

The Re-Organisation of the Party



& Party Organisation
and Party Literature

Lenin

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Introduction

These two not-so-well known articles are interesting illustrations of Lenin's flexibility in the matter of party organisation. Popular myth, much aided by the perversions of Stalinism, portrays Lenin as having a single model for party organisation. This model is a completely rigid one— independent of time, space or circumstance. According to this myth, Lenin split with the Mensheviks at the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party solely on the issue of a few words in the rules of membership (which is factually inaccurate—the split was on another issue). Therefore Leninism is synonymous with “hardness” in organisation and a strong centralised party in which the members blindly carry out orders from above. The organisation is naturally hard to join. Like all myths, this particular misrepresentation takes one aspect of the truth and presents it as the whole truth.

However obviously inaccurate this myth may be, it has been used to justify monstrous inner party regimes—and not only Stalinist ones.

These two articles show, on the contrary, that Lenin's concepts were above all concrete. In 1905, a revolution in Russia was in process. Weakened by its disastrous war against Japan, the Tsarist autocracy was not strong enough to completely suppress the revolutionary movement; as Lenin said, “Tsarism is *no longer* strong enough to defeat the revolution, the revolution is *not yet* strong enough to defeat Tsarism.”

The vast mass of workers were extremely combative, ready to engage in mortal combat. But the Marxist vanguard was relatively weak, and mainly led by people who had been forced into exile, thus being isolated from the mass movement.

Under these circumstances the crying need was to win into the party large numbers of the revolutionary workers. The Menshevik argument that this would mean diluting the party was met by Lenin arguing: (1) that firm party principles had been established which would assist the assimilation of large numbers of workers; and (2) workers joining the party in a period of revolutionary struggle would learn Marxist principles extremely quickly.

The second of the two articles shows another aspect of Lenin's views—formulas for adopting the press of the party to the new “legal” conditions. As such, it is rich with Lenin's basic concepts on the relationship of party organisation and party literature.

It should be noted that the term “social-democrat” is used by Lenin in its pre-1914 sense, as synonymous with revolutionary socialist.

WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE

The Reorganisation of the Party
and
Party Organisation and Party Literature

V.I. Lenin

The Reorganisation Of The Party

The conditions in which our Party is functioning are changing radically. Freedom of assembly, of association and of the press has been captured. Of course, these rights are extremely precarious, and it would be folly, if not a crime, to pin our faith to the present liberties. The decisive struggle is yet to come, and preparations for this struggle must take first place. The secret apparatus of the Party must be maintained. But at the same time it is absolutely necessary to make the widest possible use of the present relatively wider scope for our activity. In addition to the secret apparatus, it is absolutely necessary to create many new legal and semi-legal Party organisations (and organisations associated with the Party). Unless we do this, it is unthinkable that we can adapt our activity to the new conditions or cope with the new problems.

In order to put the organisation on a new basis, a new Party congress is required. According to the Rules, the Party should meet in congress once a year, and the next congress should be held in May 1906; but now it is essential to bring it forward. If we do not seize this opportunity, we shall lose it - in the sense that the need for organisation which the workers are feeling so acutely will find its expression in distorted, dangerous forms, strengthen

some "Independents"² or other, etc. We must hasten to organise in a new way, we must submit new methods for general discussion, we must boldly and resolutely lay down a "new line".

The appeal to the Party, published in this issue and signed by the Central Committee of our Party,³ lays down that new line, I am profoundly convinced, quite correctly. We, the representatives of revolutionary Social-Democracy, the supporters of the "Majority", have repeatedly said that complete democratisation of the Party was impossible in conditions of secret work, and that in such conditions the "elective principle" was a mere phrase. And experience confirmed our words. It has been repeatedly stated in print by former supporters of the Minority (see the pamphlet by "A Worker" with a preface by Axelrod, the letter signed "A Worker, One of Many", in *ISKRA*⁴ and in the pamphlet *WORKERS ON THE PARTY SPLIT*) that in fact it has proved impossible to employ any real democratic methods and any real elective principle. But we Bolsheviks have always recognised that in new conditions, when political liberties were acquired, it would be essential to adopt the elective principle. The minutes of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. prove this most conclusively, if, indeed, any proof is required.

