexations and indemnities, it would abolish annexations within Russia and declare directly that it regarded all annexations as criminal and predatory. Then would it be possible to avoid the imperialist offensive which, to achieve the division of Persia and the Balkans, threatens to ruin thousands and millions of people. Then would the road to peace be open. We do not say that it would be an easy road; no, it would not exclude a real revolutionary war.

We do not put this question the way Bazarov puts it in to-day's *Novaya Zhizn*. All we say is that Russia has been placed in such a position that its tasks toward the end of the imperialist war are easier than they may seem. Russia is so situated geographically that powers venturing to attack the Russian working class and its semi-proletarian ally, the poorest peasantry, in the name of capital and its predatory interests—powers undertaking such a step—would encounter an exceedingly difficult problem. Germany is on the brink of ruin, and since America which wants to gobble up Mexico, and will to-morrow probably wage a struggle against Japan, has entered the war, Germany's situation is hopeless: Germany will be destroyed by France which is so placed geographically that she suffers most and her exhaustion has reached the limit. France may be less hungry than Germany, but in human material she has lost incomparably more. Under such conditions, had your first step been to curb the profits of the Russian capitalists and to deprive them of the opportunity of raking in hundreds of millions; had you offered peace to *all* peoples against the capitalists of *all* countries thereby announcing that you refused to enter into any negotiations or dealings with the German capitalists or with any one who directly or indirectly approved of them or hob-nobbed with them, that you refused to have any relations with the French and English capitalists—then this would have been an indictment of the capitalists before the workers. You would not have regarded as a victory the issuance of a passport to MacDonald, a man who has never carried on a

revolutionary struggle against capitalism, and who is permitted to pass because he has never expressed the ideas, or principles, or practice, or experience of that revolutionary struggle against the English capitalists for which our Comrade MacLean and hundreds of other English Socialists are in prison, for which our Comrade Liebknecht, who said, "German soldiers, fight against your Kaiser!" has been sentenced to hard labour.

Would it not be more proper to put the imperialist capitalists into the same prisons which the majority of the members of the Provisional Government, together with the Third—but I really do not know whether it is the Third or the Fourth—Duma especially re-established for that purpose, have daily been threatening with and preparing? And are they not busily engaged in writing laws for that purpose in the Ministry of Justice? MacLean and Liebknecht—these are names of Socialists who put the idea of revolutionary struggle against imperialism into life. This is what we ought to say to all governments, if we want to fight for peace! We must indict them before the peoples. Thus could you place all the imperialist governments in an embarrassing position. Now it is you who have become embarrassed when on March 27 you said to the people in a proclamation: "Overthrow your tsars, your kings and your bankers," while you yourselves, being in possession of such an extraordinary organisation, rich in numbers, in experience, in material strength, as the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, are forming a bloc with your bankers, forming a coalition near-Socialist government, writing projects for reforms such as Europe has been writing for many decades. Over there, in Europe, they laugh at such struggles for peace! There they will understand us only when the Soviets seize power and act in a revolutionary manner.

Only one country in the world will be able to take steps toward stopping the imperialist war immediately through class means, in opposition to the capitalists, without a bloody revolution—only one country, and that is Russia. It will be in such a position as long as the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies exists. The latter cannot long exist beside a Provisional Government of the ordinary type. It will exist as hitherto only until the offensive has become a fact. For the offensive constitutes a break in the entire policy of

the Russian Revolution: it means transition from the policy of waiting, of preparing peace through a revolutionary uprising from below, to a renewal of the war. We have had in mind another transition: from fraternisation on one front to fraternisation on all fronts, from spontaneous fraternisation where people give a crust of bread to a starved German proletarian in exchange for a penknife—for which exchange they are threatened with hard labour—to fraternisation that is consciously planned—this is the road that suggested itself.

When we seize power we shall curb the capitalists, then the war will be entirely *different* from the one now waged—for the nature of a war is determined by the class that conducts it, and not by what is written on scraps of paper. Anything can be written on scraps of paper. But as long as the capitalist class has a majority in the government, the war will remain an imperialist war, no matter what you write, no matter how eloquent you are, no matter how many near-Socialist Ministers you may have. This everybody knows and everybody sees. In fact, the example of Albania, the examples of Greece and Persia have shown it so clearly, so palpably, that I am astonished to see everybody attacking our written declaration concerning the offensive, while nobody says a word about concrete examples! Promises of projects are easily made, while concrete measures are continually postponed. Declarations about peace without annexations are easily written, yet the cases of Albania, Greece and Persia have occurred *after* the coalition cabinet had come into life. It was in reference to these cases that the *Dyelo Naroda* [*People's Cause*], an organ not of our Party, an organ of the government, an organ of the cabinet, said that Russian democracy is being made sport of, that Greece is being stifled. That very Milyukov whom you picture to be God knows what—he is a rank and file member of his party, and Tereshchenko in no way differs from him—has written that Allied diplomacy pressed on Greece. The war remains an imperialist war and, however great your desire for peace, however sincere your sympathy with the toilers, however sincere your desire for peace—and I am fully convinced that, with the masses, it can be nothing but sincere—you are powerless because the war cannot be terminated except by a further development of the revolution. When the revolution started in Russia, the revolu-

tionary struggle for peace started from below. Were you to take power into your hands, were the revolutionary organisations to seize power for the purpose of waging a struggle upon the Russian capitalists, then the toilers of the other countries would trust you, then you would be able to offer peace. Then our peace would be secure, at least on two flanks, with respect to two peoples, Germany and France, both of which are bleeding to death and are in desperate straits. Should conditions have forced us then into a revolutionary war—nobody knows whether it would be so, nor do we forswear it—our answer would be: "We are no pacifists, we do not refuse to wage war once the revolutionary class is at the helm, once it has actually removed the capitalists from having any influence on the situation, once they cannot aggravate economic ruin which allowed them to make hundreds of millions in profits." The revolutionary power would then proclaim to all the peoples of the world the right of every people to be free; it would make clear that just as the German people has no right to wage war in order to retain Alsace-Lorraine so has the French people no right to wage war in order to retain its colonies. For if France fights for its colonies, then Russia has Khiva and Bokhara, also something in the nature of colonies, and the distribution of colonies begins. But how distribute them? According to what norm? Power. But power has changed; the capitalists find themselves in a situation where they have no way out except war. When you seize revolutionary power, you will have a revolutionary road to peace: you will turn to the peoples with a revolutionary appeal, you will make your tactics understood by your example. By following the revolutionary method of achieving peace, you will forestall the destruction of hundreds of thousands of human lives. Then, you may rest assured that the German and the French people will back you up. And the English, American and Japanese capitalists, even if they wanted to wage war upon the revolutionary working class which, with the capitalists curbed and removed and with the reins of government in its own hands, would grow ten times as strong—even if the American, English and Japanese capitalists wanted war, there are ninety-nine chances in a hundred that they could not do it. All you would have to do is to declare that you were no pacifists, and that you intended to defend your republic, your workingmen's proletarian democracy,

against the onslaughts of the German, French and other capitalists—and this would suffice to make your peace secure.

This is why we consider our declaration on the offensive to be of fundamental significance. The time for a break in the entire history of the Russian Revolution has come. The Russian Revolution began with the aid of the English imperialist bourgeoisie, the latter having thought that Russia was something like China or India. What happened, however, was that by the side of the government composed of a majority of landowners and capitalists there sprang up the Soviets, an unusual representative institution of unprecedented strength which you are now destroying by your participation in the coalition cabinet of the bourgeoisie. What happened, however, was that, in all countries, revolutionary struggle from below against the capitalist government began to meet with much greater sympathy. To go ahead, or to retreat? this is the question. In times of revolution it is impossible to remain in one place. This is why the offensive is a break in the entire Russian Revolution, not in the strategic meaning of the offensive, but in its political and economic meaning. Objectively, irrespective of the will and consciousness of one particular Minister, an offensive now means the continuation of the imperialist slaughter for the sake of crushing Persia and other weak peoples. The passing of power to the revolutionary proletariat supported by the poorest peasants means passing to as safe and painless a form of revolutionary struggle for peace as the world has ever known, passing to a situation where the power and the victory of the revolutionary workers will be made secure in Russia and throughout the whole world. (*Applause from a part of the audience.*)

*Pravda*, June 28 and 29, 1917.

V. I. Lenin

### THE PROHIBITED DEMONSTRATION \*

THE dissatisfaction of the majority of the comrades with the calling off of the demonstration is quite legitimate, but the Central Com-

\* Speech delivered at June 24, 1917, session of the Petrograd Committee of the R.S.-D.L.P.—*Ed.*

mittee could not act otherwise for two reasons: First, we received a formal prohibition of all demonstrations from our semi-official government; second, a plausible reason was given for this prohibition, namely: "We know that the hidden counter-revolutionaries are making ready to take advantage of your demonstration." In support of this, certain names were mentioned, for instance, a certain general, who, it was promised, would be arrested within three days, and others; we were informed that there had been arranged a demonstration of the Black Hundreds for June 23—they were to break into our procession and cause a general slaughter.

Even in simple warfare it sometimes happens that for strategic reasons it is necessary to postpone an offensive fixed for a certain date; it is all the more likely to happen in the case of the class struggle, depending upon the degree of vacillation shown by the moderate petty-bourgeois groups. One must know how to gauge the situation and to be daring in one's decisions.

It was absolutely necessary for us to cancel our arrangements. This has been proved by subsequent events. Today Tsereteli has delivered his historical and hysterical speech. Today the revolution has entered upon a new phase of its development. They began by enjoining our peaceful demonstration for three days, they now wish to prohibit it for the entire duration of the congress; they demand of us submission to the decisions of the congress; they threaten us with expulsion from the congress. But we have declared that we prefer to be arrested rather than give up our freedom to agitate.

Tsereteli, who in his speech has revealed himself as an out-and-out counter-revolutionist, has made the statement that one must fight the Bolsheviks not with words nor resolutions, but by depriving them of all the technical means at their disposal—which constitutes the sum total of all bourgeois revolutions; namely, first, the arming of the proletariat, then the disarming of it, so that it may not go further. The situation must indeed be very serious if it calls for a ban on a peaceful demonstration.

Tsereteli, who came to the congress from the bosom of the Provisional Government, expressed an unmistakable desire to disarm the workers. He disclosed a savage temper, he demanded that the Bolsheviks as a party should be outlawed by revolutionary democracy.

The workers must now realise that there cannot be any more talk of a "peaceful demonstration." The situation is much more serious than we thought it was. We had decided on a peaceful demonstration, in order to exert the maximum of influence upon the decisions of the congress—this is our right—but now we are being accused of having formed a conspiracy to arrest the government.

Tsereteli says that besides the Bolsheviks there are no counter-revolutionists. The assembly that sat in judgment over us was organised with a special solemnity and consisted of the Presidium of the Congress, of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in a body, of the bureau of the fractions of all the parties at the congress. At their session today they have blurted out to us the whole truth, they have declared an offensive against us.

The reply of the proletariat should be a maximum of calm, care, discipline, organisation and realisation that peaceful demonstrations are a thing of the past.

We must offer them no pretext for an attack, let them attack first, and then the workers will realise that those people are making an attempt on the very existence of the proletariat. But the forces of life are with us and it is uncertain how successful their attack will turn out to be; there are armies at the front, the spirit of discontent is rife among them, in the rear high prices, economic disintegration, etc., prevail everywhere.

The Central Committee does not wish to influence your decision. Your right to protest against the actions of the Central Committee is legitimate, and your decision should be a free decision.

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J. Stalin

TO ALL THE TOILERS, TO ALL THE WORKERS  
AND SOLDIERS OF PETROGRAD

COMRADES!

Russia is passing through severe trials.

The war which has claimed innumerable victims still goes on. The profiteering, *robber, blood-sucking bankers* are deliberately dragging it on.

The industrial chaos caused by the war is leading to the stoppage of factories, to unemployment. It is being deliberately intensified by the *lock-out capitalists* who are greedy for fabulous profits.

The shortage of supplies caused by the war is becoming more and more menacing. The high cost of living is strangling the urban poor. But prices are rising and rising to suit the caprice of the *marauder profiteers*.

The sinister phantom of famine and ruin is hovering over us...

At the same time the black clouds of counter-revolution are gathering.

The Third of June Duma which helped the tsar to oppress the people is now demanding an immediate offensive at the front—what for? For the purpose of drowning the freedom we have achieved in blood to please the “Allied” and Russian robbers.

The State Council which supplied the tsar with hangmen ministers is secretly tying a treacherous noose—what for? In order at the convenient moment to put it round the necks of the people to please the “Allied” and Russian oppressors.

And the Provisional Government, placed between the tsar’s Duma and the Soviet of Deputies and containing the ten bourgeois ministers, is clearly falling under the influence of the landlords and capitalists.

Instead of guarantees for the rights of the soldiers we have Kerensky’s “declaration” which violates these rights.

Instead of consolidation of the liberties obtained by the soldiers in the days of the revolution we have new “orders” threatening penal servitude and the disbanding of units.

Instead of guarantees for the liberties obtained by the citizens



of Russia we have the establishment of a political secret police in the barracks, arrests without trial or investigation, new conjectures about Art. 129 which carries the penalty of penal servitude.

Instead of the arming of the people we have threats to disarm the workers and soldiers.

Instead of the liberation of the oppressed nationalities we have a pin-prick policy towards Finland and the Ukraine, fear of granting them freedom.

Instead of a resolute struggle against the counter-revolution we have connivance at the orgies of the counter-revolutionaries who are openly arming for the fight against the revolution....

And the war is still dragging on, and no real serious measures are being taken to stop it, to propose to *all* nations a just peace.

Economic chaos is increasing, and no measures are being taken to combat it.

Famine is approaching nearer and nearer, and no real measures are being taken to combat it.

Is it surprising that the counter-revolutionaries are becoming more and more arrogant, instigating the government to adopt more and more repressive measures against the workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors?

Comrades! These things can no longer be tolerated in silence! After all this silence is criminal!

You are free citizens, you have the right to protest, and you must use this right before it is too late.

Let tomorrow (July 1), the day of peaceful demonstration, be transformed into a day of the formidable protest of revolutionary Petrograd against reviving oppression and tyranny!

Let the victorious banners wave tomorrow to the terror of the enemies of freedom and socialism!

Let your call, the call of the fighters of the revolution, spread throughout the world to the joy of all the oppressed and enslaved!

Over there, in the West, in the belligerent countries, the dawn of a new life, the dawn of the great workers' revolution is breaking. Let your brothers in the West know tomorrow that you on your banners are bringing them, not war, but peace, not enslavement, but liberation.

Workers! Soldiers! Clasp each other's fraternal hand and—forward under the banner of socialism!

All into the streets, comrades!

Rally in a close ring around your banners!

In serried ranks march through the streets of the capital!

Calmly and confidently declare your wishes:

*Down with the counter-revolution!*

*Down with the tsarist Duma!*

*Down with the State Council!*

*Down with the ten capitalist ministers!*

*All power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies!*

*Revise the "Declaration of Rights of the Soldiers"!*

*Annul the "Orders" against the soldiers and sailors!*

*Down with the disarming of the revolutionary workers!*

*Long live the people's militia!*

*Down with anarchy in industry and with the lock-out capitalists!*

*Long live the control and organization of production and distribution!*

*Against the offensive policy!*

*It is time the war was stopped! Let the Soviet of Deputies declare just terms of peace!*

*Neither a separate peace with Wilhelm nor the secret treaties with the French and English capitalists!*

*Bread! Peace! Freedom!*

*Signed:* CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P.

ST. PETERSBURG COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P.

MILITARY ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE R.S.-D.L.P.

CENTRAL COUNCIL OF FACTORY COMMITTEES OF THE  
CITY OF PETROGRAD

THE BOLSHEVIK FRACTION IN THE PETROGRAD SOVIET  
OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

EDITORIAL BOARD OF "PRAVDA"

EDITORIAL BOARD OF "SOLDATSKAIA PRAVDA"

V. I. LeninTHE QUESTION OF THE BOLSHEVIK LEADERS  
APPEARING BEFORE THE COURTS

JUDGING by private conversations, there are two opinions on this question.

Comrades yielding to the "Soviet atmosphere" are often inclined towards appearing before the courts.

Those who are closer to the working masses apparently incline towards not appearing.

In principle, the question reduces itself to an estimation of what are commonly called constitutional illusions.

If one thinks that a *just* government and *just* courts are possible in Russia, that the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is probable, then he may arrive at the conclusion that it is necessary to appear.

But such an opinion is thoroughly erroneous. The latest events, especially after July 17, have shown in the most flagrant fashion that the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is improbable (without a new revolution), that no just government or just court exists, or can exist (at present) in Russia.

The court is an organ of power. The liberals sometimes forget this. It is a sin for a Marxist to forget it.

Where, then, is the power? Who constitutes the power?

There is no government. It changes daily. It is inactive.

The power that is active is the military dictatorship. Under such conditions it is ridiculous even to speak of "the courts." It is not a question of "courts," but of *an episode in the civil war*. This is what those in favour of appearing before the courts unfortunately do not want to understand.

Pereverzev and Alexinsky as initiators of the "case"—is it not ridiculous to speak of a court in such a case? Is it not naive to think that, under such conditions, any court can examine, investigate, establish anything?

Power is in the hands of a military dictatorship. Without a new revolution this power can only become stronger for a while, first of all for the duration of the war.

“I have done nothing unlawful. The courts are just. The courts will examine the case. The trial will be public. The people will understand. I shall appear.”

This reasoning is childishly naïve. Not a trial but a campaign of persecution against the internationalists, this is what *the authorities need*. To seize them and hold onto them is what Messrs. Kerensky and Co. need. Thus it was (in England and France), thus it will be (in Russia).

Let the internationalists work underground as far as it is in their power, but let them not commit the folly of voluntarily appearing before the courts!

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### V. I. Lenin

#### ON SLOGANS

Too often has it happened when history has taken a sharp turn that even the most advanced of parties have been unable for a fairly long time to adapt themselves to the new situation; they continued to repeat the slogans that were formerly true, but which now had no meaning, having lost that meaning as “suddenly” as the turn in history was “sudden.”

Something of the sort may, apparently, repeat itself in connexion with the slogan regarding the transfer of the entire power of the state to the Soviets. That slogan was correct during a period of our revolution—say from March 12 to July 17—that has now passed irrevocably. That slogan has patently ceased to be true now. Unless this is understood, it is impossible to understand anything of the urgent questions of the present time. Every particular slogan must be derived from the entire complex of specific peculiarities of the given political situation. And the political situation in Russia now, after July 17, differs radically from the situation of March 12 to July 17.

During that, now passed, period of the revolution what is known as a “dual power” prevailed in the state, which both materially and formally expressed the indefinite and transitory nature of the state

power. Let us not forget that the question of power is the fundamental question of every revolution.

At that time the state power was in a condition of instability. It was shared, by voluntary consent, by the Provisional Government and the Soviets. The Soviets were composed of delegations from the mass of free (*i.e.*, not subject to external coercion) and armed workers and soldiers. The *essence* of the situation was that the arms were in the hands of the people, and that no coercion was exercised over the people from without. That is what opened up and ensured a peaceful path for the forward development of the revolution. The slogan, "All power must be transferred to the Soviets," was a slogan for the next immediate step, which could be directly effected in this peaceful path of development. It was a slogan for a peaceful development of the revolution, which was possible between March 12 and July 17, and which was, of course, most desirable, but which now is absolutely impossible.

Apparently, not all the supporters of the slogan, "All power must be transferred to the Soviets," have given sufficient thought to the circumstance that it was a slogan for a peaceful forward development of the revolution. It was peaceful not only in the sense that nobody, no class, no single force of any importance, was able then—between March 12 and July 17—to resist or prevent the transfer of power to the Soviets. That is not all. Peaceful development would then have been possible even in the sense that the struggle of classes and parties *within* the Soviets could have assumed a most peaceful and painless form, provided the state power in its entirety had passed to the Soviets in good time.

This aspect of the case has also not yet received sufficient attention. The Soviets in their class composition were organs of the movement of the workers and peasants, the ready-made form of their dictatorship. Had they possessed the entire state power, the main shortcoming of the petty-bourgeois strata, their chief sin, namely, confidence in the capitalists, would have been overcome in practice, would have been subjected to the criticism of the experience of their own measures. The substitution of classes and parties in power could have proceeded peacefully within the Soviets, based upon the solid and undivided power of the latter. The contact of all the Soviet parties with the masses could have remained stable and unimpaired.

One must not for a single moment forget that only such a close contact between the Soviet parties and the masses, freely growing in extent and depth, could have helped the petty bourgeoisie peacefully to outlive their deluded faith in compromises with the bourgeoisie. The transfer of power to the Soviets would not, and could not, of itself have changed the interrelation of classes; it would not in any way have changed the petty-bourgeois nature of the peasantry. But it would have made a big and timely step towards severing the peasants from the bourgeoisie, towards bringing them closer to, and then uniting them with, the workers.

This is what might have been had power passed in good time to the Soviets. That would have been the most easy, the most advantageous course for the people. Such a course would have been the least painful, and it was therefore necessary to fight for it most energetically. Now, however, this struggle, the struggle for the timely transfer of power to the Soviets, has ended. A peaceful course of development has been rendered impossible. The non-peaceful and most painful course has begun.

The critical change of July 17 consists precisely in the fact that after it the objective situation took an abrupt turn. The unstable situation in regard to the state power has come to an end; the power at the decisive point has passed into the hands of the counter-revolution. The development of the parties on the basis of a compromise between the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and the counter-revolutionary Cadets has brought about a situation in which both these petty-bourgeois parties have in practice become the aiders and abettors of counter-revolutionary butchery. The unenlightened confidence of the petty bourgeoisie in the capitalists has led the former, in the course of the development of the struggle of parties, to consciously support the counter-revolutionaries. The cycle of development of party relations is complete. On March 12 all classes were united against the monarchy. After July 17, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, working hand in glove with the monarchists and the Black Hundreds, secured the support of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, partly by intimidating them, and handed over the actual state power to the Cavaignacs, the military ruffians, who are shooting insubordi-

nate soldiers at the front and dealing ruthlessly with the Bolsheviks in Petrograd.

The slogan of transferring the state power to the Soviets would now sound quixotic, or a sheer mockery. This slogan would virtually be a fraud on the people; it would be inspiring them with the delusion that it is enough *even now* for the Soviets merely to wish to take power, or to proclaim it, in order to secure power, that there are still parties in the Soviet which have not been tainted by aiding the butchers, and that it is possible to undo the past.

It would be a profound error to think that the revolutionary proletariat is capable of "refusing" to support the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks against the counter-revolution in "revenge," so to speak, for the support they gave in smashing the Bolsheviks, in shooting down soldiers at the front and in disarming the workers. First, this would be ascribing philistine conceptions of morality to the proletariat (since, *for the good of the cause*, the proletariat will always support not only the vacillating petty bourgeoisie but even the big bourgeoisie); and secondly—and that is the main thing—it would be a philistine attempt to substitute "moralising" for the true political issue.

And the true political issue consists in the fact that power can now no longer be taken peacefully. It can be obtained only by victory in a decisive struggle against the real holders of power at the present moment, namely, the military ruffians, the Cavaignacs, who are relying on the reactionary troops brought to Petrograd and on the Cadets and the monarchists.

The true political issue consists in the fact that these new holders of state power can be defeated only by the revolutionary masses of the people, whose movement depends not only on their being led by the proletariat, but also on their turning their backs upon the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which have betrayed the cause of the revolution.

Those who bring philistine morals into politics reason as follows: Let us assume that it is true that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks committed an "error" in supporting the Cavaignacs, who are disarming the proletariat and the revolutionary regiments; still, we must give them a chance to "rectify" their "error"; we must "not make it difficult" for them to rectify their "error"; we

must make it easier for the petty bourgeoisie to incline towards the side of the workers. Such reasoning is childishly naïve or simply stupid, or else a new fraud on the workers. For if the petty-bourgeois masses inclined towards the workers it would mean, and could only mean, that these masses had turned their backs upon the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties could rectify their "error" now only by denouncing Tsereteli, Chernov, Dan and Rakitnikov as aiders and abettors of the butchers. We are fully and unconditionally in favour of their error being "rectified" in that way....

We said that the fundamental question of revolution is the question of power. We must add that revolutions at every step illustrate how the question of *where* the actual power lies is beclouded, and reveal the divergence between formal power and real power. That is one of the chief characteristics of every revolutionary period. In March and April 1917, it was not clear whether the real power was in the hands of the government or in the hands of the Soviets.

Now, however, it is particularly essential that the class conscious workers should soberly face the fundamental question of the revolution, namely: Who holds the state power at the present moment? Consider its material manifestations, do not accept words for deeds, and you will have no difficulty in finding the answer.

The state consists, first of all, of detachments of armed men with material appurtenances, such as jails, wrote Frederick Engels. Now it consists of the military cadets and the reactionary Cossacks, who have been specially brought to Petrograd; it consists of those who keep Kamenev and others in jail; who have shut down the newspaper *Pravda*; who have disarmed the workers and a definite section of the soldiers; who are shooting down an equally definite section of the soldiers; who are shooting down an equally definite section of troops in the army. These butchers are the real power. Tsereteli and Chernov are ministers without power, puppet ministers, leaders of parties that support the butchers. That is a fact. And the fact is not altered even though Tsereteli or Chernov personally, no doubt, "do not approve" of the butchery, and even though their papers timidly dissociate themselves from it. Such changes of political garb change nothing in substance.

The organ of 150,000 Petrograd workers has been suppressed;



the military cadets on July 19 killed the worker Voynov for carrying *Listok Pravdy* [*The Pravda Leaflet*] from the printshop. Is this not butchery? Is this not the work of Cavaignacs? But in this neither the government nor the Soviets are "guilty," we shall be told.

So much the worse for the government and the Soviets, we reply: for that means that they are ciphers, puppets, and that the real power is not in their hands.

First of all, and above all, the people must know the *truth*—they must know in whose hands the state power really lies. The people must be told the whole truth, namely, that the power is in the hands of a military clique of Cavaignacs (Kerensky, certain generals, officers, etc.) who are supported by the bourgeoisie as a class, headed by the Constitutional-Democratic Party and by all the monarchists, acting through the Black Hundred papers, *Novoye Vremya* [*New Times*], *Zhivoye Slovo* [*The Living Word*], etc., etc.

That power must be overthrown. Unless that is done all talk of fighting counter-revolution is but empty phrases, "self-deception and deception of the people."

That power now has the support both of the ministers, Tsereteli and Chernov, and of their parties. We must explain to the people the butcher's rôle they are playing and the fact that such a *finale* for these parties was inevitable after their "errors" of May 4, May 18, June 22 and July 17 and after their approval of the policy of an offensive at the front, a policy which predetermined nine-tenths of the victory of the Cavaignacs in July.

The whole agitational work among the people must be reshaped to deal with the concrete experience of the present revolution, and particularly of the July days, *i.e.*, it must clearly point to the real enemy of the people, the military clique, the Constitutional-Democrats and the Black Hundreds, and must definitely unmask the petty-bourgeois parties, the Socialist-Revolutionary and the Menshevik parties, which played and are playing the part of butcher's assistants.

The whole agitational work among the people must be reshaped in order to make it clear that it is absolutely hopeless to expect that the peasants will obtain land as long as the power of the military clique has not been overthrown, as long as the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties have not been exposed and made to forfeit the people's confidence. That would be a very long and arduous

process under "normal" conditions of capitalist development. But the war and the economic chaos will tremendously accelerate the process. These are "accelerators" that may make a month or even a week equal to a year.

Two objections may probably be made to what has been said above: First, that to speak now of a decisive struggle is to encourage sporadic action, which would only be to the advantage of the counter-revolution; secondly, that the overthrow of the latter would still mean the transfer of power to the Soviets.

To the first argument we reply: The workers of Russia are already class conscious enough not to yield to provocation at a moment which is clearly unfavourable to them. Nobody can deny that to take action and to offer resistance at the present moment would be abetting counter-revolution. Neither can it be denied that a decisive struggle will be possible only in the event of a new revolutionary upsurge among the very depths of the masses. But it is not enough to speak in general of a revolutionary upsurge, of the rising tide of revolution, of aid by the West European workers, and so forth; we must draw a definite conclusion from our past, from the lessons we have learnt. And that will lead us precisely to the slogan of a decisive struggle against the counter-revolution, which has usurped power.

The second argument also reduces itself to a substitution for concrete truths of arguments of too general a character. No one, no force, except the revolutionary proletariat, can overthrow the bourgeois counter-revolution. Now, after the experience of July 1917, it is the revolutionary proletariat that must take over state power independently. Without that the victory of the revolution is *impossible*. Power in the hands of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry or semi-proletarians—that is the only solution. And we have already indicated the factors that can enormously accelerate this solution.

Soviets may, indeed are bound to, appear in this new revolution, but *not* the present Soviets, not organs of compromise with the bourgeoisie, but organs of a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. It is true that we shall even then be in favour of building the whole state on the Soviet model. It is not a question of Soviets

in general; it is a question of combating the present counter-revolution, of combating the treachery of the *present* Soviets.

The substitution of the abstract for the concrete is one of the greatest and most dangerous sins in a revolution. The present Soviets have failed, they have suffered utter collapse because they were dominated by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties. At this moment these Soviets resemble sheep brought to the slaughter, bleating pitifully under the knife. The Soviets *at present* are impotent and helpless against triumphant and triumphing counter-revolution. The slogan of transferring power to the Soviets might be construed as a "simple" appeal for the transfer of power to the present Soviets, and to say that, to appeal for that now, would be to deceive the people. Nothing is more dangerous than deceit.

The cycle of development of the class and party struggle in Russia from March 12 to July 17 is complete. A new cycle is beginning, one that involves not the old classes, not the old parties, not the old Soviets, but classes, parties and Soviets that have been rejuvenated in the fire of struggle, tempered, schooled and re-created in the process of struggle. We must look forward, not backward. We must operate not with the old, but with the new, post-July, class and party categories. We must, at the beginning of the new cycle, proceed from the triumphant bourgeois counter-revolution, which triumphed because the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks compromised with it, and which can be vanquished only by the revolutionary proletariat. Of course, in this new cycle there will be many and various stages, before the final victory over the counter-revolution, before the final defeat (without a struggle) of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and before a new upsurge of a new revolution. But of this it will be possible to speak only later, as each of these stages makes its appearance. . . .

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J. Stalin

**CLOSE RANKS!**

**THE** events of July 16 and 17 were called forth by the general crisis in the country. The protracted war and general exhaustion,

the incredibly high cost of living and starvation, the growing counter-revolution and economic chaos, the disbanding of regiments at the front and the postponement of the settlement of the land question, the general chaos in the country and the inability of the Provisional Government to lead the country out of this crisis—this is what impelled the masses into the streets on July 16 and 17.

To attribute this demonstration to the sinister agitation of this or that party means adopting the point of view of the secret police who are inclined to attribute every mass movement to the instigation of “ringleaders” and “inciters.”

No party—not even the Bolsheviks—called for the demonstration of July 16. More than that. On July 16, the most influential party in Petrograd, the Bolshevik Party, called upon the workers and soldiers to abstain. But when the movement broke out in spite of this, our Party, not considering it right to wash its hands of it, did all it possibly could to give the movement a peaceful and organised character.

But the counter-revolution was wide awake. It organised the firing of provocative shots, it cast a gloom over the days of the demonstration by bloodshed, and relying on certain units from the front it took up the offensive against the revolution. The core of the counter-revolution, the Cadet Party, as if foreseeing all this, resigned from the Cabinet beforehand and thus set its hands free. But the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries on the Executive Committee, desiring to cling to their shaken positions, perfidiously declared the demonstration in favour of all power to the Soviets to be a rebellion against the Soviets and the revolution and incited the backward strata of the soldiers who were called up from the front against revolutionary Petrograd. Blinded by factional fanaticism they failed to notice that by striking blows at the revolutionary workers and soldiers they were weakening the whole front of the revolution and raising the hopes of the counter-revolution.

The result is—the orgy of counter-revolution and military dictatorship.

The wrecking of the offices of *Pravda* and *Soldatskaia Pravda*, the wrecking of the *Trud* printing plant and of our district organisations, assaults and murder, arrests without trial and a number of “unauthorised” punishments, the base calumny hurled at the leaders of

our Party by contemptible police spies and the orgies of the pirates of the venal newspapers, the disarming of the revolutionary workers and the disbanding of regiments, the re-introduction of the death penalty—this is the “work” of the military dictatorship.

And all this is done on the plea of “saving the revolution,” “by order” of the Kerensky-Tsereteli Ministry,” supported by the All-Russian Executive Committee. And the ruling parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, scared by the military dictatorship, light-heartedly betray the leaders of the proletarian party to the enemies of the revolution, hush up the wrecking and outrage and take no measures to counteract “unauthorised” punishments.

The tacit agreement between the Provisional Government and the headquarters of the counter-revolution, the Cadet Party, with the open connivance of the Executive Committee, against the revolutionary workers and soldiers of Petrograd—such is the scene today.

And the more the ruling parties yield the more arrogant the counter-revolutionaries become. From attacking the Bolsheviks they are now passing to the attack upon all Soviet parties, and upon the Soviets themselves. Menshevik district organisations are being smashed up on the Petrograd Side and on the Okhta. The Nevsky Gates branch of the Metal Workers Union has been smashed up. Meetings of the Petrograd Soviet are invaded and its members arrested (Deputy Sakharov). Special groups are organised on the Nevsky Prospekt for the purpose of catching members of the Executive Committee. There is definite talk about dispersing the Executive Committee, to say nothing about the “plot” against certain members of the Provisional Government and leaders of the Executive Committee.

The arrogance and provocative conduct of the counter-revolutionaries are growing hour by hour. But the Provisional Government continues to disarm the revolutionary workers and soldiers on the plea of “saving the revolution”....

All this, in connection with the developing crisis in the country, in connection with the famine and chaos, the war and the surprises connected with it—serves to aggravate the situation still further and makes new political crises inevitable.

To be prepared for impending battles, to meet them in a worthy and organised manner—such is now the task.

Hence:

The first commandment is: do not yield to the provocation of the counter-revolutionaries; arm yourselves with restraint and self-control; save your strength for the impending struggle; do not permit any premature actions.

The second commandment is: rally closely around our Party; close your ranks against the innumerable enemies that are up in arms against us; hold aloft the banner, encourage the weak, rally the stragglers and enlighten the ignorant.

No compromise with the counter-revolution!

No unity with the "Socialist" jailers.

For an alliance of the revolutionary elements against the counter-revolution and those who shield it—such is our watchword.

Member of the Central Committee of the  
Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party

J. STALIN

*Proletarskoye Dyelo [The Proletarian Cause], July 28, 1917.*

## J. Stalin

### THE VICTORY OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

THE counter-revolution has organised itself. It is growing and is attacking along the whole front. The leaders of the counter-revolution, Messieurs the Cadets, who only yesterday boycotted the government, are ready today to return to power in order to become masters of the country.

The "ruling" parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, together with their government for the "salvation of the revolution," are retreating in utter disorder. They are ready to make any concessions; they are ready to do anything—only give the orders.

Hand over the Bolsheviki and their adherents?

Please, Messieurs Cadets, take the Bolsheviki.

Hand over the Baltic delegation and the Bolsheviki from Kronstadt?

At your service, Messieurs of the "Intelligence Service," take the delegation.

Close down the Bolshevik workers' and soldiers' newspapers which displease the Cadets?

Glad to serve you, Messieurs Cadets; we'll close them down.

Disarm the revolution, disarm the workers and soldiers?

With great pleasure, Messieurs landlords and capitalists. We will not only disarm the Petrograd workers but also the Sestroretsk workers, although they took no part in the events of July 16 and 17.

Restrict free speech and freedom of assembly, inviolability of the person and the home, introduce a censorship and a secret police?

Everything will be done, Messieurs Blacks, everything, down to the last detail.

Restore the death penalty at the front?

With great pleasure, Messieurs Insatiables. . . .

Dissolve the Finnish Seim, which stands on the platform adopted by the Soviet?

It will be done at once, our masters—landlords and capitalists.

Revise the government's program?

Glad to serve you, Messieurs Cadets.

And the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are prepared to concede even more, only to reach an agreement with the Cadets, only to strike a bargain with them somehow. . . .

But the counter-revolution is becoming more and more arrogant, demanding more and more sacrifices, driving the Provisional Government and the Executive Committee to shameful self-abnegation. To please the Cadets it is proposed to create in Moscow an "Extraordinary Assembly" consisting of members of the late State Duma and other "qualified" persons in the general chorus of which the Central Executive Committee is to remain in the most wretched minority. The Cabinet Ministers, having lost their heads, are placing their portfolios at the feet of Kerensky. At the dictates of the Cadets a list of members of the government is being drawn up.

With the aid of the tsarist Duma and the traitor-Cadets to bury the freedom that was won with the heart's blood of the people—this is the shameful position to which the present helmsmen of our political life are leading us. . . .

And the war is dragging on and on, increasing the disaster at the front; and they think they can improve the situation by restoring the death penalty at the front. Blind ones! They do not see that an offensive can count on mass sympathy only when the objects of the war are clear and near to the army, when the army knows that it is shedding its blood for its own cause; they do not see that in democratic Russia, where meetings and free assemblies of soldiers are held, a mass offensive is inconceivable without such knowledge.

And chaos is increasing, threatening to bring famine, unemployment and universal ruin; and they think that by means of police measures against the revolution they will be able to solve the economic crisis. Such is the will of the counter-revolution. Blind ones! They do not see that without revolutionary measures against the bourgeoisie it is impossible to save the country from collapse.

Persecuted workers, wrecked organisations, deceived peasants, arrested soldiers and sailors, calumny and lies against the leaders of our Party; and side by side with this, the triumphant, slandering, arrogant counter-revolutionaries, all under the flag of "saving" the revolution—this is what the parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have brought things to.

And yet there are people (see *Novaya Zhizn*) who after all this propose that we unite with these gentlemen who are "saving" the revolution by strangling it.

What do they take us for?

No, gentlemen, the road of the betrayers of the revolution is not our road.

The workers will never forget that in the stern moments of the July days, when the enraged counter-revolution was shooting at the revolution, the Bolshevik Party was the only party that did not retire from the working class districts.

The workers will never forget that in those stern moments the "ruling" parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were in the camp of those who crushed and disarmed the workers, soldiers and sailors.

The workers will remember this and draw the proper conclusions from it.



V. I. Lenin

## CONSTITUTIONAL ILLUSIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL illusions is the term for a political error which consists in the fact that people believe in the existence of a normal, juridical, regulated and legalised, in brief, "constitutional," system, which in fact does not exist at all. It would seem at first glance that in present-day Russia, in this month of July 1917, when a constitution has not even been drafted, such constitutional illusions are impossible. But that is a profound mistake. In fact, the essential characteristic of the present political situation in Russia is that extremely large numbers of the population are under the sway of Constitutional illusions. Unless this is understood, it is impossible to understand anything of the present political situation in Russia. Not even an approach to a correct conception of the tactical tasks in present-day Russia is possible unless prime attention is devoted to a systematic and merciless exposure of constitutional illusions, to laying bare their roots, and to re-establishing a proper political perspective.

Let us take three opinions characteristic of the constitutional illusions of the present day and examine them carefully.

The first of these opinions is that our country is on the eve of the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, and that, therefore, everything that is now going on is of a temporary, transitory, non-essential, non-decisive character, and that everything will soon be revised and definitely regulated by the Constituent Assembly. The second opinion is that certain parties, e.g., the Socialist-Revolutionaries or the Mensheviks, or an alliance of both—possess an obvious and undisputed majority among the people, or in "highly influential" institutions, such as the Soviets, and that therefore the will of these parties and of these institutions, as the will of the majority of the people in general, cannot be ignored, and still less violated, in republican, democratic and revolutionary Russia. The third opinion is that a certain measure, for instance, the suppression of *Pravda*, was not legally sanctioned either by the Provisional Government or by the Soviets, and that, therefore, it is but an epi-

sode, a chance occurrence, which must in no case be regarded as possessing decisive significance.

Let us examine each of these opinions.

### I.

The convocation of a Constituent Assembly was promised by the first Provisional Government. That government considered that its main task was to lead the country to a Constituent Assembly. The second Provisional Government appointed October 13 as the day for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. The third Provisional Government, after the events of July 17, solemnly confirmed this date.

Nevertheless, the chances are ninety-nine out of a hundred that the Constituent Assembly will not be convened on that date. If it does meet on that date, the chances are again ninety-nine out of a hundred that it will be as impotent and useless as was the First Duma, so long as a second revolution does not succeed in Russia. To become convinced of this, one has only to abstract oneself for a minute from the hubbub of phrases, promises and petty doings of the day, which clog the brain, and cast a glance at that which is fundamental, that which determines everything in public life—the class struggle.

It is clear that the bourgeoisie in Russia has become closely amalgamated with the landlords. This is shown by the press, the elections, the policy of the Cadet Party and of the parties still further to the Right, and by the utterances made at the various “congresses” of “interested” persons.

The bourgeoisie understands perfectly well what the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and “Left” Menshevik chatter-boxes cannot understand, namely, that it is *impossible* to abolish private property in land in Russia, and without compensation at that, except by a gigantic economic revolution, by placing the banks under the control of the entire people, by nationalising the trusts and by adopting a series of the most ruthless revolutionary measures against capital. The bourgeoisie understands that perfectly well. But at the same time it cannot help knowing, seeing and feeling that the vast majority of the peasants in Russia will now not only express themselves in favour of confiscating the landed estates, but will even

prove to be much more Left than Chernov. For the bourgeoisie knows better than we do how many partial concessions have been made by Chernov, let us say, from May 19 to July 15, in the matter of delaying and narrowing down the various demands of the peasants, and how much effort was expended by the *Right* Socialist-Revolutionaries (Chernov, you know, is regarded as the "Centre" by the Socialist-Revolutionaries) at the Peasant Congress and on the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies in order to "soothe" the peasants and to feed them with promises.

The bourgeoisie differs from the petty bourgeoisie in that it has learned from its economic and political experience the conditions under which "order" (*i.e.*, the enslavement of the masses) can be preserved under the capitalist system. The bourgeois are business men, conversant with large-scale commercial transactions, and are accustomed to approach even political questions in a strictly business-like manner; they have no confidence in words and know how to take the bull by the horns.

The Constituent Assembly in Russia today will yield a majority to peasants who are more Left than the Socialist-Revolutionaries. The bourgeoisie knows this, and, knowing it, it naturally resists in the most energetic manner an early convocation of the Constituent Assembly. With the *existence* of a Constituent Assembly it will be impossible, or extremely difficult, to wage the imperialist war in the spirit of the secret treaties concluded by Nicholas II, or to defend the landed estates or the payment of compensation for them. The war will not wait. The class struggle will not wait. This was obviously shown even in the brief span from March 13 to May 4.

From the very beginning of the revolution there have been two views regarding the Constituent Assembly. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, completely swayed by constitutional illusions, view the matter with the naïve confidence of the petty bourgeois who refuses to know anything about the class struggle: The Constituent Assembly has been proclaimed, the Constituent Assembly will be—and that's all there is to it! All else is of the devil. The Bolsheviki, on the contrary, said: Only the growing strength and authority of the Soviets can guarantee the convocation of the Constituent Assembly and its success. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries laid emphasis on the legal act: the procla-

mation, the promise, the declaration of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. The Bolsheviks laid emphasis on the class struggle: if the Soviets win, the Constituent Assembly is assured; if not, it is not assured.

And that is exactly what happened. The bourgeoisie has been waging, at times covertly and at times overtly, an incessant and relentless struggle against the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. This struggle was expressed in a desire to delay its convocation until the end of the war. It was expressed in repeated postponements of the date of convocation of the Constituent Assembly. When at last, after July 1, more than a month after the formation of the Coalition Cabinet, the date for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly was appointed, a Moscow bourgeois paper declared that this was done under the pressure of Bolshevik agitation. *Pravda* has published an exact quotation from this paper.

