

Revolutionary Defeatism

The Old Bolsheviks and the 'Great War'



Dave Harker

For Michael

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Abbreviations

Arbeitsgemeinschaft	= Social-Democratic Working Group (Germany)
BSP	= British Socialist Party
Bund	= General Jewish Workers' Union in Russia and Poland
BWSDP	= Bulgarian Workers' Social Democratic Party
CC	= Central Committee
DNAP	= Norwegian Labour Party
Gruppe Internationale	= International Group (Germany)
ILP	= Independent Labour Party (Britain)
Kadets	= Constitutional Democratic Party (Russia)
LDP	= Lithuanian Democratic Party
LSDP	= Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party
LSDSP	= Latvian Social-Democratic Workers' Party
LTSD	= Social-Democracy of the Latvian Territory
MSDP	= Social Democratic Party of Hungary
Octobrists	= Union of 17 October (Russia)
Okhrana	= Department of Public Safety and Order (Russia)
PPS	= Polish Socialist Party
PSF	= French Socialist Party
PSI	= Italian Socialist Party
PSDMR	= Romanian Social-Democratic Party
PSOE	= Socialist Workers' Party of Spain
PSP	= Portuguese Socialist Party
RPU	= Romanian Revolutionary Party
RSDFB	= Revolutionary Workers' Social-Democratic Federation of the Balkans
RSDRP	= All-Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party
RSDP	= Romanian Social-Democratic Party
SD	= Social Democrat / Social Democratic
SDAP	= Social-Democratic Workers' Party (Netherlands)
SDKPIL	= Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania
SDPÖ	= Social-Democratic Party of Austria
SDPS	= Social Democratic Party of Switzerland
SO	= Socialist Federation (Greece)
Spartakusbund	= Spartacus League (Germany)
SPD	= Social Democratic Party of Germany
Spilka	= Romanian Social-Democratic Party breakaway fraction
SR	= Social Revolutionary
SSDA	= Social Democratic Workers' Party of Sweden
VPSR	= All-Russian Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries

Preface

This book examines the fate of Rossyskaya Sotsial-Demokraticheskaya Rabochaya Partya (the All-Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, or RSDRP) from summer 1914 to the start of 1917, and especially that of the *Stary Bolsheviki* (Old Bolsheviks) who had joined before 1905. It seeks to answer the following questions. What was the state of the RSDRP at home and abroad in summer 1914? During the 'Great War', how did the relationships of RSDRP *intelligenty* (men and women with a secondary and often a higher education) with *praktiki* (practical underground workers, some with only a primary school education), *rabochy-intelligenty* (worker-intellectuals) and members of other revolutionary socialist parties change? What changes occurred in the peasantry as war casualties among the overwhelmingly peasant infantry became horrific? What was the state of the RSDRP at home and abroad at the very beginning of 1917? How meaningful are the terms 'Bolshevik' and Menshevik' in this period?

Revolutionary socialists often insist that revolutions come from 'below', though almost no western authors have seriously considered the possibility that workers were (and are) the real leaders most of the time. To the best of my knowledge, almost everyone who has written in English or French about the RSDRP in 1914-1917 had no experience of revolutionary activity. Some occasionally quote sentences from workers' biographies and autobiographies, when they suit their perspective, but almost all assume that intelligenty were far more important than workers. Dozens of surviving *praktiki* wrote autobiographies years later, mostly under Stalinist supervision, but it is unclear whether any have been checked against their manuscripts, if they still exist. There is a lack of studies of Menshevik workers, and those in other revolutionary socialist parties, notably Vserossiyskaya partiya sotsialistov-revolutsionerov (the All-Russian Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, or VPSR).

Many RSDRP intelligenty, a few praktiki and other worker-intellectuals have appeared in my previous books, so most pre-1914 information about them will not be repeated here. Others appear for the first time, sometimes with the barest biographical detail, or only their names, and many disappear into emigration, prison, deportation or exile, often without trial. Capital punishment had been legally abolished in the mid-18th century, yet there were executions for a long time after the crushing of the Moscow rising in December 1905, and prisons were rife with fatal diseases. *Gosudarstvennyye prestupniki* (state criminals, or 'politicals') were often exiled in Siberia, and Jews in Yakutsk in north-eastern Siberia, where temperatures reached over 50 degrees below zero.

Most books published in Russia use the *klitchki* (underground pseudonyms) of Bolsheviks, and strangely, so do most English and French books. In 1901 a letter signed 'Lenin' arrived at the RSDRP press in Munich, yet nobody realised it was from Vladimir Ulyanov, though he used at least 160 other klitchki before and after that. In 1902 Nadezhda Krupskaya greeted Lev Bronstein as 'Piero' in London, though Jews were legally unable to travel in Siberia so he had used the passport of an Irkutsk Russian called Trotsky to escape, and Ioseb Jughashvili did not sign himself 'Stalin' in print until 1912. This book follows SD intelligenty and the very few workers who were able to emigrate. The Finnish and Swiss authorities resisted extraditing political émigrés: the French offered limited sanctuary; the British had tightened their rules in 1905, but the USA and some Scandinavian countries were more welcoming.