Thus the task is clear: to preserve the secret apparatus for the time being and to develop a new, legal apparatus. As applied to the Congress, this task (the concrete fulfilment of which demands, of course, practical ability

and a knowledge of all the conditions of time and place) may be formulated as follows: to convene the Fourth Congress on the basis of the Party Rules and at the same time to begin immediately, at once, application of the elective principle. The Central Committee has solved this problem. Committee members, in form as representatives of fully authorised organisations, in fact as representatives of the Party's continuity, attend the Congress with the right to vote. Delegates elected by the ENTIRE Party membership, and consequently by the masses of the workers belonging to the Party, ARE INVITED by the Central Committee, in virtue of its right to do so, to attend the Congress with voice but no vote. The Central Committee has declared, furthermore, that it will at once propose to the Congress to change this consultative voice into the right to vote. Will the full delegates of the committees agree to this?

The Central Committee declares that in its opinion they will unquestionably agree to it. Personally, I am profoundly convinced of this. It is impossible not to agree to such a thing. It is inconceivable that the majority of the leaders of the Social Democratic proletariat will not agree to it. We are sure that the opinion of Party workers, most carefully registered by NOVAYA ZHIZN, will very soon prove the correctness of our view; even if a struggle takes place over this step (to convert the consultative voice into the right to vote), the outcome is a foregone conclusion.

Look at this question from another angle - from the point of view of the substance of the matter, not of its form. Is Social-Democracy endangered by the realisation of the plan we

propose?

Danger may be said to lie in a sudden influx of large numbers of non-Social-Democrats into the Party. If that occurred, the Party would be dissolved among the masses, it would cease to be the conscious vanguard of its class, its role would be reduced to that of a tail. That would mean a very deplorable period indeed. And this danger COULD undoubtedly become a VERY SERIOUS one IF we showed any inclination towards demagogy, if we lacked party principles (programme, tactical rules, organisational experience) entirely, or if those principles were feeble and shaky. But the fact is that no such "ifs" exist. We Bolsheviks have never shown any inclination towards demagogy. On the contrary, we have always fought resolutely, openly and straightforwardly against the slightest attempts at demagogy; we have demanded class-consciousness from those joining the Party, we have insisted on the tremendous importance of continuity in the Party's development, we have preached discipline and demanded that EVERY Party member be trained in one or other of the Party organisations. We have a firmly established Party programme which is officially recognised by all Social-Democrats and the fundamental propositions of which have not given rise to any criticism (criticism of individual points and formulations is quite legitimate and necessary in any live party). We have resolutions on tactics which were consistently and systematically worked out at the Second and Third Congresses and in the course of many years' work of the Social-Democratic press. We also have some organisational experience and an actual organisation, which has played an educational role and has undoubtedly borne

fruit, a fact which may not be immediately apparent, but which can be denied only by the blind or by the blinded.

Let us not exaggerate this danger, comrades. Social-Democracy has established a name for itself, has created a trend and has built up cadres of Social-Democratic workers. And now that the heroic proletariat has proved by deeds its readiness to fight, and its ability to fight consistently and in a body for clearly-understood aims, to fight in a purely Social-Democratic spirit, it would be simply ridiculous to doubt that the workers who belong to our Party, or who will join it tomorrow at the invitation of the Central Committee, will be Social-Democrats in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. The working class is instinctively, spontaneously Social-Democratic, and more than ten years of work put in by Social-Democracy has done a great deal to transform this spontaneity into consciousness. Don't invent bugaboos, comrades! Don't forget that in every live and growing party there will always be elements of instability, vacillation, wavering. But these elements can be influenced, and they will submit to the influence of the steadfast and solid core of Social-Democrats.

Our Party has stagnated while working underground. As a delegate to the Third Congress rightly said, it has been suffocating underground during the last few years. The "underground" is breaking up. Forward, then, more boldly; take up the new weapon, distribute it among new people, extend your bases, rally all the worker Social-Democrats round yourselves, incorporate them in the ranks of the Party organisations by hundreds and thousands. Let

their delegates put new life into the ranks of our central bodies, let the fresh spirit of young revolutionary Russia pour in through them. So far the revolution has justified all the basic theoretical propositions of Marxism, all the essential slogans of Social-Democracy. And the revolution has also justified the work done by US Social-Democrats, it has justified our hope and faith in the truly revolutionary spirit of the proletariat. Let us, then, abandon all pettiness in this imperative Party reform; let us strike out on the new path at once. This will not deprive us of our old secret apparatus (there is no doubt that the Social-Democratic workers have recognised and sanctioned it; practical experience and the course of the revolution have proved this a hundred times more convincingly than it could have been proved by decisions and resolutions). It will give us fresh young forces rising from the very depths of the only genuinely and thoroughly revolutionary class, the class which has won half freedom for Russia and will win full freedom for her, the class which will lead her through freedom to socialism!

