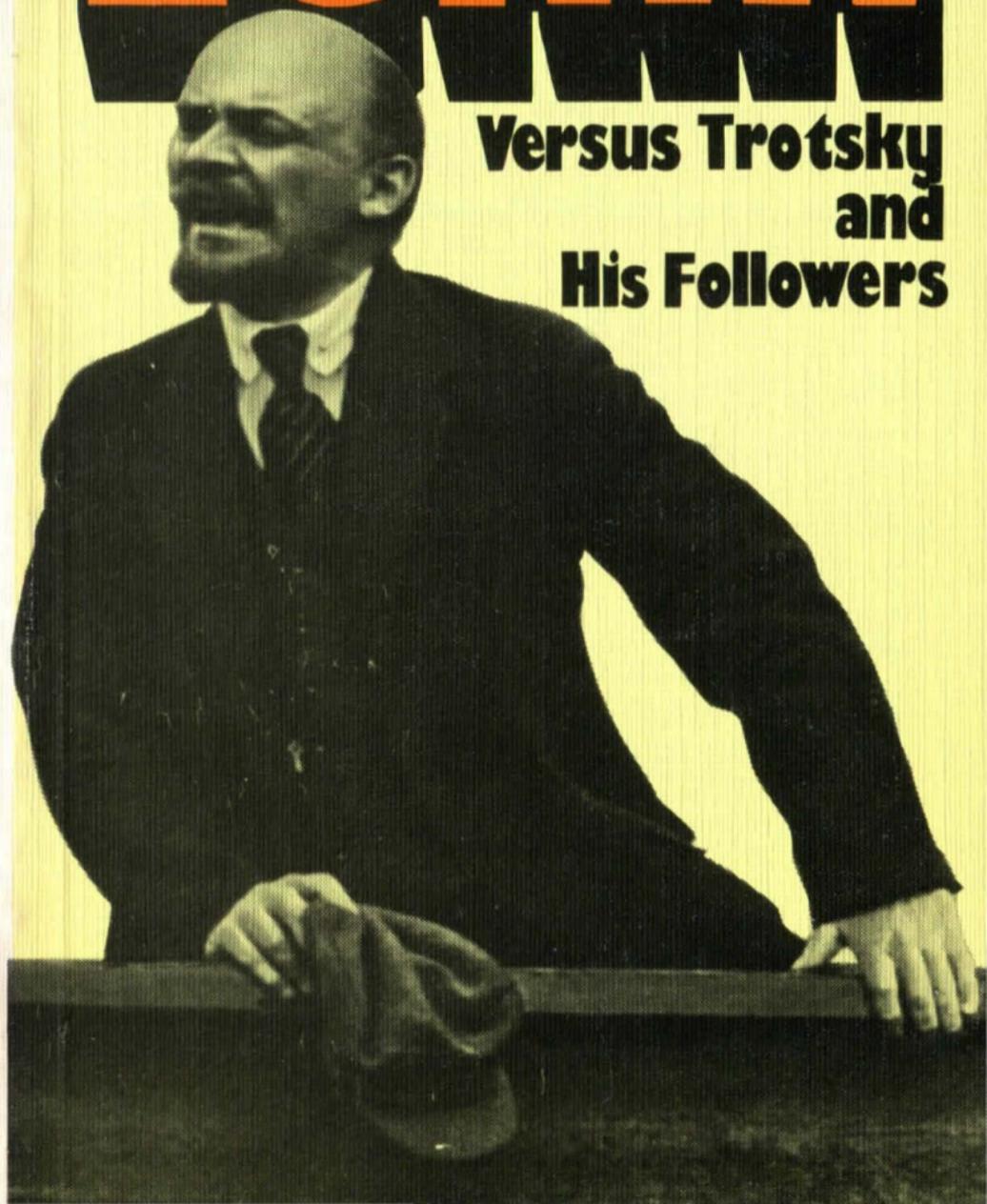


# Lenin

**Versus Trotsky  
and  
His Followers**



**THE GREAT LEGACY  
OF MARXISM-LENINISM**

# Lenin

---

THE GREAT LEGACY  
OF MARXISM-LENINISM

---

## **Versus Trotsky and His Followers**

Novosti Press Agency Publishing House  
Moscow 1981

10102  
0101020000

© Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1981

*Editing completed on November 18, 1981*

## Foreword

---

In the modern world a hard and keen struggle is being waged between different political trends and theories many of which in one way or another reflect the fact that the political activity of the masses is increasing. Trotskyism has a special place among the political phenomena of social life today. The Trotskyists seek to divert from a correct path those members of non-proletarian sections, in particular students and intellectuals, who become increasingly involved in the political struggle and who could and should join hands with the working class and its revolutionary vanguard, the Communist parties.

Trotskyism as an ideological and political trend was resolutely rejected by the Communist and working-class movement in the late 1920s and early 1930s thanks to the efforts of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties which exposed the pseudo-revolutionary and defeatist essence of Trotskyism. As a result, Trotskyist organisations disintegrated or degenerated into sectarian groupings interminably wrangling among themselves.

Recent years have witnessed a certain revival of Trotskyism. Trotskyist organisations have become

more active in a number of capitalist countries in Europe, Latin America and the United States, and the flow of Trotskyist publications has increased. The Trotskyists have begun the loud and strident propagation of their views. A political trend known as "modern Trotskyism" or "neo-Trotskyism" has emerged. But while claiming to advance new theories "neo-Trotskyism" does not essentially differ from the old traditional Trotskyism in social origin, methodology, political orientation and methods of penetrating the revolutionary movement.

In changed historical circumstances the Trotskyists cannot always, of course, use Trotsky's old ideas. These are sometimes altered to a certain extent, they are modified and modernised. But all this is merely an attempt to adapt "classic" Trotskyism to new conditions in order to attain the old objectives.

Now that contradictions and cataclysms in capitalist society have become extremely acute the monopoly capitalists are seeking to prevent the growth of the working people's political activity and to channel their revolutionary energy in the wrong direction. Various pseudo-revolutionary ideas, including Trotskyism, are being quite eagerly used for these purposes. This is understandable: Leftist phraseology and ostentatious revolutionism in no way endanger the foundations of capitalist society. It is no accident that the numerous writings of Trotsky and present-day Trotskyists are widely circulated by bourgeois and liberal newspapers, magazines and publishers. Moreover, the existence of organisations which are "also Communist" and discredit the goals and principles of scientific communism, is extremely useful to the ruling bourgeoisie which therefore encourages them in every way.

The Trotskyists, reflecting to some extent the views and feelings of certain groups of students, intellectuals and lower-paid employees, try to foist distorted political concepts on them and to incite them to acts of adventurism. They harp incessantly on "untapped possibilities" which could allegedly speed the revolution, they put forward strident "revolutionary" slogans and call for armed action. They do not care whether or not the conditions for this exist. This is "Leftist" opportunism of the sheerest kind which has always been one of the most dangerous enemies of the revolutionary movement.

"Leftist" opportunism is a typical offshoot of petty-bourgeois revolutionism.

When non-proletarian strata adopt a consistently revolutionary position, their own experience convinces them of the need for proletarian leadership. Petty-bourgeois revolutionism then moves towards proletarian revolutionism.

The situation is different when the petty bourgeoisie or its groupings side with the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary struggle and reject the leadership of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard. In this case petty-bourgeois revolutionism inevitably becomes an obstacle to the revolutionary movement.

"Leftist" and openly Rightist opportunism are two sides of the same coin. Right-wing opportunists weaken the revolutionary movement because they renounce struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie for the sake of coming to terms with it. The "Left-wingers" loudly denounce collaboration with the bourgeoisie but in fact weaken the militant movement by involving some of its groups in ruinous adventures. Right-wing and "Leftist" opportunism have the same ideological basis—lack of trust

in the revolutionary strength of the working class and its political vanguard, Marxist-Leninist parties.

In their propaganda today's Trotskyists every now and then resort to political demagoguery. Like Trotsky, they seek to replace Leninism by Trotskyism while using phrases about "loyalty to Lenin" as a cover. They describe Trotsky as Lenin's comrade-in-arms and a loyal and even the only continuer of his cause.

What does this gross deception count on? Evidently, on the fact that many participants in the working-class and national liberation movement, especially young people, know little about the origins of Trotskyism, the historical experience of the ideological and political struggle against it and the basic political and theoretical arguments which were put forward by Lenin and the Communist Party in the course of this struggle.

The present collection presents in chronological order some of Lenin's articles, letters and speeches which reconstruct the irreconcilable ideological struggle against Trotskyism and expose the essence of Trotsky's anti-Marxist concepts.

The first articles and speeches in this collection cover the initial period in Lenin's struggle against Trotsky's ideological position. This was at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in 1903.

By that time the working-class movement in Russia had become very active and acquired a wide scope. A revolutionary Marxist party had to undertake the task of transforming separate, mainly spontaneous actions of the workers into a conscious class struggle. The Congress, signifying the creation of such a party, was a most important stage along this road. There were two points of view which clashed during the discussion of its programme and rules:

the revolutionary one and the opportunist one. Trotsky found himself among the opportunists. He opposed Lenin's revolutionary line on the questions of the programme and organisational questions. The draft programme of the Party contained an important Marxist proposition on the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., on the winning of political power by the working class. Trotsky did not object to this proposition in words, but in fact opposed it. He expressed a view which coincided with the views of West European and Russian opportunists. In his opinion, the dictatorship of the proletariat was only possible if the proletariat constituted the majority of the nation. In Russia this meant that the solution of this problem would be put off indefinitely. It is well known that the victory of the 1917 October Revolution fully refuted this thesis.

Trotsky's opportunistic position was manifested especially clearly at the Second Congress on the question of the organisational structure of the Party. It was seen in his wording of the first paragraph of the Rules concerning the conditions for membership of the Party. Lenin believed that a Party member must belong to a Party organisation, work under its guidance, obey its decisions and observe Party discipline. Only in such a case would the Party as a whole become an organised detachment of the working class and its political leader.

Unlike Lenin, Martov and Trotsky who backed Martov's wording of the first paragraph of the Rules believed that any striker who was not a member of a Party organisation and who, consequently, did not obey Party discipline could be a Party member. The granting of the right to join the Party to people who were not members of a Party organisation opened the way into the Party to chance fellow-travellers of the revolutionary forces. "It would be

better," Lenin wrote in this connection, "if ten who do work should not call themselves Party members (real workers don't hunt after titles!) than that one who only talks should have the right and opportunity to be a Party member." (See p. 23.)

At the Second Congress the Party split into the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks who relied on the masses of workers and peasants created a revolutionary party which led the struggle of the working people of Russia for the overthrow of tsarism, for the full democratisation of state and public life, and, subsequently, for socialist development.

In January, 1905, a revolution broke out in Russia. In its character it was bourgeois-democratic revolution which, if victorious, would have led to the overthrow of tsarism and the establishment of a democratic republic. The main motive force of this revolution was the proletariat (this was its principal difference from bourgeois-democratic revolutions that had at different times taken place, mainly in the middle of the 19th century in a number of West European countries) and the proletariat was much more consistent than the bourgeoisie in the struggle for its victory.

At that time one of the main issues was that of a provisional revolutionary government which was to emerge as a result of the overthrow of tsarism. The Bolsheviks believed that it had to be a government representing the revolutionary classes of society, i.e., a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The Mensheviks and Trotsky evaluated the revolution and its motive forces differently. The Mensheviks believed that the revolution in Russia, like the previous bourgeois revolutions in Western Europe, had to be led by the bourgeoisie which had to

take political power in the event of victory; the proletariat should not oppose its class goals in this revolution to those of the bourgeoisie and its only task was fully to support the bourgeoisie. In this period Trotsky went to the other extreme and came out with an absurd "Leftist" theory of "permanent revolution" which he had borrowed from Parvus. This theory completely ignored the objective conditions of the revolution taking place in Russia. Trotsky believed that the working class could take power alone without allies. He put forward the slogan: "A workers' government without the tsar". That slogan meant the isolation of the proletariat from the many millions of peasants who were a powerful revolutionary force because they were vitally interested in eliminating the remnants of old precapitalist relations in the countryside. Thus Trotsky rejected the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. In fact Trotsky opposed the theory of "permanent revolution" to Lenin's analysis of the character and motive forces of the 1905-1907 revolution.

This revolution was defeated. Years of brutal reaction began. Tsarism struck its main blow at the Party of the working class. The conditions under which it had to work radically changed. It was necessary skillfully to combine both illegal and legal forms of Party work to promote the strengthening of the Party's ties with the masses. The Party concentrated its efforts on accumulating strength, studying the experience and lessons of the revolution, and preparing for fresh battles against the autocracy. The Bolsheviks were accomplishing these tasks while fighting against Right-wing and "Left-wing" opportunists. The Menshevik-Liquidators frightened by reactionary forces, demanded the dissolution of the revolutionary proletarian party and

its replacement by a legal reformist party. The "Left-wing" opportunists—the Otzovists—sought to recall the representatives of the working class from the State Duma and other legal organisations. They were thus pushing the Party to the path of adventurism, sectarianism and isolation from the masses. The Liquidators and the Otzovists were becoming a grave threat to the very existence of the Party. "The alternative facing the Social-Democratic Party," Lenin wrote, "was either to perish or to rid itself entirely of these tendencies." (Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1963, Vol. 17, p. 541.)

What was Trotsky's position in this critical situation? Trotsky, who then supported the Centrists, claimed that he was "above factions". This was not so, however. Insisting that there was no difference in principle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks and that the struggle between them was one between two groups of the intelligentsia for influence over "the politically immature proletariat", Trotsky and his followers called for unification, ostensibly in the interests of the cause. Such "unification" was to embrace all the trends in the Party irrespective of their attitude to liquidationism and otzovism. The Trotskyists hoped that under the banner of "unification" they would later be able to win a leading position in the Party by rejecting the Leninist policy of struggle against opportunism. Like the Liquidators, the Trotskyists aimed their main blow at the Marxist revolutionary Party which was able to become the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat even at a time of brutal reaction. They wanted to have a reformist party open to all.

The Bolsheviks led by Lenin resolutely rejected unification with the opportunists. Then the Trotskyists decided to organise an alliance of all the anti-

Party elements. Thus what was called the August Bloc emerged. It did not, however, last long; being established on an anti-Marxist and opportunist basis, it disintegrated. It was in fact the Trotskyists' unsuccessful attempt to form a centrist petty-bourgeois party in Russia. In a number of his articles—*The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia, Trotsky's Diplomacy and a Certain Party Platform, The Break-Up of the "August" Bloc* and some others—Lenin laid bare the class essence of the inner-party struggle in the Russian Social-Democratic movement in that period.

During the First World War (1914-1918) the Russian Bolsheviks and the consistent revolutionary internationalists in European countries faced a new opportunist trend in the international working-class movement—social chauvinism—which formed a bloc with the Centrists and the "Left-wing" sectarians. In those years, not going beyond Menshevism, Trotsky advocated centrism and Kautskyism. As before, Trotsky, under the guise of talk about "unity", advocated an alliance with all opportunists, "irrespective of their factional origin". The Bolsheviks advanced tactical slogans—no support to the imperialist forces which had unleashed a world war, and the downfall of one's own government—that showed the masses the need for overthrowing the autocracy. To these slogans Trotsky opposed his own centrist slogans: "Peace at all costs" (including an agreement with imperialist governments—*Ed.*) and "neither victories nor defeats" (in other words, preservation of the imperialist *status quo*—*Ed.*).

It was at the height of the world war that Lenin wrote his fundamental work *Imperialism—the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in which he analysed the economic and political foundations of the system that caused unjust predatory wars and gave a

scientific explanation of the laws of the world revolutionary process. The main conclusion of the book was that at the beginning of the 20th century capitalism had reached a stage when features of the period of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had emerged.

It was during the war that Lenin sharply criticised Trotsky's ideas on the nature of the new era of imperialism and Trotsky's view of the prospects of the forthcoming socialist revolution in Russia and its motive forces. He showed that under the guise of "revolutionary phraseology" Trotsky had actually espoused Kautsky's theory of "ultra-imperialism" which denied the fundamental contradictions of imperialism and essentially affirmed the inviolability of that system.

By 1917 by the very logic of the course of mounting revolutionary events in Russia Trotsky and his followers found themselves politically isolated. Lenin noted that they did not have and do not have any basis in the working class. Therefore Trotsky, who was afraid of being thrown on the scrap heap of history, tried to manoeuvre. He even criticised his own views and hinted that in principle he had no differences with the Bolsheviks.

Immediately after the February Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution of 1917 Trotsky came to Petrograd and joined the "Inter-District Organisation of the United Social-Democrats" (Mezhraiontsy) \*

\* An organisation which appeared in St. Petersburg in November, 1913, under the banner of struggle for unity of the RSDLP. In seeking to reconcile the Bolshevik and Menshevik organisations in Petersburg the Mezhraiontsy formed their own factional organisation. During the First World War (1914-1918) they took a centrist position, agreed that the war was imperialist in nature and opposed social-chauvinism, but did not agree to a complete break with the Mensheviks.

which had about 4,000 members then. In August, 1917, the Mezhraiontsy declared that they had no differences with the Bolsheviks and joined the RSDLP (Bolsheviks). But, as later events showed, for Trotsky it was yet another act of political hypocrisy.

Pseudo-revolutionaries usually hide the untenability of their ideology behind "leftist" and "ultra-revolutionary" phrases. This was typical of Trotsky's position too. At the crucial moment of the October Revolution, i.e., when preparations for an armed uprising were under way, Trotsky proposed that it should not begin before the convocation of the Second Congress of Soviets. (The First Congress of Soviets was held on June 3, 1917—*Ed.*) Moreover, indulging in flamboyant declarations, he irresponsibly claimed it would not be at all difficult to settle the issue of taking power—one only had to time the uprising for the opening of the Congress of Soviets which would then announce the seizure of power. "To 'wait' for the Congress of Soviets would be utter idiocy," Lenin wrote in his article *The Crisis Has Matured*, "for it would mean losing weeks at a time when weeks and even days decide everything. It would mean faint-heartedly renouncing power, for on November 1-2 it will have become impossible to take power (both politically and technically, since the Cossacks would be mobilised for the day of the insurrection so foolishly 'appointed')." (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 26, p. 83.)

Having won political power the working people of Russia embarked on the building of the world's first socialist state whose ultimate goal, Lenin believed, was a complete transformation of the economic and political life of the country on entirely new principles. Trotsky did not share this view. He claimed that the future of the Soviet Republic was

wholly dependent on the victory of revolution in Europe. Categorically denying that socialism could be victorious in one country he said: "It is only a European revolution that can save us in the full sense of this word." [*The Seventh Extraordinary Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*]. *Stenographic Report*, Moscow, 1962, p. 65.] It was from this premise that he conducted peace talks with Germany in Brest-Litovsk, too.

Soviet Russia was going through a difficult time. The World War was still continuing and a very urgent task was to stop it. But the governments of Britain, France and the United States rejected the Soviet government's appeal to the belligerent countries to conclude a peace treaty on a democratic basis. Then the Soviet government began peace talks with Kaiser Germany and its allies in Brest-Litovsk in November, 1917. The newly born state of workers and peasants vitally needed a respite from the war.

In view of the situation in which the Soviet Republic found itself Lenin favoured the immediate signing of a peace treaty. Lenin's strategy and tactics on this question encountered fierce resistance from Trotsky. Trotsky, heading the Soviet delegation at the peace talks, ignored Lenin's specific instructions and in reply to the German ultimatum of January 27 (February 9—New Style), 1918, declared "neither war nor peace", which meant: we are not going to sign the peace treaty, we are no longer waging war and we are going to demobilise our army. At the same time he sent a telegram to the Commander-in-Chief demanding that he order demobilisation of the army. When Lenin learned about this he gave instructions to cancel Trotsky's unauthorised directions.

Trotsky's act of adventurism followed directly from his idea of "giving a push" to revolutionary events outside Soviet Russia. He regarded the October Revolution just as a "torch" which was to "kindle the flame" of revolution in Europe and then in the world. Proceeding from his thesis—"a world revolution at any price"—he was prepared to sacrifice the greatest achievement of the working people of Russia, Soviet power. Thus, "ultra-revolutionism" coincided with the aims of the aggressive imperialist states and the counter-revolutionary forces of landlords and capitalists inside the country which still hoped to destroy the Soviet Republic.

Stressing the direct relationship between the anti-imperialist struggle of the proletariat in other countries and the revolutionary transformations in Russia, in direct contrast to Trotsky's prognostications Lenin set the working people of Russia as their main task that of preserving the Soviet Republic as the bulwark of the world liberation movement. He considered that the downfall of Soviet power would be a mortal blow to the cause of socialism in the whole world.

During the Brest-Litovsk peace talks the Party had also to resist fierce pressure from "Left Communists" whom Lenin dubbed "heroes of the Leftist phrase". They called for the immediate launching of a revolutionary war against German and world imperialism. The "Left" phrasemongers accused the Party of opportunism and of betraying the interests of the Russian and world proletariat. Trotsky justified the activity of the "Left Communists" and sided with them. He claimed that the rejection of peace with Germany would make it possible "to exert a revolutionising influence on the German proletariat". (*The Seventh Extraordinary Congress of*

the RCP(B). *Stenographic Report*, p. 68.) The Trotskyists tried to strengthen their position by referring to the rising tide of revolution in Western Europe. They even predicted the exact dates when imperialism would collapse and revolutions would begin in other countries. All these statements were based on the anti-Marxist idea of the possibility of "giving a push" to world revolution by war and hastening the downfall of the imperialist system.

