

*Lenin, Stalin,
Mao Tsetung*

**On
The
Communist
Press**

The articles in this book are placed in chronological order and by author. They appear as follows: Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung. The explanatory notes have been added to meet the needs of this edition.

PRESENTATION

This is a collection of articles by Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung on the communist press; an excerpt of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) published under Stalin's leadership is included as an appendix.

Taken together, these articles, constitute an excellent synthesis of the lessons drawn in the working class' fight to establish a true communist press.

By reprinting these writings today, we hope to give the readers a correct idea of what a communist newspaper is.

This collection will guide us in the struggle to build the weekly **Forge**. At the present time, a weekly newspaper of the working class is key to the CCL(ML)'s central task, the creation of a true Marxist-Leninist communist party in Canada. By taking up, with heightened consciousness, the task of building the weekly **Forge**, we will advance more rapidly in the struggle for the creation of the party that the working class lacks so much.

Fight to make the **Forge** "a part of an enormous pair of smith's bellows that would fan every spark of class struggle and popular indignation into a general conflagration" as Lenin said (**What Is To Be Done?**, p. 112).

A conflagration that will destroy capitalist exploitation and oppression, allowing a socialist Canada to shine

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Vladimir Lenin

LENIN

OUR IMMEDIATE TASK

The Russian working-class movement is today going through a period of transition. The splendid beginning achieved by the Social-Democratic workers' organisations in the Western area, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, and other cities was consummated by the formation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (spring 1898). Russian Social-Democracy seems to have exhausted, for the time being, all its strength in making this tremendous step forward and has gone back to the former isolated functioning of separate local organisations. The Party has not ceased to exist, it has only withdrawn into itself in order to gather strength and put the unification of all Russian Social-Democrats on a sound footing. To effect this unification, to evolve a suitable form for it and to get rid completely of narrow local isolation—such is the immediate and most urgent task of the Russian Social-Democrats.

We are all agreed that our task is that of the organisation of the proletarian class struggle. But what is this class struggle? When the workers of a single factory or of a single branch of industry engage in struggle against their employer or employers, is this class struggle? No, this is only a weak embryo of it. The struggle of the workers becomes a class struggle only when all the foremost representatives of the entire working class of the whole country are conscious of themselves as a single working class and launch a struggle that is directed, not against individual employers, but against the *entire class* of capitalists and against the government that supports that class. Only when the individual worker realises that he is a member

of the entire working class, only when he recognises the fact that his petty day-to-day struggle against individual employers and individual government officials is a struggle against the entire bourgeoisie and the entire government, does his struggle become a class struggle. "Every class struggle is a political struggle" ¹—these famous words of Marx are not to be understood to mean that any struggle of workers against employers must *always be* a political struggle. They must be understood to mean that the struggle of the workers against the capitalists inevitably *becomes* a political struggle *insofar as* it becomes a class struggle. It is the task of the Social-Democrats, by organising the workers, by conducting propaganda and agitation among them, to *turn* their spontaneous struggle against their oppressors into the struggle of the whole class, into the struggle of a definite political *party* for definite political and socialist ideals. This is something that cannot be achieved by local activity alone.

Local Social-Democratic activity has attained a fairly high level in our country. The seeds of Social-Democratic ideas have been broadcast throughout Russia; workers' leaflets—the earliest form of Social-Democratic literature—are known to all Russian workers from St. Petersburg to Krasnoyarsk, from the Caucasus to the Urals. All that is now lacking is the unification of all this local work into the work of a single *party*. Our chief drawback, to the overcoming of which we must devote all our energy, is the narrow "amateurish" character of local work. Because of this amateurish character many manifestations of the working-class movement in Russia remain purely local events and lose a great deal of their significance as examples for the whole of Russian Social-Democracy, as a stage of the whole Russian working-class movement. Because of this amateurishness, the consciousness of their community of interests throughout Russia is insufficiently inculcated in the workers, they do not link up their struggle sufficiently with the idea of Russian socialism and Russian democracy. Because of this amateurishness the comrades' varying views on theoretical and practical problems are not openly discussed in a central newspaper, they do not serve the purpose of elaborating a common programme and devising common tactics for the Party, they are lost in narrow study-circle life or they lead

to the inordinate exaggeration of local and chance peculiarities. Enough of our amateurishness! We have attained sufficient maturity to go over to *common action*, to the elaboration of a common Party programme, to the joint discussion of our Party tactics and organisation.

Russian Social-Democracy has done a great deal in criticising old revolutionary and socialist theories; it has not limited itself to criticism and theorising alone; it has shown that its programme is not hanging in the air but is meeting the extensive spontaneous movement among the people, that is, among the factory proletariat. It has now to make the following, very difficult, but very important, step—to elaborate an organisation of the movement adapted to our conditions. Social-Democracy is not confined to simple service to the working-class movement: it represents "*the combination of socialism and the working-class movement*" (to use Karl Kautsky's definition which repeats the basic ideas of the *Communist Manifesto*); the task of Social-Democracy is to bring definite socialist ideals to the spontaneous working-class movement, to connect this movement with socialist convictions that should attain the level of contemporary science, to connect it with the regular political struggle for democracy as a means of achieving socialism—in a word, to fuse this spontaneous movement into one indestructible whole with the activity of the *revolutionary party*. The history of socialism and democracy in Western Europe, the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, the experience of our working-class movement—such is the *material* we must master to elaborate a purposeful organisation and purposeful tactics for our Party. "The analysis" of this material must, however, be done independently, since there are no ready-made models to be found anywhere. On the one hand, the Russian working-class movement exists under conditions that are quite different from those of Western Europe. It would be most dangerous to have any illusions on this score. On the other hand, Russian Social-Democracy differs very substantially from former revolutionary parties in Russia, so that the necessity of learning revolutionary technique and secret organisation from the old Russian masters (we do not in the least hesitate to admit this necessity) does not in any way relieve

us of the duty of assessing them critically and elaborating our own organisation independently.

In the presentation of such a task there are two main questions that come to the fore with particular insistence: 1) How is the need for the complete liberty of local Social-Democratic activity to be combined with the need for establishing a single—and, consequently, a centralist—party? Social-Democracy draws its strength from the spontaneous working-class movement that manifests itself differently and at different times in the various industrial centres; the activity of the local Social-Democratic organisations is the *basis* of all Party activity. If, however, this is to be the activity of isolated “amateurs,” then it cannot, strictly speaking, be called Social-Democratic, since it will not be the organisation and leadership of the *class* struggle of the proletariat. 2) How can we combine the striving of Social-Democracy to become a revolutionary party that makes the struggle for political liberty its chief purpose with the determined refusal of Social-Democracy to organise political conspiracies, its emphatic refusal to “call the workers to the barricades” (as correctly noted by P. B. Axelrod), or, in general, to impose on the workers this or that “plan” for an attack on the government, which has been thought up by a company of revolutionaries?

Russian Social-Democracy has every right to believe that it has provided the *theoretical* solution to these questions; to dwell on this would mean to repeat what has been said in the article, “Our Programme.” It is now a matter of the *practical* solution to these questions. This is not a solution that can be made by a single person or a single group; it can be provided only by the organised activity of Social-Democracy as a whole. We believe that the most urgent task of the moment consists in undertaking the solution of these questions, for which purpose we must have as our immediate aim *the founding of a Party organ that will appear regularly and be closely connected with all the local groups*. We believe that *all* the activity of the Social-Democrats should be directed to this end throughout the whole of the forthcoming period. Without such an organ, local work will remain narrowly “amateurish.” The formation of the Party—if the correct representation of that Party in a

certain newspaper is not organised—will to a considerable extent remain bare words. An economic struggle that is not united by a central organ cannot become the *class* struggle of the entire Russian proletariat. It is impossible to conduct a political struggle if the Party as a whole fails to make statements on all questions of policy and to give direction to the various manifestations of the struggle. The organisation and disciplining of the revolutionary forces and the development of revolutionary technique are impossible without the discussion of all these questions in a central organ, without the collective elaboration of certain *forms and rules for the conduct of affairs*, without the establishment—through the central organ—of every Party member’s *responsibility* to the entire Party.

In speaking of the necessity to concentrate *all* Party forces—all literary forces, all organisational abilities, all material resources, etc.—on the foundation and correct conduct of the organ of the whole Party, we do not for a moment think of pushing other forms of activity into the background—e.g., local agitation, demonstrations, boycott, the persecution of spies, the bitter campaigns against individual representatives of the bourgeoisie and the government, protest strikes, etc., etc. On the contrary, we are convinced that all these forms of activity constitute the *basis* of the Party’s activity, but, *without* their unification through an organ of the whole Party, these forms of revolutionary struggle *lose nine-tenths of their significance*; they do not lead to the creation of common Party experience, to the creation of Party traditions and continuity. The Party organ, far from competing with such activity, will exercise tremendous influence on its extension, consolidation, and systematisation.

The necessity to concentrate *all* forces on establishing a regularly appearing and regularly delivered organ arises out of the peculiar situation of Russian Social-Democracy as compared with that of Social-Democracy in other European countries and with that of the old Russian revolutionary parties. Apart from newspapers, the workers of Germany, France, etc., have numerous other means for the public manifestation of their activity, for organising the movement—parliamentary activity, election agitation, public meetings,

participation in local public bodies (rural and urban), the open conduct of trade unions (professional, guild), etc., etc. *In place of all of that, yes, all of that, we must be served—until we have won political liberty—by a revolutionary newspaper, without which no broad organisation of the entire working-class movement is possible. We do not believe in conspiracies, we renounce individual revolutionary ventures to destroy the government; the words of Liebknecht, veteran of German Social-Democracy, serve as the watchword of our activities: "Studieren, propagandieren, organisieren"—Learn, propagandise, organise—and the pivot of this activity can and must be only the organ of the Party.*

But is the regular and more or less stable establishment of such an organ possible, and under what circumstances is it possible? We shall deal with this matter next time.

AN URGENT QUESTION

In the previous article we said that our immediate task is to establish a Party organ, one that appears and can be delivered regularly, and we raised the question of whether and under what circumstances it is possible to achieve this aim. Let us examine the more important aspects of this question.

The main objection that may be raised is that the achievement of this purpose *first* requires the development of local group activity. We consider this fairly widespread opinion to be fallacious. We can and must immediately set about founding the Party organ—and, it follows, the Party itself—and putting them on a sound footing. The conditions essential to such a step already exist: local Party work is being carried on and obviously has struck deep roots; for the destructive police attacks that are growing more frequent lead to only short interruptions; fresh forces rapidly replace those that have fallen in battle. The Party has resources for publishing and literary forces, not only abroad, but in Russia as well. The question, therefore, is whether the work *that is already being conducted* should be continued in "amateur" fashion or whether it should be organised into the work of one party and in such a way that it is reflected in its entirety in one common organ.

Here we come to the most urgent question of our movement, to its sore point—organisation. The improvement of revolutionary organisation and discipline, the perfection of our underground technique are an absolute necessity. We must openly admit that in this respect we are lagging behind

the old Russian revolutionary parties and must bend all our efforts to overtake and surpass them. Without improved organisation there can be no progress of our working-class movement in general, and no establishment of an active party with a properly functioning organ, in particular. That is on the one hand. On the other, the existing Party organs (organs in the sense of institutions and groups, as well as newspapers) must pay greater attention to questions of organisation and exert an influence in this respect on local groups.

Local, amateurish work always leads to a great excess of personal connections, to study-circle methods, and we have grown out of the study-circle stage which has become too narrow for our present-day work and which leads to an over-expenditure of forces. Only fusion into a single party will enable us strictly to observe the principles of division of labour and economy of forces, which must be achieved in order to reduce the losses and build as reliable a bulwark as possible against the oppression of the autocratic government and against its frantic persecutions. Against us, against the tiny groups of socialists hidden in the expanses of the Russian "underground," there stands the huge machine of a most powerful modern state that is exerting all its forces to crush socialism and democracy. We are convinced that we shall, in the end, smash that police state, because all the sound and developing sections of our society are in favour of democracy and socialism; but, in order to conduct a systematic struggle against the government, we must raise revolutionary organisation, discipline, and the technique of underground work to the highest degree of perfection. It is essential for individual Party members or separate groups of members to specialise in the different aspects of Party work—some in the duplication of literature, others in its transport across the frontier, a third category in its distribution inside Russia, a fourth in its distribution in the cities, a fifth in the arrangement of secret meeting places, a sixth in the collection of funds, a seventh in the delivery of correspondence and all information about the movement, an eighth in maintaining relations, etc., etc. We know that this sort of specialisation requires much greater self-restraint, much greater ability to concentrate on

modest, unseen, everyday work, much greater real heroism than the usual work in study circles.

The Russian socialists and the Russian working class, however, have shown their heroic qualities and, in general, it would be a sin to complain of a shortage of people. There is to be observed among the working youth an impassioned, uncontrollable enthusiasm for the ideas of democracy and socialism, and helpers for the workers still continue to arrive from among the intellectuals, despite the fact that the prisons and places of exile are overcrowded. If the idea of the necessity for a stricter organisation is made widely known among all these recruits to the revolutionary cause, the plan for the organisation of a regularly published and delivered Party newspaper will cease to be a dream. Let us take one of the conditions for the success of this plan—that the newspaper be assured a regular supply of correspondence and other material from everywhere. Has not history shown that at all times when there has been a resurgence of our revolutionary movement such a purpose has proved possible of achievement even in respect of papers published abroad? If Social-Democrats working in various localities come to regard the Party newspaper as *their own* and consider the maintenance of regular contact with it, the discussion of their problems and the reflection of the whole movement in it to be their main task, it will be quite possible to ensure the supply to the paper of full information about the movement, provided methods of maintaining secrecy, not very complicated ones, are observed. The other aspect of the question, that of delivering the newspaper regularly to all parts of Russia, is much more difficult, more difficult than the similar task under previous forms of revolutionary movement in Russia when newspapers were not, to such an extent, intended for the masses of the people. The purpose of Social-Democratic newspapers, however, facilitates their distribution. The chief places to which the newspaper must be delivered regularly and in large numbers are the industrial centres, factory villages and towns, the factory districts of big cities, etc. In such centres the population is almost entirely working class; in actual fact the worker in such places is master of the situation and has hundreds of ways of outwitting the police; relations with neighbouring factory centres are

distinguished by their extraordinary activity. At the time of the Exceptional Law against the Socialists (1878-90) ² the German political police did not function worse, but probably better, than the Russian police; nevertheless, the German workers, thanks to their organisation and discipline, were able to ensure the regular transport across the frontiers of a weekly illegal newspaper and to deliver it to the houses of all subscribers, so that even the ministers could not refrain from admiring the Social-Democratic post ("the red mail"). We do not, of course, dream of such successes, but we can, if we bend our efforts towards it, ensure that our Party newspaper appears no less than twelve times a year and is regularly delivered in all the main centres of the movement to all groups of workers that can be reached by socialism.

To return to the question of specialisation, we must also point out that its insufficiency is due partially to the dominance of "amateur" work and partially to the fact that our Social-Democratic newspapers usually devote far too little attention to questions of organisation.

Only the establishment of a common Party organ can give the "worker in a given field" of revolutionary activity the consciousness that he is marching with the "rank and file," the consciousness that his work is directly essential to the Party, that he is one of the links in the chain that will form a noose to strangle the most evil enemy of the Russian proletariat and of the whole Russian people—the Russian autocratic government. Only strict adherence to this type of specialisation can economise our forces; not only will every aspect of revolutionary work be carried out by a smaller number of people, but there will be an opportunity to make a number of aspects of present-day activities *legal* affairs. This *legalisation* of activity, its conduct within the framework of the law, has long been advised for Russian socialists by *Vorwärts* (*Forward*),³ the chief organ of the German Social-Democrats. At first sight one is astonished at such advice, but in actual fact it merits careful attention. Almost everyone who has worked in a local study circle in some city will easily remember that among the numerous and diverse affairs in which the circle engaged some were, in themselves, legal (e.g. the gathering

of information on the workers' conditions; the study of legal literature on many questions; consultation and reviewing of certain types of foreign literature; maintenance of certain kinds of relations; aid to workers in obtaining a general education, in studying factory laws, etc.). Making affairs of this sort the specific function of a special contingent of people would reduce the strength of the revolutionary army "in the firing line" (without any reduction of its "fighting potential") and increase the strength of the reserve, those who replace the "killed and wounded." This will be possible only when both the active members and the reserve see their activities reflected in the common organ of the Party and sense their connection with it. Local meetings of workers and local groups will, of course, always be necessary, no matter to what extent we carry out our specialisation; but, on the one hand, the number of mass revolutionary meetings (particularly dangerous from the standpoint of police action and often having results far from commensurate with the danger involved) will become considerably less and, on the other hand, the selection of various aspects of revolutionary work as special functions will provide greater opportunities to screen such meetings behind legal forms of assembly: entertainments, meetings of societies sanctioned by law, etc. Were not the French workers under Napoleon III and the German workers at the time of the Exceptional Law against the Socialists able to devise all possible ways to cover up their political and socialist meetings? Russian workers will be able to do likewise.

Further: only by better organisation and the establishment of a common Party organ will it be possible to extend *and* deepen the very content of Social-Democratic propaganda and agitation. We stand in great need of this. Local work must almost inevitably lead to the exaggeration of local particularities, to * this is impossible without a central organ which will, at the same time, be an advanced democratic organ. Only then will our *urge* to convert Social-Democracy into a leading fighter for democracy become *reality*. Only then, too, shall

* Part of the manuscript is not extant.—Ed.

we be able to work out definite political tactics. Social-Democracy has renounced the fallacious theory of the "one reactionary mass." It regards utilisation of the support of the progressive classes against the reactionary classes to be one of the most important political tasks. As long as the organisations and publications are local in character, this task can hardly be carried out at all: matters do not go farther than relations with individual "liberals" and the extraction of various "services" from them. Only a common Party organ, consistently implementing the principles of political struggle and holding high the banner of democracy will be able to win over to its side all militant democratic elements and use all Russia's progressive forces in the struggle for political freedom. Only then shall we be able to convert the workers' smouldering hatred of the police and the authorities into conscious hatred of the autocratic government and into determination to conduct a desperate struggle for the rights of the working class and of the entire Russian people! In modern Russia, a strictly organised revolutionary party built up on this foundation will prove the greatest political force!

DRAFT OF A DECLARATION OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF *ISKRA* ⁴ AND *ZARYA* ⁵

In undertaking the publication of two Social-Democratic organs—a scientific and political magazine and an all-Russian working-class newspaper—we consider it necessary to say a few words concerning our programme, the objects for which we are striving, and the understanding we have of our tasks.

We are passing through an extremely important period in the history of the Russian working-class movement and Russian Social-Democracy. All evidence goes to show that our movement has reached a critical stage. It has spread so widely and has brought forth so many strong shoots in the most diverse parts of Russia that it is now striving with unrestrained vigour to consolidate itself, assume a higher form, and develop a definite shape and organisation. Indeed, the past few years have been marked by an astonishingly rapid spread of Social-Democratic ideas among our intelligentsia; and meeting this trend in social ideas is the spontaneous, completely independent movement of the industrial proletariat, which is beginning to unite and struggle against its oppressors and is manifesting an eager striving for socialism. Study circles of workers and Social-Democratic intellectuals are springing up everywhere, local agitation leaflets are beginning to appear, the demand for Social-Democratic literature is increasing and is far outstripping the supply, and intensified government persecution is powerless to restrain the movement.

The prisons and places of exile are filled to overflowing. Hardly a month goes by without our hearing of socialists

"caught in dragnets" in all parts of Russia, of the capture of underground couriers, of the arrest of agitators, and the confiscation of literature and printing-presses; but the movement goes on and is growing, it is spreading to ever wider regions, it is penetrating more and more deeply into the working class and is attracting public attention to an ever-increasing degree. The entire economic development of Russia and the history of social thought and of the revolutionary movement in Russia serve as a guarantee that the Social-Democratic working-class movement will grow and surmount all the obstacles that confront it.

The principal feature of our movement, which has become particularly marked in recent times, is its state of disunity and its amateur character, if one may so express it. Local study circles spring up and function in almost complete isolation from circles in other districts and—what is particularly important—from circles that have functioned and now function simultaneously in the same districts. Traditions are not established and continuity is not maintained; local publications fully reflect this disunity and the lack of contact with what Russian Social-Democracy has already achieved. The present period, therefore, seems to us to be critical precisely for the reason that the movement is outgrowing this amateur stage and this disunity, is insistently demanding a transition to a higher, more united, better and more organised form, which we consider it our duty to promote. It goes without saying that at a certain stage of the movement, at its inception, this disunity is entirely inevitable; the absence of continuity is natural in view of the astonishingly rapid and universal growth of the movement after a long period of revolutionary calm. Undoubtedly, too, there will always be diversity in local conditions; there will always be differences in the conditions of the working class in one district as compared with those in another; and, lastly, there will always be the particular aspect in the points of view among the active local workers; this very diversity is evidence of the virility of the movement and of its sound growth. All this is true; yet disunity and lack of organisation are not a necessary consequence of this diversity. The maintenance of continuity and the unity of the movement do not by any means exclude diversity, but,

on the contrary, create for it a much broader arena and a freer field of action. In the present period of the movement, however, disunity is beginning to show a definitely harmful effect and is threatening to divert the movement to a false path: narrow practicalism, detached from the theoretical clarification of the movement as a whole, may destroy the contact between socialism and the revolutionary movement in Russia, on the one hand, and the spontaneous working-class movement, on the other. That this danger is not merely imaginary is proved by such literary productions as the *Credo*—which has already called forth legitimate protest and condemnation—and the *Separate Supplement to "Rabochaya Mysl"* (September 1899). That supplement has brought out most markedly the trend that permeates the whole of *Rabochaya Mysl*; in it a particular trend in Russian Social-Democracy has begun to manifest itself, a trend that may cause real harm and that must be combated. And the Russian legal publications, with their parody of Marxism capable only of corrupting public consciousness, still further intensify the confusion and anarchy which have enabled the celebrated Bernstein (celebrated for his bankruptcy) to publish before the whole world the untruth that the majority of the Social-Democrats active in Russia support him.

It is still premature to judge how deep the cleavage is, and how far the formation of a special trend is probable (at the moment we are not in the least inclined to answer these questions in the affirmative and we have not yet lost hope of our being able to work *together*), but it would be more harmful to close our eyes to the gravity of the situation than to exaggerate the cleavage, and we heartily welcome the resumption of literary activity on the part of the Emancipation of Labour group, and the struggle it has begun against the attempts to distort and vulgarise Social-Democracy.⁶

The following practical conclusion is to be drawn from the foregoing: we Russian Social-Democrats must unite and direct all our efforts towards the formation of a single, strong party, which must struggle under the banner of a revolutionary Social-Democratic programme, which must maintain the continuity of the movement and systematically support its organisation. This conclusion is not

a new one. The Russian Social-Democrats reached it two years ago when the representatives of the largest Social-Democratic organisations in Russia gathered at a congress in the spring of 1898, formed the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, published the *Manifesto* of the Party, and recognised *Rabochaya Gazeta* as the official Party organ. Regarding ourselves as members of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, we agree entirely with the fundamental ideas contained in the *Manifesto* and attach extreme importance to it as the open and public declaration of the aims towards which our Party should strive. Consequently, we, as members of the Party, present the question of our immediate and direct tasks as follows: What plan of activity must we adopt to revive the Party on the firmest possible basis? Some comrades (even some groups and organisations) are of the opinion that in order to achieve this we must resume the practice of electing the central Party body and instruct it to resume the publication of the Party organ. ⁷ We consider such a plan to be a false one or, at all events, a hazardous one. To establish and consolidate the Party means to establish and consolidate unity among all Russian Social-Democrats; such unity cannot be decreed, it cannot be brought about by a decision, say, of a meeting of representatives; it must be worked for. In the first place, it is necessary to develop a common Party literature—common, not only in the sense that it must serve the whole of the Russian movement rather than separate districts, that it must discuss the questions of the movement as a whole and assist the class-conscious proletarians in their struggle instead of dealing merely with local questions, but common also in the sense that it must unite all the available literary forces, that it must express all shades of opinion and views prevailing among Russian Social-Democrats, not as isolated workers, but as comrades united in the ranks of a single organisation by a common programme and a common struggle. Secondly, we must work to achieve an organisation especially for the purpose of establishing and maintaining contact among all the centres of the movement, of supplying complete and timely information about the movement, and of delivering our newspapers and periodicals regularly to all parts of Russia. Only when such an organisation has been founded,

only when a Russian socialist post has been established, will the Party possess a sound foundation, only then will it become a real fact and, therefore, a mighty political force. We intend to devote our efforts to the first half of this task, i.e., to creating a common literature, since we regard this as the pressing demand of the movement today, and a necessary preliminary measure towards the resumption of Party activity.

The character of our task naturally determines the programme for conducting our publications. They must devote considerable space to theoretical questions, i.e., to the general theory of Social-Democracy and its application to Russian conditions. The urgent need to promote a wide discussion of these questions at the present time in particular is beyond all doubt and requires no further explanation after what has been said above. It goes without saying that questions of general theory are inseparably connected with the need to supply information about the history and the present state of the working-class movement in the West. Furthermore, we propose systematically to discuss all political questions—the Social-Democratic Labour Party must respond to all questions that arise in all spheres of our daily life, to all questions of home and foreign politics, and we must see to it that every Social-Democrat and every class-conscious worker has definite views on all important questions. Unless this condition is fulfilled, it will be impossible to carry on wide and systematic propaganda and agitation. The discussion of questions of theory and policy will be connected with the drafting of a Party programme, the necessity for which was recognised at the congress in 1898. In the near future we intend to publish a draft programme; a comprehensive discussion of it should provide sufficient material for the forthcoming congress that will have to adopt a programme. ⁸ A further vital task, in our opinion, is the discussion of questions of organisation and practical methods of conducting our work. The lack of continuity and the disunity, to which reference has been made above, have a particularly harmful effect upon the present state of Party discipline, organisation, and the technique of secrecy. It must be publicly and frankly owned that in this respect we Social-Demo-

crats lag behind the old workers in the Russian revolutionary movement and behind other organisations functioning in Russia, and we must exert all our efforts to come abreast of the tasks. The attraction of large numbers of working-class and intellectual young people to the movement, the increasing failures and the cunningness of governmental persecution make the propaganda of the principles and methods of Party organisation, discipline, and the technique of secrecy an urgent necessity.

Such propaganda, if supported by all the various groups and by all the more experienced comrades, can and must result in the training of young socialists and workers as able leaders of the revolutionary movement, capable of overcoming all obstacles placed in the way of our work by the tyranny of the autocratic police state and capable of serving all the requirements of the working masses, who are spontaneously striving towards socialism and political struggle. Finally, one of the principal tasks arising out of the above-mentioned issues must be the analysis of this spontaneous movement (among the working masses, as well as among our intelligentsia). We must try to understand the social movement of the intelligentsia which marked the late nineties in Russia and combined various, and sometimes conflicting, tendencies. We must carefully study the conditions of the working class in all spheres of economic life, study the forms and conditions of the workers' awakening, and of the struggles now setting in, in order that we may unite the Russian working-class movement and Marxist socialism, which has already begun to take root in Russian soil, into one integral whole, in order that we may combine the Russian revolutionary movement with the spontaneous upsurge of the masses of the people. Only when this contact has been established can a Social-Democratic working-class party be formed in Russia; for Social-Democracy does not exist merely to serve the spontaneous working-class movement (as some of our present-day "practical workers" are sometimes inclined to think), but to combine socialism with the working-class movement. And it is only this combination that will enable the Russian proletariat to fulfil its immediate political task—to liberate Russia from the tyranny of the autocracy.

The distribution of these themes and questions between the magazine and the newspaper will be determined exclusively by differences in the size and character of the two publications—the magazine should serve mainly for propaganda, the newspaper mainly for agitation. But all aspects of the movement should be reflected in both the magazine and the newspaper, and we wish particularly to emphasise our opposition to the view that a workers' newspaper should devote its pages exclusively to matters that immediately and directly concern the spontaneous working-class movement, and leave everything pertaining to the theory of socialism, science, politics, questions of Party organisation, etc., to a periodical for the intelligentsia. On the contrary, it is necessary to combine all the concrete facts and manifestations of the working-class movement with the indicated questions; the light of theory must be cast upon every separate fact; propaganda on questions of politics and Party organisation must be carried on among the broad masses of the working class; and these questions must be dealt with in the work of agitation. The type of agitation which has hitherto prevailed almost without exception—agitation by means of locally published leaflets—is now inadequate; it is narrow, it deals only with local and mainly economic questions. We must try to create a higher form of agitation by means of the newspaper, which must contain a regular record of workers' grievances, workers' strikes, and other forms of proletarian struggle, as well as all manifestations of political tyranny in the whole of Russia; which must draw definite conclusions from each of these manifestations in accordance with the ultimate aim of socialism and the political tasks of the Russian proletariat. "Extend the bounds and broaden the content of our propagandist, agitational, and organisational activity"—this statement by P. B. Axelrod must serve as a slogan defining the activities of Russian Social-Democrats in the immediate future, and we adopt this slogan in the programme of our publications.

Here the question naturally arises: if the proposed publications are to serve the purpose of uniting all Russian Social-Democrats and mustering them into a single party, they must reflect all shades of opinion, all local specific features, and all the various practical methods. How can

we combine the varying points of view with the maintenance of a uniform editorial policy for these publications? Should these publications be merely a jumble of various views, or should they have an independent and quite definite tendency?

We hold to the second view and hope that an organ having a definite tendency will prove quite suitable (as we shall show below), both for the purpose of expressing various viewpoints, and for comradely polemics between contributors. Our views are in complete accord with the fundamental ideas of Marxism (as expressed in the *Communist Manifesto*, and in the programmes of Social-Democrats in Western Europe); we stand for the consistent development of these ideas in the spirit of Marx and Engels and emphatically reject the equivocating and opportunist corrections à la Bernstein which have now become so fashionable. As we see it, the task of Social-Democracy is to organise the class struggle of the proletariat, to promote that struggle, to point out its essential ultimate aim, and to analyse the conditions that determine the methods by which this struggle should be conducted. "The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves."⁹ But while we do not separate Social-Democracy from the working-class movement, we must not forget that the task of the former is to represent the interests of this movement in all countries as a whole, that it must not blindly worship any particular phase of the movement at any particular time or place. We think that it is the duty of Social-Democracy to support every revolutionary movement against the existing political and social system, and we regard its aim to be the conquest of political power by the working class, the expropriation of the expropriators, and the establishment of a socialist society. We strongly repudiate every attempt to weaken or tone down the revolutionary character of Social-Democracy, which is the party of social revolution, ruthlessly hostile to all classes standing for the present social system. We believe the historical task of Russian Social-Democracy is, in particular, to overthrow the autocracy; Russian Social-Democracy is destined to become the vanguard fighter in the ranks of Russian democracy; it is destined to achieve the aim which the whole social development

of Russia sets before it and which it has inherited from the glorious fighters in the Russian revolutionary movement. Only by inseparably connecting the economic and political struggles, only by spreading political propaganda and agitation among wider and wider strata of the working class, can Social-Democracy fulfil its mission.

From this point of view (outlined here only in its general features, since it has been dealt with in greater detail and more thoroughly substantiated on many occasions by the Emancipation of Labour group, in the *Manifesto* of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and in the "commentary" to the latter—the pamphlet, *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*—and in *The Working-Class Cause in Russia* [a basis of the programme of Russian Social-Democracy]), we shall deal with all theoretical and practical questions; and we shall try to connect all manifestations of the working-class movement and of democratic protest in Russia with these ideas.

Although we carry out our literary work from the standpoint of a definite tendency, we do not in the least intend to present all our views on partial questions as those of all Russian Social-Democrats; we do not deny that differences exist, nor shall we attempt to conceal or obliterate them. On the contrary, we desire our publications to become organs for the *discussion* of all questions by all Russian Social-Democrats of the most diverse shades of opinion. We do not reject polemics between comrades, but, on the contrary, are prepared to give them considerable space in our columns. Open polemics, conducted in full view of all Russian Social-Democrats and class-conscious workers, are necessary and desirable in order to clarify the depth of existing differences, in order to afford discussion of disputed questions from all angles, in order to combat the extremes into which representatives of various views, various localities, or various "specialities" of the revolutionary movement inevitably fall. Indeed, we regard one of the drawbacks of the present-day movement to be the absence of open polemics between avowedly differing views, the effort to conceal differences on fundamental questions.

Moreover, while recognising the Russian working class and Russian Social-Democracy as the vanguard in the struggle for democracy and for political liberty, we think it necessary to strive to make our publications *general-democratic* organs, not in the sense that we would for a single moment agree to forget the class antagonism between the proletariat and other classes, nor in the sense that we would consent to the slightest toning-down of the class struggle, but in the sense that we would bring forward and discuss *all* democratic questions, not confining ourselves merely to narrowly proletarian questions; in the sense that we would bring forward and discuss all instances and manifestations of political oppression, show the connection between the working-class movement and the political struggle in all its forms, attract all honest fighters against the autocracy, regardless of their views or the class they belong to, and induce them to support the working class as the only revolutionary force irrevocably hostile to absolutism. Consequently, although we appeal primarily to the Russian socialists and class-conscious workers, we do not appeal to them alone. We also call upon all who are oppressed by the present political system in Russia, on all who strive for the emancipation of the Russian people from their political slavery to support the publications which will be devoted to organising the working-class movement into a revolutionary political party; we place the columns of our publications at their disposal in order that they may expose all the abominations and crimes of the Russian autocracy. We make this appeal in the conviction that the banner of the political struggle raised by Russian Social-Democracy can and will become the banner of the whole people.

The tasks we set ourselves are extremely broad and all-embracing, and we would not have dared to take them up, were we not absolutely convinced from the whole of our past experience that these are the most urgent tasks of the whole movement, were we not assured of the sympathy and of promises of generous and constant support on the part of: 1. several organisations of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and of separate groups of Russian Social-Democrats working in various towns; 2. the Emancipation of Labour group, which founded Russian Social-Democracy

and has always been in the lead of its theoreticians and literary representatives; 3. a number of persons who are unaffiliated with any organisation, but who sympathise with the Social-Democratic working-class movement, and have proved of no little service to it. We will exert every effort to carry out properly the part of the general revolutionary work which we have selected, and will do our best to bring every Russian comrade to regard our publications as his own, to which *all* groups would communicate every kind of information concerning the movement, in which they would express their views, indicate their needs for political literature, relate their experiences, and voice their opinions concerning Social-Democratic editions; in a word, the medium through which they would thereby share whatever contribution they make to the movement and whatever they draw from it. Only in this way will it be possible to establish a genuinely all-Russian Social-Democratic organ. Russian Social-Democracy is already finding itself constricted in the underground conditions in which the various groups and isolated study circles carry on their work. It is time to come out on the road of open advocacy of socialism, on the road of open political struggle. The establishment of an all-Russian organ of Social-Democracy must be *the first step on this road.*

Written in the spring of 1900

First published in 1925
in *Lenin Miscellany IV*

Published according to
a manuscript copied
by an unknown hand

DECLARATION OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF *ISKRA*¹⁰

IN THE NAME OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD

In undertaking the publication of a political newspaper, *Iskra*, we consider it necessary to say a few words concerning the objects for which we are striving and the understanding we have of our tasks.

We are passing through an extremely important period in the history of the Russian working-class movement and Russian Social-Democracy. The past few years have been marked by an astonishingly rapid spread of Social-Democratic ideas among our intelligentsia, and meeting this trend in social ideas is an independent movement of the industrial proletariat, which is beginning to unite and struggle against its oppressors, and to strive eagerly towards socialism. Study circles of workers and Social-Democratic intellectuals are springing up everywhere, local agitation leaflets are being widely distributed, the demand for Social-Democratic literature is increasing and is far outstripping the supply, and intensified government persecution is powerless to restrain the movement. The prisons and places of exile are filled to overflowing. Hardly a month goes by without our hearing of socialists "caught in dragnets" in all parts of Russia, of the capture of underground couriers, of the confiscation of literature and printing-presses. But the movement is growing, it is spreading to ever wider regions, it is penetrating more and more deeply into the working class and is attracting public attention to an ever-increasing degree. The entire economic development of Russia and the history of social thought and of the revolutionary movement in Russia serve

as a guarantee that the Social-Democratic working-class movement will grow and will, in the end, surmount all the obstacles that confront it.

On the other hand, the principal feature of our movement, which has become particularly marked in recent times, is its state of disunity and its amateur character, if one may so express it. Local study circles spring up and function independently of one another and—what is particularly important—of circles that have functioned and still function in the same districts. Traditions are not established and continuity is not maintained; local publications fully reflect this disunity and the lack of contact with what Russian Social-Democracy has already achieved.