The reader does not need to be able to read Russian, or what Anglophones call Bielarusian, Estonian, Finnish, Georgian, German, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Ukrainian, Yiddish or any of the 170 or so other languages written and spoken in the Empire. This book uses names of nations that are familiar in the west, but since the autocracy sought to 'Russianise' names of towns and cities in subject nations, those used here are in the languages of the majority of their inhabitants. The capital of Suomi (Finland) was Helsinki, not Helsinkki or Helsingfors, that of Eesti (Estonia) was Tallinn, not Reval, that of Latvija (Latvia) was Rīga, not Riga, that of Lietuva (Lithuania) was Vilnius, not Vilna, Vilno or ווילנע, that of Bielarus was Мінск (Minsk), that of Królestwo Polskie (the Russian-controlled Kingdom of Poland) was Warszawa, not Varshava or ווירשאוו, that of Україна (Ukraine) was Київ (Kyiv), not Kiev, that of Austrian-controlled Galicia was Lwów, not Lviv or Lemberg, that of საქართველო (Georgia) was თბილისი (Tbilisi), not Tiflis, and that of Azərbaycan (Azerbaijan) was Bakı, not Baku.

This book uses the Russian calendar (Old Style, or OS) for events inside the Empire, and the western calendar (New Style, or NS), which was 13 days ahead, for events abroad, but it gives both dates when confusion might arise, and Russian and other measures have been converted into the UK quantities in use at the time.

The author of this book is a retired academic with 25 years' experience in a revolutionary socialist party, and like my other books, it will challenge the haters of the devils Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, and the worshippers of saints Vladimir, Lev and Ioseb. It is based on Marx's premise that 'the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves', and his mottos: 'doubt everything', 'ignorance never helped anybody' and 'go your own way, and let people talk'. I must thank Frank Ellis very warmly for his comradely criticism, and Eide O'Callaghan for putting this alongside my previous books about the Old Bolsheviks online.

Introduction

After the defeat of the Moscow rising in December 1905 many survivors of the St. Petersburg *soviet* (workers' council) and other *soveti* had been executed, imprisoned, deported or exiled, but two leading Bolshevik intelligenty escaped to the Grand Duchy of Finland, which had its own constitution and currency, though the tsar was the Grand Duke. A third intelligent was released early in 1906 and joined them. This self-appointed 'troika' or 'Small Trinity' aimed to steer the RSDRP. They regarded the defeat as a temporary setback, but acknowledged that RSDRP unity was necessary. One focussed on bomb-making and training fighting squads to carry out 'expropriations', another supervised those robberies, while the third refused to finance RSDRP committees which did not agree with the troika. Some expropriators killed not only police and troops, but civilians, and this alienated Menshevik intelligenty in Russia and abroad. Most Mensheviks believed that a revolution in Western Europe was necessary before one was possible in Russia, and favoured abandoning the underground for legal and semi-legal organisations, though some intelligenty and workers who had previously self-identified as revolutionary socialists looked to the increasingly reformist Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany, or SPD). Socjaldemokracja Królestwa Polskiego i Litwy (the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, or SDKPiL), was polarising between revolutionaries and reformists, while Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (the Polish Socialist Party, or PPS) was splitting between revolutionary-nationalists who used terror, and those who did not. Some members of Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija (Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party, or LSDP), and the Latvijas Sociāldemokrātiskā strādnieku partija (Latvian Social-Democratic Workers' Party, or LSDSP) used terror and conducted expropriations, and the LSD helped to fund the RSDRP, which formed a military organisation. The Vserossiyskaya partiya sotsialistov-revoljutsionerov (All-Russian Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries, or VPSR), had begun to split, and the Bolshevik troika in Finland supplied SR 'Maximalist' terrorists with bombs. Some members of אגלגמניינער יידישער אַרבעטער בונד אין ליטע פּוילין און רוסלאַ (the General Jewish Workers' Union in Russia and Poland, or Bund) used terror, though other socialist Jews looked to Palestine.

In spring 1906, at an RSDRP congress in Stockholm, almost all the delegates were male intelligenty. A majority accepted the principle of 'democratic centralism' with a single leading 'centre', a 'central organ' published abroad and elected local committees in Russia. The Bund, SDKPiL and LSDP formally joined the RSDRP, but retained a good deal of autonomy. They all agreed about robbing government institutions, and banks, but not civilians. The Mensheviks favoured taking part in the elections to the Duma (a consultative parliament accountable to the tsar), as did some Bolsheviks, who wanted to test the RSDRP's base among the minority of enfranchised male workers and demonstrate that the tsar was not serious about reforms in the first stage of the two-stage elections. The government gerrymandered the elections to minimise the representation of workers and peasants, and though many SD-inclined workers abstained, most peasants took part, and some peasant deputies leaned towards the SRs and SDs. The RSDRP held back revolutionary sailors from mutiny, though the number of the party's adherents rose.