Lenin resolutely opposed the adventurist slogan of a revolutionary war and proved its untenability in the specific situation of 1918. Soviet Russia was in economic straits and there was virtually no army because the old army was spontaneously demobilising itself—the soldiers were tired of the senseless war to which they were totally averse. In such circumstances the preaching of "a world conflagration" and "a revolutionary war" amounted to criminally reckless gambling with the destiny of the Soviet Republic. It was yet another manifestation of a typical feature of the Trotskyists and other "Left" phrasemongers—ignoring reality.

The Brest Treaty was signed in March, 1918. Despite resistance from the Trotskyists there came a breathing-space of peace which made it possible to strengthen Soviet rule and start forming its own armed forces—the Red Army, capable of defending the gains of the revolution. But this respite was ended by the start of foreign military intervention and the Civil War (1918-1920).\* It was only in the early 1920s that the country was at last able to start peaceful construction.

---

\* The period of armed struggle of the working class and peasantry of Soviet Russia against the internal counter-revolutionaries and foreign interventionists who sought to destroy the gains of the October Revolution.

In those years opposition groupings, which reflected the views and sentiments of petty-bourgeois strata in town and country and their fear of the difficulties of the transition period that had just begun, became more active in the Party. The activities of the oppositionists showed lack of confidence in the strength of the Party and the people and in their ability to tackle a great variety of "peaceful" tasks.

With their endless talk about the need for a creative approach to pressing economic and political problems they tried to reduce to nothing the Party's leading role in tackling these problems, to shake its unity, undermine Party discipline and weaken the Party's influence on the masses.

Trotsky was largely to blame for the sharpening of the inner-Party struggle. At that time he put forward the idea of putting the trade unions under state control, proposing that they be merged with economic management bodies. Trotsky insisted on introducing emergency, in fact military, methods of administration. Stating without any justification that the trade unions were experiencing a crisis, he proposed resorting to "extremely drastic organisational measures"—to "shake up" the trade unions, to "consolidate" them by putting persons in charge who could "tighten the screws" and to introduce methods of coercion in the work among the masses. He proposed taking as a model the work of the Central Committee of the Amalgamated Union of Railwaymen and Water Transport Workers—Tsekt-ran—which used such methods. Trotsky's main difference with the Party, as Lenin put it, was his different *approach* to the mass, the different way of winning it over and *keeping in touch* with it.

In order to remove the danger of a split in the RCP(B) (for a part of the Party members were in-

fluenced by Trotskyist demagoguery) it was necessary to explain to the masses the essence of the differences that had arisen. Here Lenin's speeches and articles played a tremendous role. The present collection includes the text of Lenin's speech at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, *The Trade Unions, the Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes*, excerpts from Lenin's brochure *On the Crisis in the Party, Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin*, and his *Speech on the Trade Unions* at the Tenth Party Congress.

Lenin took account of the sum of the problems facing the Party and the state. He showed that for the Party the question of the trade unions was a part of the general question of the role of the masses of the working people in socialist construction. In giving leadership to the masses the Party used methods of persuasion and education and these methods should be applied also in the work of the trade unions. Lenin explained that the trade unions educated and organised the working class, they were a school for the masses where they acquired the necessary experience in management and administration. Through the trade unions workers were drawn into active socialist construction and exercised control over the activities of the managers of economic bodies.

After the overwhelming majority of the Party members had rejected the erroneous line of Trotsky and other oppositionists, the Tenth Party Congress upheld and endorsed Lenin's course. A special resolution of the Congress defined the role and importance of trade unions as schools of communism and stressed the need to involve broad sections of the working people in the building of socialism, the need to restore the methods of workers' democracy

and to establish the principle of electing leading trade union bodies.

In his speech at the Congress Lenin warned of the danger of factionalism in the Party. He submitted a draft resolution he had written—*On Party Unity*—which was approved by the Congress.

But, since Trotsky and his followers did not heed the Party's warning, in 1927 they were excluded from the Party for their factionalist splitting activity. In 1929 Trotsky was expelled from the Soviet Union.

The struggle waged by Lenin and the Leninist Party against Trotskyism teaches all genuine revolutionaries how to discern what lies behind loud pseudo-revolutionary phrases. This struggle shows that only creative Marxism-Leninism can serve as a guide to action for the revolutionary forces. Any attempt openly or secretly to revise Marxism-Leninism or to distort it in a dogmatic way, any reluctance to reckon with objective reality, which calls for adjustments to revolutionary theory, inevitably lead to a departure from the revolution and to betrayal of the revolutionary cause.

1903-1917

SECOND CONGRESS OF THE RSDLP <sup>1</sup>

July 17(30)-August 10(23), 1903

---

*From:*

**Second Speech in the Discussion  
on the Party Rules**

To come to the main subject, I must say that Comrade Trotsky... has evaded the gist of the matter. He has spoken of intellectuals and workers, of the class point of view and of the mass movement, but he has failed to notice a basic question: does my formulation<sup>2</sup> narrow or expand the concept of a Party member? If he had asked himself that question, he would easily have seen that my formulation narrows this concept, while Martov's<sup>3</sup> expands it, for (to use Martov's own correct expression) what distinguishes his concept is its "elasticity". And in the period of Party life that we are now passing through it is just this "elasticity" that undoubtedly opens the door to all elements of confusion, vacillation, and opportunism. To refute this simple and obvious conclusion it has to be proved that there are no such elements; but it has

not even occurred to Comrade Trotsky to do that. Nor can that be proved, for everyone knows that such elements exist in plenty, and that they are to be found in the working class too. The need to safeguard the firmness of the Party's line and the purity of its principles has now become particularly urgent, for, with the restoration of its unity, the Party will recruit into its ranks a great many unstable elements, whose number will increase with the growth of the Party. Comrade Trotsky completely misinterpreted the main idea of my book, *What Is To Be Done?*,<sup>4</sup> when he spoke about the Party not being a conspiratorial organisation (many others too raised this objection). He forgot that in my book I propose a number of various types of organisations, from the most secret and most exclusive to comparatively broad and "loose" (*lose*) organisations. He forgot that the Party must be only the vanguard, the leader of the vast masses of the working class, the whole (or nearly the whole) of which works "under the control and direction" of the Party organisations, but the whole of which does not and should not belong to a "party".

...This formulation necessarily tends to make Party members of *all and sundry*; Comrade Martov himself was forced to admit this, although with a reservation: "Yes, if you like," he said. But that is precisely what we do not like! And that is precisely why we are so adamant in our opposition to Martov's formulation. It would be better if ten who do work should not call themselves Party members (real workers don't hunt after titles!) than that one who only talks should have the right and opportunity to be a Party member.

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 6, pp. 501-502, 503

From:

## Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government <sup>5</sup>

...Parvus <sup>6</sup> managed at last to go forward, instead of moving backward like a crab... He openly advocated (unfortunately, together with Trotsky) the idea of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, the idea that it was the duty of Social-Democrats to take part in the provisional revolutionary government after the overthrow of the autocracy. Parvus is profoundly right in saying that the Social-Democrats must not fear to take bold strides forward, to deal joint "blows" at the enemy, shoulder to shoulder with the revolutionary bourgeois democrats, on the definite understanding, however (very appropriately brought to mind), that the organisations are not to be merged, that we march separately but strike together, that we do not conceal the diversity of interests...

But for all our warm sympathy for these slogans... we could not help feeling jarred by certain false notes that Parvus struck... It would be most dangerous at present for Parvus to compromise his correct position by his own imprudence. Among the least imprudent is the following sentence in his preface to Trotsky's pamphlet: "If we wish to keep the revolutionary proletariat apart from the other political currents, we must learn to stand ideologically at the head of the revolutionary movement (this is correct), to be more revolutionary than anyone else." This is incorrect... Parvus' exposition is not sufficiently concrete because he does not consider the totality of the various revolutionary currents in Russia, which are inevitable in the epoch of

democratic revolution and which naturally reflect the still unstratified classes of society in such an epoch. At such a time, revolutionary-democratic programmes are quite naturally veiled in vague, even reactionary, socialist ideas concealed behind revolutionary phrases... Under such circumstances we, the Social-Democrats, never can and never will advance the slogan "Be more revolutionary than anyone else". We shall not even try to keep up with the revolutionariness of a democrat who is detached from his class basis, who has a weakness for fine phrases and flaunts catchwords and cheap slogans (especially in agrarian matters). On the contrary, we will always be critical of such revolutionariness; we will expose the real meaning of words, the real content of idealised great events; and we will teach the need for a sober evaluation of the classes and shadings within the classes, even in the hottest situations of the revolution...

Equally incorrect, for the same reason, are Parvus' statements that "the revolutionary provisional government in Russia will be a government of working-class democracy", that "if the Social-Democrats are at the head of the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat, this government will be a Social-Democratic government", that the Social-Democratic provisional government "will be an integral government with a Social-Democratic majority". This is *impossible*, unless we speak of fortuitous, transient episodes, and not of a revolutionary dictatorship that will be at all durable and capable of leaving its mark in history. This is impossible, because only a revolutionary dictatorship supported by the vast majority of the people can be at all durable... The Russian proletariat, however, is at present a minority of the population in Russia. It can become the great, overwhelming majority only

if it combines with the mass of semi-proletarians, semi-proprietors, i.e., with the mass of the petty-bourgeois urban and rural poor. Such a composition of the social basis of the possible and desirable revolutionary-democratic dictatorship will, of course, affect the composition of the revolutionary government and inevitably lead to the participation, or even predominance, within it of the most heterogeneous representatives of revolutionary democracy. It would be extremely harmful to entertain any illusions on this score. If that windbag Trotsky now writes (unfortunately, side by side with Parvus) that "a Father Gapon<sup>7</sup> could appear only once", that "there is no room for a second Gapon", he does so simply because he is a windbag. If there were no room in Russia for a second Gapon, there would be no room for a truly "great", consummated democratic revolution. To become great, to evoke 1789-93, not 1848-50,<sup>8</sup> and to surpass those years, it must rouse the vast masses to active life, to heroic efforts, to "fundamental historic creativeness"; it must raise them out of frightful ignorance, unparalleled oppression, incredible backwardness, and abysmal dullness. The revolution is already raising them and will raise them completely; the government itself is facilitating the process by its desperate resistance. But, of course, there can be no question of a mature political consciousness, of a Social-Democratic consciousness of these masses or their numerous "native" popular leaders or even "muzhik" leaders. They cannot become Social-Democrats at once without first passing a number of revolutionary tests, not only because of their ignorance (revolution, we repeat, enlightens with marvellous speed), but because their class position is not proletarian, because the objective logic of historical development confronts them at the present time with

the tasks, not of a socialist, but of a democratic revolution.

In this revolution, the revolutionary proletariat will participate with the utmost energy, sweeping aside the miserable tail-ism of some and the revolutionary phrases of others. It will bring class definiteness and consciousness into the dizzying whirlwind of events, and march on intrepidly and unswervingly, not fearing, but fervently desiring, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, fighting for the republic and for complete republican liberties, fighting for substantial economic reforms, in order to create for itself a truly large arena, an arena worthy of the twentieth century, in which to carry on the struggle for socialism.

March, 1905

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 8, pp. 289-292

THE FIFTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN  
SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY 9  
April 30-May 19 (May 13-June 1), 1907

---

*From:*

**Speech on the Report on the Activities of  
the Duma<sup>10</sup> Group**

A few words about Trotsky. He spoke on behalf of the "Centre",<sup>11</sup> and expressed the views of the Bund.<sup>12</sup> He fulminated against us for introducing our "unacceptable" resolution.<sup>13</sup> He threatened an outright split, the withdrawal of the Duma group, which is supposedly offended by our resolution. I emphasise these words, I urge you to reread our resolution attentively.

Is it not monstrous to see something offensive in a calm acknowledgement of mistakes, unaccompanied by any sharply expressed censure, to speak of a split in connection with it?

...The very possibility that the question can be presented in this way shows that there is something non-partisan in our Party. This non-partisan something is the Duma group's relations with the Party. The Duma group must be more of a Party group, must have closer connections with the Party, must be more subordinate to all proletarian work. Then wailings about insults and threats of a split will disappear.

When Trotsky stated: "Your unacceptable resolution prevents your right ideas being put into effect," I called out to him: "Give us *your* resolution!" Trotsky replied: "No, first withdraw yours."

A fine position indeed for the "Centre" to take, isn't it? Because of our (in Trotsky's opinion) mistake ("tactlessness"), he punishes the whole Party, depriving it of his "tactful" exposition of the very same principles! Why did you not get your resolution passed, we shall be asked in the localities. Because the Centre took umbrage at it, and in a huff refused to set forth its own principles!... That is a position based not on principle, but on the Centre's lack of principle.

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 12, pp. 451-452

*From:*

**The Attitude Towards Bourgeois Parties**

The question of the attitude of Social-Democracy towards bourgeois parties is one of those known as "general" or "theoretical" questions, i.e., such that are not directly connected with any definite practical task confronting the Party at a given moment. At the London Congress of the RSDLP,<sup>14</sup> the Mensheviks and the Bundists conducted a fierce struggle against the inclusion of such questions in the agenda, and they were, unfortunately, supported in this by Trotsky, who does not belong to either side. The opportunist wing of our Party, like that of other Social-Democratic parties, defended a "business-like" or "practical" agenda for the Congress. They shied away from "broad and general" questions. They forgot that in the final analysis broad,

principled politics are the only real, practical politics. They forgot that anybody who tackles partial problems without having previously settled general problems, will inevitably and at every step "come up against" those general problems without himself realising it. To come up against them blindly in every individual case means to doom one's politics to the worst vacillation and lack of principle. . . The real source of almost all differences, certainly all differences of substance, of all disagreements on questions of the practical politics of the proletariat in the Russian revolution, was a different assessment of our attitude to non-proletarian parties. Since the very beginning of the Russian revolution there have appeared two basic views among Social-Democrats on the nature of the revolution and the role of the proletariat in it. Anyone who attempts to analyse the tactical differences in the RSDLP without going into the difference of these basic views will get hopelessly entangled in trivialities and partial problems.

May, 1907

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 12, pp. 489-490

*From:*

### **The Aim of the Proletarian Struggle in Our Revolution**

#### **III**

Trotsky's major mistake is that he ignores the bourgeois character of the revolution and has no clear conception of the transition from this revolu-

tion to the socialist revolution. This major mistake leads to... mistakes on side issues... A coalition of the proletariat and the peasantry "presupposes either that the peasantry will come under the sway of one of the existing bourgeois parties, or that it will form a powerful independent party". This is obviously untrue both from the standpoint of general theory and from that of the experience of the Russian revolution. A "coalition" of classes *does not at all* presuppose *either* the existence of any particular powerful party, *or* parties in general. This is only confusing classes with parties. A "coalition" of the specified classes *does not in the least* imply *either* that one of the existing bourgeois parties will establish its sway over the peasantry *or* that the peasants should form a powerful independent party! Theoretically this is clear because, first, the peasants do not lend themselves very well to party organisation; and because, secondly, the formation of peasant parties is an extremely difficult and lengthy process in a bourgeois revolution, so that a "powerful independent" party may emerge only towards the end of the revolution. The experience of the Russian revolution shows that "coalitions" of the proletariat and the peasantry were formed *scores and hundreds of times*, in the most diverse forms, without any "powerful independent party" of the peasantry. Such a coalition was formed when there was "joint action", between, say, a Soviet of Workers' Deputies and a Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies, or a Railwaymen's Strike Committee, or Peasants' Deputies, etc. All these organisations were mainly *non-party*, nevertheless, every joint action between them undoubtedly represented a "coalition" of *classes*...

...A political bloc at various historical moments takes the form either of "a fighting agreement" in

connection with insurrection, or of a parliamentary agreement for "joint action against the Black Hundreds<sup>15</sup> and Cadets",<sup>16</sup> and so on. The idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has found its practical expression throughout our revolution in a thousand forms, from the signing of the manifesto calling upon the people to pay no taxes and to withdraw their deposits from the savings-banks (December 1905), or the signing of calls to insurrection (July 1906), to voting in the Second and Third Dumas in 1907 and 1908.

Trotsky's second statement... is wrong too. It is not true that "the whole question is, who will determine the government's policy, who will constitute a homogeneous majority in it," and so forth... Trotsky himself, in the course of his argument, concedes that "representatives of the democratic population will take part" in the "workers' government", i.e., concedes that there will be a government consisting of representatives of the proletariat *and* the peasantry. On what terms the proletariat will take part in the government of the revolution is quite another question, and it is quite likely that on this question the Bolsheviki will disagree not only with Trotsky, but also with the Polish Social-Democrats. The question of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes, however, cannot be reduced to a question of the "majority" in any particular revolutionary government, or of the terms on which the participation of the Social-Democrats in such a government is admissible.

Lastly, the most fallacious of Trotsky's opinions... is the third, viz.: "even if they (the peasantry) do this ("support the regime of working-class democracy") with no more political understanding than they usually support a bourgeois regime." The proletariat cannot count on the ignorance and

prejudices of the peasantry as the powers that be under a bourgeois regime count and depend on them, nor can it assume that in time of revolution the peasantry will remain in their usual state of political ignorance and passivity.

April, 1909

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 15, pp. 371-374

*From:*

### A Letter to Maxim Gorky

February 13, 1908

... Regarding Trotsky, I wanted to reply last time, but I forgot. We... decided straight away to invite him on to *Proletary*. We wrote him a letter, proposing and outlining a theme. *By general agreement* we signed it the "Editorial Board of *Proletary*", so as to put the matter on a more collegial footing (I personally, for example, had had a big fight with Trotsky, a regular fierce battle in 1903-05 when he was a Menshevik). Whether there was something in the form of our letter that offended Trotsky, I do not know, but he sent us a letter, not written by him: "On Comrade Trotsky's instructions" the editorial board of *Proletary* was informed that he refused to write, he was too busy.

In my opinion, this is mere posturising. At the London Congress, too, he acted the *poseur*. I don't know really whether he will go with the Bolsheviki...

The Mensheviks here have issued an announcement about the monthly *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*... I shall get it and send it to you. The struggle may

become sharper. But Trotsky wants to stand "above the contending factions"...

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 34, pp. 385-386

*From:*

## Notes of a Publicist <sup>17</sup>

### II

#### THE "UNITY CRISIS" IN OUR PARTY

##### 1. Two Views on Unity

With touching unanimity the liquidators <sup>18</sup> and the otzovists <sup>19</sup> are abusing the Bolsheviks up hill and down dale (the liquidators attack Plekhanov <sup>20</sup> as well). The Bolsheviks are to blame, the Bolshevik Centre is to blame, the "'individualistic' habits of Lenin and Plekhanov"... are to blame, as well as the "irresponsible group" of "former members of the Bolshevik Centre"... In this respect the liquidators and the otzovists are entirely at one; their *bloc* against orthodox Bolshevism (a bloc *which more than once* characterised the struggle at the plenum, <sup>21</sup> which I deal with separately below) is an indisputable fact; the representatives of two extreme tendencies, each of them equally expressing subordination to bourgeois ideas, each of them equally anti-Party, are entirely at one in their internal Party policy, in their struggle against the Bolsheviks and in proclaiming the Central Organ to be "Bolshevik". But the strongest abuse from Axelrod <sup>22</sup> and Alexinsky <sup>23</sup> only serves to screen their complete failure to understand the meaning and importance of Party unity. Trotsky's (the Vien-

nese) resolution only differs outwardly from the "effusions" of Axelrod and Alexinsky. It is drafted very "cautiously" and lays claim to "above faction" fairness. But what is its meaning? The "Bolshevik leaders" are to blame for everything—this is the same "philosophy of history" as that of Axelrod and Alexinsky.

The very first paragraph of the Vienna resolution states: ... "the representatives of all factions and trends... by their decision (at the plenum) consciously and deliberately assumed responsibility for carrying out the adopted resolutions *in the present conditions, in co-operation with the given persons, groups and institutions.*" This refers to "conflicts in the Central Organ." Who is "responsible for carrying out the resolutions" of the plenum in the Central Organ? Obviously the majority of the Central Organ, i.e., the Bolsheviks and the Poles; it is they who are responsible for carrying out the resolutions of the plenum—"in co-operation with the given persons," i.e., with the Golosists <sup>24</sup> and Vperyodists. <sup>25</sup>

What does the principal resolution of the plenum say in that part of it which deals with the most "vexed" problems of our Party, with questions which were most disputable before the plenum and which should have become least disputable after the plenum?

It says that *bourgeois influence over the proletariat manifests itself*, on the one hand, in rejecting the illegal Social-Democratic Party and belittling its role and importance, etc., and, on the other hand, in rejecting Social-Democratic work in the Duma as well as the utilisation of legal possibilities, the failure to grasp the importance of both the one and the other, etc.

Now what is the meaning of this resolution?