Such a state of disunity is not in keeping with the demands posed by the movement in its present strength and breadth, and creates, in our opinion, a critical moment in its development. The need for consolidation and for a definite form and organisation is felt with irresistible force in the movement itself; yet among Social-Democrats active in the practical field this need for a transition to a higher form of the movement is not everywhere realised. On the contrary, among wide circles an ideological wavering is to be seen; an infatuation with the fashionable "criticism of Marxism" and with "Bernsteinism," the spread of the views of the so-called "economist" trend, and what is inseparably connected with it—an effort to keep the movement at its lower level, to push into the background the task of forming a revolutionary party that heads the struggle of the entire people. *It is a fact* that such an ideological wavering is to be observed among Russian Social-Democrats; that narrow practicalism, detached from the theoretical clarification of the movement as a whole, threatens to divert the movement to a false path. No one who has direct knowledge of the state of affairs in the majority of our organisations has any doubt whatever on that score. Moreover, literary productions exist which confirm this. It is sufficient to mention the *Credo*, which has already called forth legitimate protest; the *Separate Supplement to "Rabochaya Mysl"* (September 1899), which brought out so markedly the trend that permeates the *whole* of *Rabochaya Mysl*; and, finally, the manifesto of the St. Petersburg Self-Emancipation of

the Working Class group,¹¹ also drawn up in the spirit of "economism."¹² And *completely untrue* are the assertions of *Rabocheye Dyelo* to the effect that the *Credo* merely represents the opinions of individuals, that the trend represented by *Rabochaya Mysl* expresses merely the confusion of mind and the tactlessness of its editors, and not a special tendency in the progress of the Russian working-class movement.

Simultaneously with this, the works of authors whom the reading public has hitherto, with more or less reason, regarded as prominent representatives of "legal" Marxism are increasingly revealing a change of views in a direction approximating that of bourgeois apologetics. As a result of all this, we have the confusion and anarchy which has enabled the ex-Marxist, or, more precisely, the ex-socialist, Bernstein, in recounting his successes, to declare, unchallenged, in the press that the majority of Social-Democrats active in Russia are his followers.

We do not desire to exaggerate the gravity of the situation, but it would be immeasurably more harmful to close our eyes to it. For this reason we heartily welcome the decision of the Emancipation of Labour group to resume its literary activity and begin a systematic struggle against the attempts to distort and vulgarise Social-Democracy.

The following practical conclusion is to be drawn from the foregoing: we Russian Social-Democrats must unite and direct all our efforts towards the formation of a strong party which must struggle under the single banner of revolutionary Social-Democracy. This is precisely the task laid down by the congress in 1898 at which the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was formed, and which published its *Manifesto*.

We regard ourselves as members of this Party; we agree entirely with the fundamental ideas contained in the *Manifesto* and attach extreme importance to it as a public declaration of its aims. Consequently, we, as members of the Party, present the question of our immediate and direct tasks as follows: What plan of activity must we adopt to revive the Party on the firmest possible basis?

The reply usually made to this question is that it is necessary to elect anew a central Party body and instruct it to

resume the publication of the Party organ. But, in the period of confusion through which we are now passing, such a simple method is hardly expedient.

To establish and consolidate the Party means to establish and consolidate unity among all Russian Social-Democrats, and, for the reasons indicated above, such unity cannot be decreed, it cannot be brought about by a decision, say, of a meeting of representatives; it must be worked for. In the first place, it is necessary to work for solid ideological unity which should eliminate discordance and confusion that—let us be frank!—reign among Russian Social-Democrats at the present time. This ideological unity must be consolidated by a Party programme. Secondly, we must work to achieve an organisation especially for the purpose of establishing and maintaining contact among all the centres of the movement, of supplying complete and timely information about the movement, and of delivering our newspapers and periodicals regularly to all parts of Russia. Only when such an organisation has been founded, only when a Russian socialist post has been established, will the Party possess a sound foundation and become a real fact, and, therefore, a mighty political force. We intend to devote our efforts to the first half of this task, i.e., to creating a common literature, consistent in principle and capable of ideologically uniting revolutionary Social-Democracy, since we regard this as the pressing demand of the movement today and a necessary preliminary measure towards the resumption of Party activity.

As we have said, the ideological unity of Russian Social-Democrats has still to be created, and to this end it is, in our opinion, necessary to have an open and all-embracing discussion of the fundamental questions of principle and tactics raised by the present-day "economists," Bernsteinians, and "critics." Before we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation. Otherwise, our unity will be purely fictitious, it will conceal the prevailing confusion and hinder its radical elimination. It is understandable, therefore, that we do not intend to make our publication a mere storehouse of various views. On the contrary, we shall conduct it in the spirit of a strictly defined tendency. This tendency can

be expressed by the word Marxism, and there is hardly need to add that we stand for the consistent development of the ideas of Marx and Engels and emphatically reject the equivocating, vague, and opportunist "corrections" for which Eduard Bernstein, P. Struve, and many others have set the fashion. But although we shall discuss all questions from our own definite point of view, we shall give space in our columns to polemics between comrades. Open polemics, conducted in full view of all Russian Social-Democrats and class-conscious workers, are necessary and desirable in order to clarify the depth of existing differences, in order to afford discussion of disputed questions from all angles, in order to combat the extremes into which representatives, not only of various views, but even of various localities, or various "specialities" of the revolutionary movement, inevitably fall. Indeed, as noted above, we regard one of the drawbacks of the present-day movement to be the absence of open polemics between avowedly differing views, the effort to conceal differences on fundamental questions.

We shall not enumerate in detail all questions and points of subject-matter included in the programme of our publication, for this programme derives automatically from the general conception of what a political newspaper, published under present conditions, should be.

We will exert our efforts to bring every Russian comrade to regard our publication as his own, to which all groups would communicate every kind of information concerning the movement, in which they would relate their experiences, express their views, indicate their needs for political literature, and voice their opinions concerning Social-Democratic editions; in a word, they would thereby share whatever contribution they make to the movement and whatever they draw from it. Only in this way will it be possible to establish a genuinely all-Russian Social-Democratic organ. Only such a publication will be capable of leading the movement on to the high road of political struggle. "Extend the bounds and broaden the content of our propagandist, agitational, and organisational activity"—these words of P. B. Axelrod must serve as a slogan defining the activities of Russian Social-Democrats in the immediate future, and we adopt this slogan in the programme of our publication.

We appeal not only to socialists and class-conscious workers, we also call upon all who are oppressed by the present political system; we place the columns of our publications at their disposal in order that they may expose all the abominations of the Russian autocracy.

Those who regard Social-Democracy as an organisation serving exclusively the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat may be content with merely local agitation and working-class literature "pure and simple." We do not understand Social-Democracy in this way; we regard it as a revolutionary party, inseparably connected with the working-class movement and directed against absolutism. Only when organised in such a party will the proletariat—the most revolutionary class in Russia today—be in a position to fulfil the historical task that confronts it—to unite under its banner all the democratic elements in the country and to crown the tenacious struggle in which so many generations have fallen with the final triumph over the hated regime.

* * *

The size of the newspaper will range from one to two printed signatures.

In view of the conditions under which the Russian underground press has to work, there will be no regular date of publication.

We have been promised contributions by a number of prominent representatives of international Social-Democracy, the close co-operation of the Emancipation of Labour group (G. V. Plekhanov, P. B. Axelrod, and V. I. Zaslulich), and the support of several organisations of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, as well as of separate groups of Russian Social-Democrats.

Written in September 1900

Published in 1900 by *Iskra*
as a separate leaflet

Published according to
the text of the leaflet, 1900

WHERE TO BEGIN¹³

In recent years the question of "what is to be done" has confronted Russian Social-Democrats with particular insistence. It is not a question of what path we must choose (as was the case in the late eighties and early nineties), but of what practical steps we must take upon the known path and how they shall be taken. It is a question of a system and plan of practical work. And it must be admitted that we have not yet solved this question of the character and the methods of struggle, fundamental for a party of practical activity, that it still gives rise to serious differences of opinion which reveal a deplorable ideological instability and vacillation. On the one hand, the "Economist" trend, far from being dead, is endeavouring to clip and narrow the work of political organisation and agitation. On the other, unprincipled eclecticism is again rearing its head, aping every new "trend", and is incapable of distinguishing immediate demands from the main tasks and permanent needs of the movement as a whole. This trend, as we know, has ensconced itself in *Rabocheye Dyelo*. This journal's latest statement of "programme", a bombastic article under the bombastic title "A Historic Turn" (*Listok Rabochevo Dyela*, No. 6¹⁴), bears out with special emphasis the characterisation we have given. Only yesterday there was a flirtation with "Economism", a fury over the resolute condemnation of *Rabochaya Mysl*,¹⁵ and Plekhanov's presentation of the question of the struggle against autocracy was being toned down. But today Liebknecht's words are being quoted: "If the circumstances change within twenty-four hours, then tactics must be changed within twenty-four hours." There is talk of a "strong fighting organisation" for direct attack, for storming the autocracy; of "broad revolutionary political agitation among the masses" (how energetic we are now—both revolutionary and

political!); of "ceaseless calls for street protests"; of "street demonstrations of a pronounced [*sic!*] political character"; and so on, and so forth.

We might perhaps declare ourselves happy at *Rabocheye Dyelo's* quick grasp of the programme we put forward in the first issue of *Iskra*,¹⁶ calling for the formation of a strong well-organised party, whose aim is not only to win isolated concessions but to storm the fortress of the autocracy itself; but the lack of any set point of view in these individuals can only dampen our happiness.

Rabocheye Dyelo, of course, mentions Liebknecht's name in vain. The tactics of agitation in relation to some special question, or the tactics with regard to some detail of party organisation may be changed in twenty-four hours; but only people devoid of all principle are capable of changing, in twenty-four hours, or, for that matter, in twenty-four months, their view on the necessity—in general, constantly, and absolutely—of an organisation of struggle and of political agitation among the masses. It is ridiculous to plead different circumstances and a change of periods: the building of a fighting organisation and the conduct of political agitation are essential under any "drab, peaceful" circumstances, in any period, no matter how marked by a "declining revolutionary spirit"; moreover, it is precisely in such periods and under such circumstances that work of this kind is particularly necessary, since it is too late to form the organisation in times of explosion and outbursts; the party must be in a state of readiness to launch activity at a moment's notice. "Change the tactics within twenty-four hours"! But in order to change tactics it is first necessary to have tactics; without a strong organisation skilled in waging political struggle under all circumstances and at all times, there can be no question of that systematic plan of action, illumined by firm principles and steadfastly carried out, which alone is worthy of the name of tactics. Let us, indeed, consider the matter; we are now being told that the "historic moment" has presented our Party with a "completely new" question—the question of terror. Yesterday the "completely new" question was political organisation and agitation; today it is terror. Is it not strange to hear people who have so grossly forgotten their principles holding forth on a radical change in tactics?

Fortunately, *Rabocheye Dyelo* is in error. The question of terror is not a new question at all; it will suffice to recall briefly the established views of Russian Social-Democracy on the subject.

In principle we have never rejected, and cannot reject, terror. Terror is one of the forms of military action that may be perfectly suitable and even essential at a definite juncture in the battle, given a definite state of the troops and the existence of definite conditions. But the important point is that terror, at the present time, is by no means suggested as an operation for the army in the field, an operation closely connected with and integrated into the entire system of struggle, but as an independent form of occasional attack unrelated to any army. Without a central body and with the weakness of local revolutionary organisations, this, in fact, is all that terror can be. We, therefore, declare emphatically that under the present conditions such a means of struggle is inopportune and unsuitable; that it diverts the most active fighters from their real task, the task which is most important from the standpoint of the interests of the movement as a whole; and that it disorganises the forces, not of the government, but of the revolution. We need but recall the recent events. With our own eyes we saw that the mass of workers and "common people" of the towns pressed forward in struggle, while the revolutionaries lacked a staff of leaders and organisers. Under such conditions, is there not the danger that, as the most energetic revolutionaries go over to terror, the fighting contingents, in whom alone it is possible to place serious reliance, will be weakened? Is there not the danger of rupturing the contact between the revolutionary organisations and the disunited masses of the discontented, the protesting, and the disposed to struggle, who are weak precisely because they are disunited? Yet it is this contact that is the sole guarantee of our success. Far be it from us to deny the significance of heroic individual blows, but it is our duty to sound a vigorous warning against becoming infatuated with terror, against taking it to be the chief and basic means of struggle, as so many people strongly incline to do at present. Terror can never be a regular military operation; at best it can only serve as one of the methods employed in a decisive assault. But can we *issue the call* for such

a decisive assault at the present moment? *Rabocheye Dyelo* apparently thinks we can. At any rate, it exclaims: "Form assault columns!" But this, again, is more zeal than reason. The main body of our military forces consists of volunteers and insurgents. We possess only a few small units of regular troops, and these are not even mobilised; they are not connected with one another, nor have they been trained to form columns of any sort, let alone assault columns. In view of all this, it must be clear to anyone who is capable of appreciating the general conditions of our struggle and who is mindful of them at every "turn" in the historical course of events that at the present moment our slogan cannot be "To the assault", but has to be, "Lay siege to the enemy fortress". In other words, the immediate task of our Party is not to summon all available forces for the attack right now, but to call for the formation of a revolutionary organisation capable of uniting all forces and guiding the movement in actual practice and not in name alone, that is, an organisation ready at any time to support every protest and every outbreak and use it to build up and consolidate the fighting forces suitable for the decisive struggle.

The lesson of the February and March events¹⁷ has been so impressive that no disagreement in principle with this conclusion is now likely to be encountered. What we need at the present moment, however, is not a solution of the problem in principle but a practical solution. We should not only be clear on the nature of the organisation that is needed and its precise purpose, but we must elaborate a definite *plan* for an organisation, so that its formation may be undertaken from all aspects. In view of the pressing importance of the question, we, on our part, take the liberty of submitting to the comrades a skeleton plan to be developed in greater detail in a pamphlet now in preparation for print.¹⁸

In our opinion, the starting-point of our activities, the first step towards creating the desired organisation, or, let us say, the main thread which, if followed, would enable us steadily to develop, deepen, and extend that organisation, should be the founding of an All-Russian political newspaper. A newspaper is what we most of all need; without it we cannot conduct that systematic, all-round propaganda and agitation, consistent in principle, which is the chief

and permanent task of Social-Democracy in general and, in particular, the pressing task of the moment, when interest in politics and in questions of socialism has been aroused among the broadest strata of the population. Never has the need been felt so acutely as today for reinforcing dispersed agitation in the form of individual action, local leaflets, pamphlets, etc., by means of generalised and systematic agitation that can only be conducted with the aid of the periodical press. It may be said without exaggeration that the frequency and regularity with which a newspaper is printed (and distributed) can serve as a precise criterion of how well this cardinal and most essential sector of our militant activities is built up. Furthermore, our newspaper must be All-Russian. If we fail, and as long as we fail, to combine our efforts to influence the people and the government by means of the printed word, it will be utopian to think of combining other means, more complex, more difficult, but also more decisive, for exerting influence. Our movement suffers in the first place, ideologically, as well as in practical and organisational respects, from its state of fragmentation, from the almost complete immersion of the overwhelming majority of Social-Democrats in local work, which narrows their outlook, the scope of their activities, and their skill in the maintenance of secrecy and their preparedness. It is precisely in this state of fragmentation that one must look for the deepest roots of the instability and the waverings noted above. The *first* step towards eliminating this shortcoming, towards transforming divers local movements into a single, All-Russian movement, must be the founding of an All-Russian newspaper. Lastly, what we need is definitely a *political* newspaper. Without a political organ, a political movement deserving that name is inconceivable in the Europe of today. Without such a newspaper we cannot possibly fulfil our task—that of concentrating all the elements of political discontent and protest, of vitalising thereby the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. We have taken the *first* step, we have aroused in the working class a passion for “economic”, factory exposures; we must now take the next step, that of arousing in every section of the population that is at all politically conscious a passion for *political* exposure. We must not be discouraged by the fact that the voice of

political exposure is today so feeble, timid, and infrequent. This is not because of a wholesale submission to police despotism, but because those who are able and ready to make exposures have no tribune from which to speak, no eager and encouraging audience, they do not see anywhere among the people that force to which it would be worth while directing their complaint against the “omnipotent” Russian Government. But today all this is rapidly changing. There is such a force—it is the revolutionary proletariat, which has demonstrated its readiness, not only to listen to and support the summons to political struggle, but boldly to engage in battle. We are now in a position to provide a tribune for the nationwide exposure of the tsarist government, and it is our duty to do this. That tribune must be a Social-Democratic newspaper. The Russian working class, as distinct from the other classes and strata of Russian society, displays a constant interest in political knowledge and manifests a constant and extensive demand (not only in periods of intensive unrest) for illegal literature. When such a mass demand is evident, when the training of experienced revolutionary leaders has already begun, and when the concentration of the working class makes it virtual master in the working-class districts of the big cities and in the factory settlements and communities, it is quite feasible for the proletariat to found a political newspaper. Through the proletariat the newspaper will reach the urban petty bourgeoisie, the rural handicraftsmen, and the peasants, thereby becoming a real people’s political newspaper.

The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour. With the aid of the newspaper, and through it, a permanent organisation will naturally take shape that will engage, not only in local activities, but in regular general work, and will train its members to fol-

low political events carefully, appraise their significance and their effect on the various strata of the population, and develop effective means for the revolutionary party to influence those events. The mere technical task of regularly supplying the newspaper with copy and of promoting regular distribution will necessitate a network of local agents of the united party, who will maintain constant contact with one another, know the general state of affairs, get accustomed to performing regularly their detailed functions in the All-Russian work, and test their strength in the organisation of various revolutionary actions. This network of agents* will form the skeleton of precisely the kind of organisation we need—one that is sufficiently large to embrace the whole country; sufficiently broad and many-sided to effect a strict and detailed division of labour; sufficiently well tempered to be able to conduct steadily *its own* work under any circumstances, at all "sudden turns", and in face of all contingencies; sufficiently flexible to be able, on the one hand, to avoid an open battle against an overwhelming enemy, when the enemy has concentrated all his forces at one spot, and yet, on the other, to take advantage of his unwieldiness and to attack him when and where he least expects it. Today we are faced with the relatively easy task of supporting student demonstrations in the streets of big cities; tomorrow we may, perhaps, have the more difficult task of supporting, for example, the unemployed movement in some particular area, and the day after may have to be at our posts to play a revolutionary part in a peasant uprising. Today we must take advantage of the tense political situation arising out of the government's campaign against the Zemstvo; tomorrow we may have to support popular indignation against some tsarist bashi-bazouk on the rampage and help, by means of boycott, indictment demonstrations, etc., to make things so hot for him as to

* It will be understood, of course, that these agents could work successfully only in the closest contact with the local committees (groups, study circles) of our Party. In general, the entire plan we project can, of course, be implemented only with the most active support of the committees which have on repeated occasions attempted to unite the Party and which, we are sure, will achieve this unification—if not today, then tomorrow, if not in one way, then in another

force him into open retreat. Such a degree of combat readiness can be developed only through the constant activity of regular troops. If we join forces to produce a common newspaper, this work will train and bring into the foreground, not only the most skilful propagandists, but the most capable organisers, the most talented political party leaders capable, at the right moment, of releasing the slogan for the decisive struggle and of taking the lead in that struggle.

In conclusion, a few words to avoid possible misunderstanding. We have spoken continuously of systematic, planned preparation, yet it is by no means our intention to imply that the autocracy can be overthrown only by a regular siege or by organised assault. Such a view would be absurd and doctrinaire. On the contrary, it is quite possible, and historically much more probable, that the autocracy will collapse under the impact of one of the spontaneous outbursts or unforeseen political complications which constantly threaten it from all sides. But no political party that wishes to avoid adventurous gambles can base its activities on the anticipation of such outbursts and complications. We must go our own way, and we must steadfastly carry on our regular work, and the less our reliance on the unexpected, the less the chance of our being caught unawares by any "historic turns".

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?¹⁹

Burning Questions of Our Movement

(Excerpts)²⁰

III

TRADE-UNIONIST POLITICS AND SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

We shall start off again by praising the *Rabocheye Dyelo*. "Exposure Literature and the Proletarian Struggle" is the title Martynov gave his article in No. 10 of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, on his differences with the *Iskra*. He formulated the substance of these differences as follows: "We cannot confine ourselves entirely to exposing the system that stands in its" (the working-class party's) "path of development. We must also react to the immediate and current interests of the proletariat." (P. 63.) ". . . the *Iskra* . . . is in fact an organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs. . . . We, however, work and shall continue to work for the cause of the working class in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle." (P. 63.) One cannot help being grateful to Martynov for this formula. It is of outstanding general interest because substantially it embraces not only our disagreements with the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, but the general disagreement between ourselves and the "Economists" concerning the political struggle. We have already shown that the "Economists" do not altogether repudiate "politics," but that they are constantly straying from the

Social-Democratic to the trade-unionist conception of politics. Martynov strays in exactly the same way, and we agree, therefore, to take his views as a *model* of Economist error on this question. As we shall endeavour to prove, neither the authors of the Special Supplement to the *Rabochaya Mysl*, nor the authors of the manifesto issued by the Self-Emancipation Group, nor the authors of the Economist letter published in the *Iskra*, No. 12, will have any right to complain against this choice.

A. POLITICAL AGITATION AND ITS RESTRICTION BY THE ECONOMISTS

Everyone knows that the extensive spread and consolidation of the economic* struggle of the Russian workers proceeded simultaneously with the creation of a "literature" exposing economic conditions, i.e., factory and industrial conditions. These "leaflets" were devoted mainly to the exposure of factory conditions, and very soon a veritable passion for exposures was roused among the workers. As soon as the workers realized that the Social-Democratic circles desired to and could supply them with a new kind of leaflet that told the whole truth about their life of poverty, about their excessive toil and their lack of rights, correspondence began to pour in from the factories and workshops. This "exposure literature" created a huge sensation not only in the particular factory, the conditions of which were exposed in the given leaflet, but in all the factories to which news spread about

* To avoid misunderstanding we must point out that here and throughout this pamphlet, by economic struggle we imply (in accordance with the meaning of the term as accepted among us) the "practical economic struggle" which Engels, in the passage quoted above, described as "resistance to the capitalists," and which in free countries is known as the professional, syndical or trade union struggle.

the facts exposed. And as the poverty and want among the workers in the various enterprises and in the various trades are much the same, the "truth about the life of the workers" stirred *all*. Even among the most backward workers, a veritable passion arose to "go into print" — a noble passion for this rudimentary form of war against the whole of the contemporary social system which is based upon robbery and oppression. And in the overwhelming majority of cases these "leaflets" were in truth a declaration of war, because the exposures served greatly to agitate the workers; they evoked among them the common demands for the removal of the most glaring evils and roused in them a readiness to support these demands with strikes. Finally, the employers themselves were compelled to recognize the significance of these leaflets as a declaration of war, so much so that in a large number of cases they did not even wait for the outbreak of hostilities. As is always the case, the mere publication of these exposures made them effective, and they acquired the significance of a strong moral influence. On more than one occasion, the mere appearance of a leaflet proved sufficient to secure the satisfaction of all or part of the demands put forward. In a word, economic (factory) exposures were and remain an important lever in the economic struggle. And they will continue to retain this significance as long as capitalism exists, which creates the need for the workers to defend themselves. Even in the most advanced countries of Europe we can still witness how the exposure of evils in some backward trade, or in some forgotten branch of domestic industry, serves as a starting point for the awakening of class consciousness, for the beginning of a trade union struggle, and for the spread of Socialism.*

The overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats

*In the present chapter, we deal only with the *political* struggle, in its broader or narrower meaning. Therefore, we note only in passing,

have of late been almost entirely absorbed by this work of organizing the exposure of factory conditions. It is sufficient to recall the *Rabochaya Mysl* to see to what extent they were taken up by it. So much so, indeed, that they lost sight of the fact that this, *taken by itself*, is in essence still not Social-Democratic work, but merely trade union work. As a matter of fact, these exposures merely dealt with the relations between the workers *in a given trade* and their employers, and all that they achieved was that the sellers of labour power learned to sell their "commodity" on better terms and to fight the purchasers over a purely commercial deal. These exposures could have served (if properly utilized by an organization of revolutionaries) as a beginning and a constituent part of Social-Democratic activity, but they could also have led (and, given a worshipful attitude towards spontaneity, were bound to lead) to a "pure" trade union struggle and to a non-Social-Democratic working-class movement. Social-Democracy leads the struggle of the working class not only for better terms for the sale of labour power, but also for the abolition of the social system which compels the propertyless to sell themselves to the rich. Social-Democracy represents the working class not in the latter's relation to only a given group of employers, but in its rela-

merely as a curiosity, the *Rabocheye Dyelo's* charge that the *Iskra* is "too restrained" in regard to the economic struggle. (*Two Congresses*, p. 27, rehashed by Martynov in his pamphlet *Social-Democracy and the Working Class*.) If those who make this accusation counted up in terms of hundred-weights or reams (as they are so fond of doing) what has been said about the economic struggle in the industrial column of the *Iskra* in one year, and compared this with the industrial columns of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* and the *Rabochaya Mysl* taken together, they would easily see that they lag behind even in this respect. Apparently, the consciousness of this simple truth compels them to resort to arguments which clearly reveal their confusion. "The *Iskra*," they write, "willy-nilly (!) is compelled (!) to reckon with the imperative demands of life and to publish at least (!) correspondence about the working-class movement." (*Two Congresses*, p. 27.) Now this is really a crushing argument!

tion to all classes of modern society, to the state as an organized political force. Hence, it follows that Social-Democrats not only must not confine themselves entirely to the economic struggle; they must not even allow the organization of economic exposures to become the predominant part of their activities. We must actively take up the political education of the working class and the development of its political consciousness. Now that the *Zarya* and the *Iskra* have made the first attack upon Economism, "all are agreed" on this (although some agree only in words, as we shall soon see).

The question arises: what should political education consist of? Can it be confined to the propaganda of working-class hostility to the autocracy? Of course not. It is not enough to *explain* to the workers that they are politically oppressed (no more than it was to *explain* to them that their interests were antagonistic to the interests of the employers). Agitation must be conducted over every concrete example of this oppression (in the same way that we have begun to conduct agitation around concrete examples of economic oppression). And inasmuch as *this* oppression affects the most diverse classes of society, inasmuch as it manifests itself in the most varied spheres of life and activity, industrial, civic, personal, family, religious, scientific, etc., etc., is it not evident that *we shall not be fulfilling our task* of developing the political consciousness of the workers if we do not *undertake* the organization of the *political exposure* of the autocracy *in all its aspects*? In order to carry on agitation around concrete examples of oppression, these examples must be exposed (just as it was necessary to expose factory abuses in order to carry on economic agitation).

One would think that this was clear enough. It turns out, however, that it is only in words that "all" are agreed on the need to develop political consciousness, *in all its aspects*. It turns out that the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, for example,

far from tackling the task of organizing (or making a start in organizing) comprehensive political exposure, is even trying to *drag* the *Iskra*, which has undertaken this task, *away from it*. Listen to this: "The political struggle of the working class is merely" (it is precisely not "merely") "the most developed, widest and most effective form of economic struggle." (Program of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, published in No. 1, p. 3.) "The Social-Democrats are now confronted with the task of, as far as possible, lending the economic struggle itself a political character." (Martynov, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 42.) "The economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle." (Resolution passed by the Congress of the Union and "amendments" thereto, *Two Congresses*, pp. 11 and 17.) As the reader will observe, all these postulates permeate the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, from its very first number to the latest "Instructions to the Editors," and all of them evidently express a single view regarding political agitation and struggle. Examine this view from the standpoint of the opinion prevailing among all Economists, that political agitation must *follow* economic agitation. Is it true that, in general,* the economic struggle "is the most widely applicable means" of drawing the masses into the political struggle? It is absolutely untrue. *All and sundry* manifestations of police tyranny

* We say "in general," because the *Rabocheye Dyelo* speaks of general principles and of the general tasks of the whole Party. Undoubtedly, cases occur in practice, when politics really *must* follow economics, but only Economists can say a thing like that in a resolution intended to apply to the whole of Russia. Cases do occur when *it is possible* "right from the beginning" to carry on political agitation "exclusively on an economic basis"; and yet the *Rabocheye Dyelo* hit upon the idea that "there is no need for this whatever." (*Two Congresses*, p. 11.) In the next chapter, we shall show that the tactics of the "politicians" and revolutionaries not only do not ignore the trade union tasks of Social-Democracy, but that, on the contrary, they alone *can secure* the consistent fulfilment of these tasks.

and autocratic outrage, and not only such as are connected with the economic struggle, are not one whit less "widely applicable" as a means of "drawing in" the masses. The Zemsky Nachalniks,²¹ the flogging of peasants, the corruption of the officials, the police treatment of the "common people" in the cities, the fight against the famine-stricken and the suppression of the popular striving towards enlightenment and knowledge, the extortion of taxes, the persecution of the religious sects, the humiliating treatment of the soldiers and the treatment of the students and the liberal intelligentsia as if they were soldiers — do all these and a thousand other similar manifestations of tyranny, though not directly connected with the "economic" struggle, represent, in general, *less* "widely applicable" means and occasions for political agitation and for drawing the masses into the political struggle? The very opposite is true. Of the sum total of the cases in which the workers suffer (either on their own account or on account of those closely connected with them) from tyranny, violence and lack of rights, undoubtedly only a small minority represent cases of police tyranny in the economic struggle as such. Why then should we, beforehand, *restrict* the scope of political agitation by declaring only *one* of the means to be "the most widely applicable," when Social-Democrats have, in addition, other, generally speaking, no less "widely applicable" means?

Long, long ago (a year ago! . . .) the *Rabocheye Dyelo* wrote: "The masses begin to understand immediate political demands after one, or at all events, after several strikes," "immediately the government sets the police and gendarmerie against them" (No. 7, p. 15, August 1900). This opportunist theory of stages has now been rejected by the Union, which makes a concession to us by declaring: "There is no need whatever to conduct political agitation right from the beginning, exclusively on an economic basis." (*Two Congresses,*

p. 11.) This very repudiation of part of its former errors by the Union will show the future historian of Russian Social-Democracy better than any number of lengthy arguments the depths to which our Economists have degraded Socialism! But the Union must be very naive indeed to imagine that the abandonment of one form of restricting politics will induce us to agree to another form of restriction! Would it not be more logical to say, in this case too, that the economic struggle should be conducted on the widest possible basis, that it should always be utilized for political agitation, but that "there is no need whatever" to regard the economic struggle as the *most* widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle?

The Union attaches significance to the fact that it replaced the phrase "most widely applicable means" for the phrase "the best means" contained in one of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Jewish Workers' Union (Bund).²² We confess that we find it difficult to say which of these resolutions is the better one. In our opinion *both are "worse."* Both the Union and the Bund fall into the error (partly, perhaps, unconsciously, under the influence of tradition) of giving an economic, trade-unionist interpretation to politics. Whether this is done by employing the word "best" or the words "most widely applicable" makes no material difference whatever. If the Union had said that "political agitation on an economic basis" is the most widely applied (and not "applicable") means it would have been right in regard to a certain period in the development of our Social-Democratic movement. It would have been right in regard to the *Economists* and to many (if not the majority) of the practical workers of 1898-1901, for these practical Economists *applied* political agitation (to the extent that they applied it at all!) *almost exclusively on an economic basis.* Political agitation on *such* lines was recognized and, as we have seen, even recommended by the *Rabochaya Mysl* and by the Self-Eman-

cipation Group! The *Rabocheye Dyelo* should have *strongly condemned* the fact that the useful work of economic agitation was accompanied by the harmful restriction of the political struggle, but instead of that, it declares the means most widely *applied (by the Economists)* to be the most widely *applicable!* It is not surprising that when we call these people Economists, they can do nothing else but pour every manner of abuse upon us, and call us “mystifiers,” “disrupters,” “papal Nuncios,” and “slanderers,”* go complaining to the whole world that we have mortally offended them, and declare almost on oath that “not a single Social-Democratic organization is now tinged with Economism.”** Oh, these evil, slanderous politicians! They must have deliberately invented this Economism, out of sheer hatred of mankind, in order mortally to offend other people!

What real concrete meaning does Martynov attach to his words about Social-Democracy taking up the task of “lending the economic struggle itself a political character”? The economic struggle is the collective struggle of the workers against their employers for better terms *in the sale of their labour power*, for the better conditions of life and labour. This struggle is necessarily an industrial struggle, because conditions of labour differ very much in different trades, and, consequently, the fight to *improve* these conditions can only be conducted in respect to each trade (trade unions in the Western countries, temporary trade associations and leaflets in Russia, etc.). Lending “the economic struggle itself a political character” means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction of these trade demands, the improvement of conditions of labour in each separate trade by means of “legislative and administrative measures” (as Martynov expresses it on the

* These are exactly the expressions used in *Two Congresses*, pp. 31, 32, 28 and 30.

** *Two Congresses*, p. 32.

next page of his article, p. 43). This is exactly what all workers' trade unions do and always have done. Read the works of the thoroughly scientific (and “thoroughly” opportunist) Mr. and Mrs. Webb and you will see that the British trade unions long ago recognized, and have long been carrying out, the task of “lending the economic struggle itself a political character”; they have long been fighting for the right to strike, for the removal of all legal hindrances to the cooperative and trade union movements, for laws protecting women and children, for the improvement of labour conditions by means of health and factory legislation, etc.

Thus, the pompous phrase about “lending the economic struggle *itself* a political character,” which sounds so “terrifically” profound and revolutionary, serves as a screen to conceal what is in fact the traditional striving to *degrade* Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade union politics! On the pretext of rectifying the one-sidedness of the *Iskra*, which, it is alleged, places “the revolutionizing of dogma higher than the revolutionizing of life,”* we are presented with the *struggle for economic reform* as if it were something entirely new. As a matter of fact, the phrase “lending the economic struggle itself a political character” means nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms. And Martynov himself might have come to this simple conclusion had he only pondered over the significance of his own words. “Our Party,” he says, turning his heaviest guns against the *Iskra*, “could and should have presented concrete demands to the government for legislative and administrative measures against economic exploitation, unemployment, famine, etc.”

* *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 60. This is the Martynov variation of the application to the present chaotic state of our movement of the thesis: “Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programs,” which we have already characterized above. As a matter of fact, this is merely a translation into Russian of the notorious Bernsteinian phrase: “The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing.”

(*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, pp. 42-43.) Concrete demands for measures — does not this mean demands for social reforms? And again we ask the impartial reader, do we slander the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (may I be forgiven for this clumsy expression!) by calling them concealed Bernsteinians when they advance, as their point of *disagreement* with the *Iskra*, their thesis about the necessity of fighting for economic reforms?

Revolutionary Social-Democracy always included, and now includes, the fight for reforms as part of its activities. But it utilizes “economic” agitation for the purpose of presenting to the government, not only demands for all sorts of measures, but also (and primarily) the demand that it cease to be an autocratic government. More, it considers it its duty to present this demand to the government, not on the basis of the economic struggle *alone*, but on the basis of all manifestations in general of public and political life. In a word, it subordinates the struggle for reforms, as the part to the whole, to the revolutionary struggle for liberty and for Socialism. Martynov, however, resuscitates the theory of stages in a new form, and strives to prescribe an exclusively economic, so to speak, path of development for the political struggle. By coming out at this moment, when the revolutionary movement is on the upgrade, with an alleged special “task” of fighting for reforms, he is dragging the Party backwards and is playing into the hands of both “economic” and liberal opportunism.

To proceed. While shamefacedly hiding the struggle for reforms behind the pompous thesis about “lending the economic struggle itself a political character,” Martynov advanced, as if it were a special point, *exclusively economic* (in fact exclusively factory) reforms. Why he did that, we do not know. Perhaps it was due to carelessness? But if he had in mind something else besides “factory” reforms,

then the whole of his thesis, which we have just quoted, loses all sense. Perhaps he did it because he thinks it possible and probable that the government will make “concessions” only in the economic sphere?* If so, then it is a strange delusion. Concessions are also possible and are made in the sphere of legislation concerning flogging, passports, land compensation payments, religious sects, the censorship, etc., etc. “Economic” concessions (or pseudo concessions) are, of course, the cheapest and most advantageous from the government’s point of view, because by these means it hopes to win the confidence of the masses of the workers. For this very reason, we Social-Democrats *must not* under any circumstances or in any way whatever create grounds for the belief (or the misunderstanding) that we attach greater value to economic reforms, or that we regard them as being particularly important, etc. “Such demands,” writes Martynov concerning the concrete demands for legislative and administrative measures referred to above, “would not be merely a hollow sound, because, promising certain palpable results, they might be actively supported by the masses of the workers. . . .” We are not Economists, oh no! We only cringe as slavishly before the “palpableness” of concrete results as do the Bernsteins, the Prokopoviches, the Struves, the R.M.’s, and tutti quanti!²³ We only wish to make it understood (with Narcissus Tuporylov) that all that which “does not promise palpable results” is merely a “hollow sound”! We are only trying to argue as if the masses of the workers were incapable (and had not already proved their capabilities, notwithstanding those who ascribe their own philistinism to them) of actively supporting *every* protest against the autocracy even if it *promises absolutely no palpable results what-*

* P. 43. “Of course, when we advise the workers to present certain economic demands to the government, we do so because in the *economic* sphere the autocratic government is, of necessity, prepared to make certain concessions.”

ever!