The decision of the Central Committee of our Party to convene the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., published in NOVAYA ZHIZN, No.9, is a decisive step towards the full application of the democratic principle in Party organisation. The election of delegates to the Congress (who will come there first with the right to a voice but no vote and will then, undoubtedly receive the right to vote) must be carried through within a month. All Party organisations must, therefore, begin as soon as possible to discuss candidates and the tasks of the Congress. It is unquestionably necessary to reckon with the possibility of the dying

autocracy making fresh attempts to withdraw the promised liberties and to attack the revolutionary workers, above all their leaders. Therefore it would hardly be advisable (except perhaps in special cases) to publish the real names of delegates. The assumed names to which the epoch of political slavery has accustomed us must not be discarded so long as the Black Hundreds are in power, nor would it be amiss to elect, as of old, alternates, in case of arrests. However, we shall not dwell on all these precautions of secrecy, since comrades acquainted with the local conditions of work will easily overcome all the difficulties that may arise in this respect. Comrades who have ample experience in revolutionary work under the autocracy must help by their counsel all those who are starting Social-Democratic work in the new and "free" conditions (free in inverted commas, for the time being). It goes without saying that in doing so our committee members must show great tact: previous formal prerogatives inevitably lose their significance at the present time, and it will be necessary in very many cases to start "from the beginning" to PROVE to large sections of new Party comrades the importance of a consistent Social-Democratic programme, Social-Democratic tactics and organisation. We must not forget that so far we have had to deal too often only with revolutionaries coming from a particular social stratum, whereas now we shall have to deal with typical representatives of the masses. This change calls for a change not only in the methods of propaganda and agitation (a more popular style, ability to present a question, to explain the basic truths of socialism in the simplest, clearest and most convincing manner), but also in organisation.

In this article I should like to dwell on one aspect of the new tasks in organisation. The Central Committee decision invites ALL Party organisations to send delegates to the Congress and calls upon ALL worker Social-Democrats to join such organisations. If this excellent desire is to be really fulfilled, a mere "invitation" to the workers will not do, nor will it do merely to increase the number of organisations of the old type. For this purpose, it is necessary for all comrades to devise NEW forms of organisation by their independent, creative joint efforts. It is impossible to lay down any predetermined standards for this, for we are working in an entirely new field: a knowledge of local conditions, and above all the initiative of ALL Party members must be brought into play. The new form of organisation, or rather the new form of the basic organisational nucleus of the workers' party, must be definitely much broader than were the old circles. Apart from this, the new nucleus will most likely have to be a less rigid, more "free", more "loose" (lose) organisation. With complete freedom of association and civil liberties for the people, we should, of course, have to found Social-Democratic unions (not only trade unions, but political and Party unions) everywhere. In the present conditions we must strive to approach that goal by all ways and means at our disposal.

We must immediately arouse the initiative of all Party functionaries and of all workers who sympathise with Social-Democracy. We must arrange at once, everywhere, lectures, talks, meetings, open-air rallies at which the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. should be announced, the tasks of the Congress explained in the most popular

and comprehensible way, the new form of organisation of the Congress pointed out, and an appeal made to all Social-Democrats to take part in building up a genuinely proletarian Social-Democratic Party on new lines. Such work will supply us with a wealth of information based on experience: it will, in the course of two or three weeks (if we act energetically), produce new Social-Democratic forces from among the workers, and revive among far wider sections an interest in the Social-Democratic Party, which we have now decided to reconstruct on new lines jointly with all the worker comrades. At all meetings the question will immediately be raised about the founding of unions, organisations, Party groups. Each union, organisation or group will immediately elect its bureau, or board, or directing committee - in a word, a central standing body which will conduct the affairs of the organisation, maintaining relations with local Party institutions, receive and circulate Party literature, collect subscriptions for Party work, arrange meetings and lectures, and, finally, prepare the election of a delegate to the Party Congress. The Party committees will, of course, take care to help each such organisation, to supply it with material explaining what the R.S.D.L.P. stands for, its history and its present great tasks.