After July 17, when the servility and the timidity of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks led to the "victory" of the counter-revolution, a brief but highly significant phrase slipped into *Ryech* [*Speech*] respecting the "speediest possible" convocation of the Constituent Assembly! But on July 29, an item appeared in *Volya Naroda* [*The People's Will*] and in *Russkaya Volya* [*Russian Will*] to the effect that the Cadets were demanding the postponement of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly under the pretext that it was "impossible" to summon it at such "short" notice, and that, the item states, the Menshevik Tsereteli, doing lackey service to the counter-revolution, had given his consent to its postponement until December 3!

Undoubtedly, this item slipped in despite the wish of the bourgeoisie. Such "revelations" are not to their advantage. But murder will out. The counter-revolution, becoming brazen after July 17, blurted out the truth. The first seizure of power by the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie after July 17 is immediately accompanied by a measure (a very serious measure) directed *against* the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

That is a fact. And that fact reveals the utter futility of constitutional illusions. Unless a new revolution takes place in Russia, unless the power of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie (and particularly of the Cadets) is overthrown, unless the people withdraw their con-

fidence from the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, parties of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Constituent Assembly will either never be convoked, or else will be a "Frankfort talkshop," an impotent and useless assembly of petty bourgeois, frightened to death by the war and by the prospect of a "boycott of the government" by the bourgeoisie, and helplessly torn between convulsive efforts to rule without the bourgeoisie and the fear of having to get along without the bourgeoisie.

The question of the Constituent Assembly is *subordinate* to the question of the course and issue of the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Some time ago, we recall, *Rabochaya Gazeta* [*Labor Gazette*] blurted out the remark that the Constituent Assembly would be a *Convention*. This is an example of the empty, wretched and contemptible bragging of our Menshevik lackeys of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. In order not to be a "Frankfort talkshop" or a First Duma, in order to be a Convention, one must have the courage, the capacity and the strength to aim ruthless blows at the counter-revolution, and not compromise with it. For this purpose the power must be in the hands of the most advanced, most resolute and most revolutionary class of the present epoch. For this purpose that class must be supported by the whole mass of the urban and rural poor (the semi-proletarians). This requires that the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie particularly, *i.e.*, particularly the Cadets and the higher command of the army, shall be dealt with mercilessly. Such are the real, the class, the material conditions necessary for a Convention. It is enough to enumerate these conditions precisely and clearly in order to realise how ridiculous is the bragging of *Rabochaya Gazeta* and how incredibly foolish are the constitutional illusions of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks regarding a Constituent Assembly in present-day Russia.

## II.

Marx, when he castigated the petty-bourgeois "Social-Democrats" of 1848, was particularly severe in his condemnation of their unbridled use of phrases regarding "the people" and the majority of the people in general. It is well to recall this when examining the

second opinion, when analysing the constitutional illusions on the subject of a "majority."

Certain definite and concrete conditions are required to make it really possible for the majority in the state to decide. It requires, first, the establishment of a state system, of a form of state power, which would permit the possibility of deciding matters by a majority, and which would guarantee this possibility actually being realised. Secondly, it requires that this majority, by its class composition, by the interrelation of classes inside (and outside) this majority, should be *able* to draw the chariot of state harmoniously and effectively. Every Marxist knows that these two concrete conditions are of decisive importance in the question of a majority of the people and of the direction of state affairs in accordance with the will of the majority. Nevertheless, the political literature of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and still more their political conduct, betrays a complete lack of understanding of these conditions.

If the political power in the state is in the hands of a class the interests of which coincide with the interests of the majority, the administration of that state in accordance with the real will of the majority will be possible.

If, however, the political power is in the hands of a class the interests of which differ from the interests of the majority, any form of majority rule is bound to lead to the duping or suppression of the majority. Every bourgeois republic provides hundreds and thousands of examples of this kind. In Russia the bourgeoisie rules both economically and politically. Its interests, particularly during the imperialist war, are in violent conflict with the interests of the majority. Hence, from a materialist and Marxist, and not from a formal and juridical standpoint, the whole point is to expose this conflict, and to endeavour to prevent the masses from being duped by the bourgeoisie.

Our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, on the contrary, have fully shown and proved that their true rôle is to be an instrument of the bourgeoisie for deceiving the masses (the "majority"), to be the medium and the abettors of that deception. No matter how sincere individual Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks may be, their fundamental political ideas—that it is possible to escape

from the imperialist war and to achieve a "peace without annexations and indemnities," without a dictatorship of the proletariat and the triumph of socialism, and that it is possible to secure the transfer of the land to the people without compensation and to establish "control" over production in the interests of the people without the same condition—these fundamental political (and, of course, economic) ideas of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are in practice nothing but petty-bourgeois self-deception, or, which is the same thing, deception practised by the bourgeoisie on the masses (the "majority").

That is our first and main "amendment" to the question of the majority as understood by the petty-bourgeois democrats, Socialists of the Louis Blanc type, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. What, in practice, is the value of a "majority," if a majority is in itself but a formal factor, while materially, in actual reality, that majority is a majority of the parties with the help of which the bourgeoisie deceives the majority?

And, of course—and this leads us to our second "amendment," to the second of the above-mentioned fundamental conditions—this deception can be correctly understood only by ascertaining its class roots and its class meaning. This is not personal deception, not (to put it bluntly) a "swindle," but rather an illusory idea arising out of the economic situation in which a class finds itself. The petty-bourgeois is in such an economic situation, the conditions of his life are such, that he cannot help deceiving himself, he involuntarily and inevitably gravitates now towards the bourgeoisie, now towards the proletariat. It is *economically impossible* for him to pursue an independent "line."

His past draws him towards the bourgeoisie, his future towards the proletariat. His judgment gravitates towards the latter, his prejudice (to use an expression of Marx's) towards the former. In order that the majority of the people may become an actual majority in the administration of the state, and thereby the actual servant of the interests of the majority, the actual protector of its rights, and so forth, a definite class condition is required, *viz.*, that the majority of the petty bourgeoisie, at least at the decisive moment and in the decisive place, shall join forces with the revolutionary proletariat.

Without this, a majority is but a fiction which may prevail for

some little time, may glitter and shine, make a noise, gather laurels, but which is absolutely and inevitably doomed to failure. Such, be it noted in passing, was the failure of the majority of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, as revealed in the Russian revolution in July 1917.

Furthermore, a revolution differs from the "normal situation" in a state precisely by the fact that controversial questions of state life are decided by the direct struggle of classes and the struggle of masses, even to the point of armed struggle. It cannot be otherwise when the masses are free and armed. It follows from this fundamental fact that in times of revolution it is not sufficient to ascertain the "will of the majority"; nay, *one must prove to be the stronger* at the decisive moment and in the decisive place; *one must be victorious*. Beginning with the Peasant War in the Middle Ages in Germany, and throughout all the big revolutionary movements and epochs, including 1848 and 1871, and including 1905, we see innumerable examples of how the better organised, more class conscious and better armed minority forces its will upon the majority and vanquishes it.

Frederick Engels particularly emphasised the lesson to be drawn from the experience which to some degree is common to the Peasant Revolt of the sixteenth century and to the Revolution of 1848 in Germany, namely, disunity of action and lack of centralisation on the part of the oppressed masses owing to their petty-bourgeois status in life. And examining the matter from this angle too we arrive at the same conclusion, namely, that a simple majority of the petty-bourgeois masses decides nothing, and can decide nothing, for the disunited millions of rural petty proprietors can acquire organisation, political consciousness in action and centralisation of action (which is essential for victory) *only* when they are led either by the bourgeoisie or by the proletariat.

It is well known that in the long run the problems of social life are decided by the class struggle in its bitterest and acutest form, the form of civil war. And in this war, as in any other war—a fact also well known and in principle not disputed by any one—it is economics that decide. It is highly characteristic and significant that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, while not denying this "in principle" and while perfectly realising the capitalist



character of present-day Russia, dare not soberly look the truth in the face. They are afraid to admit the truth that every capitalist country, including Russia, is fundamentally divided into three main forces: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The first and third are spoken of by all and recognised by all. As to the second—which is indeed the numerical *majority!*—nobody cares soberly to admit its significance, economic, political or military.

Truth is no flatterer. That is why the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks shrink from knowing their own selves.

### III.

When we started writing this article, the suppression of *Pravda* was but an “incident” and had not yet been ratified by the government. But now, after July 29, the government has formally suppressed *Pravda*.

If one regards it historically, as a whole and in conjunction with the entire process of preparation for this measure and its realisation, this suppression casts a remarkably clear light on the “nature of the constitution” in Russia and on the danger of constitutional illusions.

It is a known fact that the Cadet Party, headed by Milyukov and the paper *Ryech*, have ever since April been demanding repressive measures against the Bolsheviks. This demand for repression, voiced in various forms, from “statesman-like” articles in *Ryech* to Milyukov’s repeated cries, “Arrest them” (Lenin and other Bolsheviks), has been one of the major components, if not the major component, of the political programme of the Cadets in the revolution.

Long before Alexinsky and Co., in June and July, invented and fabricated the vile and calumnious charge that the Bolsheviks were German spies and in receipt of German money; long before the equally calumnious charge—contradicted by generally known facts and published documents—of “armed insurrection” and “mutiny,” long before all this, the Cadet Party had been systematically, steadily and relentlessly demanding repressive measures against the Bolsheviks. Since this demand has now been realised, what opinion must one have of the honesty or the intelligence of people who forget, or make believe they forget, the true class and party origin of this

demand? How are we to characterise the attempt on the part of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks to pretend that they believe that the "occasion" furnished on July 17 for the repressive measures against the Bolsheviks was an "incidental," an "isolated" case—how are we to characterise it, if not as a crude falsification or the most incredible political imbecility? There must after all be a limit to the distortion of indisputable historical truths!

It is sufficient to compare the movement of May 3-4 with that of July 16-17 to realise their similarity of character. They were marked by the same objective features: a spontaneous outburst of discontent, impatience and indignation on the part of the masses; provocative shots from the Right; killings on the Nevsky; calumnious outcries on the part of the bourgeoisie, and particularly the Cadets, to the effect that "It was the Leninists who fired the shots on the Nevsky"; the extreme bitterness and aggravation of the struggle between the proletarian masses and the bourgeoisie; an utter loss of presence of mind on the part of the petty-bourgeois parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and a tremendous range of vacillation in their policy and in their approach to the question of state power generally. And June 22-23 and July 1 present an identical class picture in another form.

The course of events is as clear as can be: the growing dissatisfaction, impatience and indignation of the masses; the increasing aggravation of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, particularly for influence over the petty-bourgeois masses, and, in this connection, two very important historical events, which prepare the way for the dependence of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks on the counter-revolutionary Cadets. These events are, first, the formation on May 19 of a coalition cabinet, in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks proved to be servitors of the bourgeoisie, by becoming increasingly entangled by deals and agreements with the latter, by showing it thousands of "complaisances" in delaying the most essential revolutionary measures; second, the offensive at the front. The offensive inevitably implied the renewal of the imperialist war, a vast increase in the influence, weight and authority of the imperialist bourgeoisie, a widespread dissemination of chauvinism among the masses, and, last but not least, a transfer of power, at first the military power

and then the state power generally, to the counter-revolutionary higher command of the army.

Such is the course of the historical events which between May 3-4 and July 16-17 rendered class antagonisms deeper and keener, and which after July 17 enabled the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie to accomplish that which already on May 3-4 had become clearly outlined as its programme and tactics, its immediate aim and the "clean" means which were to lead to the achievement of that aim.

Nothing from a historical point of view can be more puerile, more pitiful theoretically and ridiculous practically, than the philistine whining (indulged in also, it should be said, by L. Martov) over July 17 and the assertion that the Bolsheviks somehow managed to inflict defeat upon themselves, that it was caused by their own "adventurism," and so on and so forth. All this whining, all this moralising to the effect that one should not have participated (in an attempt to lend a "peaceful and organised" character to the entirely justified dissatisfaction and indignation of the masses!), is either sheer apostasy, when proceeding from Bolsheviks, or the usual expression of the usual state of fright and confusion of the petty-bourgeois. As a matter of fact, the movement of July 16-17 grew out of the movement of May 3-4 as inevitably as summer follows spring. It was the unconditional duty of the proletarian party to remain with the masses and endeavor to lend as peaceful and organised a character as possible to their justified action, and not to stand aside and wash their hands like Pontius Pilate on the pedantic plea that the masses were not organised to the last man and that in their movement excesses are sometimes committed—as though no excesses had been committed on May 3-4, as though there has ever in history been a serious movement of the masses in which excesses were not committed!

And the defeat of the Bolsheviks after July 17 followed with historical inevitability from the whole preceding course of events; for on May 3-4 the petty-bourgeois masses and their leaders, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were not yet tied by the offensive on the war front and had not yet become entangled by their petty deals with the bourgeoisie in the "Coalition Cabinet," whereas by July 17 they had become so tied and entangled that they could not but signify their readiness to co-operate (in repressions, calum-

nies and butcher's work) with the counter-revolutionary Cadets. On July 17 the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks finally sank into the cesspool of counter-revolution, because they had been sliding towards it throughout May and June by their participation in the Coalition Cabinet and their approval of the policy of an offensive on the war front.

We may appear to have deviated from our subject, namely, the suppression of *Pravda*, in order to give a historical estimate of the events of July 17. But it only appears so, for in reality the one cannot be understood without the other. We have seen that, if one discerns the essence of the matter and the connexion between events, the closing down of *Pravda*, the arrests and other forms of persecution of the Bolsheviks are but the realisation of the old programme of the counter-revolution and of the Cadets in particular.

It would now be highly instructive to examine *who* precisely it was that carried this programme into effect, and by what methods.

Let us consider the facts. On July 15-16 the movement was growing; the masses were seething with indignation owing to the inactivity of the government, the high cost of living, economic disruption and the offensive at the front. The Cadets withdrew, playing at resigning and presenting an ultimatum to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and leaving them, who were tied to power but had no power, to pay for the defeat and the indignation of the masses.

On July 15-16 the Bolsheviks were trying to restrain the masses from action. This has been acknowledged *even* by an eye-witness from *Dyelo Naroda*, who recounted what took place in the Grenadier Regiment on July 15. On the evening of July 16, the movement broke its banks and the Bolsheviks drew up an appeal explaining that the movement must maintain a "peaceful and organised" character. On July 17, provocative shots from the Right increased the number of victims of the firing on both sides. It must be pointed out that the promise of the Executive Committee to investigate the incidents, to issue bulletins twice a day, etc., etc., has remained an empty promise! The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did nothing whatever, did not publish *even* a complete list of the dead on both sides!

On the night of July 17 the Bolsheviks drew up an appeal,

which was printed in *Pravda* that same night, calling for the cessation of the demonstration. But that same night there began, first, a movement of counter-revolutionary troops into Petrograd (apparently upon the summons or with the consent of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, of their Soviets—a “delicate” point, regarding which, of course, strict silence is maintained even now, when every atom of necessity for secrecy has disappeared!). Secondly, that very same night raids on the Bolsheviks were begun by military cadets and similar elements acting upon the instructions of the Commander of the Forces, Polovtsev, and of the general staff. On the night of July 17, the *Pravda* office was raided. On July 18-19, the printing plant of *Trud* was wrecked; a workingman by the name of Voynov was killed in broad daylight for carrying *Listok Pravdy* from the printing office; house searches and arrests were undertaken among the Bolsheviks and revolutionary regiments disarmed.

Who started all this? Not the government and not the Soviet, but the counter-revolutionary military gang centred around the general staff and acting in the name of the “intelligence service” and circulating the fabrication of Pereverzev and Alexinsky in order to “arouse the ire” of the army, and so forth.

The government is absent; the Soviets are absent; they are trembling for their own fate: they receive message after message to the effect that the Cossacks may come and smash them. The Black Hundred and Cadet press, which led the hounding of the Bolsheviks, is beginning to hound the Soviets. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have fettered themselves hand and foot by their own policy. It was as fettered people that they called (or tolerated the calling of) counter-revolutionary troops to Petrograd. And that fettered them still more. They have sunk to the bottom of the hideous counter-revolutionary cesspool. They have cravenly dismissed their own commission, appointed to investigate the “case” of the Bolsheviks. They basely surrendered the Bolsheviks to the counter-revolutionaries. They abjectly participated in the demonstration on the occasion of the funeral of the Cossacks, and thus kissed the hand of the counter-revolutionaries.

They are fettered; they are at the bottom of the pit.

They toss uneasily; they present the government to Kerensky, then they go to Canossa to the Cadets, then they organise a “Zemsky

Sober" \* or a "coronation" of the counter-revolutionary government in Moscow, Kerensky dismisses Polovtsev.

But nothing comes of all this uneasy tossing; the essence of the situation remains unchanged. Kerensky dismisses Polovtsev, but at the same time gives shape and legality to Polovtsev's *measures* and to his policy: he suppresses *Pravda*, he introduces capital punishment for the soldiers, he forbids the holding of meetings at the front, he continues to arrest Bolsheviks (even Kollontai!) in accordance with Alexinsky's programme.

The "essence of the constitution" in Russia is being revealed with striking clarity: the offensive at the front and the coalition with the Cadets in the rear have cast the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks into the cesspool of counter-revolution. *In reality*, the state power is passing into the hands of the counter-revolution, into the hands of the military gang. Kerensky and the government of Tsereteli and Chernov are *but a screen for it*; they are compelled to create *post factum* a legal foundation for its measures, actions and policies.

The haggling that is going on between the Cadets and Kerensky, Tsereteli and Chernov is of secondary significance, if not entirely insignificant. Whether in this haggling the Cadets win, or whether Tsereteli and Chernov hold out "alone," will in nowise affect the essence of the situation. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have swung over to counter-revolution (forced by the policy they have been pursuing since May 19)—and that is the fundamental, the main and decisive fact.

The cycle of party development is complete. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks sank steadily from their "confidence" in Kerensky on March 13 to May 19, which bound them to the counter-revolution, and then to July 18, when they reached the very depths of counter-revolution.

A new phase is beginning. The victory of counter-revolution is causing disillusionment on the part of the masses with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, and is opening the way for the adoption by the masses of a policy of supporting the revolutionary proletariat.

*Rabochiy i Soldat*, August 17 and 18, 1917.

\* National assembly.—Ed.

J. Stalin

## THE NEW GOVERNMENT

THE Ministerial game of leap-frog has come to an end. A new government has been formed. Cadets, pro-Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks—such is the composition of the government.

The Cadet Party is satisfied. The principal demands of the Cadets have been accepted. These demands will serve as the basis of the activities of the new government.

The Cadets wanted the government strengthened at the expense of the Soviets, they wanted the government to be independent of the Soviets. The Soviets, guided by the “bad shepherds,” the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, conceded this, thus signing their own death-warrant.

The Provisional Government as the sole power—this is what the Cadets have achieved.

The Cadets demanded the “sanation of the army,” *i.e.*, “iron discipline” in the army, subordination of the army only to the immediate officers who, in their turn, were to be subordinated only to the government. The Soviets, guided by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, also conceded this and thus disarmed themselves in the interests of... “saving the country.”

The Soviets deprived of the army, the army subordinated only to the government—this is what the Cadets have achieved.

The Cadets demanded unconditional unity with the Allies. The Soviets “resolutely” took this path in the interests of... “national defence,” forgetting their “internationalist” declarations. And the so-called “programme of July 8” was left hanging in the air.

“Ruthless war,” “war to the end”—this is what the Cadets have achieved.

Listen to the Cadets themselves:

The demands of the Cadets undoubtedly served as the basis of the activities of the whole government... Precisely for this reason, since the principal demands of the Cadets were adopted, the Party thought it no longer necessary to continue the controversy over specifically Party disagreements.

For the Cadets know that under present conditions

very little time and possibilities will be left for the democratic elements of the notorious programme of July 8. (See *Ryech.*)

Clear, one would think.

There was a time when the Soviets were creating a new life, introducing revolutionary changes and compelling the Provisional Government to consolidate these changes in decrees and orders.

This was in March-April.

At that time the Provisional Government walked in the leading strings of the Soviets and its non-revolutionary form covered the revolutionary measures of the Soviets.

Now the time has come when the Provisional Government has turned round and is introducing counter-revolutionary "changes," and the Soviets find themselves "compelled" tacitly to endorse them in their wishy-washy resolutions.

Now the Central Executive Committee, this representative of all the Soviets, is walking in the leading strings of the Provisional Government, covering the counter-revolutionary face of the latter with revolutionary phraseology.

Evidently, the rôles have changed, and they have not changed in favour of the Soviets.

Yes, the Cadets have reason to be "satisfied."

Whether this will be for long, the near future will show.

*Rabochiy i Soldat*, July 26, 1917.

V. I. Lenin

## LESSONS OF THE REVOLUTION

EVERY revolution involves a severe crisis in the lives of vast masses of the people. Unless the time is ripe for such a crisis, no real revolution can take place. And just as a crisis in the life of an individual teaches him a great deal and is fraught with suffering and emotional stress, so also a revolution teaches a whole people many a rich and valuable lesson in a very short space of time.

During a revolution millions and tens of millions of people learn in a week more than they do in a year of their ordinary somnolent life. For during a severe crisis in the life of a people it becomes particularly apparent what aims the various classes of the people



are pursuing, what forces they control, and what methods they resort to in action.

It behooves every class conscious worker, every soldier and every peasant carefully to ponder the lessons of the Russian Revolution, particularly now, at the beginning of August, when it has become obvious that the first stage of our revolution has ended in failure.

What indeed were the working class and peasant masses striving for when they made the revolution? What did they expect of the revolution? They expected, as we know, freedom, peace, bread and land.

But what do we see now?

Instead of freedom, the old despotic rule is beginning to be re-established. Capital punishment is being introduced for the soldiers at the front. Peasants are being prosecuted for arbitrary seizure of the landed estates. The printing plants of workers' newspapers are being smashed. Workers' newspapers are being suppressed without trial. Bolsheviki are being arrested, often without charges being preferred or upon charges obviously based on calumny. It may be argued that the prosecution of the Bolsheviki does not constitute a violation of freedom, for only definite individuals are being prosecuted and on definite charges. But such an argument would be a deliberate and obvious untruth; for what justification can there be for wrecking printing presses and suppressing newspapers on account of the crimes of individual persons, even if these charges are proved and established by court of law? It would be a different thing if the government had legally declared the whole Party of the Bolsheviki, their whole policy and views, to be criminal. But everybody knows that the government of a free Russia could not, and did not, do anything of the kind.

The main thing is that the newspapers of the landlords and capitalists furiously abused the Bolsheviki for their opposition to the war and for their hostility to the landlords and the capitalists, and demanded the open arrest and prosecution of the Bolsheviki, even at a time when not a single charge had been trumped up against a single Bolshevik. The people want peace. But the revolutionary government of free Russia has again started a war of conquest on the basis of the very secret treaties which the former Tsar Nicholas II concluded with the British and French capitalists in order that

the Russian capitalists might plunder other nations. These secret treaties have remained unpublished to this very day. The government of free Russia has resorted to subterfuges and refrained from proposing a just peace to all the nations.

There is no bread. Famine is again looming. Everybody can see that the capitalists and the rich are shamelessly cheating the treasury in the matter of military supplies (the war is now costing the people fifty million rubles daily), that they are raking in untold profits as a result of high prices, while nothing whatever is being done to establish a rigid control by the workers over the production and distribution of goods. The capitalists are becoming more brazen every day, throwing workers on to the streets at a time when the people are suffering from lack of commodities. A vast majority of the peasants at congress after congress have loudly and clearly proclaimed the ownership of land by the landlords to be an injustice and a robbery. But a government which calls itself revolutionary and democratic has been leading the peasants by the nose for months and deceiving them by promises and delays. For months Minister Chernov was not allowed by the capitalists to issue laws prohibiting the sale and purchase of land. And when finally this law was passed, the capitalists started an infamous campaign of vilification against Chernov and are continuing this campaign to the present day.

The government has become so brazen in its defence of the landlords that it is beginning to bring peasants to trial for "arbitrary" seizure of land.

They are leading the peasants by the nose by persuading them to wait for the Constituent Assembly. But the convocation of the Assembly is being all the time postponed by the capitalists. Now that, owing to the pressure of the Bolsheviks, the date of its convocation has been set for October 13, the capitalists are openly clamouring that this is "impossibly" short notice, and are demanding the postponement of the Constituent Assembly. . . . The most influential members of the party of capitalists and landlords, the Cadet, or the "People's Freedom," Party, such as Panina, are openly advocating that the convocation of the Constituent Assembly be postponed until the end of the war.

As to the land, wait until the Constituent Assembly. As to the Constituent Assembly, wait until the end of the war. As to the end

of the war, wait until we have won a complete victory. That is what it comes to. The capitalists and landlords, having a majority in the government, are simply mocking the peasants.

But how could this have happened, in a free country, after the overthrow of the tsarist power?

In a country that is not free, the people are ruled by a tsar and a handful of landlords, capitalists and bureaucrats, who are not elected by anybody.

In a free country, the people are ruled only by those who have been elected for that purpose by the people themselves. At the elections people are divided into parties, and as a rule each class of the population forms its own party; for instance, the landlords, the capitalists, the peasants and the workers each form their own party. Hence, the people are ruled in free countries by means of an open struggle of parties and by free agreement arrived at by these parties among themselves.

For a period of about four months following the overthrow of the tsarist power on March 12, 1917, Russia was ruled as a free country, *i.e.*, by means of an open struggle of freely formed parties and by free agreement among these parties. Hence, in order to understand the development of the Russian Revolution, it is above all necessary to study what were the chief parties, what class interests they defended, and what were the chief interrelations between these parties.

After the overthrow of the tsarist government the state power passed into the hands of the first Provisional Government. It consisted of representatives of the bourgeoisie, *i.e.*, the capitalists, joined by the landlords. The party of the Cadets, the chief party of the capitalists, occupied the foremost place as the ruling and government party of the bourgeoisie.

It was not by chance that this party secured power, although it was not the capitalists, of course, but the workers and peasants, the soldiers and sailors, who fought the tsarist troops and shed their blood for freedom. Power was secured by the party of the capitalists, because that class possessed the advantage of wealth, organisation and knowledge. Since 1905, and particularly during the war,

the class of capitalists and landlords associated with them in Russia made its greatest progress in the matter of its own organisation.

The Cadet Party had always been monarchist; it was so both in 1905 and from 1905 to 1917. After the victory of the people over the tsarist tyranny that party declared itself a republican party. The experience of history shows that when the people triumph over the monarchy capitalist parties always consent to become republican, in order the better to defend the privileges of the capitalists and their power over the people.

In word, the Cadet Party stands for "the freedom of the people." But in deed it stands for the capitalists, and it was immediately joined by the landlords, the monarchists and the Black Hundreds. The press and the elections are proof of this. All the bourgeois papers and the whole Black Hundred press began to sing in unison with the Cadets after the revolution. Not daring to come out openly, all the monarchist parties supported the Cadet Party at the elections, as, for instance, in Petrograd.

Having obtained state power, the Cadets bent every effort to continue the predatory war of conquest begun by Tsar Nicholas II, who had concluded secret predatory treaties with the British and French capitalists. By these treaties the Russian capitalists were promised, in the event of victory, the seizure of Constantinople, Galicia, Armenia, etc. As to the people, the government of the Cadets put them off with idle subterfuges and promises, deferring all matters of vital and essential interest to the workers and peasants until the Constituent Assembly, the date of the convocation of which, however, it did not designate.

The people, making use of their freedom, began to organise independently. The chief organisation of the workers and peasants, who form the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, was the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. These Soviets began to be formed as early as the February Revolution, and within a few weeks all class conscious and advanced members of the working class and the peasantry were united in Soviets in most of the large cities of Russia and in many rural districts.

The elections to the Soviets were carried on in complete freedom. The Soviets were genuine organisations of the masses of the people, the workers and peasants. The Soviets were genuine organisations

of the vast majority of the people. The workers and the peasants, clad in military uniform, were armed.

It goes without saying that the Soviets could, and should, have taken the entire power of the state into their hands. Pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly there should have been no other power in the state than the Soviets. Only thus could our revolution have become a true people's revolution, a true democratic revolution. Only thus could the toiling masses, who are genuinely anxious for peace, and who have no interest in a war of conquest, have begun to carry out a decided and firm policy, which would have put an end to the war of conquest and would have led to peace. Only thus could the workers and peasants have bridled the capitalists, who are making vast profits "in the war" and have reduced the country to a state of ruin and starvation. But in the Soviets only a minority of the deputies were on the side of the party of the revolutionary workers, the Bolshevik Social-Democrats, who demanded that the whole state power should be transferred to the Soviets. The majority of the deputies in the Soviets were on the side of the parties of the Menshevik Social-Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were opposed to the transfer of power to the Soviets. Instead of removing the government of the bourgeoisie and replacing it by a government of the Soviets, these parties insisted on supporting the government of the bourgeoisie, arriving at an agreement with it, and forming a common government with it. This policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie pursued by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, who enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the people, forms the main feature of the development of the revolution during the five months since its outbreak.

Let us first see how the compromise of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie proceeded, and then let us seek an explanation of the fact that the majority of the people trusted them.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries compromised with the capitalists in one form or another at every period of the Russian Revolution.

At the beginning of March 1917, as soon as the people had triumphed and the tsarist power had been overthrown, the capitalist

Provisional Government accepted Kerensky as one of its members as a "Socialist." As a matter of fact, Kerensky had never been a Socialist; he had only been a Trudovik, and had joined the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" only in March 1917, when to do so had become both safe and profitable. Through Kerensky, who was vice-chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, the capitalist Provisional Government immediately set about binding and taming the Soviet. The Soviet, *i.e.*, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who predominated in it, allowed itself to be tamed and agreed immediately after the formation of the capitalist Provisional Government to "support it to the extent that" it carried out its promises.

The Soviet regarded itself as a body for supervising and controlling the actions of the Provisional Government. The leaders of the Soviet established what was known as a Contact Commission for maintaining relations with the government. Within this Contact Commission the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Soviet conducted continuous negotiations with the capitalist government; they were in fact ministers without portfolios, unofficial ministers.

This state of affairs continued during the whole of March and almost the whole of April. The capitalists resorted to delays and subterfuges, endeavouring to gain time. Not a single step of any importance was taken by the capitalist government during this period in the direction of developing the revolution. It did absolutely nothing even in furtherance of its direct task, the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; it did not submit the question to the localities or even set up a Central Commission to handle the preparations. The government was concerned with only one thing, namely, with surreptitiously renewing the predatory international treaties concluded by the tsar with the capitalists of Great Britain and France, cautiously and unostentatiously thwarting the revolution and promising everything without fulfilling anything. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the Contact Commission acted like fools and were fed on grandiloquent phrases, promises and hopes. Like the crow in the fable, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks succumbed to flattery and listened with great satisfaction to the assurances of the capitalists that they valued the Soviets highly and would not take a single step without them.

But time passed and the capitalist government did absolutely nothing for the revolution. On the contrary, it managed during this period, in detriment to the revolution, to renew the secret predatory treaties, or rather to confirm them and "vitalise" them by supplementary and no less secret negotiations with the diplomats of British and French imperialism. It managed during this period, in detriment to the revolution, to lay the foundations of a counter-revolutionary organisation of (or at least of closer relations among) the generals and officers of the army on active service. In detriment to the revolution, it managed to start an organisation of industrialists, manufacturers and millowners, who, under the onslaught of the workers, were compelled to make concession after concession, but who at the same time began to sabotage production and to prepare at a favourable moment to bring it to a standstill.

However, the organisation of the advanced workers and peasants in the Soviets was steadily progressing. The best representatives of the oppressed classes felt that, notwithstanding the agreement between the government and the Petrograd Soviet, notwithstanding the oratory of Kerensky, notwithstanding the Contact Commission, the government was an enemy of the people, an enemy of the revolution. The masses felt that unless the resistance of the capitalists were broken, the cause of peace, the cause of freedom, the cause of the revolution would inevitably be lost. The impatience and bitterness of the masses grew.

They took an open form on May 3-4. The movement flared up spontaneously; nobody prepared it. The movement was so definitely directed against the government that one regiment rose in arms and appeared at the Mariinsky Palace to arrest the ministers. It became obvious to everybody that the government could not remain in power. The Soviets could (and should) have taken power without meeting the least resistance from any quarter. Instead, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks supported the collapsing capitalist government, entangled themselves in still further compromises and adopted measures that were still more fatal to the revolution.

The revolution is enlightening all classes with a rapidity and thoroughness unknown in normal, peaceful times. The capitalists, better organised, more experienced in the affairs of the class struggle and politics, learned its lessons faster than the others. Per-

ceiving that the position of the government was untenable, they resorted to a measure which for many decades now, ever since 1848, has been practised by the capitalists of other countries in order to fool, divide and weaken the workers. This measure is what is known as a "coalition" government, *i.e.*, a joint cabinet of members of the bourgeoisie and of renegades from socialism.

In countries where freedom and democracy have existed longest side by side with a revolutionary labour movement, namely, in Great Britain and France, the capitalists have frequently and successfully resorted to this method. When they enter a bourgeois cabinet the "Socialist" leaders inevitably prove to be pawns, puppets, screens for the capitalists, instruments for deceiving the workers. The "democratic and republican" capitalists of Russia resorted to this same method. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks let themselves be fooled at once, and the "Coalition" Cabinet, with the participation of Chernov, Tsereteli and Co., became a fact on May 19.

The fools of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties were jubilant and bathed self-admiringly in the rays of the ministerial glory of their leaders. The capitalists gleefully rubbed their hands at having found coadjutors against the people in the shape of the "leaders of the Soviets" and at having secured the promise of the latter to support "offensive actions at the front," *i.e.*, a renewal of the imperialist predatory war which for a while had come to a standstill. The capitalists were well aware of the puffed-up impotence of these leaders, they knew that the promises of the bourgeoisie—regarding control over, or even the organisation of, production, regarding a policy of peace, and so forth—would never be fulfilled.

And that is exactly what happened. The second phase in the development of the revolution, May 19 to June 22 or July 1, fully corroborated the expectations of the capitalists as to the ease with which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks could be duped.

While Plekhanov and Skobelev were fooling themselves and the people with grandiloquent speeches to the effect that one hundred per cent of the profits of the capitalists would be taken away from them, that their "resistance was broken," and so forth, the capitalists were steadily fortifying themselves. Nothing, absolutely noth-



ing, was undertaken during the whole of this period to curb the capitalists. The minister renegades from socialism were mere talking machines for distracting the attention of the oppressed classes, while the entire apparatus of state administration remained in the hands of the bureaucracy (the government officials) and the bourgeoisie. The notorious Palchinsky, Vice-Minister for Industry, was a typical representative of that apparatus, thwarting every measure aimed at the capitalists. The ministers talked and talked, but everything remained as of old.

The bourgeoisie used Minister Tsereteli particularly to fight the revolution. He was sent to "calm" Kronstadt when the local revolutionaries had the audacity to remove an appointed commissar. The bourgeoisie launched in its newspapers an incredibly vociferous, violent and vicious campaign of lies, calumnies and slander against Kronstadt, accusing it of desiring "defection from Russia," repeating this and similar absurdities in a thousand different modifications in order to terrify the petty bourgeoisie and the philistines. A most typical representative of the stupid and frightened philistines, Tsereteli was more "conscientious" than the rest in swallowing the bait of bourgeois calumny; he was more zealous than the rest in "fulminating against and subduing" Kronstadt, without realising that he was playing the rôle of lackey of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The result was that he was the instrument of the "compromise" arrived at with revolutionary Kronstadt, in accordance with which the commissar for Kronstadt is not simply appointed by the government, but is elected locally, and *confirmed* by the government. It was on such miserable compromises that the ministers who had fled from socialism to the bourgeoisie wasted their time.

Wherever it was impossible for a bourgeois minister to appear before the revolutionary workers or the Soviets in defence of the government, a "Socialist" minister—Skobelev, or Tsereteli, or Chernov—appeared (or, more correctly, was sent by the bourgeoisie) and faithfully performed the work of the bourgeoisie; he would do his level best to defend the cabinet, whitewash the capitalists and fool the people by making promise after promise and by counselling them to wait, wait, wait.

Minister Chernov particularly was engaged in bargaining with his bourgeois colleagues; down to July, down to the new "government

crisis" which began after the movement of July 16-17, down to the time when the Cadets withdrew from the cabinet, Minister Chernov was continuously engaged in the useful and interesting work, so beneficial to the people, of persuading his bourgeois colleagues, counselling them to agree at least to the prohibition of the sale and purchase of land. Such a prohibition had been most solemnly promised to the peasants at the All-Russian (Soviet) Congress of Peasants' Deputies in Petrograd. But the promise remained but a promise. Chernov proved unable to fulfil it either in May or in June, until the revolutionary tide, the spontaneous outbreak of July 16-17, which coincided with the retirement of the Cadets from the cabinet, made it possible to enact this measure. But even so it was an isolated measure, incapable of causing any palpable improvement in the struggle of the peasantry against the landlords for the land.

Meanwhile, at the front the counter-revolutionary imperialist task of renewing the imperialist predatory war, a task which Guchkov, so hated by the people, had been unable to fulfil, was being fulfilled successfully and brilliantly by the "revolutionary democrat" Kerensky, that newly-baked member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. He was intoxicated with his own eloquence, incense was burned to him by the imperialists, who were using him as a pawn; he was flattered; he was worshipped. All this because he served the capitalists religiously, persuading the "revolutionary army" to agree to renew the war which was being fought in fulfilment of the treaties concluded by Tsar Nicholas II with the capitalists of Great Britain and France, a war fought in order that the Russian capitalists might secure Constantinople, Lemberg, Erzerum and Trebizond.

Thus passed the second phase of the Russian revolution—May 19 to June 22. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie strengthened and consolidated itself, and, shielded and defended by the "Socialist" ministers, prepared to launch an offensive both against the external enemy and against the internal enemy, *i.e.*, the revolutionary workers.

On June 22, the party of the revolutionary workers, the Bolsheviks, were preparing for a demonstration in Petrograd with the purpose of giving organised expression to the steadily growing dissatisfaction and indignation of the masses. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, entangled in compromises with the

bourgeoisie and bound by the imperialist policy of an offensive at the front, were horrified, feeling that they were losing their influence among the masses. A general howl was raised against the demonstration, in which the counter-revolutionary Cadets united with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. Under their leadership, and as a result of their policy of compromise with the capitalists, the swing-over of the petty bourgeois masses to an alliance with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie became quite definite and strikingly obvious. Therein lies the historical significance and class meaning of the crisis of June 22.

The Bolsheviks called off the demonstration, not desiring to lead the workers into desperate collision with the united Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. But the latter, in order to retain at least a remnant of the confidence of the masses, were compelled to call a general demonstration for July 1. The bourgeoisie were beside themselves with rage, rightly discerning in this a certain vacillation of the petty-bourgeois democrats towards the proletariat; they decided to paralyse the action of the democracy by an advance at the front.

And indeed, July 1 marked an imposing victory for the slogans of the revolutionary proletariat, the slogans of Bolshevism, among the Petrograd masses. And on July 2 the bourgeoisie and the Bonapartist \* Kerensky solemnly announced that the offensive at the front had begun on the very day of July 1.

The offensive at the front meant in fact a resumption of the predatory war in the interests of the capitalists against the will of the vast majority of the toilers. That is why the offensive at the front was inevitably accompanied, on the one hand by a gigantic growth of chauvinism and the transfer of the military power (and consequently of the state power) to the clique of military Bonapartists, and on the other by the adoption of repressive measures against the masses, the persecution of the internationalists, the

\* Bonapartism (from the name of the two French emperors, Bonaparte)—an epithet applied to a government which, endeavouring to appear non-partisan when the struggle between the parties of the capitalists and the workers has grown particularly acute, actually utilises the situation for its own advantage. In reality serving the capitalists, such a government most of all dupes the workers by promises and petty doles.

abolition of the freedom of agitation and the arrest and shooting of those opposed to the war.

May 19 bound the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the triumphal chariot of the bourgeoisie with a rope; July 1 shackled them, as servants of the capitalists, with a chain.

With the renewal of the predatory war, the bitterness of the masses naturally gained rapidly in intensity. July 16-17 witnessed an outburst of indignation, which the Bolsheviks attempted to restrain, but which they were, of course, bound to endeavour to lend the most organised form possible.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, slaves of the bourgeoisie and enchained by their master, agreed to everything: they agreed to the drafting of reactionary troops into Petrograd, to the restoration of capital punishment, to disarming the workers and the revolutionary troops, to arrests, prosecutions and the suppression of newspapers without trial. The power which the bourgeoisie in the government were unable to secure entirely, and which the Soviets did not wish to secure, fell into the hands of the military clique, the Bonapartists, who of course were wholly supported by the Cadets and the Black Hundreds, by the landlords and capitalists.

And so from step to step. Having set foot on the inclined plane of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks slid headlong to the bottom. On March 13, in the Petrograd Soviet, they promised conditional support to the bourgeois government. On May 19 they saved it from collapse and allowed themselves to be made its servants and defenders by agreeing to an offensive at the front. On June 22 they united with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in a campaign of furious rage, lies and calumnies against the revolutionary proletariat. On July 2 they approved the resumption of the predatory war, which had already begun. On July 16 they consented to the summoning of reactionary troops, and this was the beginning of their final surrender of power to the Bonapartists. Down and down, from step to step.

This shameful *finale* of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties is not fortuitous: it is a consequence of the economic situation of the small masters, the petty bourgeoisie, as has been repeatedly borne out by the experience of Europe.

Everybody, of course, has observed how the small master bends every effort and strains every nerve to get on in the world, to become a real master, to rise to the position of an "established" employer, a real bourgeois. As long as capitalism rules, there is no other alternative for the small master except himself to become a capitalist (and that is possible at best for one in every hundred small masters), or to become a ruined man, a semi-proletarian, and ultimately a proletarian. The same is true in politics: the petty-bourgeois democrats, especially their leaders, tend to follow the bourgeoisie. The leaders of the petty-bourgeois democracy console their masses with promises and assurances as to the possibility of reaching agreement with the big capitalists; at best, they obtain from the capitalists for a very short time certain small concessions for a small upper stratum of the toiling masses; but in every decisive question, in every important matter, the petty-bourgeois democracy are always to be found in the wake of the bourgeoisie, as a feeble appendage of the bourgeoisie, an obedient tool in the hands of the financial kings. The experience of Great Britain and France has proved this over and over again.

The experience of the Russian Revolution from February to July 1917, when events developed with unusual rapidity, particularly under the influence of the imperialist war and the profound crisis arising therefrom—that experience has most strikingly and palpably confirmed the old Marxist truth concerning the instability of the position of the petty bourgeoisie.

The lesson of the Russian Revolution is that there is no escape for the masses from the iron grip of war, famine and enslavement to the landlords and capitalists, unless they completely break with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, unless they clearly recognise the treacherous rôle of the latter, unless they renounce all compromise with the bourgeoisie and decidedly come over to the side of the revolutionary workers. Only the revolutionary workers, if supported by the poor peasants, can smash the resistance of the capitalists and lead the people to the conquest of the land without compensation, to complete freedom, to salvation from famine, the cessation of the war, and to a just and lasting peace.

September 12-13, 1917.

## POSTSCRIPT

This article, as is apparent from the text, was written at the beginning of August.

The history of the revolution during the month of August has fully corroborated what was said in this article. Then, at the end of August, the Kornilov revolt created a new turn in the revolution, by clearly showing the people that the Cadets, in alliance with the counter-revolutionary generals, are striving to disperse the Soviets and to restore the monarchy. How strong this new turn of the revolution is, and whether it will succeed in putting an end to the ruinous policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the near future will show.

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J. StalinSPEECHES AT THE SIXTH CONGRESS OF THE R.S.-D.L.P.  
(BOLSHEVIKS) AUGUST 8-16, 1917

## I.

## REPORT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION

THE question of the present moment is the question of the fate of our revolution, of the forces which are driving the revolution forward, of the forces which are undermining it.