Take for example the very "measures" for the relief of unemployment and the famine that Martynov himself advances. Whereas the *Rabocheye Dyelo* is engaged, judging by what it has promised, in drawing up and elaborating a program of "concrete" (in the form of bills?) "demands for legislative and administrative measures," "promising palpable results," the *Iskra*, which "constantly places the revolutionizing of dogma higher than the revolutionizing of life," tried to explain the inseparable connection between unemployment and the whole capitalist system; warned that "famine is coming"; exposed the police "fight against the famine-stricken" and the outrageous "provisional penal regulations"; and the *Zarya* published a special reprint, in the form of an agitation pamphlet, of a section of its "Review of Internal Affairs" dealing with the famine.²⁴ But good God! How "one-sided" were these incorrigibly narrow and orthodox doctrinaires; how deaf to the calls of "life itself"! Their articles contained — oh horror! — not a single, can you imagine it? — *not a single* "concrete demand," "promising palpable results"! Poor doctrinaires! They ought to be sent to Krichevsky and Martynov to be taught that tactics are a process of growth, of that which grows, etc., and that the economic struggle *itself* should be given a political character!

"In addition to its immediate revolutionary significance, the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government" ("*economic* struggle against the government"!)" "has also this significance: it constantly brings it home to the workers that they have no political rights." (Martynov, p. 44.) We quote this passage not in order to repeat for the hundredth and thousandth time what has already been said above, but in order particularly to thank Martynov for this excellent new formula: "the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the govern-

ment." What a pearl! With what inimitable talent and skill in eliminating all partial disagreements and shades of differences among Economists does this clear and concise postulate express the *quintessence* of Economism: from calling to the workers to join "in the political struggle which they carry on in the general interest, for the purpose of improving the conditions of all the workers,"* continuing through the theory of stages, and ending in the resolution of the Congress on the "most widely applicable," etc. "Economic struggle against the government" is precisely trade-unionist politics, which is very, very far from being Social-Democratic politics.

B. A TALE OF HOW MARTYNOV RENDERED PLEKHANOV MORE PROFOUND

"What a large number of Social-Democratic Lomonosovs have appeared among us lately!" observed a comrade one day, having in mind the astonishing propensity of many of those who are inclined towards Economism to arrive, "all by themselves," at great truths (for example, that the economic struggle stimulates the workers to ponder over their lack of rights), and in doing so to ignore, with the supreme contempt of born geniuses, all that has already been produced by the previous development of revolutionary thought and of the revolutionary movement. Lomonosov-Martynov is precisely such a born genius. Glance at his article, "Immediate Questions," and observe how "all by himself" he *approaches* what has been said long ago by Axelrod (of whom our Lomonosov, naturally, says not a word); how, for example, he is *beginning* to understand that we cannot ignore

* *Rabochaya Mysl*, Special Supplement, p. 14.

the opposition of the various strata of the bourgeoisie (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 9, pp. 61, 62, 71; compare this with the *Rabocheye Dyelo's Reply to Axelrod*, pp. 22, 23-24), etc. But alas, he is only "approaching" and is only "beginning," not more than that, for so little has he understood Axelrod's ideas, that he talks about "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." For three years (1898-1901) the *Rabocheye Dyelo* has tried hard to understand Axelrod, but . . . but has failed to do so yet! Perhaps one of the reasons is that Social-Democracy, "like humanity," always sets itself only tasks that can be achieved?

But the Lomonosovs are distinguished not only by the fact of their ignorance of many things (that would be half a misfortune!), but also by the fact that they are not conscious of their ignorance. Now this is a real misfortune; and it is this misfortune that prompts them without further ado to attempt to render Plekhanov "more profound."

"Much water," Lomonosov-Martynov says, "has flowed under the bridges since Plekhanov wrote this book." (*Tasks of the Socialists in the Fight Against the Famine in Russia*.) "The Social-Democrats who for a decade led the economic struggle of the working class . . . have failed as yet to lay down a broad theoretical basis for Party tactics. This question has now come to a head, and if we should wish to lay down such a theoretical basis we would certainly have to deepen considerably the principles of tactics developed at one time by Plekhanov. . . . Our present definition of the distinction between propaganda and agitation would have to be different than Plekhanov's." (Martynov had just quoted Plekhanov's words: "A propagandist presents many ideas to one or a few persons; an agitator presents only one or a few ideas, but he presents them to a mass of people.") "By propaganda we would understand the revolutionary elucidation of the whole of the present system or partial manifestations of it, irrespective of whether it is done in a form intelligible to individuals or to broad masses. By agitation, in the strict sense of the word," (*sic!*) "we would understand calling the masses to certain concrete actions, facilitating the direct revolutionary intervention of the proletariat in social life."

We congratulate Russian — and international — Social-Democracy on this new, Martynov terminology which is more

strict and more profound. Up to now we thought (with Plekhanov, and with all the leaders of the international working-class movement) that a propagandist, dealing with, say, that same question of unemployment, must explain the capitalistic nature of crises, the reasons why they are inevitable in contemporary society, describe the need for its transformation into socialist society, etc. In a word, he must present "many ideas," so many indeed that they will be understood as an integral whole only by a (comparatively) few persons. An agitator, however, speaking on the same subject, will take as an illustration a fact that is most glaring and most widely known to his audience, say, the death from starvation of the family of an unemployed worker, the growing impoverishment, etc., and utilizing this fact, which is known to all and sundry, will direct all his efforts to presenting *a single idea* to the "masses," i.e., the idea of the senselessness of the contradiction between the increase of wealth and increase of poverty; he will strive to *rouse* discontent and indignation among the masses against this crying injustice, and leave a more complete explanation of this contradiction to the propagandist. Consequently, the propagandist operates chiefly by means of the *printed* word; the agitator by means of the *living* word. The propagandist must possess different qualities than the agitator. Kautsky and Lafargue, for example, we call propagandists; Bebel and Guesde we call agitators. To single out a third sphere, or third function, of practical activity, and to include in this function "calling the masses to certain concrete actions," is sheer nonsense, because the "call," as a single act, either naturally and inevitably supplements the theoretical tract, propagandist pamphlet and agitational speech, or represents a purely executive function. Take, for example, the struggle now being carried on by the German Social-Democrats against the grain duties. The theoreticians write research works on tariff policy and "call," say, for a fight for commercial treaties and for free trade. The propagandist does the

same thing in the periodical press, and the agitator in public speeches. At the present time, the "concrete action" of the masses takes the form of signing petitions to the Reichstag against the raising of the grain duties. The call for this action comes indirectly from the theoreticians, the propagandists and the agitators, and, directly, from those workers who carry the petition lists to the factories and to private homes soliciting signatures. According to the "Martynov terminology," Kautsky and Bebel are both propagandists, while those who solicit the signatures are agitators; is that not so?

The German example recalled to my mind the German word "Verballhornung," which literally translated means "to Ballhorn." Johann Ballhorn, a Leipzig publisher of the sixteenth century, published a child's reader in which, as was the custom, he introduced a drawing of a cock; but this drawing, instead of portraying an ordinary cock with spurs, portrayed it without spurs and with a couple of eggs lying near it. On the cover of this reader he printed the legend "Revised edition by Johann Ballhorn." Since that time the Germans describe any "revision" that is really a worsening as "Ballhorning." And you cannot help recalling Ballhorn when you see how the Martynovs try to render Plekhanov "more profound."

Why did our Lomonosov "invent" this confusion? In order to illustrate how the *Iskra* "devotes attention only to one side of the case, just as Plekhanov did a decade and a half ago" (p. 39). "According to the *Iskra*, propagandist tasks force agitational tasks into the background, at least for the present" (p. 52). If we translate this last proposition from the language of Martynov into ordinary human language (because humanity has not yet managed to learn the newly invented terminology), we shall get the following: According to the *Iskra*, the tasks of political propaganda and political agitation force into the background the task of "presenting to the government concrete demands for legislative and ad-

ministrative measures" that "promise certain palpable results" (or demands for social reforms, that is, if we are permitted just once again to employ the old terminology of old humanity, which has not yet grown to Martynov's level). We suggest that the reader compare this thesis with the following tirade:

"What also astonishes us in these programs" (the programs advanced by revolutionary Social-Democrats) "is the constant stress that is laid upon the benefits of workers' activity in parliament (non-existent in Russia), though they completely ignore (thanks to their revolutionary nihilism) the importance of workers participating in the legislative manufacturers' assemblies on factory affairs (which do exist in Russia) . . . or at least the importance of workers participating in municipal bodies. . . ."

The author of this tirade expresses somewhat more straightforwardly, more clearly and frankly, the very idea which Lomonosov-Martynov discovered all by himself. This author is R.M. in the Special Supplement to the *Rabochaya Mysl.* (P. 15.)

C. POLITICAL EXPOSURES AND "TRAINING IN REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY"

In advancing against the *Iskra* his "theory" of "raising the activity of the masses of the workers," Martynov, as a matter of fact, betrayed a striving to *belittle* this activity, because he declared the very economic struggle, before which all Economists have grovelled, to be the preferable, the most important and "the most widely applicable" means of rousing this activity, and the widest field for it. This error is characteristic, precisely because it is by no means peculiar to Martynov alone. As a matter of fact, it is possible to "raise the activity of the masses of the workers" *only* provided this activity *is not restricted* to "political agitation on an economic basis." And one of the fundamental conditions for the neces-

sary expansion of political agitation is the organization of *comprehensive* political exposure. The masses *cannot* be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity in any other way except by means of such exposures. Hence, activity of this kind is one of the most important functions of international Social-Democracy as a whole, for even the existence of political liberty does not in the least remove the necessity for such exposures; it merely changes somewhat the sphere against which they are directed. For example, the German party is especially strengthening its position and spreading its influence, thanks precisely to the untiring energy with which it is conducting a campaign of political exposure. Working-class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all* cases, *without exception*, of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected. Moreover, to respond from a Social-Democratic, and not from any other point of view. The consciousness of the masses of the workers cannot be genuine class consciousness, unless the workers learn to observe from concrete, and above all from topical (current), political facts and events, *every* other social class and *all* the manifestations of the intellectual, ethical and political life of these classes; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and the materialist estimate of *all* aspects of the life and activity of *all* classes, strata and groups of the population. Those who concentrate the attention, observation and consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone are not Social-Democrats; for its self-realization is indissolubly bound up not only with a fully clear theoretical — it would be even more true to say not so much with a theoretical, as with a practical understanding, of the relationships between *all* the various classes of modern society, acquired through experience of political life. That is why the idea preached by our Economists, that the economic struggle is the most widely

applicable means of drawing the masses into the political movement, is so extremely harmful and extremely reactionary in its practical significance. In order to become a Social-Democrat, the worker must have a clear picture in his mind of the economic nature and the social and political features of the landlord and the priest, the high state official and the peasant, the student and the tramp; he must know their strong and weak points; he must see the meaning of all the catchwords and sophisms by which each class and each stratum *camouflages* its selfish strivings and its real “inside workings”; he must understand what interests certain institutions and certain laws reflect and how they reflect them. But this “clear picture” cannot be obtained from books. It can be obtained only from living examples and from exposures, following hot upon the heels of what is going on around us at a given moment, of what is being discussed, in whispers perhaps, by each one in his own way, of the meaning of such and such events, of such and such statistics, of such and such court sentences, etc., etc., etc. These comprehensive political exposures are an essential and *fundamental* condition for training the masses in revolutionary activity.

Why is it that the Russian workers as yet display little revolutionary activity in connection with the brutal way in which the police maltreat the people, in connection with the persecution of the religious sects, with the flogging of the peasantry, with the outrageous censorship, the torture of soldiers, the persecution of the most innocent cultural undertakings, etc.? Is it because the “economic struggle” does not “stimulate” them to this, because such activity does not “promise palpable results,” because it produces little that is “positive”? No. To advocate such views, we repeat, is merely to lay the blame where it does not belong, to blame the masses of the workers for one’s own philistinism (which is also Bernsteinism). We must blame ourselves, our lagging behind the mass movement for being unable as yet to organize sufficiently

wide, striking and rapid exposures of all these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel* that the students and members of religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life, and, feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to respond to these things, and then he will organize catcalls against the censors one day, another day he will demonstrate outside the house of a governor who has brutally suppressed a peasant uprising, another day he will teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surplices who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition, etc. As yet we have done very little, almost nothing, to *hurl* universal and fresh exposures among the masses of the workers. Many of us as yet do not appreciate the *bounden duty* that rests upon us, but spontaneously trail in the wake of the "drab everyday struggle," in the narrow confines of factory life. Under such circumstances to say that the "*Iskra* displays a tendency to minimize the significance of the forward march of the drab everyday struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas" (Martynov, p. 61) — means dragging the Party backward, defending and glorifying our unpreparedness and backwardness.

As for calling the masses to action, that will come of itself immediately energetic political agitation, live and striking exposures are set going. To catch some criminal red-handed and immediately to brand him publicly is of itself far more effective than any number of "calls"; the effect very often is such as will make it impossible to tell exactly who it was that "called" on the crowd, and exactly who suggested this or that plan of demonstration, etc. Calls for action, not in the general, but in the concrete sense of the term, can be made only at the place of action; only those who themselves go into action, and do so immediately, can sound such calls.

And our business as Social-Democratic publicists is to deepen, to expand and intensify political exposures and political agitation.

A word in passing about "calls to action." *The only paper* which *prior* to the spring events²⁵ *called upon* the workers actively to intervene in a matter that certainly did not *promise* any *palpable results* whatever for the workers, i.e., the drafting of the students into the army, *was the "Iskra."* Immediately after the publication of the order of January 11, on "drafting the 183 students into the army," the *Iskra* published an article about it (in its February issue, No. 2),²⁶ and *before* any demonstration was started *openly called upon* "the workers to go to the aid of the students," called upon the "people" openly to take up the government's arrogant challenge. We ask: how is the remarkable fact to be explained that although Martynov talks so much about "calls to action," and even suggests "calls to action" as a special form of activity, he said not a word about *this* call? After this, is not Martynov's allegation, that the *Iskra* was *one-sided* because it did not sufficiently "call for" a struggle for demands "promising palpable results," sheer philistinism?

Our Economists, including the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, were successful because they pandered to the backward workers. But the Social-Democratic worker, the revolutionary worker (and the number of such workers is growing) will indignantly reject all this talk about fighting for demands "promising palpable results," etc., because he will understand that this is only a variation of the old song about adding a kopek to the ruble. Such a worker will say to his counsellors of the *Rabochaya Mysl* and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*: you are wasting your time, gentlemen, and shirking your proper duties, by meddling with such excessive zeal in a job that we can very well manage ourselves. There is nothing clever in your assertion that the Social-Democrats' task is to lend the economic struggle itself a political character; that is only the beginning, it

is not the main task of Social-Democrats. For all over the world, including Russia, *the police themselves often make the start in lending* the economic struggle a political character, and the workers themselves learn to understand whom the government supports.* The "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government," about which you make as much fuss as if you had discovered a new America, is being waged in a host of remote spots of Russia by the workers themselves who have heard about strikes, but who have heard almost nothing about Socialism. The "activity" you want to stimulate among us workers, by advancing concrete demands promising palpable results, we are already displaying and in our everyday, petty trade union work we put forward these concrete demands, very often without any assistance whatever from the intellectuals. But *such* activity is not enough for us; we are not children to be fed on the thin gruel of "economic" politics alone; we want to know everything that others know, we want to learn the details of *all* aspects of political life and to take part *actively* in

*The demand "to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" most strikingly expresses *subservience to spontaneity* in the sphere of political activity. Very often the economic struggle *spontaneously* assumes a political character, that is to say, without the intervention of the "revolutionary bacilli—the intelligentsia," without the intervention of the class-conscious Social-Democrats. For example, the economic struggle of the British workers also assumed a political character without any intervention of the Socialists. The tasks of the Social-Democrats, however, are not exhausted by political agitation on an economic basis; their task is to *convert* trade union politics into Social-Democratic political struggle, to *utilize* the sparks of political consciousness, which the economic struggle generates among the workers, for the purpose of *raising* them to the level of *Social-Democratic* political consciousness. The Martynovs, however, instead of raising and stimulating the spontaneously awakening political consciousness of the workers, *bow to spontaneity* and repeat over and over again *ad nauseam*, that the economic struggle "brings home" to the workers their own lack of political rights. It is unfortunate, gentlemen, that the spontaneously awakening trade-unionist political consciousness does not "bring home" to you an understanding of your Social-Democratic tasks!

every single political event. In order that we may do this, the intellectuals must talk to us less of what we already know,* and tell us more about what we do not yet know and what we can never learn from our factory and "economic" experience, that is, you must give us political knowledge. You intellectuals can acquire this knowledge, and it is your *duty* to bring it to us in a hundred and a thousand times greater measure than you have done up to now; and you must bring it to us, not only in the form of arguments, pamphlets and articles which sometimes — excuse our frankness! — are rather dull, but precisely in the form of live *exposures* of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life. Just devote more zeal to

*To prove that this imaginary speech of a worker to an Economist is based on fact, we shall refer to two witnesses who undoubtedly have direct knowledge of the working-class movement, and who are least of all inclined to be partial towards us "doctrinaires," for one witness is an Economist (who regards even the *Rabocheye Dyelo* as a political organ!), and the other is a terrorist. The first witness is the author of a remarkably truthful and vivid article entitled "The St. Petersburg Working-Class Movement and the Practical Tasks of Social-Democracy," published in the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6. He divided the workers into the following categories: 1. class-conscious revolutionaries; 2. intermediate stratum; 3. all the rest. Now the intermediate stratum, he says, "is often more interested in questions of political life than in its own immediate economic interests, the connection between which and the general social conditions it has long understood. . . ." The *Rabochaya Myst* "is sharply criticized": "it keeps on repeating the same thing over and over again, things we have long known, read long ago." "Nothing in the political review again!" (Pp. 30-31.) But even the third stratum, "the younger and more sensitive section of the workers, less corrupted by the tavern and the church, who hardly ever have the opportunity of getting hold of political literature, discuss political events in a rambling way and ponder over the fragmentary news they get about student riots," etc. The terrorist writes as follows: ". . . They read over once or twice the petty details of factory life in other towns, not their own, and then they read no more . . . dull, they find it. . . . To say nothing in a workers' paper about the government . . . is to regard the worker as a small child. . . . The workers are not babies." (*Svoboda*; published by the Revolutionary-Socialist Group, pp. 69-70.)

carrying out this duty, and *talk less about "raising the activity of the masses of the workers"*! We are far more active than you think, and we are quite able to support, by open, street fighting, demands that do not promise any "palpable results" whatever! And it is not for you to "raise" our activity, because *activity is precisely the thing you yourselves lack!* Bow less in worship to spontaneity, and think more about raising *your own* activity, gentlemen!

D. WHAT IS THERE IN COMMON BETWEEN ECONOMISM AND TERRORISM?

In the last footnote we quoted the opinion of an Economist and of a non-Social-Democratic terrorist who happened to be in agreement with him. Speaking generally, however, there is not an accidental, but a necessary, inherent connection between the two, about which we shall have to speak further on, but which must be dealt with here in connection with the question of training the masses in revolutionary activity. The Economists and the present-day terrorists have one common root, namely, the *worship of spontaneity*, which we dealt with in the preceding chapter as a general phenomenon, and which we shall now examine in relation to its effect upon political activity and the political struggle. At first sight, our assertion may appear paradoxical, so great is the difference between those who stress the "drab everyday struggle" and those who call for the most self-sacrificing struggle of individuals. But this is no paradox. The Economists and terrorists merely bow to different poles of spontaneity: the Economists bow to the spontaneity of the "pure" working-class movement, while the terrorists bow to the spontaneity of the passionate indignation of intellectuals, who lack the ability or opportunity to link up the revolutionary struggle with the working-class movement, to form an in-

tegral whole. It is difficult indeed for those who have lost their belief, or who have never believed that this is possible, to find some outlet for their indignation and revolutionary energy other than terror. Thus, both kinds of worship of spontaneity we have mentioned are nothing more nor less than *a beginning in carrying out* the notorious *Credo* program: Let the workers wage their "economic struggle against the employers and the government" (we apologize to the author of the *Credo* for expressing his views in Martynov's words! We think we have a right to do so because the *Credo*, too, says that in the economic struggle the workers "come up against the political regime"), and let the intellectuals conduct the political struggle by their own efforts — with the aid of terror, of course! This is an absolutely logical and inevitable *conclusion* which must be insisted upon — *even though those* who are beginning to carry out this program *do not themselves realize* that it is inevitable. Political activity has its logic quite apart from the consciousness of those who, with the best intentions, call either for terror or for lending the economic struggle itself a political character. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and, in this case, good intentions cannot save one from being spontaneously drawn "along the line of least resistance," along the line of the *purely bourgeois Credo* program. Surely it is no accident either that many Russian liberals — avowed liberals and those who wear the mask of Marxism — wholeheartedly sympathize with terror and are trying to keep alive the present wave of terrorist sentiments.

And the formation of the Revolutionary-Socialist *Svoboda* Group — which set itself the aim of helping the working-class movement in every possible way, but which included in its *program* terror, and emancipation, so to speak, from Social-Democracy — this fact once again confirmed the remarkable penetration of P. B. Axelrod who *literally foretold* these results of Social-Democratic wavering *as far back as*

the end of 1897 (*The Contemporary Tasks and Tactics*), when he outlined his remarkable "two perspectives." All the subsequent disputes and disagreements among Russian Social-Democrats are contained, like a plant in the seed, in these two perspectives.*

From this point of view it also becomes clear why the *Rabocheye Dyelo*, being unable to withstand the spontaneity of Economism, has been unable also to withstand the spontaneity of terrorism. It is highly interesting to note here the specific arguments that the *Svoboda* advanced in defence of terrorism. It "completely denies" the deterrent role of terrorism (*The Regeneration of Revolutionism*, p. 64), but instead stresses its "excitative significance." This is characteristic, first, as representing one of the stages of the breakup and decline of the traditional (pre-Social-Democratic) cycle of ideas which insisted upon terrorism. To admit that the government cannot now be "terrified," and therefore disrupted, by terror, is tantamount to thoroughly condemning terror as a system of struggle, as a sphere of activity sanctioned by the program. Secondly, it is still more characteristic as an example of the failure to understand our immediate task of "training the masses in revolutionary activity." The

* Martynov "conceives of another, more realistic(?) dilemma" (*Social-Democracy and the Working Class*, p. 19): "Either Social-Democracy takes over the direct leadership of the economic struggle of the proletariat and by that (1) transforms it into a revolutionary class struggle . . ." "by that," i.e., apparently by the direct leadership of the economic struggle. Can Martynov quote an example where the leadership of the industrial struggle *alone* has succeeded in transforming a trade union movement into a revolutionary class movement? Cannot he understand that in order to bring about this "transformation" we must actively take up the "direct leadership" of *all-sided* political agitation? . . . "Or the other prospect: Social-Democracy refrains from taking the leadership of the economic struggle of the workers and so . . . clips its own wings. . . ." In the *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s opinion, quoted above, it is the *Iskra* that "refrains." We have seen, however, that the latter *does far more* to lead the economic struggle *than* the "*Rabocheye Dyelo*," but it does not confine itself to this, and *does not narrow down* its political tasks for the sake of it.

Svoboda advocates terror as a means of "exciting" the working-class movement, and of giving it a "strong impetus." It is difficult to imagine an argument that disproves itself more than this one does! Are there not enough outrages committed in Russian life that special "excitants" have to be invented? On the other hand, is it not obvious that those who are not, and cannot be, roused to excitement even by Russian tyranny will stand by "twiddling their thumbs," watching a handful of terrorists engaged in single combat with the government? The fact of the matter is that the masses of the workers are roused to a high pitch of excitement by the abominations in Russian life, but we are unable to collect, if one may put it that way, and concentrate all these drops and streamlets of popular excitement, which are called forth by the conditions of Russian life to a far larger extent than we imagine, but which it is precisely necessary to combine into a *single* gigantic torrent. That this can be accomplished is irrefutably proved by the enormous growth of the working-class movement and the eagerness with which the workers clamour for political literature, to which we have already referred above. On the other hand, calls for terror and calls to lend the economic struggle itself a political character are merely two different forms of *evading* the most pressing duty that now rests upon Russian revolutionaries, namely, to organize comprehensive political agitation. The *Svoboda* desires to *substitute* terror for agitation, openly admitting that "as soon as intensified and strenuous agitation is commenced among the masses the excitative function of terror will be finished." (*The Regeneration of Revolutionism*, p. 68.) This is exactly what proves that both the terrorists and the Economists *underestimate* the revolutionary activity of the masses, in spite of the striking evidence of the events that took place in the spring,* and whereas the former go out

* This refers to the big street demonstrations which commenced in the spring of 1901. (Author's note to the 1907 edition. — *Ed.*)

in search of artificial "excitants," the latter talk about "concrete demands." But both fail to devote sufficient attention to the development of *their own activity* in political agitation and in the organization of political exposures. And no other work can serve as a *substitute* for this work either at the present time or at any other time.

E. THE WORKING CLASS AS VANGUARD FIGHTER FOR DEMOCRACY

We have seen that the conduct of the broadest political agitation, and consequently the organization of comprehensive political exposures, is an absolutely necessary, and the *most urgently necessary*, task of activity, that is, if that activity is to be truly Social-Democratic. However, we arrived at this conclusion *solely* on the grounds of the pressing needs of the working class for political knowledge and political training. But presenting the question in this way alone is too narrow, for it ignores the general democratic tasks of Social-Democracy in general, and of present-day Russian Social-Democracy in particular. In order to explain the point more concretely we shall approach the subject from an aspect that is "nearest" to the Economist, namely, from the practical aspect. "Everyone agrees" that it is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the working class. The question is, *how* is that to be done, what is required to do it? The economic struggle merely "brings home" to the workers questions concerning the attitude of the government towards the working class. Consequently, *however much we may try* to "lend the economic struggle itself a political character" *we shall never be able* to develop the political consciousness of the workers (to the level of Social-Democratic political consciousness) by keeping within the framework of the economic struggle, for *that framework is too narrow*. The Marty-

nov formula has some value for us, and not because it illustrates Martynov's ability to confuse things, but because it strikingly expresses the fundamental error that all the Economists commit, namely, their conviction that it is possible to develop the class political consciousness of the workers *from within*, so to speak, their economic struggle, i.e., making this struggle the exclusive (or, at least, the main) starting point, making it the exclusive, or, at least, the main basis. Such a view is fundamentally wrong. Just because the Economists are piqued by our polemics against them, they refuse to ponder deeply over the origins of these disagreements, with the result that we absolutely fail to understand each other. It is as if we spoke in different tongues.

Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside of the economic struggle, from outside of the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships between *all* the classes and strata and the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between *all* the classes. For that reason, the reply to the question as to what must be done to bring political knowledge to the workers cannot be merely the answer with which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those inclined towards Economism, mostly content themselves, namely: "To go among the workers." To bring political knowledge to the *workers* the Social-Democrats must *go among all classes of the population*, must dispatch units of their army *in all directions*.

We deliberately select this awkward formula, we deliberately express ourselves in a simplified, blunt way — not because we desire to indulge in paradoxes, but in order to "bring home" to the Economists those tasks which they unpardonably ignore, to make them understand the difference between trade-unionist and Social-Democratic politics, which they

refuse to understand. We therefore beg the reader not to get excited, but to listen patiently to the end.

Take the type of Social-Democratic circle that has become most widespread in the past few years, and examine its work. It has "contacts with the workers," and rests content with this, issuing leaflets in which abuses in the factories, the government's partiality towards the capitalists and the tyranny of the police are strongly condemned. At meetings of workers the discussions never, or rarely, go beyond the limits of these subjects. Lectures and discussions on the history of the revolutionary movement, on questions of the home and foreign policy of our government, on questions of the economic evolution of Russia and of Europe, and the position of the various classes in modern society, etc., are extremely rare. As to systematically acquiring and extending contact with other classes of society, no one even dreams of that. In fact the ideal leader, as the majority of the members of such circles picture him, is something far more in the nature of a trade union secretary than a socialist political leader. For the trade union secretary of any, say British trade union, always helps the workers to conduct the economic struggle, helps to expose factory abuses, explains the injustice of the laws and of measures which hamper the freedom to strike and the freedom to picket (i.e., to warn all and sundry that a strike is proceeding at a certain factory), explains the partiality of arbitration court judges who belong to the bourgeois classes, etc., etc. In a word, every trade union secretary conducts and helps to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." It cannot be too strongly insisted that *this is not yet* Social-Democracy. The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be a trade union secretary, but *a tribune of the people*, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; he must be able to generalize all these manifestations to produce

a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; he must be able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to explain his Socialistic convictions and his democratic demands to *all*, in order to explain to *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the proletariat's struggle for emancipation. Compare, for example, a leader like Robert Knight (the well-known secretary and leader of the Boiler-Makers' Society, one of the most powerful trade unions in England), with Wilhelm Liebknecht, and try to apply to them the contrasts that Martynov draws in his controversy with the *Iskra*. You will see — I am running through Martynov's article — that Robert Knight engaged more in "calling the masses to certain concrete actions" (p. 39) while Wilhelm Liebknecht engaged more in "the revolutionary elucidation of the whole of the present system or partial manifestations of it" (pp. 38-39); that Robert Knight "formulated the immediate demands of the proletariat and indicated the means by which they can be achieved" (p. 41), whereas Wilhelm Liebknecht, while doing this, was not averse "simultaneously to guide the activities of various opposition strata," "dictate a positive program of action for them"* (p. 41); that it was precisely Robert Knight who strove "as far as possible to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" (p. 42) and was excellently able "to submit to the government concrete demands promising certain palpable results" (p. 43), while Liebknecht engaged to a much greater degree in "one-sided" "exposures" (p. 40); that Robert Knight attached more significance to the "forward march of the drab, everyday struggle" (p. 61), while Liebknecht attached more significance to the "propaganda of brilliant and finished ideas" (p. 61); that Liebknecht converted the paper he was directing into "an organ of revolutionary opposition that

* For example, during the Franco-Prussian War, Liebknecht dictated a program of action for the whole of democracy — and this was done to an even greater extent by Marx and Engels in 1848.

exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs, in so far as it affects the interests of the most varied strata of the population" (p. 63), whereas Robert Knight "worked for the cause of the working class in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle" (p. 63) — if by "close and organic contact" is meant the worship of spontaneity which we examined above using the example of Krichevsky and Martynov — and "restricted the sphere of his influence," convinced, of course, as is Martynov, that "by doing so he intensified that influence" (p. 63). In a word, you will see that *de facto* Martynov reduces Social-Democracy to the level of trade unionism, though he does so, of course, not because he does not desire the good of Social-Democracy, but simply because he is a little too much in a hurry to render Plekhanov more profound, instead of taking the trouble to understand him.

Let us return, however, to our thesis. We said that a Social-Democrat, if he really believes it is necessary to develop comprehensively the political consciousness of the proletariat, must "go among all classes of the population." This gives rise to the questions: How is this to be done? Have we enough forces to do this? Is there a basis for such work among all the other classes? Will this not mean a retreat, or lead to a retreat, from the class point of view? Let us deal with these questions.

We must "go among all classes of the population" as theoreticians, as propagandists, as agitators and as organizers. No one doubts that the theoretical work of Social-Democrats should aim at studying all the features of the social and political position of the various classes. But extremely little, little beyond proportion, is done in this direction as compared with the work that is done in studying the features of factory life. In the committees and circles, you will meet people who are immersed even in the study of, say, some special branch of the metal industry, but you will hardly ever find

members of organizations (obliged, as often happens, for some reason or other to give up practical work) especially engaged in the collection of material concerning some pressing question of social and political life in our country which could serve as a means for conducting Social-Democratic work among other strata of the population. In speaking of the lack of training of the majority of present-day leaders of the working-class movement, we cannot refrain from mentioning the point about training in this connection also, for it too is bound up with the "economic" conception of "close organic contact with the proletarian struggle." The principal thing, of course, is *propaganda* and *agitation* among all strata of the people. The work of the West-European Social-Democrat is in this respect facilitated by the public meetings and rallies, to which *all* are free to go, and by the fact that in parliament he addresses the representatives of *all* classes. We have neither a parliament nor freedom of assembly, nevertheless we are able to arrange meetings of workers who desire to listen to *a Social-Democrat*. We must also find ways and means of calling meetings of representatives of all classes of the population that desire to listen to *a democrat*; for he is no Social-Democrat who forgets that "the Communists support every revolutionary movement," that we are obliged for that reason to expound and emphasize *general democratic tasks before the whole people*, without for a moment concealing our socialist convictions. He is no Social-Democrat who forgets his obligation to be *abead of everybody* in advancing, accentuating and solving *every* general democratic problem.

"But everybody agrees with this!" — the impatient reader will exclaim — and the new instructions adopted by the last Congress of the Union for the editorial board of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* definitely say: "All events of social and political life that affect the proletariat either directly as a special class

or as the vanguard of all the revolutionary forces in the struggle for freedom should serve as subjects for political propaganda and agitation." (*Two Congresses*, p. 17, our italics.) Yes, these are very true and very good words and we would be fully satisfied if the *Rabocheye Dyelo* understood them and if it refrained from saying in the next breath things that are the very opposite of them. For it is not enough to call ourselves the "vanguard," the advanced detachment; we must act like one; we must act in such a way that all the other detachments shall see us, and be obliged to admit, that we are marching in the vanguard. And we ask the reader: Are the representatives of the other "detachments" such fools as to take our word for it when we say that we are the "vanguard"? Just picture to yourselves the following: A Social-Democrat comes to the "detachment" of Russian educated radicals, or liberal constitutionalists, and says: We are the vanguard; "the task confronting us now is, as far as possible, to lend the economic struggle itself a political character." The radical, or constitutionalist, if he is at all intelligent (and there are many intelligent men among Russian radicals and constitutionalists), would only laugh at such a speech, and would say (to himself, of course, for in the majority of cases he is an experienced diplomat): "Your 'vanguard' must be made up of simpletons! They do not even understand that it is our task, the task of the progressive representatives of bourgeois democracy to lend the workers' economic struggle *itself* a political character. Why, we too, like all the West-European bourgeoisie, want to draw the workers into politics, but *precisely into trade-unionist, and not Social-Democratic politics*. Trade-unionist politics of the working class are precisely *bourgeois politics* of the working class and the 'vanguard's' formulation of its tasks is the formula for trade-unionist politics. Let them even call themselves Social-Democrats to their heart's content, I am not a child to get excited over a label. But they must not

fall under the influence of those pernicious orthodox doctrinaires, let them allow 'freedom of criticism' to those who are unconsciously driving Social-Democracy into trade-unionist channels."

And the light chuckle of our constitutionalist will turn into Homeric laughter when he learns that the Social-Democrats who talk about Social-Democracy being the vanguard at the present time, when spontaneity almost completely dominates our movement, fear nothing so much as "belittling the spontaneous elements," as "belittling the significance of the forward march of the drab, everyday struggle, as compared with the propaganda of brilliant and finished ideas," etc., etc.! A "vanguard" which fears that consciousness will outstrip spontaneity, which fears to put forward a bold "plan" that would compel universal recognition even among those who think differently from us. Are they not confusing the word "vanguard" with the word "rearguard"?