It is high time, furthermore, to take steps to establish local economic string points, so to speak, for the workers' Social-Democratic organisations - in the form of restaurants, tea-rooms, beer-halls, libraries, reading-rooms, shooting galleries,* etc., etc., maintained by

* I do not know the Russian equivalent of tir (Lenin uses the French word, - Tr.), by which I mean a place for target practice, where there is a supply

Party members. We must not forget that, apart from being persecuted by the "autocratic" police, the Social-Democratic workers will also be persecuted by their "autocratic" employers, who will dismiss agitators. Therefore it is highly important to organise bases which will be as independent as possible of the tyranny of the employers.

Generally speaking, we Social-Democrats must take every possible advantage of the present extension of freedom of action, and the more this freedom is guaranteed, the more energetically shall we advance the slogan: "Go among the people!" The initiative of the workers themselves will now display itself on a scale that we, the underground and circle of workers of yesterday, did not even dare dream of. The influence of socialist ideas on the masses of the proletariat is now proceeding, and will continue to proceed along paths that we very often shall be altogether unable to trace. With due regard to these conditions, we shall

of all kinds of fire-arms and where anyone may for a small fee practice shooting at a target with a revolver or rifle. Freedom of assembly and association has been proclaimed in Russia. Citizens have the right to assemble and to learn how to shoot; this can present no danger to anyone. In any big European city you will find such shooting galleries open to all, situated in basements, sometimes outside the city, etc. And it is very far from useless for the workers to learn how to shoot and how to handle arms. Of course we shall have to get down to this work seriously and on a large scale only when the freedom of association is guaranteed and we can bring to book the police scoundrels who dare to close such establishments.

have to distribute the Social-Democratic intelligentsia** in a more rational way to ensure that they do not hang about uselessly where the movement has already stood up on its own feet and can, so to speak, shift for itself, and that they go to the "lower strata" where the work is harder, where the conditions are more difficult, where the need for experienced and well-informed people is greater, where the sources of light are fewer and where the heart-beat of political life is weaker. We must now "go among the people" both in anticipation of elections, in which the entire population, even of the remotest places will take part and (more important still) in anticipation of an open struggle - in order to paralyse the reactionary policies of a provincial Vendée⁵, to spread all over the country, among all the proletarian masses the slogans issuing from the big centres.

To be sure, it is always bad to run to extremes: to organise the work on the most stable and "exemplary" lines possible we shall even yet have often to concentrate our best forces in some important centre or other. Experience will show the proportion to be adhered to in this respect. Our task now is not so much to invent rules for organising on new lines, as to develop the most far-reaching and courageous work which will enable us at the Fourth Congress to

**At the Third Congress of the Party I suggested that there be about eight workers to every two intellectuals in the Party committees. (See present edition, Vol.8, p.408. - Ed.) How obsolete that suggestion seems today!

Now we must wish for the new Party organisations to have one Social-Democratic intellectual to several hundred Social-Democratic workers.

sum up and set down the data obtained from the experience of the Party.

In the first two sections we dealt with the general importance of the elective principle in the Party and the need for new organisational nuclei and forms of organisation. We shall now examine another extremely vital question, namely the question of Party unity.

It is no secret to anyone that the vast majority of Social-Democratic workers are exceedingly dissatisfied with the split in the Party and are demanding unity. It is no secret to anyone that the split has caused a certain coolingoff among Social-Democratic workers (or workers ready to become Social-Democrats) towards the Social-Democratic Party.

The workers have lost almost all hope that the Party "chiefs" will unite of themselves. The need for unity was formally recognised by both the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and by the Menshevik Conference held last May. Six months have passed since then, but the cause of unity has made hardly any progress. No wonder the workers are beginning to show signs of impatience. No wonder "A Worker, One of Many", who wrote on unity in ISKRA and in a pamphlet published by the "Majority" (WORKERS ON THE PARTY SPLIT, published by the Central Committee, Geneva, 1905), has at last threatened the Social-Democratic intelligentsia with a "fist from below". Some Social-Democrats (Mensheviks) did not like that threat at the time, others (Bolsheviks) though it legitimate and, at bottom, fully justified.