What did the revolution spring from? From a coalition of four forces: the proletariat, the peasantry, the liberal bourgeoisie and Allied capital. Why did the proletariat go into the revolution? Because it is the mortal enemy of tsarism. Why did the peasantry go into the revolution? Because it had confidence in the proletariat and longed for land. Why did the liberal bourgeoisie go into the revolution? Because during the progress of the war it became disappointed with tsarism. It thought that tsarism would give it the opportunity of conquering new territory. Having no hope of increas-

ing the capacity of the home market it took the path of least resistance, the path of expansion of the foreign market. But it made a mistake: tsarism and its troops could not even protect the frontiers and surrendered fifteen provinces to the enemy. Hence the liberal bourgeoisie's betrayal of tsarism.

But what about Allied capital? It regarded Russia as an auxiliary enterprise to serve its imperialist objectives. Meanwhile, tsarism, which in the first two years raised hopes of maintaining the unity of the front, began to incline towards a separate peace. Hence Allied capital's betrayal of tsarism.

Tsarism proved to be isolated and quietly and peacefully passed away.

Although marching together, the four forces of the February Revolution pursued different aims. The liberal bourgeoisie and Allied capital wanted a little revolution for the purpose of waging a big war. But the masses of the workers and peasants did not go into the revolution for this purpose. They had other aims: (1) to put an end to the war, and (2) to conquer the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

This is the basis of the contradictions of the revolution.

The crisis of April 20 and 21 was the first manifestation of these contradictions. Milyukov made an attempt to transform passive imperialism into active imperialism. The mass movement resulted in a Coalition Government. As experience had shown, the principle of coalition was the surest weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie for the purpose of drugging the masses and of continuing to lead them. The moment the Coalition Government was formed the counter-revolution began to mobilise from top to bottom. Meanwhile, the war continued, economic chaos increased, the revolution continued and more and more assumed a socialist character. The revolution burst into the sphere of production—the question of control was raised. The revolution burst into the sphere of agriculture—the question was raised not only of confiscating the land but also of confiscating livestock and implements. The Bolsheviks were the heralds of the proletarian revolution and thus correctly defined its character. Those who proposed that we confine ourselves to consolidating the revolutionary gains were not revolutionaries. The policy of compromise chosen by the Mensheviks and Socialist-

Revolutionaries was doomed to impotence. No power could stop, there was no possibility of stopping the revolution half way. Thus, the fact that our revolution developed and marched forward compelled us to recognise the necessity of stepping over from the bourgeois revolution into the socialist revolution.

Some comrades said that as capitalism in our country is poorly developed it is utopian to raise the question of the socialist revolution. They would be right if there were no war, if there were no economic chaos, if the foundations of our national economy were not shaken. But this question of intervening in the economic sphere is raised in all countries as an essential question. In Germany this question was raised and settled without the direct and active participation of the masses. In Russia it is different. Here economic chaos has assumed more menacing dimensions. On the other hand, nowhere has there ever been such freedom in time of war as we have here. Then, also, there is the wide-scale organisation of the workers: in Petrograd, for example, 66 per cent of the metal workers are organised. Lastly, nowhere has the proletariat had such extensive organisations as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. All this precluded the possibility of nonintervention on the part of the masses of the workers in economic life. This is the real basis on which the question of the socialist revolution is raised here in Russia. Insofar as the workers actively intervene in the process of organising control and exchange, we raise the question of the socialist revolution here as a practical question. This is why the comrades who object to this point are wrong.

The fact that the revolution marched so far forward could not but have roused the vigilance of the counter-revolutionaries; it had to engender counter-revolution. This is the first factor in the mobilisation of the counter-revolution.

The second factor is the adventure undertaken under the policy of an offensive at the front, and a number of breaches of the line at the front, which robbed the government of all prestige and encouraged the counter-revolution which started an attack upon this government. Rumours are circulating to the effect that a period of wide-scale provocation has set in. Delegates from the front are of the opinion that both the offensive and the retreat, in short, all that



has occurred at the front, was deliberately arranged for the purpose of dishonouring the revolution and of overthrowing the "revolutionary" Cabinet. I do not know whether they are right or wrong, but it is remarkable that on July 2 the Cadets resigned from the government, on July 3 the July events began, and on July 4 news was received of the breach in the line at the front. It cannot be said that the Cadets resigned over the decision on the Ukrainian question: the Cadets had declared that it was necessary to settle the Ukrainian question. There is another fact which indicates that a period of provocation has really set in. I have in mind the shooting in the Ukraine. These facts should make it clear to the comrades that the breach in the line at the front was one of the facts that was intended to discredit the idea of the revolution in the eyes of the broad masses of the petty-bourgeoisie.

There is a third factor which served to strengthen the counter-revolutionary forces in Russia: Allied capital. If Allied capital, realising that tsarism was going towards a separate peace, betrayed Nicholas' government, there is nothing to prevent it from breaking with the present government if it proves incapable of maintaining the "united" front. Milyukov said at a meeting that in the international market Russia is regarded as the source of manpower, and that she gets money for this. And if it transpires that the new power, in the shape of the Provisional Government, is incapable of maintaining the united front in the offensive against Germany, it will not be worth while subsidising such a government. And without money, without credit, the government must collapse. This reveals the secret of the enormous strength displayed by the Cadets during the crisis. Kerensky and all his Ministers proved to be puppets in the hands of the Cadets. Wherein lay the strength of the Cadets? In the support which they received from Allied capital.

Two paths lie before Russia:

Either the war comes to an end, all financial ties with imperialism are broken, the revolution marches on, the foundations of the bourgeois world are shaken and the era of the workers' revolution sets in;

Or the other path: the continuation of the war, the continuation of the offensive, complete subordination to the orders of Allied capital and the Cadets—and then complete financial dependence upon

Allied capital (there were definite rumours in the Taurida Palace\* that America will provide \$8,000,000,000, will provide funds for restoring industry), and the triumph of the counter-revolution.

There can be no third path, no third path exists.

The attempt of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to claim that the demonstration of July 3 and 4—the demonstration of the workers who could no longer tolerate the policy of the capital—was an armed rebellion, is simply ridiculous. If we are to speak of those who are to blame we must bear in mind the objective conditions: (1) the development of the revolution into a socialist revolution; (2) the breach in the line at the front, which revealed to the petty-bourgeoisie the unfitness of the Coalition Government, and (3) Allied capital, which refused to subsidise the revolution. Among these forces the workers' demonstration is a tiny dot which is hardly noticeable. The only thing to blame for the demonstration was the arrogance of the counter-revolution. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries began to hit out at the Left, at the Bolsheviks, and thereby exposed the revolutionary front and surrendered themselves and us to the counter-revolutionaries.

On July 3 we proposed that a united revolutionary front be formed against the counter-revolution. Our slogan "All Power to the Soviets" means: create a united revolutionary front. But fearing to break away from the bourgeoisie they turned their backs on us, and this broke the revolutionary front to the advantage of the counter-revolutionaries. If we are to speak of those who are to blame for the counter-revolution, then the culprits are the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, the betrayers of the revolution. If we ask, wherein lay the strength of the Cadets who sitting in their offices issued instructions to the Central Executive Committee, if we ask whence they derived their strength, there can be only one answer: Allied capital, the fact that Russia needs money, needs an internal loan which the bourgeoisie will not grant, or guarantees for a foreign loan which Allied capital will not give because it dislikes the policy of the Coalition Government. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, Allied capital and the High Command—these are the three props of the counter-revolution. Our misfortune is that Russia is a petty-

\* The seat of the former State Duma and since the February Revolution the headquarters of the Soviet.—Ed.

bourgeois country which follows the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who compromise with the Cadets; and until the peasantry is disillusioned with the idea of compromise between the upper and lower strata we shall continue to suffer and the revolution will fail.

But the subterranean forces of the revolution do not slumber. As long as the war continues, as long as economic chaos continues, no repressive measures, no executions, no Moscow Conferences will save the government from fresh outbreaks. The peasantry will not receive land, the workers will not receive control over production, the soldiers will be restored to their former slavery. Delegates from the front report that the idea of bloody vengeance is maturing in the minds of the soldiers, and as long as the counter-revolution triumphs new outbreaks and new battles are absolutely inevitable. And if the counter-revolutionaries manage to hold on for a month or two it will be only because the principle of coalition still prevails.

What is the Provisional Government? It is a puppet, a miserable screen behind which stand the Cadets, the military clique and Allied capital—the three props of the counter-revolution. Were it not for the “Socialist” Ministers in the government the counter-revolutionaries might have been overthrown by now. But the characteristic feature of the present moment is that the counter-revolutionary measures are being carried out with the hands of the “Socialists.” It is only because this screen exists that the counter-revolution can hold on for a month or two. But insofar as the forces of the revolution are developing there will be outbreaks, and the time will come when the workers will rouse and rally around themselves the poor strata of the peasantry, will raise the banner of the workers’ revolution and usher in the era of the socialist revolution in the West. [*Reads resolution.*]

I would like to explain one passage in the resolution: until July 3 a peaceful victory, the peaceful transfer of power to the Soviets, was possible. Had the Congress of Soviets decided to take power I think the Cadets would not have dared to come out openly against the Soviets, for such a step would have been doomed to failure from the very outset. But now that the counter-revolution has organised and consolidated itself it is utter nonsense to say that the Soviets can take over power peacefully. The peaceful period of the revolu-

tion has come to an end; the non-peaceful period, the period of clashes and outbreaks, has set in....

## II.

## REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

On Point 1. "What forms of fighting organisations does the reporter propose in place of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies?" My reply is that the question is not presented properly. I did not oppose the Soviets as a form of working class organisation; a slogan is not determined by the form of organisation of the revolutionary body, but by the content which is the flesh and blood of that body. If the Cadets were members of the Soviets we would never have advanced the slogan of transferring power to them.

We have now advanced the slogan of transferring power to the proletariat and the poor peasantry. Hence, it is not a question of form, but of the *class* to which power is transferred; it is a question of the composition of the Soviets.

The Soviet is the most expedient form of organisation of the working class struggle for power; but the Soviets are not the only type of revolutionary organisation. This form is purely Russian; abroad we have seen in this rôle the Municipalities during the Great French Revolution and the Central Committee during the Paris Commune; and even here in Russia the idea of a Revolutionary Committee was mooted. Perhaps the Workers' Section will be the most convenient form for the struggle for power.

But we must be quite clear about the point that it is not the question of form that is decisive.

The really decisive question is whether the working class is ripe for the dictatorship; all the rest will come, will be brought about by the creativeness of the revolution.

On Points 2 and 3. What practical shape will our attitude take towards the existing Soviets? The reply to this is quite clear. As far as transferring all power to the Central Executive Committee is concerned, this slogan is obsolete. And this is the only point we are discussing. The question of overthrowing the Soviets is an invention. Nobody here has raised it. The fact that we are proposing to withdraw the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" does not

mean "Down with the Soviets!" And although we are withdrawing the slogan we are not even resigning from the Central Executive Committee, miserable as its rôle has been recently.

The local Soviets have still a part to play, for they must defend themselves against the attacks of the Provisional Government, and in this struggle we will support them. Thus, I repeat: the withdrawal of the slogan to transfer power to the Soviets does not mean "Down with the Soviets." "Our attitude towards those Soviets in which we have the majority" is one of the greatest sympathy. Let these Soviets live and grow strong. But *strength* no longer lies in the Soviets. Formerly, the Provisional Government issued decrees and the Executive Committee issued counter-decrees, and it was only the latter that acquired the force of law. Recall the case of Order No. 1. Now, however, the Provisional Government ignores the Central Executive Committee. The decision that the Soviet be represented on the commission for investigating the events of July 3-5 was never withdrawn by the Soviet; but it was not carried out on Kerensky's orders. It is not now a question of winning a majority in the Soviets, which in itself is very important, but of sweeping away the counter-revolution.

On Point 4. About a more concrete definition of the concept "poor peasantry," and what are the forms of its organisation? My reply is that the term "poor peasantry" is not a new one. It was introduced into Marxian literature by Comrade Lenin in 1905; since then it has been used in nearly every issue of *Pravda* and found a place in the resolutions of the April Conference.\*

The poor strata of the peasantry are those strata which disagree with the upper stratum of the peasantry. The Soviet of Peasant Deputies, which "represents" 80,000,000 peasants (counting women) is the organisation of the upper strata of the peasantry. The lower strata of the peasantry are waging a fierce struggle against the "Soviet" policy. While the head of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, Chernov, and also Avksentyev and others, are urging the peasantry not to seize the land immediately but to wait until the land question is settled by the Constituent Assembly, the peasants, in spite of this advice, are seizing the land and ploughing it up, are seizing

\* The All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party which met May 7-12 (April 24-29, old calendar), 1917. See pp. 35-52.—*Ed.*

farm implements, etc. News of this sort comes from Penza, Voronezh, Vityebsk, Kazan and a number of other provinces.

This alone clearly reveals the division of the rural population into lower and upper strata, reveals that the peasantry no longer exists as a united whole. The upper strata mainly follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries; the lower strata, however, cannot live without land, and they stand in opposition to the Provisional Government. These are the peasants who have little land, one horse, or no horses, etc. These are joined by the strata which have almost no land, the semi-proletarian strata.

It would be unwise in a revolutionary period not to attempt to reach an agreement with these strata of the peasantry; but at the same time the poor strata of the peasantry must be organised separately and rallied around the proletarians.

It is difficult to say what form the organisation of these strata will take. At present the lower strata of the peasantry are either organising in unauthorised Soviets, or are trying to capture the existing Soviets. Thus, in Petrograd about six weeks ago, a Soviet of Poor Peasants was organised (consisting of representatives of 80 military units and of factories) which is waging a fierce struggle against the policy of the Soviet of Peasant Deputies.

Generally speaking, the Soviets are the most expedient form; we must not speak in terms of *bodies*, however, but must indicate the *class content*; and we must also strive to induce the masses to distinguish between *form* and *content*.

Generally speaking, the question of form is not the main question. If the revolution takes the upgrade the organisational forms will be created. We must not let the question of form obscure the main question: to *which class* should power be transferred?

A *bloc* with the Defencists is impossible. The Defencist parties have bound up their fate with the bourgeoisie and the idea of a *bloc* extending from the Socialist-Revolutionaries to the Bolsheviks has collapsed. The fight in alliance with the poor strata of the peasantry, against the leaders of the Soviets, and to sweep away the counter-revolution—this is the immediate question. (*Applause.*)

## III.

## SPEECH IN REPLY TO DEBATE

Comrades, first of all I must correct certain matters of fact.

Comrade Yaroslavsky objects to my assertion that the Russian proletariat is the most organised, and points to the Austrian proletariat. But, comrades, I spoke about "red" organisation, and in no country is the proletariat organised in this way to the same extent as the Russian proletariat.

Comrade Angarsky is quite wrong in stating that I advocate the idea of uniting all forces. But we cannot help seeing that for different motives, not only have the peasantry and proletariat turned their backs on tsarism, but also the Russian bourgeoisie and foreign capital. This is a fact. And it is bad when Marxists ignore facts.

But later, the first two forces went into the camp of the revolution, the latter went into the camp of the counter-revolution.

Now I will deal with the subject itself. The question was dealt with most seriously by Comrade Bukharin, but even he failed to carry it to its logical conclusion. Comrade Bukharin asserts that the bourgeois imperialist has formed a *bloc* with the muzhik. But with which muzhik? There are different kinds of muzhiks in our country. A *bloc* has been formed with the Rights; but we have lower-class muzhiks who represent the poor strata of the peasantry. Now with these, no *bloc* could be formed. These have not formed a *bloc* with the big bourgeoisie; they follow the latter because of their ignorance, they are simply being deceived, they are being led.

Against whom is the *bloc* directed?

Comrade Bukharin has not told us. This *bloc* consists of Allied and Russian capital, the High Command and the upper stratum of the peasantry represented by Socialist-Revolutionaries of the Chernov type. This *bloc* has been formed against the lower peasantry and against the workers.

What is Comrade Bukharin's perspective? His analysis is fundamentally wrong. In his opinion, in the first stage we march towards a peasant revolution. But this revolution cannot but meet, cannot but coincide with the workers' revolution. It is impossible for the working class, which is the vanguard of the revolution, to refrain

from fighting for its own demands; therefore, I think Comrade Bukharin's scheme is not thought out.

The second stage, according to Comrade Bukharin, is the proletarian revolution supported by Western Europe, without the peasantry, who will have received land and therefore will have been satisfied. But against whom will this revolution be directed? In his toy scheme Comrade Bukharin gives no reply to this question. No other approach to the analysis of what is happening has been proposed.

And yet the situation is quite clear. Nobody now talks about dual power. Whereas in the earlier stage the Soviets represented a real force, now they are merely organs for uniting the masses, without any power. This is precisely why it is impossible "simply" to transfer power to them. Comrade Lenin in his pamphlet goes further and definitely states that there is no dual power, for all power has passed into the hands of the capitalists; and to advance the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" now would be Quixotic.

Whereas in the earlier stages no laws were effective without the sanction of the Executive Committee, now there is not even any talk about dual power.

You may capture all the Soviets now, but you will not have power!

During the District Duma elections we jeered at the Cadets, for they represented a miserable group which obtained only 20 per cent of the votes. Now they are jeering at us.

Why? Because, with the connivance of the Central Executive Committee, power has passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Comrades are in a hurry to organise a government; but you haven't got power yet!

The principal task now is to carry on propaganda urging the necessity for *overthrowing* the present government. We are not yet sufficiently prepared for this idea, but we must prepare for it.

The workers, peasants and soldiers must understand that they will get no liberty or land unless the present government is overthrown.

And so the question now is not one of organising a government, but of overthrowing one; when we get power into our hands we shall manage to organise it.



Now a few words to Comrades Angarsky and Nogin about socialism. Already at the April Conference we said that the time has come to take the first steps towards socialism.

[*Reads end of resolution of the April Conference "On the Present Situation."*]

The proletariat of Russia, operating in one of the most backward countries in Europe, among the masses of a small-peasant population, cannot set itself the aim of immediately bringing about socialist changes.

"But it would be a great mistake, and, in practice, even complete desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie, to deduce from this that the working class must support the bourgeoisie, or that it must confine its activities to limits acceptable to the petty-bourgeoisie, or that we must renounce the leading rôle of the proletariat in the work of explaining to the people the urgency of a number of practically ripe steps towards socialism."

The comrades are three months behind the times. What has happened during these three months? The petty-bourgeoisie has split up into various strata, the lower strata are deserting the upper strata, the proletariat is organising, chaos is increasing and this imperatively raises the question of introducing workers' control (for example, in Petrograd, the Donetz Region, etc.). All this favours the propositions adopted as far back as April, but these comrades are dragging us back.

Now about the Soviets. The fact that we are withdrawing the old slogan about Soviet power does not mean that we are opposing the Soviets. On the contrary, we can and must work in the Soviets, even in the Central Executive Committee, that organ of counter-revolutionary camouflage. Although the Soviets are now merely organs for organising the masses, we, always being with the masses, will not leave them until we are driven out. Do we not stay in the factory committees and in the municipalities, even though they have no power? If we remain in the Soviets we can continue to expose the tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

Now that the counter-revolution has fully revealed the connection that exists between our bourgeoisie and Allied capital it has become more obvious than ever that in our revolutionary struggle we must rely upon three factors: the Russian proletariat, the peasantry

and the international proletariat, for the fate of our revolution is closely bound up with the West European movement. (*Applause.*)

## IV.

REPLY TO PREOBRAZHENSKY ON POINT 9 OF THE RESOLUTION  
"ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION"

[*Stalin reads Point 9 of the Resolution.*]

9. The task of these revolutionary classes will then be to exert every effort to capture political power and to direct it, in alliance with the revolutionary proletariat of the advanced countries, towards peace and towards the socialist reorganisation of society.

PREOBRAZHENSKY: *I propose that the end of the resolution be amended to read as follows: "To direct it towards peace and, in the event of a proletarian revolution in the West, towards socialism."*

[*If we adopt the version proposed by the commission we will contradict the already adopted resolution of Comrade Bukharin.*]

STALIN: I am opposed to such an ending for the resolution. The possibility is not precluded that Russia will be the country to lay the road to socialism. Until now, no country has enjoyed such freedom as is enjoyed in Russia, no country has attempted to introduce workers' control in industry. Moreover, the base of our revolution is wider than that of Western Europe, where the proletariat confronts the bourgeoisie absolutely alone. Here the workers are supported by the poor strata of the peasantry. Lastly, in Germany, the apparatus of state works incomparably better than the imperfect apparatus of our bourgeoisie, which is itself a tributary to European capital. We must cast aside the obsolete idea that only Europe can show us the way. There is dogmatic Marxism and creative Marxism. I stand on the basis of the latter.

[THE CHAIRMAN: *I shall put Comrade Preobrazhensky's amendment to the vote. Rejected.*]

*Minutes of the Sixth Congress of the R.S.-D.L.P. (Bolsheviks), July 26-August 3, 1917. Moscow, 1934.*

V. I. LeninON KAMENEV'S SPEECH IN THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE STOCKHOLM  
CONFERENCE

COMRADE Kamenev's speech of August 6 in the Central Executive Committee concerning the Stockholm Conference cannot fail to arouse resentment from all Bolsheviks who are loyal to their party and their principles.

In the first sentence of his speech, Comrade Kamenev made a declaration of a formal nature which renders his speech positively monstrous. Comrade Kamenev declared that he spoke for himself personally: that "our fraction has not discussed this question."

Since when have individual members of an organized party begun to speak on important questions "for themselves personally"? Since the fraction has not discussed the question, Comrade Kamenev had no right to bring it up. This is the first conclusion to be drawn from his own words.

Second, what right had Comrade Kamenev to forget that there is a decision of the Central Committee of the Party against participating at Stockholm? If this decision has not been abrogated by a congress or by a new decision of the Central Committee, it is law for the Party. If it has been abrogated, Comrade Kamenev ought to have said so, and ought not to have spoken in the past tense: "We Bolsheviks have hitherto maintained a negative attitude towards the Stockholm Conference."

The conclusion again to be drawn is that not only had Kamenev no right to make this speech, but that he directly violated the decision of the Party; he spoke directly against the Party; he violated its will by not saying a word about the Central Committee's decision, which is binding for him. Yet this decision was in due time published in the *Pravda*, with an addendum saying that the representative of the Party would leave the Zimmerwald Conference should it express itself in favour of participating at Stockholm.

The arguments in favour of the "hitherto" negative attitude of the Bolsheviks towards participating at Stockholm were quoted by Kamenev incorrectly. He did not mention that the Stockholm

Conference will include social-imperialists, that it is shameful for a revolutionary Social-Democrat to have anything to do with such people.

Sad as it may be to admit it, we must admit that Starostin, often much confused, has expressed the point of view of revolutionary Social-Democracy a thousand times better, more correctly, with more dignity, than Kamenev. To go to confer with social-imperialists, with Ministers, with hangmen's aides in Russia—this is a shame and a betrayal. In such a case, one doesn't talk about internationalism.

Kamenev's arguments in favour of "changing" our view on Stockholm are ridiculously weak.

It has become evident to us—Kamenev said—that from this [??] moment Stockholm ceases [??] to be a blind tool in the hands of imperialist governments.

This is not true. There is not a single fact to back this, and Kamenev was not able to quote anything substantial. If the Anglo-French social-imperialists do not join the conference, while the Germans do, is this any fundamental change? Is this really any change from the standpoint of an internationalist? Can Kamenev already have forgotten the decision of our Party conference (May 12) concerning a perfectly analogous case, that of a Danish social-imperialist? \*

Over Stockholm—Kamenev is reported by the papers as saying—a broad revolutionary banner is beginning to wave, under which the forces of the world proletariat are being mobilised.

This is the emptiest declaration in the spirit of Chernov and Tsereteli. This is a glaring untruth. Not a revolutionary banner, but a banner of deals, compromises, forgiveness for social-imperialists, bankers' negotiations concerning the division of annexations—this is the banner which is really beginning to wave over Stockholm.

It is intolerable that a party of internationalists responsible before the whole world for revolutionary internationalism should compromise itself by flirting with the schemes of Russian and German social-imperialists, with the negotiations among the Ministers of the bourgeois-imperialist government, the Chernovs, Skobelevs and Co.

\* See V. I. Lenin, *The Revolution of 1917, Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Book II, p. 401.—Ed.

We have decided to build the Third International. We must accomplish this in spite of all difficulties. Not a step backward to deals with social-imperialists and renegades from socialism!

*Proletary [The Proletarian], August 29, 1917.*

## J. Stalin

### STOCKHOLM AGAIN

THE war is dragging on. Its bloody chariot is rolling along menacingly and inexorably. Step by step it is being transformed from a European war into a world war, dragging more and more states into its fatal trail.

Simultaneously, the significance of the Stockholm Conference is declining and disappearing.

The "fight for peace" and the tactics of "bringing pressure to bear" upon the imperialist governments proclaimed by the conciliators has been transformed into a "hollow sound."

The attempts of the conciliators to hasten the cessation of the war and to restore the International by means of agreements between the "Defencist majorities" in the various countries have met with utter failure.

The Stockholm undertaking of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, around which a close net of imperialist intrigue is being woven, must inevitably be transformed, either into an impotent parade, or into a plaything in the hands of the imperialist governments.

It is now clear to all that the tour of Europe undertaken by the delegates of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and the "socialist" diplomacy of the Defencists in arranging official luncheons for the representatives of Anglo-French social-imperialism, are not the way to restore the international fraternity of the workers.

Our Party was right in dissociating itself from Stockholm already at the April Conference.

The development of the war and the whole world situation are inevitably aggravating class antagonisms and are leading to the epoch of great social battles.

In this, and in this alone, can the democratic way of liquidating the war be found.

There is talk about the "evolution" of the views of the Anglo-French social-patriots, about their decision to go to Stockholm, etc. But does this really make any difference? Have not the Russian and German-Austrian social-patriots also decided (even before the Anglo-French!) to participate in the Stockholm Conference? Who can assert that this decision has hastened the cessation of the war?

Has the party of Scheidemann, which is participating in the Stockholm Conference, ceased to support its government, which is waging an offensive and seizing Galicia and Rumania?

Are not the parties of Renaudel and Henderson, who talk about "fighting for peace" and about Stockholm, at the same time supporting their governments which have seized Mesopotamia and Greece?

In the light of these facts, what significance can their *talk* in Stockholm have for the liquidation of the war?

Kind words about peace which conceal the resolute support of the policy of war and conquest—who does not know these old and hoary tricks for the imperialist deception of the masses?

It is said that circumstances have now changed compared with the past, and that in view of this, we ought to change our attitude towards Stockholm.

Yes, circumstances have changed, but they have changed, not in favour of Stockholm, but exclusively against it.

First of all, the change is that the war has been transformed from a European into a world war, and has expanded and deepened the general crisis to the utmost limits.

Hence the chances of an imperialist peace and of the policy of "bringing pressure to bear" upon the governments have been reduced to the extreme minimum.

The second change is that Russia has taken the offensive at the front and has adapted the internal life of the country, in the sense of curbing liberties, to the requirements of the offensive policy. For one must understand, after all, that an offensive policy is incompatible with the "maximum of liberties," that the turning point in the development of our revolution was reached as early as June.

Moreover, the Bolsheviki "found themselves" in jail, whereas the Defencists, transformed into offensivists, are playing the part of jailers.

Hence, the position of the adherents of the "fight for peace" has become intolerable, for whereas before it was possible to talk about peace without being exposed as a liar, now, however, after the offensive policy, which is supported by the "Defencists," words about peace coming from the lips of "Defencists" sound like mockery.

What does all this show?

It shows that "comradely" *talk* about peace at Stockholm and bloodshedding *deeds* at the front have proved to be absolutely incompatible, that the contradiction between them has become crying, self-evident.

Herein lies the inevitability of the failure of the Stockholm Conference.

In view of this, our attitude towards Stockholm has changed somewhat.

Before, we exposed the Stockholm undertaking. Now it is hardly worth exposing, for it is exposing itself.

Before, it had to be stigmatised as playing at peace, misleading the masses. Now, it is hardly worth stigmatising because one does not hit a man when he is down.

But from this it follows that the road to Stockholm is not the road to peace.

The road to peace avoids Stockholm and runs through the revolutionary struggle of the workers against imperialism.

*Rabochiy i Soldat*, August 27, 1917.

## J. Stalin

### THE RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE

THE Moscow Conference has come to a close.

After the "sharp clash between the two opposite camps," after the "sanguinary battle" between the Milyukovs and Tseretelis, after the "engagement" has ended and the wounded have been removed,

it is permissible to ask: What did the "battle" of Moscow end in; who won and who lost?

The Cadets are pleased and are rubbing their hands.

The Party of People's Freedom can pride itself on the fact—they say—that its slogans... have been recognised... as the slogans of the whole people (*Ryech*).

The Defencists are also pleased, for they are talking about the "triumph of democracy" (read: of the Defencists!) and assert that "democracy is emerging from the Moscow Conference strengthened" (*Izvestia*).

Bolshevism must be destroyed, said Milyukov at the Conference amidst the loud applause of the representatives of the "virile forces."

This is what we are doing, replies Tsereteli, for "an Exceptional Law has already been passed" against Bolshevism. Moreover, "the revolution" (read: counter-revolution) "is not yet experienced in the struggle against the Left danger"; give us time to acquire experience.

And the Cadets agree that it is better to destroy Bolshevism gradually, not at one stroke, and not with their own hands, but with other hands, the hands of these very "Socialist" Defencists.

The "committees and Soviets must be abolished," said General Kaledin, amidst the applause of the representatives of the "virile forces."

True, replied Tsereteli, but it is too early yet, for "the scaffolding cannot yet be taken away before the edifice of the free revolution" (read: counter-revolution) "is completed." Give us time to "complete it," and then the Soviets and committees will be removed.

And the Cadets agree that it is better to degrade the committees and Soviets to the rôle of simple adjuncts of the imperialist mechanism than to destroy them at one stroke.

As a result, we have "universal triumph" and "satisfaction."

It is not for nothing that the newspapers say that "greater unity has been established between the Socialist Ministers and the Cadet Ministers than there was before the conference" (*Novaya Zhizn*).

Who won, you ask?

The capitalists have won, for at the conference the government



pledged itself "not to permit the interference of the workers" (control!) "in the management of factories."

The landlords have won, for at the conference the government pledged itself not to introduce "any radical reforms in the sphere of the land question."

The counter-revolutionary generals have won, for the death penalty was approved at the Moscow Conference.

Who won, you ask?

The counter-revolution has won, for it has organised on an all-Russian scale and has rallied around itself all the "virile forces" of the country, much as Ryabushinsky and Milyukov, Tsereteli and Dan, Alexeyev and Kaledin.

The counter-revolution has won, for so-called "revolutionary democracy" has been placed at its disposal as a convenient shield against popular anger.

Now the counter-revolutionaries are not alone. Now the whole of "revolutionary democracy" is working for them. Now they have the "public opinion" of the "land of Russia" which Messieurs the Defencists will "steadily" influence.

The coronation of the counter-revolution—such is the result of the Moscow Conference.

The Defencists who are now chattering about the "triumph of democracy" do not even suspect that they have simply been hired as flunkies to serve the triumphant counter-revolutionaries.

This, and only this, is the political meaning of the "honest coalition" for which Mr. Tsereteli "prayed" and to which Messieurs Milyukovs have no objection.

A "coalition" between the Defencists and the "virile forces" of the imperialist bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat and the poor peasants.

Such is the result of the Moscow Conference.

Whether this counter-revolutionary "coalition" will last for long, the near future will show.

*Proletary*, August 30, 1917.

V. I. Lenin

## THEY DO NOT SEE THE WOODS FOR THE TREES

AT the session of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets on August 17, L. Martov said (we quote from the report in the *Novaya Zhizn*) that "Tsereteli's criticism is too mild," that "the government does not offer resistance to counter-revolutionary attempts on the part of the military" and that "it is not our aim to overthrow the present government or to undermine confidence in it."... "The correlation of forces is in reality such," Martov continued, "that there is no ground for demanding the passing of power to the Soviets. This could come up only in the course of a civil war, which at present is inadmissible." "It is not our intention to overthrow the government," Martov concludes, "but we must remind it that there are forces in the country other than the Cadets and the military. Those are the forces of revolutionary democracy, and on them the Provisional Government must rely."

These ideas of Martov's are remarkable, and it is worth while to dwell on them most attentively. They are remarkable in that they reproduce with unusual boldness the most widespread, the most pernicious, the most dangerous political errors of the petty-bourgeois mass, its most typical superstitions. Of all the representatives of this mass, Martov, as a publicist, is surely one of the most "Left," one of the most revolutionary, one of the most enlightened and clever. It is therefore much more useful to analyse his ideas than those of a Chernov, who parades with empty verbiage, or those of a stupid Tsereteli, etc. In analysing Martov's ideas, we analyse what is at present most reasonable in the ideas of the petty-bourgeoisie.

Extremely characteristic are, first of all, Martov's vacillations as regards the passing of power to the Soviets. Prior to July 17, Martov was *against* this slogan. After July 17, he is *for* it. Early in August, he is again against it, and note how monstrously illogical, how amusing his argumentation is from the point of view of Marxism. He is against it because, he says,

The correlation of forces is in reality such that there is no ground for demanding the passing of power to the Soviets. This could come up only in the course of a civil war, which at present is inadmissible.

What confusion! It appears, first, that prior to July 17 such transfer of power was possible *without* a civil war (sacred truth!), but it was just then that Martov was against such transfer of power. ... Second, it appears that after July 17, when Martov was *for* the passing of power to the Soviets, such transfer would have been possible without civil war; which is an obvious, glaring and flagrant untruth, because the facts are that on the night of July 17-18 the Bonapartists, supported by the Cadets, and lackey-fashion aided by the Chernovs and Tseretelis, brought the counter-revolutionary troops into Petrograd. To seize power peacefully under such conditions would have been absolutely impossible.

Third and last, it appears, according to Martov, that a Marxist or even a plain revolutionary democrat has a right to reject a slogan that correctly expresses the interests of the people and the interests of the revolution, on the ground that that slogan can be realised "only in the course of a civil war..." This is an obvious absurdity, an obvious renunciation of all class struggle, all revolution. For who does not know that the history of all revolutions the world over reveals, not an accidental, but an inevitable transformation of class struggle into civil war? Who does not know that it is precisely *after* July 17 that we see in Russia the beginning of civil war on the part of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, disarming of regiments, executions at the front, murder of Bolsheviks? It appears, don't you see, that civil war is "inadmissible" for revolutionary democracy just at a time when the course of events has, by sheer necessity, brought about a situation where civil war is started by the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

Martov became confused in a most unbelievable, amusing, helpless fashion.

Disentangling the confusion introduced by Martov, one must say:

It was before July 17 that the slogan of power passing into the hands of the then existing Soviets was the only correct one. At that time such passing of power was possible in a peaceful way, without civil war, because at that time there had been no systematic acts of violence against the masses, against the people, as there were

after July 17. At that time this slogan guaranteed a peaceful forward development of the whole revolution and particularly made it possible to eliminate peacefully the class struggle of parties *within* the Soviets.

After July 17, the passing of power to the Soviets became impossible without civil war, since, on July 17-18, power passed to a military Bonapartist clique supported by the Cadets and the Black Hundreds. It follows from this that all Marxists, all adherents of the revolutionary proletariat, all honest revolutionary democrats *must* now make clear to the workers and the peasants the radical change in the situation, a change which necessitates a new path for the passing of power to the proletarians and semi-proletarians.

Martov has advanced no arguments in defence of his "idea" of the inadmissibility of civil war "at present," in defence of his declaration that it is not his intention "to overthrow the present government." This opinion, particularly when expressed without motivation at a meeting of Defencists, inevitably smacks of the Defencist argument that civil war within is inadmissible while the enemy threatens from without.

We do not know whether Martov would have the courage to advance such an argument openly. Among the mass of the petty bourgeoisie this argument is one of the most popular. It is, of course, one of the cheapest. The bourgeoisie was not afraid of revolution and civil war at moments when the enemy threatened from without, as was the case in September 1870, in France, or in February 1917, in Russia. The bourgeoisie was not afraid to seize power at the price of civil war at moments when the enemy threatened from without. Just as little will the revolutionary proletariat reckon with this "argument" of liars and lackeys of the bourgeoisie.

One of the most flagrant theoretical errors committed by Martov, an error also highly typical of the whole circle of political ideas of the petty bourgeoisie, consists in confusing tsarist and monarchist counter-revolution generally with bourgeois counter-revolution. Here we have the specific narrowness or specific stupidity of a petty-bourgeois democrat who cannot break away from economic, political and ideological dependence upon the bourgeoisie, who grants it

priority, who sees in it an "ideal," who trusts its cries about the danger of a "counter-revolution from the Right."

This circle of ideas, or, more correctly, this thoughtlessness of the petty bourgeoisie, was voiced by Martov in his speech when he said: "To counterbalance the pressure exerted on it [the government] from the Right, we must organise a counter-pressure."

Here is a sample of philistine credulity and forgetfulness of the class struggle. It appears that the government is something above classes and above parties; that "pressure" is being brought to bear upon it too strongly from the Right, therefore one must press more strongly from the Left. Oh, wisdom worthy of Louis Blanc, Chernov, Tsereteli and all that despicable crew! How infinitely useful this philistine wisdom is for the Bonapartists; how they long to present the situation to "the foolish little peasants" in such a light as to make them believe that the present government is fighting both against the Right and Left, against the extremes only, in the meantime organising the state on a firm basis, introducing in practice real democracy—whereas in reality this Bonapartist government is a government of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie!

It is profitable for the bourgeoisie (and necessary for the perpetuation of its domination) to deceive the people by depicting the situation as if the bourgeoisie represented "the revolution in general, while counter-revolution threatens from the Right, from the tsar." It is only through the infinite stupidity of the Dans and Tseretelis, through the infinite conceit of the Chernovs and Avksentyevs, that this idea, nurtured by the conditions of life of the petty-bourgeoisie, is current among "revolutionary democracy."

Anyone who has learned anything from history or from Marxist doctrine, however, will have to admit that the cornerstone of a political analysis must be the question of *classes*: in behalf of what class is the revolution we speak of? In behalf of what class is the counter-revolution?

The history of France shows us that the Bonapartist counter-revolution emerged at the end of the eighteenth century (and then a second time in 1848-1852) on the basis of a counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, and in turn it paved the way for the restoration of a legitimate monarchy. Bonapartism is the form of government which grows out of a counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie where

democratic transformations and a democratic revolution are taking place.

One must purposely shut his eyes not to see how, in our very presence, Bonapartism is growing in Russia under very similar conditions. The tsarist counter-revolution is at present utterly insignificant; it has not a shadow of political importance; it plays no political rôle. The bugaboo of a tsarist counter-revolution is purposely put forward and made a fuss over by charlatans to frighten fools, to treat philistines to a political sensation, to distract the attention of the people from the real and serious counter-revolution. It is impossible to read without laughing the reasonings of a Zarudny, who makes a great point of worrying about the counter-revolutionary rôle of a back-yard organisation named "Holy Russia" while "not noticing" the counter-revolutionary rôle of the organisation of the entire bourgeoisie of Russia called the Cadet Party.

The Cadet Party is the main political force of the bourgeois counter-revolution in Russia. This force has splendidly consolidated around it all the Black Hundred elements, both at the elections and (which is still more important) in the apparatus of the military and civil administration and in the press campaign of lies, calumny and baiting—directed primarily against the Bolsheviks, *i.e.*, the party of the revolutionary proletariat, and then against the Soviets.

Slowly but surely the present government is following the political line which the Cadet Party has been systematically preaching and preparing since March 1917. It has renewed and is prolonging the imperialist war; it has stopped the peace "prattle"; it has given the Ministers the right to suppress newspapers, to disperse conferences, to make arrests and send into exile; it has restored capital punishment and executions of soldiers at the front; it is disarming the workers and the revolutionary regiments; it has flooded the capital with counter-revolutionary troops; it has begun to arrest and persecute the peasants for unauthorised "seizure"; it is shutting down factories and organising lock-outs—here is a far from complete list of measures which give the clearest picture of the bourgeois counter-revolution of Bonapartism.

And what about the postponed convocation of the Constituent Assembly and the coronation of Bonapartist politics with a *Zemsky Sobor* in Moscow—this step leading to the postponement of the

Constituent Assembly to the end of the war? Is this not a gem of Bonapartist politics? And Martov does not see where the main headquarters of the bourgeois counter-revolution is located.... Really, they do not see the woods for the trees.

What an infinitely dirty lackey's rôle the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, *i.e.*, the S.-R.'s and Mensheviks who dominated it, played in the question of postponing the convocation of the Constituent Assembly! The Cadets struck the keynote; they advanced the idea of postponement; they started a campaign in the press; they engineered a *Cossack Congress* to demand postponement. (A Cossack Congress! How could the Libers, Avksentyevs, Chernovs and Tseretelis refrain from acting as lackeys!). The Mensheviks and S.-R.'s ran after the Cadets like cockerels, they crawled at their master's whistle like a dog threatened with a whip.

Instead of giving the people a plain statement of the facts showing how brazenly, how shamelessly the Cadets have been delaying and hindering the convocation of the Constituent Assembly since March; instead of exposing the lying evasions and the assertions that it was impossible to convoke the Constituent Assembly at the appointed time, the Bureau of the Central Executive Committee promptly put aside all the "doubts" expressed even by Dan (even by Dan!) and despatched two lackeys of this collegium of lackeys, Bramson and Bronzov, to the Provisional Government with a report "on the necessity of postponing the elections to the Constituent Assembly till November 10-11...." A splendid prelude to the coronation of the Bonapartists by a *Zemsky Sobor* in Moscow. Whoever has not become altogether vile must join the party of the revolutionary proletariat. Without the victory of the revolutionary proletariat, peace for the people, land for the peasants, bread for the workers and all the toilers, *cannot be secured*.

*Proletary*, September 1, 1917.

J. Stalin

## ELECTION DAY

TO-DAY the elections to the Petrograd City Duma take place. The result depends upon you, comrades, workers, and you, comrades, soldiers. The elections are universal and equal. The vote of every soldier, of every working man and of every working woman will be equal to the vote of a capitalist, houseowner, professor and government official. On you, comrades, and on you alone will rest the blame if you are unable to utilise this right.

You were able to fight in the streets against the tsarist police—be able now to fight for your interests by voting for our Party!

You were able to defend your rights against the counter-revolution—be able now to refuse it your confidence in to-day's elections.

You were able to tear the mask from the traitors to the revolution—be able now to shout to them: "Hands off!"

First of all there comes before you *Milyukov's party, the Party of People's Freedom*. This party champions the interests of the landlords and capitalists. This party is opposed to the workers, peasants and soldiers, for it is opposed to workers' control of industry, opposed to transferring the landlords' land to the peasants, it is in favour of the death penalty for soldiers at the front. It was this party, the Cadet Party, which as far back as the beginning of June demanded an immediate offensive at the front which has cost the country hundreds of thousands of lives. It was this party, the Cadet Party, which strove for and at last achieved the triumph of the counter-revolution and repressions against the workers, soldiers and sailors. To vote for Milyukov's party means betraying yourselves, your wives and children, your brothers in the rear and at the front.

Comrades! *Not a single vote for the Party of People's Freedom!*

The next to come before you are the *Defencists, the parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries*. These parties champion the interests of the secured small proprietors of town and country. This is why, every time the class struggle assumes a decisive character they are to be found in the same camp as the landlords and capitalists against the workers, peasants and soldiers. This is what



happened in the July days when the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, disarmed and punished the workers and soldiers. This is what happened at the time of the Moscow Conference when these parties, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, endorsed the repressions and the death penalty against the workers and soldiers at the front.