Ponder over the following piece of Martynov reasoning. On page 40 he says that the *Iskra's* tactics of exposing abuses are one-sided, that "however much we may spread distrust and hatred towards the government, we shall not achieve our aim until we have succeeded in developing sufficiently active social energy for its overthrow." This, it may be said in parenthesis, is the concern, with which we are already familiar, for increasing the activity of the masses, while at the same time striving to restrict one's own activity. But that is not the main point just now. Martynov, therefore, speaks here of *revolutionary* energy ("for overthrowing"). And what conclusion does he arrive at? Since in ordinary times various social strata inevitably march separately, "it is, therefore, clear that we Social-Democrats cannot simultaneously guide the activities of various opposition strata, we cannot dictate to them a positive program of action, we cannot point out to them in what manner they should fight for their daily interests. . . . The liberal strata will themselves take

care of the active struggle for their immediate interests and that struggle will bring them face to face with our political regime." (P. 41.) Thus, having commenced with talk about revolutionary energy, about the active struggle for the overthrow of the autocracy, Martynov immediately turns towards trade union energy and active struggle for immediate interests! It goes without saying that we cannot guide the struggle of the students, liberals, etc., for their "immediate interests," but this was not the point at issue, most worthy Economist! The point we were discussing was the possible and necessary participation of various social strata in the overthrow of the autocracy; and not only are we *able*, but it is our bounden duty, to guide *these* "activities of the various opposition strata" if we desire to be the "vanguard." Not only will our students and liberals, etc., themselves take care of "the struggle that will bring them face to face with our political regime"; the police and the officials of the autocratic government will see to this more than anyone else. But if "we" desire to be advanced democrats, we must make it our business to *stimulate* in the minds of those who are dissatisfied with university, or only with Zemstvo, etc. conditions the idea that the whole political system is worthless. *We* must take upon ourselves the task of organizing an all-round political struggle under the leadership of *our* Party in such a manner as to obtain all the support possible of all opposition strata for the struggle and for our Party. *We* must train our Social-Democratic practical workers to become political leaders, able to guide all the manifestations of this all-round struggle, able at the right time to "dictate a positive program of action" for the restless students, the discontented Zemstvo Councillors, the incensed religious sects, the offended elementary schoolteachers, etc., etc. For that reason, Martynov's assertion is *absolutely wrong* — that "with regard to these, we can come forward *merely in the negative* role of expositors of

abuses . . . we can *only*" (our italics) "dissipate the hopes they have in various government commissions." By saying this Martynov shows that *he understands absolutely nothing* about the role that the revolutionary "vanguard" must really play. If the reader bears this in mind, he will be clear as to the *real meaning* of Martynov's following concluding remarks: "The *Iskra* is an organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs in so far as it affects the interests of the most varied strata of the population. We, however, work and shall continue to work for the cause of the working class in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle. By narrowing down the sphere of our active influence, we make it more complicated to exercise that influence." (P. 63.) The true meaning of this conclusion is as follows: the *Iskra* desires to *elevate* the trade-unionist politics of the working class (to which, owing to misunderstanding, lack of training, or by conviction, our practical workers frequently confine themselves) to Social-Democratic politics, whereas the *Rabocheye Dyelo* desires to *degrade* Social-Democratic politics to trade-unionist politics. And, what is more, it assures the world that these positions are "quite compatible within the common cause" (p. 63). *O, Sancta simplicitas!*²⁷

To proceed: Have we sufficient forces to direct our propaganda and agitation among *all* classes of the population? Of course we have. Our Economists, frequently inclined as they are to deny this, lose sight of the gigantic progress our movement has made from 1894 (approximately) to 1901. Like real "tail-enders," they frequently live in the distant past, in the period when the movement was just beginning. At that time, indeed, we had astonishingly few forces, and it was perfectly natural and legitimate then to devote ourselves exclusively to activities among the workers, and severely condemn any deviation from this. The whole task then was to consolidate our position in the working class. At the

present time, however, gigantic forces have been attracted to the movement; the best representatives of the young generation of the educated classes are coming over to us; all over the country there are people, compelled to live in the provinces, who have taken part in the movement in the past or who desire to do so now, who are gravitating towards Social-Democracy (whereas in 1894 you could count the Social-Democrats on your fingers). One of the principal political and organizational shortcomings of our movement is that *we do not know how* to utilize all these forces and give them appropriate work (we shall deal with this in greater detail in the next chapter). The overwhelming majority of these forces entirely lack the opportunity of "going among the workers," so there are no grounds for fearing that we shall deflect forces from our main work. And in order to be able to provide the workers with real, comprehensive and live political knowledge, we must have "our own people," Social-Democrats, everywhere, among all social strata, and in all positions from which we can learn the inner springs of our state mechanism. Such people are required not only for propaganda and agitation, but in a still larger measure for organization.

Is there scope for activity among all classes of the population? Those who fail to see this also lag, in their consciousness, behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses. The working-class movement has aroused and is continuing to arouse discontent in some, hopes for support for the opposition in others, and the consciousness of the intolerableness and inevitable downfall of the autocracy in still others. We would be "politicians" and Social-Democrats only in name (as actually very often happens), if we failed to realize that our task is to utilize every manifestation of discontent, and to collect and make the best of every grain of even rudimentary protest. This is quite apart from the fact that many millions of the labouring peasantry, handicraftsmen, petty

artisans, etc., would always listen eagerly to the preachings of any at all able and intelligent Social-Democrat. Indeed, is there a single class of the population in which no individuals, groups or circles are to be found who are discontented with the lack of rights and with tyranny and, therefore, accessible to the propaganda of Social-Democrats as the spokesmen of the most pressing general democratic needs? To those who desire to have a clear idea of what the political agitation of a Social-Democrat *among all* classes and strata of the population should be like, we would point to *political exposures* in the broad sense of the word as the principal (but of course not the sole) form of this agitation.

"We must arouse in every section of the population that is at all enlightened a passion for *political exposure*," I wrote in my article "Where To Begin?" (*Iskra*, No. 4, May 1901), with which I shall deal in greater detail later. "We must not be discouraged by the fact that the voice of political exposure is at present feeble, rare and timid. This is not because of a wholesale submission to police despotism, but because those who are able and ready to make exposures have no tribune from which to speak, no audience to listen eagerly and approve what the speakers say, and because the latter do not see anywhere among the people forces to whom it would be worth while directing their complaint against the 'omnipotent' Russian government. . . . We are now in a position, and it is our duty, to provide a tribune for the nation-wide exposure of the tsarist government. That tribune must be a Social-Democratic paper."²⁸

The ideal audience for political exposures is the working class, which is first and foremost in need of all-round and live political knowledge, and is most capable of converting this knowledge into active struggle, even if it does not promise "palpable results." And the tribune for *nation-wide* exposures can be only an all-Russian newspaper. "Without a political organ, a political movement deserving that name is inconceivable in modern Europe," and in this respect Russia must undoubtedly be included in modern Europe. The press has long ago become a power in our country, otherwise the government would not spend tens of thousands of rubles to

bribe it, and to subsidize the Katkovs and Meshcherskys. And it is no novelty in autocratic Russia for the underground press to break through the wall of censorship and *compel* the legal and conservative press to speak openly of it. This was the case in the 'seventies and even in the 'fifties. How much broader and deeper are now those sections of the people that are prepared to read the illegal underground press, and to learn from it "how to live and how to die," to use the expression of a worker who sent a letter to the *Iskra* (No. 7).²⁹ Political exposures are as much a declaration of war against the *government* as economic exposures are a declaration of war against the factory owners. And the moral significance of this declaration of war will be all the greater, the wider and more powerful this campaign of exposure is, the more numerous and determined the social *class*, which has *declared war in order to commence the war*. Hence, political exposures in themselves serve as a powerful instrument for *disintegrating* the system we oppose, a means for diverting from the enemy his casual or temporary allies, a means for spreading enmity and distrust among the permanent partners of the autocracy.

Only a party that will *organize* really *nation-wide* exposures can become the vanguard of the revolutionary forces in our time. The word "nation-wide" has a very profound meaning. The overwhelming majority of the non-working-class expositors (and in order to become the vanguard, we must attract other classes) are sober politicians and level-headed businessmen. They know perfectly well how dangerous it is to "complain" even against a minor official, let alone against the "omnipotent" Russian government. And they will come *to us* with their complaints only when they see that these complaints can really have effect, and that we represent a *political force*. In order to become such a force in the eyes of outsiders, much persistent and stubborn work is re-

quired to *raise* our own consciousness, initiative and energy. To accomplish this it is not enough to attach a "vanguard" label on rearguard theory and practice.

But if we have to undertake the organization of really nation-wide exposure of the government, what, then, will be the expression of the class character of our movement? — the over-zealous advocates of "close organic contact with the proletarian struggle" will ask us. The reply is: the fact that we Social-Democrats will organize these public exposures; that all the questions raised by the agitation will be elucidated in a consistently Social-Democratic spirit, without any concessions to deliberate or non-deliberate distortions of Marxism; in the fact that this all-round political agitation will be conducted by a party which unites into one inseparable whole the pressure upon the government in the name of the whole people, the revolutionary training of the proletariat, while safeguarding its political independence, and guidance of the economic struggle of the working class, the utilization of all its spontaneous conflicts with its exploiters which rouse and bring into our camp increasing numbers of the proletariat!

But one of the most characteristic features of Economism is its failure to understand this connection, more, this identity of the most pressing needs of the proletariat (a comprehensible political education through the medium of political agitation and political exposures) with the needs of the general democratic movement. This lack of understanding is expressed not only in "Martynovite" phrases, but also in the references to a supposedly class point of view which is identical in meaning with these phrases. Here, for example, is how it is put by the authors of the "Economist" letter in No. 12 of the *Iskra*.* "This fundamental defect of the *Iskra*"

* Lack of space has prevented us from replying in full, in the *Iskra*, to this letter, which is extremely characteristic of the Economists. We

(overestimating ideology) "is the cause of its inconsistency in the question of the attitude of Social-Democrats to various social classes and tendencies. By a process of theoretical reasoning" (and not by "the growth of Party tasks, which grow together with the Party"), "the *Iskra* solved the problem of immediately proceeding to the struggle against absolutism. But in all probability it senses how difficult a task this would be for the workers in the present state of affairs" . . . (not only senses, but knows perfectly well that this task appears less difficult to the workers than to those "Economist" intellectuals who are concerned about little children, for the workers are prepared to fight even for demands which, to use the language of the never-to-be-forgotten Martynov, do not "promise palpable results") . . . "and lacking the patience to wait until the workers accumulate more strength for this struggle, the *Iskra* begins to search for allies in the ranks of the liberals and intelligentsia" . . .

Yes, yes, we have indeed lost all "patience" to "wait" for the blessed time that has long been promised us by diverse "conciliators" when the Economists will stop throwing the blame for their *own* backwardness upon the workers, and stop justifying their own lack of energy by alleging that it is the workers who lack strength. We ask our Economists: what does "the working class accumulating more strength for this struggle" mean? Is it not evident that it means the political training of the workers, exposing to them *all* the aspects of our despicable autocracy? And is it not clear that *precisely for this work* we need "allies in the ranks of the liberals and intelligentsia," who are prepared to join us in the exposure of the political attack on the Zemstvos, on

we were very glad it appeared, for rumours about the *Iskra* not maintaining a consistent, class point of view, have reached us long ago from various sources, and we have been waiting for an appropriate opportunity, or for a formulated expression of this current charge, to reply to it. And it is our habit to reply to attacks not by defence, but by counter-attacks.

the teachers, on the statisticians, on the students, etc.? Is this surprisingly "intricate mechanism" really so difficult to understand? Has not P. B. Axelrod repeated to you over and over again since 1897: "The problem of the Russian Social-Democrats acquiring adherents and direct and indirect allies among the non-proletarian classes will be solved principally and primarily by the character of the propagandist activities conducted among the proletariat itself"? But the Martynovs and the other Economists continue to imagine that "by economic struggle against the employers and the government," the workers must *first* accumulate strength (for trade-unionist politics) and *then* "go over" — we presume from trade-unionist "training for activity" — to Social-Democratic activity!

"... In its quest," continue the Economists, "the *Iskra* not infrequently departs from the class point of view, obscures class antagonisms and puts into the forefront the general character of the prevailing discontent with the government, notwithstanding the fact that the causes and the degree of this discontent vary quite considerably among the 'allies.' Such, for example, is the *Iskra's* attitude towards the Zemstvo..." The *Iskra*, it is alleged, "promises the nobility, who are discontented with the government's sops, the aid of the working class, but does not say a word about the class antagonisms between these strata of the population." If the reader will turn to the articles "The Autocracy and the Zemstvo" (Nos. 2 and 4 of the *Iskra*), to which, *in all probability*, the authors of the letter refer, he will find that these articles⁷¹ deal with the attitude of the *government* towards the "mild agitation of the bureaucratic Zemstvo, which is based on the Estates," and towards the "independent activity of even the propertied classes." In these articles it is stated that the workers cannot look on indifferently while the government is carrying on a fight against the Zemstvo, and the Zemstvo-ites are called upon to give up making mild speeches,

and to speak firmly and resolutely when revolutionary Social-Democracy confronts the government in all its strength. What the authors of the letter do not agree with here is not clear. Do they think that the workers will "not understand" the phrases "propertied classes" and "bureaucratic Zemstvo based on the Estates"? Do they think that *urging* the Zemstvo to abandon mild speeches and to speak firmly and resolutely is "overestimating ideology"? Do they imagine the workers can "accumulate strength" for the fight against absolutism if they know nothing about the attitude of absolutism *also* towards the Zemstvo? All this too remains unknown. One thing alone is clear and that is that the authors of the letter have a very vague idea of what the political tasks of Social-Democracy are. This is revealed still more clearly by their remark: "Such also" (i.e., also "obscures class antagonisms") "is the *Iskra's* attitude towards the student movement." Instead of calling upon the workers to declare by means of public demonstrations that the real centre of unbridled violence, disorder and outrage is not the students but the Russian government (*Iskra*, No. 2³⁰), we should, no doubt, have inserted arguments in the spirit of the *Rabochaya Mysl'*. And such ideas are expressed by Social-Democrats in the autumn of 1901, after the events of February and March, on the eve of a fresh revival of the student movement, which reveals that even in this sphere the "spontaneous" protest against the autocracy is *outstripping* the conscious Social-Democratic leadership of the movement. The spontaneous striving of the workers to stand up for the students who are being beaten up by the police and the Cossacks is *outstripping* the conscious activity of the Social-Democratic organization!

"And yet in other articles," continue the authors of the letter, "the *Iskra* sharply condemns all compromises, and defends, for example, the intolerant conduct of the Guesdites." We would advise those who usually so conceitedly and frivolously declare in connection with the disagreements existing

among the contemporary Social-Democrats that they are of a minor nature and do not justify a split, to ponder very deeply over these words. Is it possible to have successful activity, within one organization, by people who say that so far we have done astonishingly little to explain the hostility of the autocracy towards the various classes, and to inform the workers of the opposition of the various strata of the population towards the autocracy, and by people who see in this a "compromise" — evidently a compromise with the theory of the "economic struggle against the employers and the government"?

We urged the necessity of introducing the class struggle in the rural districts on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the emancipation of the peasantry (No. 3³¹), and spoke of the irreconcilability between the local government bodies and the autocracy in connection with Witte's secret memorandum. (No. 4.) In connection with the new law we attacked the feudal landlords and the government which serves them (No. 8³²), and welcomed the illegal Zemstvo congress. We urged the Zemstvo to stop making degrading petitions (No. 8³³), and to come out and fight. We encouraged the students, who had begun to understand the need for, and to take up, the political struggle (No. 3) and, at the same time, we lashed out at the "barbarous lack of understanding" revealed by the adherents of the "purely student" movement, who called upon the students to abstain from taking part in the street demonstrations (No. 3, in connection with the manifesto issued by the Executive Committee of the Moscow students on February 25). We exposed the "senseless dreams" and the "lying hypocrisy" of the cunning liberals of the *Rossiya*³⁴ (No. 5) and at the same time we commented on the fury with which "peaceful writers, aged professors, scientists and well-known liberal Zemstvo-ites were man-handled" in the government's torture chambers. (No. 5,

“Police Raid on Literature.”) We exposed the real significance of the program of “state concern for the welfare of the workers,” and welcomed the “valuable admission” that “it is better by granting reforms from above to forestall the demand for such reforms from below, than to wait for those demands to be put forward.” (No. 6.³⁵) We encouraged the protesting statisticians (No. 7), and censured the strikebreaking statisticians. (No. 9.) He who sees in these tactics an obscuring of the class consciousness of the proletariat and *compromise with liberalism* shows that he absolutely fails to understand the true significance of the program of the *Credo* and *is carrying out that program de facto*, however much he may repudiate it! Because *by that* he drags Social-Democracy towards the “economic struggle against the employers and the government” and *yields to liberalism*, abandons the task of actively intervening *in every* “liberal” issue and of defining *his own*, Social-Democratic, attitude towards this question.

(...)

LOCAL AND ALL-RUSSIAN WORK

The objections raised against the organization plan outlined here on the grounds that it is undemocratic and conspiratorial are totally unsound. Nevertheless, a question still remains which is frequently put and deserves detailed examination. This is the question about the relations between local work and all-Russian work. Fears are expressed that the formation of a centralized organization may shift the centre of gravity from the former to the latter, damage the movement, weaken our contacts with the masses of the workers and undermine local agitation generally. To these fears we reply that our movement in the past few years has suffered precisely from the fact that the local workers have been too absorbed in local work; that therefore it is absolutely necessary to shift the centre of gravity somewhat to

national work and that far from weakening, this would strengthen our ties and the continuity of our local agitation. Take the question of central and local newspapers. I would ask the reader not to forget that we cite the publication of newspapers only as *an example*, illustrating an immeasurably broader and more varied revolutionary activity in general.

In the first period of the mass movement (1896-98), an attempt is made by local Party workers to publish an all-Russian paper, the *Rabochaya Gazeta*. In the next period (1898-1900), the movement makes an enormous stride, but the attention of the leaders is wholly absorbed by local publications. If we count up all the local papers that were published, we shall find that the average was one per month.* Does this not clearly illustrate our amateurishness? Does this not clearly show that our revolutionary organization lags behind the spontaneous growth of the movement? If *the same number* of issues had been published, not by scattered local groups, but by a single organization, we would not only have saved an enormous amount of effort, but we would have secured immeasurably greater stability and continuity in our work. This simple point is very frequently lost sight of by those practical workers who work *actively* and almost exclusively on local publications (unfortunately this is true even now in the overwhelming majority of cases), as well as by the publicists who display an astonishing quixotism on this question. The practical workers usually rest content with the argument that “it is difficult”** for

* See *Report to the Paris Congress*,³⁶ p. 14. “From that time (1897) to the spring of 1900, thirty issues of various papers were published in various places. . . . On an average, over one issue per month was published.”

** This difficulty is more apparent than real. As a matter of fact, *there is not* a single local circle but which has the opportunity of taking up some function or other in connection with all-Russian work. “Don’t say: I can’t; say: I won’t.”

local workers to engage in the organization of an all-Russian newspaper, and that local newspapers are better than no newspapers at all. The latter argument is, of course, perfectly just, and we shall not yield to any practical worker in our recognition of the enormous importance and usefulness of local newspapers *in general*. But this is not the point. The point is, can we not overcome the scatteredness and amateurishness that are so glaringly expressed in the thirty issues of local newspapers published throughout Russia in two and a half years? Do not restrict yourselves to the indisputable, but too general, statement about the usefulness of local newspapers generally; have the courage also frankly to admit their negative aspects that have been revealed by the experience of two and a half years. This experience has shown that under the conditions in which we work, these local newspapers prove, in the majority of cases, to be unstable in their principles, lacking in political significance, extremely costly in regard to expenditure of revolutionary forces, and totally unsatisfactory from a technical point of view (I have in mind, of course, not the technique of printing them, but the frequency and regularity of publication). These defects are not accidental; they are the inevitable outcome of the scatteredness which, on the one hand, explains the predominance of local newspapers in the period under review, and, on the other hand, is *fostered by* this predominance. It is positively *beyond the strength* of a separate local organization to maintain stability of principles in its newspaper and raise it to the level of a political organ; it is *beyond its strength* to collect and utilize sufficient material to cast light on the whole of our political life. The argument usually advanced to support the need of numerous local newspapers in free countries that the cost of printing by local workers is low and that the population can be kept more fully and quickly informed, this *argument*, as ex-

perience has shown, speaks *against* local newspapers in Russia. They are excessively costly in regard to expenditure of revolutionary forces, and appear *very* rarely, for the very simple reason that the publication of an *illegal* newspaper, no matter how small its size, requires an extensive secret apparatus such as is possible with large factory production; for this apparatus cannot be created in a small, handicraft workshop. Very frequently, the primitiveness of the secret apparatus (every practical worker can cite numerous cases) enables the police to take advantage of the publication and distribution of one or two issues to make *mass* arrests, which result in such a cleanup that it becomes necessary to start all over again. A well-organized secret apparatus requires professionally well-trained revolutionaries and division of labour applied with the greatest consistency, but both of these requirements are beyond the strength of a separate local organization, no matter how strong it may be at any given moment. Not only are the general interests of our movement as a whole (training of the workers in consistent socialist and political principles) *better served by non-local newspapers*, but so also are even specifically local interests. This may seem paradoxical at first sight, but it has been proved up to the hilt by the two and a half years of experience to which we have already referred. Everyone will agree that if all the local forces that were engaged in the publication of these thirty issues of newspapers had worked on a single newspaper, sixty if not a hundred issues could easily have been published and, consequently, it would have more fully expressed all the specifically local features of the movement. True, it is not an easy matter to attain such a degree of organization, but we must realize the need for it. Every local circle must think about it, and *work actively* to achieve it, without waiting to be urged on from outside, without being tempted by the popularity and closer proximity of a local newspaper which, as our revolutionary experience

has shown, proves to a large extent to be illusory.

And it is a bad service indeed those publicists render to the practical work who, thinking that they are particularly close to the practical workers, fail to see this illusoriness, and make shift with the astonishingly hollow argument: we must have local newspapers, we must have district newspapers, and we must have all-Russian newspapers. Generally speaking, of course, all these are necessary, but once you undertake to solve a concrete organizational problem surely you must take time and circumstances into consideration. Is it not quixotic when the *Svoboda* (No. 1, p. 68), in a special article "dealing with *the question of a newspaper*," writes: "It seems to us that every locality, where any appreciable number of workers are collected, should have its own workers' newspaper; not a newspaper imported from somewhere, but its very own." If the publicist who wrote these words refuses to think about their meaning, then at least you, reader, think about it for him. How many scores, if not hundreds, of "localities where any appreciable number of workers are collected" are there in Russia, and would it not be simply perpetuating our amateurishness if indeed every local organization set to work to publish its own newspaper? How this diffusion would facilitate the task of the gendarmes of netting — and without "any appreciable" effort — the local Party workers at the very outset of their activity and preventing them from developing into real revolutionaries! A reader of an all-Russian newspaper, continues the author, would not find at all interesting the descriptions of the malpractices of the factory owners and the "details of factory life in other towns outside his own." But "an inhabitant of Orel would not find it dull reading about Orel affairs. In every issue he would learn of who had been 'called over the coals' and who had been 'scolded,' and his spirits would begin to soar." (P. 69.) Yes, yes, the spirit of the Orel reader is soaring but the flights of imagina-

tion of our publicist are also soaring — too high. He should have asked himself: is such a defence of petty parochialism in place? We are second to none in our appreciation of the importance and necessity of factory exposures, but it must be borne in mind that we have reached a stage when St. Petersburg folk find it dull reading the St. Petersburg correspondence of the St. Petersburg *Rabochaya Mysl*. Local factory exposures have always been *and should always continue* to be made through the medium of leaflets, but we must raise the level of the *newspaper*, and not lower it to the level of a factory leaflet. What we require for a newspaper is not so much "petty" exposures, as of the major, typical evils of factory life, exposures based on especially striking facts and capable, therefore, of arousing the interest of *all* workers and all leaders of the movement, capable of really enriching their knowledge, widening their outlook, and of serving as a starting point for awakening new districts and new categories of the workers.

"Moreover, in a local newspaper, all the malpractices of the factory administration and other authorities may be denounced hot on the spot. In the case of a general newspaper, however, by the time the news reaches it the facts will have been forgotten in the localities in which they occurred. The reader, when he gets the paper, will say: 'God knows when that happened!'" (*Ibid.*) Exactly! God knows when it happened. From the same source we learn that the 30 issues of newspapers which appeared in two and a half years, were published in six cities. This, on the average, is *one issue per city per half year!* And even if our frivolous publicist *trebled* his estimate of the productivity of local work (which would be absolutely wrong in the case of an average city, because it is impossible to increase productivity to any extent by our amateurish methods), we would still get only one issue every two months, i.e., nothing at all like "denouncing hot on the spot." It would

be sufficient, however, to combine ten or so local organizations, and send their delegates to take an active part in organizing a general newspaper, to enable us every fortnight to "denounce," *over the whole of Russia*, not petty, but really outstanding and typical evils. No one who knows the state of affairs in our organizations can have the slightest doubt on that score. As for catching the enemy red-handed — if we mean it seriously and not merely as a trite phrase — that is quite beyond the ability of the illegal paper generally. It can only be done by an anonymous leaflet, because exposures of that nature must be made within a day or two at the most (take, for example, the usual brief strikes, beatings in a factory, demonstrations, etc.).

"The workers live not only in factories, but in the cities too," continues our author, rising from the particular to the general, with a strict consistency that would have done honour to Boris Krichevsky himself; and he refers to matters like municipal councils, municipal hospitals, municipal schools, and demands that workers' newspapers should not ignore municipal affairs in general. This demand — an excellent one in itself — serves as a particularly vivid illustration of the empty abstraction to which discussions about local newspapers are all too frequently limited. First of all, if indeed newspapers appeared "in every locality where any appreciable number of workers are collected" with such detailed information on municipal affairs as the *Svoboda* desires, it would, under our Russian conditions, inevitably degenerate into actual petty parochialism, would lead to a weakening of the consciousness of the importance of an all-Russian revolutionary onslaught on the tsarist autocracy, and would strengthen those extremely virile shoots — not uprooted but rather hidden or temporarily suppressed — of the tendency which has already become notorious as a result of the famous remark about revolutionaries who talk a great deal about non-existent parliaments and too little about

existing municipal councils. We say "inevitably" in order to emphasize that the *Svoboda* obviously does not want this but the contrary to happen. But good intentions are not enough. In order that municipal affairs may be dealt with in their proper perspective, in relation to the whole of our work, this perspective must *first* be clearly conceived, firmly established, not only by argument, but by numerous examples, so that it may acquire the stability of a *tradition*. This is far from being the case with us yet. And yet this must be done *first*, before we can allow ourselves to think and talk about an extensive local press.

Secondly, in order to be able to write really well and interestingly about municipal affairs, one must have first-hand and not book knowledge of them. But there are hardly any Social-Democrats *anywhere in Russia* who possess that knowledge. In order to be able to write in newspapers (not in popular pamphlets) about municipal and state affairs one must have fresh and multifarious material collected and worked up by able people. And in order to be able to collect and work up such material, we must have something more than the "primitive democracy" of a primitive circle, in which everybody does everything and all entertain themselves by playing at referendums. For this it is necessary to have a staff of expert writers, expert correspondents, an army of Social-Democratic reporters who establish contacts far and wide, able to fathom all sorts of "state secrets" (about which the Russian government official is so puffed up, but which he so easily blabs), able to penetrate "behind the scenes," an army of people whose "official duty" it must be to be ubiquitous and omniscient. And we, the Party that fights against *all* economic, political, social and national oppression, can and must find, collect, train, mobilize and set into motion such an army of omniscient people — but

all this has yet to be done! Far from taking a single step in this direction in the overwhelming majority of localities, the necessity for doing it is very often not even *realized*. Search our Social-Democratic press for lively and interesting articles, correspondence, and exposures of our diplomatic, military, ecclesiastical, municipal, financial, etc., etc., affairs and malpractices! You will find *almost nothing*, or very little, about these things.* That is why "it always frightfully annoys me when a man comes to me, utters beautiful and charming words" about the need for newspapers in "every locality where any appreciable number of workers are collected" that will expose factory, municipal and government evils.

The predominance of the local papers over a central press may be a sign either of poverty or of luxury. Of poverty, when the movement has not yet developed the forces for large-scale production, continues to flounder in amateurishness and is all but swamped with "the petty details of factory life." Of luxury, when the movement has *already fully mastered* the task of comprehensive exposure and comprehensive agitation and it becomes necessary to publish numerous local newspapers in addition to the central organ.

* That is why even examples of exceptionally good local newspapers fully confirm our point of view. For example, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* is an excellent newspaper, and is altogether free from instability of principles. But it has been unable to provide what it desired for the local movement, owing to the infrequency of its publication and to extensive police raids. What our Party most urgently requires at the present time, viz., a principled discussion of the fundamental questions of the movement and wide political agitation, has proved too big a job for the local newspaper. And what material of particular value it has published, like the articles about the mine owners' congress, unemployment, etc., was not strictly local material, *it was required for the whole of Russia*, and not for the South alone. No articles like that have appeared in any of our Social-Democratic newspapers.

Let each one decide for himself what the predominance of local newspapers implies at the present time. I shall limit myself to a precise formulation of my own conclusion in order not to furnish grounds for misunderstanding. Hitherto, the majority of our local organizations have been thinking almost exclusively of local newspapers, and have devoted almost all their activities to these. This is abnormal — the very opposite should be the case. The majority of the local organizations should think principally of the publication of an all-Russian newspaper, and devote their activities principally to it. Until this is done, we shall *not* be able to establish a *single* newspaper capable, to any degree, of serving the movement with *comprehensive* press agitation. When it is done, however, normal relations between the necessary central newspapers and the necessary local newspapers will be established automatically.

* * *

It would seem at first glance that the conclusion concerning the necessity for shifting the centre of gravity from local work to all-Russian work does not apply to the sphere of the specifically economic struggle. In this struggle, the immediate enemy of the workers is the individual employer or group of employers, who are not bound by any organization having even the remotest resemblance to the purely military, strictly centralized organization of the Russian government which is guided even in its minutest details by a single will, and which is our immediate enemy in the political struggle.

But that is not the case. As we have already pointed out time and again, the economic struggle is a trade struggle, and for that reason it requires that the workers be organized according to trade and not only according to their place of employment. And this organization by trade becomes all

the more imperatively necessary, the more rapidly our employers organize in all sorts of companies and syndicates. Our scatteredness and our amateurishness are an outright hindrance to this work of organization which requires the existence of a single, all-Russian body of revolutionaries which is capable of giving leadership to the all-Russian trade unions. We have already described above the type of organization that is desired for this purpose, and now we shall add just a few words about this in connection with the question of our press.

That every Social-Democratic newspaper must have a *special section* devoted to the trade union (economic) struggle hardly anyone will doubt. But the growth of the trade union movement compels us to think also about a trade union press. It seems to us, however, that with rare exceptions, there can be no question of trade union newspapers in Russia at the present time; they would be a luxury, and many a time we lack even our daily bread. The form of trade union press that would suit the conditions of our illegal work and is already required at the present time is *trade union pamphlets*. In these pamphlets, *legal** and illegal material should be collected and grouped systematically, on conditions of labour in a given trade, on the differences in this regard in the various parts of Russia, the principal demands advanced by the workers in a given trade, the defects of the laws concerning that trade, outstanding cases of economic struggle by the workers in this trade, on the rudiments, the present state and the requirements of their trade union organization, etc. Such pamphlets would, in the first place, relieve our Social-Democratic press of a mass of trade details that are of interest only to the workers of the given trade; secondly,

*Legal material is particularly important in this connection, and we are particularly behind in our ability systematically to collect and utilize it. It would not be an exaggeration to say that one could somehow compile a trade union pamphlet on the basis of legal material alone, but

they would record the results of our experience in the trade union struggle, would preserve the material collected—which now literally gets lost in a mass of leaflets and fragmentary correspondence—and would generalize this material. Thirdly, they could serve as material for the guidance of agitators, because conditions of labour change relatively slowly and the principal demands of the workers in a given trade are extremely stable (cf., for example, the demands advanced by the weavers in the Moscow district in 1885 and in the St. Petersburg district in 1896); a compilation of these demands and needs might serve for years as an excellent handbook for agitators on economic questions in backward localities or among the backward strata of the workers. Examples of successful strikes, information about the higher standard of living, about better conditions of labour in one district, would encourage the workers in other districts to take up the fight

it could not be done on the basis of illegal material alone. In collecting illegal material from workers on questions like those dealt with in the publications of the *Rabochaya Mysl*, we waste a great deal of the efforts of revolutionaries (whose place in this work could very easily be taken by legal workers), and yet we never obtain good material. The reason is that a worker who very often knows only a single department of a large factory and almost always the economic results, but not the general conditions and standards of his work, cannot acquire the knowledge which is possessed by the office staff of a factory, by inspectors, doctors, etc., and which is scattered in petty newspaper reports, and in special industrial, medical, Zemstvo and other publications.

I very distinctly remember my "first experiment," which I would never like to repeat. I spent many weeks "examining" a worker who used to visit me, about every aspect of the conditions prevailing in the enormous factory at which he was employed. True, after great effort, I managed to obtain material for a description (of just one single factory!), but at the end of the interview the worker would wipe the sweat from his brow, and say to me smilingly: "I find it easier to work overtime than answer your questions!"

The more energetically we carry on our revolutionary struggle, the more the government will be compelled to legalize a part of the "trade union" work, thereby relieving us of part of our burden.

again and again. Fourthly, having made a start in generalizing the trade union struggle, and having in this way strengthened the link between the Russian trade union movement and Socialism, the Social-Democrats would at the same time see to it that our trade union work did not take up either too small or too large a part of our entire Social-Democratic work. A local organization that is cut off from the organizations in other towns finds it very difficult, and sometimes almost impossible, to maintain a correct sense of proportion (and the example of the *Rabochaya Mysl* shows what a monstrous exaggeration can be made in the direction of trade unionism). But an all-Russian organization of revolutionaries that stands undeviatingly on the basis of Marxism, that leads the whole of the political struggle and possesses a staff of professional agitators, will never find it difficult to determine the proper proportion.

(...)

B. CAN A NEWSPAPER BE A COLLECTIVE ORGANIZER?

The main point of the article "Where To Begin?" is that it discusses *precisely* this question and gives an affirmative reply to it. As far as we know, the only attempt to examine this question on its merits and to prove that it must be answered in the negative was made by L. Nadezhdin, whose argument we reproduce in full:

"... It greatly pleased us to see the *Iskra* (No. 4) raise the question of the need for an all-Russian newspaper, but we cannot agree that it fits in with the title of the article: 'Where To Begin?' Undoubtedly this is an extremely important matter, but neither a newspaper, nor a whole series of popular leaflets, nor a whole mountain of manifestoes, can serve as the basis for a militant organization in revolutionary times. We must set to work to build up strong political organizations in the localities. We lack such organizations; we have been carrying on our work mainly

among enlightened workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle. *If strong political organizations are not trained locally, what will be the use of even an excellently organized all-Russian newspaper?* It will be a burning bush, burning without being consumed, but firing no one! The *Iskra* thinks that around it, in the work for it people will gather and organize. *But they will find it far easier to gather and organize around work that is more concrete!* This something more concrete must and should be the extensive organization of local newspapers, the immediate preparation of the workers' forces for demonstrations, constant work by local organizations among the unemployed (regular distribution of pamphlets and leaflets, meetings, appeals to resist the government, etc.). We must begin live political work in the localities, and when the time comes to amalgamate on this real basis, it will not be an artificial, a paper amalgamation; it will not be by means of newspapers that such an amalgamation of local work into an all-Russian cause will be achieved!" (*The Eve of Revolution*, p. 54.)

We have emphasized the passages in this eloquent tirade which most strikingly illustrate the author's incorrect judgment of our plan, and the incorrectness of his point of view in general, which he opposes to that of the *Iskra*. Unless we train strong political organizations in the localities—even an excellently organized all-Russian newspaper will be of no avail. Absolutely true. But the whole point is that *there is no other way of training* strong political organizations except through the medium of an all-Russian newspaper. The author missed the most important statement the *Iskra* made *before it proceeded* to set forth its "plan": that it was necessary "to call for the establishment of a revolutionary organization, capable of combining all the forces and of leading the movement *not only in name*, but in deed, i.e., *an organization that will be ready at any moment to support every protest and every outbreak*, and to utilize these for the purpose of increasing and strengthening the military forces required for decisive battle." But now after the February and March events, everyone will agree with this in principle, continues the *Iskra*. Yet what we need is not a solution of the problem in principle, but a *practical solution of it*; we

must immediately advance a definite constructive plan in order that everyone may immediately set to work to build *from every side*. And now we are again being dragged away from the practical solution towards something that in principle is correct, indisputable and great, but is absolutely inadequate and absolutely incomprehensible to the broad masses of workers, namely, to "train strong political organizations"! This is not the point at issue, most worthy author! The point is *how* to go about the training and how to accomplish it!

It is not true to say that "we have been carrying on our work mainly among enlightened workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle." Presented in such a form, this thesis reduces itself to the *Svoboda's* usual but fundamentally fallacious proclivity to oppose the enlightened workers to the "mass." In recent years, even the enlightened workers have been "engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle." That is the first point. On the other hand, the masses will never learn to conduct the political struggle until we help to *train* leaders for this struggle, both from among the enlightened workers and from among the intellectuals; and such leaders can acquire training *solely* by systematically appraising *all* the everyday aspects of our political life, of *all attempts* at protest and struggle on the part of various classes and on various grounds. Therefore, to talk about "training political organizations" and at the same time to *contrast* the "paper work" of a political newspaper to "live political work in the localities" is simply ridiculous! Why, the *Iskra* has adapted its "plan" for a newspaper to the "plan" for creating a "militant preparedness" to support the unemployed movement, peasant revolts, discontent among the Zemstvo-ites, "popular indignation against the reckless tsarist bashi-bazouks," etc. Everyone who is at all acquainted with the movement knows perfectly well that the vast majority of

local organizations *never even dream* of these things, that many of the prospects of "live political work" here indicated *have never* been realized by a single organization, that the attempt, for example, to call attention to the growth of discontent and protest among the Zemstvo intelligentsia rouses feelings of consternation and perplexity in Nadezhdin ("Good Lord, is this newspaper intended for Zemstvo-ites?"—*The Eve*, p. 129), among the Economists (letter to the *Iskra*, No. 12) and among many practical workers. Under these circumstances, it is possible to "begin" *only* by inducing people to *think* about all these things, by inducing them to summarize and generalize all the diverse signs of ferment and active struggle. "Live political work" can be *begun* in our time, when Social-Democratic tasks are being degraded, *exclusively* with live political agitation, which is impossible unless we have an all-Russian newspaper, frequently issued and properly distributed.