It seems to me that the time has come when the CLASS CONSCIOUS worker Social-Democrats can and must carry out their intention (I will not say "threat", because this word smacks of accusations, of demagogy, and we must do our utmost to avoid both). Indeed, the time has come, or, in any case, is coming, when the elective principle can be applied in the Party organisation not in words only, but in deeds, not as a fine-sounding but hollow phrase, but as a really new principle which really renovates, extends and strengthens Party ties. The "Majority" represented by the Central Committee has directly appealed for the immediate application and introduction of the elective principle. The Minority is following in the same direction. And the Social-Democratic workers constitute the enormous, overwhelming majority in all the Social-Democratic organisations, committees, gatherings, meetings, etc.

Hence it is now possible not only to URGE unity, not only to obtain PROMISES to unite, but actually TO UNITE - by a simple decision of the majority of organised workers in both factions. There will be no imposition, since, in principle, the need for unity has been recognised by all, and the workers have only to decide in practice a question that has already been decided in principle.

The relation between the functions of the intellectuals and of the proletariat (workers) in the Social-Democratic working-class movement can probably be expressed, with a fair degree of accuracy, by the following general formula: the intelligentsia is good at solving problems "in principle", good at drawing up plans, good at reasoning about the need for action - while

the workers act, and transform drab theory into living reality.

And I shall not in the slightest degree slip into demagogy, nor in the least belittle the great role played by consciousness in the working-class movement, nor shall I in any way detract from the tremendous importance of Marxist theory and Marxist principles, if I say now: both at the Congress and at the Conference we created the "drab theory" of Party unity. Comrade workers, help us to transform this drab theory into living reality! Join the Party organisations in huge numbers! Turn our Fourth Congress and the Second Menshevik Conference into a grand and imposing Congress of Social-Democratic workers. Join with us in settling this practical question of fusion; let this question be the exception (it is an exception that proves the opposite rule!) in which we shall have one-tenth theory and nine-tenths practice. Such a wish is surely legitimate, historically necessary, and psychologically comprehensible. We have "theorised" for so long (sometimes - why not admit it? - to no use) in the unhealthy atmosphere of political exile, that it will really not be amiss if we now "bend the bow" slightly, a little, just a little, "the other way" and put practice a little more in the forefront. This would certainly be appropriate in regard to the question of unity, about which, owing to the causes of the split, we have used up such an awful lot of ink and no end of paper. We exiles in particular are longing for practical work. Besides, we have already written a very good and comprehensive programme of the whole democratic revolution. Let us, then, unite also to make this revolution!

Party Organisation and Party Literature

The new conditions for Social-Democratic work in Russia which have arisen since the October revolution have brought the question of party literature to the fore. The distinction between the illegal and the legal press, that melancholy heritage of the epoch of feudal, autocratic Russia, is beginning to disappear. It is not yet dead, by a long way. The hypocritical government of our Prime Minister is still running amuck, so much so that IZVESTIA SOVETA RABOCHIKH DEPUTATOV⁶ is printed "illegally"; but apart from bringing disgrace on the government, apart from striking further moral blows at it, nothing comes of the stupid attempts to "prohibit" that which the government is powerless to thwart.

So long as there was a distinction between the illegal and the legal press, the question of the party and non-party press was decided extremely simply and in an extremely false and abnormal way. The entire illegal press was a party press, being published by organisations and run by groups which in one way or another were linked with groups of practical party workers. The entire legal press was non-party - since parties were banned - but it "gravitated" towards one party or another. Unnatural alliances, strange "bed-fellows" and false cover-devices were inevitable. The forced reserve

of those who wished to express party views merged with the immature thinking or mental cowardice of those who had not risen to these views and who were not, in effect, party people.

An accursed period of Aesopian language, literary bondage, slavish speech, and ideological serfdom! The proletariat has put an end to this foul atmosphere which stifled everything living and fresh in Russia. But so far the proletariat has won only half freedom for Russia.

The revolution is not yet completed. While tsarism is NO LONGER strong enough to defeat the revolution, the revolution is NOT YET strong enough to defeat tsarism. And we are living in times when everywhere and in everything there operates this unnatural combination of open, forthright, direct and consistent party spirit with an underground, covert, "diplomatic" and dodgy "legality". This unnatural combination makes itself felt even in our newspaper: for all Mr Guchkov's⁷ witticisms about Social-Democratic tyranny forbidding the publication of moderate liberal-bourgeois newspapers, the fact remains that PROLETARY,⁸ the Central Organ of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, still remains outside the locked doors of AUTOCRATIC, police-ridden Russia.