*Does it mean* that the Golosists should have sincerely and irrevocably put an end to rejecting the illegal Party and belittling it, etc., that they should have admitted this to be a deviation, that they should have got rid of it, and done positive work in a spirit hostile to this deviation; that the Vperyodists should have sincerely and irrevocably put an end to rejecting Duma work and legal possibilities, etc.; that the majority of the Central Organ should in every way have enlisted the "co-operation" of the Golosists and Vperyodists *on condition* that they sincerely, consistently and irrevocably renounced the "deviations" described in detail in the resolution of the plenum?

*Or* does the resolution mean that the majority of the Central Organ is responsible for carrying out the resolutions (on the overcoming of liquidationist and otzovist deviations) "in co-operation with the *given*" Golosists, who *continue* as before and even more crudely to defend liquidationism, and with the given Vperyodists, who continue as before and even more crudely to assert the legitimacy of otzovism, ultimatumism, etc.?

This question needs only to be put for one to see how hollow are the eloquent phrases in Trotsky's resolution, to see how in *reality* they serve to defend the very position held by Axelrod and Co., and Alexinsky and Co.

In the very first words of his resolution Trotsky expressed the full spirit of the worst kind of conciliation, "conciliation" in inverted commas, of a sectarian and philistine conciliation, which deals with the "given persons" and not the given line of policy, the given spirit, the given ideological and political content of Party work.

It is in this that the enormous difference lies between real partyism, which consists in purging the

Party of liquidationism and otzovism, and the "conciliation" of Trotsky and Co., which actually renders the most faithful service to the liquidators and otzovists, and is therefore an evil that is all the more dangerous to the Party the more cunningly, artfully and rhetorically it cloaks itself with professedly pro-Party, professedly anti-factional declarations.

March-June, 1910

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 16, pp. 209-211

*From:*

### The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia <sup>26</sup>

The subject indicated by the above title is dealt with in articles by Trotsky and Martov in Nos. 50 and 51 of *Neue Zeit*.<sup>27</sup> Martov expounds Menshevik views. Trotsky follows in the wake of the Mensheviks, taking cover behind particularly sonorous phrases. Martov sums up the "Russian experience" by saying: "Blanquist and anarchist lack of culture triumphed over Marxist culture" (read: Bolshevism over Menshevism). "Russian Social-Democracy spoke too zealously *in Russian*", in contrast to the "general European" methods of tactics. Trotsky's "philosophy of history" is the same. The cause of the struggle is the "adaptation of the Marxist intelligentsia to the class movement of the proletariat"...

#### IV

The development of the factions in Russian Social-Democracy since the revolution is... to be ex-

plained, not by the "adaptation of the intelligentsia to the proletariat", but by the changes in the relations between the classes. The Revolution of 1905-07 accentuated, brought out into the open and placed on the order of the day the antagonism between the peasants and the liberal bourgeoisie over the question of the *form* of a bourgeois regime in Russia. The politically mature proletariat could not but take a most energetic part in this struggle, and its attitude to the various classes of the new society was reflected in the struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism.

The three years 1908-10 are marked by the victory of the counter-revolution, by the restoration of the autocracy and by the Third Duma, the Duma of the Black Hundreds<sup>15</sup> and Octobrists.<sup>28</sup>

...The proletariat is now confronted with the *elementary* task of preserving its proletarian party, which is hostile both to the reaction and to counter-revolutionary liberalism. This task is not an easy one, because it is the proletariat that suffers all the brunt of economic and political persecution, and all the hatred of the liberals because the leadership of the masses in the revolution has been wrested from them by the Social-Democrats.

The crisis in the Social-Democratic Party is very grave. The organisations are shattered. A large number of veteran leaders (especially among the intellectuals) have been arrested. A new type of Social-Democratic worker, who is taking the affairs of the Party in hand, has already appeared, but he has to overcome extraordinary difficulties. Under such conditions the Social-Democratic Party is losing many of its "fellow-travellers". ... They are falling away from Marxism and from Social-Democracy. This process is observed in both factions: among the Bolsheviks in the shape of the "otzovist" ten-

dency, which arose in the spring of 1908, suffered defeat immediately at the Moscow Conference, and after a long struggle was rejected by the official centre of the faction and formed a *separate faction* abroad—the *Vperyod* faction. . .

Among the Mensheviks the same process of the falling away of petty-bourgeois "fellow-travellers" was expressed in the liquidationist tendency. . .

Failing to understand the historical and economic significance of this disintegration in the era of counter-revolution, of this *falling away of non-Social-Democratic* elements from the Social-Democratic Labour Party, Trotsky tells the German readers that *both* factions are "falling to pieces," that the Party is "falling to pieces", that the Party is "demoralised."

It is not true. And this untruth expresses, firstly, Trotsky's utter lack of theoretical understanding. Trotsky has absolutely failed to understand why the plenum described *both* liquidationism and otzovism as a "manifestation of bourgeois influence on the proletariat." Just think: is the severance from the Party of trends which have been condemned by the Party, and which express *bourgeois* influence on the proletariat, an indication of the Party's disintegration, of its demoralisation, or is it an indication of its becoming stronger and purer?

Secondly, in practice, this untruth expresses the "policy" of *advertisement* pursued by Trotsky's faction. That Trotsky's venture is an attempt to create a faction is now obvious to all, since Trotsky has removed the Central Committee's representative from *Pravda*. In advertising his faction Trotsky does not hesitate to tell the Germans that the Party is falling to pieces, that *both* factions are falling to pieces and that he, Trotsky, alone, is saving the

situation. Actually, we all see now—and the latest resolution adopted by the Trotskyists (in the name of the Vienna Club, on November 26, 1910)<sup>29</sup> proves this quite conclusively—that Trotsky enjoys the *confidence exclusively* of the liquidators and the Vperyodists.

The extent of Trotsky's shamelessness in belittling the Party and exalting himself before the Germans is shown, for instance, by the following. Trotsky writes that the "working masses" in Russia consider that the "Social-Democratic Party stands *outside* (Trotsky's italics) their circle" and he talks of "Social-Democrats without Social-Democracy."

How could one expect Mr. Potresov<sup>30</sup> and his friends to refrain from bestowing kisses on Trotsky for such statements?

But these statements are refuted not only by the *entire* history of the revolution, but even by the results of the elections to the Third Duma from the workers' curia.

Trotsky writes that "owing to their former ideological and organisational structure, the Menshevik and Bolshevik factions proved altogether incapable" of working in legal organisations: work was carried on by "individual groups of Social-Democrats, but all this took place outside the factions, outside their organisational influence"... That is what Trotsky writes. But the facts are as follows. From the very beginning of the existence of the Social-Democratic group in the Third Duma, the Bolshevik faction, through its representatives authorised by the Central Committee of the Party, has all the time assisted, aided, advised, and supervised the work of the Social-Democrats in the Duma. The same is done by the editorial board of the Central Organ of the Party...

When Trotsky gives the German comrades a detailed account of the stupidity of "otzovism" and describes this trend as a "crystallisation" of the boycottism characteristic of Bolshevism as a whole, and then mentions in a few words that Bolshevism "did not allow itself to be overpowered" by otzovism, but "attacked it resolutely or rather in an unbridled fashion"—the German reader certainly gets no idea how much subtle perfidy there is in such an exposition. Trotsky's Jesuitical "reservation" consists in omitting a small, very small "detail". He "forgot" to mention that at an official meeting of its representatives held as far back as the spring of 1909, the Bolshevik faction repudiated and expelled the otzovists. But it is just this "detail" that is inconvenient for Trotsky, who wants to talk of the "falling to pieces" of the Bolshevik faction (and then of the Party as well) and not of the *falling away* of the non-Social-Democratic elements!

We now regard Martov as one of the leaders of liquidationism, one who is the more dangerous the more "cleverly" he defends the liquidators by quasi-Marxist phrases. But Martov openly expounds views which have put their stamp on whole tendencies in the mass labour movement of 1903-10. Trotsky, on the other hand, represents only his own personal vacillations and nothing more. In 1903 he was a Menshevik; he abandoned Menshevism in 1904, returned to the Mensheviks in 1905 and merely flaunted ultra-revolutionary phrases; in 1906 he left them again; at the end of 1906 he advocated electoral agreements with the Cadets (i.e., he was in fact once more with the Mensheviks); and in the spring of 1907, at the London Congress, he said that he differed from Rosa Luxemburg<sup>31</sup> on "individual shades of ideas rather than on political tendencies". One day Trotsky plagiarises from the

ideological stock-in-trade of one faction; the next day he plagiarises from that of another, and therefore declares himself to be standing *above* both factions. In theory Trotsky is on *no* point in agreement with either the liquidators or the otzovists, but *in actual practice he is in entire* agreement with both the Golosists and the Vperyodists.

Therefore, when Trotsky tells the German comrades that he represents the "general Party tendency", I am obliged to declare that Trotsky represents only *his own* faction and enjoys a certain amount of confidence *exclusively* among the otzovists and the liquidators. The following facts prove the correctness of my statement. In January 1910, the Central Committee of our Party established close ties with Trotsky's newspaper *Pravda* and appointed a representative of the Central Committee to sit on the editorial board. In September 1910, the Central Organ of the Party announced a *rupture* between the representative of the Central Committee and Trotsky owing to Trotsky's anti-Party policy. In Copenhagen, Plekhanov, as the representative of the pro-Party Mensheviks<sup>32</sup> and delegate of the editorial board of the Central Organ, together with the present writer, as the representative of the Bolsheviks, and a Polish comrade,<sup>33</sup> entered an emphatic protest against the way Trotsky represents our Party affairs in the German press.

Let the readers now judge for themselves whether Trotsky represents a "general Party", or a "general anti-Party" trend in Russian Social-Democracy.

May, 1911

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 16, pp. 374, 387-392

*From:*

## Letter to the Russian Collegium of the Central Committee of the RSDLP

...On the 26th November (N.S.), 1910, Trotsky carried through a resolution in the so-called Vienna Party Club (a circle of Trotskyists, exiles who are pawns in the hands of Trotsky) which he published as a separate leaflet. I append this leaflet.

...Open war is declared on *Rabochaya Gazeta*<sup>34</sup>... The arguments are not new. The statement that there are now "no essential grounds" for a struggle against the *Golos* and *Vperyod* groups is the height of absurdity and hypocrisy. Everybody knows that the *Golos* and *Vperyod* people had no intention of dispersing their factions and that the former in reality support the liquidators, Potresov and Co., that the *Vperyod* group organised the factional school abroad<sup>35</sup> (using funds of well-known origin), where they teach Machism, where they teach that otzovism is a "legal shade of opinion" (taken literally from their platform), etc., etc.

Trotsky's call for "friendly" collaboration by the Party with the *Golos* and *Vperyod* groups is disgusting hypocrisy and phrase-mongering. Everybody is aware that for the whole year since the Plenary Meeting the *Golos* and *Vperyod* groups have worked in a "friendly" manner against the Party (and were secretly supported by Trotsky). Actually, it is only the Bolsheviks and Plekhanov's group who have for a whole year carried out friendly Party work in the Central Organ, in *Rabochaya Gazeta*, and at Copenhagen,<sup>36</sup> as well as in the Russian legal press.

Trotsky's attacks on the bloc of Bolsheviks and Plekhanov's group are not new; what *is* new is the outcome of his resolution: the Vienna Club (read:

“Trotsky”) has organised a “general Party fund for the purpose of preparing and convening a conference of the RSDLP”.

This indeed is new. It is a direct step towards a split. It is a clear violation of Party legality and the start of an adventure in which Trotsky will come to grief. This is obviously a split. Trotsky’s action, his “fund”, is supported only by the *Golos* and *Vperyod* groups. There can be no question of participation by the Bolsheviks and Plekhanov’s group. That the liquidators (of *Golos*) in Zurich have already supported Trotsky is comprehensible. It is quite possible and probable that “certain” *Vperyod* “funds” will be made available to Trotsky. You will appreciate that this will only stress the adventurist character of his undertaking.

It is clear that this undertaking violates Party legality, since not a word is said about the Central Committee, which alone can call the conference. In addition, Trotsky, having ousted the CC representative on *Pravda* in August 1910, himself lost all trace of legality, converting *Pravda* from an organ supported by the representative of the CC into a purely factional organ.

Thus, the whole matter has taken on definite shape, the situation has clarified itself. The *Vperyod* group collected “certain funds” for struggle against the Party, for support of the “legal shade of opinion” (otzovism). Trotsky in the last number of *Pravda* (and in his lecture in Zurich) goes all out to flirt with *Vperyod*. The liquidators in Russia sabotaged the work of the Russian Central Committee. The liquidators abroad want to prevent a plenary meeting abroad—in other words, sabotage anything like a Central Committee. Taking advantage of this “violation of legality”, Trotsky seeks an or-

ganisational split, creating “his own” fund for “his own” conference.

The roles have been assigned. The *Golos* group defend Potresov and Co., as a “legal shade of opinion”, the *Vperyod* group defend otzovism, as a “legal shade of opinion”. Trotsky seeks to defend both camps in a “popular fashion”, and to call his conference (possibly on funds supplied by *Vperyod*). The Triple Alliance (Potresov + Trotsky + Maximov<sup>37</sup>) against the Dual Alliance (Bolsheviks + Plekhanov’s group). The deployment of forces has been completed and battle joined.

You will understand why I call Trotsky’s move an adventure; it is an adventure in every respect.

It is an adventure in the ideological sense. Trotsky groups all the enemies of Marxism, he unites Potresov and Maximov, who detest the “Lenin-Plekhanov” bloc, as they like to call it. Trotsky unites all to whom ideological decay is dear, all who are not concerned with the defence of Marxism; all philistines who do not understand the reasons for the struggle and who do not wish to learn, think, and discover the ideological roots of the divergence of views. At this time of confusion, disintegration, and wavering it is easy for Trotsky to become the “hero of the hour” and gather all the shabby elements around himself. The more openly this attempt is made, the more spectacular will be the defeat.

It is an adventure in the party-political sense. At present everything goes to show that the real unity of the Social-Democratic Party is possible only on the basis of a sincere and unswerving repudiation of liquidationism and otzovism. It is clear that Potresov (together with *Golos*) and the *Vperyod* group have renounced neither the one nor the other. Trotsky unites them, basely deceiving himself, deceiv-

ing the Party, and deceiving the proletariat. In reality, Trotsky will achieve nothing more than the strengthening of Potresov's and Maximov's anti-Party groups. The collapse of this adventure is inevitable.

Finally, it is an organisational adventure. A conference held with Trotsky's "funds", without the Central Committee, is a split. Let the initiative remain with Trotsky. Let his be the responsibility.

Three slogans bring out the essence of the present situation within the Party:

1. Strengthen and support the unification and rallying of Plekhanov's supporters and the Bolsheviks for the defence of Marxism, for a rebuff to ideological confusion, and for the battle against liquidationism and otzovism.

2. Struggle for a plenary meeting—for a legal solution to the Party crisis.

3. Struggle against the splitting tactics and the unprincipled adventurism of Trotsky in banding Potresov and Maximov against Social-Democracy.

December, 1910

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 17, pp. 19-22

*From:*

### The State of Affairs in the Party

The question of the crisis in our Party has again been given priority by the Social-Democratic press abroad, leading to stronger rumours, perplexity and vacillation among wide Party circles. It is, therefore, essential for the Central Organ of the Party to clarify this question in its entirety. Martov's ar-

ticle in *Golos*, No. 23, and Trotsky's statement of November 26, 1910 in the form of a "resolution" of the "Vienna Club", published as a separate leaflet, present the question to the reader in a manner which completely distorts the essence of the matter.

Martov's article and Trotsky's resolution conceal definite practical actions—actions directed against the Party. Martov's article is simply the literary expression of a campaign launched by the *Golos* group to sabotage the Central Committee of our Party. Trotsky's resolution, which calls upon organisations in the localities to prepare for a "general Party conference" independent of, and against, the Central Committee, expresses the very aim of the *Golos* group—to destroy the central bodies so detested by the liquidators, and with them, the Party as an organisation. It is not enough to lay bare the anti-Party activities of *Golos* and Trotsky; they must be fought. Comrades to whom the Party and its revival are dear must come out most resolutely against all those who, guided by purely factional and narrow circle considerations and interests, are striving to destroy the Party. . .

Trotsky's statement, though outwardly entirely unconnected with Martov's jeering at the adversities of the Party, and with the attempts of the *Golos* supporters to sabotage the Central Committee, is actually connected with the one and the other by inseparable ties, by the ties of "interest". There are many Party members who still fail to see this connection. The Vienna resolution of November 26, 1910, will undoubtedly help them understand the essence of the matter.

The resolution consists of three parts: (1) a declaration of war against *Rabochaya Gazeta* (a call to "rebuff it resolutely" as one of the "new factional group undertakings", using Trotsky's expres-

sion); (2) polemics against the line of the Bolshevik-Plekhanov "bloc"; (3) a declaration that the "meeting of the Vienna Club (i.e., Trotsky and his circle) resolves: to organise a general Party fund for the purpose of preparing and convening a conference of the RSDLP".

We shall not dwell on the first part at all. Trotsky is quite right in saying that *Rabochaya Gazeta* is a "private undertaking", and that "it is not authorised to speak in the name of the Party as a whole".

Only Trotsky should not have forgotten to mention that he and his *Pravda* are not authorised to speak in the name of the Party *either*. In saying that the Plenary Meeting recognised the work of *Pravda* as useful, he should not have forgotten to mention that it appointed a *representative of the Central Committee* to the Editorial Board of *Pravda*. When Trotsky, in referring to the Meeting's decisions on *Pravda*, fails to mention this fact, all one can say about it is that *he is deceiving the workers*. And this deception on the part of Trotsky is all the more malicious, since in August 1910 Trotsky removed the representative of the Central Committee from *Pravda*. Since that incident, since *Pravda* has severed its relations with the Central Committee, Trotsky's paper is nothing but a "private undertaking", and one, moreover, that has failed to carry out the obligations it assumed. Until the Central Committee meets again, the *only* judge of the relations between *Pravda* and the Central Committee is the Central Committee *representative* appointed by the Plenary Meeting who has declared that Trotsky behaved in a manner hostile to the Party.

That is what emerges from the question, so opportunely raised by Trotsky, as to who is "authorised to speak in the name of the Party as a whole".

Nor is that all. Inasmuch as (and so long as) the

legalist liquidator-independents obstruct the Central Committee in Russia, and inasmuch as (and so long as) the *Golos* group obstruct the Central Committee abroad, the *sole* body authorised "to speak in the name of the Party as a whole" is the *Central Organ*.

Therefore, we declare, *in the name of the Party as a whole*, that Trotsky is pursuing an anti-Party policy; that, by failing to make the least mention of the Central Committee in his resolution (as if he had already come to an understanding with *Golos* that the work of the Central Committee would be sabotaged), and by announcing in the name of *one group abroad* the "organisation of a fund for the purpose of convening a conference of the RSDLP", he is *contravening Party legality* and is embarking on the path of *adventurism* and a *split*. If the efforts of the liquidators to sabotage the work of the Central Committee meet with success, we, as the sole body authorised to speak in the name of the Party as a whole, will immediately declare that we take no part *whatever* in Trotsky's "fund" or in his venture, and that we shall recognise as a *general Party* conference only one convened by the *Central Organ*, not one convened by Trotsky's circle.\*

December, 1910

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 17, pp. 23, 29-31

\* That a general Party conference, one convened by the Central Committee of the Party, is really *needed* and should be called *as soon as possible* — of that there can be no question.

*From:*

## Trotsky's Diplomacy and a Certain Party Platform

Trotsky's *Pravda*, No. 22, which appeared recently after a long interval in which no issue was published, vividly illustrates the decay of the petty groups abroad that attempted to base their existence on their diplomatic game with the non-Social-Democratic trends of liquidationism and otzovism.

The publication appeared on November 29, New Style, nearly a month after the announcement issued by the Russian Organising Commission.<sup>38</sup> *Trotsky makes no mention of this whatsoever!*

As far as Trotsky is concerned, the Russian Organising Commission does not exist. Trotsky calls himself a Party man on the strength of the fact that to him the Russian Party centre, formed by the overwhelming majority of the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, means nothing. Or, perhaps it is the other way round, comrades? Perhaps Trotsky, with his small group abroad, is just nothing so far as the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia are concerned?

Trotsky uses the boldest type for his assertions—it's a wonder he never tires of making solemn vows—that his paper is “not a factional but a Party organ”. You need only pay some little attention to the contents of No. 22 to see at once the obvious mechanics of the game with the non-Party *Vperyod* and liquidator factions. . .

. . . Or take the florid editorial grandly entitled “Onward!”. “Class-conscious workers!” we read in that editorial. “At the present moment there is no more important (*sic!*) and comprehensive slogan

(the poor fellow has let his tongue run away with him) than freedom of association, assembly, and strikes.” “The Social-Democrats,” we read further, “call upon the proletariat to fight for a republic. But if the fight for a republic is not to be merely the bare (!) slogan of a select few, it is necessary that you class-conscious workers should teach the masses to realise from experience the need for freedom of association and to fight for this most vital class demand.”