Those who regard the *Iskra's* "plan" as a manifestation of "literariness" have totally failed to understand the substance of the plan, and imagine that what is suggested as the most suitable means for the present time is the goal. These people have not taken the trouble to study the two comparisons that were drawn to clearly illustrate the plan proposed. The *Iskra* wrote: the publication of an all-Russian political newspaper must be *the main line* by adhering to which we could unswervingly develop deeper, and expand this organization (i.e., a revolutionary organization always prepared to support every protest and every outbreak). Pray tell me: when bricklayers lay bricks in various parts of an enormous structure the like of which has never been seen before, is it "paper" work to use a line to help them find the correct place in which to put each brick, to indicate to them the ultimate purpose of the work as a whole, enable them to use *not only every brick but even every piece of brick* which, joining with the bricks placed before and after

it, forms a complete and all-embracing line? And are we not now passing through just such a period in our Party life when we have bricks and bricklayers, but lack the guiding line which all could see and follow? Let them shout that in stretching out the line, we want to command. Had we desired to command, gentlemen, we would have written on the title page, not "*Iskra*, No. 1," but "*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 3," as we were invited to do by a number of comrades, and *as we would have had a perfect right to do* after the events described above. But we did not do that. We wished to have our hands free to wage an irreconcilable struggle against all pseudo Social-Democrats; we wanted our line, if properly laid, to be respected because it was correct, and not because it was laid by an official organ.

"The question of uniting local activity in central bodies runs in a vicious circle," L. Nadezhdin lectures us; "unification requires homogeneous elements, and this can be created only by something that unites; but this uniting element may be the product of strong local organizations which at the present time are by no means distinguished for their homogeneity." This truism is as hoary and indisputable as the one that says we must train strong political organizations. And it is equally barren. *Every* question "runs in a vicious circle" because the whole of political life is an endless chain consisting of an infinite number of links. The whole art of politics lies in finding and gripping as strong as we can the link that is least likely to be torn out of our hands, the one that is most important at the given moment, the one that guarantees the possessor of a link the possession of the whole chain.* If we had a staff of experienced bricklayers,

* Comrade Krichevsky and Comrade Martynov! I call your attention to this outrageous manifestation of "autocracy," "uncontrolled authority," "supreme regulating," etc. Just think of it: a desire to *possess* the whole chain!! Send in a complaint at once. Here you have a ready-prepared subject for two leading articles for No. 12 of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*!

who had learned to work so well together that they could place their bricks exactly where they were required without a guiding line (and, speaking abstractly, this is by no means impossible), then perhaps we might seize upon some other link. But the unfortunate thing is that we have no experienced bricklayers trained to teamwork yet, that bricks are often laid where they are not needed at all, that they are not laid according to the general line, but are so scattered about that the enemy can shatter the structure as if it were made not of bricks but of sand.

Here is the other comparison: "A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and collective agitator, but also a collective organizer. In this respect *it can be compared to the scaffolding* erected around a building in construction; it marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, permitting them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organized labour."* Does this sound anything like an attempt of an armchair author to exaggerate his role? The scaffolding is not required at all for habitation, it is made of the cheapest material, it is only put up temporarily, and as soon as the shell of the structure is completed, is scrapped for firewood. As for the building up of revolutionary organizations, experience shows that sometimes they may be built without scaffolding—take the 'seventies for example. But at the present time we cannot imagine that the building we require can be put up without scaffolding.

Nadezhdin disagrees with this, and says: "The *Iskra* thinks that around it, in the work for it people will gather and organize. *But they will find it far easier* to gather and organize around work that is *more concrete!*" So! So! "they will

* Martynov, quoting the first sentence in this passage in the *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10, p. 62), left out the second sentence as if desiring to emphasize by that either his unwillingness to discuss the essentials of the question, or his incapability of understanding them.

find it far easier to gather around work that is more concrete. . . ." There is a Russian proverb which says: "Don't spit into a well, you may want to drink out of it." But there are people who do not object to drinking from a well which has been spat into. What despicable things our magnificent, legal "critics of Marxism" and illegal admirers of the *Rabochaya Mysl* have said in the name of this something more concrete! How restricted our movement is by our own narrowness, lack of initiative and hesitation, which is justified by the traditional argument about finding it "far easier to gather around work that is more concrete"! And Nadezhdin—who regards himself as possessing a particularly keen sense of the "realities of life," who so severely condemns "armchair" authors (with pretensions to being witty) and accuses the *Iskra* of a weakness for seeing Economism everywhere, and who imagines that he stands far above this division between the orthodox and the critics — fails to see that with his arguments he is playing into the hands of the narrowness that arouses his indignation and that he is drinking from a well that has actually been spat into! Yes, the sincerest indignation against narrowness, the most passionate desire to raise those who worship this narrowness from their knees, is insufficient if the indignant one is swept along without sail or rudder, and as "spontaneously" as the revolutionaries of the 'seventies, clutches at such things as "excitative terror," "agrarian terror," "sounding the tocsin," etc. Glance at this "more concrete" work around which he thinks it will be "far easier" to gather and organize: 1) local newspapers; 2) preparations for demonstrations; 3) work among the unemployed. It will be seen at the very first glance that all these have been seized upon at random in order to be able to say something, for however we may regard them, it would be absurd to see in them anything especially suitable for "gathering and organizing." Why, this very Na-

dezhdin says a few pages further on: "It is time we simply stated the fact that extremely petty work is being carried on in the localities, the committees are not doing a tenth of what they could do. . . the unifying centres that we have at the present time are a pure fiction, they represent a sort of revolutionary bureaucracy, mutual promotion of each other to the post of general; and so it will continue until strong local organizations grow up." These remarks, though exaggerating the position somewhat, no doubt contain many a bitter truth, but can it be said that Nadezhdin does not see the connection between the petty work carried on in the localities and the narrow outlook of the Party workers, the narrow scope of their activities, which is inevitable in view of the lack of training of the Party workers confined to their local organizations? Has he, like the author of the article on organization published in the *Svoboda*, forgotten how the transition to a broad local press (from 1898) was accompanied by a very strong intensification of Economism and "amateurishness"? Even if a "broad local press" could be established at all satisfactorily (and we have shown above that it is impossible save in very exceptional cases)—even then the local organs could not "gather and organize" *all* the revolutionary forces for a *general* attack upon the autocracy and for the leadership of a *united* struggle. Do not forget that we are here discussing *only* the "gathering," the organizing significance of a newspaper, and we could put to Nadezhdin, who defends scatteredness, the ironical question that he himself has put: "Has someone left us a legacy of 200,000 revolutionary organizers?" Furthermore, "preparations for demonstrations" cannot be *opposed* to the *Iskra's* plan for the very reason that this plan includes the organization of the widest possible demonstrations *as one of its aims*; the point under discussion is the choice of the practical *means*. On this point also Nadezhdin is confused for he has lost sight of the fact that only already "gathered

and organized" forces can "prepare for" demonstrations (which hitherto, in the overwhelming majority of cases, have taken place quite spontaneously) and we *lack* precisely *the ability* to gather and organize. "Work among the unemployed." Again the same confusion, for this too represents one of the military operations of the mobilized forces and not a plan for mobilizing the forces. The extent to which Nadezhdin here too underestimates the harm caused by our state of scatteredness, by our lack of "200,000 organizers," can be seen from the following: many (including Nadezhdin) have reproached the *Iskra* with the paucity of the news it gives about unemployment and with the casual nature of the correspondence it publishes about the most common affairs of rural life. The reproach is justified, but the *Iskra* is "guilty without sin." We strive "to stretch a line" through the countryside too, but there are almost no bricklayers there, and we are *obliged* to encourage *everyone* who informs us even on the most common facts, in the hope that this will increase the number of our contributors in this field and will ultimately *train us all* to select the really most outstanding facts. But the material on which we can train is so scanty that unless we generalize it for the whole of Russia we shall have very little to train on at all. No doubt one who possesses at least as much capability as an agitator and as much knowledge of the life of the vagrant as apparently Nadezhdin does, could render priceless service to the movement by carrying on agitation among the unemployed—but a person of this description would be simply burying his talents if he failed to inform *all* comrades in Russia of every step he took in his work, in order that others, who, in the mass, as yet lack the ability to undertake new kinds of work, might learn from his example.

Absolutely everybody now talks about the importance of unity, about the necessity for "gathering and organizing" but

in the majority of cases what is lacking is a definite idea of where to begin and how to bring about this unity. Probably everyone will agree that if we "unite," say, the district circles in a given city, it will be necessary to have for this purpose *common institutions*, i.e., not merely a common title of "Union" but genuinely *common* work, exchange of material, experience and forces, distribution of functions not only by districts, but specializing them on a city-wide scale. Everyone will agree that a big secret apparatus will not pay its way (to use a commercial expression) "with the resources" (in material and man power, of course), of a single district, and that this narrow field will not provide sufficient scope for a specialist to develop his talents. But the same thing applies to the unification of a number of cities, because even a whole locality *will prove*, and has already proved in the history of our Social-Democratic movement, to be far too narrow a field: we have already proved this above in detail with regard to political agitation and organizational work. What we require first and foremost and most imperatively, is to widen the field, establish *real* contacts between the cities on the basis of *regular, common work*; for scatteredness weighs down our people who are "stuck in a hole" (to use the expression employed by a correspondent to the *Iskra*), not knowing what is happening in the world, from whom to learn, or how to acquire experience and satisfy their desire to engage in broad activities. And I continue to insist that we can *start* establishing *real* contacts only with the aid of a common newspaper, as the only regular, all-Russian enterprise, which will summarize the results of the most diverse forms of activity and thereby *stimulate* people to march forward untiringly along *all* the innumerable paths which lead to revolution in the same way as all roads lead to Rome. If it is not in name only that we want unity, we must arrange for every local circle *immediately to assign*, say, a fourth of its forces to *active* work for the *common*

cause and the newspaper will immediately convey to them* the general design, dimensions and character of this cause, will give them a precise indication of the most keenly felt defects of all-Russian activity, where agitation is lacking and where contacts are weak, and point out which cogs in the vast general mechanism could be repaired or replaced by better ones. A circle that has not yet commenced to work, but which is only just seeking work, could then start, not like a craftsman in a separate little workshop unaware of the development that has taken place in "industry" before him or of the general level of production methods prevailing in industry, but as a participant in an extensive enterprise that *reflects* the whole general revolutionary attack on the autocracy. And the more perfect the finish of each cog, the larger the number of detail workers engaged in the common cause, the closer will our network become and the less will be the consternation in the general ranks resulting from inevitable police raids.

Actual contacts would begin to be established by the mere function of distributing a newspaper (that is, if it is a newspaper worthy of the name, i.e., if it is issued regularly, not once a month like a magazine, but four times a month). At the present time, communication between cities on revolutionary business is an extreme rarity, and at all events the exception rather than the rule. If we had a newspaper, however, such communication would become the rule and would secure, not only the distribution of the newspaper, of course, but also (and what is more important) an exchange

* *A reservation*: that is, if a given circle sympathizes with the policy of that newspaper and considers it useful to become a collaborator, meaning by that, not only literary collaboration, but revolutionary collaboration generally. *Note for the "Rabocheye Dyelo"*: among revolutionists who attach value to the cause and not to playing at democracy, who do not separate "sympathy" from the most active and lively participation, this reservation is taken for granted.

of experience, of material, of forces and of resources. The scope of organizational work would immediately become many times wider and the success of one locality would serve as a standing encouragement to further perfection and would arouse the desire to utilize the experience already gained by comrades working in other parts of the country. Local work would become far richer and more varied than it is now: political and economic exposures gathered from all over Russia would provide mental food for workers of all trades and in *all stages of development*, would provide material and occasion for talks and readings on the most diverse subjects, which would, in addition, be suggested by hints in the legal press, by talk among the public and by the "shamefaced" government statements. Every outbreak, every demonstration, would be weighed and discussed in all its aspects in all parts of Russia; it would stimulate a desire to keep up with the rest (we Socialists do not by any means reject all rivalry or all "competition"!) and consciously to prepare for that which at first appeared spontaneously as it were, a desire to take advantage of the favourable conditions in a given district or at a given moment for modifying the plan of attack, etc. At the same time, this revival of local work would not result in that desperate, "convulsive" exertion of *all* efforts and the risking of *all* forces which every single demonstration or the publication of every single issue of a local newspaper now frequently entails. On the one hand the police would find it much more difficult to get at the "roots," once they do not know in what district to seek for them. On the other hand, regular common work would train our people to adjust the force of a *given* attack to the strength of the given detachment of the army (at the present time no one ever thinks of doing that, because in nine cases out of ten these attacks occur spontaneously), and would facilitate the "transportation" from one place to another, not only of literature, but also of revolutionary

forces.

At present these forces in a great many cases are being spent and bled on restricted local work, but under the circumstances we are discussing, there would be the possibility and occasion would constantly arise for transferring an agitator or organizer who is at all capable from one end of the country to another. Beginning with short journeys on Party business at the Party's expense, people would become accustomed to being maintained entirely by the Party, would become professional revolutionaries and would train themselves to be real political leaders.

And if indeed we succeeded in reaching a point when all, or at least a considerable majority, of the local committees, local groups and circles actively took up work for the common cause, we could, in the not distant future, establish a weekly newspaper that would be regularly distributed in tens of thousands of copies over the whole of Russia. This newspaper would become a part of an enormous pair of smith's bellows that would fan every spark of class struggle and popular indignation into a general conflagration. Around what is in itself still a very innocent and very small, but a regular and *common* effort, in the full sense of the word, a regular army of tried warriors would systematically gather and receive their training. On the ladders and scaffolding of this general organizational structure there would soon develop and come to the fore Social-Democratic Zhelyabovs from among our revolutionaries and Russian Bebel's from among our workers who would take their place at the head of the mobilized army and rouse the whole people to settle accounts with the shame and the curse of Russia.

That is what we should dream of.

* * *

"We should dream!" I wrote these words and became

alarmed. I imagined myself sitting at a "unity congress" and opposite me were the editors and contributors of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Comrade Martynov rises and, turning to me, says sternly: "Permit me to ask you, has an autonomous editorial board the right to dream without first soliciting the opinion of the Party committees?" He is followed by Comrade Krichevsky who (philosophically deepening Comrade Martynov who had long ago rendered Comrade Plekhanov more profound) continues even more sternly: "I go further. I ask, has a Marxist any right at all to dream, knowing that according to Marx mankind always sets itself such tasks as it can solve and that tactics is a process of growth of Party tasks, which grow together with the Party?"

The very thought of these stern questions sends a cold shiver down my spine and makes me wish for nothing but a place to hide. I shall try to hide behind the back of Pisarev.

"There are rifts and rifts," wrote Pisarev concerning the rift between dreams and reality. "My dream may run ahead of the natural march of events or may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural march of events will ever proceed. In the first case my dream will not cause any harm; it may even support and augment the energy of the workingmen. . . . There is nothing in such dreams that would distort or paralyze labour power. On the contrary, if man were completely deprived of the ability to dream in this way, if he could not from time to time run ahead and mentally conceive, in an entire and completed picture, the product to which his hands are only just beginning to lend shape, then I cannot at all imagine what stimulus there would be to induce man to undertake and complete extensive and strenuous work in the sphere of art, science and practical endeavour. . . . The rift between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observa-

tions with his castles in the air and if, generally speaking, he works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well." 37

Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement. And the people most responsible for this are those who boast of their sober views, their "closeness" to the "concrete," the representatives of legal criticism and of illegal tail-ism.

C. WHAT TYPE OF ORGANIZATION DO WE REQUIRE?

From what has been said the reader will see that our "tactics-as-a-plan" consists in rejecting an immediate *call* for attack, in demanding "a regular siege of the enemy fortress," or in other words, in demanding that all efforts be directed towards gathering, organizing and *mobilizing* permanent troops. When we ridiculed the *Rabocheye Dyelo* for its leap from Economism to shouting for an attack (for which it clamoured in April 1901, in the *Listok Rabochevo Dyela*, No. 6), it of course came down on us with accusations of being "doctrinaire," of failing to understand our revolutionary duty, of calling for caution, etc. Of course we were not in the least surprised to hear these accusations coming from those who totally lack principles and who evade all arguments by references to a profound "tactics-as-a-process," any more than we were surprised by the fact that these accusations were repeated by Nadezhdin, who in general has a supreme contempt for durable programs and the fundamentals of tactics.

It is said that history does not repeat itself. But Nadezhdin is exerting every effort to cause it to repeat itself and he zealously imitates Tkachov in strongly condemning "revolu-

tionary culturism," in shouting about "sounding the tocsin," about a special "eve-of-the-revolution point of view," etc. Apparently, he has forgotten the well-known maxim that while an original historical event represents a tragedy, the copy of it is only a farce.³⁸ The attempt to seize power, which had been prepared by the preaching of Tkachov and carried out by means of the "terrifying" terror which did really terrify, was majestic, but the "excitative" terror of a little Tkachov is simply ridiculous and is particularly ridiculous when supplemented by the idea of an organization of average workers.

"If the *Iskra* would only emerge from its sphere of literariness," wrote Nadezhdin, "it would realize that these (instances like the worker's letter to the *Iskra*, No. 7, etc.) are symptoms of the fact that soon, very soon that 'attack' will commence, and to speak now (*sic!*) of an organization linked up with an all-Russian newspaper means propagating armchair ideas and armchair work." What an unimaginable muddle: on the one hand excitative terror and an "organization of average workers" along with the opinion that it is far "easier" to gather around something "more concrete," like a local newspaper — and on the other hand, the view to talk "now" about an all-Russian organization means propagating armchair thoughts, or, to put it plainly and bluntly, "now" is already too late! But what about the "extensive organization of local newspapers" — is it not too late for that, my dear L. Nadezhdin? And compare with this the *Iskra's* point of view and tactics: excitative terror — is nonsense; to talk about an organization of average workers and about the *extensive* publication of local newspapers means opening the door wide to Economism. We must speak about a single all-Russian organization of revolutionaries, and it will never be too late to talk about that until the real, and not paper, attack commences.

"Yes, as far as organization is concerned the situation is anything but brilliant," continues Nadezhdin. "Yes, the *Iskra* is absolutely right when it says that the mass of our military forces consists of volunteers and insurgents. . . . You do well to give such a sober picture of the state of our forces. But why, at the same time, do you forget that *the crowd is not ours at all*, and consequently, *it will not ask us* when to commence military operations, it will simply go and 'rebel'. . . . When the crowd itself breaks out with its elemental destructive force it *may* overwhelm and brush aside the 'regular troops' among whom we had been preparing all the time to introduce the extremely systematic organization, but had never *managed* to do so." (Our italics.)

Astonishing logic! *Precisely because* the "crowd is not ours," it is stupid and unseemly to shout about "attack" this very minute, because an attack means assault by regular troops and not a spontaneous outburst of the crowd. It is precisely because the crowd *may* overwhelm and brush aside the regular troops that we must without fail "manage to keep up" with the spontaneous upsurge by our work of "introducing extremely systematic organization" among the regular troops, for the more we "manage" to introduce such organization the more probable will it be that the regular troops will not be overwhelmed by the crowd, but will take their place in front at the head of the crowd. Nadezhdin is confused because he imagines that troops, which are being systematically organized, are engaged in something that isolates them from the crowd, when as a matter of fact they are engaged exclusively in all-sided and all-embracing political agitation, i.e., precisely in work that *brings closer and merges into a single whole* the elemental destructive force of the crowd and the conscious destructive force of the organization of revolutionaries. You, gentlemen, wish to lay the blame where it does not belong. For it is precisely the *Svoboda* group that, by including terror *in its program*, calls for an organization of terrorists, and such an organization would indeed prevent our troops from coming closer to the crowd, which, unfortunately, is still not ours, and which,

unfortunately, does not yet ask us, or rarely asks us when and how to commence military operations.

"We will miss the revolution itself," continues Nadezhdin in his attempt to scare the *Iskra*, "in the same way as we missed the recent events which came upon us like a bolt from the blue." This sentence taken in connection with the one quoted above clearly demonstrates the absurdity of the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view" specially invented by the *Svoboda*.* To put it candidly, this special "point of view" boils down to this: it is too late "now" to discuss and prepare. If that is the case, oh most worthy opponent of "literariness," what was the use of writing a pamphlet of 132 pages on "questions of theory** and tactics"? Don't you think it would have been more becoming for "the eve-of-the-revolution point of view" to have issued 132,000 leaflets containing the brief call: "Beat them up"?

Those who make nation-wide political agitation the cornerstone of their program, *their tactics and their organizational work* as the *Iskra* does, stand in least risk of missing the revolution. The people who were engaged over the whole of Russia in spinning the network of organizations linked

* *The Eve of Revolution*, p. 62.

** In his *Review of Questions of Theory*, L. Nadezhdin, by the way, made almost no contribution whatever to the discussion of questions of theory apart, perhaps, from the following passage, which is a very peculiar one from the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view": "Bernsteinism, on the whole, is losing its acuteness for us at the present moment, as also is the question as to whether Mr. Adamovich has proved that Mr. Struve has already deserved distinction, or on the contrary whether Mr. Struve will refute Mr. Adamovich and will refuse to resign — it really makes no difference, because the hour of revolution has struck." (P. 110.) One can hardly imagine a more striking illustration of L. Nadezhdin's infinite disregard for theory. We have proclaimed "the eve of the revolution," therefore "it really makes no difference" whether the orthodoxians will succeed in finally driving the critics from their positions or not!! And our wiseacre fails to see that it is precisely during the revolution that we shall stand in need of the results of our theoretical battles with the critics in order to be able resolutely to combat their *practical* positions!

up with an all-Russian newspaper not only did not miss the spring events, but, on the contrary, enabled us to foretell them. Nor did they miss the demonstrations that were described in the *Iskra*, Nos. 13 and 14; on the contrary, they took part in those demonstrations, clearly appreciating their duty of coming to the aid of the spontaneously rising crowd and, at the same time, through the medium of the newspaper, helping all the comrades in Russia to become more closely acquainted with the demonstrations and to utilize their experience. And if they live they will not miss the revolution which first and foremost will demand of us experience in agitation, ability to support (in a Social-Democratic manner) every protest, ability to direct the spontaneous movement, while safeguarding it from the mistakes of friends and the traps of enemies!

We have thus come to the last reason that compels us so strongly to insist upon a plan of organization centred around an all-Russian newspaper, by means of joint work for a common newspaper. Only such organization will ensure the *flexibility* required of a militant Social-Democratic organization, i.e., the ability to adapt itself immediately to the most diverse and rapidly changing conditions of struggle, the ability, "on the one hand, to avoid open battle with an enemy of overwhelming strength when he has concentrated all his forces at one spot and, on the other, to be able to take advantage of the awkwardness of this enemy and attack him whenever and wherever he least expects.* It would be a

* *Iskra*, No. 4, "Where To Begin?" "Revolutionary culturists, who do not accept the eve-of-the-revolution point of view, are not in the least perturbed by the prospect of working for a long period of time," writes Nadezhdin. (P. 62.) To this we shall remark: unless we are able to devise political tactics and an organizational plan designed for *work over a very long period* and at the same time, *by the very process of this work*, ensure our Party's readiness to be at its post and fulfil its duty in every contingency whenever the march of events is accelerated, we shall prove to

grievous error indeed to build up the Party organization in anticipation only of outbreaks and street fighting, or only upon the "forward march of the drab everyday struggle." We must *always* conduct our everyday work and always be prepared for everything, because very frequently it is almost impossible to foresee when periods of outbreaks will give way to periods of calm. And in those cases when it is possible to do so, it will not be possible to utilize this foresight for the purpose of reconstructing our organization, because in an autocratic country these changes take place with astonishing rapidity, being sometimes connected with a single night raid by the tsarist janizaries.³⁹ And the revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act (as the Nadezhdins apparently imagine) but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with periods of more or less intense calm. For that reason, the principal content of the activity of our Party organization, the focus of this activity, should be work that is possible and necessary in the period of the most powerful outbreaks as well as in the period of complete calm, namely, work of political agitation, linked up over the whole of Russia, illuminating all aspects of life and conducted among the broadest possible strata of the masses. But this work is *unthinkable* in contemporary Russia without an all-Russian newspaper, issued very frequently. The organization which will form around this newspaper, an organization of its *collaborators* (in the broad sense of the word, i.e., all those working for it), will be ready *for everything*, from upholding the honour, the prestige and continuity of the Party in periods of acute

be but miserable political adventurers. Only Nadezhdin, who began to describe himself as a Social-Democrat but yesterday, can forget that the aim of Social-Democracy is radically to transform the conditions of life of the whole of humanity and that for that reason it is not permissible for a Social-Democrat to be "perturbed" by the question of the duration of the work.

revolutionary "depression," to preparing for, fixing the time for and carrying out the *nation-wide armed insurrection*.

Indeed, picture to yourselves a very ordinary occurrence in Russia — the complete discovery and arrest of our organization in one or several localities. With *all* the local organizations lacking a *single*, common regular task, such raids frequently result in the interruption of our work for many months. If, however, all the local organizations had one common task, then, even in the event of a very serious raid, two or three energetic persons could in the course of a few weeks establish new youth circles, which, as is well known, spring up very quickly even now, and bring them into contact with the common centre. And when the common task, hampered by the raid, is apparent to all, new circles could come into being and make connections with the centre even more rapidly.

On the other hand, picture to yourselves a popular uprising. Probably everyone will now agree that we must think of this and prepare for it. But *how*? Surely the Central Committee cannot appoint agents to all localities for the purpose of preparing for the uprising! Even if we had a Central Committee it could achieve absolutely nothing by such appointments under present-day Russian conditions. But a network of agents* that would form in the course of estab-

* Alas, alas! Again I have let slip that awful word "agents" which jars so much on the democratic ears of the Martynovs! I wonder why this word did not offend the sensibilities of the heroes of the 'seventies and yet offends the amateurs of the 'nineties? I like the word, because it clearly and trenchantly indicates the *common cause* to which all the agents bend their thoughts and actions, and if I had to replace this word by another, the only word I might select would be the word "collaborator," if it did not suggest a certain literariness and diffusiveness. The thing we need is a military organization of agents. However, the numerous Martynovs (particularly abroad) whose favourite pastime is "mutual promotion of each other to the post of general" may instead of saying "passport agent" prefer to say, "Chief of the Special Department for Supplying Revolutionists With Passports," etc.

lishing and distributing a common newspaper would not have to "sit around and wait" for the call for an uprising, but could carry on the regular work that would guarantee the highest probability of success in the event of an uprising. Such work would strengthen our contacts with the broadest strata of the masses of the workers and with all those strata who are discontented with the autocracy, which is of such importance for an uprising. It is precisely such work that would serve to cultivate the ability properly to estimate the general political situation and, consequently, the ability to select the proper moment for the uprising. It is precisely such work that would train *all* local organizations to respond simultaneously to one and the same political questions, incidents and events that agitate the whole of Russia, to react to these "incidents" in the most vigorous, uniform and expedient manner possible; for an uprising is in essence the most vigorous, most uniform and most expedient "reaction" of the whole of the people to the conduct of the government. And lastly, it is precisely such work that would train all revolutionary organizations throughout Russia to maintain the most continuous, and at the same time the most secret, contact with each other, thus creating *real* Party unity — for without such contacts it will be impossible collectively to discuss the plan of the uprising and take the necessary preparatory measures on the eve of it, which must be kept in the strictest secrecy.

In a word, the "plan for an all-Russian political newspaper," far from representing the fruits of the labour of armchair workers, infected with dogmatism and literariness (as it seemed to those who gave but little thought to it), is a most practical plan for immediate and all-round preparations for the uprising, while at the same time never for a moment forgetting our ordinary, everyday work.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE LETTER FROM
"7 Ts. 6 F." ⁴⁰

I am writing under the fresh impression of your letter, which I have just read. Its senseless twaddle is so exasperating that I am unable to suppress the desire to state my opinion frankly. Please send my letter on to the author and tell him that he need not take offence at the severe tone. After all, it is not meant for publication.

The letter deserves a reply, in my opinion, because it shows up in particularly bold relief a characteristic trait in the mood of many present-day revolutionaries: waiting for instructions; demanding *everything* from above, from others, from outside; looking lost when faced by failures caused by local inactivity; piling up complaint after complaint, and inventing recipes for a cheap and simple cure of the evil.

You will not invent anything, gentlemen! If *you yourselves* are inactive, if you permit splits to take place under your very noses and then heave sighs and make complaint—*no recipes will help you*. And it is utterly absurd to shower us with complaints on this score. Don't imagine that you offend us by your accusations and attacks: you see, we have become inured, so devilishly inured to them that they do not provoke us!

"Mass" literature "by the hundredweight"—this battle-cry of yours is nothing but an *imaginary recipe* for someone else to cure you of your own inactivity. Believe me, no such recipes will *ever* work! If you yourselves are not energetic and alert, no one will help you in any way. It is highly unreasonable to wail, "*give* us this or that, *deliver* something or other", when *you yourselves should do the getting and delivering*. It is useless to write about it to us, for we cannot do it from here, whereas you can and should

do it by yourselves: I am referring to the delivery of literature we are publishing and have on hand.

Some local "activists" (so called because they are inactive), who have seen no more than a few issues of *Iskra* and who do not work actively to get and distribute it in *mass* quantities, invent the flimsy excuse: "That is not what we want. Give us *mass* literature, for the masses! Masticate it for us, put it into our mouths, and perhaps we'll manage to do the swallowing ourselves.

How phenomenally absurd these complaints appear to those who know and see that they, these local "activists", are unable to organise the distribution of even what is available. Is it not ridiculous to read: give us hundredweights, when you *are unable* to take and transport even a *few pounds*? Do that first, worthy "dreamers for an hour" (for the first mishap makes you abandon everything, even all your convictions!). Do that, and then, when you have done it not once, but dozens of times, the publication, too, *will grow* with the demand.

I say it will grow, for your complaints about mass literature (which you have uncritically and senselessly copied from the Socialist-Revolutionaries, *Svoboda* people, and all sorts of confused "inactivists") are caused by forgetfulness of a small ... a very small trifle, namely, forgetfulness of the fact that you are unable to take and distribute *even a hundredth part* of the mass literature we are publishing now. I shall take one of the recent lists of one of our few (miserably, pitifully, shamefully few) consignments. *The Nizhni-Novgorod speeches, the Rostov struggle, the pamphlet on strikes, the Dikstein pamphlet**⁴¹—I shall limit myself to these. Four, only four small items! So little!!

* "This is old stuff!" you wail. Yes. All parties that have *good* popular literature have been distributing *old stuff*: Guesde and Lafargue, Bebel, Bracke, Liebknecht, etc., *for decades*. Do you hear: for decades! And the *only* popular literature that is *good*, the *only* popular literature that is *suitable* is that which can serve *for decades*. For popular literature is a series of *textbooks for the people*, and textbooks teach the ABC, which remains unchanged for *fifty years* at a time. The "popular" literature which "captivates" you and which the *Svoboda* group and Socialist-Revolutionaries publish by the hundredweight every month is *waste paper and charlatanism*. Charlatans always bustle and make the greatest noise, and some naïve people mistake that for energy.

Yes, it is very little! Yes, we need four hundred, not four.

But, permit me to ask you, have you been able to distribute *at least these four things by the ten thousand*? No, you have not been able to do this. You have not been able to distribute them by the hundred even. *That is why* you shout: *give us hundredweights!* (No one will ever *give* you anything if you are unable to *take* it: bear that in mind).

Have you been able to make use of the *hundreds* of copies which have been *delivered* to you, *brought* to you, and *placed into your mouths*? No, you have not been able to do that. Even in this trifle you have not been able to link up the *masses* with Social-Democracy. Every month we get tens and hundreds of leaflets, reports, news items, and letters from all parts of Russia, but we have had *not a single* (give good thought to the exact meaning of the words, “not a single”!) report about the distribution of these hundreds of copies among the *masses*, about the impression they made on the *masses*, about the reaction of the *masses*, about discussions among the *masses* on *these* things! You are placing us in a position wherein the writer does the writing and the reader (the intellectual) does the reading—after which this same slothful reader fulminates against the writer because he (the writer!!!) does not furnish literature “by the hundredweight” everywhere. The person whose sole business it is to *link up* the writer with the masses sits like a ruffled turkey and gobbles away: give us mass literature, while *at the same time he is unable* to make use of even a *hundredth part* of what is available.

You will of course say that it is *impossible*, impossible in general, to get, for instance, *Iskra*, our main product, *linked up* with the masses. I know you will say that. I have heard it hundreds of times and have always replied that this is untrue, that it is a subterfuge, shirking, inability, and indolence, the desire to have roast duck fly straight into your mouths.

I know from the facts that enterprising people *have been able* to “link up” *Iskra* (this super-intellectual *Iskra*, as the sorry little intellectuals consider it) with the *masses* of even such backward and uneducated workers as those in the industrial gubernias around Moscow. I have known *workers* who have themselves distributed *Iskra* among the masses (there)

and who merely remarked that there were too few copies. Quite recently I heard a “soldier from the field of battle” tell of how in one such out-of-the-way factory area in central Russia *Iskra* is read at one and the same time in numerous circles, at gatherings numbering from ten to fifteen people, the committee and subcommittees *themselves* reading over every issue in advance, *planning* jointly just how to use each article in agitation talks. And they were able to make use of even those paltry five to eight (maximum: *eight!!*) copies which were all that they got owing to the helpless inactivity of the activists stationed near the border (who are never even able to make arrangements for reception of literature consignments and hope that the writer will give birth not only to articles but to people to do the work for them!).

Come now, tell us with your hand over your heart: have many of you made *such* use of *every* copy of *Iskra* you received (delivered to you, brought to you)? You are silent! Well then, let me tell you: one *out of a hundred* copies that get to Russia (by the will of the fates and due to the inactivity of the “readers”) is being used *in this way*, with discussions on the agitation value of every item, with readings of every item in workers’ study circles, in *all* circles of *all* workers who are accustomed to foregather in a particular town. And yet people who are unable to *assimilate* even a hundredth part of the material that gets to them wail: give us hundredweights!! Shchedrin’s formula (the writer does the writing) still regards the “reader” far, far too optimistically!!

The present-day reader (from among the Social-Democratic intellectuals) has gone so far as to complain about the *writers* because the local intellectuals are lazy and “order” the workers about, without doing anything for them. The complaint is justified, a thousand times justified, only ... is it directed to the proper quarter? Won’t you permit us to *return this complaint to the sender*, with a double charge as punishment?? What about yourselves, my worthy complainants? If your friends are *unable* to make use of *Iskra* for readings in workers’ study circles, if they are *unable* to assign people for the delivery and distribution of literature, if they are *unable* to assist the workers to set up circles for this purpose, *why don’t you throw* such helpless friends *overboard*?? Just think, in what sort of pretty

situation do you find yourselves when you complain to us about *your own* helplessness?

It is a *fact* that the "practicians" do not make use of even a hundredth part of all they *could* take. And it is a no less indubitable fact that the special varieties of "mass" literature which these people have thought up are only pretexts and dodges. In the letter of "7 Ts. 6 F.", for instance, three varieties are recommended to "us" (it would be to us, of course):

1) A popular newspaper. Chew over every fact so as to make its assimilation possible without digestion, so that *we*, "activists", should need no stomachs at all.

It does not matter that the world has never yet seen such a "popular" "newspaper", since a newspaper *gives answers to everything*, while popular literature *gives instruction on a few things*. It does not matter that *all* our examples of such literature, beginning with *Rabochaya Mysl*, on through *Vperyods*,⁴² *Rabocheye Dyelos*, *Krasnoye Znamyas*,⁴³ and the like, have unavoidably and necessarily proved mongrels, being neither popular nor newspapers. It does not matter that *all* efforts of the "workers'" newspapers have merely nurtured, and always will nurture, the absurd division into an intellectual movement and a working-class movement (a division caused by the dull-wittedness and bungling of the intellectuals, who go so far as to send complaints about their own bungling from the *seat of the trouble* to the ends of the earth!). It does not matter that *all* the efforts of the "workers'" newspapers so far have been breeding, and will always breed among us, amateurishness and special, profound, Kazan and Kharkov theories. All this does not matter. Look at the *captivating Svoboda* group and the *captivating* ("breath-taking") Socialist-Revolutionaries; what a mass (ugh, what a mass!) of popular newspapers and periodicals they are publishing!! *Narodnoye Dyelo*, *Krasnoye Znamya*, *Svoboda*—a magazine for workers, *Otkliki*—a newspaper and magazine for workers, *Luchina*—for peasants, *Rabochaya Mysl*—the Geneva newspaper of the St. Petersburg workers!! It does not matter that all this is trash, but it is *mass* trash for all that.