One of the reasons why the counter-revolution achieved victory was the fact that the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties helped it to curb the revolution by arranging an agreement with the landlords and capitalists.

One of the reasons why the counter-revolution is becoming stronger now is the fact that the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties are shielding it from the anger of the people by carrying out its commands under the flag of the revolution.

To vote for these parties means voting for an alliance with the counter-revolution against the workers and the poor peasants.

Voting for these parties means voting in favour of endorsing arrests in the rear and the death penalty at the front.

Comrades! *Not a single vote for the Defencists, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries!*

And finally, the *New Life* group,\* list No. 12, comes before you. This group expresses the moods of the intellectuals without a base, who are divorced from life and the movement. This is why it is eternally oscillating between revolution and counter-revolution, between war and peace, between the workers and the capitalists, between the landlords and the peasants.

On one hand it is in favour of the workers, on the other hand it refuses to break away from the capitalists—this is why it so shamefully repudiates the July demonstration of workers and soldiers.

On the one hand it is in favour of the peasants, on the other hand it does not break away from the landlords—this is why it is opposed to the immediate transfer of the landlords' land to the peasants and proposes that we wait until the Constituent Assembly, the convocation of which has been postponed, perhaps forever.

In words, the *New Life* group is in favour of peace; in deeds, however, it is opposed to peace, for it *calls for support* for the

\* The group gathered around the journal *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*).—Ed.

Liberty Loan which is intended for the purpose of continuing the imperialist war.

But whoever supports the Liberty Loan helps to protract the war, helps imperialism, and in fact fights against internationalism.

In words, the *New Life* group is against repressions and prisons; in deeds, however, it is in favour of repressions and prisons, for it has entered into an alliance with the Defencists who support repressions and prisons.

But whoever enters into an alliance with the Defencists helps the counter-revolution, and in fact, fights against the revolution!

Comrades, learn to know people by their deeds and not by their words!

Learn to appraise parties and groups by their actions and not by their promises!

If the *New Life* group, while proposing to fight for peace, at the same time calls for support for the Liberty Loan, then know that it is bringing grist to the mill of the imperialist. If the *New Life* group, while flirting with the Bolsheviks sometimes, at the same time supports the Defencists, then know it is bringing grist to the mill of the counter-revolution.

To vote for this double-faced group, to vote for list No. 12, means entering the service of the Defencists, who in their turn are serving the counter-revolution.

Comrades! *Not a single vote for the New Life group!*

Our Party is the party of the urban and rural workers, the party of the poor peasants, the party of the oppressed and exploited.

All the bourgeois parties, all the bourgeois newspapers, all the vacillating and half-hearted groups hate and slander our Party. Why?

Because:

Our Party alone stands for the revolutionary struggle against the landlords and capitalists.

Our Party alone stands for the immediate transfer of the landlords' land to the Peasant Committees.

Our Party alone stands for workers' control of industry against all the capitalists.

Our Party alone stands for the democratic organisation of ex-

change between town and country against the profiteers and marauders.

Our Party alone stands for the complete liquidation of the counter-revolution in the rear and at the front.

Our Party alone fights staunchly to protect the revolutionary organisations of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

Our Party alone fights resolutely and in a revolutionary manner for peace and the fraternity of nations.

Our Party alone fights resolutely and staunchly for the conquest of power by the workers and the peasant poor.

Our Party and our Party alone is free from the stigma of having supported the death penalty at the front.

This is why the bourgeoisie and the landlords hate our Party so much.

This is why you must vote for our Party to-day.

Workers, soldiers, working-women!

*Vote for our Party, for list No. 6!*

*Proletary, September 2, 1917.*

## J. Stalin

### WE DEMAND!

EVENTS are moving fast. After the Moscow Conference—the surrender of Riga and the demand for repressions. After the unsuccessful campaign of slander against the soldiers at the front—provocateur rumours about a “Bolshevik plot” and fresh demands for repressions. After the exposure of these provocateur rumours—the open rebellion of Kornilov who demands the dismissal of the Provisional Government and the proclamation of a military dictatorship. And, as in the July days, Milyukov’s party, the Party of People’s Freedom, resigns from the Cabinet and by that openly supports Kornilov’s counter-revolutionary plot.

As a result—the march of Kornilov’s regiments on Petrograd for the purpose of establishing a military dictatorship, the dismissal of Kornilov by the Provisional Government, Kerensky’s announcement of a crisis, Kishkin’s resignation from the Constitutional

Democratic Party which is implicated in the plot, and the formation of the so-called revolutionary Directorate.

And so:

*It is a fact* that the counter-revolution needed the "Bolshevik plot" for the purpose of paving the way for Kornilov who was marching on Petrograd ostensibly for the purpose of "suppressing the Bolsheviks."

*It is a fact* that the bourgeois press, from *Russkaya Volya* [*Russian Will*] and *Birzhevka* \* to *Novoye Vremya* [*New Times*] and *Rech* [*Speech*], helped Kornilov by zealously spreading during those days the rumours about the "Bolshevik plot."

*It is a fact* that Kornilov's present action is merely the continuation of the machinations of the counter-revolutionary High Command, which surrendered Tarnopol in July and Riga in August in order to utilise the "setbacks" at the front as a means of achieving the "complete" triumph of the counter-revolution.

*It is a fact* that the Cadet Party is now, as it was in July, to be found in the camp of the traitors at the front and of the most arrogant counter-revolutionaries in the rear.

Our Party was right in denouncing the Cadets as the instigators of the bourgeois counter-revolution.

Our Party was right in calling for a resolute struggle against the counter-revolution and for the arrest of the "implicated" persons (Kaledin and others) as early as the beginning of June.

The counter-revolution did not start yesterday, and did not start with the Kornilov plot. It started, at any rate, in June, when the government, starting the offensive at the front, began to pursue a policy of repression; when the counter-revolutionary generals, after surrendering Tarnopol and throwing the blame upon the soldiers, secured the re-introduction of the death penalty at the front; when the Cadets, sabotaging the Cabinet as far back as July and relying for support upon Allied capital, established their hegemony in the Provisional Government; and lastly, when the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders of the Central Executive Committee, instead of breaking with the Cadets and uniting with the July demonstrators, turned their weapons against the workers and soldiers.

\* Abbreviation for *Birzhevye Vedomosti* (*Stock Exchange News*).—Ed.

This is a fact which it would be ridiculous to deny.

The fight now going on between the coalition government and the Kornilov party is not a fight between revolution and counter-revolution, but between two different methods of counter-revolutionary policy; and the Kornilov party, the sworn enemy of the revolution, does not hesitate, after surrendering Riga, to march against Petrograd for the purpose of preparing the conditions for the restoration of the old régime.

The workers and soldiers will take all measures to put up a determined resistance to Kornilov's counter-revolutionary gangs if they appear in revolutionary Petrograd.

The workers and soldiers will not permit the capital of Russia to be defiled by the dirty hands of the enemies of the revolution.

They will defend the battle-flag of the revolution with their lives.

But they will not defend it for the purpose of substituting for an alien dictatorship one that is no less alien, but for the purpose of paving the way for the complete triumph of the Russian Revolution.

To-day, when the country is gasping in the clutches of economic chaos and war and the ravens of counter-revolution are plotting its doom, the revolution must find within its own ranks the necessary strength and resources to save it from collapse and disintegration.

It is not the substitution of some "ruling" groups for others, and not playing at dictatorship that is needed to-day, but the utter liquidation of the bourgeois counter-revolution and resolute measures in the interests of the majority of the people of Russia.

With this in view our Party demands:

1. The immediate dismissal of the counter-revolutionary Generals in the rear and at the front, the appointment in their place of Generals elected by the soldiers and officers, and, as a whole, the complete democratisation of the army from top to bottom.

2. The restoration of the revolutionary soldiers' organisations, which alone are capable of establishing democratic discipline in the army.

3. The annulment of all repressions, and primarily of the death penalty.

4. The immediate placing of the landlords' land at the disposal of the Peasant Committees and the supply of agricultural implements to the poor peasants.

5. The legislative enactment of an 8-hour day and the organisation of democratic control over the factories, works and banks by bodies on which the representatives of the workers shall predominate.

6. The complete democratisation of the financial system, primarily, the ruthless taxation of capital and property and the confiscation of the scandalous war profits.

7. The organisation of proper exchange between town and country with the view to the towns receiving the required food supplies and the rural districts receiving the necessary manufactured goods.

8. The immediate proclamation of the right of the peoples of Russia to self-determination.

9. The restoration of liberties, the decreeing of a democratic republic and the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

10. The annulment of the secret treaties with the Allies and the presentation of terms for a universal democratic peace.

Our Party declares that unless these demands are conceded it will be impossible to save the revolution which for six months has been gasping in the clutches of war and general chaos.

Our Party declares that the only possible means of securing the satisfaction of these demands is a rupture with the capitalists, the complete liquidation of the bourgeois counter-revolution, and the transfer of power in the country to the revolutionary workers, peasants and soldiers.

This is the only way to save the country and the revolution from collapse.

*Rabochiy, September 10, 1917.*

J. Stalin

## THE PLOT CONTINUES

*Who are they?* Yesterday we wrote that the Cadets were the instigators of the counter-revolution. We based our statement not only on "rumours," but also on universally known facts such as the resignation of the Cadets from the Cabinet at the critical moments of the "surrender" of Tarnopol in July and the Kornilov plot in August. For it could not have been an accident that in July and in

August the Cadets were found in the camp of the traitors at the front and of the most arrant counter-revolutionaries in the rear, against the Russian people.

To-day, *Izvestia* and the Defencists, these sworn compromisers with the Cadets, unreservedly confirm the statement we made about the Cadets yesterday. The Defencists write:

Lvov did not conceal the fact that this [*i.e.*, a military dictatorship] was desired not only by General Kornilov, *but also by a certain group of public men* who at the present moment are at General Headquarters. (*Izvestia.*)

Thus:

*It is a fact* that General Headquarters are the headquarters of the counter-revolution.

*It is a fact* that the General Staff of the counter-revolution consists of "certain public men."

Who are these "public men"?

Listen further:

*It has been established beyond a doubt* that a number of public men who have very close ideological and personal connections with "representatives of the Cadet Party" are implicated in the plot. (*Izvestia.*)

Thus:

*It is a fact* that Messieurs the Defencists, who only yesterday were embracing the "virile forces" of the country in the persons of "representatives of the Cadet Party," are today compelled to rank them with the plotters against the revolution.

*It is a fact* that the plot has been organised and is being directed by "representatives of the Cadet Party."

Our Party was right when it asserted that the first condition for the victory of the revolution was a *rupture* with the Cadets.

*What are they counting on?* Yesterday we wrote that the Kornilov Party is the bitterest enemy of the Russian Revolution; that after having surrendered Riga Kornilov would not hesitate to surrender Petrograd in order to ensure the victory of the counter-revolution.

Today *Izvestia* unreservedly confirms our statement.

General Lukomsky, Chief of the General Staff, who is actually the spirit of the rebellion, reports that internecine warfare at the front in the event of the Provisional Government rejecting General Kornilov's demands may cause a breach in the line and the appearance of the enemy in places where we least expect him.

This sounds very much like a threat to surrender, say, Petrograd, does it not?

And here is an even more definite statement:

Evidently, General Lukomsky will not shrink from downright treachery in his efforts to ensure the success of the plot. His threat that refusal to carry out General Kornilov's demands may lead to civil war at the front, to the opening of the front to the enemy and to the disgrace of a separate peace, cannot otherwise be regarded than firm determination to come to an agreement with the Germans in order to ensure the success of the plot.

Do you hear: "Agreement with the Germans," "opening the front to the enemy," "separate peace"....

The Cadets "who are implicated in the plot" and who by their presence at General Headquarters are screening the "opening of the front to the enemy," "agreement with the Germans"—these are the real "traitors" and "betrayers"!

For months these "opening the front to the enemy" heroes have been throwing mud at our Party, accusing it of "treachery" and of taking "German money." For months the yellow hirelings of the banks on *Novoye Vremya*, and *Birzhevka*, *Ryech* and *Russkaya Volya* have been spreading this fable. But what has transpired? Now even the Defencists are compelled to admit that the treachery at the front was perpetrated by the officers and their ideological instigators.

Let the workers and soldiers remember this!

Let them know that the provocateur howls of the bourgeois press about the "treachery" of the soldiers and the Bolsheviks were *merely camouflage* for the purpose of concealing the actual treachery of the Generals and the "public men" of the Cadet Party.

Let them know that whenever the bourgeois press raises a howl about the "treachery" of the soldiers it is a sure sign that those who inspire this press have already prepared the ground for treachery and are trying to throw the blame upon the soldiers.

Let the workers and soldiers know this and draw the proper conclusions from it.

Do you want to know what they are counting on?

They are counting on "opening the front to the enemy" and on an "agreement with the Germans," hoping that the idea of a separate



peace will serve as a bait with which to entice the war-weary soldiers after them and to march them against the revolution.

The workers and soldiers will understand that no mercy must be shown to these traitors at General Headquarters.

*The plot continues...* Events are moving fast. New facts and rumours are flashing past us. There are rumours, as yet unconfirmed, of negotiations between Kornilov and the Germans. There is definite talk about an exchange of shots between Kornilov's regiments and the revolutionary soldiers near Petrograd. Kornilov's "Manifesto" has appeared in which he proclaims himself dictator, the enemy and grave-digger of the gains of the Russian Revolution.

But the Provisional Government, instead of meeting the enemy as an enemy, prefers to confer with General Alexeyev, negotiates with Kornilov again and again, and again and again tries to plead with the plotters who are openly betraying Russia.

And so-called "revolutionary democracy" is preparing for another "special conference on the lines of the Moscow Conference to be attended by representatives of all the virile forces of the country" (*cf. Izvestia*).

At the same time the Cadets, who only yesterday were howling about a "Bolshevik plot," are today mollified by the exposure of the plot, calling for "common sense" and "compromise" (*cf. Ryech*).

Evidently they want to "arrange" a new compromise with those very "virile forces" which, while shouting about a Bolshevik plot, are themselves organising a plot against the revolution and the Russian people.

But these compromisers are reckoning without their masters; for the real masters of the country, the workers and soldiers, want no conferences with the enemies of the revolution. The information received from the districts and regiments says in one voice that the workers are mobilising their forces, that the soldiers are standing to arms. Obviously, the workers prefer to talk with the enemy as an enemy.

Nor can it be otherwise: You don't confer with enemies, you fight them.

The plot continues—prepare to resist!

*Rabochiy*, September 10, 1917.

V. I. Lenin

## PEASANTS AND WORKERS

No. 88 of the *Izvestia* of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies of September 1 contains an exceedingly interesting article, one that should become one of the basic documents in the hands of every Party propagandist and agitator working among the peasantry, and in the hands of every class conscious worker leaving for the agricultural districts, or in contact with the agricultural districts.

This article is entitled "Model Instructions Compiled from 242 Instructions Presented by Delegates from the Localities to the First All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies in Petrograd in the Year 1917."

It is extremely to be desired that the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies publish particulars of these Instructions in the greatest possible detail (if it is absolutely impossible to publish them in full, which, of course, would be best of all). What is especially needed, for instance, is a complete list of the gubernias, uyezds and volosts concerned, with information as to how many Instructions came from each locality, the dates on which the Instructions were drawn up or presented, and an analysis of at least the chief demands, so that it might be seen whether there are differences between the various regions on various points. For instance, a district where land is held individually and one where it is held communally; districts populated by Great-Russians and districts populated by other nationalities; districts situated in the centre of the country and districts situated in outlying sections; districts which have never known serfdom, etc.; do they differ in any way in their attitude towards the abolition of private ownership of all *peasant* land, the periodic redistribution of land, the prohibition of hired labour, the confiscation of the landlords' implements and cattle, and so on and so forth? Without such detailed particulars a scientific study of the unusually valuable material contained in the peasants' Instructions is impossible. And we Marxists must take every pain to make a scientific study of the facts upon which our policy is based.

In the absence of better material, the *Summary of Instructions* (as we shall call the "Model Instructions"), if it be not proved

incorrect as to facts, is unique, and, we repeat, should be in the possession of every member of our Party.

The first part of the Summary of Instructions is devoted to general political statements, to demands for political democracy; the second part is devoted to the land question. (Let us hope that the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, or somebody else, will make a summary of the peasants' Instructions and resolutions on the question of the war.) We shall for the present not dwell in detail on the first part and shall mention only two points: Par. 6 demands that all officials be elected; Par. 11, the abolition, upon the conclusion of the war, of the standing army. These points bring the political programme of the peasants *closest of all* to the programme of the Bolshevik Party. In stressing these points, we must point out and demonstrate in all our propaganda and agitational work that the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are traitors not only to socialism, but also to democracy; for in Kronstadt, for instance, against the will of the people, against the principles of democracy they insisted, in complaisance to the capitalists, that the position of commissar should be *confirmed* by the government, *i.e.*, should not be purely elective. In the Borough Dumas of Petrograd, as well as in other local government institutions, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, contrary to democratic principles, are opposing the Bolshevik demand for the immediate organisation of a workers' militia and the subsequent organisation of a national militia.

The agrarian demands of the peasantry, according to the Summary of Instructions, consist, first of all, in the demand for the abolition, without compensation, of private ownership of land in all its forms, including peasant ownership; the transfer of highly cultivated lands to the state or to the communities; the confiscation of all livestock and farm implements on the lands confiscated (the case of peasants with very little land is excluded) and their transfer to the state or to the communities; the prohibition of hired labour; the equable distribution of land among the toilers, with periodic redistribution, etc. As measures calculated to meet the exigencies of the transition period until the Constituent Assembly is convened, the peasants demand the *immediate* issue of laws prohibiting the sale and purchase of land; the abolition of the laws on the withdrawal from the

communes and the formation of individual farms; the conservation of forests, fisheries, etc.; the annulment of long-term leaseholds, the revision of short-term leaseholds, and so forth.

Very little reflection on the above demands is required to understand the utter impossibility of realising them *by an alliance* with the capitalists, and, indeed, unless a complete break is made with the capitalists, unless a most resolute and merciless struggle is waged against the capitalist class, and its rule overthrown.

The self-deception of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the deceit they practise on the peasantry consist in the fact that they accept and spread the idea that such changes, changes of *such* a character, are possible without the overthrow of the domination of the capitalists, without the transfer of the whole power of the state to the proletariat, without support being given by the poor peasants to the proletarian state in its sweeping and revolutionary measures against the capitalists. It is this that makes the crystallisation of a Left Wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries so significant, for it proves that the realisation of this deception is growing within the party itself.

And, indeed, the confiscation of all privately-owned land implies the confiscation of the hundreds of millions of capital of the banks in which these lands are for the most part mortgaged. Is such a measure conceivable, unless the revolutionary class smashes the resistance of the capitalists by revolutionary means? We must bear in mind that we are dealing here with the most centralised form of capital, bank capital, which is united by innumerable threads with all the most important centres of capitalist economy in a vast country, and which can be vanquished only by the not less centralised force of the urban proletariat.

Further, the transfer to the government of highly cultivated farms. Is it not obvious that a "state" which would be capable of taking over and really managing such farms for the benefit of the toiler, and not for the benefit of the officials and the capitalists, must needs be a revolutionary proletarian state?

The confiscation of stud farms, etc., and of all livestock and farm implements—that is not only another tremendous blow to private property in the means of production; it is a step towards socialism. For the placing of *farm implements* at the "exclusive use of the

state or the commune" implies the necessity for large-scale socialist agriculture, or, at least, socialist control over the united small estates, socialist regulation of their activities.

And the "prohibition" of hired labour? That is but an empty phrase, the helpless, unenlightened and naïve yearning of downtrodden petty proprietors, who do not realise that all capitalist industry would come to a standstill if there were not a reserve army of wage labour in the villages, that it is impossible to "prohibit" hired labour in the country when it is permitted in the town, and that, as a matter of fact, the "prohibition" of hired labour would be a step towards socialism.

And this has brought us to the fundamental question of the relation of the workers to the peasants.

There has been a mass Social-Democratic labour movement in Russia for more than twenty years (if we count from the big strikes of 1896). Like a crimson thread the following question runs through this considerable interval, through two great revolutions, through the entire political history of Russia: Will the working class lead the peasants forward, towards socialism, or will the liberal bourgeoisie drag them backwards, to a reconciliation with capitalism?

The opportunist wing of the Social-Democrats reason in accordance with the following sapient formula: *Since* the Socialist-Revolutionaries are petty bourgeois, "we" reject their philistine utopian conception of socialism *for* a bourgeois negation of socialism. Marxism is happily replaced by Struvism, while Menshevism sinks to the rôle of a lackey to the Cadets, and endeavours to "reconcile" the peasant to the domination of the bourgeoisie. Tsereteli and Skobelev, hand in hand with Chernov and Avksentyev, are busy signing the reactionary decrees of the Cadet landlords in the name of "revolutionary democracy"—that is the latest and most obvious expression of the part they are playing.

The revolutionary Social-Democrats, who have never abandoned their criticism of the petty-bourgeois illusions of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and *who have never combined* with them unless it be *against* the Cadets, have always striven to *emancipate* the peasants from the influence of the Cadets and have always advocated, as against the philistine utopian conception of socialism, not a liberal

reconciliation with capitalism, but a revolutionary proletarian path to socialism.

Now that the war has tremendously accelerated development, has rendered the crisis of capitalism acute in the extreme, and has forced the peoples to make an immediate choice between ruin and the adoption of urgent and determined measures towards socialism, the abysmal difference between semi-liberal Menshevism and revolutionary proletarian Bolshevism assumes prominence as a practical question involving the action of tens of millions of peasants.

Reconcile yourselves to the reign of capital, *for* "we" are not yet ripe for socialism—that is what the Mensheviks say to the peasants, thus, by the way, substituting the abstract question of "socialism" in general for the concrete question of whether the wounds caused by the war can be healed unless definite measures towards socialism are taken.

Reconcile yourselves to capitalism, *for* the Socialist-Revolutionaries are petty-bourgeois utopians—that is what the Mensheviks say to the peasants; and together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries they go and support the Cadet government. . . .

And the Socialist-Revolutionaries, beating their breasts, assure the peasants that they are opposed to a peace of any kind with the capitalists, that they have never regarded the Russian Revolution as bourgeois—and that is *precisely why* they have formed a *bloc* with the opportunist Social-Democrats and are supporting a bourgeois government. . . . The Socialist-Revolutionaries will subscribe to any kind of programme of the peasantry, even the most revolutionary—but they never carry them out; they shelve them, fool the peasants with empty promises, and in practice waste months in "compromising" with the Cadets within the coalition government.

This outrageous, direct and palpable betrayal of the interests of the peasants by the Socialist-Revolutionaries in practice has changed the situation enormously. We must reckon with this change. We must not continue merely to agitate against the Socialist-Revolutionaries in the old way, in the way we did in 1902-03 and in 1905-07. We must not confine ourselves to a theoretical confutation of petty-bourgeois illusions, such as "the socialisation of the land," "equal land tenure," "prohibition of hired labour," etc.

That was on the eve of the bourgeois revolution, or when the bourgeois revolution was still incomplete; and our whole task then was primarily to bring about the downfall of the monarchy.

Now the monarchy has been overthrown. The bourgeois revolution is completed, inasmuch as Russia is now a democratic republic, with a government made up of Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. And in three years the war has dragged us thirty years ahead; in Europe it has established universal labour service and the compulsory trustification of enterprises; it has brought the most advanced countries to a state of famine and unprecedented ruin and forced them to take measures towards socialism.

Only the proletariat and the peasantry can overthrow the monarchy—that, in those days, was the fundamental definition of our class policy. And that definition was a correct one. February and March 1917 corroborated it once again.

Only the proletariat, leading the poor peasantry (the semi-proletarians, as our programme calls them), can end the war by a democratic peace, can heal the wounds it has caused, and can begin to take measures towards socialism, measures which have become absolutely essential and *urgent*—such is the definition of our class policy at the present time.

From this it follows that the central point of our propaganda and agitation against the Socialist-Revolutionaries must be that they have betrayed the peasants. They represent not the mass of poor peasants, but a minority of rich peasant owners. They are leading the peasantry not towards an alliance with the workers, but towards an alliance with the capitalists, *i.e.*, towards subjection to the capitalists. They have sold the interests of the toiling and exploited masses for berths in the government, for a coalition with the Mensheviks and the Cadets.

History, accelerated by the war, has made such forward strides that old formulas have acquired a new content. "Prohibition of hired labour" was at one time *merely* an empty phrase of the petty-bourgeois intellectual. In actual practice it now means something else: in the 242 Instructions millions of poor peasants have announced their desire to abolish hired labour; but they do not know how to accomplish it. We do know how to accomplish it. We know

that it can be accomplished only by an alliance with the workers, and under their leadership, only by fighting the capitalists, and not by "compromising" with the capitalists.

This is the change we must make in our basic line of propaganda and agitation against the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and in the basic line of our speeches to the peasants.

The Socialist-Revolutionary Party has betrayed you, comrades, peasants. It has betrayed the cabins and sided with the palaces; if not with the palaces of the monarch, at least with the palaces where the Cadets—the most bitter enemies of the revolution, and especially of the peasant revolution—participate in the government together with the Chernovs, the Peshekhonovs and the Avksentyevs.

Only the revolutionary proletariat, only the vanguard that unites it, the Bolshevik Party, can put *into practice* the programme of the poor peasants as set forth in their 242 Instructions. For the revolutionary proletariat is *actually* making for the abolition of hired labour, following the only true road—the overthrow of capital, and not by forbidding the hiring of labourers, not by prohibiting wage labour. The revolutionary proletariat is actually making for the confiscation of land, farm stock and technical agricultural enterprises—for that which the peasants want, and which the Socialist-Revolutionaries *cannot* give them.

That is the way the fundamental line of the speeches of the worker to the peasant must be changed. We workers can give you, and will give you, what the poor peasants want and seek, without always knowing where and how to seek it. We workers are defending our own interests *against the capitalists*, and at the same time we are defending the interests of the overwhelming majority of the peasantry, whereas the Socialist-Revolutionaries are allying themselves with the capitalists and betraying those interests.

Let us remind the reader of what Engels said on the peasant question shortly before his death. Engels stated that Socialists did not even dream of expropriating the small peasants, and that only the *force of example* could teach the latter the advantages of socialist mechanised agriculture.

The war has now confronted Russia practically with a question of precisely this kind. There are not enough farm implements. They



must be confiscated, but the highly cultivated estates must not be "divided up."

The peasants have begun to understand this. Necessity has forced them to understand it. They have been forced to understand it by the war, because farm implements are nowhere to be got. What we have must be husbanded. Large-scale farms imply the husbanding of labour expended on farm implements, as well as on much else.

The peasants want to retain their small holdings, to equalise them according to standards, and to re-equalise them periodically. ...Let them. No intelligent Socialist will quarrel with the poor peasants on this score. If the land is confiscated, *it will mean* that the rule of the banks is undermined; if farm property is confiscated, *it will mean* that the rule of capital is undermined. And *with the proletariat ruling in the centre*, with political power transferred to the proletariat, the rest will come *of itself*; it will come by "force of example," it will be prompted by experience itself.

The crux of the matter is the transfer of political power to the proletariat. Given that, everything essential and fundamental in the programme of the 242 Instructions will *become possible of realisation*. And actual experience will show what modifications are needed in the realisation. That is the last thing to worry about. We are not doctrinaires. Our teaching is not a dogma, but a guide to action.

We do not claim that Marx or the Marxists know the road to socialism in every concrete detail. That would be nonsense. We know the direction of the road, we know what class forces are following the road; but the concrete and practical details will be learned only from the experience of the millions when they begin to take action.

Trust the workers, comrades peasants; break your alliance with the capitalists! Only in close union with the workers *can* you begin to realise the programme contained in the 242 Instructions. In alliance with the capitalists and under the direction of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, you will never live to see a *single* effective and unalterable step taken in the spirit of that programme.

But when, in union with the urban workers, in a merciless struggle against capital, you *begin* to carry out the programme of the 242 Instructions, the whole world will come to your aid and to ours, and the success of this programme—not as it is now formulated,

but in its essence—will be assured. That will mark the end of the domination of capital and of wage slavery. That will mark the beginning of the reign of socialism, the reign of peace, the reign of the toilers.

*Rabochiy*, September 11, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL- DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

It is possible that these lines will arrive too late, for events are developing with an at times dizzying rapidity. I am writing this on Wednesday, September 12, and the recipients will read it not earlier than Friday, September 15. Nevertheless, I take the chance and consider it my duty to write the following.

The Kornilov revolt was extremely unexpected (unexpected at such a time and in such a form); it was, one might say, an incredibly abrupt turn in the course of events.

Like every abrupt turn in events, it calls for a revision and alteration of tactics. And, as in the case of every revision, one must be super-cautious in order not to lose sight of principles.

It is my conviction that those who are drifting (like Volodarsky) into defencism or (like other Bolsheviks) into a *bloc* with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and into *supporting* the Provisional Government are guilty of lack of principle. It is absolutely wrong and unprincipled. We shall become defencists *only after* the power has passed to the proletariat, *after* peace has been proposed and *after* the secret treaties and ties with the banks have been broken; *only after all this*. Neither the fall of Riga *nor the fall of Petrograd* will make us defencists (I particularly beg that this be given to Volodarsky to read). Until then, we are for a proletarian revolution, we are opposed to the war, we are *not* defencists.

And *even now* we must not support Kerensky's government. That would be unprincipled. It will be asked: What, not even fight Kornilov? Of course, fight him! But that is not the same thing;

there is a dividing line; that line is being overstepped by certain Bolsheviks, who allow themselves to become "compromisers" and to be *carried away* by the flood of events.

We will fight and are fighting Kornilov, *just as Kerensky's troops are*. But we do not support Kerensky; *on the contrary*, we expose his weakness. That is the difference. It is a rather subtle difference, but an extremely important one, and must not be forgotten.

What change, then, is necessitated in our tactics by the Kornilov revolt?

We must change the *form* of our struggle against Kerensky. While not relaxing our hostility towards him one iota, while not withdrawing a single word we uttered against him, while not renouncing the aim of overthrowing Kerensky, we say: We must *reckon* with the present state of affairs; we shall not overthrow Kerensky just now; we shall adopt a *different* method of fighting him, namely, we shall point out to the people (who are fighting Kornilov) the *weakness and vacillation* of Kerensky. That was done before *too*. But now it has become *the main thing*. That is the change.

The change, furthermore, consists in this, that *the main thing* now is to intensify our agitation in favour of what might be called "partial demands" to be addressed to Kerensky, namely: arrest Milyukov; arm the Petrograd workers; summon the Kronstadt, Viborg and Helsingfors troops to Petrograd; disperse the State Duma; arrest Rodzyanko; legalise the transfer of the landlords' estates to the peasants; introduce workers' control over bread and over the factories, etc., etc. These demands must be addressed not only to Kerensky, and *not so much* to Kerensky as to the workers, soldiers and peasants who have been *carried away* by the struggle against Kornilov. *Draw* them still further; encourage them to beat up the generals and officers who are in favour of supporting Kornilov; urge *them* to demand the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants; suggest *to them* the necessity of arresting Rodzyanko and Milyukov, of dispersing the State Duma, of shutting down *Ryech* and the other bourgeois papers, and of instituting proceedings against them. The "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries particularly must be pushed in this direction.

It would be wrong to think that we have departed from the task of the conquest of power by the proletariat. Not at all. We have ap-

proached much nearer to it; only *not directly* but obliquely. And *at this very minute* we must conduct our agitation against Kerensky not so much directly as *indirectly*, that is, by demanding a most active, energetic and truly revolutionary war against Kornilov. The development of that war alone may put *us* in power, but of this we must *speak* as little as possible in our agitation (all the time remembering that events may any day put the power into our hands, and then we shall not relinquish it). It seems to me that this should be transmitted in the form of a letter to agitators (not through the press) to our agitators and propagandists, and to the members of the Party generally. As to the talk of defence of the country, of a united front of revolutionary democracy, of supporting the Provisional Government, and so forth, we must oppose it ruthlessly as being mere *talk*. This is the time for *action*. We must tell them: You, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Menshevik gentlemen, have long ago worn these phrases to shreds. This is the time for *action*; the war against Kornilov must be conducted as a revolutionary war; the masses must be drawn into it, they must be aroused, inflamed (Kerensky is *afraid* of the masses, he is *afraid* of the people). In the war against the Germans *action* is now required; *an immediate and unequivocal peace must be proposed on precisely formulated terms*. If we do that, we may secure either a speedy peace or the transformation of the war into a revolutionary war. Otherwise all the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries will remain lackeys of imperialism.

P.S. I have seen six issues of *Rabochiy* since this was written, and I must say that there is complete harmony in our views. I greet with all my heart the splendid editorials, the press reviews and the articles by V. M——n and Vol——y. As to Volodarsky's speech, I have read his letter to the editors, and it also "liquidates" the reproaches I brought against him. Once more, hearty greetings and best wishes.

September 12, 1917. First printed in *Pravda*, November 7, 1920.

J. Stalin

## THE CRISIS AND THE DIRECTORATE

AFTER the Kornilov plot and the break-down of the government, after the collapse of the plot and the creation of the Kerensky-Kishkin Cabinet, after the "new" crisis and the "new" Tsereteli-Gotz "negotiations" with this same Kerensky, we have at last a "new" (brand new!) Government of Five.

Kerensky, Tereshchenko, Verkhovsky, Verderevsky and Nikitin, a "Directorate" of Five—such is the "new" government, "chosen" by Kerensky, confirmed by Kerensky, responsible to Kerensky and *independent* of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

It is said that this government is equally independent of the Cadets, but this is utter nonsense; for the absence of official representatives of the Cadets in the government is merely a screen to conceal its complete dependence on the Cadets.

Ostensibly, the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky is Supreme Commander. Actually, however, it is General Alexeyev, the placeman of the Cadets, who has the General Staff, *i.e.*, all the threads of the front, in his hands.

Ostensibly, the "Left" Directorate is independent (don't laugh!) of the Cadets. Actually, however, it is the placemen of the Cadets who direct the various Ministries and actually direct all the affairs of state.

In words, rupture with the Cadets. In deeds, agreement with the placemen of the Cadets in the rear and at the front.

The Directorate as a screen to conceal the alliance with the Cadets, the dictatorship of Kerensky as a shield to protect the dictatorship of the landlords and capitalists from the anger of the people—such is the scene today.

And ahead lies another conference of the representatives of the "virile forces" at which Messieurs the Tseretelis and Avksentyevs, these sworn compromisers, will strive to convert the secret agreement arrived at with the Cadets yesterday into an open and definite one, to the joy of the enemies of the workers and peasants.

During the past six months our country has experienced three acute crises of power. On each occasion the crisis was settled by means of

a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and on each occasion the workers and peasants were fooled.

Why?

Because on each occasion the petty-bourgeois parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, intervening in the struggle for power, took the side of the landlords and capitalists and decided the issue in favour of the Cadets.

The Kornilov plot revealed the entire counter-revolutionary nature of the Cadets. For three days the Defencists howled about the treachery of the Cadets, for three days they howled about the lack of vitality of the coalition which fell to pieces at the very first clash with the counter-revolution. Well, what happened? After all this they found nothing better to do than to accept a masked coalition with these very reviled Cadets!

Only yesterday the Defencist majority of the Central Executive Committee by its vote decided to "support" the Directorate of Five which arose as a result of the behind-the-scenes agreements with the Cadets, to the damage of the fundamental interests of the workers and peasants.

On that day, the day of an acute crisis of power, on the day of intensified struggle for power in face of the utterly routed Kornilov, the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionaries *once again* helped the landlords and the capitalists to retain power, *once again* helped the counter-revolutionary Cadets to fool the workers and peasants.

Such, and only such, is the political meaning of yesterday's voting in the Central Executive Committee.

Let the workers know this, let the peasants know this, and let them draw the proper conclusions from it.

Today's secret coalition is unstable, just as yesterday's open coalitions were unstable; there can be no firm agreement between landlord and peasant, capitalist and worker. In view of this, the struggle for power is not ended; on the contrary, it is becoming more intense and acute. Let the workers know that in this struggle they will inevitably suffer defeat as long as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks exercise influence among the masses.

Let the workers remember that in order to take power the masses of peasants and soldiers must be torn away from the compromising

Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and rallied around the revolutionary proletariat.

Let them remember this, and let them open the eyes of the peasants and soldiers by exposing the treachery of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to them.

Ruthless struggle against Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik influence among the masses, tireless work to rally the peasants and soldiers around the banner of the Party of the proletariat—such is the lesson of the crisis we have just experienced.

*Rabochiy Put [The Worker's Road], September 16, 1917.*

## J. Stalin

### THE SECOND WAVE

THE first wave of the Russian Revolution began under the flag of the struggle against tsarism. The main forces of the revolution at that time were the workers and soldiers. But they were not the only forces. The liberal bourgeois (Cadets) and the Anglo-French capitalists also "came out." The former abandoned tsarism because of its inability to lay a road to Constantinople, and the latter betrayed tsarism because it strove for a separate peace with Germany.

Thus, something in the nature of a concealed coalition was formed under the attack of which tsarism was compelled to leave the stage. On the very next day after the fall of tsarism, however, this secret coalition became an open one and assumed the form of a definite treaty between the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet, between the Cadets and "revolutionary democracy."

But these forces pursued entirely different aims. Whereas the Cadets and the Anglo-French capitalists merely wanted to make a little revolution in order to utilise the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses for the purpose of waging a big imperialist war, the workers and soldiers, on the contrary, strove for the thorough break-up of the old régime and for the complete victory of a great revolution in order, after overthrowing the landlords and curbing the imperialist bourgeoisie, to secure the cessation of the war and ensure a just peace.

This fundamental contradiction lay at the base of the further development of the revolution. It, too, predetermined the instability of the coalition with the Cadets.

The expression of this contradiction are all the so-called government crises that have occurred, including the last, August, crisis.

And if in the course of these crises success always proved to be on the side of the imperialist bourgeoisie and after each "solution" of a crisis the workers and soldiers found themselves deceived and the coalition preserved in one form or another, it was not only because the imperialist bourgeoisie is highly organised and financially powerful, but also because on each occasion the wavering upper stratum of the petty-bourgeoisie and their Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which still have the following of the broad masses of the petty-bourgeoisie in our predominantly petty-bourgeois country, took their stand "on the other side of the barricades" and decided the issue of the struggle for power in favour of the Cadets.

The coalition with the Cadets reached the apex of its strength in the July Days when the members of the coalition came out in a united fighting front and turned their weapons against the "Bolshevik" workers and soldiers.

In this respect the Moscow Conference was merely an echo of the July Days, and the fact that the Bolsheviks were not allowed to attend this conference was to have served as a necessary pledge for binding the "honest coalition" with the "virile forces" of the country.

The *isolation* of the Bolsheviks was regarded as a necessary condition for the stability of the *coalition* with the Cadets.

Such was the situation up to the Kornilov rebellion.

With the outbreak of the Kornilov action the scene changed.

It was already clear at the Moscow Conference that the alliance with the Cadets was threatening to become an alliance with the Kornilovs and Kaledins not only against...the Bolsheviks, but against the entire Russian Revolution, against the very existence of the gains of the revolution. The boycott of the Moscow Conference and the protest strike of the Moscow workers, which tore the mask from this counter-revolutionary assembly and which thwarted the plans of the plotters, not only served as a warning in this sense, but also as a call to be prepared. It is well known that the call



did not remain a voice crying in the wilderness: a number of towns responded to it immediately with protest strikes. . . .

This was an ominous portent.

The Kornilov rebellion merely opened the safety valves and gave an outlet to the accumulated revolutionary anger, it merely released the shackled revolution and spurred and pushed it on.

And here in the flames of battle against the counter-revolutionary forces in which words and promises are tested by the living deeds of the direct struggle, the true friends and enemies of the revolution, the true allies and the traitors to the workers, peasants and soldiers, were revealed.

The Provisional Government that was so carefully stitched together out of different materials burst at every seam at the very first breath of the Kornilov rebellion.

It is "sad" but a fact: the coalition looks like a power when it is necessary to chatter about "saving the revolution," but the coalition turns out to be a squib when it is really necessary to save the revolution from mortal danger.

The Cadets resigned from the Cabinet, thus openly demonstrating their solidarity with the Kornilovites. All the imperialists of all colours and degrees, the bankers and manufacturers, the factory-owners and profiteers, the landlords and generals, the pen pirates on *Novoye Vryemya* and the cowardly provocateurs on the *Birzhevka*—all these, headed by the Cadet Party and in alliance with the Anglo-French imperialist cliques, are found in the same camp as the counter-revolutionaries, against the revolution and its gains.

It is becoming clear that the alliance with the Cadets is an alliance with the landlords against the peasants, with the capitalists against the workers, with the generals against the soldiers.

It is becoming clear that whoever compromises with Milyukov compromises with Kornilov and must come out against the revolution, for Milyukov and Kornilov "are one."

The vague understanding of this truth lies at the base of the new mass revolutionary movement, at the base of the second wave of the Russian Revolution.

Whereas the first wave is *ending* with the triumph of the coalition with the Cadets (the Moscow Conference!), the second wave is

*beginning* with the collapse of this coalition, with open war against the Cadets.

This is the whole point.

In the struggle against the General-Cadet counter-revolution the moribund Soviets and Committees in the rear and at the front are reviving and becoming strong.

In the struggle against the General-Cadet counter-revolution, new revolutionary committees of workers and soldiers, sailors and peasants, railwaymen and post and telegraph workers are springing up.

In the flames of this struggle new local organs of power are arising, in Moscow and in the Caucasus, in Petrograd and in the Urals, in Odessa and in Kharkov.

It is not a matter here of the new resolutions passed by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who have undoubtedly swung to the Left during the past few days, although, of course, this is of no little importance.

Nor is it a matter of the "victory of Bolshevism," the phantom with which the bourgeois press is trying to frighten the scared philistines on *Dyen (Day)* and *Volya Naroda (People's Will.)*

The thing is that in the *struggle* against the Cadets, and *in spite of them*, a new power is rising up and in open battle is defeating the units of the counter-revolution.

The thing is that this power, passing from the defensive to the offensive, is inevitably encroaching upon the vital interests of the landlords and capitalists, and by that is rallying around itself the broad masses of the workers and peasants.

The thing is that, acting in this way, this "unrecognised" power is compelled by the force of circumstances to raise the question of its "legalisation"; and the "official" power, which has revealed an obvious kinship with the counter-revolutionary plotters, turns out to have no firm ground under its feet.

And lastly, the thing is that in the face of this new wave of revolution which is spreading to new towns and regions, the Kerensky government, which only yesterday was afraid of waging a determined struggle against the counter-revolution, is today uniting with Kornilov and the Kornilovites in the rear and at the front, and at the same time it is "ordering" the dissolution of the centres of

revolution, the "unauthorised" committees of workers, soldiers and peasants.

And the more thoroughly Kerensky finds himself in harmony with the Kornilovs and Kaledins the wider becomes the rift between the masses and the government, the more probable becomes the rupture between the Soviets and the placemen of the Cadets.

It is these facts, and not the resolutions of certain parties, that contain the death warrant of the old compromising slogans.

We do not by any means overrate the degree of the rupture with the Cadets. We know that this rupture is still only a formal one. But for a start, even such a rupture is a big step forward. We may assume that the Cadets themselves will do the rest. They are already boycotting the Democratic Conference.\* The representatives of trade and industry, whom the cunning strategists of the Central Executive Committee wanted to "entice into their net," followed in the footsteps of the Cadets. We may assume that they will go further and continue to close down the factories, refuse credits for the organs of "democracy" and deliberately intensify the chaos and famine. And "democracy," in combating chaos and famine, will inevitably be drawn into a resolute struggle against the bourgeoisie and will widen the rupture with the Cadets....