This revolutionary phraseology merely serves to disguise and justify the falsity of liquidationism, and thereby to befuddle the minds of the workers. Why is the slogan calling for a republic the *bare* slogan of a *select few* when the existence of a republic means that it would be impossible to disperse the Duma, means freedom of association and of the press, means freeing the peasants from violence and plunder. . . Is it not clear that it is just the opposite—that it is the slogan of “freedom of association” as a “comprehensive” slogan, used *independently* of the slogan of a republic, that is “bare” and senseless?

It is absurd to demand “freedom of association” from the tsarist monarchy, without explaining to the masses that such freedom cannot be expected from tsarism and that to obtain it there must be a republic. The introduction of bills into the Duma on freedom of association, and questions and speeches on such subjects, ought to serve us Social-Democrats as an occasion and material for our agitation in favour of a republic.

The “class-conscious workers should teach the masses to realise from experience the need for freedom of association”! This is the old song of old Russian opportunism, the opportunism long ago

preached to death by the Economists. The *experience* of the masses is that the ministers are closing down their unions, that the governors and police officers are daily perpetrating deeds of violence against them—this is real *experience of the masses*. But extolling the slogan of “freedom of association” as opposed to a republic is merely phrase-mongering by an opportunist intellectual who is alien to the masses. . . . Actually, it is . . . something different, the experience of life that educates them; what enlightens them is the agitation of the class-conscious workers for a republic—which is the sole comprehensive slogan from the standpoint of political democracy.

Trotsky knows perfectly well that liquidators writing in legal publications *combine* this very slogan of “freedom of association” with the slogan “down with the underground party, down with the struggle for a republic”. Trotsky’s particular task is to conceal liquidationism by throwing dust in the eyes of the workers.

\* \* \*

It is impossible to argue with Trotsky on the merits of the issue, because Trotsky holds no views whatever. We can and should argue with confirmed liquidators and otzovists; but it is no use arguing with a man whose game is to hide the errors of both these trends; in his case the thing to do is to expose him as a diplomat of the smallest calibre.

December, 1911

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 17, pp. 360, 361, 362

*From:*

## The Liquidators Against the Party

. . . Trotsky was entrusted with singing all the virtues of the Organising Committee<sup>39</sup> and of the forthcoming liquidationist conference; nor could they have assigned the job to anyone fitter than the “professional uniter”. And he did sing them—in every variety of type his Vienna printer could find: “The supporters of *Vperyod* and *Golos*, pro-Party Bolsheviks, pro-Party Mensheviks, so-called liquidators and non-factionalists—in Russia and abroad—are firmly supporting the work. . .” of the Organising Committee. (*Pravda*, No. 24.)

The poor fellow—again he told a lie, and again he miscalculated. The bloc under the hegemony of the liquidators, which was being prepared in opposition to the Conference of 1912 with so much fuss, is now bursting at the seams and the reason is that the liquidators have shown their hand too openly. The Poles<sup>40</sup> refused to take part in the Organising Committee. Plekhanov, through correspondence with a representative of the Committee, established several interesting details, to wit: (1) that what is planned is a “constituent” conference, i.e., not a conference of the RSDLP, but of some new party; (2) that it is being convened on “anarchical” lines; (3) that the “conference is being convened by the liquidators.” After these circumstances had been revealed by Comrade Plekhanov, there was nothing surprising to us in the fact that the so-called Bolshevik (!) conciliators<sup>41</sup> plucked up courage and resolved to convict Trotsky of—having told a lie by listing them among the supporters of the Organising Committee. “This Organising Committee, as it is now constituted, with its obvious tendency to

impose upon the whole Party its own attitude to the liquidators, and with the principles of organisational anarchy which it has made the basis for increasing its membership, does not provide the least guarantee that a really general Party conference will be convened." That is how our emboldened "pro-Party" people comment on the Organising Committee today. We do not know where the most Leftist of our Left—the *Vperyod* group, who at one time hastened to signify its sympathy with the Organising Committee—stand today. Nor is this of any importance. The important thing is that the liquidationist character of the conference to be held by the Organising Committee has been established by Plekhanov with irrefutable clarity, and that the statesmanlike minds of the "conciliators" had to bow to this fact. Who remains, then? The open liquidators and Trotsky. . .

The basis of this bloc is obvious: the liquidators enjoy full freedom to pursue their line in *Zhivoje Dyelo*<sup>42</sup> and *Nasha Zarya*<sup>43</sup> "as before", while Trotsky, operating abroad, screens them with r-r-revolutionary phrases, which cost him nothing and do not bind them in any way.

There is one little lesson to be drawn from this affair by those abroad who are sighing for unity. . . To build up a party, it is not enough to be able to shout "unity"; it is also necessary to have a *political* programme, a programme of political action. The bloc comprising the liquidators, Trotsky, the *Vperyod* group, the Poles, the pro-Party Bolsheviks (?), the Paris Mensheviks, and so on and so forth, was foredoomed to ignominious failure, because it was based on an unprincipled approach, on hypocrisy and hollow phrases. As for those who sigh, it would not be amiss if they finally made up their minds on that extremely complicated and dif-

ficult question: With whom do they want to have unity? If it is with the liquidators, why not say so without mincing? But if they are against unity with the liquidators, then what sort of unity are they sighing for?

The January Conference<sup>44</sup> and the bodies it elected are the only thing that actually unites all the RSDLP functionaries in Russia today. Apart from the Conference there is only the promise of the Bundists and Trotsky to convene the liquidationist conference of the Organising Committee, and the "conciliators" who are experiencing their liquidationist hang-over.

May, 1912

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 18, pp. 22-24

*From:*

### The Break-Up of the "August" Bloc<sup>45</sup>

All who are interested in the working-class movement and Marxism in Russia know that a bloc of the liquidators, Trotsky, the Letts<sup>46</sup>, the Bundists and the Caucasians<sup>47</sup> was formed in August 1912.

The formation of this bloc was announced with tremendous ballyhoo in the newspaper *Luch*,<sup>48</sup> which was founded in St. Petersburg—not with workers' money—just when the elections were being held,<sup>49</sup> in order to sabotage the will of the majority of the organised workers. It went into raptures over the bloc's "large membership", over the alliance of "Marxists of different trends", over "unity" and non-factionalism, and it raged against the "splitters", the supporters of the January 1912 Conference.

The question of "unity" was thus presented to thinking workers in a new and practical light. The facts were to show who was right: those who praised the "unity" platform and tactics of the "August" bloc members, or those who said that this was a false signboard, a new disguise for the old, bankrupt liquidators.

Exactly *eighteen months* passed. A tremendous period considering the upsurge of 1912-13. And then, in February 1914, a new journal—this time eminently "unifying" and eminently and truly "non-factional"—bearing the title *Borba*,<sup>50</sup> was founded by Trotsky, that "genuine" adherent of the August platform.

Both the contents of *Borba's* issue No. 1 and what the liquidators wrote about that journal before it appeared, at once revealed to the attentive observer that the August bloc *had broken up* and that frantic efforts were being made to conceal this and hoodwink the workers. But this fraud will also be exposed very soon.

Before the appearance of *Borba*, the editors of *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*<sup>51</sup> published a scathing comment stating: "The real physiognomy of this journal, which has of late been spoken of quite a lot in Marxist circles, is still unclear to us."

Think of that, reader: since August 1912 Trotsky has been considered a leader of the August unity bloc; but the whole of 1913 shows him to have been dissociated from *Luch* and the Luchists. In 1914, this selfsame Trotsky establishes *his own* journal, while continuing fictitiously on the staff of *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta* and *Nasha Zarya*. "There is a good deal of talk in circles" about a secret "memorandum"—which the liquidators are keeping dark—written by Trotsky *against* the Luchists, Messrs. F. D.,<sup>52</sup> L.M.,<sup>53</sup> and similar "strangers".

And yet the truthful, non-factional and unifying Editorial Board of *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta* writes: "Its physiognomy is still unclear to us!"

It is not yet clear to them that the August bloc has fallen apart!

No, Messrs. F.D., L.M. and other Luchists, it is perfectly "clear" to you, and you are simply deceiving the workers.

The August bloc—as we said at the time, in August 1912—turned out to be a mere screen for the liquidators. *That bloc has fallen asunder. Even* its friends in Russia have not been able to stick together. The famous uniters even failed to unite themselves and we got *two* "August" trends, the Luchist trend (*Nasha Zarya* and *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*) and the Trotskyist trend (*Borba*). Both are waving scraps of the "general and united" August banner which they have torn up, and both are shouting themselves hoarse with cries of "unity"!

What is *Borba's* trend? Trotsky wrote a verbose article in *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 11, explaining this, but the editors of that liquidator newspaper very pointedly replied that its "physiognomy is still unclear".

The liquidators do have their *own* physiognomy, a liberal, not a Marxist one. . .

Trotsky, however, has never had any "physiognomy" at all; the only thing he does have is a habit of changing sides, of skipping from the liberals to the Marxists and back again, of mouthing scraps of catchwords and bombastic parrot phrases.

In *Borba* you will not find *a single* live word on any controversial issue. . .

. . . Trotsky assures us that he is in favour of combining immediate demands with ultimate aims, but there is not a word as to his attitude towards the *liquidator* method of effecting this "combination"!

Actually, under cover of high-sounding, empty, and obscure phrases that confuse the non-class-conscious workers, Trotsky is defending the liquidators. . .

. . . Unity means rallying the majority of the workers in Russia about decisions which have long been known, and which condemn liquidationism. Unity means that members of the Duma must work in harmony with the will of the majority of the workers, which the six workers' deputies are doing.

But the liquidators and Trotsky, the Seven and Trotsky, who tore up their own August bloc, who flouted all the decisions of the Party and dissociated themselves from the "underground" as well as from the organised workers, are the worst splitters. Fortunately, the workers have already realised this, and all class-conscious workers are creating their own *real* unity *against* the liquidator disruptors of unity.

March, 1914

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 20, pp. 158-161

*From:*

### **Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity**

The questions of the present-day working-class movement are in many respects vexed questions, particularly for representatives of that movement's recent past (i.e., of the stage which historically has just drawn to a close). This applies primarily to the questions of so-called factionalism, splits, and so forth. One often hears intellectuals in the work-

ing-class movement making nervous, feverish and almost hysterical appeals not to raise these vexed questions. Those who have experienced the long years of struggle between the various trends among Marxists. . . may naturally think it superfluous to repeat many of the arguments on the subject of these vexed questions.

But there are not many people left today who took part in the fourteen-year-old conflict among Marxists (not to speak of the eighteen- or nineteen-year-old conflict, counting from the moment the first symptoms of Economism appeared). The vast majority of the workers who now make up the ranks of the Marxists either do not remember the old conflict, or have never heard of it. To the overwhelming majority. . . these vexed questions are a matter of exceptionally great interest. We therefore intend to deal with these questions, which have been raised *as it were* anew (and for the younger generation of the workers they are really new) by Trotsky's "non-factional workers' journal", *Borba*.

### **I. "FACTIONALISM"**

Trotsky calls his new journal "non-factional". He puts this word in the top line in his advertisements; this word is stressed by him in every key, in the editorial articles of *Borba* itself, as well as in the liquidationist *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, which carried an article on *Borba* by Trotsky before the latter began publication.

What is this "non-factionalism"?

Trotsky's "workers' journal" is Trotsky's journal *for* workers, as there is not a trace in it of either workers' initiative, or any connection with working-class organisations. Desiring to write in a popular

style, Trotsky, in his journal for workers, explains for the benefit of his readers the meaning of such foreign words as "territory", "factor", and so forth.

Very good. But why not also explain to the workers the meaning of the word "non-factionalism"? Is that word *more* intelligible than the words "territory" and "factor"?

No, that is not the reason. The reason is that the label "non-factionalism" is used by the worst representatives of the worst remnants of factionalism to *mislead* the younger generation of workers. It is worth while devoting a little time to explaining this.

Group-division was the main distinguishing feature of the Social-Democratic Party during a definite historical period. Which period? From 1903 to 1911.

To explain the nature of this group-division more clearly we must recall the concrete conditions that existed in, say, 1906-07. At that time the Party was united, there was no split, but group-division existed, i.e., in the united Party there were *virtually two* groups, two virtually separate organisations. The local workers' organisations were united, but on every important issue the two groups devised two sets of tactics. The advocates of the respective tactics disputed among themselves in the united workers' organisations... and questions were decided *by a majority vote*. One group was defeated at the Stockholm Unity Congress (1906), the other was defeated at the London Unity Congress (1907).

These are commonly known facts in the history of organised Marxism in Russia.

It is sufficient to recall these commonly known facts to realise what glaring falsehoods Trotsky is spreading.

For over two years, since 1912, there has been *no* factionalism among the organised Marxists in

Russia, no disputes over tactics in *united* organisations, at *united* conferences and congresses. There is a *complete* break between the Party, which in January 1912 formally announced that the liquidators *do not* belong to it, and the liquidators. Trotsky often calls this state of affairs a "split", and we shall deal with this appellation separately later on. But it remains an undoubted fact that the term "factionalism" *deviates from the truth*.

As we have said, this term is a repetition, and uncritical, unreasonable, senseless repetition of *what was true yesterday*, i.e., in the period that has already passed. When Trotsky talks to us about the "chaos of factional strife" (see No. 1, pp. 5, 6, and many others) we realise at once *which* period of the past his words echo.

Consider the present state of affairs from the viewpoint of the young Russian workers who now constitute nine-tenths of the organised Marxists in Russia. They see *three* mass expressions of the different views, or trends in the working-class movement: the Pravdists,<sup>54</sup> gathered around a newspaper with a circulation of 40,000; the liquidators (15,000 circulation) and the Left Narodniks<sup>55</sup> (10,000 circulation)...

The question arises: what has "chaos" got to do with it? Everybody knows that Trotsky is fond of high-sounding and empty phrases. But the catchword "chaos" is *not only* phrase-mongering; it signifies *also* the transplanting, or rather, a vain attempt to transplant, to Russian soil, in the present period, the relations that existed *abroad* in a *bygone* period. That is the whole point.

There is no "chaos" whatever in the struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks.<sup>56</sup> That, we hope, not *even* Trotsky will dare to deny. The struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks has been

going on for over thirty years, ever since Marxism came into being... If there is any "chaos" anywhere, it is only in the heads of cranks who fail to understand this.

What, then, remains? "Chaos" in the struggle between the Marxists and the liquidators? That, too, is wrong for a struggle against a *trend*, which the entire Party recognised as a trend and condemned as far back as 1908, cannot be called chaos. And everybody who has the least concern for the history of Marxism in Russia knows that liquidationism is most closely and inseparably connected, even as regards its leaders and supporters, with Menshevism (1903-08) and Economism (1894-1903). Consequently, here, too, we have a history extending over nearly twenty years. To regard the history of one's own Party as "chaos" reveals an unpardonable empty-headedness.

Now let us examine the present situation *from the point of view* of Paris or Vienna. At once the whole picture changes. Besides the Pravdists and liquidators, we see *no less than five Russian* groups claiming membership of one and the same Social-Democratic Party...<sup>57</sup>

Here Trotsky is right in a certain sense; this is indeed group-division, chaos indeed!

Groups within the Party, i.e., nominal unity (all *claim* to belong to one Party) and actual disunity (for, in fact, all the groups are independent of one another and enter into negotiations and agreements with each other as sovereign powers).

...Take a period of two full years—1912 and 1913. As everybody knows, this was a period of the revival and upswing of the working-class movement, when every trend or tendency of a more or less *mass* character (and in politics this mass character

alone counts) *could not but* exercise some influence on the Fourth Duma elections, the strike movement, the legal newspapers, the trade unions, the insurance election campaign, and so on. Throughout those two years, not one of these five groups abroad asserted itself in the slightest degree *in any* of the activities of the mass working-class movement in Russia just enumerated!

That is a fact that anybody can easily verify.

And that fact proves that we were right in calling Trotsky a representative of the "worst remnants of factionalism".

Although he claims to be non-factional, Trotsky is known to everybody who is in the least familiar with the working-class movement in Russia as the representative of "Trotsky's *faction*". Here we have group-division, for we see two essential symptoms of it: (1) nominal recognition of unity and (2) group segregation in fact. Here there are remnants of group-division, for there is no evidence whatever of any real connection with the mass working-class movement in Russia.

And lastly, it is the worst form of group-division, for there is *no* ideological and political definiteness. It cannot be denied that this definiteness is characteristic of both the Pravdists (even our determined opponent L. Martov admits that we stand "solid and disciplined" around universally known formal decisions on all questions) and the liquidators (they, or at all events the most prominent of them, have very definite features, namely, liberal, not Marxist)...

Trotsky, however, possesses no ideological and political definiteness, for his patent for "non-factionalism"... is merely a patent to *flit* freely to and fro, from one group to another.

To sum up:

1) Trotsky does not explain, nor does he understand, the historical significance of the *ideological* disagreements among the various Marxist trends and groups, although these disagreements run through the twenty years' history of Social-Democracy and concern the fundamental questions of the present day. . .

2) Trotsky fails to understand that the main specific features of *group-division* are nominal recognition of unity and actual disunity;

3) Under cover of "non-factionalism" Trotsky is championing the interests of a group abroad which particularly lacks definite principles and has no basis in the working-class movement in Russia.

All that glitters is not gold. There is much glitter and sound in Trotsky's phrases, but they are meaningless. . .

\* \* \*

The old participants in the Marxist movement in Russia know Trotsky very well, and there is no need to discuss him for their benefit. But the younger generation of workers do not know him, and it is therefore necessary to discuss him, for he is typical of all the five groups abroad, which, in fact, are also vacillating between the liquidators and the Party.

In the days of the old *Iskra* (1901-03), these waverers, who flitted from the Economists to the Iskrist and back again, were dubbed "Tushino turncoats" (the name given in the Troublous Times<sup>58</sup> in Rus to fighting men who went over from one camp to another).

When we speak of liquidationism we speak of a definite ideological trend, which grew up in the course of many years, stems from Menshevism and Economism in the twenty years' history of Marxism, and is connected with the policy and ideology of a definite class—the liberal bourgeoisie.

The only ground the "Tushino turncoats" have for claiming that they stand above groups is that they "borrow" their ideas from one group one day and from another the next day. Trotsky was an ardent Iskrist in 1901-03. . .

At the end of 1903, Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, i.e., he deserted from the Iskrist to the Economists. He said that "between the old *Iskra* and the new lies a gulf". In 1904-05, he deserted the Mensheviks and occupied a vacillating position, now co-operating with Martynov (the Economist), now proclaiming his absurdly Left "permanent revolution"<sup>59</sup> theory. In 1906-07, he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared that he was in agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

In the period of disintegration, after long "non-factional" vacillation, he again went to the right, and in August 1912, he entered into a bloc with the liquidators. He has now deserted them again, although *in substance* he reiterates their shoddy ideas.

Such types are characteristic of the flotsam of past historical formations, of the time when the mass working-class movement in Russia was still dormant, and when every group had "ample room" in which to pose as a trend, group or faction, in short, as a "power", negotiating amalgamation with others.

The younger generation of workers should know exactly whom they are dealing with, when individuals come before them with incredibly pretentious

claims, unwilling absolutely to reckon with *either* the Party decisions, which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards liquidationism, or with the experience of the present-day working-class movement in Russia, which has actually brought about the *unity* of the majority on the basis of full recognition of the aforesaid decisions.

May, 1914

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 20, pp. 327-332, 346-347

*From:*

### A Letter to Alexandra Kollontai <sup>60</sup>

(Written not earlier than August 4, 1915)

Dear A. M.,

We were very glad about the statement by the Norwegians and your efforts with the Swedes. <sup>61</sup> It would be devilishly important to have a joint international statement by the *Left* Marxists! (A statement of principle is the main thing, and so far the only thing possible.)

Roland-Holst, <sup>62</sup> like Rakovsky <sup>63</sup> (have you seen his French pamphlet?), like Trotsky, in my opinion, are *all* the most harmful "Kautskians", <sup>64</sup> in the sense that all of them in various forms are for *unity* with the opportunists, all in various forms *embellish* opportunism, all of them (in various ways) preach eclecticism instead of revolutionary Marxism...

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 35, p. 200

*From:*

### A Letter to Henriette Roland-Holst

March 8, 1916

(5) What are our differences with Trotsky? This must probably interest you. In brief—he is a Kautskyite, that is, he stands for unity with the Kautskyites in the International <sup>65</sup> and with Chkheidze's <sup>66</sup> parliamentary group in Russia. We are absolutely against such unity. Chkheidze with his phrases (that he is for Zimmerwald: <sup>67</sup> see his recent speech. *Vorwärts* 5/III) *cloaks* the fact that he shares the views of the *Organising Committee* and of the people *taking part in the war committees*. <sup>68</sup> Trotsky at present is against the Organising Committee (Axelrod and Martov) but for unity with the Chkheidze Duma group!!

We are decidedly against.

With best regards to you, Comrade Pannekoek <sup>69</sup> and the other Dutch comrades!

Yours  
N. Lenin

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 43, pp. 515-516

*From:*

### The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution <sup>70</sup>

#### Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party

#### THE SITUATION WITHIN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

... Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to fix a "sequence" of

action by the revolutionary proletariat in the various belligerent countries, laborious efforts to conclude "agreements" between the socialists of the belligerent countries *on the question* of the revolutionary struggle, all the fuss over the summoning of socialist congresses *for the purpose* of a peace campaign, etc., etc.—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, attempts, and plans may be—amount, as far as their *objective* significance is concerned, to mere phrase-mongering, and *at best* are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the *deception* of the people by the chauvinists. . .