And all you have is just one *Iskra*; after all, it gets monotonous! Thirty-one issues and all *Iskra*, while with the

captivating people every two issues of one title (of trash) are immediately followed by three issues of another title (of trash). Now, this is energy, this is jolly, this is new! But our Social-Democrats....

2) And "they" are always having new pamphlets. Each reprint is considered a pamphlet and all this is meretriciously trumpeted forth, and the printed sheets are added up (a million printed sheets: see No. 16 of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*. They have broken all records! Champions!).

But in our case! Reprints are not counted as pamphlets—that is highbrowism, bookishness! The ancient Dikstein pamphlets are being republished, when every girl in Paris and in Chernigov knows that *ten* new pamphlets (trash) are worth a hundred times more than one old pamphlet, even a good one.

It is only the Germans who do things in such a way that, for example, in 1903 Bebel's *Our Aims*, written thirty-four years ago, is being republished for the *eleventh* time! That is so boring. Our "captivating" Socialist-Revolutionaries are pouring out stuff. But our local "activists" are able to use neither the *old* Plekhanov pamphlets (twenty years old: ancient stuff! To the archives with them!), nor "some" one (one!) pamphlet on strikes⁴⁴ and on the Witte memorandum!

This quite apart from the fact that the local "activist" does not lift a finger to squeeze *good* pamphlets out of authors now in exile—and to get local writers to contribute to "*Iskra*". Why do that? It is much easier to complain than to undertake such a troublesome business! And the present-day reader unblushingly calls himself an *Iskra*-ist on the grounds that he writes complaints to *Iskra*. Nor does it trouble his conscience in the slightest that 99 per cent of the articles are written by the one and the same three and a half writers. Nor does he find it necessary even to think about the fact that *Iskra* must not be allowed to stop publication and that the fortnightly issue of one and a half to two signatures calls for a lot of work. Still, he continues to shout with simply unparalleled fatuity: thirty-one issues, and there are still many fools in the localities and much helpless wailing!! A truly crushing argument.... Only whom and what does it crush?

3) Leaflets.

Give us leaflets! The committees cannot do it!! Write, deliver, bring (and distribute?) leaflets!

Well, now, this is indeed consistent. I open my mouth and you shovel it in: here we have the new formula for the relations between the "writer" and the *Iskra* practician! To go so far as to state that the local organisations (consisting of slothful "activists"?) cannot manage to issue local leaflets, that these leaflets should be delivered from abroad, that is the *limit*. This is such a splendid (in my opinion) crowning touch to the whole letter of "7 Ts. 6 F." that it only remains for me to conclude with this "crown". Any further remarks or comments will only dim its shining lustre.

Written in the second half
of January 1903

First published in 1924
in the magazine *Molodaya*
Gvardia, No. 2-3.

Published according
to the manuscript

A LETTER TO THE COMRADES

(WITH REFERENCE TO THE FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION
OF THE ORGAN OF THE PARTY MAJORITY)

Dear Comrades,

Today, at a meeting of a close circle of Bolsheviks abroad, a final decision was taken on a question that in principle has long been decided: the publication of a Party periodical that will uphold and develop the principles of the majority against the organisational and tactical discord brought into the Party by the minority, and will serve the needs of the positive work of the organisations in Russia, against whom such a bitter fight is now being carried on by minority agents practically all over the country—a fight that terribly disorganises the Party at this vital historical juncture, and one that is carried on throughout by the most shameless splitting methods and tactics, amid hypocritical deploring of the split by the so-called Central Organ of the Party. We have done everything in our power to steer the struggle into a Party channel; ever since January we have been fighting for a congress, as the only worthy Party way to end this impossible situation. By now it is perfectly clear that the activities of the Central Committee following its desertion to the minority consist almost entirely in desperately resisting a congress, and that the Council is resorting to the most outrageous and unpardonable tricks to put off convening it. The Council is directly sabotaging a congress; whoever has still to be convinced of that after its latest decisions, printed in the supplement to Nos. 73-74 of *Iskra*, will see it from Orlovsky's pamphlet *The Council Against the Party*,⁴⁵ which we published the other day. It is perfectly clear now that unless

they unite and resist our so-called central institutions, the majority will not be able to uphold their position, to uphold the party spirit in its struggle against the circle spirit. Union of the Bolsheviks in Russia has long been put forward by them as an urgent need. Recall the tremendous sympathetic response to the programmatic resolution of the twenty-two* (programmatic for our struggle within the Party); recall the proclamation of the nineteen, issued in printed form by the Moscow Committee (October 1904); lastly, nearly all Party committees are aware that a number of private conferences of majority committees have lately been held, and in part are still being held⁴⁶ and that the most vigorous and definite efforts are being made to solidly unite the majority committees for resistance to the overweening Bonapartists on the Council, Central Organ, and Central Committee.

We hope that these efforts (or rather steps) will be made generally known in the very near future, when the results will allow of a definite statement of what has already been achieved. It need hardly be said that the majority would have been quite unable to conduct their self-defence without a publishing house of their own. As you may already know from our Party literature, the new Central Committee simply ejected our pamphlets (and even the covers of pamphlets already set up) from the Party printing office, thus turning the latter into the printing office of a circle, and refused the direct request of the majority members abroad and of committees in Russia—the Riga Committee, for instance—to have majority literature delivered to Russia. It became quite evident that falsification of Party opinion was a systematic tactic of the new Central Committee. We found ourselves faced unavoidably with the necessity of expanding our publishing activities and setting up our own transport arrangements. The committees that had broken off comradesly relations with the editorial board of the Central Organ (see Dan's admission in his account of the Geneva meeting of September 2, 1904⁴⁷—an interesting pamphlet) could not and cannot do without a periodical organ. A party without an organ, an organ without a party!

* See pp 452-59 of this volume.—Ed

This tragic formulation put forward by the majority as far back as August inexorably decreed the one solution—the starting of our own organ. The young literary forces that have been coming abroad to uphold the vital cause of the majority of the comrades in Russia need a field for their energies. A number of Party writers in Russia likewise call insistently for an organ. In starting this organ, which will probably be called *Vperyod*, we are acting in full agreement with the mass of the Bolsheviks in Russia, and in full harmony with our conduct in the Party struggle. We are resorting to this weapon after a whole year spent in trying every, absolutely every way that is simpler, more economical for the Party, more perfectly in accordance with the interests of the working-class movement. We are by no means abandoning the struggle for a congress; on the contrary, we want to extend, co-ordinate, and support this struggle, want to help the committees to decide the new question now facing them—that of arranging a congress without the Council and Central Committee, and against the wishes of the Council and Central Committee—a question that requires the fullest and most serious discussion. We openly champion views and aims that have long since been stated, in a number of pamphlets, before the whole Party. We are fighting and will continue to fight for the consistent revolutionary line, against discord and wabbling in matters of both organisation and tactics (see the monstrously muddled letter of the new *Iskra* to the Party organisations, printed for Party members only and concealed from the eyes of the world⁴⁸). The announcement about the new organ will probably appear in a week or so, and the first issue somewhere between January 1 and 10, New Style. The editorial board will include all the majority writers that have so far come to the fore (Ryadovoy, Galyorka, Lenin, Orlovsky, who contributed regularly to *Iskra* from its 46th to 51st issue, when it was conducted by Lenin and Plekhanov, and also very valuable younger forces). The body practically directing and organising the complex business of distribution, agencies, etc., etc., will be formed (has already been formed in part)⁴⁹ through direct assignment of definite functions to definite comrades by a number of Russian committees (the Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, and Niko-

layev committees, the four Caucasian committees, and several northern ones, more particulars of which you will receive shortly). We now appeal to all comrades to give us all the support they can. We shall conduct the organ on the understanding that it is the organ of the movement in Russia, not of any émigré circle. This requires, first and foremost, the most vigorous "literary" support, or rather literary participation, from Russia. I have put the word "literary" in italics and inverted commas in order to draw attention from the first to its special sense and caution against a misconception that is very common and highly detrimental to the work. It is a misconception that writers and only writers (in the professional sense of the term) can successfully contribute to a publication; on the contrary, it will be vital and alive only if for five leading and regularly contributing writers there are five hundred of five thousand contributors who are not writers. One of the shortcomings of the old *Iskra*, one which I always tried to rid it of (and which has grown to monstrous proportions in the new *Iskra*) was that too little was done for it from Russia. We always used to print everything, practically without exception, that we received from Russia. A really live organ should print only a tenth of what it receives, using the rest as material for the information and guidance of the journalists. We must have as many Party workers as possible correspond with us, correspond in the ordinary, not the journalistic sense of the term.

Isolation from Russia, the engulfing atmosphere of the accursed émigré slough, weighs so heavily on one here that living contact with Russia is our only salvation. Let all remember that who want in fact, and not just in word, to consider (and to *make*) our organ the organ of the entire "majority", the organ of the mass of Russian comrades. Let everyone who regards this organ as his own and who is conscious of the duties of a Social-Democratic Party member abandon once and for all the bourgeois habit of thinking and acting as is customary towards legally published papers—the habit of feeling: it is *their* business to write and ours to read. All Social-Democrats must work for the Social-Democratic paper. We ask everyone to contribute, and especially the workers. Give the workers the widest opportunity to write

for our paper, to write about positively everything, to write as much as they possibly can about their daily lives, interests, and work—without such material a Social-Democratic organ will not be worth a brass farthing and will not deserve the name. In addition, please send us *private letters*, not intended as contributions to the paper, i.e., not for publication, but by way of comradely intercourse with the editors and to keep them informed, and not only about facts and incidents, but about the prevailing sentiment and the everyday, "uninteresting", humdrum, routine side of the movement. People who have not lived abroad cannot imagine how much we need such letters (there is absolutely nothing secret about them either, and to write such an uncoded letter once or twice a week is really something the busiest person can do). So write to us about the discussions at the workers' study circles, the nature of these discussions, the subjects of study, and the things the workers ask about; about the state of propaganda and agitational work, and about contacts among the general public, in the army, and among the youth; above all write about any dissatisfaction the workers feel with us Social-Democrats, about the things that trouble them, about their suggestions, criticisms, etc. Matters relating to the practical organisation of the work are particularly interesting now, and there is no way of acquainting the editors with them except by a lively correspondence not of a journalistic nature, but simply of a comradely kind. Of course, not everyone has the ability or inclination to write, but ... don't say "I can't", say "I don't want to"; given the desire, one or two comrades who could write can be found in any circle, any group, even the smallest, even the most minor (the minor groups are often especially interesting, for they sometimes do the most important, though inconspicuous, part of the work). We here have from the start placed the secretarial work on a broad footing, drawing on the experience of the old *Iskra*; and you for your part should know that *anybody*, absolutely anybody who sets about it with patience and determination can without much difficulty make sure that all his letters, or nine-tenths of them, reach their destination. I say this on the basis of the three years' experience of the old *Iskra*, which had many such an informal correspondent (often unacquainted

with any of the editors) who wrote with the utmost regularity. The police have long been quite unequal to the task of intercepting all foreign correspondence (they only seize a letter occasionally, if the writer has been unusually careless); and the great bulk of the old *Iskra's* material always used to arrive in the most usual way, in ordinary letters sent to our addresses. A special word of warning against the practice of concentrating correspondence only in the hands of the committee and the secretaries. Nothing could be more harmful than such a monopoly. Essential as unity is in actions and decisions, in the matter of general information, of correspondence, it is quite wrong. It very often happens that the most interesting letters are from comparative "outsiders" (people more remote from the committees), who perceive more *freshly* much that old experienced workers overlook because they are too used to it. Give every opportunity to the younger people to write to us—to the youth, to Party workers, to "centralists", to organisers, and to ordinary rank-and-filers at impromptu meetings and mass rallies.

Only given such a wide correspondence can we, by our joint efforts, make our paper a real organ of the *working-class movement in Russia*. We earnestly request, to have this letter read to every kind of meeting, study circle, subgroup, etc., etc.—as widely as possible—and to be informed how the workers receive this appeal. As to the idea of publishing a separate workers' ("popular") organ and a general—guiding—intellectual organ, we are very sceptical about it; we should like to see the Social-Democratic newspaper the organ of the whole movement, to see the workers' paper and the Social-Democratic paper fused in one. This can be achieved only if we have the most active support of the working class.

With comradely greetings, *N. Lenin*

Written on November 29
(December 12), 1904

Published in leaflet form
in December 1904

Published according
to the leaflet text

TO A. A. BOGDANOV

January 10, 1905

My dear friend,

At last we have launched *Vperyod*, and I would like to discuss it with you in greater detail. Issue No. 2 will appear the day after tomorrow. We intend to bring it out weekly. We have sufficient literary forces for the task. We are all in excellent spirits and at the top of our working form (with the slight exception of Vasily Vasilyevich,⁵⁰ who has a touch of the blues). We are sure that things will go well, so long as we don't go bankrupt. We need 400 francs (150 rubles) per issue, but we have only 1,200 francs all in all. We shall need the deuce of a lot of help for the first few months; for, unless we can make it a regular publication, the entire position of the Majority will be dealt a terrific, well-nigh irreparable blow. Do not forget this and get whatever you can (*especially from Gorky*).

Next. It is particularly important now to let Rakhmetov⁵¹ know that he should push on as hard as he can with the arrangements for literary contributions from Russia. The success of a weekly depends largely upon the energetic collaboration of Russian writers and Social-Democrats. Write to Rakhmetov that he should mobilise *both Finn and Kollontai* for the purpose (we badly need articles *on Finland*), as well as *Rumyantsev* and *Andrei Sokolov* the latter especially and particularly. I know by long experience that the people in Russia are devilishly, unpardonably, and incredibly slow at this sort of thing. It is therefore necessary to act, first of all, by personal example; secondly, not to rely on promises, but to see that you get the things written. Let Rakhmetov be sure to order the articles and the correspondence himself, and receive them himself, and send them off himself, keeping at it until he gets the material. (I would also



Lenin giving a speech to the soldiers of the Red Army during the Civil War, May 1920



Drawing of Lenin giving a speech to the workers at the Putilov factory in Petrograd after the revolution.



The Bolshevik Party published the newspaper: "The Harvester" on travelling presses.



Distribution of Bolshevik leaflets. August 1917



Lenin and Stalin during the Civil War



Chairman Mao reading the news of the liberation of Nanking in 1949



Chairman Mao at the Lu Hsun Institute of Literature and Art in Yen-an in May 1938.

and one's address abroad. If we tackle this properly, my word, we could revolutionise the distribution of underground literature in Russia. Don't forget that transportation, at best, takes four months. And that's with a weekly paper! As for the enveloped copies, probably from 50 to 75 per cent will be delivered at postal speed.

Now, as to the writers. They ought simply to be obligated to write regularly once a week or once a fortnight; otherwise—so, indeed, tell them—we cannot consider them decent people and will have nothing more to do with them. The usual excuse is: We don't know what theme to choose, we're afraid to waste our effort, we think "they already have this". It is against these trite and idiotic pretexts that Rakhmetov must wage a personal, a definitely personal, fight. The principal themes are the domestic topics of Russia (of the kind that comprise in periodical literature reviews of the domestic political scene and reflections of social life), as well as articles and brief comments on material appearing in Russian special publications (statistical, military, medical, prison, ecclesiastical, and other periodicals). We are always in need of copy for these two sections. Only people living in Russia, and such people alone, can conduct these two sections well. *The keynote here is fresh facts, fresh impressions, special materials that are inaccessible to the people abroad, and not just arguments, not evaluations from the Social-Democratic point of view.* Therefore, such articles and comments will never go to waste, for we shall always make use of them. It is Rakhmetov's duty now to organise this thing at once and give us at least half a dozen good, useful contributors, who would not be lazy or try to shirk their jobs, but would each get in direct touch with the Editorial Board. Only by direct contact with contributors can we arrange all the details of the work. People should be enlisted by being made to realise that nowhere else can they "get into print" as quickly as in a weekly newspaper.

In conclusion, a word or two about the organisational slogan of today. After the article "Time to Call a Halt!" (*Vperyod*, No. 1),* this slogan should be clear; but people are so inert that Rakhmetov, here again, will have to explain and

* See pp. 35-39 of this volume.—Ed.

explain again, and hammer it into their heads as hard as he can. The *split* is now complete; for we have exhausted all means. It is the *Third Congress* against the will of the Central Committee and the Council and *without them*. Complete rupture with the Central Committee. An open statement that we have our own Bureau. The complete removal of the Mensheviks and the new-Iskrists everywhere. We did everything we could to get on together, and should now declare openly and bluntly that we are obliged to work separately. All trustfulness and naïveté can only cause tremendous harm.

For Christ's sake hurry up and issue an open and emphatic statement on the Bureau.⁵² It is necessary: (1) to line up fully with "Time to Call a Halt!" and re-issue its appeal; (2) to declare that *Vperyod* is the organ of the majority of the committees and that the Bureau is working with it in complete and friendly agreement; (3) that the C.C. and the Council have deceived the Party in the most disgraceful way and sabotaged the Congress; (4) that there is no way out now other than the convening of a congress of the committees themselves *without* the C.C. and the Council; (5) that the Bureau undertakes to help the constructive work of the committees; (6) that the Central Organ has utterly lost the membership's confidence by its vacillations and lies.

Believe me, we highly appreciate Zemlyachka, but she is wrong in her opposition to Papasha,⁵³ and it is for you to correct her mistakes. Let us hurry up and break with the C.C. all along the line, and publish a statement about the Bureau at once to the effect that it is the Organising Committee and that it is convening the Third Congress.

First published in 1925
in the magazine *Proletarshaya
Revolutsiya*, No. 3 (38)

Published according to
the manuscript

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD
OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE RUSSIAN
SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

Comrades,

We wish to draw your attention to one of the methods of co-operation between the Central Organ and the press of the various localities, in the matter of agitation. The Central Organ is very often accused of being out of touch with the movement, being couched in unpopular language, etc., etc. There is of course some truth in these reproaches, and we are fully aware that our work, which is conducted from afar, is inadequate in such an eventful period. However, our isolation is in part due to the infrequent and irregular communications between the Central Organ and the *masses* of local Social-Democrats, and to insufficient co-operation between the two. We quite agree that we are not helping you sufficiently, but then, neither are you giving us enough help. We now want to draw your attention in a comradely way to the elimination of *one* of these shortcomings.

The comrades on the spot do not make sufficient use of the Central Organ for purposes of agitation. The Central Organ arrives late, and the number of copies received is small. It is therefore necessary more frequently: 1) to have articles and items reprinted in local bulletins; 2) more often to adapt or paraphrase in more popular language the slogans (and articles) of the Central Organ, in local bulletins, in doing which you may complement, alter, abridge them, etc., since you, who are on the spot, can see what is best, and all Party publications belong to the Party as a whole; 3) to *quote* the Central Organ in local bulletins more often, so as

to familiarise the masses with the title of the Central Organ, with the *idea* of having their own permanent paper, the idea of having their own ideological centre, of always being able to turn to it, etc., etc. You should on all occasions endeavour to indicate in your bulletins that the very same idea was propounded in such and such an article in *Proletary*, or that news to the same effect is contained in such and such of the letters it has published, etc., etc. This is most important for the purpose of familiarising the masses with our Central Organ, and widening our entire sphere of influence.

The local committees have often republished articles, selecting whatever appealed to them most. What is particularly important now is to have *uniform slogans* (on the attitude towards the liberals, the *Osvobozhdeniye* League, their "theory of agreement", their draft constitution, etc.; on the question of a revolutionary army and the programme of a revolutionary government; on the boycott of the State Duma, etc., etc.). You should try to make every possible use of the Central Organ in your local agitation, not only by republishing but also by *paraphrasing* its ideas and slogans in your bulletins, *developing* or amending them to conform with the local conditions, etc. This is extremely important for establishing actual co-operation between us, for exchanging opinions, correcting our slogans and acquainting the masses of the workers with the fact that we have a permanent Central Organ of the Party.

We earnestly request that this letter be read and discussed in absolutely all organisations and study circles of the Party, down to the very lowest.

The Editorial Board of "Proletary"

Rabochy, 34 No. 2,
September 1905

Published according to
the manuscript

THE CHARACTER OF OUR NEWSPAPERS

Far too much space is being allotted to political agitation on outdated themes—to political ballyhoo—and far too little to the building of the new life, to the facts about it.

Why, instead of turning out 200-400 lines, don't we write twenty or even ten lines on such simple, generally known, clear topics with which the people are already fairly well acquainted, like the foul treachery of the Mensheviks—the lackeys of the bourgeoisie—the Anglo-Japanese invasion to restore the sacred rights of capital, the American multi-millionaires baring their fangs against Germany, etc., etc.? We must write about these things and note every new fact in this sphere, but we need not write long articles and repeat old arguments; what is needed is to convey in just a few lines, "in telegraphic style", the latest manifestation of the old, known and already evaluated politics.

The bourgeois press in the "good old bourgeois times" never mentioned the "holy of holies"—the conditions in privately-owned factories, in the private enterprises. This custom fitted in with the interests of the bourgeoisie. We must radically break with it. We have *not* broken with it. So far our type of newspaper has *not* changed as it should in a society in transition from capitalism to socialism.

Less politics. Politics has been "elucidated" fully and reduced to a struggle between the two camps: the insurrectionary proletariat and the handful of capitalist slaveowners (with the whole gang, right down to the Mensheviks and others). We may, and, I repeat, we must, speak very briefly about these politics.

More economics. But not in the sense of "general" discussions, learned reviews, intellectual plans and similar piffle,

for, I regret to say, they are all too often just piffle and nothing more. By economics we mean the gathering, *careful checking* and study of the facts of the actual organisation of the new life. Have *real* successes been achieved by big factories, agricultural communes, the Poor Peasants' Committees, and local Economic Councils in building up the new economy? What, precisely, are these successes? Have they been verified? Are they not fables, boasting, intellectual promises ("things are moving", "the plan has been drawn up", "we are getting under way", "we now vouch for", "there is undoubted improvement", and other charlatan phrases of which "we" are such masters)? How have the successes been achieved? What must be done to extend them?

Where is the black list with the names of the lagging factories which since nationalisation have remained models of disorder, disintegration, dirt, hooliganism and parasitism? Nowhere to be found. But there *are* such factories. We shall not be able to do our duty unless we wage *war* against these "guardians of capitalist traditions". We shall be jellyfish, not Communists, as long as we tolerate such factories. We have not learned to wage the class struggle in the newspapers as skilfully as the bourgeoisie did. Remember the skill with which it *hounded its* class enemies in the press, ridiculed them, disgraced them, and tried to sweep them away. And we? Doesn't the class struggle in the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism take the form of safeguarding the interests of the working *class* against the few, the groups and sections of workers who stubbornly cling to capitalist traditions and continue to regard the Soviet state in the old way: work as little and as badly as they can and grab as much money as possible from the state. Aren't there many such scoundrels, even among the compositors in Soviet printing works, among the Sormovo and Putilov workers, etc.? How many of them have we found, how many have we exposed and how many have we pilloried?

The press is silent. And if it mentions the subject at all it does so in a stereotyped, official way, not in the manner of a *revolutionary* press, not as an organ of the *dictatorship* of a class demonstrating that the resistance of the capitalists and of the parasites—the custodians of capitalist traditions—will be crushed with an iron hand.

The same with the war. Do we harass cowardly or inefficient officers? Have we denounced the really bad regiments to the whole of Russia? Have we "caught" enough of the bad types who should be removed from the army with the greatest publicity for unsuitability, carelessness, procrastination, etc.? We are not yet waging an effective, ruthless and truly revolutionary *war* against the *specific* wrongdoers. We do very little to *educate the people* by living, concrete examples and models taken from all spheres of life, although that is the chief task of the press during the transition from capitalism to communism. We give little attention to that aspect of *everyday* life inside the factories, in the villages and in the regiments where, more than anywhere else, the new is being built, where attention, publicity, public criticism, condemnation of what is bad and appeals to learn from the good are needed most.

Less political ballyhoo. Fewer highbrow discussions. Closer to life. More attention to the way in which the workers and peasants are *actually* building the *new* in their everyday work, and more *verification* so as to ascertain the extent to which the new is *communistic*.

Pravda No. 202,
September 20, 1918
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to
the *Pravda* text



M. G. Stuenkel

STALIN

FROM THE EDITORS*

Convinced that for intelligent Georgian readers the publication of a free periodical is an urgent question; convinced that this question must be settled today and that further delay can only damage the common cause; convinced that every intelligent reader will welcome such a publication and will render it every assistance, we, a group of Georgian revolutionary Social-Democrats, are meeting this want in the endeavour to satisfy the readers' wishes as far as it lies in our power. We are issuing the first number of the first Georgian free newspaper *Brdzola*.⁵⁵

To enable the reader to form a definite opinion about our publication and, in particular, about ourselves, we shall say a few words.

The Social-Democratic movement has not left untouched a single corner of the country. It has not avoided that corner of Russia which we call the Caucasus, and with the Caucasus, it has not avoided our Georgia. The Social-Democratic movement in Georgia is a recent phenomenon, it is only a few years old; to be more precise, the foundations of that movement were laid only

* Leading article in the illegal Social-Democratic newspaper *Brdzola* (*The Struggle*).

in 1896. Here, as everywhere else, our activities at first did not extend beyond the bounds of secrecy. Agitation and wide propaganda in the form that we have been witnessing lately were impossible and, willy-nilly, all efforts were concentrated in a few circles. This period has now passed. Social-Democratic ideas have spread among the masses of the workers, and activities have also overflowed the narrow bounds of secrecy and have spread to a large section of the workers. The open struggle has started. This struggle has confronted the pioneer Party workers with many questions of a kind that have been in the background hitherto and have not urgently called for explanation. The first question that has arisen in all its magnitude is: what means have we at our command to enlarge the area of the struggle? In words, the answer to this question is very simple and easy; in practice it is quite different.

It goes without saying that for the organized Social-Democratic movement the principal means is the extensive propaganda of and agitation for revolutionary ideas. But the conditions under which the revolutionary is obliged to operate are so contradictory, so difficult, and call for such heavy sacrifices, that often both propaganda and agitation become impossible in the form that the initial stage of the movement requires.

Studying in circles with the aid of books and pamphlets becomes impossible, first, because of police persecution, and secondly, because of the very way this work is organized. Agitation wanes with the very first arrests. It becomes impossible to maintain contact with the workers and to visit them often; and yet the workers are expecting explanations of numerous questions of the day. A fierce struggle is raging around them; all the forces of the government are mustered against them; but they have no means of critically analyzing the present situation,

they have no information about the actual state of affairs, and often a slight setback at some neighbouring factory is enough to cause revolutionary-minded workers to cool off, to lose confidence in the future, and the leader is obliged to start drawing them into the work anew.

In most cases, agitation with the aid of pamphlets which provide answers only to certain definite questions has little effect. It becomes necessary to create a literature that provides answers to questions of the day. We shall not stop to prove this commonly-known truth. In the Georgian labour movement the time has already arrived when a periodical becomes one of the principal means of revolutionary activity.

For the information of some of our uninitiated readers we deem it necessary to say a few words about the legally printed newspapers. We would deem it a great mistake if any worker regarded such a newspaper, irrespective of the conditions under which it was published or of the trend it pursued, as the mouthpiece of his, the worker's, interests. The government, which "takes care" of the workers, is in a splendid position as far as such newspapers are concerned. A whole horde of officials, called censors, are attached to them, and it is their special function to watch them and to resort to red ink and scissors if even a single ray of truth breaks through. Circular after circular comes flying to the committee of censors ordering: "Don't pass anything concerning the workers; don't publish anything about this or that event; don't permit the discussion of such and such a subject," and so on and so forth. Under these conditions, it is, of course, impossible for a newspaper to be run properly; and in vain will the worker seek in its columns, even between the lines, for information on and a correct appraisal of matters that concern him. If anybody were

to believe that a worker can gain any benefit from the rare lines that appear in this or that legally printed newspaper casually mentioning matters concerning him, and released by the reactionary censor only by mistake, we would have to say that he who placed his hopes on such fragments and attempted to build up a system of propaganda on such snippets would display lack of understanding.

We repeat that we are saying this only for the information of a few uninitiated readers.

And so, a Georgian free periodical is something the Social-Democratic movement needs very urgently. The only question now is how to run such a publication; by what should it be guided, and what should it give the Georgian Social-Democrats.

From the point of view of the onlooker, the question of the existence of a Georgian newspaper in general, and the question of its content and trend in particular, may seem to settle themselves naturally and simply: the Georgian Social-Democratic movement is not a separate, exclusively Georgian, working-class movement with its own separate program; it goes hand in hand with the entire Russian movement and, consequently, accepts the authority of the Russian Social-Democratic Party—hence it is clear that a Georgian Social-Democratic newspaper should be only a local organ that deals mainly with local questions and reflects the local movement. But behind this reply lurks a difficulty which we cannot ignore and which we shall inevitably encounter. We refer to the language difficulty. While the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Party is able to explain all general questions with the aid of the all-Party newspaper and leave it to the regional committees to deal only with local questions, the Georgian newspaper finds itself in a difficulty as regards

content. The Georgian newspaper must simultaneously play the part of an all-Party and of a regional, or local organ. As the majority of Georgian working-class readers cannot freely read the Russian newspaper, the editors of the Georgian newspaper have no right to pass over those questions which the all-Party Russian newspaper is discussing, and should discuss. Thus, the Georgian newspaper must inform its readers about all questions of principle concerning theory and tactics. At the same time it must lead the local movement and throw proper light on every event, without leaving a single fact unexplained, and providing answers to all questions that excite the local workers. The Georgian newspaper must link up and unite the Georgian and Russian militant workers. The newspaper must inform its readers about everything that interests them at home, in Russia and abroad.

Such, in general, is our view of what the Georgian newspaper should be.

A few words about the content and trend of the newspaper.

We must demand that as a Social-Democratic newspaper it should devote attention mainly to the militant workers. We think it superfluous to say that in Russia, and everywhere, the revolutionary proletariat alone is destined by history to liberate mankind and bring the world happiness. Clearly, only the working-class movement stands on solid ground, and it alone is free from all sorts of utopian fairy tales. Consequently, the newspaper, as the organ of the Social-Democrats, should lead the working-class movement, point the road for it, and safeguard it from error. In short, the primary duty of the newspaper is to be as close to the masses of the workers as possible, to be able constantly to influence them and serve as their conscious and guiding centre.

As, however, in the conditions prevailing in Russia today, it is possible that other elements of society besides the workers may come out as the champions of "freedom," and as this freedom is the immediate goal of the militant workers of Russia, it is the duty of the newspaper to afford space for every revolutionary movement, even one outside the labour movement. We say "afford space" not only for casual information, or simply news. No! The newspaper must devote special attention to the revolutionary movement that goes on, or will arise, among other elements of society. It must explain every social phenomenon and thereby influence every one who is fighting for freedom. Hence, the newspaper must devote special attention to the political situation in Russia, weigh up all the consequences of this situation, and on the widest possible basis raise the question of the necessity of waging a political struggle.

We are convinced that nobody will quote our words as proof that we advocate establishing connection and compromising with the bourgeoisie. The proper appraisal, the exposure of the weaknesses and errors of the movement against the existing system, even if it proceeds among the bourgeoisie, cannot cast the stain of opportunism on the Social-Democrats. The only thing here is not to forget Social-Democratic principles and revolutionary methods of fighting. If we measure every movement with this yardstick, we shall keep free of all Bernsteinian blather.

Thus, the Georgian Social-Democratic newspaper must provide plain answers to all questions connected with the working-class movement, explain questions of principle, explain theoretically the role the working class plays in the struggle, and throw the light of scientific socialism upon every phenomenon the workers encounter.

At the same time, the newspaper must serve as the

representative of the Russian Social-Democratic Party and give its readers timely information about all the views on tactics held by Russian revolutionary Social-Democracy. It must inform its readers about how the workers in other countries live, what they are doing to improve their conditions, and how they are doing it, and issue a timely call to the Georgian workers to enter the battlefield. At the same time, the newspaper must not leave out of account, and without Social-Democratic criticism, a single social movement.

Such is our view of what a Georgian newspaper should be.

We cannot deceive either ourselves or our readers by promising to carry out these tasks in their entirety with the forces at present at our command. To run the newspaper as it really ought to be run we need the aid of our readers and sympathizers. The reader will note that the first number of *Brdzola* suffers from numerous defects, but defects which can be rectified, if only our readers give us their assistance. In particular, we emphasize the paucity of home news. Being at a distance from home we are unable to watch the revolutionary movement in Georgia and provide timely information and explanation concerning questions of that movement. Hence we must receive assistance from Georgia. Whoever wishes to assist us also with literary contributions will undoubtedly find means of establishing direct or indirect contact with the editors of *Brdzola*.

We call upon all Georgian militant Social-Democrats to take a keen interest in the fate of *Brdzola*, to render every assistance in publishing and distributing it, and thereby convert the first free Georgian newspaper *Brdzola* into a weapon of the revolutionary struggle.

WORKER CORRESPONDENTS

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The importance of workers' participation in the conduct of a newspaper lies primarily in the fact that such participation makes it possible to transform this sharp weapon in the class struggle, as a newspaper is, from a weapon for the enslavement of the people into a weapon for their emancipation. Only worker and peasant correspondents can bring about this great transformation.

Only as an *organised* force can worker and peasant correspondents play, in the course of development of the press, the part of mouthpiece and vehicle of proletarian public opinion, of exposé of the defects in Soviet public life, and of tireless fighter for the improvement of our work of construction.

Should worker correspondents be elected at workers' meetings, or should they be chosen by the editors? I think that the second method (choice by the editors) is more advisable. The underlying principle must be the correspondent's independence of the institutions and persons that, in one way or another, he comes in contact with in the course of his work. This, however, does not mean independence of that intangible but constantly operating force that is called proletarian public opinion, of which the worker correspondent must be the vehicle.

Worker and peasant correspondents must not be regarded merely as future journalists, or as factory social workers in the narrow sense of the term; they are primarily exposés of the defects in our Soviet public life, fighters for the removal of those defects, commanders of proletarian public opinion, striving to direct the inexhaustible forces of this immense factor so that they help the Party and the Soviet power in the difficult task of socialist construction.

This gives rise to the question of educational work among worker and peasant correspondents. It is, of course, necessary to give worker and peasant correspondents some grounding in the technique of journalism; but that is not the main thing. The main thing is that the worker and peasant correspondents should learn in the course of their work and acquire that intuition of the journalist-public worker without which the correspondent cannot fulfil his mission; and which cannot be implanted by any artificial measures of training in the technical sense of the term.

Direct ideological guidance of worker and peasant correspondents must be exercised by the newspaper editors, who are linked with the Party. The censorship of articles must be concentrated in the hands of the newspaper editors.

Persecution of worker and peasant correspondents is barbarous, a survival of bourgeois customs. The newspaper must undertake to protect its correspondent from persecution, for it alone is capable of raising a fierce campaign to expose obscurantism.

I wish *Rabochy Korrespondent* every success.

J. Stalin



毛泽东

MAO TSETUNG

A TALK TO THE EDITORIAL STAFF OF
THE *SHANSI-SUIYUAN DAILY*

April 2, 1948

Our policy must be made known not only to the leaders and to the cadres but also to the broad masses. Questions concerning policy should as a rule be given publicity in the Party papers or periodicals. We are now carrying out the reform of the land system. The policies on land reform should be published in the papers and broadcast on the radio so that the broad masses all know them. Once the masses know the truth and have a common aim, they will work together with one heart. This is like fighting a battle; to win a battle the fighters as well as the officers must be of one heart. After the troops in northern Shensi went through training and consolidation and poured out their grievances against the old social order, the fighters heightened their political consciousness and became clear on why they were fighting and how they should fight; every one of them rolled up his sleeves for battle, their morale was very high and as soon as they went into action they won a victory. When the masses are of one heart, everything becomes easy. A basic principle of Marxism-Leninism is to enable the masses to know their own interests and unite to fight for their own interests. The role and power of the newspapers consists in their ability to bring the Party programme, the Party line, the Party's general and specific policies, its tasks and methods of work before the masses in the quickest and most extensive way.