In this perspective, and in this connection, the Democratic Conference convened for September 25 is particularly symptomatic. How will the conference end? Will it "take" power? Will Kerensky "yield"? These are questions which cannot be answered yet. The initiators of the conference will possibly try to find some cunning formula of "agreement." But this is not the point, of course. The fundamental questions of revolution, particularly the question of power, are not settled at conferences. But one thing is certain, and that is, that the conference will sum up the events of the last few days, it will count up the forces, it will reveal the difference between the first, departed wave, and the second, rising wave of the Russian Revolution.

And we will learn that:

Then, under the first wave—the fight against tsarism and its sur-

\* Called by the Kerensky government following the Kornilov revolt in the attempt to secure a broader base among the petty bourgeoisie.—*Ed.*

vivals. Now, under the second wave—the fight against the landlords and the capitalists.

Then—alliance with the Cadets. Now—rupture with them.

Then—the Bolsheviks were isolated. Now—the Cadets are isolated.

Then—alliance with Anglo-French capital and war. Now—a maturing rupture with it and peace, a just and universal peace.

Thus, and only thus, will the second wave of the revolution proceed, no matter what the conference decides.

*Rabochiy Put*, September 22, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### THE BOLSHEVIKS MUST ASSUME POWER

##### A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND TO THE PETROGRAD AND MOSCOW COMMITTEES OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL- DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

HAVING obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals, the Bolsheviks can, and must, take over the power of government.

They can do so because the active majority of the revolutionary elements of the people of both capitals is large enough to carry the masses, to overcome the resistance of the adversary, to smash him and to conquer power and retain it. For, by immediately proposing a democratic peace, by immediately giving the land to the peasants and by re-establishing the democratic institutions and liberties which have been mangled and shattered by Kerensky, the Bolsheviks will create a government which *nobody* will be able to overthrow.

The majority of the people are *on our side*. This was proved by the long and painful course of events from May 19 to September 13 and to September 25. The majority gained in the Soviets of the capitals was a *result* of the fact that the people have developed in *our direction*. The vacillation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks and the increase in the number of internationalists within their ranks prove the same thing.

The Democratic Conference represents *not* a majority of the revo-

lutionary people, but *only the compromising upper stratum of the petty bourgeoisie*. One must not be deceived by the election figures; elections prove nothing. Compare the elections to the City Dumas of Petrograd and Moscow with the elections to the Soviets. Compare the elections in Moscow with the Moscow strike of August 25. Here we have objective data regarding the majority of revolutionary elements who are leading the masses.

The Democratic Conference is deceiving the peasants: it is giving them neither peace nor land.

A Bolshevik government *alone* will satisfy the demands of the peasantry.

Why must the Bolsheviks assume power *now*?

Because the impending surrender of Petrograd will render our chances a hundred times less favourable.

And while the army is headed by Kerensky and Co. it is not in our power to prevent the surrender of Petrograd.

Neither can we "wait" for the Constituent Assembly, for by surrendering Petrograd Kerensky and Co. can always *frustrate* the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. Our Party alone, having assumed power, can secure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly: and, having assumed power, it will accuse the other parties of procrastination and will be able to substantiate its accusations.

A separate peace between the British and German imperialists must be prevented, and can be prevented, but only by quick action.

The people are tired of the vacillations of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Our victory in the capitals alone will draw the peasants over to our side.

We are concerned not with the "day," nor with the "moment" of insurrection in the narrow sense of the word. That will be decided by the common voice of those who are in contact with the workers and soldiers, with *the masses*.

The point is that at the Democratic Conference our Party has virtually *its own congress*, and this congress (whether it wishes to or not) must decide the *fate of the revolution*.

The point is to make the *task* clear to the Party. An *armed insurrection* in Petrograd and Moscow (with their regions), the conquest

of power and the overthrow of the government must be placed on the order of the day. We must consider *how* to agitate for this without expressly saying as much in the press.

We must remember and weigh the words of Marx: "*Insurrection is an art.*"

It would be naïve to wait for a "formal" majority for the Bolsheviks; no revolution ever waits for that. Kerensky and Co. are not waiting either; they are preparing to surrender Petrograd. The wretched vacillations of the Democratic Conference are bound to exhaust the patience of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow. History will not forgive us if we do not assume power now.

There is no apparatus? There is an apparatus: the Soviets and the democratic organisations. The international situation just *now*, *on the eve* of the conclusion of a separate peace between the British and the Germans, is in *our favour*. If we propose peace to the nations now we shall *win*.

Power must be assumed in Moscow and in Petrograd at once (it does not matter which begins; even Moscow may begin); we shall win *absolutely and unquestionably*.

September 25-27, 1917. First printed in *Proletarskaya Revolyutsia* [*Proletarian Revolution*], 1921.

## V. I. Lenin

### MARXISM AND INSURRECTION

#### A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

ONE of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism practised by the prevailing "Socialist" parties consists in the opportunist lie that preparations for insurrection, and generally the treatment of insurrection as an art are "Blanquism."

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, has already earned himself a wretched notoriety by accusing Marxism of Blanquism, and when our present-day opportunists cry Blanquism they do not improve on or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein one jot.

Marxists are accused of Blanquism for treating insurrection as an art! Can there be a more flagrant perversion of the truth, when not a single Marxist will deny that it was Marx who expressed himself on this score in the most definite, precise and categorical manner, inasmuch as it was Marx who called insurrection precisely an *art*, saying that it must be treated as an art, that the first success must be *won*, and that one must proceed from success to success, never ceasing the *offensive* against the enemy, taking every advantage of his confusion, etc., etc.?

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon the rising revolutionary spirit of the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon the *crucial moment* in the history of the growing revolution, when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemies and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions in the attitude towards insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*.

But when these conditions are operating it is a betrayal of Marxism and a betrayal of the revolution to refuse to treat insurrection as an *art*.

In order to show that the present moment is one in which the Party is *obliged* to admit that *insurrection* has been placed upon the order of the day by the whole course of objective events, and that it must treat insurrection as an art, it will perhaps be best to use the method of comparison, and to draw a parallel between July 16-17 and the September days.

In the days of July 16-17 it was possible to argue, without transgressing against the truth, that the right thing to do was to take power, for our enemies would in any case accuse us of rebellion and treat us like rebels. However, to have concluded that we could have seized power at that time would have been wrong, because the objective conditions for a successful insurrection did not exist.

1. We still lacked the support of the class which is the vanguard of the revolution.

We still did not have a majority among the workers and soldiers of the capitals. Now, we have a majority in both Soviets. It was

created *solely* by the history of July and August, by the experience of the "ruthless treatment" meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov affair.

2. There was no rising revolutionary spirit at that time among the people. There is that spirit now, after the Kornilov affair, as is proved by the situation in the provinces and by the seizure of power by the Soviets in many localities.

3. At that time there was no *vacillation* on any serious political scale among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillation is enormous. Our main enemy, Allied and world imperialism (for world imperialism is being led by the "Allies"), *has begun to waver* between a war to a victorious conclusion and a separate peace directed against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having clearly lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, and have rejected a *bloc, i.e.,* a coalition, with the Cadets.

4. Therefore, an insurrection on July 16-17 would have been a mistake: we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically in spite of the fact that at certain moments Petrograd was in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for the possession of Petrograd. There was not at that time that "savageness," nor that fierce hatred *both* of the Kerenskys *and* of the Tseretelis and Chernovs. Our people had still not been tempered by the experience of the persecution of the Bolsheviks in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks participated.

We could not have retained power politically on July 16-17 because *before the Kornilov affair* the army and provinces might have, and would have, marched against Petrograd.

The picture is now entirely different.

We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.

We have the following of the *majority* of the people; for Chernov's resignation, while by no means the only symptom, is the most striking and obvious symptom that the peasantry *will not receive land* from the Socialist-Revolutionaries' *bloc* (or from the Socialist-



Revolutionaries themselves). And that is the chief reason for the popular character of the revolution.

We have the advantageous position of a party that firmly knows the path it must follow, where *imperialism as a whole* and the *bloc* of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are vacillating incredibly.

*Our victory is assured*, for the people are bordering on desperation, and we are showing the people a sure way out; for during the "Kornilov days" we demonstrated to the people the value of our leadership, and then we *proposed* to the politicians of the bloc a compromise, *which they rejected*, although their vacillations continued unremittingly.

It would be a sheer mistake to think that our offer of a compromise has not *yet* been rejected, and that the "Democratic Conference" may *still* accept it. The compromise was proposed by *a party to parties*; it could not have been proposed in any other way. It was rejected by *parties*. The Democratic Conference is a *conference*, and nothing more. One thing must not be forgotten, namely, that the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poor and embittered peasantry, are not represented in it. It is a conference of *a minority of the people*—that obvious truth must not be forgotten. It would be a sheer mistake, it would be sheer parliamentary cretinism on our part, were we to regard the Democratic Conference as a parliament; for even *if it were* to proclaim itself a parliament, and the sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would *not decide* anything. The power of decision lies *outside it*; it lies in the working-class quarters of Petrograd and Moscow.

All the objective conditions for a successful insurrection exist. We have the advantage of a situation in which *only* our success in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; a situation in which *only* our success of the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace *to the benefit* of the revolution.

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a successful insurrection save Petrograd; for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we shall become* "defencists," then we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be

the "war" party *par excellence*, and we shall fight the war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away all the bread and boots from the capitalists. We shall leave them only crusts, we shall dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and shoes to the front.

And we shall save Petrograd.

The resources, both material and spiritual, for a truly revolutionary war in Russia are still immense; the chances are a hundred to one that the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And to secure an armistice now would in itself mean to win the *whole world*.

Having recognised the absolute necessity of an insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow to save the revolution and to save Russia from being "separately" divided up among the imperialists of both coalitions, we must first adapt our political tactics at the conference to the conditions of the growing insurrection, and, secondly, we must show that our acceptance of Marx's idea that insurrection must be treated as an art is not merely a verbal acceptance.

At the conference we must immediately set about consolidating the Bolshevik fraction, without striving after numbers, and without fearing to leave the waverers in the camp of the waverers: they are more useful to the cause of the revolution *there* than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

We must prepare a brief declaration in the name of the Bolsheviks, sharply emphasising the irrelevance of long speeches and of "speeches" in general, the necessity for immediate action to save the revolution, the absolute necessity for a complete break with the bourgeoisie, for the removal of the whole present government, for a complete rupture with the Anglo-French imperialists, who are preparing for a "separate" partition of Russia, and for the immediate transfer of the whole power *to the revolutionary democracy headed by the revolutionary proletariat*. Our declaration must consist of the briefest and most trenchant formulation of this conclusion in accordance with the proposals of the programme: peace for the peoples, land for the peasants, the confiscation of outrageous profits, and a check on the outrageous sabotage of production by the capitalists.

The briefer and more trenchant the declaration the better. Only

two other important points must be clearly indicated in it, namely, that the people are worn out by vacillation, that they are exhausted by the irresoluteness of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks; and that we are definitely breaking with these *parties* because they have betrayed the revolution.

And another thing. By immediately proposing a peace without annexations, by immediately breaking with the Allied imperialists and with all imperialists, either we shall at once obtain an armistice, or the entire revolutionary proletariat will rally to the defence of the country, and a truly just, truly revolutionary war will then be waged by the revolutionary democracy under the leadership of the proletariat.

Having read this declaration, and having appealed for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing, we must *despatch* our whole fraction to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there; the pulse of life is there; the source of salvation of the revolution is there; the motive force of the Democratic Conference is there.

There, in ardent and impassioned speeches, we must explain our programme and put the alternative: either the Conference adopts it *in its entirety*, or else insurrection. There is no middle course. Delay is impossible. The revolution is perishing.

By putting the question thus, by concentrating our entire fraction on the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to decide the right moment to launch the insurrection*.

And in order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, *i.e.*, as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *staff* of the insurrectionary detachments; we must distribute our forces; we must move the reliable regiments to the most important points; we must surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre; we must occupy the Peter and Paul fortress; we must arrest the general staff and the government; we must move against the junkers and the Savage Division such detachments as will rather die than allow the enemy to approach the centre of the city; we must mobilise the armed workers and call upon them to engage in a last desperate fight; we must occupy the telegraph and telephone stations at once, quarter *our* staff of the insurrection at the central telephone station and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution, *without regarding insurrection as an art.*

September 26-27, 1917.

J. Stalin

### ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS

THE revolution is marching on. Fired at in the July days and "buried" at the Moscow Conference, it is raising its head again, breaking down the old obstacles, creating a new power. The first line of trenches of the counter-revolution has been captured. After Kornilov, Kaledin is now retreating. In the flames of the struggle the moribund Soviets are reviving. They are once again taking the helm and leading the revolutionary masses.

*All power to the Soviets*—such is the slogan of the new movement.

The Kerensky Government is coming out to fight the new movement. Already in the first days of the Kornilov rebellion it threatened to dissolve the revolutionary Committees and treated the fight against Kornilovism as "arbitrary conduct." Since then the fight against the Committees has become more intense, and recently it has grown into open war.

The Simferopol Soviet arrests a participant in the Kornilov plot, the well-known Ryabushinsky. But the Kerensky government in reply to this issues an order for "measures to be taken to secure the release of Ryabushinsky and for action to be taken against those who subjected him to illegal arrest" (*Ryech*).

In Tashkent all power has passed into the hands of the Soviet and the old authorities have been deposed. But in retaliation the Kerensky government "is to take a number of measures, which are being kept secret for the time being, but which should have a very sobering effect upon the extremist members of the Tashkent Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies" (*Russkie Vedomosti [Russian Chronicles]*).

The Soviets demand a strict and thorough investigation of the case

of Kornilov and his accomplices. But in reply to this the Kerensky government is "narrowing down the investigation to an insignificant circle of persons, and is ignoring certain very important sources which would help to qualify Kornilov's crime as treason and not only as sedition" (Shubnikov's Report in *Novaya Zhizn*).

The Soviets demand a rupture with the bourgeoisie and primarily with the Cadets. But in reply to this the Kerensky government conducts negotiations with the Kishkins and Konovalovs, inviting them into the Cabinet and proclaiming the government's "independence" of the Soviets.

*All power to the imperialist bourgeoisie*—such is the slogan of the Kerensky Government.

There is no room for doubt. We have two powers before us: the power of Kerensky and his government, and the power of the Soviets and the Committees.

The fight between these two powers is the characteristic feature of the present moment.

Either the power of the Kerensky Government—and then the rule of the landlords and capitalists, war and chaos.

Or the power of the Soviets—and then the rule of the workers and peasants, peace and the liquidation of chaos.

Thus, and only thus, does life itself present the question.

The revolution raised this question in every crisis of power. And on each occasion Messieurs the compromisers wriggled out of a straight answer, and while wriggling they surrendered power to the enemies. By convening a conference instead of convening a Congress of Soviets the compromisers wanted to wriggle once again and surrendered power to the bourgeoisie. But they miscalculated. The time has come when it is no longer possible to wriggle.

The straight question which life raises demands a clear and definite answer.

For the Soviets or against them?

Let Messieurs the compromisers choose.

*Rabochiy Put*, September 30, 1917.

J. Stalin

### FORGING CHAINS

THE compromising machine is in motion. The Winter Palace, that political house of assignation, is full of guests. Everybody seems to be there! The Moscow Kornilovites and the Petersburg Savinkovites, the Kornilovite "Minister" Nabokov and the hero of disarming, Tsereteli, the sworn enemy of the Soviets, Kishkin, and the celebrated lock-outer Konovalov, the representatives of the party of political deserters (Cadets!) and the co-operator die hards of the Burkenheim breed, the representatives of the party of punitive expeditions (the Socialist-Revolutionaries!) and the Right Zemstvoists of the type of Dushechkin, the political pimps of the Directorate and well-known money bags among the "public men"—these are the honoured guests.

On the one hand—Cadets and industrialists.

On the other hand—Defencists and co-operators.

There, the industrialists as the prop and the army of the Cadets.

Here, the co-operators as the prop and the army of the Defencists; for after the Defencists lost the Soviets they had to retire to their old positions, to the co-operators.

"Cut yourselves away from Bolsheviks," and then "the bourgeoisie and democracy will have a common front," said Kishkin to the Defencists.

Glad to serve you, replies Avksentyev, but let us first establish the "state point of view."

"The bourgeoisie no less than democracy must reckon with the growth of Bolshevism and take care to create a coalition government," says Burkenheim to Avksentyev.

Glad to serve you, replies Avksentyev.

Do you hear: it transpires that a coalition government is needed for the purpose of fighting Bolshevism, *i.e.*, the Soviets, *i.e.*, the workers and soldiers!

"The Preliminary Parliament must be an 'advisory body' but the government must be 'independent' of it," says Nabokov.

Glad to serve you, replies Tsereteli, for he agrees that "the Provisional Government should not be formally... responsible to Parliament" (*Ryech*).

“It is not the Preliminary Parliament that is to set up the government but, on the contrary, the government is to set up the Preliminary Parliament, and announce its composition, competence and Standing Orders,” says the Cadets’ declaration.

Agreed, replies Tsereteli, “the government must sanction this institution” (*Novaya Zhizn*) and determine “its structure” (*Ryech*).

And Mr. Kerensky, the honest broker in the Winter Palace, announces authoritatively:

1. Henceforth the right to organise the government and to supplement it belongs only to the Provisional Government.
2. This conference (Preliminary Parliament) cannot have the functions and rights of a Parliament.
3. The Provisional Government cannot be responsible to this conference. (*Ryech*.)

In short, Kerensky “quite agrees” with the Cadets; and the Defencists are glad to serve—what more do you want?

It was not for nothing that Prokopovich said on leaving the Winter Palace: “We can take it that an agreement has been reached.”

It is true that only yesterday the conference expressed its opposition to a coalition with the Cadets; but what do the sworn compromisers care about this? Having decided to counterfeit the will of revolutionary democracy by convening a conference instead of convening a Congress of Soviets why should they not counterfeit the will of the conference? It is the first step that is difficult. . . .

It is true that only yesterday the conference passed a resolution to the effect that the Preliminary Parliament was to “create” the government and that the latter was to be “responsible” to it; but what do the sworn compromisers care about this as long as the coalition remains hale and hearty? As for the decisions of the conference . . . what are they worth if they undermine the coalition?

Poor “democratic conference”!

Poor simple and confiding delegates!

How could they expect downright treachery from their leaders?

Our Party was right when it asserted that the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, whose strength is not derived from the revolutionary mass movement but from compromising arrangements with bourgeois politicians, are incapable of pursuing an independent policy.

Our Party was right when it said that the policy of compromise leads to the betrayal of the interests of the revolution.

Now everybody realises that the political bankrupts of defencism are with their own hands forging chains for the peoples of Russia, to the joy of the enemies of the revolution.

It is not for nothing that the Cadets feel satisfied and are rubbing their hands in anticipation of victory.

It is not for nothing that Messieurs the compromisers are slouching around with a guilty look on their faces "like whipped curs."

It is not for nothing that Kerensky's declarations ring with a note of victory.

Yes, they are triumphant.

But their "victory" is shortlived and transient is their triumph; for they are reckoning without their host, without the people.

For the hour is near when the deceived workers and soldiers will at last express their weighty opinion and upset this tinsel "victory" like a house of cards.

And then let Messieurs the compromisers blame themselves if their Defencist lumber is sent flying with the rest of the coalition junk.

*Rabochiy Put*, October 7, 1917

## V. I. Lenin

### THE CRISIS HAS MATURED

YES, the leaders of the Central Executive Committee are pursuing the correct tactics of defending the bourgeoisie and the landlords. And there is not the slightest doubt that if the Bolsheviks allowed themselves to be caught in the trap of constitutional illusions—"faith" in the Congress of Soviets and in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, "waiting" for the Congress of Soviets, and so forth—they would be *miserable traitors* to the proletarian cause.

They would be traitors to the cause, for by their conduct they would be betraying the German revolutionary workers who have started a revolt in the fleet. To "wait" for the Congress of Soviets and so forth under such circumstances would be a *betrayal of interna-*



*tionalism*, a betrayal of the cause of the international socialist revolution.

For internationalism consists not in phrases, not in protestations of solidarity, and not in resolutions, but in *deeds*.

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to the *peasantry*, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt by a government which *even Dyelo Naroda* compares with the Stolypinists would be to *ruin* the whole revolution, irrevocably and for ever. An outcry is raised about anarchy and about the increasing apathy of the masses; but what else can the masses be but apathetic to the elections, when the peasantry has been *driven to revolt* while the so-called "revolutionary democracy" is patiently tolerating the suppression of the revolt by military force?

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to democracy and to freedom; for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt at such a moment would *mean* allowing the elections to the Constituent Assembly to be juggled *in the same way*—and even more heinously and crudely—as the "Democratic Conference" and the "Pre-Parliament" were juggled.

The crisis has matured. The future of the Russian Revolution is at stake. The honour of the Bolshevik Party is in question. The future of the international workers' revolution for socialism is at stake.

The crisis has matured. . . .

*Rabochiy Put*, October 20, 1917.

## J. Stalin

### YOU WILL WAIT IN VAIN!

THE characteristic feature of the present moment is the impassable gulf that lies between the government and the masses, a gulf that did not exist in the first months of the revolution, but which opened as a result of the Kornilov rebellion.

After the victory over tsarism, in the very first days of the revolution, power dropped into the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie. It was not the workers and soldiers who came into power, but a

handful of Cadet imperialists. Why did this happen, and what did the rule of this handful of the bourgeoisie then rest on? It happened because the workers, and principally the soldiers, placed their trust in the bourgeoisie and hoped in alliance with them to secure bread and land, peace and freedom. The "Unconsciously trustful" attitude of the masses towards the bourgeoisie—this is what the rule of the bourgeoisie then rested on. The coalition with the bourgeoisie was merely the expression of this trust and this rule.

But the past six months of the revolution have not passed in vain. Instead of bread—starvation; instead of higher wages—unemployment; instead of land—empty promises; instead of freedom—war against the Soviets; instead of peace—war until the exhaustion of Russia and the treachery of the Kornilovites at Tarnopol and Riga: this is what the coalition with the bourgeoisie has given the masses. The Kornilov rebellion merely summed up the six months' experience of the coalition, revealed the treachery of the Cadets and the fatal result of compromise with them.

All this, of course, has not happened in vain. The "unconsciously trustful" attitude of the masses towards the bourgeoisie has disappeared. Coalition with the Cadets has given way to rupture with them, trust in the bourgeoisie has given way to hatred towards them. The rule of the bourgeoisie has lost its reliable foundation.

It is true that by means of the compromising devices of the Defencists, by means of forgeries and fabrications, with the assistance of Buchanan and the Cadet Kornilovites—with the obvious mistrust of the workers and soldiers—the compromisers have succeeded in knocking together a "new" government of the old bourgeois dictatorship, and by means of deceit have dragged in the out-of-date and dilapidated coalition.

But in the first place, this coalition is withering, for, created in the Winter Palace, it is meeting with nothing but resistance and anger in the country.

In the second place, this government is unstable, for it has no ground under its feet in the shape of the confidence and sympathy of the masses, who entertain nothing but hatred for it.

Hence, the impassable gulf that lies between the government and the country.

And if, nevertheless, this government remains in power, if in

obedience to the will of the minority it intends to rule over the obviously hostile majority, it is clear that it is counting on but one thing, and that is violence against the masses. Such a government has no other support, nor can it have.

Hence, it is not an accident that the first step of the Kerensky-Konovalov government was to wreck the Soviet in Tashkent.

Nor is it an accident that this government has already started to suppress the labour movement in the Donetz Basin and has sent a mysterious "dictator" there.

Nor is it an accident that at its session last night it proclaimed war on peasant "unrest" and decided:

To form local committees of the Provisional Government, the direct function of which is to combat anarchy and to put down disorders. (*Birzhevka*.)

All this is not accidental.

The government of the bourgeois dictatorship, lacking the confidence of the masses, and desiring, nevertheless, to stay in power, cannot exist without "anarchy" and "disorders," by fighting which it tries to justify its existence. In its sleep it dreams that the Bolsheviks have "organised insurrection," or that the peasants have "wrecked" the landlords' manors, or that the railwaymen have "imposed a fatal strike" which deprives the front of bread... It "needs" all this in order to rouse the peasants against the workers, the front against the rear, and thus, by creating the necessity for armed intervention, to strengthen its unstable position for a time.

For one must at last understand that, lacking the confidence of the country, and being besieged by the hatred of the masses, the government can be nothing else than a *government for provoking "civil war."*

It is not for nothing that *Ryech*, the semi-official organ of the Provisional Government, warns the government against "giving the Bolsheviks the opportunity of choosing the moment for declaring civil war," and advises it not to "suffer and wait until they" (the Bolsheviks) "choose a convenient moment for a general offensive" (*Ryech*, Wednesday).

Yes, they are thirsting for the people's blood.

But their hopes are vain and their efforts ridiculous.

The revolutionary proletariat, conscious and organised, is march-

ing towards victory. The peasants and soldiers are rallying around it unanimously and confidently. Louder and louder rings out the cry: All Power to the Soviets! The paper coalition in the Winter Palace... can it withstand this pressure?

You want isolated and premature actions on the part of the Bolsheviks?

You will wait in vain, Messieurs Kornilovites!

*Rabochiy Put*, October 12, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, MOSCOW COMMITTEE, PETROGRAD COMMITTEE, AND THE BOLSHEVIK MEMBERS OF THE PETROGRAD AND MOSCOW SOVIETS

DEAR COMRADES,

Events indicate our task so clearly to us that hesitation actually becomes a *crime*.

The agrarian movement is growing. The government is increasing its savage repressions; sympathy with us is growing in the army (in Moscow, 99 per cent of the soldier votes are for us; the troops in Finland and the navy are against the government; Dubasov has testified to this effect about the front in general).

In Germany, the beginning of the revolution is evident, particularly after the shooting of the sailors. The Moscow elections, with 47 per cent of Bolsheviks, are a great victory. Together with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries this means *an obvious* majority throughout the country.

The railroad workers and the postal employés are engaged in a conflict with the government. Instead of the congress called for November 2, the Liberdans \* already are speaking of one to be convened some time during the first ten days of November, etc., etc.

To "wait" under such conditions is a crime.

\* Contraction of the names Liber and Dan, Menshevik leaders.—*Ed.*

The Bolsheviks have no right to wait for the Congress of Soviets; they must *take power immediately*. Thus they will save both the world revolution (for otherwise there is the danger of an agreement between the imperialists of all countries who, after the shooting in Germany, will be much more agreeable to each other and *will unite against us*) and the Russian Revolution (else a wave of real anarchy may become stronger *than we are*): thus they will also save the lives of hundreds of thousands of people engaged in the war.

To hesitate is a crime. To wait for the Congress of Soviets means to play a childish game of formality, a shameful game of formality; it means to betray the revolution.

If it is impossible to take power without an uprising, it is necessary immediately *to orientate upon an uprising*. It is quite possible that power can be taken at the present time without an uprising: if, for instance, the Moscow Soviet were immediately to take power and to declare itself (together with the Petrograd Soviet) the government. Victory in Moscow is assured, as there is nobody there to fight. We can wait with Petrograd. The government can do nothing and cannot save itself; it will surrender.

For when the Moscow Soviet takes over power, the banks, the factories, the *Russkoye Slovo* [*The Russian Word*], it acquires a gigantic base and a power; it carries on propaganda before all of Russia, putting the question in the following way: we offer *peace* tomorrow if the Bonapartist Kerensky surrenders (if he does not surrender, we will overthrow him). *Land* to the peasants *immediately*; concessions to the railroad workers and postal employéés *immediately*, etc.

It is not compulsory to "start" with Petrograd. If Moscow "starts" bloodlessly, it will undoubtedly be supported (1) by the sympathies of the army at the front; (2) by the peasants everywhere; (3) by the fleet and the troops in Finland *which are moving on Petrograd*.

Even if Kerensky has in the vicinity of Petrograd one or two cavalry corps, he will have to surrender. The Petrograd Soviet may bide its time, while carrying on propaganda in favour of the Moscow Soviet government. The slogan is: power to the Soviets, land to the peasants, peace to the peoples, bread to the hungry.

Victory is assured, and there are nine chances out of ten that it will be bloodless.

To wait is a crime against the revolution.

Greetings,

N. LENIN

Written October 16-20, 1917. First published in the first edition of Lenin's *Collected Works*, Volume XIV, Part I, 1922.

### V. I. Lenin

#### ADVICE OF AN ONLOOKER

I AM writing these lines on October 21 and have but little hope that they will reach the Petrograd comrades by the 22nd. It is possible that they will arrive too late, since the Congress of the Northern Soviets has been fixed for October 23. Nevertheless, I shall try to give my "Advice of an Onlooker" in the event that the probable action of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and of the whole "region" will take place soon but has not taken place yet.

It is clear that all power must pass to the Soviets. It should be equally indisputable for every Bolshevik that the revolutionary proletarian power (or the Bolshevik power—which is now one and the same thing) is assured of the ardent sympathy and unreserved support of all the toilers and exploited all over the world in general, in the warring countries in particular, and among the Russian peasantry especially. There is no point in dwelling on these all too well known and long demonstrated truths.

What must be dwelt on is something that is probably not quite clear to all comrades, *viz.*, that the transfer of power to the Soviets in practice now implies armed insurrection. This would seem obvious, but not all have pondered or are pondering over the point. To renounce armed insurrection now would be to renounce the chief slogan of Bolshevism (all power to the Soviets) and revolutionary proletarian internationalism in general.

But armed insurrection is a *special* form of the political struggle, one subject to special rules which must be attentively pondered over.

Karl Marx expressed this truth with remarkable clarity when he wrote that armed "*insurrection is an art quite as much as war.*"

Of the principal rules of this art Marx noted the following:

1. Never play with insurrection, but once you have begun it firmly realise that you must *go to the end.*

2. You must concentrate a *great superiority of forces* at the decisive place and at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organisation, will destroy the insurrectionaries.

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

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

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

Marx summarised the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed insurrection in the words of Danton, "the greatest master of revolutionary tactics yet known": "audacity, audacity, and once again audacity."

Applied to Russia and to October 1917, this means: a simultaneous offensive on Petrograd, as sudden and as rapid as possible, which must without fail be carried out from within and from without, from the working-class quarters and from Finland, from Reval and from Kronstadt, an offensive of the *whole* fleet, the concentration of a *gigantic superiority* of forces over the 15,000 or 20,000 (perhaps more) of our "bourgeois guard" (the junkers), our "Vendean troops" (a part of the Cossacks), etc.

Our three main forces—the navy, the workers and the army units—must be so combined as to occupy without fail and to hold *at the cost of any sacrifice*: (a) the telephone exchange; (b) the telegraph office; (c) the railway stations; (d) above all, the bridges.

The *most determined* elements (our "storm troops" and *young workers*, as well as the best of the sailors) must be formed into small detachments to occupy all the more important points and to *take part everywhere* in all decisive operations, for example:

To encircle and cut off Petrograd; to seize it by a combined at-

tack of the navy, the workers and the troops—a task which requires *art and triple audacity*.

To form detachments composed of the best workers, armed with rifles and bombs, for the purpose of attacking and surrounding the “centres” of the enemy (the junker schools, the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, etc.). Their watchword must be: “*We shall all perish to a man rather than let the enemy pass!*”

Let us hope that if action is decided on, the leaders will successfully apply the great precepts of Danton and Marx.

The success of the Russian and world revolutions will depend on two or three days of fighting.

October 21, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### A LETTER TO THE BOLSHEVIK COMRADES ATTENDING THE REGIONAL CONGRESS OF THE SOVIETS OF THE NORTHERN REGION

COMRADES,

Our revolution is passing through a highly critical period. This crisis coincides with the great crisis—the maturing of the world-wide socialist revolution and the struggle waged against that revolution by world imperialism. A gigantic task is being imposed upon the responsible leaders of our Party, failure to perform which will involve the danger of a total collapse of the internationalist proletarian movement. The situation is such that verily, procrastination is like unto death.

Take a glance at the international situation. The growth of a world revolution is beyond dispute. The outburst of indignation on the part of the Czech workers has been suppressed with incredible ferocity, which indicates the extreme fright the government is in. Italy too has witnessed a mass outbreak in Turin. Most important however, is the mutiny in the German navy. One can imagine the enormous difficulties of a revolution in a country like Germany, especially under present conditions. It cannot be doubted that the mutiny in the German navy is indicative of the great crisis—the



maturing of the world revolution. While our chauvinists, who are advocating the defeat of Germany, demand a revolt of the German workers immediately, we Russian revolutionary internationalists know from the experience of 1905-17 that a more impressive sign of the growth of revolution than a mutiny among the troops cannot be imagined.

Just think what our position is now in the eyes of the German revolutionaries. They can say to us: We have only Liebknecht who openly called for a revolution. His voice has been stifled in a convict prison. We have not a single newspaper which openly explains the necessity for a revolution; we have not got freedom of assembly. We have not a single Soviet of Workers' or Soldiers' Deputies. Our voice barely reaches the real, broad masses. Yet we made an attempt at revolt, although our chance was only one in a hundred. But you Russian revolutionary internationalists have behind you a half-year of freedom of agitation; you have a score of newspapers; you have a number of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies; you have gained the upper hand in the Soviets of both capitals; you have on your side the entire Baltic Fleet and all the Russian troops in Finland. And still you do not respond to our call for revolt, you do not overthrow your imperialist, Kerensky, although the chances are a hundred to one that your revolt will be successful.

Yes, we shall be real traitors to the International if, at such a moment and under such favourable conditions, we respond to such a call of the German revolutionaries with... mere resolutions.

Add to this, as we all perfectly well know, that the plotting and conspiracy of the international imperialists against the Russian Revolution are rapidly growing. International imperialism is coming more and more to the idea of stifling the revolution at all costs, stifling it both by military measures and by a peace made at the expense of Russia. It is this that is making the crisis in the world socialist revolution so acute, and that is rendering our procrastination in the matter of revolt particularly dangerous—I would almost say criminal.

Take, further, the internal situation of Russia. The petty-bourgeois compromising parties, which expressed the naïve confidence of the masses in Kerensky and in the imperialists in general, are absolutely bankrupt, their collapse is complete. The vote cast against coalition

by the Soviet *curia* at the Democratic Congress; the vote cast against coalition by a *majority* of the local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies (in spite of their Central Soviet, where Avksentyev and other friends of Kerensky's are installed); the elections in Moscow, where the working class population has the closest ties with the peasantry, and where over 49 per cent voted for the Bolsheviks (and among the soldiers fourteen thousand out of seventeen thousand)—does this not signify that the confidence of the masses in Kerensky and in those who are compromising with Kerensky & Co. has totally collapsed? Can one imagine any way in which the masses could say more clearly to the Bolsheviks than they did by this vote: "Lead us, we shall follow you"?

Are we, who have won the majority of the people over to our side, and who have gained the Soviets of both capitals, to wait? What for? For Kerensky and his Kornilovist generals to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, and thus enter directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, into a conspiracy with both Buchanan and Wilhelm for the purpose of completely stifling the Russian Revolution?

By the Moscow vote and by the elections to the Soviets, the people have expressed their confidence in us, but that is not all. There are signs of growing apathy and indifference. That is easily understood. It implies not the ebb of the revolution, as the Cadets and their henchmen vociferate, but the ebb of confidence in resolutions and elections. In a revolution, the masses demand of the leading parties action, not words; they demand victories in the struggle, not talk. The moment is approaching when the people may conceive the opinion that the Bolsheviks are no better than the others, since they were unable to act when confidence was placed in them....

The peasant insurrection is spreading over the whole country. It is perfectly clear that the Cadets and their satellites are minimising it in every way and are representing it to be nothing but "pogroms" and "anarchy." That lie is refuted by the fact that in the centres of revolt the land is beginning to be handed over to the peasants. "Pogroms" and "anarchy" have never led to such splendid political results! The tremendous strength of the peasant revolt is shown by the fact that the compromisers and the Socialist-Revolutionaries of *Dyelo Naroda*, and even Breshko-Breshkovskaya, have begun to talk

of giving the land to the peasants in order to stop the movement before it has overwhelmed them.

And are we to wait until the Cossack detachments of the Kornilovist Kerensky (who was recently exposed as a Kornilovist by the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves) succeed in suppressing this peasant uprising *piecemeal*?

Apparently, many leaders of our Party have failed to note the specific meaning of the slogan which we all adopted and which we have repeated endlessly. The slogan is "All Power to the Soviets." There were periods, there were moments during the half-year of the revolution, when this slogan did not imply insurrection. Perhaps these periods and those moments blinded some of our comrades and led them to forget that now, at least since the middle of September, this slogan for us too has become *equivalent to a call for insurrection*.

There can be no shadow of doubt on this point. *Dyelo Naroda* recently explained this "in a popular way," when it said, "Kerensky will never submit!" What a question!

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" is a call for revolt. And the blame will be wholly and entirely ours, if we, who for months have been calling upon the masses to revolt and repudiate compromise, fail to lead those masses to revolt on the eve of the collapse of the revolution, after the masses have expressed their confidence in us.

The Cadets and compromisers are trying to scare us by citing the example of July 16-18, by pointing to the intensified agitation of the Black Hundreds, and so forth. But if any mistake was made on July 16-18, it was that we did not seize power. I think that then there was no mistake, for at that time we were not yet in a majority. But now it would be a fatal mistake, worse than a mistake. The spread of Black Hundred agitation is easily understood; it is an aggravation of extremes in an atmosphere of a developing proletarian and peasant revolution. But to use this as an argument *against* revolt is ridiculous, for the impotence of the Black Hundred hirelings of the capitalists, *the impotence of the Black Hundreds in a fight*, does not even require proof. In a fight, Kornilov and Kerensky can rely only upon the support of the "Savage Division" and the Cossacks. And now demoralisation has set in even among the Cos-

sacks; besides, the peasants are threatening them with civil war within their Cossack territories.

I am writing these lines on Sunday, October 21. You will read them not earlier than October 23. I have heard from a comrade who passed through here that people travelling on the Warsaw railroad say, "Kerensky is leading the Cossacks on Petrograd!" This is quite probable, and it will be entirely our fault if we do not verify it most carefully and do not make a study of the strength and distribution of *the Kornilovist troops of the second draft*.

Kerensky has again brought Kornilovist troops into the vicinity of Petrograd in order to prevent the power of government from passing into the hands of the Soviets, in order to prevent such a government from proposing an immediate peace, in order to prevent all the land from being immediately handed over to the peasantry and in order to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, while he himself escapes to Moscow! That is the slogan of the insurrection which we must circulate as widely as possible and which will meet with a tremendous response.

We must not wait for the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which the Central Executive Committee may delay even until November. We must not procrastinate and permit Kerensky to bring up more Kornilovist troops. Finland, the fleet and Reval are represented at the Congress of Soviets. These together can start an immediate movement on Petrograd against the Kornilovist regiments, a movement of the fleet, artillery, machine-guns and two or three army corps, such as have shown, for instance in Viborg, the intensity of their hatred for the Kornilovist generals, with whom Kerensky is again in collusion.

It would be a great mistake were we to fail to seize the opportunity of immediately smashing the Kornilovist regiments of the second draft for fear that, by moving into Petrograd, the Baltic Fleet would allegedly expose the front to the Germans. The Kornilovist slanderers will say this, for they will tell any lie, but it is not worthy of revolutionaries to allow themselves to be frightened by lies and slanders. Kerensky will deliver Petrograd to the Germans, that is now as clear as daylight. No assertion to the contrary can shake our utter conviction that that is so, for it follows from the entire course of events and from Kerensky's entire policy.

Kerensky and the Kornilovists will surrender Petrograd to the Germans. And in order to save Petrograd, Kerensky must be overthrown and the power seized by the *Soviets of both capitals*. These Soviets will immediately propose a peace to all the nations and will thereby fulfil their duty to the German revolutionaries. They will thereby also be taking a decisive step towards frustrating the criminal conspiracies against the Russian Revolution, the conspiracies of international imperialism.

Only the immediate movement of the Baltic Fleet, the Finnish troops, and Reval and Kronstadt against the Kornilovist troops quartered near Petrograd can save the Russian and the world revolutions. Such a movement has ninety-nine chances out of a hundred of leading within a few days to the surrender of a part of the Cossack troops, to the complete defeat of the other part, and to the overthrow of Kerensky, for the workers and the soldiers of both capitals will support such a movement.

Procrastination is fatal.

The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" is a slogan of insurrection. Whoever uses this slogan without having grasped and pondered on this will have only himself to blame. And insurrection must be treated as an art. I insisted on this during the Democratic Conference and I insist on it now; because *that* is what Marxism teaches us, and it is what is being taught us by the present situation in Russia and in the world generally.

It is not a question of voting, of attracting the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries," of additional provincial Soviets, or of a Congress of these Soviets. It is a question of insurrection, which can and must be decided by Petrograd, Moscow, Helsingfors, Kronstadt, Viborg and Reval. *In the vicinity of Petrograd* and in Petrograd itself—that is where the insurrection can, and must, be decided on and effected. It must be effected as earnestly as possible, with as much preparation as possible, as quickly as possible and as energetically as possible.

The fleet, Kronstadt, Viborg, Reval, can and must advance on Petrograd; they must smash the Kornilov regiments, rouse both the capitals, start a mass agitation for a government which will immediately give the land to the peasants and immediately make pro-

posals for peace, and must overthrow Kerensky's government and establish such a government.

Verily, procrastination is like unto death.

October 21, 1917. First printed in *Pravda*, November 7, 1925.

### V. I. Lenin

## MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P., OCTOBER 23, 1917

### I.

#### EXCERPTS FROM THE MINUTES

**LENIN** states that since the beginning of September a certain indifference towards the question of uprising has been noted. He says that this is inadmissible, if we earnestly raise the slogan of seizure of power by the Soviets. It is, therefore, high time to turn attention to the technical side of the question. Much time has obviously been lost.

Nevertheless, the question is very urgent and the decisive moment is near.

The international situation is such that we must take the initiative.

What is being planned, surrendering as far as Narva and even as far as Petrograd, compels us still more to take decisive action.

The political situation is also effectively working in this direction. On July 16-18, decisive action on our part would have been defeated because we had no majority with us. Since then, our upsurge has been making gigantic strides.

The absenteeism and the indifference of the masses can be explained by the fact that the masses are tired of words and resolutions.

The majority is now with us. Politically, the situation has become entirely ripe for the transfer of power.

The agrarian movement also goes in this direction, for it is clear that enormous efforts are needed to subdue this movement. The slogan of transferring the entire land has become the general slogan of the peasants. The political background is thus ready. It is necessary to speak of the technical side. This is the whole matter. Mean-

while we, together with the defencists, are inclined to consider a systematic preparation for an uprising as something like a political sin.

To wait for the Constituent Assembly, which will obviously not be for us, is senseless, because it would make our task more complex.

We must utilise the regional congress and the proposal from Minsk to begin decisive action.

First published in *Proletarskaya Revolyutsia*, No. 10, 1922.

## II.

### RESOLUTION

The Central Committee recognises that the international situation of the Russian Revolution (the mutiny in the navy in Germany as the extreme manifestation of the growth in all of Europe of the world-wide socialist revolution; the threat of a peace between the imperialists with the aim of crushing the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the undoubted decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and of Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans) and the fact that the proletarian parties have gained a majority in the Soviets; all this, coupled with the peasant uprising and with a shift of the people's confidence towards our Party (elections in Moscow); finally, the obvious preparation for a second Kornilov affair (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd; the bringing of Cossacks to Petrograd; the surrounding of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.)—places the armed uprising on the order of the day.

Recognising thus that an armed uprising is inevitable and the time perfectly ripe, the Central Committee proposes to all the organisations of the Party to act accordingly and to discuss and decide from this point of view all the practical questions (the Congress of the Soviets of the northern region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the actions in Moscow and in Minsk, etc.).

First published in *Prozhektor (Searchlight)*, October 31, 1924.

J. Stalin

## THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION IS MOBILISING—PREPARE TO RESIST!

THE revolution lives. After thwarting the Kornilov attempt and stirring up the front, sweeping through the towns and re-animating the factory districts, it is now spreading to the rural districts, sweeping away the hated pillars of landlord rule.