Be that as it may, the half-way revolution compels all of us to set to work at once organising the whole thing on new lines. Today literature, even that published "legally", can be nine-tenths party literature. It must become party literature. In contradistinction to bourgeois customs, to the profit-making, commercialised bourgeois press, to bourgeois literary careerism and

individualism, "aristocratic anarchism" and drive for profit, the socialist proletariat must put forward the principle of PARTY LITERATURE, must develop this principle and put it into practice as fully and completely as possible.

What is this principle of party literature? It is not simply that, for the socialist proletariat, literature cannot be a means of enriching individuals or groups: it cannot, in fact, be an individual undertaking, independent of the common cause of the proletariat. Down with non-partisan writers! Down with literary supermen! Literature must become PART of the common cause of the proletariat, "a cog and a screw" of one single great Social-Democratic mechanism set in motion by the entire politically-conscious vanguard of the entire working class. Literature must become a component of organised, planned and integrated Social-Democratic Party work.

"All comparisons are lame", says a German proverb. So is my comparison of literature with a cog, of a living movement with a mechanism. And I daresay there will ever be hysterical intellectuals to raise a howl about such a comparison, which degrades, deadens, "bureaucratizes" the free battle of ideas, freedom of criticism, freedom of literary creation, etc., etc. Such outcries, in point of fact, would be nothing more than an expression of bourgeois-intellectual individualism. There is no question that literature is least of all subject to mechanical adjustment or levelling, to the rule of the majority over the minority. There is no question, either, that in this field greater scope must undoubtedly be allowed for personal

initiative, individual inclination, thought and fantasy, form and content. All this is undeniable; but all this simply shows that the literary side of the proletarian party cause cannot be mechanically identified with its other sides. This, however, does not in the least refute the proposition, alien and strange to the bourgeoisie and bourgeois democracy, that literature must by all means and necessarily become an element of Social-Democratic Party work, inseparably bound up with the other elements. Newspapers must become the organs of the various party organisations, and their writers must by all means become members of these organisations. Publishing and distributing centres, bookshops and reading-rooms, libraries and similar establishments - must all be under party control. The organised socialist proletariat must keep an eye on all this work, supervise it in its entirety, and, from beginning to end, without any exception, infuse into it the life-stream of the living proletarian cause, thereby cutting the ground from under the old, semi-Oblomov,⁹ semi-shopkeeper Russian principle: the writer does the writing, the reader does the reading.

We are not suggesting, of course, that this transformation of literary work, which has been defiled by the Asiatic censorship and the European bourgeoisie, can be accomplished all at once. Far be it from us to advocate any kind of standardised system, or a solution by means of a few decrees. Cut-and-dried schemes are least of all applicable here. What is needed is that the whole of our Party, and the entire politically-conscious Social-Democratic proletariat throughout Russia, should become aware of this new problem, specify it clearly

and everywhere set about solving it. Emerging from the captivity of the feudal censorship, we have no desire to become, and shall not become, prisoners of bourgeois-shopkeeper literary relations. We want to establish, and we shall establish, a free press, free not simply from the police, but also from capital, from careeism, and what is more, free from bourgeois-anarchist individualism.

These last words may sound paradoxical, or an affront to the reader. What! some intellectual, an ardent champion of liberty, may shout. What you want to impose collective control on such a delicate, individual matter as literary work! You want workmen to decide questions of science, philosophy, or aesthetics by a majority of votes! You deny the absolute freedom of absolutely individual ideological work!

Calm yourselves, gentlemen! First of all, we are discussing party literature and its subordination to party control. Everyone is free to write and say whatever he likes, without any restrictions. But every voluntary association (including a party) is also free to expel members who use the name of the party to advocate anti-party views. Freedom of speech and the press must be complete. But then freedom of association must be complete too. I am bound to accord you, in the name of free speech, the full right to shout, lie and write to your heart's content. But you are bound to grant me, in the name of freedom of association, the right to enter into, or withdraw from, association with people advocating this or that view. The party is a voluntary association, which would inevitably break up, first ideologically and then physically, if it did not cleanse it-