There are people in our leading organs in some places who think that it is enough for the leaders alone to know the Party's policies and that there is no need to let the masses know them. This is one of the basic reasons why some of our work cannot be done well. For over twenty years our Party has carried on mass work every day, and for the past dozen years it has talked about the mass line every day. We have always maintained that the revolution must rely on the

masses of the people, on everybody's taking a hand, and have opposed relying merely on a few persons issuing orders. The mass line, however, is still not being thoroughly carried out in the work of some comrades; they still rely solely on a handful of people working coolly and quietly by themselves. One reason is that, whatever they do, they are always reluctant to explain it to the people they lead and that they do not understand why or how to give play to the initiative and creative energy of those they lead. Subjectively, they too want everyone to take a hand in the work, but they do not let other people know what is to be done or how to do it. That being the case, how can everyone be expected to get moving and how can anything be done well? To solve this problem the basic thing is, of course, to carry out ideological education on the mass line, but at the same time we must teach these comrades many concrete methods of work. One such method is to make full use of the newspapers. To run a newspaper well, to make it interesting and absorbing, to give correct publicity in the newspapers to the Party's general and specific policies and to strengthen the Party's ties with the masses through the newspapers – this is an important question of principle in our Party's work which is not to be taken lightly.

You comrades are newspapermen. Your job is to educate the masses, to enable the masses to know their own interests, their own tasks and the Party's general and specific policies. Running a newspaper is like all other work, it must be done conscientiously if it is to be done well, if it is to be lively. With our newspapers, too, we must rely on everybody, on the masses of the people, on the whole Party to run them, not merely on a few persons working behind closed doors. Our papers talk about the mass line every day, yet frequently the mass line is not carried out in the work of the newspaper office itself. For instance, misprints often crop up in the papers simply because their elimination has not been tackled as a serious job. If we apply the method of the mass line, then when misprints appear, we should assemble the entire staff of the paper to discuss nothing but this matter, tell them clearly what the mistakes are, explain why they occur and how they can be got rid of and ask everyone to give the matter serious attention. After this has been done three times, or five times, such mistakes can certainly be overcome. This is true of small matters, and of big matters, too.

To be good at translating the Party's policy into action of the masses, to be good at getting not only the leading cadres but also the

broad masses to understand and master every movement and every struggle we launch – this is an art of Marxist-Leninist leadership. It is also the dividing line that determines whether or not we make mistakes in our work. If we tried to go on the offensive when the masses are not yet awakened, that would be adventurism. If we insisted on leading the masses to do anything against their will, we would certainly fail. If we did not advance when the masses demand advance, that would be Right opportunism. Chen Tu-hsiu's opportunist error consisted precisely in lagging behind the awakening of the masses, being unable to lead the masses forward and even opposing their forward march. There are many comrades who still don't understand these questions. Our papers should propagate these ideas well so that everyone can understand them.

To teach the masses, newspaper workers should first of all learn from the masses. You comrades are all intellectuals. Intellectuals are often ignorant and often have little or no experience in practical matters. You can't quite understand the pamphlet "How to Analyse the Classes in the Rural Areas"⁵⁷ issued in 1933; on this point, the peasants are more than a match for you, for they understand it fully as soon as they are told about it. Over 180 peasants in two districts of Kuo-hsien County met for five days and settled many problems concerning the distribution of land. If your editorial department were to discuss those problems, I am afraid you would discuss them for two weeks without settling them. The reason is quite simple; you do not understand those problems. To change from lack of understanding to understanding, one must do things and see things; that is learning. Comrades working on the newspapers should go out by turns to take part in mass work, in land reform work for a time; that is very necessary. When not going out to participate in mass work, you should hear a great deal and read a great deal about the mass movements and devote time and effort to the study of such material. Our slogan in training troops is, "Officers teach soldiers, soldiers teach officers and soldiers teach each other". The fighters have a lot of practical combat experience. The officers should learn from the fighters, and when they have made other people's experience their own, they will become more capable. Comrades working on the newspapers, too, should constantly study the material coming from below, gradually enrich their practical knowledge and become experienced. Only thus will you be able to do your work well, will you be able to shoulder your task of educating the masses.

The *Shansi-Suiyuan Daily* made very great progress following the conference of secretaries of prefectural Party committees last June. Then the paper was rich in content, sharp, pungent and vigorous; it reflected the great mass struggles, it spoke for the masses. I liked reading it very much. But since January this year, when we began to correct "Left" deviations, your paper seems to have lost some of its spirit; it is not clear-cut enough, not pungent enough, has become less informative and does not have much appeal for the reader. Now you are examining your work and summing up your experience; this is very good. When you have summed up your experience in combating Right and "Left" deviations and become more clear-headed, your work will improve.

The struggle against Right deviations waged by the *Shansi-Suiyuan Daily* from last June on was completely correct. In that struggle you did a very conscientious job and fully reflected the actual situation in the mass movement. You made comments, in the form of editorial notes, on the viewpoints and materials which you regarded as wrong. There were shortcomings too in some of your later comments, but the conscientious spirit was good. Your shortcomings lay chiefly in drawing the bow-string much too tight. If a bow-string is too taut, it will snap. The ancients said, "The principle of Kings Wen and Wu was to alternate tension with relaxation."⁵⁸ Now "relax" a bit and the comrades will become more clear-headed. You achieved successes in your work, but there were also shortcomings, mainly "Left" deviations. Now you are making an over-all summing-up and, after correcting the "Left" deviations, you will achieve greater successes.

When we are correcting deviations, some people look on the work of the past as utterly fruitless and all wrong. That is not right. These people fail to see that the Party has led a huge number of peasants to obtain land, overthrown feudalism, consolidated the Party organizations and improved the cadres' style of work, and that now it has also corrected the "Left" deviations and educated the cadres and masses. Are all these not great achievements? We should be analytical with regard to our work and the undertakings of the masses, and should not negate everything. In the past "Left" deviations arose because people had no experience. Without experience it is hard to avoid mistakes. From inexperience to experience, one must go through a process. Through the struggles against the Right and "Left" deviations in the short period since June last year, people have come to understand what struggle against Right deviations means

and what struggle against "Left" deviations means. Without this process, people would not understand.

After you have examined your work and summed up your experience, I am sure that your paper will be run even better. You must retain the former merits of your paper – it should be sharp, pungent and clear-cut, and it should be run conscientiously. We must firmly uphold the truth, and truth requires a clear-cut stand. We Communists have always disdained to conceal our views. Newspapers run by our Party and all the propaganda work of our Party should be vivid, clear-cut and sharp and should never mumble and mumble. That is the militant style proper to us, the revolutionary proletariat. Since we want to teach the people to know the truth and arouse them to fight for their own emancipation, we need this militant style. A blunt knife draws no blood.

OPPOSE STEREOTYPED PARTY WRITING

February 8, 1942

Comrade Kai-feng has just stated the purpose of today's meeting. I now want to discuss the ways subjectivism and sectarianism use stereotyped Party writing (or the Party "eight-legged essay")⁵⁹ as their instrument of propaganda or form of expression. We are fighting against subjectivism and sectarianism, but they will still have a hiding-place to lurk in if at the same time we do not get rid of stereotyped Party writing. If we destroy that too, we shall "checkmate" subjectivism and sectarianism and make both these monsters show themselves in their true colours, and then we shall easily be able to annihilate them, like "rats running across the street with everyone yelling: Kill them! Kill them!"

It does not matter much if a person produces stereotyped Party writings only for himself to read. If he passes them on to someone else, the number of readers is doubled, and already no small harm is done. If he has them posted up, mimeographed, printed in newspapers or published in book form, then the problem becomes indeed a big one, for they can influence many people. And those who produce stereotyped Party writing always seek large audiences. Thus it has become imperative to expose and destroy it.

Stereotyped Party writing is, moreover, one brand of the "foreign stereotype", which was attacked by Lu Hsun a long time ago.⁶⁰ Why then do we call it the Party "eight-legged essay"? Because, besides its foreign flavour, it has some smell of native soil. Perhaps it too can be counted as creative work of a sort! Who says our people have not produced any creative works? Here is one! (*Loud laughter.*)

Stereotyped Party writing has a long history in our Party; particularly during the Agrarian Revolution, it sometimes became quite rampant.

This speech was delivered by Comrade Mao Tse-tung at a cadres' meeting in Yen-an.

Viewed historically, stereotyped Party writing is a reaction to the May 4th Movement.

During the May 4th Movement, modern-minded people opposed the use of the classical Chinese language and advocated vernacular Chinese, opposed the traditional dogmas and advocated science and democracy, all of which was quite right. The movement then was vigorous and lively, progressive and revolutionary. In those days the ruling classes indoctrinated students with Confucian teachings and compelled the people to venerate all the trappings of Confucianism as religious dogma, and all writers used the classical language. In short, what was written and taught by the ruling classes and their hangers-on was in the nature of stereotyped writing and dogma, both in content and in form. That was the old stereotype and the old dogma. A tremendous achievement of the May 4th Movement was its public exposure of the ugliness of the old stereotype and the old dogma and its call to the people to rise against them. Another great and related achievement was its fight against imperialism, but the struggle against the old stereotype and the old dogma remains one of the great achievements of the May 4th Movement. Later on, however, foreign stereotyped writing and foreign dogma came into being. Running counter to Marxism, certain people in our Party developed the foreign stereotype and dogma into subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing. These are the new stereotype and the new dogma. They have become so deeply ingrained in the minds of many comrades that today we still have a very strenuous job of remoulding to do. Thus we see that the lively, vigorous, progressive and revolutionary movement of the May 4th period which fought the old feudal stereotyped writing and dogma was later turned by some people into its very opposite, giving rise to the new stereotyped writing and dogma. The latter are not lively and vigorous but dead and stiff, not progressive but retrogressive, not revolutionary but obstacles to revolution. That is to say, the foreign stereotyped writing, or stereotyped Party writing, is a reaction to the original nature of the May 4th Movement. The May 4th Movement, however, had its own weaknesses. Many of the leaders lacked the critical spirit of Marxism, and the method they used was generally that of the bourgeoisie, that is, the formalist method. They were quite right in opposing the old stereotype and the old dogma and in advocating science and democracy. But in dealing with current conditions, with history, and with things foreign, they lacked the critical spirit of historical materialism and regarded what was bad as absolutely and

wholly bad and what was good as absolutely and wholly good. This formalist approach to problems affected the subsequent course of the movement. In its development, the May 4th Movement divided into two currents. One section inherited its scientific and democratic spirit and transformed it on the basis of Marxism; this is what the Communists and some non-Party Marxists did. Another section took the road of the bourgeoisie; this was the development of formalism towards the Right. But within the Communist Party too the situation was not uniform; there, too, some members deviated and, lacking a firm grasp of Marxism, committed errors of formalism, namely, the errors of subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing. This was the development of formalism towards the "Left". So it can be seen that stereotyped Party writing is no accident, but is, on the one hand, a reaction to the positive elements of the May 4th Movement and, on the other, a legacy, a continuation or development of its negative elements. It is useful for us to understand this point. Just as it was revolutionary and necessary to fight the old stereotyped writing and the old dogmatism during the period of the May 4th Movement, so it is revolutionary and necessary today for us to use Marxism to criticize the new stereotyped writing and the new dogmatism. If there had been no fight against the old stereotype and the old dogmatism during the May 4th period, the minds of the Chinese people would not have been freed from bondage to them, and China would have no hope of freedom and independence. This task was merely begun in the period of the May 4th Movement, and a very great effort — a huge job of work on the road of revolutionary remoulding — is still necessary to enable the whole people to free themselves completely from the domination of the old stereotype and dogmatism. If today we do not oppose the new stereotyped writing and the new dogmatism, the minds of the Chinese people will be fettered by formalism of another kind. If we do not get rid of the poison of stereotyped Party writing and the error of dogmatism found among a section (only a section, of course) of Party comrades, then it will be impossible to arouse a vigorous and lively revolutionary spirit, to eradicate the bad habit of taking a wrong attitude towards Marxism and to disseminate and develop true Marxism; furthermore, it will be impossible to conduct an energetic struggle against the influence of the old stereotyped writing and dogma among the whole people, and against that of foreign stereotyped writing and dogma among many of the people, and impossible to attain the purpose of demolishing and sweeping away these influences.

Subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing — all three are anti-Marxist and meet the needs not of the proletariat but of the exploiting classes. They are a reflection of petty-bourgeois ideology in our Party. China is a country with a very large petty bourgeoisie and our Party is surrounded by this enormous class; a great number of our Party members come from this class, and when they join the Party they inevitably drag in with them a petty-bourgeois tail, be it long or short. Unless checked and transformed, the fanaticism and one-sidedness of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries can easily engender subjectivism and sectarianism, of which foreign stereotyped writing, or stereotyped Party writing, is one form of expression.

It is not easy to clean out these things and sweep them away. It must be done properly, that is, by taking pains to reason with people. If we reason earnestly and properly, it will be effective. The first thing to do in this reasoning process is to give the patient a good shake-up by shouting at him, "You are ill!" so as to administer a shock and make him break out in a sweat, and then to give him sincere advice on getting treatment.

Let us now analyse stereotyped Party writing and see where its evils lie. Using poison as an antidote to poison, we shall imitate the form of the stereotyped eight-section essay and set forth the following "eight legs", which might be called the eight major indictments.

The first indictment against stereotyped Party writing is that it fills endless pages with empty verbiage. Some of our comrades love to write long articles with no substance, very much like the "foot-bindings of a slattern, long as well as smelly". Why must they write such long and empty articles? There can be only one explanation; they are determined the masses shall not read them. Because the articles are long and empty, the masses shake their heads at the very sight of them. How can they be expected to read them? Such writings are good for nothing except to bluff the naive, among whom they spread bad influences and foster bad habits. On June 22 last year the Soviet Union began waging a gigantic war against aggression, and yet Stalin's speech on July 3 was only the length of an editorial in our *Liberation Daily*. Had any of our gentlemen written that speech, just imagine! It would have run to tens of thousands of words at a minimum. We are in the midst of a war, and we should learn how to write shorter and pithier articles. Although there is as yet no fighting here in Yen-an, our troops at the front are daily engaged in battle, and the people in the rear are busy at work. If articles are too long, who will read them? Some comrades at the front, too, like to write

long reports. They take pains over writing them and send them here for us to read. But who has the hardihood to read them? If long and empty articles are no good, are short and empty ones any better? They are no good either. We should forbid all empty talk. But the first and foremost task is to throw the long, smelly foot-bindings of the slattern into the dustbin. Some may ask, "Isn't *Capital* very long? What are we to do about that?" The answer is simple, just go on reading it. There is a proverb, "Sing different songs on different mountains"; another runs, "Fit the appetite to the dishes and the dress to the figure". Whatever we do must be done according to actual circumstances, and it is the same with writing articles and making speeches. What we oppose is long-winded and empty stereotyped writing, but we do not mean that everything must necessarily be short in order to be good. True, we need short articles in war time, but above all we need articles that have substance. Articles devoid of substance are the least justifiable and the most objectionable. The same applies to speech-making; we must put an end to all empty, long-winded speeches.

The second indictment against stereotyped Party writing is that it strikes a pose in order to intimidate people. Some stereotyped Party writing is not only long and empty, but also pretentious with the deliberate intention of intimidating people; it carries the worst kind of poison. Writing long-winded and empty articles may be set down to immaturity, but striking a pose to overawe people is not merely immature but downright knavish. Lu Hsun once said in criticism of such people, "Hurling insults and threats is certainly not fighting."⁶¹ What is scientific never fears criticism, for science is truth and fears no refutation. But those who write subjectivist and sectarian articles and speeches in the form of Party stereotypes fear refutation, are very cowardly, and therefore rely on pretentiousness to overawe others, believing that they can thereby silence people and "win the day". Such pretentiousness cannot reflect truth but is an obstacle to truth. Truth does not strike a pose to overawe people but talks and acts honestly and sincerely. Two terms used to appear in the articles and speeches of many comrades, one being "ruthless struggle" and the other "merciless blows". Measures of that kind are entirely necessary against the enemy or against enemy ideology, but to use them against our own comrades is wrong. It often happens that enemies and enemy ideology infiltrate into the Party, as is discussed in Item 4 of the Conclusion of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*. Against these enemies, we

must undoubtedly resort to ruthless struggle and merciless blows, because the scoundrels use these very measures against the Party; if we were tolerant of them, we should fall right into their trap. But the same measures should not be used against comrades who occasionally make mistakes; to them we should apply the method of criticism and self-criticism, the method indicated in Item 5 of the Conclusion of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*. The comrades who in the past loudly advocated "ruthless struggle" and "merciless blows" against comrades who occasionally made mistakes did so because, for one thing, they failed to make any analysis of the persons they were dealing with and, for another, they were striking a pose in an effort to intimidate. This method is no good, no matter whom you are dealing with. Against the enemy this tactic of intimidation is utterly useless, and with our own comrades it can only do harm. It is a tactic which the exploiting classes and the *lumpen*-proletariat habitually practise, but for which the proletariat has no use. For the proletariat the sharpest and most effective weapon is a serious and militant scientific attitude. The Communist Party lives by the truth of Marxism-Leninism, by seeking truth from facts, by science, and not by intimidating people. Needless to say, the idea of attaining fame and position for oneself by pretentiousness is even more contemptible. In short, when organizations make decisions and issue instructions and when comrades write articles and make speeches, they must without exception depend on Marxist-Leninist truth and seek to serve a useful purpose. This is the only basis on which victory in the revolution can be achieved; all else is of no avail.

The third indictment against stereotyped Party writing is that it shoots at random, without considering the audience. A few years ago a slogan appeared on the Yen-an city wall which read, "Working men and peasants, unite and strive for victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan!" The idea of the slogan was not at all bad, but the character "工" [*kung*, meaning working] in "工人" [*kung jen*, meaning working men], was written as "王", with its perpendicular stroke twisted into a zigzag. How about the character "人" [*jen*, meaning men]? It became "人", with three slanting strokes added to its right leg. The comrade who wrote this was no doubt a disciple of the ancient scholars, but it is rather baffling why he should have written such characters in such a place, on the Yen-an city wall, at the time of the War of Resistance. Perhaps he had taken a vow that the common people should not read them; it is difficult to explain

otherwise. Communists who really want to do propaganda must consider their audience and bear in mind those who will read their articles and slogans or listen to their speeches and their talk; otherwise they are in effect resolving not to be read or listened to by anyone. Many people often take it for granted that what they write and say can be easily understood by everybody, when it is not so at all. How can people understand them when they write and speak in Party stereotypes? The saying "to play the lute to a cow" implies a gibe at the audience. If we substitute the idea of respect for the audience, the gibe is turned against the player. Why should he strum away without considering his audience? What is worse, he is producing a Party stereotype as raucous as a crow, and yet he insists on cawing at the masses. When shooting an arrow, one must aim at the target; when playing the lute, one must consider the listener; how, then, can one write articles or make speeches without taking the reader or the audience into account? Suppose we want to make friends with a person, whoever he may be, can we become bosom friends if we do not understand each other's hearts, do not know each other's thoughts? It simply will not do for our propaganda workers to rattle on without investigating, studying and analysing their audience.

The fourth indictment against stereotyped Party writing is its drab language that reminds one of a *piehsan*. Like our stereotyped Party writing, the creatures known in Shanghai as "little *piehsan*" are wizened and ugly. If an article or a speech merely rings the changes on a few terms in a classroom tone without a shred of vigour or spirit, is it not rather like a *piehsan*, drab of speech and repulsive in appearance? If someone enters primary school at seven, goes to middle school in his teens, graduates from college in his twenties and never has contact with the masses of the people, he is not to blame if his language is poor and monotonous. But we are revolutionaries working for the masses, and if we do not learn the language of the masses, we cannot work well. At present many of our comrades doing propaganda work make no study of language. Their propaganda is very dull, and few people care to read their articles or listen to their talk. Why do we need to study language and, what is more, spend much effort on it? Because the mastery of language is not easy and requires painstaking effort. First, let us learn language from the masses. The people's vocabulary is rich, vigorous, vivid and expressive of real life. It is because many of us have not mastered language that our articles and speeches contain few vigorous, vivid and effective expres-

sions and resemble not a hale and healthy person, but an emaciated *piehsan*, a mere bag of bones. Secondly, let us absorb what we need from foreign languages. We should not import foreign expressions mechanically or use them indiscriminately, but should absorb what is good and suits our needs. Our current vocabulary has already incorporated many foreign expressions, because the old Chinese vocabulary was inadequate. For instance, today we are holding a meeting of *kanpu* [cadres], and the term *kanpu* is derived from a foreign word. We should continue to absorb many fresh things from abroad, not only progressive ideas but new expressions as well. Thirdly, let us also learn whatever is alive in the classical Chinese language. Since we have not studied classical Chinese hard enough, we have not made full and proper use of much that is still alive in it. Of course, we are resolutely opposed to the use of obsolete expressions or allusions, and that is final; but what is good and still useful should be taken over. Those who are badly infected by stereotyped Party writing do not take pains to study what is useful in the language of the people, in foreign languages, or in classical Chinese, so the masses do not welcome their dry and dull propaganda, and we too have no need for such poor and incompetent propagandists. Who are our propagandists? They include not only teachers, journalists, writers and artists, but all our cadres. Take the military commanders, for instance. Though they make no public statements, they have to talk to the soldiers and have dealings with the people. What is this if not propaganda? Whenever a man speaks to others, he is doing propaganda work. Unless he is dumb, he always has a few words to say. It is therefore imperative that our comrades should all study language.

The fifth indictment against stereotyped Party writing is that it arranges items under a complicated set of headings, as if starting a Chinese pharmacy. Go and take a look at any Chinese pharmacy, and you will see cabinets with numerous drawers, each bearing the name of a drug — toncal, foxglove, rhubarb, saltpetre . . . indeed, everything that should be there. This method has been picked up by our comrades. In their articles and speeches, their books and reports, they use first the big Chinese numerals, second the small Chinese numerals, third the characters for the ten celestial stems, fourth the characters for the twelve earthly branches, and then capital A, B, C, D, then small a, b, c, d, followed by the Arabic numerals, and what not! How fortunate that the ancients and the foreigners created all these symbols for us so that we can start a Chinese pharmacy without the

slightest effort. For all its verbiage, an article that bristles with such symbols, that does not pose, analyse or solve problems and that does not take a stand for or against anything is devoid of real content and nothing but a Chinese pharmacy. I am not saying that such symbols as the ten celestial stems, etc., should not be used, but that this kind of approach to problems is wrong. The method borrowed from the Chinese pharmacy, which many of our comrades are very fond of, is really the most crude, infantile and philistine of all. It is a formalist method, classifying things according to their external features instead of their internal relations. If one takes a conglomeration of concepts that are not internally related and arranges them into an article, speech or report simply according to the external features of things, then one is juggling with concepts and may also lead others to indulge in the same sort of game, with the result that they do not use their brains to think over problems and probe into the essence of things, but are satisfied merely to list phenomena in ABCD order. What is a problem? A problem is the contradiction in a thing. Where one has an unresolved contradiction, there one has a problem. Since there is a problem, you have to be for one side and against the other, and you have to pose the problem. To pose the problem, you must first make a preliminary investigation and study of the two basic aspects of the problem or contradiction before you can understand the nature of the contradiction. This is the process of discovering the problem. Preliminary investigation and study can discover the problem, can pose the problem, but cannot as yet solve it. In order to solve the problem it is necessary to make a systematic and thorough investigation and study. This is the process of analysis. In posing the problem too, analysis is needed; otherwise, faced with a chaotic and bewildering mass of phenomena, you will not be able to discern where the problem or contradiction lies. But here, by the process of analysis we mean a process of systematic and thorough analysis. It often happens that although a problem has been posed it cannot be solved because the internal relations of things have not yet been revealed, because this process of systematic and thorough analysis has not yet been carried out; consequently we still cannot see the contours of the problem clearly, cannot make a synthesis and so cannot solve the problem well. If an article or speech is important and meant to give guidance, it ought to pose a particular problem, then analyse it and then make a synthesis pointing to the nature of the problem and providing the method for solving it; in all this, formalist methods are useless. Since infantile, crude, philistine and

lazy-minded formalist methods are prevalent in our Party, we must expose them; only thus can everybody learn to use the Marxist method to observe, pose, analyse and solve problems; only thus can we do our work well and only thus can our revolutionary cause triumph.

The sixth indictment against stereotyped Party writing is that it is irresponsible and harms people wherever it appears. All the offences mentioned above are due partly to immaturity and partly to an insufficient sense of responsibility. Let us take washing the face to illustrate the point. We all wash our faces every day, many of us more than once, and inspect ourselves in the mirror afterwards by way of "investigation and study" (*loud laughter*), for fear that something may not be quite right. What a great sense of responsibility! If we wrote articles and made speeches with the same sense of responsibility, we would not be doing badly. Do not present what is not presentable. Always bear in mind that it may influence the thoughts and actions of others. If a man happens not to wash his face for a day or two, that of course is not good, and if after washing he leaves a smudge or two, that too is not so pleasing, but there is no serious danger. It is different with writing articles or making speeches; they are intended solely to influence others. Yet our comrades go about this task casually; this means putting the trivial above the important. Many people write articles and make speeches without prior study or preparation, and after writing an article, they do not bother to go over it several times in the same way as they would examine their faces in the mirror after washing, but instead offhandedly send it to be published. Often the result is "A thousand words from the pen in a stream, but ten thousand *li* away from the theme". Talented though these writers may appear, they actually harm people. This bad habit, this weak sense of responsibility, must be corrected.

The seventh indictment against stereotyped Party writing is that it poisons the whole Party and jeopardizes the revolution. The eighth indictment is that its spread would wreck the country and ruin the people. These two indictments are self-evident and require no elaboration. In other words, if stereotyped Party writing is not transformed but is allowed to develop unchecked, the consequences will be very serious indeed. The poison of subjectivism and sectarianism is hidden in stereotyped Party writing, and if this poison spreads it will endanger both the Party and the country.

The aforesaid eight counts are our call to arms against stereotyped Party writing.

As a form, the Party stereotype is not only unsuitable for expressing the revolutionary spirit but is apt to stifle it. To develop the revolutionary spirit it is necessary to discard stereotyped Party writing and instead to adopt the Marxist-Leninist style of writing, which is vigorous, lively, fresh and forceful. This style of writing has existed for a long time, but is yet to be enriched and spread widely among us. When we have destroyed foreign stereotyped writing and stereotyped Party writing, we can enrich our new style of writing and spread it widely, thereby advancing the Party's revolutionary cause.

The Party stereotype is not only confined to articles and speeches, but is also found in the conduct of meetings. "1. Opening announcement; 2. report; 3. discussion; 4. conclusions; and 5. adjournment." If this rigid procedure is followed at every meeting, large or small, everywhere and every time, is not that another Party stereotype? When "reports" are made at meetings they often go as follows: "1. the international situation; 2. the domestic situation; 3. the Border Region; and 4. our own department"; and the meetings often last from morning till night, with even those having nothing to say taking the floor, as though they would let the others down unless they spoke. In short, there is a disregard for actual conditions and deadly adherence to rigid old forms and habits. Should we not correct all these things too?

Nowadays many people are calling for a transformation to a national, scientific and mass style. That is very good. But "transformation" means thorough change, from top to bottom and inside out. Yet some people who have not made even a slight change are calling for a transformation. I would therefore advise these comrades to begin by making just a little change before they go on to "transform", or else they will remain entangled in dogmatism and stereotyped Party writing. This can be described as having grandiose aims but puny abilities, great ambition but little talent, and it will accomplish nothing. So whoever talks glibly about "transformation to a mass style" while in fact he is stuck fast in his own small circle had better watch out, or some day one of the masses may bump into him along the road and say, "What about all this 'transformation', sir? Can I see a bit of it, please?" and he will be in a fix. If he is not just prating but sincerely wants to transform to a mass style, he must really go among the common people and learn from them, otherwise his "transformation" will remain up in the air. There are some who keep clamouring for transformation to a mass style but cannot speak three sentences in the language of the common people. It shows they are

not really determined to learn from the masses. Their minds are still confined to their own small circles.

At this meeting copies of *A Guide to Propaganda*, a pamphlet containing four articles, have been distributed, and I advise our comrades to read and re-read it.

The first piece, composed of excerpts from the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*, deals with the way Lenin did propaganda work. It describes, among other things, how Lenin wrote leaflets:

Under Lenin's guidance, the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class was the first body in Russia that began to *unite Socialism with the working-class movement*. When a strike broke out in some factory, the League of Struggle, which through the members of its circles was kept well posted on the state of affairs in the factories, immediately responded by issuing leaflets and Socialist proclamations. These leaflets exposed the oppression of the workers by the manufacturers, explained how the workers should fight for their interests, and set forth the workers' demands. The leaflets told the plain truth about the ulcers of capitalism, the poverty of the workers, their intolerably hard working day of 12 to 14 hours, and their utter lack of rights. They also put forward appropriate political demands.

Take note, "well posted" and "told the plain truth"! Again:

With the collaboration of the worker Babushkin, Lenin at the end of 1894 wrote the first agitational leaflet of this kind and an appeal to the workers of the Semyannikov Works in St. Petersburg who were on strike.

To write a leaflet, you must consult with comrades who are well posted on the state of affairs. It was on the basis of such investigation and study that Lenin wrote and worked.

Every leaflet greatly helped to stiffen the spirit of the workers. They saw that the Socialists were helping and defending them.⁶²

Do we agree with Lenin? If we do, we must work in the spirit of Lenin. That is, we must do as Lenin did and not fill endless pages with verbiage, or shoot at random without considering the audience, or become self-opinionated and bombastic.

The second piece is composed of excerpts from Dimitrov's state-

ments at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. What did Dimitrov say? He said:

We must learn to talk to the masses, not in the language of book formulas, but in the language of fighters for the cause of the masses, whose every word, whose every idea reflects the innermost thoughts and sentiments of millions.⁶³

And again:

... the masses cannot assimilate our decisions unless we learn to speak the language which the masses understand.

We do not always know how to speak simply, concretely, in images which are familiar and intelligible to the masses. We are still unable to refrain from abstract formulas which we have learned by rote. As a matter of fact, if you look through our leaflets, newspapers, resolutions and theses, you will find that they are often written in a language and style so heavy that they are difficult for even our Party functionaries to understand, let alone the rank-and-file workers.⁶⁴

Well? Does not Dimitrov put his finger on our weak spot? Apparently, stereotyped Party writing exists in foreign countries as well as in China, so you can see it is a common disease. (*Laughter.*) In any case, we should cure our own disease quickly in accordance with Comrade Dimitrov's injunction.

Every one of us must make this a law, a Bolshevik law, an elementary rule:

*When writing or speaking always have in mind the rank-and-file worker who must understand you, must believe in your appeal and be ready to follow you! You must have in mind those for whom you write, to whom you speak.*⁶⁵

This is the prescription made out for us by the Communist International, a prescription that must be followed. Let it be a law for us!

The third article, selected from the *Complete Works of Lu Hsun*, is the author's reply to the magazine *The Dipper*,⁶⁶ discussing how to write. What did Lu Hsun say? Altogether he set forth eight rules of writing, some of which I shall pick out for comment here.

Rule 1: "Pay close attention to all manner of things; observe more, and if you have observed only a little, then do not write."

What he says is, "pay close attention to all manner of things",

not just to one thing or half a thing. He says "observe more", not just take a look or half a look. How about us? Don't we often do exactly the opposite and write after having observed only a little?

Rule 2: "Do not force yourself to write when you have nothing to say."

What about us? Don't we often force ourselves to write a great deal when it is all too clear that there is nothing in our heads? It is sheer irresponsibility to pick up the pen and "force ourselves to write" without investigation or study.

Rule 4: "After writing something, read it over twice at least, and do your utmost to strike out non-essential words, sentences and paragraphs, without the slightest compunction. Rather condense the material for a novel into a sketch, never spin out the material for a sketch into a novel."

Confucius advised, "Think twice",⁶⁷ and Han Yu said, "A deed is accomplished through taking thought."⁶⁸ That was in ancient times. Today matters have become very complicated, and sometimes it is not even enough to think them over three or four times. Lu Hsun said, "Read it over twice at least." And at most? He did not say, but in my opinion it does no harm to go over an important article more than ten times and to revise it conscientiously before it is published. Articles are the reflection of objective reality, which is intricate and complex and must be studied over and over again before it can be properly reflected; to be slipshod in this respect is to be ignorant of the rudiments of writing.

Rule 6: "Do not coin adjectives or other terms that are intelligible to nobody but yourself."

We have "coined" too many expressions that are "intelligible to nobody". Sometimes a single clause runs to forty or fifty words and is packed with "adjectives or other terms that are intelligible to nobody". Many who never tire of professing to follow Lu Hsun are the very ones who turn their backs on him!

The last piece is taken from the report on how to develop a national style of propaganda, which was adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. At that session held in 1938, we said that "any talk about Marxism apart from China's specific characteristics is only Marxism

in the abstract, Marxism in a vacuum". That is to say, we must oppose all empty talk about Marxism, and Communists living in China must study Marxism by linking it with the realities of the Chinese revolution.

The report said:

Foreign stereotypes must be abolished, there must be less singing of empty, abstract tunes, and dogmatism must be laid to rest; they must be replaced by the fresh, lively Chinese style and spirit which the common people of China love. To separate internationalist content from national form is the practice of those who do not understand the first thing about internationalism. We, on the contrary, must link the two closely. In this matter there are serious errors in our ranks which should be conscientiously overcome.

The abolition of foreign stereotypes was demanded in that report, yet some comrades are still promoting them. Less singing of empty, abstract tunes was demanded, yet some comrades are obstinately singing more. The demand was made that dogmatism be laid to rest, yet some comrades are telling it to get out of bed. In short, many people have let this report which was adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session go in one ear and out of the other, as if wilfully opposed to it.

The Central Committee has now made the decision that we must discard stereotyped Party writing, dogmatism and the like once and for all, and that is why I have come and talked at some length. I hope that comrades will think over and analyse what I have said and that each comrade will also analyse his own particular case. Everyone should carefully examine himself, talk over with his close friends and the comrades around him whatever he has clarified and really get rid of his own defects.

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIK) OF THE USSR

This volume was edited under Stalin's leadership in 1938 by a commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). It retraces the shining road followed by the Party that led the very first socialist revolution in 1917.

One section of the book draws the lessons of the role played by **Pravda**, the Bolshevik daily founded in 1912 in the heat of revolutionary struggle.

(...)

THE BOLSHEVIK NEWSPAPER "PRAVDA." THE BOLSHEVIK GROUP IN THE FOURTH STATE DUMA

A powerful instrument used by the Bolshevik Party to strengthen its organizations and to spread its influence among the masses was the Bolshevik daily newspaper *Pravda* (*Truth*), published in St. Petersburg. It was founded, according to Lenin's instructions, on the initiative of Stalin, Olminsky and Poletayev. *Pravda* was a mass working-class paper founded simultaneously with the new rise of the revolutionary movement. Its first issue appeared on April 22 (May 5, New Style), 1912. This was a day of real celebration for the workers. In honour of *Pravda's* appearance it was decided henceforward to celebrate May 5 as workers' press day.

Previous to the appearance of *Pravda*, the Bolsheviks already had a weekly newspaper called *Zvezda*, intended for advanced workers. *Zvezda* played an important part at the time of the Lena events. It printed a number of trenchant political articles by Lenin and Stalin which mobilized the working class for the struggle. But in view of the rising revolutionary tide, a weekly newspaper no longer met the requirements of the Bolshevik Party. A daily mass political newspaper designed for the broadest sections of the workers was needed. *Pravda* was such a newspaper.

Pravda played an exceptionally important part at this period. It gained support for Bolshevism among broad masses of the working class. Because of incessant police persecution, fines, and confiscations of issues due to the publication of articles and letters not to the liking of the censor, *Pravda* could exist only with the active support of tens of thousands of advanced workers. *Pravda* was able to pay the huge fines only thanks to large collections made among the workers. Not infrequently, considerable portions of confiscated issues of *Pravda* nevertheless found their way into the hands of readers, because the more active workers would come to the printing shop at night and carry away bundles of the newspaper.

The tsarist government suppressed *Pravda* eight times in the space of two and a half years; but each time, with the support of the workers, it reappeared under a new but similar name, e.g., *Za Pravdu* (*For Truth*), *Put Pravdy* (*Path of Truth*), *Trudovaya Pravda* (*Labour Truth*).

While the average circulation of *Pravda* was 40,000 copies per day, the circulation of *Luch* (*Ray*), the Menshevik daily, did not exceed 15,000 or 16,000.

The workers regarded *Pravda* as their own newspaper; they had great confidence in it and were very responsive to its calls. Every copy was read by scores of readers, passing from hand to hand; it moulded their class-consciousness, educated them, organized them, and summoned them to the struggle.

What did *Pravda* write about?

Every issue contained dozens of letters from workers describing their life, the savage exploitation and the various forms of oppression and humiliation they suffered at the hands of the capitalists, their managers and foremen. These were trenchant and telling indictments of capitalist conditions. *Pravda* often reported cases of suicide of unemployed and starving workers who had lost hope of ever finding jobs again.