Good people often forget the brutal and savage setting of the imperialist world war. This setting does not tolerate phrases, and mocks at innocent and pious wishes.

There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—working wholeheartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy, and material aid) *this struggle*, this, and *only this*, line, in every country without exception.

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.<sup>71</sup>

During the two odd years of the war the international socialist and working-class movement in every country has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores *reality* and refuses to recognise the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight consistently for the trend that is really internationalist, is doomed to impotence, helplessness and errors.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, i.e., socialists in word and chauvinists in deed, people who recognise "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war (and above all in the present imperialist war).

These people are our *class* enemies. They have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

They are the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in *all* countries. . .

2) The second trend, known as the "Centre", consists of people who vacillate between the social-chauvinists and the true internationalists.

The "Centre" all vow and declare that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for bringing every kind of "pressure" to bear upon the governments, for "demanding" in every way that their own government should "ascertain the will of the people for peace", that they are for all sorts of peace campaigns, for peace without annexations, etc., etc.—*and for peace with the social-chauvinists*. The "Centre" is for "unity", the Centre is opposed to a split.

The "Centre" is a realm of honeyed petty-bourgeois phrases, of internationalism in word and cowardly opportunism and fawning on the social-chauvinists in deed.

The crux of the matter is that the "Centre" is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one's own government; it does not preach revolutionary struggle; and in order to evade such a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra-"Marxist"-sounding *excuses*. . .

The chief leader and spokesman of the "Centre" is Karl Kautsky, the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889-1914), since August 1914 a model of utter bankruptcy as a Marxist, the embodiment of unheard-of spinelessness, and the most wretched vacillations and betrayals. . .

Naturally, at times individuals unconsciously drift from the social-chauvinist to the "Centrist" posi-

tion, and vice versa. Every Marxist knows that classes are distinct, even though individuals may move freely from one class to another; similarly, trends in political life are distinct in spite of the fact that individuals may change freely from one trend to another, and in spite of all attempts and efforts to *amalgamate* trends.

3) The third trend, that of the true internationalists, is best represented by the "Zimmerwald Left". (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto of September 1915, to enable the reader to learn of the inception of this trend at first hand.)

Its distinctive feature is its complete break with both social-chauvinism and "Centrism", and its gallant revolutionary struggle against *its own* imperialist government and *its own* imperialist bourgeoisie. Its principle is: "Our chief enemy is at home." It wages a ruthless struggle against honeyed social-pacifist phrases (a social-pacifist is a socialist in word and a bourgeois pacifist in deed; bourgeois pacifists dream of an everlasting peace *without* the overthrow of the yoke and domination of capital) and against all *subterfuges* employed to deny the possibility, or the appropriateness, or the timeliness of proletarian revolutionary struggle and of a proletarian socialist revolution *in connection* with the present war. . .

It is not a question of shades of opinion, which certainly exist even among the Lefts. It is a question of *trend*. The thing is that it is not easy to be an internationalist in deed during a terrible imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people *alone* that the future of socialism depends; they *alone* are the *leaders of the people*, and not their corrupters.

The distinction between the reformists and the revolutionaries, among the Social-Democrats, and

socialists generally, was objectively bound to undergo a change under the conditions of the imperialist war. Those who confine themselves to "demanding" that the bourgeois governments should conclude peace or "ascertain the will of the peoples for peace," etc., are *actually* slipping into reforms. For, objectively, *the problem of the war* can be solved only *in a revolutionary way*. . .

The most varied reforms can and must be demanded of the bourgeois governments, but one cannot, without sinking to Manilovism and reformism, demand that people and classes entangled by the thousands of threads of imperialist capital should *tear* those threads. And unless they are torn, all talk of a war against war is idle and deceitful prattle.

The "Kautskyites", the "Centre", are revolutionaries in word and reformists in deed, they are internationalists in word and accomplices of the social-chauvinists in deed.

April, 1917

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 24, pp. 74-75,  
75-76, 77-78, 80

*From:*  
**The Crisis Has Matured** <sup>72</sup>

▼

. . . And there is not the slightest doubt that if the Bolsheviks allowed themselves to be caught in the trap of constitutional illusions, "faith" in the Congress of Soviets and in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, <sup>73</sup> "waiting" for the Congress of

Soviets, and so forth—these Bolsheviks would most certainly be *miserable traitors* to the proletarian cause.

They would be traitors to the cause, for by their conduct they would be betraying the German revolutionary workers who have started a revolt in the navy. To “wait” for the Congress of Soviets and so forth under such circumstances would be a *betrayal of internationalism*, a betrayal of the cause of the world socialist revolution.

For internationalism consists of *deeds* and not phrases, not expressions of solidarity, not resolutions.

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to the *peasants*, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt... would be *to ruin* the whole revolution, to ruin it for good. An outcry is raised about anarchy and about the increasing indifference of the people, but what else can the people be but indifferent to the elections, when the peasants have been *driven to revolt* while the so-called “revolutionary democrats” are patiently tolerating its suppression by military force!

The Bolsheviks would be traitors to democracy and to freedom, for to tolerate the suppression of the peasant revolt at such a moment would *mean* allowing the elections to the Constituent Assembly...

The crisis has matured. The whole future of the Russian revolution is at stake. The honour of the Bolshevik Party is in question. The whole future of the international workers’ revolution for socialism is at stake.

The crisis has matured...

September 29, 1917

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 26, pp. 81-82

## Telegram to General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief <sup>74</sup>

January 29  
(February 11), 1918

Use all methods available to you to cancel today’s telegram on peace and general demobilisation of the armies on all fronts. By order of Lenin. <sup>75</sup>

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 44, p. 60

## Telegram to General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief

January 30  
(February 12), 1918

Notify all army commissars and Bonch-Bruyevich <sup>76</sup> that all telegrams signed by Trotsky and Krylenko on demobilisation of the army are to be held up. We cannot give you the peace terms, since peace really has not yet been concluded. Please hold up all telegrams reporting peace until you receive special permission.

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 44, p. 61

*From:*

Speech at the Evening Sitting of the Central  
Committee of the RSDLP(B). February 18, 1918

Minutes

I

*Comrade Lenin.* This is a basic question. . . War is no joke. We are losing railway cars, and our transport is breaking down. We cannot wait any longer because the situation has fully crystallised. The people will not understand this: since there is a war on, there should have been no demobilisation; the Germans will now take everything. This thing has gone so far that continued sitting on the fence will inevitably ruin the revolution. . . there was no sign of a revolution in Germany; if that is so the Germans will find their advance very rewarding. We cannot afford to wait, which would mean consigning the Russian revolution to the scrap-heap. If the Germans said that they wanted to overthrow Bolshevik power, we would naturally have to fight; no more procrastination is permissible. It is now no longer a matter of the past but of the present. . . The only thing we can do is offer the Germans a resumption of the talks. There is no half-way house in this. . .

. . . We have done our best to help the revolution in Finland, but now we can do no more. . . It is too late to put out feelers, because it is quite clear now that the Germans can launch an offensive. An offer of peace must be made to the Germans.

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 26, pp. 522-523

*From:*

The Revolutionary Phrase

When I said at a Party meeting that the revolutionary phrase about a revolutionary war might ruin our revolution, I was reproached for the sharpness of my polemics. There are, however, moments, when a question must be raised sharply and things given their proper names, the danger being that otherwise irreparable harm may be done to the Party and the revolution.

Revolutionary phrase-making, more often than not, is a disease from which revolutionary parties suffer at times when they constitute, directly or indirectly, a combination, alliance or intermingling of proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements, and when the course of revolutionary events is marked by big, rapid zigzags. By revolutionary phrase-making we mean the repetition of revolutionary slogans irrespective of objective circumstances at a given turn in events, in the given state of affairs obtaining at the time. The slogans are superb, alluring, intoxicating, but there are no grounds for them; such is the nature of the revolutionary phrase. . .

6

. . . We are accepting an unfavourable treaty and a separate peace knowing that *today* we are not yet ready for a revolutionary war, that we have to bide our time. . . we must wait until we are stronger. Therefore, *if there is a chance* of obtaining the most unfavourable separate peace, we *absolutely must accept* it in the interests of the socialist revolution, which is *still* weak (since the maturing revolution in Germany has not *yet* come to our help,

to the help of the Russians). Only if a separate peace is *absolutely* impossible shall we have to fight immediately—not because it will be correct tactics, but because we shall have no choice. If it proves impossible there will be no occasion for a dispute over tactics. There will be nothing but the inevitability of the most furious resistance. But as long as we have a choice we must choose a separate peace and an extremely unfavourable treaty. . . .

Month by month we are growing stronger, although we are today still weak. Month by month the international socialist revolution is maturing in Europe, although it is not yet fully mature. Therefore. . . therefore, “revolutionaries” (God save us from them) argue that we must accept battle when German imperialism is *obviously* stronger than we are but is *weakening* month by month (because of the slow but certain maturing of the revolution in Germany).

The “revolutionaries” of sentiment argue magnificently, they argue superbly!

## 7

The last argument, the most specious and most widespread, is that “this obscene peace is a disgrace, it is betrayal of Latvia, Poland, Courland and Lithuania”.

Is it any wonder that the Russian *bourgeoisie* (and their hangers-on, the *Novy Luch*,<sup>77</sup> *Dyelo Naroda*,<sup>78</sup> and *Novaya Zhizn*,<sup>79</sup> gang) are the most zealous in elaborating this allegedly internationalist argument?

No, it is no wonder, for this argument is a trap into which the bourgeoisie are deliberately dragging the Russian Bolsheviks, and into which some of

them are falling unwittingly, because of their love of phrases.

Let us examine the argument from the standpoint of theory; which should be put first, the right of nations to self-determination, or socialism?

Socialism should.

Is it permissible, because of a contravention of the right of nations to self-determination, to allow the Soviet Socialist Republic to be devoured, to expose it to the blows of imperialism at a time when imperialism is obviously stronger and the Soviet Republic obviously weaker?

No, it is not permissible—that is *bourgeois* and not socialist politics.

Further, would peace on the condition that Poland, Lithuania and Courland are returned “to us” be less disgraceful, be any less an annexationist peace?

From the point of view of the Russian bourgeois, *it would*. From the point of view of the socialist-internationalist, *it would not*.

Because if German imperialism set Poland free (which at one time some *bourgeois* in Germany desired), it would squeeze Serbia, Belgium, etc., *all the more*.

When the Russian bourgeoisie wail against the “obscene” peace, they are correctly expressing their class interests.

But when some Bolsheviks (suffering from the phrase disease) repeat that argument, it is simply very sad.

Examine the *facts* relating to the behaviour of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie. They are doing everything they can to drag us into the war against Germany now, they are offering us millions of blessings, boots, potatoes, shells, locomotives (on credit . . . that is not “enslavement”, don’t fear that! It is

“only” credit!). They want us to fight against Germany *now*.

It is obvious why they should want this; they want it because, in the first place, we should engage part of the German forces. And secondly, because Soviet power might collapse most easily from an untimely armed clash with German imperialism.

The Anglo-French bourgeoisie are setting a trap for us: please be kind enough to go and fight *now*, our gain will be magnificent. The Germans will plunder you, will “do well” in the East, will agree to cheaper terms in the West, and furthermore, Soviet power will be swept away... Please do fight, Bolshevik “allies”, we shall help you!

And the “Left” (God save us from them) Bolsheviks are walking into the trap by reciting the most revolutionary phrases...

Oh yes, one of the manifestations of the traces of the petty-bourgeois spirit is surrender to revolutionary phrases. This is an old story that is perennially new...

8

We must fight against the revolutionary phrase, we have to fight it...we absolutely must fight it, so that at some future time people will not say of us the bitter truth that “a revolutionary phrase about revolutionary war ruined the revolution”.

February, 1918

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 27, pp. 19, 26-29

EXTRAORDINARY SEVENTH CONGRESS  
OF THE RCP(B)<sup>80</sup>  
March 6-8, 1918

---

*From:*

**Political Report of the Central Committee,  
March 7**

...If the European revolution is late in coming, gravest defeats await us because we have no army, because we lack organisation, because, at the moment, these are two problems we cannot solve. If you are unable to adapt yourself, if you are not inclined to crawl on your belly in the mud, you are not a revolutionary but a chatterbox; and I propose this, not because I like it, but because we have no other road, because history has not been kind enough to bring the revolution to maturity everywhere simultaneously.

The way things are turning out is that the civil war has begun as an attempt at a clash with imperialism, and this has shown that imperialism is rotten to the core, and that proletarian elements are rising in every army. Yes, we shall see the world revolution, but for the time being it is a very good fairy-tale, a very beautiful fairy-tale—I quite understand children liking beautiful fairy-tales. But I ask, is it proper for a serious revolutionary to believe in fairy-tales? ...It will be a good thing if

the German proletariat is able to take action. But have you measured it, have you discovered an instrument that will show that the German revolution will break out on such-and-such a day? No, you do not know that, and neither do we. You are staking everything on this card. If the revolution breaks out, everything is saved. Of course! But if it does not turn out as we desire, if it does not achieve victory tomorrow—what then? Then the masses will say to you, you acted like gamblers—you staked everything on a fortunate turn of events that did not take place, you proved unfitted for the situation that actually arose instead of the world revolution, which will inevitably come, but which has not yet reached maturity. . .

We do not know how long the respite will last—we will try to take advantage of the situation. Perhaps the respite will last longer, perhaps it will last only a few days. Anything may happen, no one knows, or can know, because all the major powers are bound, restricted, compelled to fight on several fronts. . . Every serious revolutionary will admit that we are right, will admit that any disgraceful peace is proper, because it is in the interests of the proletarian revolution and the regeneration of Russia. . .

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 27, pp. 101-102, 107

*From:*

**Reply to the Debate on the Political Report  
of the Central Committee, March 8**

. . . I must say something about Comrade Trotsky's position. There are two aspects to his activities

when he began the negotiations at Brest and made splendid use of them for agitation, we all agreed with Comrade Trotsky. He has quoted part of a conversation with me, but I must add that it was agreed between us that we would hold out until the Germans presented an ultimatum, and then we would give way. The Germans deceived us—they stole five days out of seven from us. Trotsky's tactics were correct as long as they were aimed at delaying matters; they became incorrect when it was announced that the state of war had been terminated but peace had not been concluded. I proposed quite definitely that peace be concluded. We could not have got anything better than the Brest peace. It is now clear to everybody that we would have had a month's respite and that we would not have lost anything. . . In war you must never tie yourself down with formal decisions. It is ridiculous not to know the history of war, not to know that a treaty is a means of gathering strength. . .

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 27, pp. 113-114

*From:*

**Speeches Against Trotsky's Amendments to  
the Resolution on War and Peace, March 8  
(Morning) <sup>81</sup>**

Comrades, in my speech I have already said that neither I nor those who support me consider it possible to accept this amendment. We must in no way bind our hands in any strategic manoeuvre. . . In-

stead of the amendments which Comrade Trotsky proposes, I am ready to accept the following:

First, to say—and this I shall certainly uphold—that the present resolution is not to be published in the press but that a communication should be made only about the ratification of the treaty.

Secondly, in the forms of publication and content the Central Committee shall have the right to introduce changes in connection with a possible offensive by the Japanese.

Thirdly, to say that the Congress will empower the CC of the Party both to break all the peace treaties and to declare war on any imperialist power or the whole world when the CC of the Party considers that the appropriate moment for this has come.

We must give the CC full power to break the treaties at any moment but this does not in any way imply that we shall break them just now, in the situation that exists today. At the present time we must not bind our hands in any way. The words that Comrade Trotsky proposes to introduce will gain the votes of those who are against ratification in general, votes for a middle course which will create afresh a situation in which not a single worker, not a single soldier, will understand anything in our resolution.

At the present time we shall endorse the necessity of ratifying the treaty and we shall empower the Central Committee to declare war at any moment, because an attack against us is being prepared, perhaps from three sides; Britain or France want to take Archangel from us—it is quite possible they will, but in any case we ought not to hamper our central institution in any way, whether in regard to breaking the peace treaty or in regard to declaring war. . . In any case we must not bind

ourselves to not signing any peace treaty. In an epoch of growing wars, coming one after the other, new combinations grow up. The peace treaty is entirely a matter of vital manoeuvring—either we stand by this condition of manoeuvring or we formally bind our hands in advance in such a way that it will be impossible to move; neither making peace nor waging war will be possible.

## II

It seems to me that I have said: no, I cannot accept this. This amendment makes a hint, it expresses what Comrade Trotsky wants to say. There should be no hints in the resolution.

The first point says that we accept ratification of the treaty, considering it essential to utilise every, even the smallest, possibility of a breathing-space before imperialism attacks the Soviet Socialist Republic. In speaking of a breathing-space, we do not forget that an attack on our Republic is still going on. There you have my opinion, which I stressed in my reply to the debate.

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 27, pp. 120-121

## THE TRADE UNIONS, THE PRESENT SITUATION AND TROTSKY'S MISTAKES

---

*From:*

### Speech Delivered at a Joint Meeting of Communist Delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, Communist Members of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions and Communist Members of the Moscow City Council of Trade Unions, December 30, 1920

...My principal material is Comrade Trotsky's pamphlet, *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions*. When I compare it with the theses he submitted to the Central Committee, and go over it very carefully, I am amazed at the number of theoretical mistakes and glaring blunders it contains. How could anyone starting a big Party discussion<sup>82</sup> on this question produce such a sorry excuse for a carefully thought out statement? Let me go over the main points which, I think, contain the original fundamental theoretical errors.

Trade unions are not just historically necessary they are historically inevitable as an organisation of the industrial proletariat, and, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, embrace nearly the whole of it. This is basic, but Comrade Trotsky keeps for getting it; he neither appreciates it nor makes it

his point of departure... The trade unions have an extremely important part to play at every step of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But what is their part?... It is not a state organisation; nor is it one designed for coercion, but for education. It is an organisation designed to draw in and to train; it is, in fact, a school: a school of administration, a school of economic management, a school of communism... To talk about the role of the trade unions without taking these truths into account is to fall straight into a number of errors.

Within the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the trade unions stand, if I may say so, between the Party and the government... What happens is that the Party, shall we say, absorbs the vanguard of the proletariat, and this vanguard exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship cannot be exercised or the functions of government performed without a foundation such as the trade unions... The trade unions are a *link* between the vanguard and the masses, and by their daily work bring conviction to the masses, the masses of the class which alone is capable of taking us from capitalism to communism. On the other hand, the trade unions are a "reservoir" of the state power. This is what the trade unions are in the period of transition from capitalism to communism... the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be exercised... without a number of "transmission belts" running from the vanguard to the mass of the advanced class, and from the latter to the mass of the working people.

...In general, Comrade Trotsky's great mistake, his mistake of principle, lies in the fact that by raising the question of "principle" at this time he is dragging back the Party and the Soviet power. We

have, thank heaven, done with principles and have gone on to practical business. . .

...One may well ask, why is it that we cannot work together, as we so badly need to do? It is because of our different *approach* to the mass, the different way of winning it over and *keeping in touch* with it. That is the whole point. . . What matters now is how to approach the mass, to establish contact with it and win it over, and how to get the intricate transmission system working (how to run the dictatorship of the proletariat). . .

I must say that had we made a detailed, even if small-scale, study of our own experience and practices, we should have managed to avoid the hundreds of quite unnecessary "differences" and errors of principle in which Comrade Trotsky's pamphlet abounds. . .

...quite apart from the fact that there are a number of theoretical mistakes in the theses. It is not a Marxist approach to the evaluation of the "role and tasks of the trade unions", because such a broad subject cannot be tackled without giving thought to the peculiar political aspects of the present situation. . .

If we analysed the current political situation, we might say that we were going through a transition period within a transition period. The whole of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a transition period but we now have, you might say, a heap of new transition periods: the demobilisation of the army, the end of the war,\* the possibility of having a much longer breathing space in peace than before and a more solid transition from the war front to

the labour front. This—and this alone—is causing a change in the attitude of the proletarian class to the peasant class. What kind of change is it? Now this calls for a close examination, but nothing of the sort follows from your theses. Until we have taken this close look, we must learn to wait. The people are overweary, considerable stocks that had to be used for certain priority industries have been so used; the proletariat's attitude to the peasantry is undergoing a change. The war weariness is terrible, and the needs have increased, but production has increased insufficiently or not at all. On the other hand, as I said in my report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets,<sup>83</sup> our application of coercion was correct and successful whenever we had been able to back it up from the start with persuasion. I must say that Trotsky and Bukharin<sup>84</sup> have entirely failed to take account of this very important consideration.

Have we laid a sufficiently broad and solid base of persuasion for all these new production tasks? No, indeed, we have barely started doing it. We have not yet made the masses a party to them. Now I ask you, can the masses tackle these new assignments right away? No, they cannot. . .

...You have not given the masses a chance to discuss things, to see the point, and to think it over; you have not allowed the Party to gain fresh experience but are already acting in haste, overdoing it, and producing formulas which are theoretically false. Just think how this mistake will be further amplified by unduly zealous functionaries! A political leader is responsible not only for the quality of his leadership but also for the acts of those he leads. He may now and again be unaware of what they are about, he may often wish they had not

\* The Civil War of 1918-1920—Ed.

done something, but the responsibility still falls on him.