self of people advocating anti-party views. And to define the border-line between party and anti-party there is the party programme, the party's resolutions on tactics and its rules and, lastly, the entire experience of international Social-Democracy, the voluntary international associations of the proletariat, which has constantly brought into its parties individual elements and trends not fully consistent, not completely Marxist and not altogether correct and which, on the other hand, has constantly conducted periodical "cleansings" of its ranks, So it will be with us too, supporters of bourgeois "freedom of criticism", WITHIN the Party. We are now becoming a mass party all at once, changing abruptly to an open organisation, and it is inevitable that we shall be joined by many who are inconsistent (from the Marxist Standpoint), perhaps we shall be joined even by some Christian elements, and even by some mystics. We have sound stomachs and we are rock-like Marxists. We shall digest those inconsistent elements. Freedom of thought and freedom of criticism within the Party will never make us forget about the freedom of organising people into those voluntary associations known as parties.

Secondly, we must say to you bourgeois individualists that your talk about absolute freedom is sheer hypocrisy. There can be no real and effective "freedom" in a society based on the power of money, in a society in which the masses of working people live in poverty and the handful of rich live like parasites. Are you free in relation to your bourgeois publisher, Mr. Writer, in relation to your bourgeois public, which demand that you provide it

with pornography in frames* and paintings, and prostitution as a "supplement" to "sacred" senic art? This absolute freedom is a bourgeois or an anarchist phrase (since, as a world outlook, anarchism is bourgeois philosophy turned inside out). One cannot live in society and be free from society. The freedom of the bourgeois writer, artist or actress is simply masked (or hypocritically masked) dependence on the money-bag, on corruption, on prostitution. And we socialists expose this hypocrisy and rip off the false labels, not in order to arrive at a non-class literature and art (that will be possible only in a socialist extra-class society), but to contrast this hypocritically free literature, which is in reality linked to the bourgeoisie, with a really free one that will be OPENLY linked to the proletariat.

It will be a free literature, because the idea of socialism and sympathy with the working people, and not greed or careerism, will bring ever new forces to its ranks. It will be a free literature, because it will serve, not some satiated heroine, not the bored "upper ten thousand" suffering from fatty degeneration, but the millions and tens of millions of working people - the flower of the country, its strength and its future. It will be a free literature, enriching the last word in the revolutionary thought of mankind with the experience and living work of the socialist proletariat, bringing about permanent interaction between the experience of the past (scientific socialism, the completion of the deve-

* There must be a misprint in the source, which says ramkakh (frames), while the context suggests romanakh (novels). - Ed.

lopment of socialism from its primitive, utopian forms) and the experience of the present (the present struggle of the worker comrades).

To work, then, comrades! We are faced with a new and difficult task. But it is a noble and grateful one - to organise a broad, multiform and varied literature inseparably linked with the Social-Democratic working-class movement. All Social-Democratic literature must become Party literature. Every newspaper, journal, publishing house, etc., must immediately set about reorganising its work, leading up to a situation in which it will, in one form or another, be integrated into one Party organisation or another. Only then will "Social-Democratic" literature really become worthy of that name, only then will it be able to fulfil its duty and, even within the framework of bourgeois society, break out of bourgeois slavery and merge with the movement of the really advanced and thoroughly revolutionary class.

NOTES

- (1) Lenin's first article published in NOVAYA ZHIZN, the first legal Bolshevik newspaper published daily for just over a month in St. Petersburg from November 9, 1905, onwards. Maxim Gorky contributed articles and helped to finance it. The article appeared in issues 9, 13 and 14.
- (2) The "Independents", members of the Independent Social Labour Party, an organisation of agent-provocateurs founded in the autumn with the connivance of the secret police.
- (3) That is, Bolsheviks
- (4) The organ of the Mensheviks (Minority)

(5) Vendee, a department in Western France, where the backward peasantry began a counter-revolutionary uprising against the revolutionary French Republic at the end of the 18th. century. Vendee had become a synonym, in political writings, for reactionary rebellion and a hotbed of counter-revolution.

(6) IZESTIA SOVETA RABOCHNIKH DEPUTATOV (Bulletin of the Soviet of Workers Deputies), an official newspaper of St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers Deputies.

(7) A I. Guchfirov, 1862-1936, a monarchist representing big business and the industrial bourgeoisie.

(8) PROLETARY, (The Proletarian), an illegal Bolshevik weekly published in Geneva from May 27 to November 25, 1905.. It was smuggled into Russia and played a great role in the organisational and ideological unification of the Bolsheviks.

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