The last prop of compromise is falling. The fight against Kornilovism has swept away the last compromising illusions of the workers and soldiers and has rallied the latter around our Party. The fight against the landlords will sweep away the compromising illusions of the peasantry and gather the latter around the workers and soldiers.

In the fight against the Defencists, and in spite of them, a revolutionary front of workers, soldiers and peasants is being built up. In the fight against the compromisers, and in spite of them, this front is growing and becoming stronger.

The revolution is mobilising its forces and expelling from its midst the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary compromisers.

At the same time the counter-revolution is also mobilising its forces.

The Cadet Party, this nest and hotbed of counter-revolution, is the first to start the struggle by carrying on agitation in favour of Kornilov. Having taken power in its hands and unchained the watch-dogs in the Suvorin backyard, cloaking itself in the Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik Kornilov "Preliminary Parliament" and securing for itself the support of the counter-revolutionary generals, the Cadet Party is preparing for another Kornilov outbreak, threatening to smash the revolution.

The "Union of Public Men" of Moscow, this union of the lock-outers and the "gaunt hand of famine," the very same union which helped Kornilov to strangle the soldiers and workers and to disperse the Soviets in the rear and the committees at the front, this very union, in two days' time, is convening a "*Second Moscow Conference*" to which it is urgently inviting the representatives of the "Union of Cossack Troops."



At the front, particularly in the south and west, a secret league of Kornilovite generals is feverishly organising a fresh attack upon the revolution, and is gathering around itself all the forces suitable for this "dirty work." . . .

And the Kerensky government, the very same government which in conjunction with Kornilov organised the plot against the revolution, is preparing to flee to Moscow in order, after surrendering Petrograd to the Germans, to organise in conjunction with the Ryabushinskys and Burishkins, the Kaledins and Alexeyevs, another and more menacing plot against the revolution.

There is no possible room for doubt. As against the front of the revolution there is forming and becoming strong the front of counter-revolution, the front of the capitalists and landlords, of the Kerensky government and the Preliminary Parliament. The counter-revolution is preparing for another Kornilov rebellion.

The first Kornilov plot was thwarted; but the counter-revolution was not broken; it merely retreated, hid behind the back of the Kerensky government and entrenched itself in its new positions.

The second Kornilov plot which is now being prepared must be crushed at the roots in order to protect the revolution from danger for a long time.

The first offensive of the counter-revolution was thwarted by the forces of the workers and soldiers, by the forces of the Soviets in the rear and the Committees at the front.

The Soviets and Committees must take all measures to ensure that the second offensive of the counter-revolution is swept away by the whole might of our great revolution.

Let the workers and soldiers know, let the peasants and sailors know that it is now a fight for *peace* and *bread*, for *land* and *liberty*, against the capitalists and landlords, against the profiteers and marauders, against betrayers and traitors, against all those who do not want to put an end once and for all to the Kornilovites who are now organising.

**The Kornilovites are mobilising—prepare to resist!**

*Rabochiy Put*, October 23, 1917.

J. Stalin

### SOVIET POWER

In the first days of the revolution the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" was a novelty. "Soviet power" was opposed to the power of the Provisional Government for the first time in April. The majority in the capital were as yet in favour of a Provisional Government without Milyukov-Guchkov. In June, this slogan obtained the demonstrative recognition of the overwhelming majority of the workers and soldiers. The Provisional Government was already isolated in the capital. In July, a struggle around the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" flared up between the revolutionary majority in the capital and the Lvov-Kerensky government. The compromising Central Executive Committee, relying on the backwardness of the provinces, went over to the side of the government. The struggle ended in favour of the government. The adherents of Soviet power were outlawed.

A dead season set in of "socialist" repressions and "republican" prisons, of Bonapartist intrigues and military plots, of firing squads at the front and of "conferences" in the rear. This lasted until August. At the end of August the scene changed very radically. The Kornilov rebellion called forth the exertion of all the strength of the revolution. The Soviets in the rear and the Committees at the front, which were in a moribund state in July-August, "suddenly" revived and took power in their hands in Siberia and the Caucasus, in Finland and the Urals, in Odessa and Kharkov. Had they not done this, had they not taken power, the revolution would have been crushed. Thus, "Soviet power" proclaimed in April by a "small group of Bolsheviks in Petrograd" obtains the almost universal recognition of the revolutionary classes in Russia at the end of August.

It is now clear to all that "Soviet power" is not only a popular slogan, but the only sure weapon in the struggle for the victory of the revolution; it provides the only way out of the present situation.

The time has come for the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" to be put into practice at last.

But what is "Soviet power"; and how does it differ from every other power?

It is said that transferring power to the Soviets means forming a "homogeneous" democratic Ministry, organising a new "Cabinet" consisting of "Socialist" Ministers, and, generally speaking, making "important changes" in the composition of the Provisional Government. But this is not true. Here, it is not a matter of substituting some persons for others in the Provisional Government. The thing is to make the new revolutionary classes the masters of the situation in the country. The thing is to transfer power to the hands of the proletariat and revolutionary peasantry. For this purpose a mere change in the composition of the government is inadequate. For this purpose it is first of all necessary thoroughly to purge all the government departments and offices, to expel the Kornilovites, and to place everywhere loyal members of the working class and the peasantry. Only then, and only in that case, will it be possible to speak of transferring power to the Soviets "at the center and in the districts."

What is the cause of the universally-known helplessness of the "Socialist" Ministers in the Provisional Government? What is the cause of the fact that these Ministers have proved to be miserable playthings in the hands of people outside the Provisional Government? (Recall the "reports" Chernov and Skobelyev, Zarudny and Peshekhonov made at the "Democratic Conference"!)

First of all the fact that instead of them directing their Departments, their Departments directed them. The fact, among others, that every Department is a fortress occupied by the bureaucrats of the tsarist period who transformed the good intentions of the Ministers into "hollow sounds," and who are ready to sabotage every revolutionary measure adopted by the government. In order that power may pass to the Soviets, not in words but in deeds, these fortresses must be captured, the servants of the Cadet-tsarist régime must be expelled from them, and elected and recallable top officials who are loyal to the revolution must be put in their place.

Power to the Soviets means the thorough purging of every government office in the rear and at the front, from top to bottom.

Power to the Soviets means that every "Chief" in the rear and at the front must be elected and subject to recall.

All Power to the Soviets means that all "representatives of authority" in town and country, in the army and navy, in the "Departments" and "government-offices," on the railways and in the Post Office must be elected and subject to recall.

Power to the Soviets means the dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry.

This dictatorship differs radically from the dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie, the very dictatorship which Kornilov and Milyukov tried only very recently to establish with the benevolent participation of Kerensky and Tereshchenko.

The dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry, *i.e.*, the dictatorship of the toiling majority over the exploiting minority, over the landlords and capitalists, over the profiteers and bankers, for the sake of a democratic *peace*, for the sake of workers' *control* over production and distribution, for the sake of *land* for the peasants, for the sake of *bread* for the people.

The dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry, *i.e.*, open, mass dictatorship, exercised in the eyes of all, without plots and behind-the-scenes work; for such a dictatorship has no reason to hide the fact that no mercy will be shown to the lock-out capitalists who have intensified unemployment by means of various "unloadings," or to the profiteering bankers who have screwed up the price of food and caused starvation.

The dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, *i.e.*, a dictatorship without violence against the masses, a dictatorship which expresses the will of the masses, a dictatorship for the purpose of curbing the will of the enemies of these masses.

This is the class nature of the slogan "All Power to the Soviets."

Events in home and foreign politics, the protracted war and the longing for peace, defeat at the front and defence of the capital, the rottenness of the Provisional Government and its "removal" to Moscow, chaos and famine, unemployment and exhaustion—all this is irresistibly drawing the revolutionary classes of Russia to power. This means that the country is already ripe for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry.

The time has come for the revolutionary slogan "All Power to the Soviets" to be put into practice.

J. Stalin

## AN EXAMINATION IN INSOLENCENCE

FORCED to the wall by the onslaught of the revolution, the government of bourgeois Court favourites is striving to wriggle out of its position by flinging around false assurances that it did not intend to flee from Petrograd and did not want to surrender the capital.

Only yesterday it was announced from the house-tops (*Izvestia!*) that the government was "moving" to Moscow as it considered the position of the capital "unsafe." Only yesterday there was open talk ("by the Defence Commission"!) about the surrender of Petrograd, and the government demanded the removal of the guns from the approaches to the capital. Only yesterday, Squire Rodzyanko, Kerensky's and Kornilov's partner in the plot against the revolution, welcomed the government's decision to "surrender," for he wants Petrograd, the navy and the Soviets to perish.

Only yesterday "London" associated itself with this decision, for it wants the government to be speedily freed from Petrograd and the navy. All this occurred only yesterday. . . . But today the frightened Court favourites of the government, retreating in disorder before the navy and the garrison which have resolutely decided to defend the capital, confusing and contradicting each other, are in their cowardly fashion trying to obscure the facts, trying to justify themselves before the revolution which only yesterday they tried, so unsuccessfully and clumsily, to betray.

But Kerensky's "categorical" statement that the "removal" has been postponed until the spring is refuted by Kishkin's equally categorical statement that some of the government offices "may be transferred to Moscow *immediately*." And V. Bogdanov, the reporter for the "Defence Commission" (by no means a Bolshevik!) also categorically declares that "the government has revealed the *desire to leave Petrograd*, and the broad strata of democracy perceived in the government's departure the possibility of *surrendering Petrograd*" (*Izvestia*). This is quite apart from the fact that according to the reports in the evening newspapers "the supporters of the Provisional Government's removal to Moscow had . . . a *preponderance of votes*" (*Ruskiye Vedemosti*).

Wretched little people of the Provisional Government! Having deceived the people all the time, could they count on anything else than once again deceiving the masses from whom they are trying to conceal their disorderly retreat?

But Court favourites would not be Court favourites if they confined themselves to deception. While retreating and covering his retreat with deception, Kerensky hurls out a number of accusations, hinting at our Party, and talking loudly about the "recrudescence of pogroms," about "dangerous enemies of the revolution," about "blackmail," about "corrupting the masses," about "hands which are stained with the blood of innocent victims," etc.

Kerensky denouncing the "enemies of the revolution," the very Kerensky who with Kornilov and Savinkov plotted against the revolution and the Soviets, and by means of deception drew the Third Cavalry Corps to the capital! . . .

Kerensky denouncing the "recrudescence of pogroms," the very Kerensky who by raising the price of grain provoked the rural districts to pogroms and incendiarism! Read the Defencist-Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper *Vlast Naroda* [*People's Rule*], and judge for yourselves!

Some of our correspondents write that the recent disorders should be attributed to the raising of the fixed prices. The new prices immediately caused a general rise in the cost of living. This caused discontent, anger and excessive irritation, as a result of which the mob is more prone than before to start pogroms. (No. 140.)

Kerensky denouncing "corruption of the masses," the very Kerensky who defiled the revolution and corrupted its pure morals by reviving the secret police and detective system headed by the sordid Vonlyarlyarskys and Shchukins!

Kerensky denouncing "blackmail," the very Kerensky whose entire régime is sheer blackmail of democracy, who openly blackmailed the "Democratic Conference" by the threat of a fictitious military landing on the Finnish coast, successfully competing with General Khabalov!

Kerensky denouncing "hands which are bespattered with the blood of innocent victims," the very Kerensky whose hands are indeed bespattered with the innocent blood of tens of thousands of soldiers, the victims of the adventurist offensive at the front last June!

It is said that everything in the world has its limits. But is it not clear that there is no such limit to the insolence of the bourgeois Court favourites?

*Izvestia* reports that the members of the "Council of the Republic" "on all benches greeted Kerensky with prolonged and loud applause." We expected nothing else from the flunkey Preliminary Parliament, this abortion of Kornilovism and god-child of Kerensky.

But let these gentlemen know, let all those who are secretly preparing repressions against the "Lefts" and all those who are applauding these repressions in anticipation, let them all know that when the decisive hour strikes they will all equally have to answer before the revolution, which they want to betray, but which they will fail to deceive.

*Rabochiy Put*, October 28, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P., OCTOBER 29, 1917

##### EXCERPTS FROM THE MINUTES

###### I.

LENIN reads the resolution that was adopted by the Central Committee at the previous session. He says that the resolution was adopted with two voting against. If the comrades who disagree wish to express themselves, he says, discussion may be opened; in the meantime, however, he gives the reasons for this resolution.

Had the Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary parties broken with conciliationism, it would have been possible to offer them a compromise. This offer was made; it is obvious, however, that this compromise has been rejected by the above-named parties. On the other hand, it has become clear at this period that the masses are following us. It was so even before the Kornilov affair; (Lenin) proves it by statistics of the elections in Petrograd and in Moscow. The Kornilov affair has pushed the masses still closer to us. Inter-

relation of forces at the Democratic Conference. Situation is clearly either a dictatorship of Kornilov, or a dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry. Sentiment cannot serve as guide, since it is changeable and cannot be measured; we must be guided by an objective analysis and an appraisal of the revolution. The masses have expressed confidence in the Bolsheviks and they demand of them not words, but deeds, a decisive policy both in the struggle against the war and in the struggle against economic ruin. If we make our basis a political analysis of the revolution, it will become perfectly clear that this is now being proven even by anarchistic actions.

He analyses further the situation in Europe and proves that a revolution there is still more difficult than here. If, in a country like Germany, there has been a mutiny in the navy, this proves that things there have gone very far. The international situation gives us a good deal of objective data showing that if we act now, we will have on our side all of proletarian Europe. He proves that the bourgeoisie wishes to surrender Petrograd. We can save ourselves from this only by taking Petrograd into our hands. The conclusion from all this is clear, namely, that the armed uprising of which the Central Committee resolution speaks is on the order of the day.

As to practical conclusions from the resolution, it is more convenient to make them after listening to the reports of the representatives of the centres.

From a political analysis of the class struggle, both in Russia and in Europe, follows the necessity of a most decisive, most active policy, which can be only an armed uprising.

## II.

[Lenin] disagrees with Milyukov and Shotman and points out that it is not a question of armed forces, not a question of fighting against the troops, but of one part of the troops fighting against another. He sees no pessimism in what has been said here. He argues that the forces on the side of the bourgeoisie are not large. Facts prove that we have a preponderance over the enemy. Why cannot the Central Committee begin? This does not follow from all the data. To reject the Central Committee's resolution, one must show that there is no economic ruin, that the international situation



is not leading to complications. If the trade union functionaries demand all power, they understand very well what they want. Objective conditions show that the peasantry must be led; it will follow the proletariat.

Some are afraid that we would not retain power; but just now we have particular chances of retaining power.

[Lenin] expresses a wish that the discussion should be conducted on the level of analysing the resolution on its merits.

### III.

If all resolutions fell through in this way, one wouldn't wish for anything better. Now Zinoviev says down with the slogan, "Power to the Soviets," and pressure on the government. If it is said that the uprising is "of the people" there is no need of speaking of conspiracies. If politically the uprising is inevitable, we must treat the uprising as an art. Politically, it has already matured.

Precisely because there is bread for one day only, we cannot wait for the Constituent Assembly. [Lenin] proposes to endorse the resolution, to energetically push the preparations and to leave it to the Central Committee and the Soviet to decide when.

### IV.

Arguing against Zinoviev, Lenin says that it is wrong to contrast the present revolution with the February Revolution. As to the matter under consideration, he proposes the following resolution:

The meeting heartily greets and fully supports the resolution of the Central Committee. It calls upon all the organisations and all the workers and soldiers to prepare the armed uprising most energetically, in every way, to support the organ which the Central Committee is creating for this purpose, and expresses full confidence that the Central Committee and the Soviet will in due time indicate the favourable moment and the most expedient methods for an offensive.

First published, *Proletarskaya Revolyutsia*, October 1927.

J. Stalin.SPEECH AT THE MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE,  
OCTOBER 29, 1917

[AS RECORDED IN THE MINUTES]

THE day for the insurrection must be properly chosen. Only in this sense must the resolution be understood. It may be said that the attack must be held up, but we must understand what attack means; the increase in the price of grain, the sending of Cossacks to the Don district, etc., all this is attack. How long shall we wait if there is no military attack? Objectively, what Kamenev and Zinoviev propose would enable the counter-revolution to organise. We will continue to retreat without end and lose the whole revolution. Why should we not ensure for ourselves the possibility of choosing the day and the condition so as to deprive the counter-revolution of the possibility of organising?

Proceeding to analyse international relations the speaker shows that there must be more confidence now. There are two lines: one line is steering towards the victory of the revolution and looking to Europe; the other line does not believe in the revolution and counts on being only an opposition. The Petrograd Soviet has already taken the path of insurrection by refusing to sanction the withdrawal of the troops. The Navy has already risen insofar as it has gone against Kerensky.

*The Road to October, Articles and Speeches, March-October, 1917. Moscow, 1925.*

V. I. Lenin

## A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

COMRADES,

I have not yet been able to receive the Petrograd papers for Wednesday, October 31. When the full text of Kamenev's and Zinoviev's declaration, published in *Novaya Zhizn*, which is not a Party

paper, was transmitted to me by telephone, I refused to believe it. But doubt proved to be out of the question, and I am obliged to take this opportunity in order that this letter may reach the members of the Party by Thursday evening or Friday morning, for to remain silent in the face of such unheard-of *strike-breaking* would be a crime.

The more serious the practical problem, and the more responsible and "prominent" the persons guilty of strike-breaking, the more dangerous it is, the more resolutely must the strike-breakers be thrown out, and the more unpardonable would it be to hesitate even in consideration of the past "services" of the strike-breakers.

Just think of it! It is known in Party circles that the Party since September has been discussing the question of insurrection. Nobody has ever heard of a single letter or leaflet written by either of the persons named! Now, on the eve, one might say, of the Congress of Soviets, two prominent Bolsheviks come out *against* the majority, and, obviously, *against* the Central Committee. That is not stated directly, but the harm done to the cause is all the greater, for to speak in hints is even more dangerous.

It is perfectly clear from the text of Kamenev's and Zinoviev's declaration that they have gone against the Central Committee, for otherwise their declaration would be meaningless. But it is not stated *what* specific decision of the Central Committee they are disputing.

Why?

The reason is obvious: because it has not been published by the Central Committee.

What does this amount to?

On a burning question of supreme importance, on the eve of the critical day of November 2, and in the *non-Party* press, indeed, in a paper which on this question is *hand in glove with the bourgeoisie against the workers' party*, two "prominent" Bolsheviks attack an *unpublished* decision of the Party centre!

Why, this is a thousand times more despicable and a *million times more harmful* than all the utterances Plekhanov made in the *non-Party* press in 1906-07, which the Party so sharply condemned. For at that time it was only a question of elections, while now it is a question of an insurrection for the conquest of power!

And on such a question, *after* a decision has been taken by the centre, to dispute this *unpublished* decision before the Rodzyankos and Kerenskys in a non-Party paper—can one imagine anything more treacherous, a more heinous act of strike-breaking?

I should consider it disgraceful on my part if I were to hesitate to condemn these former comrades because of my former close relations with them. I declare outright that I no longer consider either of them comrades and that I will fight with all my might, both in the Central Committee and at the Congress, to secure their expulsion from the Party.

For a workers' party, which the facts of the situation are confronting more and more frequently with the necessity for insurrection, cannot accomplish that difficult task if unpublished decisions of the centre, after their adoption, are to be disputed in the non-Party press, and vacillation and confusion brought into the ranks of the fighters.

Let Messrs. Zinoviev and Kamenev found their own party from the dozens of disoriented people, or from the candidates to the Constituent Assembly. The workers will not join such a party, for its first slogan will be:

“Members of the Central Committee who are defeated at a meeting of the Central Committee on the question of a decisive fight are permitted resort to the non-Party press for the purpose of attacking the unpublished decisions of the Party.”

Let them build themselves *such* a party; our workers' Bolshevik Party will only gain thereby.

When all the documents are published, the strike-breaking activities of Zinoviev and Kamenev will stand out still more glaringly. In the meantime, let the following question engage the attention of the workers:

Let us assume that the Executive Committee of an all-Russian trade union had decided, after a month's deliberation and by a majority of over 80 per cent, that preparations must be made for a strike but that for the time being the date or any other details should not be divulged. Let us assume that *after* the decision had been taken two members, under the false pretext of a “dissenting opinion,” not only began to write to the local groups urging a

reconsideration of the decision, but also permitted their letters to be communicated to newspapers of other parties. Let us, finally, assume that they themselves attacked the decision in papers of other parties, although it had not yet been published, and began to denounce the strike to the capitalists.

We ask, would the workers hesitate in expelling such strike-breakers from their midst?

As to the question of insurrection now, when November 2 is so close at hand, I cannot from afar judge to what extent the cause has been damaged by the strike-breaking declaration in the non-Party press. There is no doubt that very great *practical* damage has been done. In order to remedy the situation, it is first necessary to restore unity to the Bolshevik front by expelling the strike-breakers.

The weakness of the ideological arguments against insurrection will become the clearer, the more we drag them into the light. I recently sent an article on this question to *Rabochiy Put*, and if the editors do not find it possible to print it, members of the Party will probably acquaint themselves with it in the manuscript.

These so-called "ideological" arguments reduce themselves to two. First, that it is necessary to "wait" for the Constituent Assembly. Let us wait, maybe we can hold on until then—that is the whole argument. Maybe, despite famine, despite economic ruin, despite the fact that the patience of the soldiers is exhausted, despite Rodzyanko's measures to surrender Petrograd to the Germans (even despite the lockouts), perhaps we can hold on.

Perhaps and maybe—that is the whole point of the argument.

The second is a shrill pessimism. Everything is well with the bourgeoisie and Kerensky; everything is wrong with us. The capitalists have everything wonderfully in hand; everything is wrong with the workers. The "pessimists" are shouting at the top of their voices about the military side of the matter; and the "optimists" hold their peace, for to disclose anything to Rodzyanko and Kerensky is hardly pleasant to anybody but strike-breakers.

Difficult times. A difficult task. A serious betrayal.

Nevertheless, the problem will be solved; the workers will consolidate their ranks, and the peasant revolt and the extreme im-

patience of the soldiers at the front will do their work! Let us close our ranks—the proletariat must win!

N. LENIN

October 31, 1917. First printed in *Pravda*, November 4, 1927.

V. I. Lenin

## A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

COMRADES,

I am writing these lines on the evening of November 6. The situation is critical in the extreme. It is absolutely clear that to delay the insurrection now will veritably be fatal.

I exhort my comrades with all my heart and strength to realise that everything now hangs on a thread; that we are being confronted by problems that can be solved not by conferences or congresses (even Congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by the people, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed masses.

The bourgeois onslaught of the Kornilovists and the removal of Verkhovskiy show that we must not wait. We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, first disarming (defeating, if they offer resistance) the *Junkers* and so forth.

We must not wait! We may lose everything!

The gain from the seizure of power immediately will be that the people (not the Congress, but the people, the army and the peasants in the first place) will be defended from the Kornilovist government, which has driven out Verkhovskiy and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.

Who must take power?

At present that is not important. Let the Revolutionary Military Committee take it, or "some other institution," declaring that it will relinquish the power only to the true representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the army (immediate proposals for peace), the interests of the peasants (the land to be taken immediately and private property abolished), the interests of the starving.

All boroughs, all regiments, all forces must be mobilised immediately and must send their delegations to the Revolutionary Military Committee and to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent demand that under no circumstances shall the power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until November 7; not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided unconditionally this very evening, or this very night.

History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they can be victorious today (will certainly be victorious today), while they risk losing much, in fact, everything, tomorrow.

If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Soviets but on their behalf.

The seizure of power is a matter of insurrection; its political purpose will be clear after the seizure.

It would be a disaster, or a sheer formality, to await the wavering vote of November 7. The people have the right and the duty to decide such questions not by a vote, but by force; in critical moments of revolution, the people have the right and the duty to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.

This is proved by the history of all revolutions, and it would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the moment pass, knowing that upon them depends the *salvation of the revolution*, the proposal of peace, the saving of Petrograd, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants.

The government is wavering. It must be *destroyed* at all costs!

To delay action will be fatal.

November 6, 1917. First printed in 1925.

## J. Stalin

### WHAT DO WE NEED?

In February the soldiers and workers overthrew the Tsar. But having vanquished the Tsar they did not want to take power into their own hands. Led by the bad pastors, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, the workers and soldiers voluntarily handed over

power to the placemen of the landlords and capitalists, *i.e.*, the Milyukovs and Lvovs, the Guchkovs and Konovalovs.

This was the fatal mistake the victors committed. And the soldiers at the front and the workers and peasants in the rear are now paying dearly for this mistake.

In overthrowing the Tsar the workers thought that they would obtain bread and work. But instead of this they "got" high prices and starvation, lock-outs and unemployment. Why?

Because in the government there are the placemen of the capitalists and profiteers who want to starve the workers into submission.

In overthrowing the Tsar the peasants thought that they would obtain land. But instead of this they "got" the arrest of their deputies and punitive expeditions. Why?

Because in the government there are the placemen of the landlords who will not yield an inch to the peasants.

In overthrowing the Tsar the soldiers thought that they would obtain peace. But instead of this they "got" the prolongation of the war; and efforts are being made to prolong it still more, until the autumn. Why?

Because in the government there are the placemen of the Anglo-French bankers for whom a "speedy" cessation of the war is unprofitable, for whom the war is a source of ill-gotten riches.

In overthrowing the Tsar the people thought that a Constituent Assembly would be convened within two or three months. But the convocation of the Constituent Assembly has already been postponed once, and now it is obvious that the enemies are preparing to wreck it altogether. Why?

Because in the government there are the enemies of the people, for whom the timely convocation of the Constituent Assembly is unprofitable.

After the victory of the revolution, power remained in the hands of the landlords and capitalists, the bankers and profiteers, the forestallers and marauders—this was the fatal mistake the workers and soldiers committed, this is the cause of the present disasters in the rear and at the front.

This mistake must be rectified at once. Further delay now will be fatal for the whole cause of the revolution.



The present government of landlords and capitalists must be replaced by a new government of workers and peasants.

The present impostor government, which was never elected by the people and is not responsible to the people, must be replaced by a government recognised by the people, chosen by the representatives of the workers, soldiers and peasants, and responsible to these representatives.

The Kishkin-Konovalov government must be replaced by a government of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

What was not done in March must be done now.

In this way, and only in this way, can peace, bread, land and liberty be won.

Workers, soldiers, peasants, Cossacks, all toilers!

Do you want a new government of workers and peasants to come into power in place of the present government of landlords and capitalists?

Do you want the new government of Russia, in conformity with the demands of the peasants, to declare the abolition of the landlords' right to the land and to transfer all the landlords' land to the peasant committees without compensation?

Do you want the new government of Russia to publish the secret treaties of the Tsar, to declare them non-obligatory, and to propose a just peace to all the belligerent nations?

Do you want the new government of Russia to curb the lock-outers and profiteers who are deliberately aggravating famine and unemployment, chaos and the high cost of living?

*If you want all this*, gather all your forces, rise all of you, as one man, organise meetings, elect delegates and put forward your demands through them to the Congress of Soviets which is to open in the Smolny to-morrow.

If you will act solidly and firmly no one will dare to resist the will of the people. The more strongly, the more organised and the more powerfully you act, the more peacefully will the old government make way for the new. And then the whole country will boldly and firmly march forward to the conquest of peace for the peoples, land for the peasants, bread and work for the starving.

Power must pass into the hands of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

A new government must come into power, a government chosen by the Soviets, recallable by the Soviets and responsible to the Soviets.

Only such a government can ensure the timely convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

*Rabochiy Put*, November 6, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### TO THE CITIZENS OF RUSSIA!

THE Provisional Government has been overthrown. The power of state has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Revolutionary Military Committee, which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.

The cause for which the people have fought—the immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production and the creation of a Soviet government—is assured.

Long live the revolution of the soldiers, workers and peasants!

REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY COMMITTEE OF THE PETROGRAD  
SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

November 7, 1917, 10 A.M. *Rabochiy i Soldat*, November 7, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### MEETING OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES, NOVEMBER 7, 1917

##### I.

#### REPORT ON THE TASKS OF THE SOVIET POWER

##### BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

COMRADES, the workers' and peasants' revolution, about the necessity of which the Bolsheviks have always spoken, has taken place.

What is the significance of this workers' and peasants' revolution? The significance of this revolution is, first of all, that we shall have a Soviet government, our own organ of power, in which the bourgeoisie will have no share whatever. The oppressed masses will themselves create a power. The old state apparatus will be shattered to its foundations and a new administrative apparatus set up in the shape of the Soviet organisations.

From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this revolution, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism.

One of our next tasks is to put an immediate end to the war. But in order to end this war, which is closely bound up with the present capitalist system, it is clear to everybody that capital itself must be overcome.

We shall be helped in this by the world working class movement, which is already beginning to develop in Italy, England and Germany.

The proposal for a just and immediate peace made by us to the international democracy will awaken an ardent response among the international proletarian masses everywhere. In order to strengthen this confidence of the proletariat, all the secret treaties must be published immediately.

Within Russia a huge section of the peasantry have said: We have played enough with the capitalists, we will now march with the workers. We shall secure the confidence of the peasants by a single decree putting an end to landed proprietorship. The peasants will understand that the salvation of the peasantry lies only in an alliance with the workers. We shall institute genuine workers' control over production.

We have now learnt to work harmoniously. This is attested by the revolution that has just taken place. We possess the force of mass organisation which will overcome everything and which will lead the proletariat to the world revolution.

In Russia we must now set about building a proletarian socialist state.

Long live the world socialist revolution!

## II.

## RESOLUTION

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies hails the victorious revolution of the proletariat and garrison of Petrograd. The Soviet particularly emphasises the solidarity, organisation, discipline and complete unanimity displayed by the masses in this unusually bloodless and unusually successful uprising.

The Soviet expresses the invincible conviction that the workers' and peasants' government which, as a Soviet government, will be created by the revolution, and which will ensure for the urban proletariat the support of the whole mass of the poor peasantry, will firmly proceed towards socialism, the only means of saving the country from the untold miseries and horrors of war.

The new workers' and peasants' government will immediately propose a just and democratic peace to all the warring nations.

It will immediately abolish landed proprietorship and hand over the land to the peasants. It will institute workers' control over the production and distribution of products and establish national control over the banks, at the same time transforming them into a single state enterprise.

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies calls upon all workers and all peasants to support the workers' and peasants' revolution devotedly and with all their energy. The Soviet expresses the conviction that the urban workers, in alliance with the poor peasants, will display rigid, comradely discipline and establish the strictest revolutionary order, which is essential for the victory of socialism.

The Soviet is convinced that the proletariat of the West European countries will help us to achieve a complete and lasting victory for the cause of socialism.

*Izvestia*, November 8, 1917.

V. I. LeninSPEECHES AT THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS'  
DEPUTIES, NOVEMBER 7-8, 1917

## I.

## TO THE WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS

THE Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has begun. A vast majority of the Soviets are represented at the Congress. There are also present a number of delegates from the Peasants' Soviets. The mandate of the compromising Central Executive Committee has terminated. Backed by the will of the vast majority of workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the successful uprising of the workers and of the garrison in Petrograd, the Congress takes the power of government into its hands.

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The majority of the members of the Provisional Government are already arrested.

The Soviet government will propose an immediate democratic peace to all peoples and an immediate armistice on all fronts. It will secure the transfer of the estates of the landlords, appanages and monasterial lands to the control of the peasants' committees without compensation, it will protect the rights of the soldiers by introducing complete democracy in the army; it will establish workers' control over production; it will see to it that the Constituent Assembly is convened at its appointed time; it will see to it that bread is supplied to the cities and articles of prime necessity to the villages; it will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right of self-determination.

The Congress decrees: all power in the localities shall pass to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which must guarantee genuine revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be watchful and firm. The Congress of Soviets is convinced that the revolutionary army will succeed in defending the revolution from all attacks of imperialism until such time as the new government succeeds

in concluding a democratic peace, which it will propose directly to all the peoples. The new government will do everything to supply all the needs of the revolutionary army by resorting to a determined policy of requisitioning and taxation of the propertied classes, and also to improve the condition of the soldiers' families.

The Kornilovists—Kerensky, Kaledin and others—are attempting to bring troops against Petrograd. A few detachments who, duped by Kerensky, had moved on Petrograd, have come over to the side of the people in revolt.

*Soldiers, actively resist the Kornilovist Kerensky! Be on your guard!*

*Railwaymen, hold up all troop trains despatched by Kerensky against Petrograd!*

*Soldiers, workers, and employés, the fate of the revolution and the fate of the democratic peace is in your hands!*

*Long live the Revolution!*

THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF  
WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

THE DELEGATES FROM THE PEASANTS' SOVIETS

*Rabochiy i Soldat*, November 8, 1917.

II.

REPORT ON THE PEACE QUESTION

The question of peace is a burning and painful question of the day. Much has been said and written on the subject, and you have all, no doubt, discussed it not a little. Permit me, therefore, to proceed to read a declaration which the government you have elected must publish.

DECREE ON PEACE

The Workers' and Peasants' government created by the revolution of November 6-7 and backed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace.

By a just, or democratic, peace, for which the vast majority of

the working and toiling classes of all belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving, a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (*i.e.*, the seizure of foreign lands, or the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and indemnities.

The government of Russia calls upon all the belligerent nations to conclude such a peace immediately, and expresses its readiness to take the most resolute measures without the least delay, pending the final ratification of the conditions of this peace by plenipotentiary assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

In accordance with the sense of justice of the democracy in general, and of the toiling classes in particular, the government interprets the annexation, or seizure, of foreign lands as meaning the incorporation into a large and powerful state of a small or feeble nation without the definitely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to, or forcibly retained within, the frontiers of the given state, and finally, irrespective of whether the nation inhabits Europe or distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the boundaries of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether that desire is expressed in the press, at popular meetings, in party decisions, or in protests and revolts against national oppression—it is not permitted the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation, without the least pressure being brought to bear upon it, such incorporation is annexation, *i.e.*, seizure and coercion.

The government considers that it would be the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war for the purpose of dividing up among the strong and rich nations the feeble nationalities seized by them, and solemnly declares its determination to sign immediately conditions of peace terminating this war on the conditions indicated, which are equally just for all peoples without exception.

At the same time the government declares that it does not regard the above-mentioned terms of peace as an ultimatum; in other words, it is prepared to consider any other conditions of peace, but only insists that they be advanced as speedily as possible by any of the belligerent nations, and that in the conditions of peace proposed there should be absolute clarity and the complete absence of all ambiguity and secrecy.

The government abolishes secret diplomacy and, for its part, expresses its firm determination to conduct all negotiations quite openly before the whole people. It will immediately proceed to the full publication of the secret treaties ratified or concluded by the government of landlords and capitalists during the period March to November 7, 1917. The government proclaims the absolute and immediate annulment of the contents of all such secret treaties, since they are aimed, as in the majority of cases they are, at securing advantages and privileges for the Russian landlords and capitalists and at the retention, or extension, of the annexations made by the Great-Russians.

Appealing to the governments and peoples of all countries immediately to begin open negotiations for the conclusion of peace, the government, for its part, expresses its readiness to conduct such negotiations in writing or by telegraph, or by negotiations between representatives of the various countries, or at a conference of representatives. In order to facilitate such negotiations, the government is appointing its authorised representative to neutral countries.

The government proposes to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries to conclude an immediate armistice and, for its part, considers it desirable that the armistice should be concluded for no less than three months, *i.e.*, for a period long enough to permit the conclusion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples and nations involved in or compelled to take part in the war, without exception, and the summoning of plenipotentiary assemblies of the representatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the terms of peace.

While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia appeals in particular to the



class conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind, the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany. The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and socialism; they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England, a number of revolutions of world and historic importance made by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany and the example shown to the workers of the whole world in the protracted, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organisations in Germany. All these examples of proletarian heroism and historical creative work serve as a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now lies upon them of emancipating mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences. For these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely energetic action, can help us to bring to a successful conclusion the cause of peace, and at the same time the cause of the emancipation of the toiling and exploited masses of the population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government created by the revolution of November 6-7 and backed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, must begin immediate negotiations for peace. Our appeal must be directed both to the governments and to the peoples. We cannot ignore the governments, for that would delay the possibility of concluding peace, and the people's government dare not do that; but we have no right not to appeal to the peoples at the same time. Everywhere there are differences between the governments and the peoples, and we must therefore help the peoples to interfere in the question of war and peace. We will, of course, insist upon the whole of our programme for a peace without annexations and indemnities. We shall not retreat from that programme; but we must deprive our enemies of the opportunity of declaring that their conditions are different from ours and that therefore it is useless to start negotiations with us. No, we must deprive them of that advantageous position and not advance our terms in the form of an ultimatum. Therefore the point is included that we are ready to consider all terms of peace and all proposals. We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them. We shall submit

them to the consideration of the Constituent Assembly, which will have the power to decide what concessions can or cannot be made. We are combating the duplicity of governments which in words talk of peace and justice, but in fact wage annexationist and predatory wars. There is not a single government that will say all it thinks. We, however, are opposed to secret diplomacy and will act openly in the eyes of the whole people. We do not, and never did, close our eyes to difficulties. War cannot be ended by refusal, it cannot be ended by one side only. We are proposing an armistice for three months, but shall not reject a shorter period, so that the exhausted army may breathe freely even for a little while, and because, moreover, in all the civilised countries national assemblies must be summoned for the discussion of terms.

In proposing the conclusion of an immediate armistice, we appeal to the class conscious workers of the countries that have done so much for the development of the proletarian movement. We appeal to the workers of England, where there was the Chartist movement, to the workers of France, who have in repeated insurrections displayed the strength of their class consciousness, and to the workers of Germany, who waged the fight against the Anti-Socialist Law and have created powerful organisations.

In the manifesto of March 27 we called for the overthrow of the bankers, but, far from overthrowing our own bankers, we entered into an alliance with them. Now we have overthrown the government of the bankers.

The government and the bourgeoisie will make every effort to unite their forces and drown the workers' and peasants' revolution in blood. But the three years of war have been a good lesson to the masses: Soviet movements in other countries, the mutiny in the German fleet, which was crushed by the *Junkers* of the hangman Wilhelm. Finally, we must remember that we are not living in the wilds of Africa, but in Europe, where news can spread quickly.

The workers' movement will triumph and will lay the path to peace and to socialism.

*Pravda*, November 9 and 10, 1917.

## III.

## REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT ON PEACE

I shall not touch on the general character of the declaration. The government which your Congress will set up may introduce amendments to unessential points.

I shall declare my decided opposition to lending our demand for peace the form of an ultimatum. An ultimatum may prove fatal to our whole cause. We cannot demand that because of some insignificant departure from our demands the imperialist governments should have the opportunity to say that it was impossible to enter into negotiations for peace owing to our irreconcilability.

We shall distribute our appeal everywhere, it will be made known to everybody. It will be impossible to conceal the terms proposed by our workers' and peasants' government.

It will be impossible to hush up our workers' and peasants' revolution, which has overthrown the government of bankers and landlords.

The governments might not reply to an ultimatum; they would be obliged to reply to the text we have proposed. Let it be known to all what their governments have in mind. We do not want any secrets. We want a government to be always under the control of the public opinion of the country.

What will the peasant of some remote province say if, owing to our secrecy, he will not know what another government wants. He will say: "Comrades, why did you preclude the possibility of any terms of peace being proposed? I would have discussed them, I would have examined them, and would then have instructed my representatives in the Constituent Assembly how to act. I am prepared to fight by revolutionary means for just terms if the governments do not agree, but there might be such terms for certain countries that I would be prepared to recommend those governments to go on fighting themselves. The complete realisation of our ideas depends solely on the overthrow of the whole capitalist system." This is what the peasant might say to us, and he would accuse us of superfluous uncompromisingness over trifles, when the chief thing for us is to expose all the vileness, all the rascality of the bourgeoisie

and of the crowned and uncrowned hangmen placed at the head of the governments.

We dare not and must not afford the opportunity to the governments to take refuge behind our uncompromisingness and to conceal from the peoples why they are being sent to the shambles. This is a drop, but we dare not and must not reject this drop, which will wear away the stone of bourgeois usurpation. An ultimatum would make the position of our opponents easier. But we shall make all the terms known to the people. We shall confront all the governments with our terms, and let them make answer to their peoples. We shall submit all peace proposals to the Constituent Assembly for decision.

There is still another point, comrades, to which you must direct the most careful attention. The secret treaties must be published. The clauses regarding annexations and indemnities must be annulled. There are various clauses, comrades—the predatory governments, you know, not only made agreements among themselves to the plunder, but among such agreements they also included economic agreements and various other clauses regarding friendly relations.

We shall not bind ourselves by treaties. We shall not allow ourselves to be enmeshed by treaties. We reject all clauses dealing with plunder and violence, but we shall welcome all clauses containing provisions for friendly relations and economic agreements; these we cannot reject. We propose an armistice of three months; we choose a lengthy period because the peoples are exhausted, the peoples yearn for a respite from this bloody shambles which has lasted over three years. We must realize that the people must be given the opportunity to discuss the terms of peace and to express their will with the help of parliament, and this requires time. We therefore demand a lengthy armistice, so that the army in the trenches may enjoy a respite from this nightmare of constant slaughter, but we shall not reject proposals for a shorter armistice; we shall examine them, and it is incumbent on us to accept them, even if we are offered an armistice of one or one-and-a-half months. Our proposal for an armistice too must not be in the form of an ultimatum, for we shall not give our enemies the opportunity to conceal the whole truth from the peoples, using our irreconcilability

as a pretext. It must not be in the form of an ultimatum, for it is criminal for a government not to desire an armistice. If, however, we do not put our proposal for an armistice in the form of an ultimatum we shall thereby compel the governments to appear as criminals in the eyes of the people, and the peoples will show such criminals scant ceremony. The objection is raised that by not issuing ultimatums we display our impotence, but it is time to cast aside all bourgeois falsity when speaking of the strength of the people. According to the bourgeois conception, strength means that the masses go blindly to the slaughter in obedience to the behest of the imperialist governments. The bourgeoisie admit a state to be strong only when it can, by the whole might of the government apparatus, throw the masses wherever the bourgeois rulers want.

Our idea of strength is a different one. In our opinion a state is strong by virtue of the consciousness of the masses. It is strong when the masses know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously. We need not fear to tell the truth about fatigue, for what state is now not fatigued, what nation does not talk about it openly? Take Italy, where, owing to this fatigue, there was a lengthy revolutionary movement demanding the cessation of the slaughter. Are not mass demonstrations of workers taking place in Germany, at which the demand for the cessation of the war is raised? Was it not fatigue that provoked the mutiny in the German navy that was so ruthlessly suppressed by that hangman, Wilhelm, and his hirelings? If such things are possible in so disciplined a country as Germany, where they are beginning to talk about fatigue and about putting an end to the war, we need not fear to say the same openly, because it is the truth, equally true both of our country and of all the belligerent and even non-belligerent countries.

November 8, 1917. *Pravda*, November 10, 1917.

#### IV.

#### REPORT ON THE LAND QUESTION

We consider that the revolution has demonstrated and proved how important it is that the land question should be stated clearly. The outbreak of the armed insurrection, the second, or October, Revolu-

tion, clearly proves that the land must be handed over to the peasants. A crime was committed by the government that has been overthrown and by the compromising parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who kept postponing the settlement of the land question on various pretexts and thereby brought the country to a state of ruin and faced it with a peasant revolt. False, cowardly and deceitful sound their statements regarding the pogroms and anarchy in the villages. Where and when did pogroms and anarchy result from wise measures? If the government had acted wisely, and if their measures had met the needs of the peasant poor, would there have been unrest among the peasant masses? But all the measures of the government, approved by the Avksentyev and Dan Soviets, were directed against the peasants and forced them into revolt.