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 32, pp. 19-23, 32-34

*From:*  
**The Party Crisis**

The pre-Congress discussion is in full swing. Minor differences and disagreements have grown into big ones, which always happens when someone persists in a minor mistake and balks at its correction, or when those who are making a big mistake seize on the minor mistake of one or more persons.

That is how disagreements and splits always grow. That is how we "grew up" from minor disagreements to syndicalism,<sup>85</sup> which means a complete break with communism and an inevitable split in the Party if it is not healthy and strong enough to purge itself of the malaise.

We must have the courage to face the bitter truth. The Party is sick. The Party is down with the fever. The whole point is whether the malaise has affected only the "feverish upper ranks", and perhaps only those in Moscow, or the whole organism. And if the latter is the case, is it capable of healing itself completely within the next few weeks, before the Party Congress and at the Party Congress, making a relapse impossible, or will the malaise linger and become dangerous?

What is it that needs to be done for a rapid and certain cure? *All* members of the Party must make a calm and painstaking *study* of 1) the essence of the disagreements and 2) the development of the Party struggle. A study must be made of both,

because the essence of the disagreements is revealed, clarified and specified (and very often transformed as well) in the *course of the struggle*, which, passing through its various stages, always shows, at every stage, a *different* line-up and number of combatants, *different* positions in the struggle, etc. A *study* must be made of both, and a demand made for the most exact, printed documents that can be thoroughly verified. . .

Let me outline the essence of the disagreements and the successive stages in the struggle, as I see them.

. . .The Fifth All-Russia Trade Union Conference,<sup>86</sup> November 2-6. The battle is joined. Trotsky and Tomsky<sup>87</sup> are the only Central Committee "combatants". Trotsky lets drop a "catchy phrase" about "shaking up" the trade unions.

. . .The Central Committee Plenum of November 9. Trotsky submits his "draft theses", *The Trade Unions and Their Future Role*, advocating the "shake-up" policy, *camouflaged* or adorned with talk of a "severe crisis" gripping the trade unions, and their new tasks and methods. Tomsky, strongly supported by Lenin, considers that. . . it is the "shake-up" that is the crux of the whole controversy. In the course of it, Lenin makes a number of obviously exaggerated and therefore mistaken "attacks", which produces the need for a "buffer group", and this is made up of ten members of the Central Committee (the group includes Bukharin and Zinoviev,<sup>88</sup> but neither Trotsky nor Lenin). It resolves "not to put the disagreements up for broad discussion", and, *cancelling Lenin's report* (to the trade unions), appoints Zinoviev as the rapporteur and instructs him to "present a business-like and non-controversial report".

Trotsky's theses are rejected. Lenin's theses are adopted. In its final form, the resolution is adopted by ten votes to four. . .

The Central Committee sets up a trade union commission and elects Comrade Trotsky to it. He refuses to work on the commission, magnifying by this step *alone* his original mistake, which subsequently leads to factionalism. Without that step, his mistake (in submitting incorrect theses) remained a very minor one, such as every member of the Central Committee, without exception, has had occasion to make.

. . . The Eighth Congress of Soviets. On December 25, Trotsky issues his "platform pamphlet", *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions*. From the standpoint of formal democracy, Trotsky had an uncontested right to issue his platform, for on December 24 the Central Committee had permitted free discussion. From the standpoint of revolutionary interest, this was blowing up the mistake out of all proportion and *creating a faction* on a faulty platform. The pamphlet quotes from the Central Committee resolution of December 7 only that part which refers to "industrial democracy" but does *not* quote what was said against "reconstruction from above".

. . . The pamphlet from beginning to end is shot through with the "shake-up" spirit.

. . . The discussion before thousands of responsible Party workers from all over Russia at the RCP group of the Eighth Congress of Soviets on December 30.<sup>89</sup>

. . . It is that all of Trotsky's disagreements are artificial, that *neither* he *nor* the "Tsektranites"<sup>90</sup> *have any* "new tasks or methods", and that everything practical and substantive had been said, adopted and *decided upon* by the trade unions, *even be-*

*fore the question was raised in the Central Committee.*

. . . There is no need to harass the trade unions by inventing disagreements with them, when they themselves have decided upon and accepted all that is new, business-like and practical in the tasks of the trade unions in production. On this basis, let us vigorously work together for practical results.

January 19, 1921

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 32, pp. 43-47, 53

*From:*

### Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin

#### THE DANGER OF FACTIONAL PRONOUNCEMENTS TO THE PARTY

Is Comrade Trotsky's pamphlet *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions* a factional pronouncement? Irrespective of its content, is there any danger to the Party in a pronouncement of this kind? Attempts to hush up this question are a particularly favourite exercise with the members of the Moscow Committee (with the exception of Comrade Trotsky, of course) . . . and with Comrade Bukharin, who, however, felt obliged, on December 30, 1920, to make the following statement on behalf of the "buffer group":<sup>91</sup>

"...when a train seems to be heading for a crash, a buffer is not a bad thing at all" . . .

So there is some danger of a crash. Can we con-

ceive of intelligent members of the Party being indifferent to the question of how, where and when this danger arose?

Trotsky's pamphlet opens with the statement that "it is the fruit of collective work", that "a number of responsible workers, particularly trade unionists (members of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, <sup>92</sup> the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union, Tsektran and others)" took part in compiling it, and that it is a "platform pamphlet". At the end of thesis 4 we read that "the forthcoming Party Congress will have to *choose* (Trotsky's italics) between the two trends within the trade union movement".

If this is not the formation of a faction by a member of the Central Committee, if this does not mean "heading for a crash", then let Comrade Bukharin, or anyone of his fellow-thinkers, explain to the Party any other possible meaning of the words "factionalism", and the Party "seems to be heading for a crash"...

#### THE POLITICAL DANGER OF SPLITS IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

...Any difference, even an insignificant one, may become politically dangerous if it has a chance to grow into a split, and I mean the kind of split that will shake and destroy the whole political edifice...

Clearly, in a country under the dictatorship of the proletariat, a split in the ranks of the proletariat, or between the proletarian party and the mass of the proletariat, is not just dangerous; it is extremely dangerous, especially when the proletariat

constitutes a small minority of the population. And splits in the trade union movement... mean precisely splits in the mass of the proletariat.

That is why, when the whole thing started at the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions on November 2-6, 1920 (and that is exactly where it did start), and when right after the Conference—no, I am mistaken, *during* that Conference—Comrade Tomsky appeared before the Political Bureau in high dudgeon and, fully supported by Comrade Rudzutak, <sup>93</sup> the most even-tempered of men, began to relate that at the Conference Comrade Trotsky had talked about "shaking up" the trade unions and that he, Tomsky, had opposed this—when that happened, I decided there and then that policy (i.e., the Party's trade union policy) lay at the root of the controversy, and that Comrade Trotsky, with his "shake-up" policy against Comrade Tomsky, was entirely in the wrong. For, *even if the "shake-up" policy were partly justified* by the "new tasks and methods" (Trotsky's thesis 12), it cannot be tolerated at the present time, and in the present situation, because it threatens a split.

It now seems to Comrade Trotsky that it is "an utter travesty" to ascribe the "stake-up-from-above" policy to him (L. Trotsky, "A Reply to the Petrograd Comrades", *Pravda* No. 9, January 15, 1921). But "shake-up" is a real "catchword", not only in the sense that after being uttered by Comrade Trotsky at the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions it has, you might say, "caught on" throughout the Party and the trade unions. Unfortunately, it remains true even today in the much more profound sense that it alone epitomises *the whole spirit, the whole trend* of the platform pamphlet entitled *The Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions...*

## DISAGREEMENTS ON PRINCIPLE

There being deep and basic disagreements on principle—we may well be asked—do they not serve as vindication for the sharpest and most factional pronouncements? Is it possible to vindicate such a thing as a split, provided there is need to drive home some entirely new idea?

I believe it is, provided of course the disagreements are truly very deep and there is no other way to rectify a wrong trend in the policy of the Party or of the working class.

But the whole point is that there are no such disagreements. Comrade Trotsky has tried to point them out, and failed. A tentative or conciliatory approach had been possible—and necessary—*before* the publication of his pamphlet (December 25) . . . but *after* its publication we had to say: Comrade Trotsky is essentially wrong on all his new points.

This is most evident from a comparison of his theses with Rudzutak's which were adopted by the Fifth All-Russia Conference of Trade Unions (November 2-6). I quoted the latter in my December 30 speech and in the January 21 issue of *Pravda*. They are fuller and more correct than Trotsky's, and wherever the latter differs from Rudzutak, he is wrong.

Take this famous "industrial democracy", which Comrade Bukharin hastened to insert in the Central Committee's resolution of December 7. . .

The term is theoretically wrong. In the final analysis, every kind of democracy, as political superstructure in general (which must exist until classes have been abolished and a classless society established), serves production and is ultimately determined by the relations of production in a given society. It is, therefore, meaningless to single out

"industrial democracy", for this leads to confusion, and the result is a dummy.

... "industrial democracy" is a term that lends itself to misinterpretation. It may be read as a repudiation of dictatorship and individual authority. It may be read as a suspension of ordinary democracy or a pretext for evading it. Both readings are harmful. . .

## POLITICS AND ECONOMICS. DIALECTICS AND ECLECTICISM

It is strange that we should have to return to such elementary questions, but we are unfortunately forced to do so by Trotsky and Bukharin. They have both reproached me for "switching" the issue, or for taking a "political" approach, while theirs is an "economic" one. Bukharin even put that in his theses and tried to "rise above" either side, as if to say that he was combining the two.

This is a glaring theoretical error. I said again in my speech that politics is a concentrated expression of economics, because I had earlier heard my "political" approach rebuked in a manner which is inconsistent and inadmissible for a Marxist. Politics must take precedence over economics. To argue otherwise is to forget the ABC of Marxism.

Am I wrong in my political appraisal? If you think so, say it and prove it. But you forget the ABC of Marxism when you say (or imply) that the political approach is equivalent to the "economic", and that you can take "the one and the other".

What the political approach means, in other words, is that the wrong attitude to the trade unions will ruin the Soviet power and topple the dictatorship

of the proletariat. (In a peasant country like Russia, the Soviet power would surely go down in the event of a split between the trade unions and a Party in the wrong.) This proposition can (and must) be tested in substance, which means looking into the rights and wrongs of the approach and taking a decision. To say: I "appreciate" your political approach, "*but*" it is only a political one and we "*also* need an economic one", is tantamount to saying: I "appreciate" your point that in taking that particular step you are liable to break your neck, *but* you must also take into consideration that it is better to be clothed and well-fed than to go naked and hungry...

Trotsky and Bukharin make as though they are concerned for the growth of production whereas we have nothing but formal democracy in mind. This picture is wrong, because the *only* formulation of the issue (which the Marxist standpoint *allows*) is: without a correct political approach to the matter the given class will be unable to stay on top, *and*, consequently, will be incapable of solving *its production problem* either...

Comrade Trotsky's political mistakes, aggravated by Comrade Bukharin, *distract* our Party's attention from economic tasks and "production" work, *and, unfortunately, make us waste time on correcting them and arguing it out with the syndicalist deviation...* objecting to the incorrect approach to the trade union movement... and debating general "theses"...

Let us now consider what good there is in a "broad discussion". Once again we find political mistakes distracting attention from economic tasks. I was against this "broad" discussion, and I believed, and still do, that it was a mistake—a political mistake—on Comrade Trotsky's part to disrupt the work of

the trade union commission, which ought to have held a business-like discussion. I believe Bukharin's buffer group made the political mistake of misunderstanding the tasks of the buffer (in which case they had once again substituted eclecticism for dialectics), for from the "buffer" standpoint they should have vigorously opposed any broad discussion and demanded that the matter should be taken up by the trade union commission...

...Less than a month has passed since Trotsky started his "broad discussion" on December 25, and you will be hard put to find one responsible Party worker in a hundred who is not fed up with the discussion and has not realised its futility (to say no worse). For Trotsky has made the Party waste time on a discussion of words and bad theses, and has ridiculed as "cloistered" the *business-like* economic discussion in the commission, which was to have studied and verified practical experience and projected its lessons for *progress* in real "production" work, in place of the *regress* from vibrant activity to scholastic exercises in all sorts of "production atmospheres".

Take this famous "coalescence". My advice on December 30 was that we should keep mum on this point, because we had *not studied* our own practical experience, and without that any discussion was bound to degenerate into "hot air" and draw off the Party's forces *from* economic work. I said it was bureaucratic projecteering for Trotsky to propose in his theses that from one-third to one-half and from one-half to two-thirds of the economic councils<sup>94</sup> should consist of trade unionists...

January 25, 1921

Coll. Works,  
Vol. 32, pp. 70-87

*From:*

**Preliminary Draft Resolution of the Tenth  
Congress of the RCP on Party Unity**

1. The Congress calls the attention of all members of the Party to the fact that the unity and cohesion of the ranks of the Party, the guarantee of complete mutual confidence among Party members and genuine team-work that really embodies the unanimity of will of the vanguard of the proletariat, are particularly essential at the present time, when a number of circumstances are increasing the vacillation among the petty-bourgeois population of the country.

2. Notwithstanding this, even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism had been apparent in the Party—the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate and create their own group discipline. . .

4. In the practical struggle against factionalism, every organisation of the Party must take strict measures to prevent all factional actions. Criticism of the Party's shortcomings, which is absolutely necessary, must be conducted in such a way that every practical proposal shall be submitted immediately,

without any delay, in the most precise form possible, for consideration and decision to the leading local and central bodies of the Party. Moreover, every critic must see to it that the form of his criticism takes account of the position of the Party, surrounded as it is by a ring of enemies, and that the content of his criticism is such that, by directly participating in Soviet and Party work, he can test the rectification of the errors of the Party or of individual Party members in practice. Analyses of the Party's general line, estimates of its practical experience, check-ups of the fulfilment of its decisions, studies of methods of rectifying errors, etc., must under no circumstances be submitted for preliminary discussion to groups formed on the basis of "platforms", etc., but must in all cases be submitted for discussion directly to all the members of the Party. For this purpose, the Congress orders a more regular publication of *Diskussionny Listok* and special symposiums to promote unceasing efforts to ensure that criticism shall be concentrated on essentials and shall not assume a form capable of assisting the class enemies of the proletariat. . .

6. The Congress, therefore, hereby declares dissolved and orders the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception formed on the basis of one platform or another (such as the Workers' Opposition group, the Democratic Centralism group, etc.). . .

*Coll. Works,*  
Vol. 32, pp. 241-244

## Commentaries

---

<sup>1</sup> The main problems on the agenda of the *Second Congress of the RSDLP* were the endorsement of the programme and the rules of the Party, and the election of leading Party bodies. The congress endorsed a programme which formulated not only the immediate tasks of the proletariat in the bourgeois democratic revolution (minimum programme) but also the tasks of the proletariat in the forthcoming socialist revolution (maximum programme). The discussion of the Party rules was attended by a sharp struggle over the question of organisational principles of Party building. The congress endorsed the Party rules in the main as put forward by Lenin; only the first clause had Martov's wording. The congress also adopted a number of resolutions on tactical questions. The debate at the congress led to a split between the consistent supporters of the *Iskra* trend led by Lenin and so-called "moderate" Iskraists who supported Martov. (*Iskra* was the first all-Russia illegal Marxist newspaper founded by Lenin in 1900; it played a decisive role in establishing the revolutionary working-class Marxist party in Russia.) The revolutionary Marxists who supported Lenin received a majority of votes in the elections to the central bodies of the Party, hence their name "Bolsheviks" from the Russian word "bolshinstvo", the majority. Lenin's opponents at the congress came to be called "Mensheviks" from the word "menshinstvo", the minority. In later years Lenin wrote: "As a current of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism has existed since 1903." (Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 32, p. 24.)

<sup>2</sup> Lenin's formulation of the *first paragraph of the RSDLP Rules* was as follows: "A Party member is one who recognises the Party programme and supports the Party financially, as well as by personal participation in one of its organisations." Martov's formulation of the *first paragraph of the RSDLP Rules* read: "A member of the RSDLP can be considered one who accepts its programme, supports the Party financially and renders it regular personal assistance under the guidance of one of its organisations."

<sup>3</sup> Martov, L. (*Tsederbaum*, Y.) (1873-1923), one of the leading ideologists of Menshevism. He had been in the social democratic movement since the 1890's. At the Second Congress of the RSDLP he headed the opportunist minority. After the October Revolution Martov opposed the Soviet government. In 1920 he emigrated to Germany.

<sup>4</sup> Lenin's book *What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement* was published in March, 1902. In it Lenin laid bare the essence of economism, the opportunist trend that developed in Russian social-democracy at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. The proponents of economism insisted that the liberal bourgeoisie must play the main role in the political struggle against czarism, while the workers had merely to wage the economic struggle for improvement of labour legislation, for higher wages, etc. The economists did not recognise the need to set up a centralised proletarian party nor the leading role of such a party in the working class movement; they advocated spontaneity in this movement. In his work Lenin substantiated and developed the ideas of Marx and Engels about the Party as the revolutionising, guiding and organising force of the working class movement. Lenin also developed the basic principles of his doctrine of the party of the new type, the party of proletarian revolution. The book analysed the significance of the theory of scientific socialism for the working class movement and for every aspect of the Party's activity. Lenin showed that the role of the front-ranking fighter could be played only by a party which was guided by an advanced theory. He laid bare the opportunist character of the worship of spontaneity in the working class movement. The book gained wide currency among the Russian Social-Democrats and played an important part in the struggle for the formation of a revolutionary working class Marxist party.

<sup>5</sup> Lenin wrote his article *Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government* at the end of March,

1905. The rise in the revolutionary movement in Russia threatened the very existence of the czarist autocracy. This prompted the Social-Democrats to begin discussions on the question of a provisional revolutionary government and their participation in it. In his article Lenin showed that the views propounded by Parvus and Trotsky on this question were erroneous and adventurist. Ignoring the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution they insisted that the proletariat could overthrow czarism by acting alone and without allies. On assuming power the proletariat would allegedly set up a government of "working class democracy", or as Parvus put it "an integrated government with a social-democratic majority". Lenin considered this an incorrect position. In the struggle against the autocracy and against the remnants of serfdom in Russia the interests of the proletariat and the interests of the peasants and other petty-bourgeois segments of the population were identical. Therefore, representatives of the peasants, petty-bourgeoisie, and the intelligentsia, i.e. all other elements of revolutionary democracy, would take part in a future provisional revolutionary government, together with the representatives of the proletariat.

<sup>6</sup> Parvus (1869-1924) took part in the social-democratic movement in Russia and in Germany at the end of the 90's and in the early 1900's. After the Second Congress of the RSDLP he identified himself with the Mensheviks. Author of the anti-Marxist concepts of "permanent revolution" which Trotsky adopted in his struggle against Leninism. In later years he drifted away from social-democracy: during the First World War he became a chauvinist and engaged in speculative dealings and made a fortune out of war supplies.

<sup>7</sup> Gapon, G. A. (1870-1906), a Russian Orthodox priest, agent provocateur of the czarist secret police. Beginning in 1903 he engaged in setting up workers' organisations in Petersburg of a kind that would suit the czarist authorities. Gapon incited the workers of Petersburg to petition the Czar; the soldiers opened fire on their peaceful demonstration. That day has become known in history as "Bloody Sunday".

<sup>8</sup> Lenin considered that the bourgeois revolution of 1789-1793 exceeded those of 1848-1850 in the scale of participation of the masses and the depth of the attendant social changes.

<sup>9</sup> The 5th Congress of the RSDLP was held in London. Shortly before the 5th Congress the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks had drafted resolutions that reflected their widely differing views on tactical questions. The tremendous preparatory work carried out by the Bolsheviks under Lenin's guidance predetermined the character of most of the resolutions adopted by the congress. The Bolsheviks succeeded in getting the question of the tactics of social-democracy in bourgeois democratic revolution and the question of attitude to bourgeois parties included in the agenda. Lenin's report on the attitude to be adopted towards bourgeois parties featured prominently in the work of the congress. This question was the focal point of the basic differences which had largely arisen from their different views on the revolution of 1905-1907 and which had divided the RSDLP into two groups. On all fundamental issues the congress passed Bolshevik-sponsored resolutions.

The 5th Congress marked the end of a particularly important stage in the struggle of the Bolsheviks for the unification of the Party on the basis of Leninist principles. The congress denounced the Menshevik political line as conciliatory and approved the Bolshevik line which reflected the interests of the revolutionary proletariat. The decisions of the congress signified a major victory for Leninism in the working class movement.