Pravda wrote of the needs and demands of the workers of various factories and branches of industry, and told how the workers were fighting for their demands. Almost every issue contained reports of strikes at various factories. In big and protracted strikes, the newspaper helped to organize collections among the workers of other factories and branches of industry for the support of the strikers. Sometimes tens of thousands of rubles were collected for the strike funds, huge sums for those days when the majority of the workers received not more than 70 or 80 kopeks per day. This fostered a spirit of proletarian solidarity among the workers and a consciousness of the unity of interests of all workers.

The workers reacted to every political event, to every victory or

defeat, by sending to *Pravda* letters, greetings, protests, etc. In its articles *Pravda* dealt with the tasks of the working-class movement from a consistent Bolshevik standpoint. A legally published newspaper could not call openly for the overthrow of tsardom. It had to resort to hints, which, however, the class-conscious workers understood very well, and which they explained to the masses. When, for example, *Pravda* wrote of the "full and uncurtailed demands of the Year Five," the workers understood that this meant the revolutionary slogans of the Bolsheviks, namely, the overthrow of tsardom, a democratic republic, the confiscation of the landed estates, and an 8-hour day.

Pravda organized the advanced workers on the eve of the elections to the Fourth Duma. It exposed the treacherous position of those who advocated an agreement with the liberal bourgeoisie, the advocates of the "Stolypin Labour Party"—the Mensheviks. *Pravda* called upon the workers to vote for those who advocated the "full and uncurtailed demands of the Year Five," that is, the Bolsheviks. The elections were indirect, held in a series of stages: first, meetings of workers elected delegates; then these delegates chose electors; and it was these electors who participated in the elections of the workers' deputy to the Duma. On the day of the elections of the electors *Pravda* published a list of Bolshevik candidates and recommended the workers to vote for this list. The list could not be published earlier without exposing those on the list to the danger of arrest.

Pravda helped to organize the mass actions of the proletariat. At the time of a big lockout in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1914, when it was inexpedient to declare a mass strike, *Pravda* called upon the workers to resort to other forms of struggle, such as mass meetings in the factories and demonstrations in the streets. This could not be stated openly in the newspaper. But the call was understood by class-conscious workers when they read an article by Lenin bearing the modest title "Forms of the Working-Class Movement" and stating that at the given moment strikes should yield place to a higher form of the working-class movement—which meant a call to organize meetings and demonstrations.

In this way the illegal revolutionary activities of the Bolsheviks were combined with legal forms of agitation and organization of the masses of the workers through *Pravda*.

Pravda not only wrote of the life of the workers, their strikes and demonstrations, but also regularly described the life of the peasants, the famines from which they suffered, their exploitation by the feudal landlords. It described how as a result of the Stolypin "reform" the kulak farmers robbed the peasants of the best parts of their land. *Pravda* drew the attention of the class-conscious workers to the widespread and burning

discontent in the countryside. It taught the proletariat that the objectives of the Revolution of 1905 had not been attained, and that a new revolution was impending. It taught that in this second revolution the proletariat must act as the real leader and guide of the people, and that in this revolution it would have so powerful an ally as the revolutionary peasantry.

The Mensheviks worked to get the proletariat to drop the idea of revolution, to stop thinking of the people, of the starvation of the peasants, of the domination of the Black-Hundred feudal landlords, and to fight only for "freedom of association," to present "petitions" to this effect to the tsarist government. The Bolsheviks explained to the workers that this Menshevik gospel of renunciation of revolution, renunciation of an alliance with the peasantry, was being preached in the interests of the bourgeoisie, that the workers would most certainly defeat tsardom if they won over the peasantry as their ally, and that bad shepherds like the Mensheviks should be driven out as enemies of the revolution.

What did *Pravda* write about in its "Peasant Life" section?

Let us take, as an example, several letters relating to the year 1913.

One letter from Samara, headed "An Agrarian Case," reports that of 45 peasants of the village of Novokhasbulat, Bugulma uyezd, accused of interfering with a surveyor who was marking out communal land to be allotted to peasants withdrawing from the commune, the majority were condemned to long terms of imprisonment.

A brief letter from the Pskov Province states that the "peasants of the village of Psitsa (near Zavalye Station) offered armed resistance to the rural police. Several persons were wounded. The clash was due to an agrarian dispute. Rural police have been dispatched to Psitsa, and the vice-governor and the procurator are on their way to the village."

A letter from the Ufa Province reported that peasant's allotments were being sold off in great numbers, and that famine and the law permitting withdrawal from the village communes were causing increasing numbers of peasants to lose their land. Take the hamlet of Borisovka. Here there are 27 peasant households owning 543 dessiatins of arable land between them. During the famine five peasants sold 31 dessiatins outright at prices varying from 25 to 33 rubles per dessiatin, though land is worth three or four times as much. In this village, too, seven peasants have mortgaged between them 177 dessiatins of arable land, receiving 18 to 20 rubles per dessiatin for a term of six years at a rate of 12 per cent per annum. When the poverty of the population and the usurious rate of interest are borne in mind, it may be safely said that half of the 177 dessiatins is bound to pass into the possession of the usurer, for it is not likely that even half the debtors can repay so large a sum in six years.

In an article printed in *Pravda* and entitled "Big Landlord and

Small Peasant Land Ownership in Russia," Lenin strikingly demonstrated to the workers and peasants what tremendous landed property was in the hands of the parasite landlords. Thirty thousand big landlords alone owned about 70,000,000 dessiatins of land between them. An equal area fell to the share of 10,000,000 peasant households. On an average, the big landlords owned 2,300 dessiatins each, while peasant households, including the kulaks, owned 7 dessiatins each; moreover, five million households of small peasants, that is, half the peasantry, owned no more than one or two dessiatins each. These figures clearly showed that the root of the poverty of the peasants and the recurrent famines lay in the large landed estates, in the survivals of serfdom, of which the peasants could rid themselves only by a revolution led by the working class.

Through workers connected with the countryside, *Pravda* found its way into the villages and roused the politically advanced peasants to a revolutionary struggle.

At the time *Pravda* was founded the illegal Social-Democratic organizations were entirely under the direction of the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, the legal forms of organization, such as the Duma group, the press, the sick benefit societies, the trade unions, had not yet been fully wrested from the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks had to wage a determined struggle to drive the Liquidators out of the legally existing organizations of the working class. Thanks to *Pravda*, this fight ended in victory.

Pravda stood in the centre of the struggle for the Party principle, for the building up of a mass working-class revolutionary party. *Pravda* rallied the legally existing organizations around the illegal centres of the Bolshevik Party and directed the working-class movement towards one definite aim—preparation for revolution.

Pravda had a vast number of worker correspondents. In one year alone it printed over eleven thousand letters from workers. But it was not only by letters that *Pravda* maintained contact with the working-class masses. Numbers of workers from the factories visited the editorial office every day. In the *Pravda* editorial office was concentrated a large share of the organizational work of the Party. Here meetings were arranged with representatives from Party nuclei; here reports were received of Party work in the mills and factories; and from here were transmitted the instructions of the St. Petersburg Committee and the Central Committee of the Party.

As a result of two and a half years of persistent struggle against the Liquidators for the building up of a mass revolutionary working-class party, by the summer of 1914 the Bolsheviks had succeeded in winning the support of *four-fifths* of the politically active workers of Russia for the Bolshevik Party and for the *Pravda* tactics. This was borne out,

for instance, by the fact that out of a total number of 7,000 workers' groups which collected money for the labour press in 1914, 5,600 groups collected for the Bolshevik press, and only 1,400 groups for the Menshevik press. But, on the other hand, the Mensheviks had a large number of "rich friends" among the liberal bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia who advanced over half the funds required for the maintenance of the Menshevik newspaper.

The Bolsheviks at that time were called "Pravdists." A whole generation of the revolutionary proletariat was reared by *Pravda*, the generation which subsequently made the October Socialist Revolution. *Pravda* was backed by tens and hundreds of thousands of workers. During the rise of the revolutionary movement (1912-14) the solid foundation was laid of a mass Bolshevik Party, a foundation which no persecution by tsardom could destroy during the imperialist war.

"The *Pravda* of 1912 was the laying of the corner-stone of the victory of Bolshevism in 1917." (*Stalin.*)

- 1 Marx and Engels, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* P. 6
- 2 *The Exceptional Law Against the Socialists* was promulgated in Germany in 1878. The law suppressed all organisations of the Social-Democratic Party, mass working-class organisations, and the labour press; socialist literature was confiscated and the banishing of socialists began. The law was annulled in 1890 under pressure of the mass working-class movement. P. 14
- 3 *Vorwärts (Forward)*—the central organ of German Social-Democracy; it was first published in 1876 and was edited by Wilhelm Liebknecht and others. Engels made use of its columns for the struggle against all manifestations of opportunism. From the middle nineties, however, after the death of Engels, *Vorwärts* began regularly to print articles of the opportunists, who predominated in German Social-Democracy and in the Second International. P. 14
- 4 *Iskra (The Spark)* was the first all-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper; it was founded by Lenin in 1900 and it played an important role in building the Marxist revolutionary party of the working class in Russia.
It was impossible to publish the revolutionary newspaper in Russia on account of police persecution, and, while still in exile in Siberia, Lenin evolved a plan for its publication abroad. When his exile ended (January 1900) Lenin immediately set about putting his plan into effect. In February, in St. Petersburg, he negotiated with Vera Zaslulich (who had come from abroad illegally) on the participation of the Emancipation of Labour group in the publication of the newspaper. At the end of March and the beginning of April a conference was held—known as the Pskov Conference—with V. I. Lenin, L. Martov (Y. O. Zederbaum), A. N. Potresov, S. I. Radchenko, and the "legal Marxists" P. B. Struve and M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky participating, which discussed the draft declaration, drawn up by Lenin, of the Editorial Board of the all-Russian newspaper (*Iskra*) and the scientific and political magazine (*Zarya*) on the programme and the aims of these publications. During the first half of 1900 Lenin travelled in a number of Russian cities (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, Smolensk, Nizhni-Novgorod, Ufa, Samara, Syzran) and established contact with Social-Democratic groups and individual Social-Democrats, obtaining their support for *Iskra*. In August 1900, when Lenin arrived in Switzerland, he and Potresov conferred with the Emancipation of Labour group on the programme and the aims of the newspaper and the magazine, on possible contributors, and on the editorial board and its location. The conference almost ended in failure but an agreement was finally reached on all disputed questions.
The first issue of Lenin's *Iskra* was published in Leipzig in December 1900; the ensuing issues were published in Munich; from July 1902 the paper was published in London, and from the spring of 1903 in Geneva. Considerable help in getting the newspaper

going (the organisation of secret printing-presses, the acquisition of Russian type, etc.) was afforded by the German Social-Democrats Clara Zetkin, Adolf Braun, and others; by Julian Marchlewski, a Polish revolutionary residing in Munich at that time; and by Harry Quelch, one of the leaders of the English Social-Democratic Federation.

The Editorial Board of *Iskra* consisted of: V. I. Lenin, G. V. Plekhanov, L. Martov, P. B. Axelrod, A. N. Potresov, and V. I. Zaslulich. The first secretary of the board was I. G. Smidovich-Leman; the post was then taken over, from the spring of 1901, by N. K. Krupskaya, who also conducted the correspondence between *Iskra* and the Russian Social-Democratic organisations. Lenin was in actuality editor-in-chief and the leading figure in *Iskra*, in which he published his articles on all basic questions of Party organisation and the class struggle of the proletariat in Russia, as well as on the most important events in world affairs.

Iskra became the centre for the unification of Party forces, for the gathering and training of Party workers. In a number of Russian cities (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Samara, and others) groups and committees of the R.S.D.L.P. were organised on Leninist *Iskra* lines and a conference of *Iskra* supporters held in Samara in January 1902 founded the Russian *Iskra* organisation. *Iskra* organisations grew up and worked under the direct leadership of Lenin's disciples and comrades-in-arms: N. E. Bauman, I. V. Babushkin, S. I. Gusev, M. I. Kalinin, P. A. Krasikov, G. M. Krzhizhanovskiy, F. V. Lengnik, P. N. Lepeshinsky, I. I. Radchenko, and others.

On the initiative and with the direct participation of Lenin, the *Iskra* Editorial Board drew up a draft programme of the Party (published in No. 21 of *Iskra*) and prepared the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., held in July and August 1903. By the time the Congress was convened the majority of the local Social-Democratic organisations in Russia had adopted the *Iskra* position, approved its programme, organisational plan, and tactical line, and recognised the newspaper as their leading organ. A special resolution of the Congress noted *Iskra's* exceptional role in the struggle to build the Party and adopted the newspaper as the central organ of the R.S.D.L.P. The Congress approved an editorial board consisting of Lenin, Plekhanov, and Martov. Despite the Congress decision, Martov refused to participate, and Nos. 46-51 of *Iskra* were edited by Lenin and Plekhanov. Later Plekhanov went over to the Menshevik position and demanded that all the old Menshevik editors be included in the Editorial Board of *Iskra*, although they had been rejected by the Congress. Lenin could not agree to this and on October 19 (November 1), 1903, he resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board. He was co-opted to the Central Committee, from where he conducted a struggle against the Menshevik opportunists. Issue No. 52 of *Iskra* was edited by Plekhanov alone. On November 13 (26), 1903, Plekhanov, on his own initiative and in violation of the will of the Congress, co-opted all the old Menshevik editors to the Editorial Board. Beginning with issue

No. 52, the Mensheviks turned *Iskra* into their own organ. P.17

5. *Zarya (Dawn)*—a Marxist scientific and political magazine published legally in Stuttgart in 1901-02 by the *Iskra* Editorial Board. Altogether four numbers (in three issues) appeared: No. 1—April 1901 (it actually appeared on March 23, New Style); No. 2-3—December 1901; and No. 4—August 1902. P. 17
6. Lenin refers to the "Announcement on the Renewal of Publications of the Emancipation of Labour Group" published at the beginning of 1900 in Geneva, after the appearance of Lenin's "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats." In their "Announcement" the Emancipation of Labour group supported Lenin's appeal in the "Protest" for decisive struggle against opportunism in the ranks of Russian and international Social-Democracy. P.19
7. By *groups and organisations* Lenin means the Social-Democrats grouped round the newspaper *Yuzhny Rabochy (Southern Worker)*, the Bund, and the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, the leadership of which had been transferred from the Emancipation of Labour group to the "young" supporters of "economism." These organisations planned to call the Second Congress of the Party in Smolensk in the spring of 1900. The circumstances surrounding the preparation for the Congress are discussed in Chapter 5 of Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?* P. 20
8. Lenin refers to "A Draft Programme of Our Party" which he wrote at the end of 1899 for No. 3 of *Rabochaya Gazeta* that never came to be published (see present volume, pp. 227-54). A draft programme of the Party was elaborated for the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., on Lenin's suggestion, by the Editorial Board of *Iskra* and *Zarya* and was printed in *Iskra*, No 21, on June 1, 1902; it was adopted by the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in August 1903. P. 21
9. Lenin quotes the basic postulate of the "General Rules of the International Working Men's Association" (First International) drawn up by Karl Marx (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, P. 24
10. Unlike the first draft declaration which presented the programme of both organs, the newspaper and the magazine, the declaration published by the editorial board of *Iskra* related only to *Iskra*. It had been decided to present the objectives of the magazine *Zaria* separately in its first issue. P. 28

- 11 *The Self-Emancipation of the Working Class* group was a small circle of "economists" that came into being in St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1898 and existed for a few months only. The group issued a manifesto announcing its aims (printed in the magazine *Nakanune [On the Eve]*, published in London), its rules, and several proclamations addressed to workers.
Lenin criticised the views of this group in Chapter 2 of his book, *What Is to Be Done?* P. 30
- 12 *Rabocheye Dyelo (The Workers' Cause)*—a journal with "Economist" views, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. It appeared irregularly and was published in Geneva from April 1899 to February 1902 under the editorship of B. N. Krichevsky, A. S. Martynov, and V. P. Ivanshin. Altogether 12 numbers appeared in nine issues.
Lenin criticised the views of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* group in his *What Is To Be Done?* P. 30
- 13 "Where To Begin" was published in *Iskra* and reissued by local Social-Democratic organisations as a separate pamphlet. The Siberian Social-Democratic League printed 5,000 copies of the pamphlet and distributed it throughout Siberia. The pamphlet was also distributed in Samara, Tambov, Nizhni-Novgorod, and other Russian cities. P. 34
- 14 "Istok" *Rabocheye Dyelo (Rabocheye Dyelo Supplement)*—of which eight numbers were issued in Geneva, at irregular intervals, between June 1900 and July 1901. P. 34
- 15 *Rabochaya Mysl (Workers' Thought)*—an "Economist" newspaper, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, published from October 1897 to December 1902. Altogether 16 issues appeared: numbers 3 to 11 and number 16 were published in Berlin, the remaining numbers in St. Petersburg. It was edited by K. M. Takhtarev and others.
Lenin characterised the paper's views as a Russian variety of international opportunism and criticised them in a number of his articles published in *Iskra* and in other works including *What Is To Be Done?* P. 34
- 16 The reference is to the article "The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement", which was published as the leading article in *Iskra*, No. 1, December 1900 Vol. 4, pp. 366-71).
Iskra (The Spark)—the first All-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper, founded by Lenin in 1900. The foundation of a militant organ of revolutionary Marxism was the main task confronting Russian Social-Democrats at the time.
Since the publication of a revolutionary newspaper in Russia was impossible, owing to police persecution, Lenin, while still in exile in Siberia, worked out all the details of a plan to publish

the paper abroad. When his term of exile ended in January 1900, he immediately began to put his plan into effect. In February, he conducted negotiations with Vera Zasulich, who had come illegally to St. Petersburg from abroad, on the participation of the Emancipation of Labour group in the publication of an All-Russian Marxist newspaper. The so-called Pskov Conference was held in April, with V. I. Lenin, L. Martov (Y. O. Tserdobaum), A. N. Potresov, S. I. Radchenko, and the "legal Marxists" (P. B. Struve and M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky) participating. The conference heard and discussed Lenin's draft editorial declaration on the programme and the aims of the All-Russian newspaper (*Iskra*) and the scientific and political magazine (*Zarya*). Lenin visited a number of Russian cities—St. Petersburg, Riga, Pskov, Nizhni-Novgorod, Ufa, and Samara—establishing contact with Social-Democratic groups and individual Social-Democrats and obtaining their support for *Iskra*. In August, when Lenin arrived in Switzerland, he and Potresov held a conference with the Emancipation of Labour group on the programme and the aims of the newspaper and the magazine, on possible contributors, on the composition of Editorial Board, and on the problem of residence. For an account of the founding of *Iskra* see the article "How the 'Spark' was Nearly Extinguished"

The first issue of Lenin's *Iskra* was published in Leipzig in December 1900; the ensuing issues were published in Munich; from July 1902 it was published in London; and from the spring of 1903 in Geneva.

The Editorial Board consisted of V. I. Lenin, G. V. Plekhanov, L. Martov, P. B. Axelrod, A. N. Potresov, and V. I. Zasulich. The first secretary of the Editorial Board was I. G. Smidovich-Leman. From the spring of 1901 the post was taken over by N. K. Krupskaya, who was also in charge of all correspondence between *Iskra* and Russian Social-Democratic organisations. Lenin was actually Editor-in-Chief and the leading figure in *Iskra*. He published his articles on all important questions of Party organisation and the class struggle of the proletariat in Russia and dealt with the most important events in world affairs.

Iskra became, as Lenin had planned, a rallying centre for the Party forces, a centre for the training of leading Party workers. In a number of Russian cities (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Samara, and others) groups and committees of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (R.S.D.L.P.) were organised along Lenin's *Iskra* line. *Iskra* organisations sprang up and worked under the direct leadership of Lenin's disciples and comrades-in-arms: N. E. Bauman, I. V. Babushkin, S. I. Gusev, M. I. Kalinin, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, and others. The newspaper played a decisive role in the struggle for the Marxist Party, in the defeat of the "Economists", and in the unification of the dispersed Social-Democratic study circles.

On the initiative and with the direct participation of Lenin, the Editorial Board drew up a draft programme of the Party

(published in *Iskra*, No. 21) and prepared the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., which was held in July and August 1903. By the time the Congress was convened the majority of the local Social-Democratic organisations in Russia had joined forces with *Iskra*, approved its programme, organisational plan, and tactical line, and accepted it as their leading organ. By a special resolution, which noted the exceptional role played by *Iskra* in the struggle to build the Party, the Congress adopted the newspaper as the central organ of the R.S.D.L.P. and approved an editorial board consisting of Lenin, Plekhanov, and Martov. Despite the decision of the Congress, Martov refused to participate, and Nos. 46 to 51 were edited by Lenin and Plekhanov. Later Plekhanov went over to the Menshevik position and demanded that all the old Menshevik editors, notwithstanding their rejection by the Congress, be placed on the Editorial Board. Lenin could not agree to this, and on October 19 (November 1, new style), 1903, he left the *Iskra* Editorial Board to strengthen his position in the Central Committee and from there to conduct a struggle against the Menshevik opportunists. Issue No. 52 of *Iskra* was edited by Plekhanov alone. On November 13 (26), 1903, Plekhanov, on his own initiative and in violation of the will of the Congress, co-opted all the old Menshevik editors on to the Editorial Board. Beginning with issue No. 52, the Mensheviks turned *Iskra* into their own, opportunist, organ. P. 35

- 17 This passage refers to the mass revolutionary actions of students and workers—political demonstrations, meetings, strikes—that took place in February and March 1901, in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Kazan, Yaroslavl, Warsaw, Belostok, Tomsk, Odessa, and other cities in Russia.

The student movement of 1900-01, which began with academic demands, acquired the character of revolutionary action against the reactionary policy of the autocracy; it was supported by the advanced workers and it met with a response among all strata of Russian society. The direct cause of the demonstrations and strikes in February and March 1901, was the drafting of 183 Kiev University students into the army as a punitive act for their participation in a students' meeting.

The government launched a furious attack on participants in the revolutionary actions; the police and the Cossacks dispersed demonstrations and assaulted the participants; hundreds of students were arrested and expelled from colleges and universities. On March 4 (17), 1901, the demonstration in the square in front of the Kazan Cathedral, in St. Petersburg, was dispersed with particular brutality. The February-March events were evidence of the revolutionary upsurge in Russia; the participation of workers in the movement under political slogans was of tremendous importance. P. 37

- 18 The reference is to Lenin's work *What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement* P. 37

- 19 *What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement*—a book written by Lenin in the latter part of 1901 and in the beginning of 1902. In "Where To Begin?", published in the *Iskra*, No. 4 (May 1901), Lenin wrote that the article represents "the outlines of a plan which is described in greater detail in a pamphlet now in preparation for the press."

Lenin began the actual writing of the book in the autumn of 1901. In his "Preface to 'Documents of the 'Unity' Congress,'" written in November 1901, Lenin stated that the book "was in preparation and would appear at an early date." Lenin subsequently described his article, "A Conversation with the Advocates of Economism" (*Iskra*, No. 12, December 1901) as a synopsis of *What Is To Be Done?* In February 1902 Lenin wrote the preface to the book, which appeared in the early days of March in Stuttgart where it was published by Dietz. An announcement of its publication was printed in the *Iskra*, No. 18, March 10, 1902.

The ideas Lenin advanced and expounded in *What Is To Be Done?* were upheld and developed by Comrade Stalin. His pamphlet *Briefly About the Disagreements in the Party*, written in the spring of 1905, is intimately connected with *What Is To Be Done?* (J. V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. 1, pp. 89-130). The defence of Lenin's ideas, enunciated in *What Is To Be Done?*, is taken up by Comrade Stalin also in his article "A Reply to *Sotsial-Demokrat*," published in the newspaper *Proletariats Brdzola (The Struggle of the Proletariat)* in August 1905 (J. V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. 1, pp. 160-72). Lenin gave a high appraisal of this article, noting, in particular, that it contained a "splendid presentation of the question of the celebrated 'introduction of consciousness from without.'"

In republishing *What Is To Be Done?* in 1907 in the collection *Twelve Years*, Lenin omitted section A of Chapter V "Who Was Offended by the Article 'Where To Begin?'" and announced in the preface that the book was being published "with very slight abridgements, omitting only details concerning organizational relationships and minor polemical remarks." Lenin added five footnotes to the new edition.

The text of *What Is To Be Done?* given in Vol. 5 of V.I. Lenin's *Collected Works* (from which this translation has been made) follows the 1902 edition, checked with the text of the 1907 edition. P. 42

- 20 *Zemsky Nachalniki*—rural officials in tsarist Russia appointed from the landed nobility and exercising administrative and magisterial rights. P. 42

- 21 *Bund*—the General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia. Founded in 1897, it embraced mainly the Jewish artisans in the western regions of Russia. The Bund joined the R.S.D.L.P. at the latter's First Congress in March 1898. At the Second R.S.D.L.P. Congress the Bund delegates insisted on their organization being recognized as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in Russia. The Congress rejected

this organizational nationalism, whereupon the Bund withdrew from the Party.

In 1906, following the Fourth ("Unity") Congress, the Bund reaffiliated to the R.S.D.L.P. The Bundists constantly supported the Mensheviks and waged an incessant struggle against the Bolsheviks. Despite its formal affiliation to the R.S.D.L.P., the Bund was an organization of a bourgeois-nationalist character. As opposed to the Bolshevik programmatic demand for the right of nations to self-determination, the Bund put forward the demand for cultural-national autonomy. During the First World War of 1914-18 the Bundists took the stand of social-chauvinism. In 1917 the Bund supported the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government and fought on the side of the enemies of the October Socialist Revolution.

During the Civil War prominent Bundists joined forces with the counter-revolution. At the same time a turn began among the rank-and-file members of the Bund in favour of collaboration with the Soviet government. Only when the victory of the proletarian dictatorship over the internal counter-revolution and foreign interventionists became evident did the Bund declare its abandonment of the struggle against the Soviet system. In March 1921, the Bund went into voluntary liquidation and part of its membership joined the R.C.P.(B.) in the ordinary way. P. 48

22 all such. P. 49

23 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 5, pp. 231-51. P. 53

24 The reference is to student unrest and working-class action—meetings, demonstrations and strikes—that took place in February and March 1901 in many cities of Russia: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Yaroslavl, Tomsk, Warsaw, Belostok, etc. P. 54

25 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 4, pp. 388-93. P. 63

26 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 5, pp. 9-10. P. 63

27 *Iskra*, No. 7 (August 1901), carried in its section "The Workers' Movement and Letters from the Mills and Factories," a letter from a weaver which testified to the vast influence Lenin's *Iskra* exercised on the advanced workers. The letter reads in part:

"... I showed the *Iskra* to many fellow workers and the copy has been read to tatters; but we treasure it greatly.... The *Iskra* writes about our own cause, about the cause of all Russia which cannot be evaluated in kopeks or measured in hours of work; when you read the paper you understand why the gendarmes and police are afraid of us workers and of those intellectuals whom we follow. There is no denying that they do not simply make the bosses tremble for their pocketbooks, but inspire fear in the tsar, the employers and the rest.... It will not take much now to set the working folk aflame. All that is wanted is a spark to

kindle the fire that is already smouldering among the people. How true are the words 'the spark will kindle a flame!'. . . In the past every strike was an event, but today everyone sees that strikes alone are not enough, that we must now strive for liberty, win it by might and main. Today everyone, old and young, is eager to read, but the sad thing is that there are no books. Last Sunday I gathered eleven people and read them

'Where To Begin?', and we discussed it till late in the evening. How true it expresses everything, how it gets to the very heart of things And we would like to write a letter to your *Iskra*, to ask you to teach us not only how to begin, but how to live and how to die." P. 79

28 And in the interval *between* these articles the *Iskra* (No. 3) printed one specially dealing with class antagonisms in the countryside. (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 4, pp. 394-401.) P. 81

29 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 4, pp. 388-93. P. 82

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 394-401. P. 86

31 *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, pp. 78-83. P. 87

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85. P. 87

33 *Rossiia (Russia)*—a moderate liberal newspaper published in St. Petersburg from 1899 through 1902. P. 87

34 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 5, pp. 71-72. P. 87

35 Reference is to the pamphlet *Report on the Russian Social-Democratic Movement to the International Socialist Congress in Paris, 1900*. The report was submitted to the Congress by the Editorial Board of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* on behalf of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad and was issued in a separate pamphlet in Geneva in 1901. The pamphlet also contained the report of the Bund ("History of the Jewish Working-Class Movement in Russia and Poland") P. 88

36 Lenin is quoting from D. I. Pisarev's article "Errors of Immature Thought." (Pisarev, *Selected Works in Two Volumes*, P. 89

37 Lenin refers here to the following passage in Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

"Hegel remarks somewhere that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce." (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLPH, Moscow, 1951, Vol. I, p. 225.)

P. 114

38 *Janizaries*—elite rifle troops of the Ottoman Empire, abolished in 1826. The Janizaries were known for their plunder of the population and wanton brutality. Lenin uses the term to describe the tsarist police.

P. 115

- 39 7 Ts. 6 F.—pseudonym of the Bolshevik F. V. Lengnik. P. 119
- 40 *The Nizhni-Novgorod speeches*—the reference is to the speeches made by Nizhni-Novgorod revolutionary workers during their trial for participation in demonstrations. These speeches were published in *Iskra* and then as a pamphlet.
The Rostov struggle—the reference is to the pamphlet, *The Struggle of the Rostov Workers*, published by *Iskra*.
The pamphlet on strikes refers to the pamphlet, *The Autocracy and Strikes*, published in Geneva by the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy.
The Dikstein pamphlet—this refers to a popular Marxist pamphlet, *The Ways People Live*, by Dikstein. P. 122
- 41 *Vperyod* (Forward)—a newspaper of the “economist” trend, published in Kiev between 1896 and 1900. P. 123
- 42 *Krasnoye Znamya* (Red Banner)—organ of the “economists”, was published by the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad from November 1902 to January 1903 to take the place of *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Three numbers were issued. P. 126
- 43 Lenin is referring to the pamphlet, *The Autocracy and Strikes*. P. 126
- 44 *The Council Against the Party*, by Orlovsky (V. V. Vorovsky), was issued in Geneva in November 1904 by the Bolshevik Bonch-Bruyevich and Lenin Publishing House of Social-Democratic Party Literature. P. 127
- 45 Three conferences of Bolshevik local committees were held in September-December 1904: 1) the Southern (Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, and Nikolayev committees); 2) the Caucasian (Baku, Batum, Tiflis, and Imeretian-Mingrelian committees); and 3) the Northern (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Tver, Riga, Northern, and Nizhni-Novgorod committees).
 At Lenin's suggestion, the conferences elected a Bureau of Majority Committees for preparing and convening the Third Party Congress, consisting of Gusev, Zemlyachka, Lyadov, Litvinov, and others. The Bureau, of which Lenin became a member, was formally constituted in December 1904. P. 129
- 46 The meeting in Geneva on August 20 (September 2), 1904, was called by the Mensheviks by way of providing support for the “July Declaration” of the Central Committee. Both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were invited. The Bolsheviks refused, however, to take part, and their representative withdrew after announcing that the meeting was not competent to pass resolutions in the name of both minority and majority. The Mensheviks were obliged to admit at this meeting that the Party committees in Russia opposed the conciliation policy of the Central Committee and that the

- great majority of them had broken off all relations with the Menshevik *Iskra*. P. 130
- 47 Lenin is referring to the letter to the Party organisations issued by the Menshevik *Iskra* in November 1904, a criticism of which will be found in *The Zemstvo Campaign and “Iskra's” Plan* P. 130
- 48 Lenin is referring to the Bureau of Majority Committees. P. 131
- 49 *Vasily Vasilyevich*—the Bolshevik M. S. Olminsky (Alexandrov). P. 131
- 50 *Rakhmetov*—A. A. Malinovsky, better known by the name of Bogdanov; joined the Bolsheviks in 1903, but deserted Bolshevism after the Fifth, London, Congress. P. 135
- 51 Meaning the Bureau of Committees of the Majority. P. 135
- 52 *Papasha*—the Bolshevik M. M. Litvinov. P. 138
- 53 *Rabochy (The Worker)*—an illegal and popular Social-Democratic newspaper, which was published in Moscow by the R.S.D.L.P.'s Central Committee in 1906 by decision of the Party's Third Congress. Four issues came out between August and October. P. 138
- 54 *Brdzola (The Struggle)*—the first illegal Georgian newspaper issued by the Leninist-*Iskra* group of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization. It was founded on the initiative of J. V. Stalin. The newspaper was launched as a result of the struggle that had been waged since 1898 by the revolutionary minority in the first Georgian Social-Democratic organization known as the Messameh Dassy (J. V. Stalin, V. Z. Ketskhoveli and A. G. Tsulukidze) against the opportunist majority (Jordanian and others) on the question of instituting an underground revolutionary Marxist press. *Brdzola* was printed in Baku at an underground printing plant that had been organized by V. Z. Ketskhoveli, J. V. Stalin's closest colleague, on the instructions of the revolutionary wing of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization. He was also responsible for the practical work of issuing the newspaper. The leading articles in *Brdzola* on questions concerning the program and tactics of the revolutionary Marxist party were written by J. V. Stalin. Four numbers of *Brdzola* were issued: No. 1, in September 1901; No. 2-3, in November-December 1901; and No. 4, in December 1902. The best Marxist

newspaper in Russia next to *Iskra*, *Brdzola* urged that there was an inseverable connection between the revolutionary struggle that was being waged by the Transcaucasian proletariat and the revolutionary struggle waged by the working class all over Russia. Propagating the theoretical principles of revolutionary Marxism, *Brdzola*, like Lenin's *Iskra*, urged that the Social-Democratic organizations must proceed to take up mass political agitation and the political struggle against the autocracy, and advocated the Leninist idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. In its fight against the "Economists," *Brdzola* urged the necessity of creating a united revolutionary party of the working class and exposed the liberal bourgeoisie, nationalists and opportunists of all shades. Commenting on the appearance of No. 1 of *Brdzola*, Lenin's *Iskra* stated that it was an event of extreme importance. P. 140

55 *Rabochny Korrespondent (Worker Correspondent)*—a monthly magazine, published from January 1924 to June 1941. In January 1925 its title was changed to *Raboche-Krestyansky Korrespondent (Worker and Peasant Correspondent)*. P. 147

56 - See "How to Analyse the Classes in the Rural Areas", *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. I. P. 154

57 From the *Book of Rites*, "Miscellaneous Records", Part II. "Kings Wen and Wu could not keep a bow in permanent tension without relaxation. Nor would they leave it in a permanent state of relaxation without tension. The principle of Kings Wen and Wu was to alternate tension with relaxation." Wen and Wu were the first two kings of the Chou Dynasty (12th-3rd century B.C.). P. 161

58 For stereotyped Party writing, see "Rectify the Party's Style of Work", Note 1, p. 50 of this volume. P. 162

59 Opposition to stereotyped writing, whether old or new, runs all through Lu Hsun's works. The foreign stereotype was developed after the May 4th Movement by some shallow bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals and, disseminated by them, existed for a long time among revolutionary cultural workers. In a number of essays, Lu Hsun fought against the foreign stereotype as found in their ranks and condemned it in these terms:

A clean sweep should be made of all stereotyped writings, whether old or new. . . . For instance, it is also a kind of stereotype if all one can do is to "hurl insults", "threaten" or even "pass sentence" and merely copy old formulas and apply these indiscriminately to every fact, instead of specifically and concretely using formulas derived from science to interpret the new facts and phenomena which emerge every day. ("A Reply to Chu Hsiu-hsia's Letter", appended to "Giving the Show Away") P. 164

60 "Hurling Insults and Threats Is Certainly Not Fighting" was the title of an essay written in 1932 and included in the collection *Mixed Dialects* (Lu Hsun, *Complete Works*, Chin. ed., 1957, Vol. V). P. 164

61 See *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*, Eng. ed., FLPH, Moscow, 1951, pp. 36-37. P. 168

62 Georgi Dimitrov, "Unity of the Working Class Against Fascism", *Selected Articles and Speeches*, Eng. ed. P. 175

63 *Ibid.*, pp. 132-33. P. 176

64 *Ibid.*, p. 133. P. 176

65 *The Dipper* was a monthly published in 1931 and 1932 by the League of Chinese Left-Wing Writers. "In Reply to the Question Put by *The Dipper*" is included in the collection *Two Hearts* (Lu Hsun, *Complete Works*, Chin. ed., Vol. IV). P. 176

66 From *Confucian Analects*, Book V, "Kungyeh Chang". P. 176

67 Han Yu (768-824) was a famous Chinese writer of the Tang Dynasty. In his essay "The Scholar's Apologia" he wrote, "A deed is accomplished through taking thought and fails through lack of thought." P. 176

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