Having brought about an insurrection, the government began to howl about the pogroms and anarchy for which they themselves were responsible. They would fain have crushed the insurrection by blood and iron, but were themselves swept away by the armed revolt of the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers. The first duty of the government of the workers' and peasants' revolution is to settle the land question, which can pacify and satisfy the vast masses of the peasant poor. I shall read you the points of a decree your Soviet government must issue. In one of the points of that decree are embodied the Instructions to the Land Committees which have been compiled from 242 Instructions from local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

#### DECREE ON THE LAND

1. Landed proprietorship is abolished forthwith without compensation.

2. The landed estates, as also all appanages, the monasterial and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, farm buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed under the control of the volost Land Committees and the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

3. All damage to confiscated property, which henceforth belongs to the whole people, is declared to be a felony, punishable by the revolutionary courts. The uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies shall take all necessary measures for the preservation of the strictest order

during the confiscation of the estates of the landlords, for determining estates of which size and which particular estates shall be subject to confiscation, for drawing up inventories of all property confiscated and for the strictest revolutionary protection of all land transferred to the people and all structures, implements, cattle, supplies, etc.

4. The following peasant Instructions, compiled by the *Izvestia* of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies from 242 local peasant Instructions and published in No. 88 of the *Izvestia* (Petrograd, September 1, 1917), are everywhere to serve as a guide in carrying through the great land reforms until a final decision on the latter is taken by the Constituent Assembly.

5. The land of ordinary peasants and ordinary Cossacks shall not be confiscated.

#### THE PEASANT INSTRUCTIONS ON THE LAND

The question of the land in its full scope can be settled only by a National Constituent Assembly.

The most just settlement of the land question is as follows:

1. *The right of private property in land shall be abolished in perpetuity: land shall not be purchased, sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated.*

All land, whether *state, appanage, tsar's, monasterial, church, factory, primogenitory, private, public, peasant, etc., shall be taken over without compensation* and become the property of the whole people, to be used by those who cultivate it.

Persons who suffer by this property revolution shall be entitled to public support only for a period necessary for adaptation to their new conditions of existence.

2. All mineral wealth, *e.g., ore, oil, coal, salt, etc., as well as all forests and waters of state importance, shall be reserved for the exclusive use of the state. Small streams, lakes, woods, etc., shall be reserved for the use of the communes and be administered by the local government bodies.*

3. Lands with *highly developed forms of cultivation, e.g., orchards, plantations, nurseries, hothouses, etc., shall not be divided up, but shall be transformed into model farms* to be cultivated ex-

clusively *either by the state or by the communes*, according to their size and importance.

Urban and village household land, orchards and household gardens shall remain in the use of their present owners, the size of such holdings, and the amount of taxation levied for the use thereof, to be determined by law.

4. Stud farms, government and private pedigree stock and poultry farms, etc., shall be confiscated and become the property of the whole people; they shall be run exclusively by the state or by the communes, according to their size and importance.

The question of compensation is subject to the decision of the Constituent Assembly.

5. All livestock and farm implements of the confiscated lands shall be reserved for the exclusive use of either the state or the communes, according to their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid therefor.

The farm implements of peasants possessing little land shall not be subject to confiscation.

6. The right to use the land shall belong to all citizens of the Russian state (without distinction of sex) desiring to cultivate it by their own labour, with the help of their families, or in partnership, and only as long as they are able to cultivate it by their own efforts. The employment of hired labour is prohibited.

In the event of the accidental physical disablement of any member of a village community for a period of two years, the village community shall be obliged to assist him within this period by means of collective cultivation of his land, until he is again able to work.

Peasants who, owing to age or ill-health, are permanently disabled from personally cultivating the land shall lose their right to the use of it, but, in return, shall receive a pension from the state.

7. Land tenure shall be on an equality basis, *i.e.*, the land shall be distributed among the toilers in conformity with either the labour standard or the consumption standard, as local conditions shall warrant.

There shall be absolutely no restriction as to the forms of land tenure: household, farm, communal, or co-operative, as shall be determined in each individual village.

8. All land, when alienated, shall pass into the land fund of the



people. Its distribution among the toilers shall be controlled by the local and central government bodies, from democratically organised village and city communes, without distinction of social rank, to central oblast government bodies.

The land fund shall be subject to periodical redistribution, in accordance with the growth of population and the increase in the productiveness and efficiency of agriculture.

When the boundaries of allotments are altered, the primary nucleus of the allotment must be left intact.

The land of lapsed members shall revert to the land fund; preferential right to such land shall belong to the near relatives of the lapsed members, or to persons designated by him.

In the case of land which has reverted to the land fund, the cost of fertiliser and improvements put into the soil, to the extent that they have not been fully exhausted, shall be compensated.

Should the available land fund in a particular district prove inadequate for the needs of the population, the surplus population shall be settled elsewhere.

The state shall take upon itself the organisation of resettlement and shall bear the cost thereof as well as the cost of supplying implements, etc.

Resettlement shall be effected in the following order: first of all, landless peasants desiring to resettle, then members of the commune of depraved or vicious habits, deserters, and so on, and the remainder by lot or by agreement.

The entire contents of these Instructions, as expressing the absolute will of the vast majority of the class-conscious peasants of the whole of Russia, are declared a provisional law, which, pending the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, shall be carried into effect as far as possible immediately, and as to certain of its provisions with the due gradualness, as shall be determined by the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

Voices are being raised here that the decree itself and the Instructions were drawn up by the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Be it so. Does it matter who drew it up? As a democratic government, we cannot ignore the decision of the rank and file of the people, even though we may disagree with it; in the fire of experience, applying

the decree in practice, and carrying it out locally, the peasants will themselves understand where the truth lies. And even if the peasants continue to follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, even if they give this party a majority in the Constituent Assembly, we shall still say, be it so. Experience is the best teacher and it will show who is right. Let the peasant solve this problem from one end and us from the other. Experience will bring us closer in the general stream of revolutionary creation, in the elaboration of new state forms. We must follow experience; we must allow complete freedom for the creative faculties of the masses. The old government, which was swept away by armed insurrection, tried to settle the land question with the help of the old tsarist bureaucracy, which remained intact. But instead of solving the question the bureaucracy only fought the peasants. The peasants have learned something during the eight months of revolution; they want themselves to settle all questions concerning the land. Therefore we declare ourselves opposed to all amendments to this draft law. We want no details in it, for we are writing a decree, not a programme of action. Russia is great, and local conditions vary. We believe that the peasants will be able to solve the problem correctly, better than we could ourselves. Whether in our spirit, or in the spirit of the programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries is not the point. The point is that the peasants should be firmly assured that there are no more landlords in the countryside, that they themselves must decide all questions, and they themselves must arrange their own lives.

*Izvestia and Pravda*, November 10, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### DRAFT STATUTES ON WORKERS' CONTROL

1. *Workers'* control of the production, warehousing, purchase and sale of all products and raw materials shall be introduced in all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural and other enterprises employing not less than five workers and employés (together), or with a turnover of not less than 10,000 rubles per annum.

2. *Workers'* control shall be carried out by all the workers and

employés in a given enterprise, either directly, if the enterprise is small enough to permit it, or through their elected delegates, who shall be elected *immediately* at general meetings, at which minutes of the elections shall be taken and the names of those elected communicated to the government and to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

3. Unless permission is given by the elected delegates of the workers and employés, the closing of an enterprise or the cessation of work of state importance (see § 7), or any changes in processes, are absolutely prohibited.

4. The elected delegates shall have access to *all* books and documents and to *all* warehouses and stocks of materials, instruments and products, without exception.

5. The decisions of the elected delegates of the workers and employés are obligatory upon the owners of enterprises and can be annulled only by trade unions and congresses.

6. In all enterprises of state importance *all* the owners and *all* the delegates of the workers and employés elected for the purpose of exercising workers' control are answerable to the state for the maintenance of the strictest order and discipline and for the protection of property. Persons guilty of neglected duty, concealment of stocks, accounts, etc., shall be punished by the confiscation of the whole of their property and by imprisonment for a period of up to five years.

7. Enterprises of state importance shall be understood to comprise all enterprises working for defence purposes, or in any way connected with the production of articles necessary for the existence of the masses of the population.

8. More detailed regulations on workers' control shall be drawn up by the local Soviets of Workers' Deputies and by conferences of factory and workshop committees, and also by committees of employés, at general meetings of their delegates.

November 8-13, 1917. *Pravda*, November 16, 1917.

V. I. Lenin

RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE  
R.S.-D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS) ON THE OPPOSITION  
WITHIN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE,  
NOVEMBER 15, 1917

THE Central Committee considers that the present meeting is of historical importance and that it is therefore necessary to record the two positions which have been revealed here.

1. The Central Committee notes that the opposition formed within the Central Committee has completely departed from all the fundamental positions of Bolshevism and of the proletarian class struggle in general, by reiterating the profoundly non-Marxist talk of the impossibility of a socialist revolution in Russia and of the necessity of yielding to the ultimatums and threats of resignation of the obvious minority in the Soviet organisation, thus thwarting the will and the decision of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets and sabotaging the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry which has begun.

2. The Central Committee lays the whole responsibility for hindering revolutionary work and for the vacillations, so criminal at the present moment, on this opposition, and calls upon it to transfer its discussion and its scepticism to the press and to stand aside from the practical work, in which it does not believe. For this opposition is expressive of nothing but fright of the bourgeoisie and is a reflection of the sentiments of the fatigued (not revolutionary) section of the population.

3. The Central Committee affirms that a purely Bolshevik government cannot be renounced without betraying the slogan demanding a Soviet power, in view of the fact that the majority at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, without anybody having been excluded from the Congress, entrusted the power to this government.

4. The Central Committee affirms that without betraying the slogan demanding the power of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, there can be no entering into petty bargaining with the purpose of admitting into the Soviets organisations of a non-Soviet type, i.e., organisations which are not voluntary

associations of the revolutionary vanguard of the masses which are fighting for the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists.

5. The Central Committee affirms that to yield to the ultimatums and threats of the minority in the Soviets would be tantamount to complete renunciation not only of the Soviet power but of democracy, for such yielding would mean that the majority fears to make use of its majority, it would mean submitting to anarchy and incurring repeated ultimatums on the part of any minority.

6. The Central Committee affirms that, not having excluded anybody from the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, it is even now fully prepared to permit the return of those who withdrew and to agree to a coalition within the Soviets with those who withdrew, and that, consequently, the talk that the Bolsheviks refuse to share power with anybody is absolutely false.

7. The Central Committee affirms that on the day the present government was formed, a few hours before its formation, the Central Committee invited three representatives of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to attend its meeting and formally proposed that they should join the government. The refusal of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, even though it was provisional and conditional, places on these Left Socialist-Revolutionaries the entire responsibility for the fact that an agreement with them was not arrived at.

8. The Central Committee recalls the fact that a resolution, proposed by the Bolshevik fraction, was adopted by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets expressing readiness to reinforce the Soviet both by soldiers from the trenches and by peasants from the localities, from the villages, and that therefore the assertion that the Bolshevik government is opposed to a coalition with the peasants is absolutely false. On the contrary, the Central Committee declares that the Land Law of our government, which was wholly copied from the Socialist-Revolutionary instructions, is a practical proof of the complete and sincere readiness of the Bolsheviks to effect a coalition with the vast majority of the population of Russia.

9. The Central Committee affirms, finally, that despite all difficulties, the victory of socialism both in Russia and in Europe can be ensured only by the unswerving continuation of the policy of the present government. The Central Committee expresses its firm belief in the victory of this socialist revolution and calls upon all sceptics

and waverers to abandon their waverings and wholeheartedly and with supreme energy to support the actions of this government.

LENIN

Written November 15, 1917. Printed, without the first three clauses, in *Pravda*, November 17, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin and J. Stalin

#### DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

THE October Revolution of the workers and peasants began under the universal banner of liberation.

The *peasants* are being liberated from the power of the landlords, for landed proprietorship no longer exists—it has been abolished. The *soldiers* and *sailors* are being liberated from the power of the despotic generals, for the generals will henceforth be elected and be subject to recall. The *workers* are being liberated from the caprice and arbitrariness of the capitalists, for henceforth workers' control over the mills and factories will be established. Everything that is living and virile is being liberated from the detested fetters.

There remain only the *peoples of Russia*, who have suffered and are suffering from oppression and arbitrariness, and whose liberation must be begun immediately and accomplished decisively and for all time.

In the era of tsarism the peoples of Russia were systematically incited one against another. The results of this policy are well known: massacres and pogroms on the one hand, and the enslavement of the peoples on the other.

This shameful policy of incitement has ended, and there must be no return to it. Henceforth, it must be replaced by a policy of *voluntary* and *honest* alliance between the peoples of Russia.

In the period of imperialism, after the February Revolution, when the power passed into the hands of the Cadet bourgeoisie, the unconcealed policy of incitement gave place to a policy of cowardly distrust of the peoples of Russia, a policy of pinpricks and provocation, concealed by verbal proclamations of the "freedom" and

“equality” of the peoples. The results of this policy are well known: intensification of national enmity and undermining of mutual confidence.

This unseemly policy of lying and mistrust, of pinpricks and provocation, must be ended. It must henceforth be replaced by a frank and honest policy that will lead to *complete mutual confidence* between the peoples of Russia.

It is only by such confidence that an honest and durable alliance between the peoples of Russia can be secured.

It is only by such an alliance that the workers and peasants of the peoples of Russia can be welded together into a single revolutionary force capable of withstanding all attempts of the imperialist, annexationist bourgeoisie.

It was on these grounds that in June 1917 the First Congress of Soviets proclaimed the right of the peoples of Russia to freedom of self-determination.

In October 1917 the Second Congress of Soviets endorsed this inalienable right of the peoples of Russia in a more decisive and definite form.

In pursuance of the will of these congresses, the council of People's Commissars has decided to base its activities with regard to the nationalities of Russia on the following principles:

1. *The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.*
2. *The right of the peoples of Russia to freedom of self-determination, including the right to secede and form independent states.*
3. *Abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and restrictions whatsoever.*
4. *Freedom of development for the national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.*

The specific decrees necessitated by this will be drawn up immediately after a Commission on National Affairs has been formed.

In the name of the Russian Republic,

JOSEPH DZHUGASHVILI-STALIN

*People's Commissar of National Affairs*

V. ULIANOV (LENIN)

*Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars*

November 2, 1917. *Pravda*, November 16, 1917.

V. I. LeninULTIMATUM OF THE MAJORITY OF THE CENTRAL  
COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS)  
TO THE MINORITY

THE majority of the Central Committee of the R.S.-D.L.P. (Bolsheviks), fully approving the policy hitherto pursued by the Council of People's Commissars, deems it necessary to address the following categorical declaration to the minority of the Central Committee.

The policy of our Party at the present moment is defined in the resolution submitted by Comrade Lenin and adopted yesterday, November 15, by the Central Committee. This resolution proclaims as treason to the cause of the proletariat every attempt to induce our Party to decline power, inasmuch as the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, in the name of the millions of workers, soldiers and peasants, has entrusted this power to the representatives of our Party on the basis of our program. This fundamental line of our tactics, which logically follows from our whole struggle against the compromisers and which guided us in the revolt against the Kerensky government, at present constitutes the revolutionary essence of Bolshevism and is once again endorsed by the Central Committee. It is absolutely obligatory for all members of the Party and, first and foremost, for the minority of the Central Committee.

Yet the representatives of the minority, both before and after yesterday's meeting of the Central Committee, have been pursuing a policy which obviously runs counter to the fundamental line of our Party and which is demoralising our own ranks by inspiring hesitations at a moment when the greatest firmness and rigidity is essential.

Thus, at yesterday's meeting of the Central Executive Committee, the Bolshevik fraction, with the direct participation of members of the Central Committee belonging to the minority, openly voted against a decision of the Central Committee (on the question of the number and personal composition of the representation of our Party in the government). This unparalleled violation of discipline, committed by members of the Central Committee behind the back of the Central Committee, after a discussion in the Central Com-



mittee which lasted many hours and which was provoked by these representatives of the opposition themselves, makes it obvious to us that the opposition intends to force the hand of the Party institutions by sabotaging the work of the Party at a moment when upon the immediate result of this work depend the fate of the Party and the fate of the revolution.

We cannot and do not wish to bear responsibility for such a state of affairs.

Addressing the present declaration to the minority of the Central Committee, we categorically demand a reply in written form whether the minority undertakes to submit to Party discipline and to carry out the policy formulated in Comrade Lenin's resolution which was adopted by the Central Committee.

In the event of an unfavourable or indefinite reply to this question, we shall immediately place before the Petrograd Committee, the Moscow Committee, the Bolshevik fraction on the Central Executive Committee, the Petrograd City Conference and the Extraordinary Party Congress the following alternative proposal:

Either the Party must entrust the present opposition with the task of forming a new government in conjunction with those of its allies on whose behalf the opposition is at present sabotaging our work—in which case we shall consider ourselves absolutely free in relation to this new government, which can contribute nothing but wavering, impotence and chaos.

Or—of which we have no doubt—the Party endorses the only possible revolutionary line, as expressed in yesterday's decision of the Central Committee—in which case the Party must categorically demand that the representatives of the opposition conduct their disorganising work outside the ranks of our Party organisation. There is not and cannot be any other solution. Naturally, a split would be extremely deplorable. But an honest and open split would at present be incomparably better than internal sabotage, the thwarting of our own decisions, disorganisation and incapacitation. At any rate, we do not doubt for a moment that the submission of our differences (which are in the main a replica of our differences with the *Novaya Zhizn* and Martov groups) to the judgment of the masses will ensure our policy the unreserved and devoted support of the revolutionary workers, soldiers and peasants, and will in a

very short time condemn the vacillating opposition to impotent isolation.

Written November 16, 1917. First published in *Proletarskaya Revolyutsia*, No. 7, 1922.

V. I. Lenin

## TO THE POPULATION

COMRADES—WORKERS, SOLDIERS, PEASANTS AND ALL TOILERS!

The workers' and peasants' revolution has finally triumphed in Petrograd and has dispersed and arrested the last remnants of the small number of Cossacks who were deceived by Kerensky. The revolution has triumphed in Moscow too. Before the troop trains despatched from Petrograd could arrive, the *Junkers* and the other Kornilovists in Moscow had already signed terms of peace, namely, that the *Junkers* should be disarmed and the Committee of Public Safety dissolved.

News is arriving daily and hourly from the front and from the villages to the effect that the vast majority of the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the rural districts are supporting the new government and its laws, which provide for peace and the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants. The triumph of the revolution of the workers and peasants is guaranteed, for the majority of the people are already supporting it.

It is, of course, obvious that the landlords and capitalists and the higher-placed employés and officials, who are closely bound up with the bourgeoisie, in a word all the rich and the hangers-on of the rich, are meeting the new revolution with hostility, are resisting its victory, threatening to stop the functioning of the banks, injuring and stopping the work of various institutions, interfering with it and hindering it in every possible way, now directly, now indirectly. Every class-conscious worker perfectly well understands that such resistance is inevitable; the Bolshevik Party press has pointed it out frequently. The toiling classes will not allow themselves to be intimidated even for a minute by this resistance, and will not be de-

tered one jot by the threats and strikes of the supporters of the bourgeoisie.

The majority of the people are with us. The majority of the toilers and the oppressed of the whole world are with us. Justice is on our side. Our victory is certain.

The resistance of the capitalists and the higher ranks of the employés will be smashed. Not a single person will be deprived of his property except by a specific law of the state providing for the nationalisation of the banks and the syndicates. This law is being drawn up. Not a single toiler or worker will lose a penny; on the contrary, he will receive assistance. The strictest accountancy and control, the collection of taxes already established—the government does not desire to introduce any other measures.

On behalf of these just demands the vast majority of the people have rallied around the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government.

Comrades toilers, remember that you *yourselves* are now governing the state. Nobody will help you unless you unite and take *all the affairs* of the state *into your own hands*. Your Soviets are henceforth the organs of state power, organs with full competence to decide all questions.

Rally around your Soviets. Consolidate them. Set about the work from below without waiting for anybody. Establish the strictest revolutionary order; mercilessly suppress all attempts at anarchy on the part of drunkards, hooligans, counter-revolutionary *Junkers*, Kornilovists and the like.

Introduce the strictest control over production and account of products. Arrest and hand over to the revolutionary court of the people every one who dares to do injury to the cause of the people, whether by sabotaging (damaging, interfering with, or disorganising) production, or by concealing supplies of grain and food products, or by holding up consignments of grain, or by disorganising the railway, postal, telegraph and telephone services, or by any kind of resistance to the great cause of peace, the transfer of the land to the peasants and the establishment of workers' control over production and distribution.

Comrades workers, soldiers, peasants and all toilers! Put the *entire* power of government into the hands of *your* Soviets. Cherish

and protect the land, grain, factories, implements, products and transport like the apple of your eye—all these are henceforth *entirely* yours, the property of the whole people. Gradually, with the consent and approval of the majority of the peasants, and on the basis of their *practical* experience and the experience of the workers, we shall march firmly and undeviatingly to the triumph of socialism, which will be consolidated by the advanced workers of the more civilised countries and which will bring the peoples a lasting peace and emancipate them from all forms of oppression and exploitation.

V. ULYANOV (LENIN)

*Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars*

*Pravda*, November 20, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS) TO COMRADES KAMENEV, ZINOVIEV, RYAZANOV AND LARIN

THE Central Committee has once already delivered an ultimatum to the more prominent representatives of your policy (Kamenev and Zinoviev) demanding complete subordination to the decisions of the Central Committee and to its line and a complete renunciation of the sabotage of its work and of all disorganising activities.

By retiring from the Central Committee but remaining within the Party, the representatives of your policy assumed an obligation to submit to the decision of the Central Committee. However, not confining yourselves to criticism within the Party, you are introducing indecision into the ranks of the fighters in an insurrection which is still in progress, and are continuing, in defiance of Party discipline, to set at nought, outside our Party—in the Soviets, the municipal bodies, the trade unions, etc.—the decisions of the Central Committee and are hindering its work.

In view of this, the Central Committee is obliged to reiterate its ultimatum and to call upon you either to give an immediate undertaking in writing to submit to the decisions of the Central Committee and to carry out its policy in all your actions, or to retire

from all public Party activity and, pending the meeting of the Party Congress, to resign all responsible posts in the working class movement.

Refusal on your part to give one or the other of these undertakings will oblige the Central Committee to raise the question of your immediate expulsion from the Party.

November 18 or 19, 1917. First printed in the pamphlet *The Party against the Strikebreaking of Zinoviev and Kamenev in October 1917, 1927.*

### V. I. Lenin

#### FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.-D.L.P. (BOLSHEVIKS) TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS AND TO ALL THE TOILING CLASSES OF RUSSIA

COMRADES,

It is common knowledge that the majority at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies consists of delegates of the Party of the Bolsheviks.

This fact is essential for an understanding of the recent victorious revolution in Petrograd, Moscow and the whole of Russia. Yet this fact is forgotten and ignored by the followers of the capitalists and their unwitting supporters, who are undermining the fundamental principle of the new revolution, namely, *All Power to the Soviets*. There must be no other government in Russia than a *Soviet government*. The Soviet power has been won in Russia, and the transfer of government from one Soviet party to another is guaranteed without the necessity for a revolution, by a simple decision of the Soviets, simply by new elections of deputies to the Soviets. The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets has given a majority to the Party of the Bolsheviks. Therefore, only a government formed by that Party will be a Soviet government. You are all aware that the Central Committee of the Party of the Bolsheviks, several hours prior to the formation of the new government, and before submitting the list of its members to the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, invited to its session three of the most prominent members of the group of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, Comrades Kamkov,

Spiro and Karelin, and *invited them* to join in the new government. We extremely regret that the Left Socialist-Revolutionary comrades refused; we regard such a refusal as impermissible on the part of revolutionaries and champions of the toilers. We are ready at any moment to include Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the government, but we declare that, as the party that received the majority at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, we are entitled *and it is our duty* to the people to form a government.

Everybody knows that the Central Committee of our Party submitted a purely Bolshevik list of People's Commissars to the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and that *the Congress approved this list for a purely Bolshevik government.*

Hence the statements to the effect that the Bolshevik government is *not* a Soviet government are absolute lies, and are spread, and can be spread, only by the enemies of the people, the enemies of the Soviet power. On the contrary, now, after the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and until the Third Congress is summoned, or until new elections to the Soviets take place, or until a new government is formed by the Central Executive Committee, *only* a Bolshevik government can be regarded as the *Soviet* government.

Comrades, several members of the Central Committee of our Party and of the Council of People's Commissars—Kamenev, Zinoviev, Nogin, Rykov, Milyutin and a few others—yesterday, November 17, resigned from the Central Committee of our Party, and the three last named from the Council of People's Commissars. In a large Party like ours, notwithstanding the proletarian and revolutionary line of our policy, it is inevitable that individual comrades should be found who do not possess the firmness and determination required in the struggle against the enemies of the people. The tasks that now face our Party are indeed vast, the difficulties are enormous, and certain members of our Party who formerly occupied responsible posts flinched in face of the pressure of the bourgeoisie and fled from our ranks. The bourgeoisie and their supporters are jubilant over this fact and are maliciously rejoicing, prating of collapse and predicting the fall of the Bolshevik government.

Comrades, do not believe these lies. The comrades who have left

us have acted like deserters, since they not only quitted the posts entrusted to them, but violated the direct decision of the Central Committee of our Party, which enjoined them to delay their resignation at least until a decision be taken by the Petrograd and Moscow Party organisations. We vigorously condemn this desertion. We are profoundly convinced that all class-conscious workers, soldiers and peasants, who belong to or who sympathise with our Party, will condemn the acts of the deserters with equal vigour.

But we declare that not for one minute, and not in one iota, can the desertion of certain individuals belonging to the leading ranks of our Party shake the unity of the *masses* who support our Party, and it therefore cannot shake our Party.

Remember, comrades, that two of the deserters, Kamenev and Zinoviev, acted as deserters and strike-breakers even before the insurrection in Petrograd, for they not only voted against the insurrection at the decisive meeting of the Central Committee on October 23, 1917, but even *after* the decision had been taken by the Central Committee they addressed Party workers, agitating against the insurrection. It is common knowledge that at that time newspapers which fear to take the side of the workers and are inclined more to the side of the bourgeoisie (*e.g.*, *Novaya Zhizn*), in common with the whole bourgeois press, raised the cry that our Party was "disintegrating," that "the insurrection was collapsing," and so on. But events swiftly refuted the lies and slanders of some and the doubts, waverings and cowardice of others. The "storm" they tried to raise around the efforts of Kamenev and Zinoviev to prevent the Petrograd insurrection proved to be *a storm in a teacup*, and the great enthusiasm of the masses, the great heroism of millions of workers, soldiers and peasants in Petrograd, in Moscow, at the front, in the trenches and in the villages, swept the deserters aside as easily as a railway train brushes splinters aside.

Shame, therefore, on all faint-hearts, waverers and doubters, on all who allow themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie or who succumb to the outcries of its direct and indirect supporters. *There is not the slightest* hesitation among the *mass* of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd, Moscow and other places. Our Party stands solidly and firmly, like one man, in defence of the Soviet

power, in defence of the interests of the toilers and first and foremost of the workers and poor peasants.

The chorus of bourgeois scribes and of those who allow themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie accuse us of being uncompromising, of being irreconcilable, of refusing to share power with another party. That is not true, comrades. *We have invited* and continue to invite the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to share the power with us. It is not our fault that *they have refused*. We began the negotiations, and, after the Second Congress of Soviets had dispersed, we made all kinds of concessions in the course of these negotiations, even to the extent of provisionally agreeing to admit representatives of a section of the Petrograd City Duma, that nest of Kornilovists, which will be the first to be wiped out by the people should the rascally Kornilovists, the darling sons of the capitalists and landlords, the *Junkers*, attempt once more to oppose the will of the people, as they did last Sunday in Petrograd, and as they would like to do again (as is proved by the exposure of the Purishkevich conspiracy and the documents seized on him yesterday, November 16). But the gentlemen who stand behind the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and are using them in the interests of the bourgeoisie interpreted our readiness to make concessions as weakness and presented us with new ultimatums. At the conference on November 16, Messrs. Abramovich and Martov appeared and presented an ultimatum: there would be no negotiations until our government put a stop to the arrests and the suppression of the bourgeois newspapers.

Both our Party and the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets *refused* to accept this ultimatum, which obviously emanates from the supporters of Kaledin, the bourgeoisie, Kerensky and Kornilov. The conspiracy of Purishkevich and the appearance in Petrograd on November 16 of a delegation from a division of the 17th Army Corps bringing threats of an advance on Petrograd (a ridiculous threat, for the advance detachments of the Kornilovists were beaten and took to flight at Gatchina, while a large number of them have refused to act against the Soviets) have proved who were the *real* authors of the ultimatum of Abramovich and Martov and whom these people were *really* serving.

Therefore let the toilers remain confident and resolute! Never will



our Party submit to the ultimatum of the minority in the Soviets, a minority that has allowed itself to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie and which in spite of its "good intentions" is virtually a puppet in the hands of the Kornilovists.

We stand firmly for the principle of Soviet power, *i.e.*, the power of the *majority* obtained at the last Congress of Soviets. We were willing, and *remain willing*, to share the power with the minority of the Soviets, provided that minority loyally and honestly undertake: to submit to the majority and carry out the programme *approved by the whole* Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, consisting of gradual, but firm and undeviating measures towards socialism. But we shall not submit to any ultimatums of groups of intellectuals who are not backed by the masses, and who *in actual fact* are backed only by the Kornilovists, the Savinkovists, the *Junkers*, and so forth.

Therefore let the toilers remain confident and resolute! Our Party, the party of the Soviet majority, stands solid and united in defence of their interests, and, as heretofore, at the back of our Party stand the millions of the workers in the cities, the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the villages, resolved at all costs to bring about the triumph of peace and the triumph of socialism!

*Pravda*, November 20, 1917.

## V. I. Lenin

### RADIO BROADCAST

TO ALL REGIMENTAL, DIVISIONAL, CORPS, ARMY AND OTHER  
COMMITTEES, TO ALL THE SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY  
ARMY AND SAILORS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY NAVY

ON the night of November 20 the Council of People's Commissars sent a radiogram to Supreme Commander Dukhonin ordering him immediately and formally to propose an armistice to all the belligerent countries, both the Allied countries and the countries engaged in hostilities against us.

This radiogram was received at General Headquarters on Novem-

ber 21 at 5:05 A.M. Dukhonin was ordered to keep the Council of People's Commissars constantly informed of the progress of the negotiations and to sign the treaty of armistice only after it had been approved by the Council of People's Commissars. Simultaneously a similar proposal to conclude an armistice was formally submitted to all the plenipotentiary representatives of the Allied countries in Petrograd.

Not having received a reply from Dukhonin by the evening of November 21, the Council of People's Commissars empowered Lenin, Stalin and Krylenko to ascertain the causes of the delay from Dukhonin over the direct wire.

The conversation lasted from 2 A.M. to 4:30 A.M. of November 22. Dukhonin made numerous attempts to evade giving an explanation of his conduct and a precise reply to the orders of the government, but when the order to enter immediately into formal negotiations for an armistice was given to Dukhonin in a categorical form, he replied by a refusal to comply. Thereupon, in the name of the government of the Russian Republic and at the behest of the Council of People's Commissars, Dukhonin was told that he was dismissed from his post for refusing to comply with the orders of the government and for conduct that entailed untold hardships on the toiling masses of all countries and on the armies in particular. At the same time, Dukhonin was ordered to continue to conduct affairs pending the arrival of a new Supreme Commander or of a person empowered by him to take over affairs from Dukhonin. Ensign Krylenko has been appointed the new Supreme Commander.

Soldiers, the cause of peace is in your hands! Do not allow the counter-revolutionary generals to frustrate the great cause of peace, surround them by a guard in order to avert acts of summary justice unworthy of a revolutionary army and in order to prevent these generals from evading the trial that awaits them. Maintain the strictest revolutionary and military order.

Let the regiments at the front immediately elect plenipotentiaries to start formal negotiations for an armistice with the enemy.

The Council of People's Commissars empowers you to do so.

Keep us informed in every possible way of every step in the negotiations. The Council of People's Commissars is alone empowered to sign the final treaty of armistice.

Soldiers, the cause of peace is in your hands! Vigilance, restraint and energy, and the cause of peace will triumph!

In the name of the government of the Russian Republic,

V. ULYANOV (LENIN)

*Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars*

N. KRYLENKO

*People's Commissar of War and Supreme Commander*

*Izvestia*, November 23, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS TO THE REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY COMMITTEE

THE disruption of the food supply caused by war and mismanagement is being aggravated to an extreme by profiteers, marauders and their abettors on the railways, in the steamship offices, transport offices, etc.

At a time of great national hardship, criminal plunderers are jeopardising the health and lives of millions of soldiers and workers for gainful ends.

Such a state of affairs cannot be tolerated a single day longer.

The Council of People's Commissars orders the Revolutionary Military Committee to adopt the most vigorous measures to eradicate profiteering and sabotage, concealment of supplies, the malicious upholding of freight, etc.

All persons guilty of such actions are liable, by special decision of the Revolutionary Military Committee, to immediate arrest and confinement in the prisons of Kronstadt, pending their trial by revolutionary court-martial.

All public organisations should be drawn into the fight against the food plunderers.

V. ULYANOV (LENIN)

*Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars*

*Izvestia*, November 25, 1917.

J. StalinSPEECH AT THE CONGRESS OF THE FINNISH SOCIAL-  
DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY \***COMRADES!**

I have been delegated to this Congress to greet you in the name of the workers' revolution in Russia which has shaken the capitalist system to its foundations. I have come here to greet your Congress in the name of the Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia, in the name of the Council of People's Commissars, which was born in the flames of this revolution.

But I have not only come here to bring you greetings. I would like first of all to bring you the joyous news of the victories of the Russian Revolution, of the disorganisation of its enemies and of the fact that in the atmosphere of the expiring imperialist war the chances of the revolution are improving day by day.

Bondage to the landlords has been broken, for power in the rural districts has passed into the hands of the peasants. The power of the generals has been broken, for power in the army is now concentrated in the hands of the soldiers. A curb has been put on the capitalists, for workers' control is rapidly being established over the factories, works and banks. The whole country, the towns and villages, the rear and the front, is studded with revolutionary committees of workers, soldiers and peasants who are taking the reins of government in their hands.

Attempts were made to scare us with the bogey of Kerensky and the counter-revolutionary generals; but Kerensky has been expelled and the generals are besieged by the soldiers and Cossacks who also support the demands of the workers and peasants.

Attempts were made to scare us with the bogey of starvation, it was prophesied that the Soviet power would perish in the claws of food chaos. But it was enough for us to curb the profiteers, it was enough for us to appeal to the peasants, for hundreds of thousands of poods of grain to come pouring into the towns.

Attempts were made to scare us with the prospect of the disloca-

\* Helsingfors, November 27, 1917.—*Ed.*

tion of the state apparatus, with the sabotage of the government officials, etc. But we ourselves knew that the new socialist government would not be able simply to take over the old bourgeois state apparatus and make it its own. But it was enough to set to work to renovate the old apparatus, to purge it of its anti-social elements, for the sabotage to begin to melt away.

Attempts were made to scare us with the bogey of the "surprises" of war, of possible complications with the imperialist cliques in connection with our proposals for a democratic peace. And indeed, the danger, a mortal danger, did exist. It existed after the capture of Esel, when the Kerensky government was preparing to flee to Moscow and surrender Petrograd, and when the Anglo-German imperialists were negotiating peace at the expense of *Russia*. On the basis of such a peace the imperialists could indeed have wrecked the cause of the Russian, and perhaps, of the international revolution. But the October Revolution came in the nick of time. It took the cause of peace into its own hands, it knocked the most dangerous weapon out of the hands of international imperialism and so saved the revolution from mortal danger. There was only one thing the old wolves of imperialism could do: either submit to the revolutionary movement that is flaring up in all countries and agree to peace, or continue the struggle by *prolonging* the war. But to prolong the war in its fourth year, when the whole world is gasping in the clutches of war, when the prospect of another winter campaign is rousing a storm of anger among the soldiers of all countries, and after the sordid secret treaties have been published—to continue the war under such circumstances means courting inevitable failure. The old wolves of imperialism miscalculated this time. And this is precisely why we are not scared by "surprises" which the imperialists might hold out for us.

And lastly, attempts were made to scare us with the prospect of the collapse of Russia, of its disintegration into numerous independent states, and it was hinted that the right of nations to self-determination proclaimed by the Council of People's Commissars was a "fatal mistake." But I must declare to you most categorically that we would not be democrats, let alone Socialists, if we did not recognise the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination. I declare that we would have betrayed socialism had we not

taken all measures to restore fraternal mutual confidence between the workers of Finland and Russia. But everybody knows that without the emphatic recognition of the right of the Finnish people to free self-determination it would have been impossible to restore this mutual confidence.

And the important thing here is, not merely the verbal, if official, recognition of this right. What is important is that the verbal recognition will be confirmed by the Council of People's Commissars by deeds, that it will be unflinching applied in practice. For the time for words has passed. The time has arrived for the old slogan: "Proletarians of all countries, unite," to be put into practice. Complete freedom for the Finns, as well as for the other nationalities of Russia, to build their own life! A voluntary and honest alliance of the Finnish people with the Russian people! No tutelage, no supervision from above, over the Finnish people! Such is the guiding principle of the policy of the Council of People's Commissars. Only as a result of such a policy can mutual confidence between the peoples of Russia be created. Only on the basis of such mutual confidence can the proletarians among the peoples of Russia be united in one army. Only as a result of such unification can the gains of the October Revolution be consolidated and the cause of the international socialist revolution be advanced. That is why we smile every time we are told that Russia will inevitably fall to pieces as a result of the application of the right of nations to self-determination.

These are the difficulties with which our enemies continue to try to frighten us, but which we shall overcome as the revolution grows.

Comrades, information has reached us that your country is experiencing approximately the same crisis of power that Russia experienced on the eve of the October Revolution. Information has reached us that attempts are being made to scare you, too, with the bogey of famine, sabotage, etc. Permit me to declare to you on the basis of our experience of the revolutionary movement in Russia that these dangers, even if they are real, are by no means insuperable! These dangers can be overcome if you act resolutely and unflinching. In the atmosphere of war and chaos, in the atmosphere of the surging revolutionary movement in the West and of the growing victory of the workers' revolution in Russia, there are no

dangers and difficulties that can withstand your assault. In such an atmosphere only one power can hold on and conquer, the socialist power. In such an atmosphere only one set of tactics is suitable, the tactics of Danton: audacity, audacity and audacity!

And if you need our help we will give it to you, we will stretch out our fraternal hand to you.

Of this you can be certain.

*Pravda*, November 29, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE TOILING AND EXPLOITED PEASANTS

##### A LETTER TO *Pravda*

TODAY, Saturday, December 1, in the course of my speech at the Peasant Congress, I was publicly asked a question to which I forthwith replied. It is essential that this question and my reply should immediately be made known to all the reading public, for, while formally speaking only in my own name, I was in fact speaking in the name of the whole Bolshevik Party.

The matter was as follows.

Touching upon the question of an alliance between the Bolshevik workers and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, whom many peasants at present trust, I attempted to show in my speech that the alliance *can* be an "honest coalition," an honest alliance, for *there is no* radical divergence between the interests of the wage workers and the interests of the toiling and exploited peasants. Socialism is *fully* able to satisfy the interests of both. And *only* socialism can satisfy their interests. Hence the possibility and necessity for an "honest coalition" between the proletarians and the toiling and exploited peasantry. On the other hand, a "coalition" between the toiling and exploited classes on the one hand and the bourgeoisie on the other *cannot* be an "honest coalition" because of the fundamental divergence of interests of these classes.

Imagine, I said, that there will be in the government a majority

of Bolsheviks and a minority of left Socialist-Revolutionaries, or let us say, only one Left Socialist-Revolutionary, the Commissar for Agriculture. Could the Bolsheviks in such circumstances practise an honest coalition?

They could; for, while they are irreconcilable in their fight against the counter-revolutionary elements (including the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Defencists), the Bolsheviks would be obliged to *abstain* from voting on questions concerning purely Socialist-Revolutionary points in the land programme approved by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Such a point, for instance, would be the principle of equal land tenure and the redistribution of land among the small peasants.

By abstaining from voting on such a point the Bolsheviks would not in any way be changing their programme. For, given the triumph of socialism (workers' control over the factories, to be followed by their expropriation, the nationalisation of the banks, and the creation of a supreme economic council for the regulation of the whole economic life of the country), given that, the workers *would be obliged to agree* to the transitional measures proposed by the small toiling and exploited peasants, provided such measures were *not detrimental* to the cause of socialism. Kautsky, when he was still a Marxist (from 1899 to 1909) frequently admitted—I said—that the transitional measures to socialism cannot be identical in countries of large-scale and in countries of small-scale agriculture.

We Bolsheviks would be obliged to abstain when such a point was being voted in the Council of People's Commissars or in the Central Executive Committee, for, if the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (and the peasants who support them) agreed to workers' control, to the nationalisation of the banks, etc., equal land tenure would be only one of the *transitional* measures to complete socialism. It would be absurd for the proletariat to *impose* such transitional measures; it is its duty, in the interests of the triumph of socialism, to *give way* to the small toiling and exploited peasants in the choice of these transitional measures, since they can do *no harm* to the cause of socialism.

Thereupon, a Left Socialist-Revolutionary (if I am not mistaken, it was Comrade Feofilaktov) asked me the following question:



How would the Bolsheviks act if in the Constituent Assembly the peasants wanted to carry through a law on equal land tenure, while the bourgeoisie were opposed to the peasants and the decision therefore depended on the Bolsheviks?

I replied: In such circumstances, when the cause of socialism would be assured by the introduction of workers' control, the nationalisation of the banks, etc., the alliance between the workers and the toiling and exploited peasants would oblige the party of the proletariat and against the bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks, in my opinion, would be entitled when the vote was being taken to make a declaration of dissent, to record their non-agreement; but to hold back under such circumstances would be to betray their allies *in the fight for socialism* for the sake of a difference with them on a particular issue. Never would the Bolsheviks betray the peasants in such a situation. Equal land tenure, and like measures, can *never* injure socialism, provided the power is in the hands of a workers' and peasants' government, provided workers' control has been established, the banks nationalised, a workers' and peasants' supreme economic organ created to direct (regulate) the *whole* of the economic life of the country, and so forth.

Such was my reply.

*Pravda*, December 2, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin and J. Stalin

TO ALL THE TOILING MOSLEMS OF RUSSIA AND THE EAST

COMRADES AND BROTHERS,

Great events are taking place in Russia. The end of the bloody war started for the partitioning of foreign countries is approaching. The rule of the robbers who have enslaved the peoples of the world is collapsing. The old edifice of bondage and slavery is tottering under the blows of the Russian Revolution. The days of the world of despotism and oppression are numbered. A new world is being born, a world of those who toil and are being emancipated. This revolution is headed by the workers' and peasants' government of Russia, the Council of People's Commissars.

The whole of Russia is covered by revolutionary Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. Power in the country is in the hands of the people. The toiling people of Russia are inspired by the one desire to secure an honest peace and to help the oppressed nations of the world to achieve their freedom.

In this sacred cause, Russia does not stand alone. The great call of liberation sounded by the Russian Revolution is being echoed by the toilers of the West and the East. Exhausted by the war, the peoples of Europe are already extending a hand to us and are working for peace. The workers and soldiers of the West are already gathering under the banners of socialism and storming the strongholds of imperialism. And far-off India, a country which for centuries was oppressed by the "enlightened" robbers of Europe, has already raised the standards of revolt, is organising her Soviets of Deputies, casting off detested slavery and calling upon the peoples of the East to fight for liberation.

The rule of capitalist plunder and violence is collapsing. The ground is tottering under the feet of the imperialist marauders.

In face of these great events, we appeal to you, the toiling and disinherited Moslems of Russia and the East.