<sup>10</sup> The State Duma was a legislative institution with limited rights; it was set up in Russia by the Czar who was forced to make this move under pressure from the masses during the revolution of 1905-1907 in order to consolidate the alliance with the bourgeoisie and to re-organise the country on the lines of bourgeois monarchy. The Bolsheviks took part in the work of the Second (1907), the Third (1907-1912) and the Fourth (1912-1917) Dumas, taking this as an opportunity to propagate the Party programme, wrest the peasants from under the influence of the bourgeoisie and create in the Duma a revolutionary bloc of representatives of the working class and the peasants. In this case reference is made to the social-democratic faction at the Second State Duma. This faction consisted of 65 Social-Democrats, mostly Mensheviks, whose opportunist tactics had a marked effect on its activities. The social-democratic representatives at the Duma advocated an alliance with the bourgeois parties and in this way tried to keep alive the illusions of constitutional monarchy. Lenin sharply criticised the mistakes of the social-democratic faction at the Duma and pointed

out the obvious discrepancy between the views of the majority of Russia's social-democracy and its representatives in the Duma.

<sup>11</sup> *Centrism* (centre), one of the most dangerous of the opportunist currents in the working class movement. The centrists held an intermediate position between the outright opportunists and the revolutionary Marxists. The ideology of centrism is that of time serving, and subjection of the class interests of the proletariat to the interests of the bourgeoisie. By exposing centrism the Bolsheviks helped the working masses to grow aware of their class aims, to break with the opportunists and to form a genuine Marxist revolutionary party.

<sup>12</sup> *The Bund* ("The General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia") was founded in Vilno in 1897; it united predominantly semi-proletarian elements. At the First Congress of the RSDLP the Bund joined the RSDLP (1898). At the Second Congress of the RSDLP, after the Bund's demand that it be recognised as the sole spokesman for the Jewish proletariat was rejected, the Bund left the Party. In 1906 the Bund again joined the RSDLP. Within the RSDLP the Bundists supported the opportunists (the economists and the Mensheviks), opposed the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism. In March, 1921, the Bund was disbanded; some of its members were admitted to the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

<sup>13</sup> Reference to the Bolshevik-sponsored resolution *On the State Duma* adopted at the Fifth Congress of the RSDLP. This resolution stressed that the activities of the Social-Democrats at the State Duma must be coordinated with their activities outside the Duma and that the Duma must be used first and foremost as a platform for exposing the autocracy and the conciliatory policy of the bourgeoisie. The resolution was opposed by Trotsky who tried to take the Duma faction from under the control of the Party and place it above the Party.

<sup>14</sup> Lenin is referring to the *Third Congress of the RSDLP* (12-27 April, 1905) organised by the Bolsheviks and held in London, and the Menshevik conference held in Geneva at approximately the same time. At both these gatherings the fundamental questions, such as the nature, the driving forces and the tasks of the impending bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia, were reviewed and two tactical lines

worked out. The resolutions of the Bolshevik congress and the Menshevik conference made clear the essential differences that divided the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks.

<sup>15</sup> *Chernosotentsi*, or the Black Hundreds, is the popular name for "The Union of the Russian People", an extremely reactionary organisation of the monarchists, set up in October, 1905, in Petersburg to fight the revolutionary movement. The Union was made up of reactionary landowners, large property owners, merchants, policemen, clergymen, members of the lower middle class, rural bourgeoisie (kulaks), and declassed and criminal elements. The Union sought to preserve the integrity of the czarist autocracy, the semi-serf type of land ownership, and the privileges of the Russian aristocracy. The favourite method of work was pogrom and murder. Helped or abetted by the police the members of the Union beat up and even murdered the more active revolutionary workers and representatives of the democratically-minded Russian intelligentsia; they worked openly and with impunity. They dispersed and opened fire on public meetings, organised Jewish pogroms, and meted out brutal treatment to the non-Russian nationalities. The organisations of the Black Hundreds were liquidated in the course of the bourgeois democratic revolution in February, 1917. After the October Socialist Revolution the former members of the Union took an active part in counter-revolutionary revolts and conspiracies against Soviet government.

<sup>16</sup> *Cadets* (the Constitutional Democratic Party), the leading party of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia, supporters of constitutional monarchy. The party was set up in October, 1905; the principal aim of the Cadets was the struggle with the revolutionary movement. During the First World War the Cadets actively supported the aggressive foreign policy of the czarist government; after the bourgeois democratic revolution in February, 1917, the Cadets, who participated in the bourgeois Provisional Government, pursued an anti-popular, counter-revolutionary policy. After the victory of the October Revolution the Cadets were among the most bitter enemies of Soviet rule.

<sup>17</sup> This article was written in answer to the brochure, *The Present-Day Position and the Tasks of the Party. The Political Platform Worked Out by a Group of Bolsheviks*. The brochure was published in Paris by the otzovist group which called itself "Vperyod" ("Forward"). The brochure

the Central Committee, however, failed to discharge its "unifying" mission. After the plenum the struggle waged by the Bolsheviks against the Menshevik liquidators, and against the Trotskyists and other anti-party elements was further intensified.

<sup>22</sup> *Axelrod, P. B.* (1850-1928), one of the leaders of Menshevism. He was hostile to the October Revolution and, in emigration, supported military intervention of Soviet Russia.

<sup>23</sup> *Alexinsky, G. A.* (1879-) was a Social-Democrat at the start of his political career. In the course of the revolution of 1905-1907 he adhered to the Bolsheviks. In later years he became an arrant counter-revolutionary and was bitterly opposed to the October Revolution. In 1918 he went abroad where he joined the most extreme reactionaries.

<sup>24</sup> *Golosists*, the Menshevik grouping round the newspaper *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* (The Voice of the Social-Democrat), the foreign organ of the Mensheviks which was published from February, 1908, until December, 1911, first in Geneva and later in Paris. From 1909 onwards the newspaper established itself as the ideological centre of the liquidators.

<sup>25</sup> *Vperyodists*, the "Vperyod" group, a group of otzovists who had a newspaper of the same name. The Vperyodists acted in close contact with the liquidator-Golosists and the Trotskyists in their struggle against the Bolsheviks. Having no base in the working class movement the "Vperyod" group virtually fell apart in 1913; formally however it ceased functioning only after the February Revolution.

<sup>26</sup> The article, *The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia*, was written in answer to the articles by Martov and Trotsky published in the journal of German social-democracy *Die Neue Zeit* in September, 1910; these articles grossly misrepresented the nature of the inner-party struggle waged at the time of the 1905 revolution.

<sup>27</sup> *Die Neue Zeit*, a theoretical journal of the German Social-Democratic Party; it was published in Stuttgart between 1883 and 1923. Until October, 1917, it was edited by K. Kautsky. The journal published some of the works of Marx and Engels for the first time. Contributors to this magazine included many people who were prominent in the

German and international working class movement at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century.

In 1895 the journal began systematically to publish articles by revisionists, including a series of articles "Problems of Socialism" by E. Bernstein, which opened a revisionist campaign against Marxism. During the First World War (1914-1918) the journal held a centrist position; actually it supported the social chauvinists, the opportunists in the international working class movement. Social chauvinism propagated by the leaders of the Second International was expressed chiefly in the support it gave for the imperialist war. Significantly the social chauvinists of every belligerent country declared that the armed forces of their country were in the right and supported their bourgeois governments.

The social chauvinists betrayed the principles of proletarian internationalism, advocating class peace with the bourgeoisie of their own countries; they set the workers of different countries against one another in a fratricidal war in the name of victory of their own bourgeoisie, the imperialist redivision of the world, and colonial plunder. In many countries today social chauvinism is still an ideological weapon of the Right-wing socialist parties.

<sup>28</sup> *Octobrists*, members of the Union of October 17 Party, formed in Russia after the publication, on October 17, 1905, of the czarist manifesto containing false promises of freedom of speech and assembly, and announcing the government's decision to set up a "Russian parliament", i.e. the State Duma. It was a counter-revolutionary party which represented and protected the interests of the big bourgeoisie and land owners. The Octobrists fully supported the policy of the czarist government.

<sup>29</sup> Reference to Trotsky's supporters who were grouped round the newspaper *Pravda* published in Vienna under his editorship. This Trotskyist factionalist newspaper which appeared from 1908 to 1912 did not represent any party organisation in Russia and was, as Lenin put it, "a private concern". Pretending to be "above factionalism" the newspaper, right from the start, opposed Bolshevism, defended liquidationism and otzovism and disseminated the centrist "theory" of cooperation of revolutionaries and opportunists inside one party. In 1912 Trotsky and his newspaper were the initiators and the main organisers of the "August" Bloc.

<sup>30</sup> *Potresov, A. N.* (1869-1934), a Menshevik leader. Emigrated after the October Revolution; attacked Soviet Russia in books and articles.

<sup>31</sup> *Luxemburg, Rosa* (1871-1919), a leader of the left wing of the Second International; played an important role in the international working class movement. Was one of the initiators of the Internationale group in Germany which was later renamed Spartacus and then the Spartacus League. During the events of November, 1918, in Germany she was one of the leaders of the revolutionary vanguard of the German workers. In January, 1919, after the uprising of the German workers had been put down, she was brutally assassinated by the counter-revolutionaries.

<sup>32</sup> The group calling itself *Pro-Party Mensheviks* was led by Plekhanov. In 1908, Plekhanov broke with the liquidators and began to oppose them. He and his supporters while adhering to the Menshevik faction at the same time wanted to see the Party retain its organisational structure. He and his followers were thus prepared to act in a bloc with the Bolsheviks. Lenin urged the Bolsheviks to develop closer organisational ties with the Pro-Party Mensheviks, but pointed out that agreement with them was possible only on the basis of a common struggle for a revolutionary party, against liquidationism. Acting in alliance with the Bolsheviks the Pro-Party Mensheviks joined in the activities of local Party committees, and some Bolshevik periodicals. This tactic of rapprochement with the Pro-Party Mensheviks who were followed by most of the Menshevik workers in Russia helped the Bolsheviks to expand their influence in legal organisations and oust the liquidators. In 1911, Plekhanov broke with the Bolsheviks. Using the struggle against "factionalism" and against the split in the RSDLP as a smoke-screen he tried to reconcile the Bolsheviks with the opportunists. In 1912, Plekhanovites, together with Trotskyists, Bundists and liquidators turned against the decisions of the Bolshevik-sponsored Prague conference.

<sup>33</sup> *The Polish comrade, A. Varsky* (A. S. Varshavsky) (1868-1937), a veteran leader of the revolutionary movement in Poland, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Poland and a member of its Central Committee (1928-1929).

<sup>34</sup> *Rabochaya Gazeta* (Workers' Gazette), an illegal Bolshevik newspaper; was published irregularly in Paris between 1910 and 1912.

<sup>35</sup> Reference to the *factionalist, anti-Party school* organised on the island of Capri in 1909 by the otzovists. Lectures at that school were attended by 13 Social-Democrats from Russia who had come to Capri with assistance from the otzovists specially for this purpose. In the same year a split occurred at the school, and some of its students were expelled. At Lenin's invitation they went to Paris where they attended a course of lectures. The lecturers at the Capri school, together with the remaining students, founded the "Vperyod" group known for its anti-Bolshevik leanings.

<sup>36</sup> Reference to the *international socialist congress at Copenhagen* (the 8th Congress of the 2nd International) which was held from August 28 to September 3, 1910.

<sup>37</sup> *Maximov, N. (Bogdanov, A.)* (1873-1928), a Social-Democrat; a doctor by education, he is better known as a philosopher, sociologist, and economist. After the Second RSDLP Congress sided with the Bolsheviks. Later he became the leader of the otzovists and then of the anti-Party "Vperyod" group. After the October Revolution he was director of the Blood Transfusion Institute which he had founded.

<sup>38</sup> *The Russian Organising Commission (ROC)* for calling an all-Russia Party conference was set up in accordance with a decision of the June (1911) conference held by the members of the Central Committee of the RSDLP. By the end of 1911 more than 20 Party organisations (in Petersburg, Moscow, Baku, Tiflis, Kiev, Yekaterinoslav, Yekaterinburg, etc.) had rallied round ROC. The Commission did a great deal of organisational and propagandist work to strengthen the unity of Russia's Party organisations and to re-create the revolutionary party. As a result of these efforts in January, 1912, the 6th (Prague) All-Russia Conference was held.

<sup>39</sup> *Organising Committee (OK)* was set up in January, 1912, at a conference organised by the liquidators and attended by representatives of the Bund, the Caucasian regional committee and the Central Committee of social-democracy of the Latvian Territory, by spokesmen for the newspaper *Pravda* (published in Vienna), the newspaper *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, and the "Vperyod" group. The Organising Committee headed by Trotsky was appointed to call the anti-Party conference held in August, 1912.

<sup>40</sup> *The Poles*, reference to representatives of the revolutionary party of the Polish working class (the Social-Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania); this party was set up in 1893 as the Social-Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland. In 1900 the two groups of social-democracy (Polish and Lithuanian) merged forming the Social-Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania.

<sup>41</sup> *Bolshevik Conciliators*, a small group of Bolsheviks who gravitated towards the liquidators. The group was organised abroad, at the end of 1911. The conciliators stated their political credo in a circular letter "To All Members of the RSDLP" in which they called for a conference to be held on the basis of the unity of all the political trends that then existed in the Party. The group virtually supported the Trotskyist political platform.

<sup>42</sup> *Zhivoye Dyelo*, a legal weekly newspaper published by the liquidators in Petersburg in 1912. Altogether 16 issues of this newspaper came out. Among its more active contributors were L. Martov, F. Dan and P. Axelrod.

<sup>43</sup> *Nasha Zarya*, a legal monthly journal published in Petersburg from 1910 to 1914. The journal was edited by A. Potresov; F. Dan was one of its contributors. *Nasha Zarya* served as the rallying point for the liquidators in Russia.

<sup>44</sup> *The January Conference*, reference to the all-Russia conference of the RSDLP held in Prague on January 18-30, 1912. This conference had the significance of a Party congress since it played an outstanding role in the development of the Bolshevik Party as a party of the new type. The conference summed up the results of the struggle of the Bolsheviks against the Mensheviks over this crucial period and the Party firmly established itself as an all-Russia organisation. The conference outlined the policy and tactics of the Bolshevik Party in the conditions of a newly emerging revolutionary upsurge. The Prague Conference was of great international significance, since it decided on a complete break with the opportunists thus showing how uncompromising struggle should be waged.

<sup>45</sup> *The "August" Bloc*, an anti-party bloc of the liquidators, Trotskyists and other opportunists directed against the Bolsheviks. This bloc, which was organised by Trotsky, took shape at a conference of representatives of anti-Party groups and trends which was held in Vienna, in August,

1912. It was attended by representatives of the Bund, the Transcaucasian Regional Committee, the Social-Democracy of the Latvian Region, the emigré liquidationist, Trotskyist and otzovist groups (the newspapers *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* and *Pravda* published in Vienna by Trotsky, and the "Vperyod" group). The overwhelming majority of the delegates were people who were living abroad, had lost touch with the Russian working class movement, and who had very loose, if any, connections with local party work in Russia. The conference adopted anti-party, liquidationist decisions on all questions of social-democratic tactics and came out against the existence of the Marxist revolutionary party. The attempt of Trotsky and the liquidators to set up their own centrist party in Russia was not supported by workers. Trotsky and the liquidators were unable to elect a central committee; they had to be content with electing an organisational committee. Formed of an assortment of political groups, this anti-Bolshevik bloc began falling apart almost before it was formed. The spokesman for the "Vperyod" group was the first to leave the conference. He was shortly followed by the Latvian Social-Democrats, and later by many other participants in the conference. A year later the "August" Bloc had virtually ceased to exist.

<sup>46</sup> *The Letts*, a reference to the Social-Democracy of the Latvian Region (prior to 1906 it was known as the Latvian Social-Democratic Labour Party set up in June, 1904). At its Second Congress in June, 1905, the Party adopted its programme. At the 4th (Unification) Congress of the RSDLP in 1906 the LSDLP became incorporated in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. After the Congress the LSDLP was renamed the Social-Democracy of the Latvian Region.

<sup>47</sup> Reference to the *Caucasian Committee* (the Transcaucasian Regional Committee), the factionalist centre of the Caucasian liquidators. This organisation carried on anti-Party work and served as a bulwark of the Foreign Centre of the liquidators and Trotsky's supporters. In 1912, the Committee merged with the anti-Party "August" Bloc organised by Trotsky.

<sup>48</sup> *Luch*, a daily legal newspaper published by the liquidators in Petersburg from September 16 (29), 1912, to July 5 (18), 1913. Altogether 237 issues of this newspaper came out. P. Axelrod, F. Dan and L. Martov directed its ideological orientation. In *Luch* the liquidators published their

articles opposing the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks and preached the launching of an "open party", they opposed mass revolutionary strike action and tried to revise the basic principles of the Party programme.

<sup>49</sup> Reference to the elections to the *4th State Duma* (autumn, 1912). At first the 13 deputies of the Social-Democratic faction acted as a single group. But within this faction the Bolshevik deputies had to continue their struggle against the Mensheviks who hindered the Social-Democrats in their revolutionary work.

<sup>50</sup> *Borba (Struggle)*, a journal which Trotsky started in February, 1914, ostensibly as an "above faction" periodical. The journal soon (in 1914) ceased publication.

<sup>51</sup> *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, a daily newspaper of the liquidators, published in Petersburg from January 30 (February 12) until May 1 (14), 1914; the paper reappeared on May 3 (16) under the title *Nasha Rabochaya Gazeta* (Our Working Class Gazette).

<sup>52</sup> Reference to *F. I. Dan* (Gurvich) (1871-1947), one of the leaders and ideologists of Menshevism. Headed a group of liquidators abroad; edited the newspaper *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*. During the First World War preached social chauvinism. After the February Revolution supported the bourgeois Provisional government. After the October Revolution opposed Soviet rule. Early in 1922 he was deported as an enemy of the Soviet state.

<sup>53</sup> Reference to *L. Martov* (Tsederbaum).

<sup>54</sup> *Pravdists*, supporters of the Bolshevik legal newspaper *Pravda* founded by Lenin on May 5, 1912. The paper was published with the money collected by workers themselves; at that time its circulation varied from 40,000 to 60,000. Lenin was responsible for formulating the paper's political line. *Pravda* had a large number of worker-correspondents. Lenin estimated that 80 per cent of the politically aware workers who were active in the socialist revolution were grouped round *Pravda*.

<sup>55</sup> *Left Narodniks, SR's* (Socialist Revolutionaries), a petty-bourgeois party in Russia; emerged late in 1901-early 1902 as a result of integration of various populist groups and circles. The Socialist Revolutionaries saw no distinction between the proletariat and the small proprietors, blurred

the class stratification and contradictions among the peasants, rejected the leading role of the proletariat in revolution and the very idea of proletarian dictatorship. They preached terrorism as the principal method of struggle against the autocracy and in this way impeded the work of organising the masses in revolutionary struggle. During the First World War the Socialist Revolutionaries took up a social chauvinist position.

After the February Revolution the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were the chief supporters of the bourgeois Provisional government. After the victory of the October Revolution the Socialist Revolutionaries engaged in anti-Soviet activities both in the Soviet Republic and among the white emigrés.

<sup>56</sup> *Narodniks* (populists, populism), a petty-bourgeois socio-political trend in Russia which emerged after the "peasant reform" in 1861 and which reflected the protest of the peasants against landlord oppression and against the remnants of serfdom in rural Russia. The narodniks regarded the peasants and not the proletariat as the principal revolutionary force. The narodniks believed that history was made by "leaders", outstanding personalities, "heroes" who were followed blindly by the masses, by the "mob", the people. They regarded the tactic of individual acts of terrorism as the principal method of struggle. In the 1890's the narodniks renounced the propaganda of revolutionary struggle. One tendency within the populist movement began to reflect the interests of the rural bourgeoisie (kulaks) and advocate reconciliation with the czarist government and with big landowners (the protagonists of this theory were called "liberal narodniks"). In this case Lenin refers to petty-bourgeois parties (of the SR type) and the political trends which had their roots in populism.

<sup>57</sup> One such group was the "Vperyod" group which at its inception consisted of multifarious anti-Marxist elements. In 1913, some of its members left the "Vperyod" group and formed still another grouping on a similar anti-Marxist platform. Among the groups which identified themselves with the Social-Democratic Party were the Pro-Party Mensheviks (see commentary 32).

<sup>58</sup> *The Troublous Times*, a term borrowed from old historical chronicles of the events associated with Polish and Swedish military intervention early in the 17th century and with the peasant war led by Ivan Bolotnikov (1606-1607).

Lenin here used this term to characterise the complex situation in the Russian working class movement.

<sup>59</sup> *The "permanent revolution"*, an anti-Marxist theory developed by Parvus, and borrowed by Trotsky, who subsequently employed it in his struggle against Leninism. Trotsky presented his "theory" as an outstanding "contribution" to Marxism, though in fact he had merely adopted the concept of "permanent revolution" from Marx and Engels.

The founders of scientific communism however had meant something quite different by this term. They were against the working class movement being subjected to the interests of the bourgeoisie in the bourgeois democratic revolution, and held that the proletariat must go much further than bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democracy. "...our task (is) to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power"\* ... When Marx, Engels and Lenin spoke about permanent revolution they meant its continuous development from one stage to another. By contrast, there was no room for such stages in Trotsky's theory, which essentially ignored the bourgeois democratic stage of revolution in Russia and repudiated the revolutionary role of the peasantry as an ally of the proletariat. According to the "theory of permanent revolution" the fall of czarism would automatically place the working class in power. But since the peasantry would not support the working class, the latter could retain power only if a socialist revolution in the West followed on the heels of the events in Russia. Trotsky's "theory of permanent revolution" was a rejection of Lenin's thesis of the possibility of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and a provisional revolutionary government as the political arm of such a dictatorship. Trotsky like the Mensheviks failed to grasp the essence of the bourgeois democratic revolution and the role to be played by the Russian proletariat in this revolution.

Trotsky, in the same way as Parvus, associated socialist revolution with the slogan of "working class democracy", a slogan which was "leftist" only in form but profoundly opportunistic in substance: a socialist revolution, according to this theory, was possible only after the social-democratic

\* K. Marx and F. Engels, *Sel. Works*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

organisations in Russia had gained influence over the working masses as a whole. This slogan did not orient the proletariat towards a socialist revolution, and in fact, this goal was postponed indefinitely, and was made completely dependent on a hypothetical proletarian revolution in the West. Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" was a variety of Menshevism, disguised with a "leftist" phrase. "Trotsky's major mistake is that he ignores the bourgeois character of the revolution and has no clear conception of the transition from this revolution to the socialist revolution,"\* wrote Lenin. Lack of confidence in the strength of the working class and fear of peasantry are at the base of the theory of "permanent revolution". While Lenin regarded the alliance of the working class and the peasantry as a guarantee of success in the struggle against czarism, Trotsky relied on a purely external factor, i.e. a European revolution of the proletariat, and thus consigned the working class of Russia to a position of passivity.

<sup>60</sup> *Kollontai, A. M.* (1872-1952), active in the social-democratic movement from the 1890's. A member of the Bolshevik Party from 1915. On Lenin's instructions, she took part in the work to unite the leftist and internationalist elements in the Scandinavian countries and in America. After the October Revolution she held a number of important government and diplomatic posts.

<sup>61</sup> Reference to a *Statement by the Norwegian Left Social-Democrats* who supported the draft resolution of the Left Social-Democrats written by Lenin in preparation for the first international socialist conference. This statement was later endorsed by the Left Social-Democrats in Sweden. It was forwarded to Lenin by A. M. Kollontai.

<sup>62</sup> *Roland-Holst, Henriette* (1869-1952), a Dutch socialist and author. At the start of the First World War she held a centrist position but later joined the internationalists.

<sup>63</sup> *Rakovsky, K. G.* (1873-1941) was active in the social-democratic movement in Bulgaria, Romania, Switzerland and France. In the years of the First World War held a centrist position. A member of the Bolshevik Party from 1917. After the October Revolution held a number of state and Party posts. He was one of the active members of the Trotskyist opposition, for which he was expelled from the

\* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 371.

Party at the 15th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1927.

<sup>64</sup> *Kautskians, Kautskyism*, an opportunist trend in the social-democratic movement, associated with the activities of *Karl Kautsky* (1854-1938), a prominent leader of German social-democracy and the Second International, the ideologist of centrism, one of the trends within opportunism.

<sup>65</sup> Reference to *the Second International* (founded in 1884), an association of socialist parties in several countries. The Second International did a good deal of useful preparatory work in organising the proletarian masses in a period of comparatively "peaceful" development of capitalism. However, the International collapsed during the First World War owing to the opportunism and chauvinism of its leaders, who betrayed the revolutionary interests of the international working class. The genuinely Marxist elements within the movement, and especially Lenin's Bolshevik Party, continued their struggle within the Second International against social reformism and thus laid the foundation for the further development of the international revolutionary working class movement.

<sup>66</sup> *The Chkheidze faction*, the Menshevik faction at the 4th State Duma headed by N. S. Chkheidze, a leader of Menshevism. During the First World War the Menshevik faction at the State Duma held centrist positions, but in actual fact actively supported the policies of the Russian social-chauvinists.

<sup>67</sup> Reference to the *First International Socialist Conference at Zimmerwald* held in September, 1915. The conference was attended by 38 delegates from 11 European countries. Lenin called this conference the first step towards the internationalist movement against war. The conference adopted the manifesto "To the Proletarians of Europe". This manifesto was not without its faults: it denounced the imperialist war, but at the same time did not call for revolutionary actions to end it. At the conference the left-wing internationalists united forming the so-called Zimmerwald Left. Its political platform was based on the Bolshevik theses on war, peace and revolution. The Zimmerwald Left achieved much towards organising internationalist elements in Europe and America.

<sup>68</sup> *War committees*, a reference to the war-industrial committees which were set up in Russia by the big imperialist

bourgeoisie during the First World War. In an effort to subject the workers to its influence and foster defensive, ultra-patriotic sentiment among them, the bourgeoisie decided to organise "workers' groups" within these committees and show in this way that Russia's bourgeoisie and proletariat could live in "class peace". The Bolsheviks declared that they would boycott the war-industrial committees; the support of the overwhelming majority of the workers enabled them to carry out this plan successfully.

<sup>69</sup> *Pannekoek, A.* (1873-1960), a Dutch Social-Democrat who belonged to the left wing of the Dutch Social-Democratic Workers' Party. During the First World War he took part in the work of the Zimmerwald Left and was known for his internationalist views. In 1918-1921 a member of the Communist Party of Holland; took part in the work of the Comintern. In his book, "*Left-wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*", Lenin sharply criticised the views of Pannekoek and other "ultra-leftists". In 1921 Pannekoek left the Communist Party and soon after drifted away from active political work.

<sup>70</sup> Lenin's article *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution. Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party* was written in April, 1917, for the 7th (April) All-Russia Party Conference which reviewed and adopted Lenin's programme of transforming the bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. In this article Lenin elaborated on his celebrated "April Theses": he discussed the withdrawal from the imperialist war, the new form of state power, the implementation of economic measures which were to serve as the first steps towards socialism, measures to combat famine and the economic chaos caused by the imperialist war, and the tactics the Party was to follow in order to carry out the socialist revolution. The article also pointed out the need to modify the Party programme, to call a Party congress and to rename it the Communist Party. He also gave a detailed analysis of the international socialist and working class movement, describing the principal tendencies within that movement and showing that it was urgently necessary to set up a revolutionary international to combat social chauvinism and centrism.

<sup>71</sup> *Manilovism*, from *Manilov*, a landlord in the book *Dead Souls* by the great Russian writer Nikolai Gogol. A synonym for empty daydreaming and passivity.

<sup>72</sup> Lenin wrote his article *The Crisis Has Matured* on September 29 (October 12), 1917. In this article he summed up the situation in the country and insisted that the uprising brooked no further delay, for the national crisis in Russia had matured. At that crucial moment in the development of the socialist revolution, in this period of preparation for the October armed uprising in Petrograd, the Bolshevik Party again had to fight against the erroneous, harmful and dangerous views of Trotsky. Trotsky insisted that the uprising be postponed until after the opening of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which in effect amounted to discarding all plans for an uprising, since it gave the bourgeois Provisional Government plenty of time to put it down. Lenin vehemently criticised Trotsky on this point. At the meetings of the Central Committee of the Party on the 10th (23rd) and the 16th (29th) of October, 1917, it was decided to prepare and carry out the armed uprising.

<sup>73</sup> *Constituent Assembly*, "a representative institution of the population of Russia", the convocation of which the bourgeois Provisional Government announced in its Declaration of March 2 (15), 1917. The elections to the Constituent Assembly and its first session took place, however, after the victory of the October Socialist Revolution. The counter-revolutionary majority of the Constituent Assembly refused to recognise Soviet rule and its decrees, and so the Bolshevik faction left the Assembly, with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries following suit. The remaining deputies to the Assembly represented the Constitutional Democrats, the Right-Wing Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. Since the bourgeois Constituent Assembly did not represent the working people of Russia it was dissolved on January 6 (19), 1918.

<sup>74</sup> *The telegram* was sent by direct line by Lenin's secretary. The supreme commander was *N. V. Krylenko* (1885-1938), a member of the Party from 1904; after the October Revolution he held a post in the government, the Council of People's Commissars, as a member of the Committee for the Army and Navy; was later Supreme Commander-in-Chief. From 1918 on held a number of posts in the organs of Soviet justice.

<sup>75</sup> On January 28 (February 10), 1918, at *the Peace Conference at Brest-Litovsk*, Trotsky acted against Lenin's directive to sign a peace treaty if the German side issued an

ultimatum to this effect. He announced that the Soviet government refused to sign a peace treaty on the German terms, but that at the same time it was going to stop the war immediately and would also demobilise the army. On that day, Trotsky without informing the Central Committee of the RCP(B) and the Council of People's Commissars sent a provocatively worded telegram to the Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, ordering him to stop the hostilities against Germany and her allies on the morning of January 29 (February 11) and to start demobilisation of the Army. The telegram made no reference to the cessation of the peace talks in Brest, and it thus suggested that the conference had been concluded and a peace treaty signed. On the basis of Trotsky's telegram the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, *N. V. Krylenko*, issued an order early in the morning of January 29 (February 11) which declared that a peace treaty had been signed and that hostilities were to be stopped immediately on all the fronts of war, and the demobilisation of the army to proceed. This telegram and the next one were sent in connection with Krylenko's order.

<sup>76</sup> *Bonch-Bruyevich, M. D.* (1870-1956), one of the first military experts to go over to the side of the Soviet government. He was the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the military head of the Supreme Council of War and the Chief of the Field Staff of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic.

<sup>77</sup> *Novy Luch*, the organ of the Joint Central Committee of the Mensheviks. The newspaper was published in Petrograd from December 1 (14), 1917, and was edited by Dan, Martov and others; it was closed down in June, 1918, for its counter-revolutionary agitation.

<sup>78</sup> *Dyelo Naroda* (The Cause of the People), issued by the right wing of the Socialist Revolutionaries. The newspaper was published in Petrograd, Samara and Moscow from March, 1917, under different names. It gave its unqualified support to the domestic and foreign policy of the bourgeois Provisional Government, and was closed in March, 1919, for its counter-revolutionary activities.

<sup>79</sup> *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life), published by a group of Mensheviks who were hostile to the October Revolution and to the establishment of Soviet rule in Russia. From June 1, 1918, two parallel editions of *Novaya Zhizn* were issued: one in Petrograd and another in Moscow. Both editions were closed down in July, 1918.

<sup>80</sup> *Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*, the first congress of the Communist Party held after the victory of the October Socialist Revolution (March 6-8, 1918). It was called to resolve the question of a peace treaty with Germany. Lenin and his supporters in the Central Committee sought to take Soviet Russia out of the imperialist war. The "Left Communist" group headed by Bukharin was against the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty. Trotsky held a position close to that of the "Left Communists". The congress discussed the report of the Central Committee, questions of war and peace, and the question of revising the programme and the name of the party. Some organisational matters were reviewed and a Central Committee elected. The main political report of the Central Committee was made by Lenin, with Bukharin as second speaker. Characteristically Bukharin defended the adventurist demand that the war with Germany be continued. The reports were followed by heated debate. Finally the delegates to the Congress endorsed the report of the Central Committee and turned down the theses of the "Left Communists" on the need to continue the war. By roll-call vote, with 30 votes against 12, with 4 abstentions, Lenin's resolution about the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany was carried. The delegates also discussed the question of reviewing the programme and changing the name of the Party, elected a Central Committee of 15 members and 8 alternate members. The 7th Congress of the Party was of great significance, for it confirmed the correctness of Lenin's principles on foreign policy, approved the much needed respite from the war, defeated the "Left Communists" and Trotskyists who sought to disorganise the Party, and directed the Communist Party and the working class towards the fundamental goals of socialism. The 4th Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets which was held soon after (March 14-16) ratified the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty.

<sup>81</sup> In the course of the debate on *Lenin's resolution on war and peace*, Trotsky, who was supported by the Left Communists, submitted a number of amendments precluding the conclusion of any peace treaty with the Central Rada (the bourgeois nationalist government set up in the Ukraine after the February Revolution) and the bourgeois government of Finland. After Lenin's speech, in which he criticised Trotsky and the "Left Communists" for their attempts to deprive the Central Committee of the freedom of ma-

noeuve, the Congress turned down these amendments by majority of votes.

<sup>82</sup> On November 3, 1920, Trotsky spoke at the session of the *RCP(B) faction of the 5th All-Russia Trade Union Conference* against the Party's political line on the role and purpose of the trade unions, their tasks and methods of work. That was the start of a *discussion in the Party* on matters concerning the *approach* to, *influence on*, and *contact* with the masses. The disagreements that arose in the RCP(B) faction were taken up at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (B). Towards the end of December the discussion became general. On December 24, Trotsky spoke at a meeting of activists of the trade union movement and delegates to the 8th All-Russia Congress of Soviets. On December 25, Trotsky published his pamphlet "On the Role and Tasks of the Trade Unions", the appearance of which pointed to the emergence of an anti-Party faction. This served as a signal for all other opposition groups to take a stand against the Party. Lenin's speech at a joint meeting of the RCP(B) factions of the 8th All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and the Moscow City Council of Trade Unions held at the Bolshoi Theatre on December 30, 1920, was his first speech to the Party activists in connection with the discussion of the role and goals of the trade unions in the building of socialism. In his subsequent speeches and articles, and also in the brochure, *Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin* Lenin analysed the meaning of the inner-Party struggle. Lenin finished his brochure on January 25, 1921. By the next day, January 26, the members of the Central Committee of the Party who were about to leave Moscow to take part in the discussion which was being held in the provinces had already received copies of this brochure. The rest of the edition was ready the following day. In this brochure Lenin exposed the factionalist character of the actions of the oppositionists who were undermining the unity of the Party, and showed the harm the discussion they had forced upon the Party was doing to its cause.

The discussion on the trade unions lasted for more than two months in the course of which the overwhelming majority of Party organisations came to support Lenin's platform. The results of the discussion were summed up at the 10th Party Congress which was held in March, 1921.

<sup>83</sup> *The 8th All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Red Armymen's and Cossacks' Deputies* was held in Moscow on December 22-29, 1920 with 2,537 delegates present. The congress was convened soon after the victorious conclusion of the Civil War when the economic front was "the chief and fundamental factor", as Lenin called it. The questions on the Congress agenda included a report on the work of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (the supreme executive body of the Soviets after the October Revolution, the collective president of the country) and the Council of People's Commissars; electrification of Russia; the restoration of industry and transport; development of agricultural production and assistance to peasant households, etc. The Congress endorsed by an overwhelming majority a resolution on Lenin's report on the work of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars approving the activities of the Soviet government. The 8th Congress also adopted the plan for the electrification of the country (the GOELRO Plan), the first long-term national economic plan.

<sup>84</sup> *Bukharin, N. I.* (1888-1938), a member of the Party from 1906. In 1915 held a non-Marxist position on questions of the state, proletarian dictatorship, the right of nations to self-determination, etc. At the 6th Congress of the RSDLP (1917) he submitted anti-Leninist thesis on the development of the revolution; his plan was based on the rejection of the alliance of the working class and the poor peasantry. After the October Socialist Revolution he was a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, and a member of the Executive Committee of Comintern. In 1918 he headed the anti-Party group of "Left Communists" who opposed the conclusion of the Brest peace treaty; during the trade unions discussion (1920-1921) he held a special position of his own but later joined Trotsky.

<sup>85</sup> *Syndicalism*, a petty-bourgeois opportunist trend in the working class movement. The syndicalists were against the trade unions taking part in political struggle, and held a negative view of the working class party. They mistakenly considered the trade union movement and the economic struggle to be the only way of achieving socialism. The syndicates (trade unions), they insisted, must direct production for the benefit of society.

<sup>86</sup> *The Fifth All-Russia Trade Union Conference* was held in Moscow on November 2-6, 1920. The tasks of peace-

ful socialist reconstruction necessitated changes in the style of trade union work, and an extension of the democratic principles of their organisation and functioning. The proposed new methods of work were criticised by Trotsky in a speech at a session of the Communist faction, on November 3.

A report on the need to increase production and on the part played in it by the trade unions was made by Y. E. Rudzutak. The conference adopted the theses he had proposed, which were based on Lenin's concept of the necessity of the trade unions playing a still more important role in the development of production, of the need to expand the democratic principles of their work and to enhance Party leadership of the trade union movement. All these theses were subsequently developed in the resolution "On the Role and Tasks of Trade Unions" adopted at the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (B).

<sup>87</sup> *Tomsky, M. P.* (1880-1936) joined the Bolshevik Party in 1904. After the 1905-1907 revolution his attitude to the liquidators, the otzovists and the Trotskyists was conciliatory. After the October Revolution he was elected Chairman of the Moscow Council of Trade Unions. From 1919 Chairman of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions. Repeatedly attacked the Leninist idea of the Party; defended the "independence" of the trade unions in relation to the Party leadership. In 1928-1929 was one of the leaders of the right-opportunist deviation in the All-Union Communist Party (B).

<sup>88</sup> *Zinoviev (Radomyslsky), G. E.* (1883-1936) joined the Party in 1901. From 1908 until April, 1917, was in emigration. At the 5th Congress of the RSDLP he was elected to the Central Committee of the Party. In the period of preparation for and during the October Socialist Revolution he was opposed to the armed uprising. After the October Revolution Zinoviev, who was Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Executive Committee of Comintern, repeatedly opposed the Party's Leninist policy and was subsequently expelled from it for his anti-Party activities.

<sup>89</sup> Reference to *Bukharin's speech* at a joint session of the RCP(B) faction of the 8th All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and the Moscow City Council of Trade Unions held at the Bolshoi Theatre on December 30, 1920, in conjunction with the dis-

discussion on the role of trade unions in the period of socialist construction.

<sup>90</sup> *Tsektran*, the Central Committee of the Amalgamated Union of Railwaymen and Water Transport Workers, was organised in September, 1920. The amalgamation of these two trade unions was necessitated by the need for strong centralised leadership; only extraordinary measures were capable of directing efforts to restore and rebuild the nation's war-ravaged transport facilities. *Tsektran* did a great deal of useful work. However, in the new conditions it was necessary to change the style and methods of work. Trotsky's supporters who held the key posts in *Tsektran* continued to act in their old way, which aroused discontent among the transport workers. The Central Committee of the Party denounced these pernicious practices of the Trotskyists. *Tsektran* was then integrated into the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and reduced to the same level as all the other unions. The First All-Russia Congress of Transport Workers held in March, 1921, purged *Tsektran* of the Trotskyists.

<sup>91</sup> *Buffer Group*, one of the anti-Party factionalist groups at the time of the trade union discussion in 1920-1921. Headed by Bukharin, this group which ostensibly tried to iron out the differences between Lenin and Trotsky, in actual fact sought to wed Trotskyism to Leninism. Although acting as a conciliator Bukharin defended Trotsky in every way, and attacked Lenin. The "buffer group" assisted Trotsky in his factionalist activities and brought the Party a great deal of harm. Soon afterwards Bukharin renounced his platform and openly allied himself with Trotsky.

<sup>92</sup> *The All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions*, the organ that directed the entire functioning of the trade unions in the Soviet Republic in the periods between their congresses.

<sup>93</sup> *Rudzutak*, Y. E. (1887-1938), a prominent member of the Communist Party, took an active part in the revolution of 1905-1907, joined the Party in 1905. In 1907, he was arrested and sentenced to 10 years of hard labour; in 1917, after the February revolution, he was released. After the October Revolution Rudzutak held a number of important posts in trade unions, the Communist Party and the Soviets. Lenin summed up *Rudzutak's theses* in an article "The Crisis of the Party": "1) Ordinary democracy (without any exaggerations, without denying the Central Committee's right

of appointment, etc., but also without any obstinate defence of the mistakes and excesses of certain appointees, which need to be rectified); 2) Production propaganda (this includes all that is practical in clumsy, ridiculous, theoretically wrong 'formulas' like industrial democracy, production atmosphere, etc.). We have established a *Soviet institution*, the All-Russian Production Propaganda Bureau. We must do everything to support it and not spoil production work by producing ... *bad theses*. That's all there is to it; 3) Bonuses in kind and 4) Disciplinary comrades' courts. Without Points 3 and 4, all talk about 'the role and tasks in production', etc., is empty, highbrow chatter; and it is these two points that are omitted from Trotsky's 'platform pamphlet'. But they are in Rudzutak's theses."

<sup>94</sup> On December 1, 1917, the Supreme Council of National Economy was set up as part of the Council of People's Commissars. The local councils of national economy exercised the economic and organisational functions of the Soviet state. The establishment of the Council, and the nationalisation of the banks, railways and big industrial enterprises, enabled the Soviet government to proceed to build a socialist national economy.

<sup>95</sup> *The 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*, the first congress held after the end of the Civil War. The Congress adopted decisions on the fundamental economic and political problems facing the country. It also paid considerable attention to the question of party unity. At Lenin's suggestion the congress adopted a resolution, "On Party Unity", demanding that all the factionalist groups whose activities weakened the Party and undermined its unity, be dissolved. The congress also outlined measures to broaden inner-Party democracy.

The question of the role of the trade unions in economic reconstruction also figured large. Summing up the results of the discussion on trade unions, the congress denounced the views of the Trotskyists, the "workers' opposition" and other opportunist deviationists. The congress endorsed Lenin's political platform.

В. И. ЛЕНИН ПРОТИВ ТРОЦКИЗМА

на английском языке

Цена 40 коп.



---

**Novosti Press Agency  
Publishing House**