Moslems of Russia, Tatars of the Volga and the Crimea, Kirghiz and Sarts of Siberia and Turkestan, Turks and Tatars of Transcaucasia, Chechens and Cortzi of Caucasia, all whose mosques and prayer houses were being destroyed and whose faith and customs trampled under foot by the tsars and oppressors of Russia:

Henceforth your faith and your customs, your national and cultural institutions are proclaimed to be free and inviolable. Order your national life freely and unrestrictedly. It is your right. Know that your rights, like the rights of all the peoples of Russia, are safeguarded by the whole might of the revolution and its organs, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies!

Support, then, this revolution and its authorised government!

Moslems of the East, Persians and Turks, Arabs and Hindus, all whose lives and property, freedom and fatherland have for centuries been objects of barter by the avaricious robbers of Europe, and all whose countries the plunderers who began the war want to divide up:

We announce that the secret treaties of the now-overthrown tsar for the seizure of Constantinople, which were confirmed by the now-overthrown Kerensky, have been torn up and destroyed. The Russian Republic and its government, the Council of People's Commissars, is opposed to the conquest of foreign territory, Constantinople must remain in the hands of the Moslems.

We announce that the treaty for the partition of Persia has been torn up and destroyed. As soon as hostilities cease, the troops will be evacuated from Persia and the Persians will be ensured the right freely to determine their own destiny.

We announce that the treaty for the partition of Turkey and for the "taking away" of Armenia from her has been torn up and destroyed. As soon as hostilities cease, the Armenians will be ensured the right freely to determine their political destiny.

It is not from Russia and her revolutionary government that your enslavement is to be expected, but from the European imperialist robbers, from those who are waging the present war for the partitioning of your countries, from those who have transformed your fatherland into a plundered and despoiled "colony."

Overthrow the despoilers and enslavers of your countries. Now, when war and chaos are shaking the old world to its foundations, when the whole world is fired with resentment against the imperialist robbers, when every spark of indignation becomes transformed into a mighty flame of revolution, and when even the Indian Moslems, who are oppressed and tormented under a foreign yoke, are rising in revolt against their enslavers, it is impossible to hold one's peace. Lose no time and throw off from your backs the ancient conquerors of your land! Do not allow them to despoil your hearths and homes any longer! You yourselves must be the masters of your country. You yourselves must arrange your lives in your own way. That is your right, for your destiny is in your own hands. . . .

Comrades and Brothers!

We are marching firmly and resolutely towards an honest, democratic peace. On our banners is inscribed the liberation of the toiling peoples of the world.

Moslems of Russia,

Moslems of the East,

In this work of refashioning the world we count on your sympathy and support.

DZHUGASHVILI-STALIN

*People's Commissar of National Affairs*

V. ULIANOV (LENIN)

*Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars*

*Pravda*, December 5, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### DECREE FOR THE ARREST OF THE LEADERS OF THE CIVIL WAR AGAINST THE REVOLUTION

MEMBERS of leading bodies of the Cadet Party, which is a Party consisting of enemies of the people, are liable to arrest and trial by revolutionary tribunals.

The Soviets in the various localities are enjoined to exercise special surveillance over the Cadet Party in view of its connection with the Kornilov-Kaledin civil war against the revolution.

This decree enters into effect from the moment of signature.

V. ULYANOV (LENIN)

*Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars*

Petrograd, December 11, 1917, 10:30 P.M. *Izvestia*, December 12, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### DRAFT OF A MANIFESTO TO THE PEASANTRY FROM THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES

THE Second All-Russian Peasant Congress ardently appeals to the peasantry of all the nations and peoples of Russia to bend their mind and their will, the power of their numbers and their energy, in order to arouse the sleepers and to encourage the irresolute and, from every corner of the country, from every village and from every quarter of the large cities, to utter aloud, so that all may

hear, their weighty and decisive word at this, perhaps the most serious and most responsible moment of the Great Russian Revolution.

Comrades peasants, we constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of our country. We are the vast mass of the toilers and the exploited. We are the vast mass of the fighters on behalf of the lawful and just demands of the toilers—first and foremost the demand for land—the fighters against all forms of oppression and exploitation on the part of both the landlords and the capitalists.

Comrades peasants, we are the vast mass of our army, to whose lot has fallen the inhuman suffering of more than three years of the war instigated by the tsars and the capitalists; to whose lot has also fallen the difficult but thankful and honourable rôle of being—together with the workers—vanguard fighters for freedom, land and peace, and for the complete emancipation of the toilers from all forms of oppression and exploitation.

Comrades peasants, consider our manifesto, our appeal, issued by the deputies of the peasants to the peasants of all the nations of Russia. Make known our appeal in every village and in every cottage; discuss it at every meeting and village assembly and in every peasant institution, without exception; and in the localities make your own firm and unshakable decisions. For it is on your decisions, on the decisions of the majority of the people, the decisions of the peasants themselves, that the fate of our native land mostly depends.

The fateful hour is approaching. The last fight is at hand. The whole country, all the nations of our republic, has been divided into two great camps. One camp is that of the landlords and capitalists, the rich and their servitors, the state dignitaries and their friends, the commanders of the nation and the supporters of the war.

The other camp is that of the workers and the toiling and exploited peasants, the poor people and their friends, the rank-and-file soldiers and the supporters of peace, the advocates of a heroic, decisive and bold revolutionary struggle for peace, a struggle in which no mercy will be shown to the oppressors of the people.

The struggle between these two camps has in certain parts of the country already assumed the form of open and direct civil war, a war of the Soviet armies against a small handful who are relying on the power of wealth, and who desire to overthrow the Soviet

power, the power and government of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Comrades peasants, on your determined, unshakable and momentous word much will now depend: on it depends the cessation of this civil war; on it depends the possibility of the peaceful transfer in Russia of all the land to the toilers, without compensation; on it depends the triumph of socialism. Comrades peasants, rise like one man; lift up your voice; announce your demands; draw up *your Instructions* in every village. You can make yourselves heard; you will compel them all to hear you!

Comrades peasants, you must in the first place declare your decided condemnation of those deputies to the Second All-Russian Peasants' Congress *who broke away from the Congress*. Condemn those splitters. Condemn the destroyers of the unity of the peasantry, the unity of the toiling people, the unity of the peasants and the workers. An outrageous crime has been committed by these splitters, these destroyers of the unity of the peasantry, these deserters to the camp of the rich, to the camp of the landlords and the capitalists. These people call themselves "Socialist-Revolutionaries" of the Right Wing and the Centre, the followers of Avksentyev and Chernov. They have betrayed the whole doctrine and programme of the Socialist-Revolutionaries; they have deserted to the enemies of socialism, to the throttlers of the revolution. They have broken with the loyal guardians of the doctrine, programme and demands of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party of the "Left Socialist-Revolutionary Internationalists," who have remained loyal to the interests of the toiling peasantry. They, these followers of Avksentyev and Chernov, have left the Second All-Russian Peasants' Congress and refused to submit to the decision of the majority of the peasants, in order that they may carry out the will of the wealthy and the capitalists against the peasants, in order to hinder the cause of peace, in order to prevent the immediate transfer of the land, without compensation, to the toiling people, and in order to preserve the policy of Avksentyev, Chernov, Maslov and their like, which is fatal to the peasants.

Utter your condemnation of these traitors to the cause of the peasants. By condemning them, you will save many of the weak and wavering, and you will save Russia from insane attempts at civil war. Insane, because, apart from vainly shedding rivers of

blood, they will change nothing; nothing in the world can break the unanimous decision of the workers, soldiers and peasants, the decision of the Second All-Russian Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies.

Utter your condemnation of these traitors to the cause of the peasants. Let every village express its confidence in the decisions of these two Congresses, the Congresses of the Soviets of the workers, the soldiers and the peasants. Let every village *recall* from the Constituent Assembly those deputies from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, or from the Peasants' Soviets and institutions, who have not loudly proclaimed, and proved in practice, their whole-hearted recognition of these decisions.

Comrades peasants, you all know that opponents of the decisions of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies could be elected, and were elected, from the peasants to the Constituent Assembly *only by misrepresentation*. These people, who often call themselves "Socialist-Revolutionaries," actually defrauded the peasants, who as yet did not know the truth regarding the policy of Avksentyev, Chernov and Maslov, a policy of making concessions to the landlords, of compromising with the capitalists, and of arresting the members of the local peasants' Land Committees. These Avksentyevs, Maslovs and Chernovs deceived the peasants, since the general lists of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party were compiled before October 30, whereas the truth became revealed to the whole of Russia *only after* October 30.

It was the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies that on November 7-8, 1917, revealed the truth to the whole of Russia. The truth was again revealed by the Soviet power, the Soviet government, which was the first to publish the shameful secret treaties, which was the first to start a real revolutionary struggle for peace, which was the first to show *in action* what that struggle should be, and which has already succeeded in obtaining an armistice on one of the fronts.

The truth was revealed by the Soviet government when it issued the Decree on the Land, thereby unconditionally placing itself on the side of the peasantry and eliminating all possibility of outside

interference with the complete power of the peasants in the localities.

The truth has been revealed by the Second All-Russian Peasants' Congress, which was the first to expose to the peasants in a detailed resolution the shameful rôle of the Executive Committee of the Avksentyevs and Chernovs. The Congress will close on December 21, having begun on December 13, 1917.

Comrades peasants, you thus see that when the lists were drawn up on October 30 and during the elections to the Constituent Assembly on November 25 the peasants *could not yet* have known the truth as to the land and peace, and *could not yet* distinguish their friends from their enemies, from the wolves in sheep's clothing. You can see that it is *only by fraud* that those Socialist-Revolutionaries who oppose the decisions of the Second All-Russian Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies can speak in the name of the peasants.

Comrades peasants, do not allow blood to be shed *because of this fraud!* Raise your voices in determined protest against those who have withdrawn from the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies. Draw up your *Instructions* in every gubernia, in every uyezd, in every volost and in every village; utter your protest against those who have deserted the Congress; *publish the names* of the local deputies of the peasants to the Constituent Assembly who have *not* adhered to the decisions of these Congresses, and *demand that* these deputies *shall resign* from the Constituent Assembly; for it is only by deceiving the people that they can pretend to have been elected by the people.

Comrades peasants, the Constituent Assembly must express the will of the people. Those who have withdrawn from the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies, who thwarted its will, who caused a split among the peasants and who deserted the peasants for the rich, are not the elected of the people. They are traitors, and there is no place for them in the Constituent Assembly. They bring, not peace nor land for the toilers: they bring the people the insane and criminal indignation of the rich against the Soviet power. The people will not tolerate deceit. The people will not allow their will to be frustrated. The people will not surrender the Soviet power to please the rich. The people will not allow the rich to lacerate the



cause of *peace* they have espoused, the cause of the transfer of the *land* to the toilers, immediately, without exception, without compensation.

Only two alternatives face the country:

Either a civil war against the Soviet power on the part of the Kaledinites, the Cadets, the Kornilovists (and their concealed allies, the Avksentyevs, the Chernovs and the Maslovs), a bloody war, a hopeless war for its initiators, a war that will not deprive the Soviets of power, but will only engender greater fury, be the cause of greater sacrifices, the shedding of more blood, greater delay in carrying through the great socialist reforms, and greater famine in the grainless provinces;

Or honest recognition of the truth which is apparent to all, namely, that the opponents of the decisions of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and of the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies could have secured election to the Constituent Assembly by the peasants only by fraud, and that therefore such deputies *must submit to new elections*.

There is no other alternative. Either the bloody annihilation of the rich, the Avksentyevs, the Chernovs and the Maslovs, or their consent to new elections of peasants' deputies to the Constituent Assembly as soon as the opponents of the decisions of the two Soviet Congresses, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies and the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, speak in the name of the peasants in the Constituent Assembly.

The decision lies with you, comrades peasants!

The final decision lies with you.

By the resolute utterance of *all* the peasants, *by the Instructions of all the peasants from the localities*, you can bring peace to the whole country, to all the nations of Russia, you can stop the civil war, you can guarantee not a sham, but a genuine Constituent Assembly, you can accelerate and facilitate the cessation of the war by a just peace and the transfer of the land to the toilers, you can strengthen the alliance between the peasants and the workers and hasten the triumph of socialism.

The decision lies with you, comrades peasants! Long live the

transfer of the land to the toilers! Long live peace! Long live socialism!

THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF  
PEASANTS' DEPUTIES

December 19-20, 1917. First printed in *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. IV, 1925.

V. I. Lenin

THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

1. The demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly was a perfectly legitimate part of the programme of revolutionary Social-Democracy, because in a bourgeois republic a Constituent Assembly represents the highest form of democracy, and because the imperialist republic, with Kerensky at its head, in creating a parliament, was preparing to manipulate the elections and to commit a number of infringements of democracy.

2. While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has, from the very beginning of the Revolution of 1917, repeatedly emphasised that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

3. For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, a republic of Soviets of Workers, Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the ordinary bourgeois republic crowned with a Constituent Assembly), but is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition to socialism.

4. The convocation of the Constituent Assembly in our revolution on the basis of lists submitted at the end of October 1917 is taking place amidst conditions which preclude the possibility of the elections to this Constituent Assembly faithfully expressing the will of the people in general and of the toiling masses in particular.

5. First, proportional representation results in a faithful expression of the will of the people only when the party lists correspond to the real division among the people actually in accordance

with the party groupings which are reflected in those lists. Here, however, as is well known, the party which between May and October had the largest number of adherents among the people, and especially among the peasantry, *viz.*, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, presented joint lists for the Constituent Assembly at the end of October 1917, but split after the elections to the Constituent Assembly, before it was convened.

For this reason, there is not, nor can there be, even formal correlation between the will of the mass of the electors and the composition of the Constituent Assembly.

6. Second, a still more important, not formal, nor legal, but a social-economic class source of the discrepancy between the will of the people and especially of the toiling classes, on the one hand, and the composition of the Constituent Assembly, on the other, is the circumstance that the elections to the Constituent Assembly took place at a time when the overwhelming majority of the people could not yet know the whole extent and significance of the October Soviet proletarian and peasant revolution, which began on November 7, 1917, *i.e.*, after the lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly had been submitted.

7. The October Revolution, which captured power for the Soviets, and which wrested political domination from the hands of the bourgeoisie and transferred it to the hands of the proletariat and poorest peasantry, is passing, under our very eyes, through successive stages of development.

8. It began with the victory of November 6-7 in the capital, when the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the vanguard of the proletarians, and of the most politically active section of the peasantry, gave a majority to the Bolshevik Party and put it in power.

9. Then, in the course of November and December, the revolution spread to the entire army and the peasantry, and manifested itself, first of all, in the dismissal of the leading bodies (army committees, gubernia and peasant committees, the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, etc.), which expressed the superseded compromising stage of the revolution, its bourgeois and not proletarian stage, and which were inevitably bound to disappear as a result of the pressure of the

lower and broader masses of the people, and the election of new ones.

10. This mighty movement of the exploited masses for the re-organisation of the leading bodies of their organisations has not ended even now, in the end of December 1917, and the Railway-men's Congress, which is still in session, represents one of its stages.

11. Hence, the grouping of the class forces in Russia in the course of the class struggle is in fact assuming an essentially different form in November and December 1917 from the one that could be reflected in the party lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly that were submitted at the end of October 1917.

12. Recent events in the Ukraine (partly also in Finland and White Russia, as well as in the Caucasus) similarly reveal a re-grouping of the class forces which is taking place in the process of the struggle between the bourgeois nationalism of the Ukrainian Rada, the Finnish Diet, etc., on the one hand, and the Soviet power, the proletarian and peasant revolution in each of these national republics, on the other.

13. Lastly, the civil war which was started by the counter-revolutionary rebellion of the Cadet-Kaledinites against the Soviet authorities, against the workers' and peasants' government, has finally brought the class struggle to an issue and has destroyed all chances of settling the very acute problems which history has set before the peoples of Russia, and more particularly before the Russian working class and peasantry, in a formal democratic way.

14. Only the complete victory of the workers and peasants over the bourgeois and landlord rebellion (which found expression in the Cadet-Kaledinite movement), only the ruthless military suppression of this rebellion of the slaveowners can really safeguard the proletarian and peasant revolution. The course of events and the development of the class struggle in the revolution has resulted in the slogan "All Power to the Constituent Assembly"—which ignores the gains of the workers' and peasants' revolution, which ignores the Soviet power, which ignores the decisions of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, of the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies, etc.—becoming in fact the slogan of the Cadets and the Kaledinites, and of their abettors. It is becoming clear to the entire people that this

slogan means in fact a struggle for the overthrow of the Soviet power, and that the Constituent Assembly, if it disagreed with the Soviet power, would inevitably be doomed to political extinction.

15. Among the particularly acute problems of national life is the problem of peace. A real revolutionary struggle for peace was commenced in Russia only after the victory of the revolution of November 7, and the first fruits of this victory were the publication of the secret treaties, the conclusion of an armistice, and the beginning of open negotiations for a general peace without annexations and indemnities.

Only now are the broad masses of the people receiving the full and open opportunity of seeing in operation a policy of revolutionary struggle for peace, and of studying its results.

At the time of the elections to the Constituent Assembly the masses of the people had no such opportunity.

Clearly, then, from this point of view also, a discrepancy between the composition of the Constituent Assembly and the real will of the people on the question of terminating the war is also inevitable.

16. The result of all the above-mentioned circumstances is that the Constituent Assembly, elected according to party lists compiled before the proletarian and peasant revolution, under the rule of the bourgeoisie, must inevitably clash with the will and interests of the toiling and exploited classes which on November 7 began the socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie. Naturally, the interests of this revolution are higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly, even if those formal rights were not undetermined by the absence in the Constituent Assembly Law of a provision recognising the right of the people to recall its deputies and hold new elections at any moment.

17. Every attempt, direct or indirect, to regard the question of the Constituent Assembly from a formal and legal point of view, within the limits of ordinary bourgeois democracy, and ignoring the class struggle and civil war, is treachery to the cause of the proletariat, and is the adoption of the bourgeois point of view. It is the bounden duty of the revolutionary Social-Democrats to warn all and sundry against this error, into which a few Bolshevik leaders, who have not been able to appreciate the significance of

the October uprising and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, have fallen.

18. The only chance of securing a painless solution of the crisis which has arisen as a result of the discrepancy between the elections to the Constituent Assembly and the will of the people, as well as the interests of the toiling and exploited classes, is to enable the people as broadly and as early as possible to exercise the right to elect anew the members of the Constituent Assembly, and for the Constituent Assembly to associate itself with the law passed by the Central Executive Committee concerning this new election, for the Constituent Assembly to proclaim unreservedly that it recognises the Soviet power, the Soviet revolution, its policy on the questions of peace, the land, and workers' control, and that it resolutely joins the camp of the enemies of the Cadet-Kaledinite counter-revolution.

19. Unless these conditions are created, the crisis in connection with the Constituent Assembly can be settled only in a revolutionary way, by the most energetic, rapid, firm and determined revolutionary measures on the part of the Soviet power against the Cadet-Kaledinite counter-revolution, no matter what slogans and institutions (even membership in the Constituent Assembly) this counter-revolution may screen itself with. Every attempt to tie the hands of the Soviet power in this struggle would be tantamount to aiding and abetting the counter-revolution.

*Pravda*, December 26, 1917.

### V. I. Lenin

#### DRAFT DECREE ON THE SOCIALISATION OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

THE critical food situation and the danger of famine created by the speculation and sabotage of the capitalists and government officials, as well as the general state of disorganisation, makes it essential to adopt extraordinary revolutionary measures for combating this evil.

In order that all citizens of the state, and particularly the toiling

classes, shall take up the fight against this evil immediately and comprehensively, and address themselves to the proper organisation of the economic life of the country, stopping at nothing and acting in the most revolutionary manner, under the leadership of their Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, the following regulations are decreed:

**DRAFT DECREE ON THE NATIONALISATION OF THE BANKS AND THE ADOPTION OF THE MEASURES NECESSITATED THEREBY**

1. All joint stock companies are declared to be the property of the state.

2. Members of boards and directors of joint stock companies, and also all shareholders belonging to the wealthy classes (*i.e.*, possessing property exceeding 5,000 rubles, or an income exceeding 500 rubles per month) are obliged to continue the systematic conduct of the affairs of these enterprises, observe the law on workers' control, present all shares to the State Bank and submit to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies weekly reports of their activities.

3. State loans, foreign and domestic, are hereby annulled.

4. The interests of small holders of bonds and shares, *i.e.*, holders belonging to the toiling classes of the population, shall be fully protected.

5. Universal labour service is hereby introduced: all citizens of both sexes between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five shall be obliged to perform work assigned to them by the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, or by other organs of the Soviet power.

6. As a first step towards the introduction of universal labour service, it is decreed that persons belonging to the wealthy classes (see § 2) shall be obliged to possess, and make proper entries in, consumers'-workers' books, or workers' budget books, which must be presented to the competent workers' organisations or to the local Soviets and their organs for weekly notations of the performance of the work undertaken.

7. For the purpose of proper control and distribution of food-stuffs and other necessary products, every citizen of the state shall be obliged to join a consumers' society. The food boards, com-

mittees of supply, and similar organisations, and also the railway and transport unions, shall, under the guidance of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, exercise control over the due observation of the present law. Persons belonging to the wealthy classes, in particular, shall be obliged to perform any work assigned to them by the Soviets in the sphere of organising and conducting the affairs of the consumers' societies.

8. The railway employés' unions shall be charged with the duty of urgently drawing up and immediately carrying into effect *extraordinary* measures for the better organisation of transport, particularly as regards the transport of foodstuffs, fuel and other items of prime necessity, being guided by the instructions and orders firstly of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies and then of the bodies empowered for this purpose by them and by the Supreme Council of National Economy. Similarly, upon the railway unions, working in conjunction with the local Soviets, shall devolve the duty of energetically combating petty food profiteers and mercilessly suppressing speculation, if necessary resorting to revolutionary measures for this purpose.

9. Workers' organisations, unions of office employés and the local Soviets shall immediately set about placing closed and demobilised enterprises, and also unemployed workers, on the performance of useful work and the production of articles of necessity, finding orders, raw materials and fuel. While under no circumstances postponing the performance of this work, and while likewise proceeding to the exchange of country products for city products without awaiting special instructions on the subject from superior bodies, the local unions and Soviets shall be strictly guided by the orders and instructions of the Supreme Council of National Economy.

10. Members of the wealthy classes shall be obliged to keep all their monetary possessions in the State Bank and its branches, or in the savings banks, withdrawing not more than 100-125 rubles per week (as shall be established by the local Soviets) for living purposes; withdrawals for purposes of production and trade shall be made only with a written certificate of the organs of workers' control.

For the purpose of supervising the due realisation of this present law, regulations shall be drawn up providing for the exchange of



the present currency bills for new currency bills. Persons guilty of fraud on the state and the people shall be liable to the confiscation of all their property.

11. Violators of the present law, saboteurs and government officials who go on strike, and also speculators, shall be liable to a similar penalty, and to imprisonment, or to despatch to the front, or to compulsory labour. The local Soviets and their organs shall urgently decide upon the most revolutionary measures to be taken for combating these real enemies of the people.

12. The trade unions and other organisations of the toilers, acting in conjunction with the local Soviets, and with the participation of reliable persons recommended by Party and other organisations, shall organise mobile groups of inspectors to supervise the carrying into effect of the present law, to inspect the quantity and quality of work performed and to bring to trial before the revolutionary courts persons guilty of violating or evading this law.

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### V. I. Lenin

## HOW TO ORGANISE COMPETITION

BOURGEOIS writers have been writing reams in praise of competition, private enterprise, and all the other magnificent glories and charms of the capitalists and of the capitalist system. Socialists were accused of refusing to understand the importance of these glories, and of ignoring "human nature." As a matter of fact, capitalism long ago abolished small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy and bold initiative to some *considerable* extent, and substituted for it large and very large-scale factory production, joint stock companies, syndicates and other monopolies. Under the *latter* form of capitalism, competition means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy and bold initiative of the *masses* of the population, the overwhelming majority, ninety-nine out of every hundred of the toilers; it also means that competition is superseded

by financial fraud, despotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder.

Socialism does not extinguish competition; on the contrary, it creates for the first time the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for drawing actually the majority of the population into an arena of labour in which they can display their abilities, reveal their talents, which are an untapped spring among the people, and which capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.

Now that a Socialist government is in power our task is to organise competition.

The hangers-on and spongers on the bourgeoisie described socialism as a uniform, routine, monotonous and drab barrack system. The lackeys of the money-bags, the lickspittles of the exploiters—Messieurs the bourgeois intellectuals—used socialism as a bogey to “frighten” the people, who, precisely under capitalism, were doomed to penal servitude and the barracks, to arduous, monotonous toil, to a life of poverty and semi-starvation. The first step towards the emancipation of the people from this penal servitude is the confiscation of the land of the landlords, the introduction of workers’ control of industry, and the nationalisation of the banks. The next steps are the nationalisation of the factories and works; the compulsory organisation of the whole population in consumers’ co-operative societies, which are at the same time co-operative societies for the sale of products; and the state monopoly of the sale of grain and other articles of necessity. Only now is the opportunity created for the truly mass display of enterprise, competition and bold initiative. Every factory from which the capitalist has been expelled or in which he has at least been curbed by genuine workers’ control, every village from which the landlord exploiter has been expelled and his land confiscated, is now, and has only now become, a field in which the workingman can reveal his talent, unbend his back, straighten himself, and feel that he is a human being. For the first time after centuries of working for others, of working in subjection for the exploiter, it has become possible to *work for oneself*, and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technique and culture in one’s work.

Of course, this greatest change in human history from working

in subjection to working for oneself cannot take place without friction, difficulties, conflicts and violence against the confirmed idlers and their hangers-on. No worker has any illusions on that score. Hardened by many long years of penal servitude for the exploiters, by the exploiters' insults and mockery, and by want, the workers and poor peasants know that time is needed to *break* the resistance of the exploiters. The workers and peasants are not in the least affected by the sentimental illusions of Messieurs the intellectuals, of the whole crowd of *Novaya Zhizn*-ists and other jellyfish who "shouted" against the capitalists until they were hoarse, "gesticulated" against them and "denounced" them, only to burst into tears and to behave like whipped puppies when it came to *action*, to carrying out threats, to *overthrowing* the capitalists.

The great change from subject labour to working for oneself, to labour planned and organised on a gigantic, national (to a certain extent international, world) scale requires—in addition to "*military*" measures for the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters—extensive *organisational* measures, organisational efforts on the part of the proletariat and the poor peasants. The organisational task is closely interwoven with the task of ruthlessly suppressing by military methods yesterday's slave-owners (capitalists) and their hordes of lackeys—Messieurs the bourgeois intellectuals. Yesterday's slave-owners and their servants the intellectuals say and think: "We have always been organisers and chiefs. We have commanded, and we want to continue doing so. We will refuse to obey the 'common people,' the workers and peasants. We will not submit to them. We will convert knowledge into a weapon for the defence of the privileges of the money-bags and of the rule of capital over the people."

That is what the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals say, think and do. From the point of view of *self-interest* their conduct is intelligible. The hangers-on and spongers on the feudal landlords—the priests, the scribes, the bureaucrats, as Gogol depicted them; and the "intellectuals" who hated Belinsky—also found it "hard" to part with serfdom. But the cause of the exploiters and of their intellectual menials is hopeless. The workers and peasants are breaking their resistance—unfortunately, not yet firmly, resolutely and ruthlessly enough—but *they will break it*.

"They" think that the "common people," the "common" worker and poor peasant, will be unable to cope with the great, truly heroic, in the world-historical sense of the word, organisational tasks which the socialist revolution has imposed upon the shoulders of the toilers. The intellectuals who are accustomed to serving the capitalists and the capitalist state say in order to console themselves, "You cannot do without us." But their insolent calculations will fall to the ground: already educated people are coming over to the side of the people, to the side of the toilers, and are helping to break the resistance of the servants of capital. There is a great deal of organising talent among the peasants and the working class, and this talent is only just beginning to reveal itself, to awaken, to stretch out towards the great living creative work, to undertake to build socialist society independently.

One of the most important tasks today, if not the most important task, is to develop the independent initiative of the workers, and of all the toilers and exploited generally, as widely as possible in creative *organisational work*. At all costs we must break the old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called "upper classes," only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, can administer the state and direct the organisational construction of socialist society.

This is a prejudice. It is fostered by decaying routine, by conservatism, slavish habits, and still more by the sordid selfishness of the capitalists in whose interest it is to administer while plundering and to plunder while administering. No. The workers will not forget for a moment that they need the power of knowledge. The extraordinary striving after knowledge which the workers reveal, particularly now, shows that mistaken ideas about this do not and cannot exist in the minds of the proletariat. But every *rank-and-file* worker and peasant who is able to read and write, who can judge people and has practical experience, can do organisational work. Among the "common people," of whom the bourgeois intellectuals speak with such scorn and contempt, there are *masses* of people like that. This sort of talent among the working class and the peasantry is still a rich and untapped spring.

The workers and peasants are still "shy," they have not yet become accustomed to the idea that *they* are the *ruling* class now;

they are not yet sufficiently resolute. The revolution could not *at one stroke* create these qualities in millions and millions of people who all their lives had been compelled by hunger and want to work under the threat of the stick. But the strength, the virility, the invincibility of the October Revolution of 1917 lie in that it *awakens* these qualities, breaks down the old impediments, tears off the obsolete shackles, and leads the toilers on to the road of *independent* creation of a new life.

Accounting and control—this is the *main* economic task of every Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, of every consumers' society, of every union or committee of supplies, of every trade union factory committee, or organ of workers' control in general.

The fight against the old habit of regarding the measure of labour, the means of production, from the point of view of the man in subjection, *i.e.*, the habit of shirking burdens, of trying to get as much as possible out of the *bourgeoisie*—this fight must be waged. The advanced, class-conscious workers have already started this fight, and they are offering determined resistance to the many newcomers who came into factory life during the war and who now want to treat the *people's* factory, the factory that has come into the possession of the people, in the old way, with the sole end in view of "making" as much as possible and clearing out. All the class-conscious, honest and thoughtful peasants and toilers will take their places in this fight by the side of the advanced workers.

Accounting and control, *if* it is carried on by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the supreme state power, or on the instructions, on the authority, of *this* power—widespread, general, universal accounting and control, the accounting and control of the amount of labour performed and of products distributed, is the *essence* of the socialist change, since the political rule of the proletariat has been created and ensured.

The accounting and control that are essential for the transition to socialism can be only mass accounting and control. The voluntary and conscientious co-operation of the *masses* of the workers and peasants in accounting and controlling with revolutionary enthusiasm *the rich, the rogues, the idlers and the hooligans* can alone conquer these survivals of accursed capitalist society, this offal of

humanity, these hopelessly decayed and atrophied limbs, this contagion, this plague, this sore that socialism has inherited from capitalism.

Workers and peasants, toilers and exploited! The land, the banks, the factories and works now belong to the whole of the people! You *yourselves* must set to work to take account of and control production and distribution—this is the *only* road to the victory of socialism, the only guarantee of its victory, the guarantee of victory over all exploitation, over all poverty and want! For there is enough bread, iron, timber, wool, cotton and flax in Russia to satisfy the needs of all, if only labour and its products are properly distributed, if only the *businesslike, practical* control of this distribution by the whole of the people is established, if only we can conquer the enemies of the people, the rich and their hangers-on, and the rogues, the idlers and the hooligans, *not only* in politics, but also in *everyday economic* life.

No mercy to these enemies of the people, the enemies of socialism, the enemies of the toilers! War to the death on the rich and their hangers-on, the bourgeois intellectuals; war on the rogues, the idlers and the hooligans! Both, the former and the latter, are of the same brood, the spawn of capitalism, the offspring of aristocratic and bourgeois society; the society in which a handful of men robbed and insulted the people; the society in which poverty and want forced thousands and thousands onto the path of hooliganism, corruption and roguery, and caused them to lose all resemblance to human beings; the society which inevitably cultivated in the toiler the desire to escape exploitation even by means of deception, to escape, if only for a moment, from barren toil, to procure at least a crust of bread by any possible means, no matter how, so as not to starve, so as to subdue the pangs of hunger suffered by himself and his near and dear ones.

The rich and the rogues are two sides of the same medal; they are the two principal categories of *parasites* which capitalism fostered; they are the principal enemies of socialism. These enemies must be placed under the special surveillance of the whole of the people; they must be ruthlessly punished for the slightest violation of the laws and regulations of socialist society. Weakness, hesita-

tion or sentimentality in this respect would be a great crime against socialism.

In order to make these parasites harmless to socialist society we must organise the accounting and control of labour, production and distribution, to be carried out by the whole of the people, by millions and millions of workers and peasants, voluntarily, energetically and with revolutionary enthusiasm. And in order to organise this accounting and control so that every honest, intelligent and efficient worker and peasant may be able to perform it, so that it may be within their powers, we must rouse their organising talent, the talent which is in their midst; we must rouse among them—and organise on a nationwide scale—*competition* to achieve the greatest organisational successes; the workers and peasants must be able to see clearly the difference between the necessary advice of an educated man and the necessary control by the “simple” worker and peasant of the *lackadaisicalness* that is so habitual among the “educated.”

This lackadaisicalness, carelessness, slovenliness, untidiness, nervous haste, the inclination to substitute discussion for action, talk for work, the inclination to undertake everything under the sun without finishing anything is one of the characteristics of the “educated”; and this is not due to the fact that they are bad by nature, still less is it due to malice; it is due to their habits of life, to the conditions of their work, to fatigue, to the abnormal separation of mental from manual labour, and so on.

Of the mistakes, defects and omissions of our revolution a by no means unimportant rôle is played by the mistakes, and so forth, due to these deplorable—but at present inevitable—characteristics of the intellectuals in our midst, and to the *lack* of sufficient supervision by the *workers* of the *organisational* work of these intellectuals.

The workers and peasants are still “shy”; they must get rid of this shyness, and they *certainly will* get rid of it. We cannot dispense with the advice, the instruction of educated people, of intellectuals and specialists. Every sensible worker and peasant understands the superiority of the latter in this respect, and the intellectuals in our midst cannot complain of a lack of attention and of comradely respect on the part of the workers and peasants. But advice and instruction is one thing, the organisation of *practical* accounting and control is another. Very often the intellectuals give excellent advice and

instruction, but they prove to be ridiculously, *absurdly*, shamefully "unhandy" and incapable of *carrying out* this advice and instruction, of *practically* carrying out accounting and control, of transforming words into deeds.

That is why it is utterly impossible to *dispense with the leading rôle* of the practical organisers from among the "people," from among the workers and toiling peasants. "It is not the gods who make pots"—this is the motto that the workers and peasants should get well drilled into their minds. They must understand that the whole thing now is *practice*, that the historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, is vitalised by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice, when the words of Marx, "Every step in the practical movement is more important than a dozen programmes" become particularly true—every step in practically, really curbing, restricting, fully registering and supervising the rich and the rogues is worth a dozen excellent arguments about socialism. For "theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life."

Competition must be organised between the practical organisers among the workers and peasants. Every attempt to adhere to stereotyped forms and to impose uniformity from above, as our intellectuals are inclined to do, must be combated. Stereotyped forms and uniformity imposed from above have nothing in common with democratic and socialist centralism. The unity of essentials, of fundamentals, of the essence, is not disturbed but ensured by *variety* in details, in specific local features, in methods of *approach*, in *methods* of exercising control, in *ways* of exterminating and rendering harmless the parasites (the rich and the rogues, the slovenly and hysterical intellectuals, etc., etc.).

The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms. Our Soviets are following this example. But they are still "shy," they have not yet got into their stride, have not yet "bitten into" their new, great, creative task of creating the socialist system. The Soviets must set to work more boldly and display greater initiative. Every "commune," every factory, every village, every consumers' society, every committee of supplies, must *compete* with its neighbours as a prac-



tical organiser of accounting and control of labour and distribution. The programme of this accounting and control is simple, clear and intelligible to all; it is: every one to have bread; every one to have sound footwear and good clothing; every one to have warm dwellings; every one to work conscientiously; not a single rogue (including those who shirk their work) to be at liberty, all to be kept in prison, or put to compulsory labour of the hardest kind; not a single rich man who violates the laws and regulations of socialism to be allowed to escape the fate of the rogue, which should, in justice, be the fate of the rich man. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the *practical* commandment of socialism. This is how things should be organised *practically*. These are the *practical* successes our "communes" and our worker and peasant organisers should be proud of. And this applies *particularly* to the organisers among the intellectuals, because they are *too much, far too much* in the habit of being proud of their general instructions.

Thousands of forms and methods of accounting and controlling the rich, the rogues and the idlers should be devised and put to practical test by the communes themselves, by small units in town and country. There variety is a guarantee of virility, a guarantee of success in achieving the common aim, *viz.*, to *purge* the land of Russia of all vermin; of fleas—the rogues; of bugs—the rich; and so on and so forth. In one place half a score of rich, a dozen rogues, half a dozen workers who shirk their work (in the hooligan manner in which many compositors in Petrograd, particularly in the Party printing offices, shirk their work) will be put in prison. In another place they will be put to cleaning latrines. In a third place they will be provided with "yellow tickets" after they have served their time, so that all the people shall have these pernicious people under their surveillance until they reform. In a fourth place, one out of every ten idlers will be shot on the spot. In a fifth place mixed methods may be adopted, and by conditional release, for example, the rich, the bourgeois intellectuals, the rogues and the hooligans will be given an opportunity to reform quickly. The greater variety there will be, the better and richer will be our general experience, the more certain and rapid will be the success of socialism, and the easier will it be for practice to devise—and only practice will devise—the *best* methods and means of struggle.

In what commune, in what district of a large town, in what factory and in what village are there *no* starving people, *no* unemployed, *no* idle rich, *no* scoundrelly lackeys of the bourgeoisie, saboteurs who call themselves intellectuals? Where has most been done to raise the productivity of labour, to build good new houses for the poor, to put the poor in the houses of the rich, to provide regularly a bottle of milk for every child of every poor family? It is on these points that *competition* should be organised between the communes, communities, producer-consumer societies and associations, and Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This is the work on which *organising talent* should be singled out *in practice* and rise to the top in the administration of the state. There is a great deal of this talent among the people. It is merely suppressed. It must be given an opportunity to display itself. It, *and it alone*, with the support of the masses, can save Russia and save the cause of socialism.

January 7-10, 1918. First printed in *Pravda*, January 20, 1929.

### V. I. Lenin

## DRAFT DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE TOILING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE

THE Constituent Assembly resolves:

### I.

1. Russia is hereby declared a republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power centrally and locally belongs to the Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic shall be constituted on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

### II.

Making it its fundamental aim to abolish all forms of exploitation of man by man, to put a complete end to the division of society into classes, mercilessly to crush the resistance of the exploiters, to

establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves:

1. Private property in land is hereby abolished. All land, together with all structures, farm property, and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is declared to be the property of the whole toiling people.

2. The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Council of National Economy are hereby confirmed with the object of guaranteeing the power of the toiling people over the exploiters, and as a first step towards the complete transformation of the factories, workshops, mines, railways and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

3. The passing of all the banks into the possession of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the toiling masses from the yoke of capitalism.

4. With the object of abolishing the parasitic strata of society, universal labour service is hereby instituted.

5. In order to guarantee sovereign power for the toiling masses, and in order to remove all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the toilers, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

### III.

1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutch of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly declares its complete adherence to the policy of the Soviet power of tearing up the secret treaties, organising widespread fraternisation between the workers and peasants of the warring armies, and achieving at all costs and by revolutionary means a democratic peace among the nations, without annexations and indemnities, and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same purpose in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the well-being of the exploiters of a few

chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of toiling people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars, which has proclaimed the complete independence of Finland, commenced the evacuation of troops from Persia and declared freedom of self-determination for Armenia.

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans issued by the governments of the tsar, landlords and bourgeoisie as a first blow to international bank and finance capital, and expresses its conviction that the Soviet government will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' revolt against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

#### IV.

Having been elected on the basis of party lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, when the people were still not in a position to rise *en masse* against the exploiters, when they still did not realise the full strength of the resistance shown by the latter in defence of their class privileges, and when they had not yet addressed themselves to the practical task of building a socialist society, the Constituent Assembly considers that it would be fundamentally wrong, even from a formal point of view, to set itself up against the Soviet power.

In point of fact, the Constituent Assembly considers that now, when the people are fighting the last fight against the exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any of the organs of government. The power must be vested solely and entirely in the toiling masses and their authorised representative—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Supporting the Soviet power and the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, the Constituent Assembly considers that its own duty must be limited to establishing a fundamental basis for the socialist reconstruction of society.

At the same time, with the object of creating a really free and voluntary, and therefore firm and stable, union of the toiling classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly limits its own duty to the establishment of the fundamental principles of a Federa-

tion of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own sovereign Soviet Congress whether they shall participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

*Pravda*, January 17, 1918.

### V. I. Lenin

#### DRAFT DECREE OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

AT its very inception the Russian Revolution created Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, as the mass organisation of all the toiling and exploited classes and as the only organisation capable of leading the struggle of these classes for their complete political and economic emancipation.

During the whole of the first period of the Russian Revolution the Soviets multiplied, grew and gained in strength. Experience taught them to discard illusions of compromise with the bourgeoisie and the deceptive forms of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism, and brought them to the practical conclusion that the emancipation of the oppressed classes was impossible unless they broke with these parliamentary forms and every form of compromise. Such a break was the October Revolution, which transferred the entire power to the Soviets.

The Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, was an expression of the old relation of political forces, which existed when the compromisers and the Cadets were in power. When the people at that time voted for the candidates of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party they were not in a position to choose between the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the supporters of the bourgeoisie, and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the supporters of socialism. Hence the Constituent Assembly, which was to have been the crown of the bourgeois parliamentary republic, could not but become an obstacle in the path of the October Revolution and the Soviet power.

The October Revolution, by handing power over to the Soviets and, through the Soviets, to the toiling and exploited masses, aroused the desperate resistance of the exploiters. In the process of crushing this resistance the revolution proved itself to be the beginning of the socialist revolution. The toiling classes learned by experience that the old bourgeois parliamentarism had outlived itself and was entirely incompatible with the task of achieving socialism. They learned that not national institutions, but only class institutions (such as the Soviets are), were capable of breaking the resistance of the possessing classes and of laying the foundations of a socialist society. To relinquish at this stage any particle of the power of the Soviets, the Soviet republic won by the people, for the sake of bourgeois parliamentarism and the Constituent Assembly, would be a step backward and would mean the complete collapse of the October workers' and peasants' revolution.

Owing to the circumstances mentioned above, the majority in the Constituent Assembly, when it met on January 18, was found to belong to the party of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party of Kerensky, Avksentyev and Chernov. It was only natural that this party should refuse to discuss the absolutely clear, precise and unambiguous proposal of the supreme organ of the Soviet power, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, to approve the programme of the Soviet power, to approve the Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People and to recognise the October Revolution and the Soviet Power. Thereby the Constituent Assembly severed all ties with the Soviet republic of Russia. The withdrawal from this Constituent Assembly of the fractions of the Bolsheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who now patently represent the overwhelming majority in the Soviets and enjoy the confidence of the workers and the majority of the peasants, became inevitable.

The Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties are in fact carrying on outside the walls of the Constituent Assembly a most bitter struggle against the Soviet power, openly calling in their press for its overthrow and characterising as arbitrary and unlawful the crushing of the resistance of the exploiters by the toiling classes, which is essential in the interests of emancipation from exploitation. They are supporting the saboteurs, the servitors of

capital, and are even going to the length of undisguised appeals for terrorism, which indeed certain "unidentified groups" have already begun to practise. It is obvious that under such circumstances the remaining part of the Constituent Assembly would only have served as a screen for the struggle of the counter-revolutionaries to overthrow the Soviet power.

Accordingly, the Central Executive Committee resolves:

The Constituent Assembly is hereby dissolved.

January 19, 1918. *Izvestia*, January 20, 1918.