By summer the Duma had made no meaningful reforms and the tsar closed it. He allowed an *eduskunta* (parliament) to be elected by universal suffrage in Finland, though it was accountable to him through an appointed minister. In Russia male and female SRs assassinated police, military officers and government officials, which perpetuated the idea that a revolution depended on heroic individuals inspiring a peasant rising. The number of peasant 'disturbances' was rising, but the tsar intensified martial law. The Otdeleniye po okhraneniyu obshchestvennoy bezopasnosti i Poryadka (the Department of Public Safety and Order, or Okhrana), the political police, had agents among SRs and SDs, and fostered pogroms against Jews, radical students and socialists, though some armed squads fought back. Imprisoned SDs and SRs organised educational programmes, as did women workers in key industrial centres. The number of women trade unionists was growing, and a few RSDRP *intelligentki* (female intelligenty) formed a women's section, but most male intelligenty were unsupportive.

By winter ministers had given a few concessions to the peasantry, though they mainly benefitted wealthy *kulaki* ('fists'). Industry required more literate people, so the government established more primary schools for peasants and workers. More secondary schools and higher education institutions, including some for women, and many students were being radicalised. The PPS split and the Bund's influence was declining. The RSDRP claimed 190,000 'members', though most were probably *politicheskiye svyazi* (political contacts). Trade unions were weaker and there were fewer strikes. Factory inspectors were not responsible for small workplaces and large industries such as mining and railways, but though they deemed many strikes and strikers 'political', no strike could be purely economic since trade unions and other workers' organisations were illegal. The economy was sluggish and the government was deep in debt, but it borrowed huge amounts to build railways and strengthen the armed forces, and some revolutionary socialist workers propagandised troops and sailors.

At the beginning of 1907 the Okhrana was reorganised and the status of political exiles in Siberia was reduced to that of common criminals. The RSDRP claimed 60,000 'members', though Menshevik intelligenty continued to leave the underground and local committees which they did not control. Bund, SDKPiL, LSDP and VPSR candidates stood in the Duma elections, and though several were successful, the 'Red Duma' proved toothless, and RSDRP intelligenty focussed on winning intelligenty delegates to the next party congress.

In spring the delegates at the London RSDRP congress were almost all male intelligenty, while women organised the food. The voting Bolshevik delegates just outnumbered the Mensheviks, and though the Mensheviks suspected that the Bolsheviks included voters in Duma elections, newspaper readers and *politicheskiye svyazi* as 'members', it was impossible to check whether those from either fraction were genuine. Both factions nominated intelligenty speakers, who also orchestrated the voting, and most others who spoke were intelligenty. A veteran émigré Menshevik called Bolshevik intelligenty an 'aristocracy' who treated workers as 'plebeians', but acknowledged that most workers were 'very backward', and the congress decided to politically hegemonise trade unions. The Bolsheviks had given money to the SDKPiL and LSD, and their delegates usually voted with them, and they won a majority of one on the new Central Committee, though a few were conciliationists between the factions, and some joined the majority who voted to take part in Duma elections. The CC could not afford the travel costs of delegates returning to Russia, though British socialists secured a loan from a Jewish industrialist. Two delegates had been Okhrana agents, and when they returned to Russia, and some delegates were arrested though they were mainly Bolsheviks. Bolshevik intelligenty used 'very indelicate methods' to take RSDRP committees from Menshevik intelligenty. RSDRP supporters in Britain sent arms to Latvian revolutionaries, though captured Latvians were often tortured and then executed. In Russia many peasants were restive, but though there were thousands of trade union members, the number of strikers officially deemed political was low, and troops defeated a mutiny at the key navy base on the island of Kronstadt in the Gulf of Finland, not far from St. Petersburg. An Okhrana agent helped to frame the Bolshevik Duma deputies, and the tsar decreed that the next elections would include far fewer peasant, worker and non-Russian voters, and more who were deemed to be 'Russian in spirit'. By summer there were few workers in RSDRP local committees, though a socialist bookshop in St. Petersburg was a contact point for those from the provinces and had a secret warehouse for illegal publications.

In autumn far fewer workers, peasants and SDs became deputies in the 'Black Duma', though the government made a few concessions to the peasantry. By winter many more peasants were restive and the numbers of strikes and strikers were rising sharply. Many trade unionists reportedly self-identified as SDs, though some youngsters were pulled by terror, even though the Okhrana was increasingly effective. The government was anxious to control the Bosphorus Straits for the vital grain exports and was preparing for war. The leaders of the Second International hoped to prevent war by 'coordinated action', but failed to unify the RSDRP factions. RSDRP intelligentyki organised women workers in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but SD intelligenty acknowledged that the autocracy had triumphed. The Bolshevik RSDRP CC member left for Paris, where he relied on western bourgeois papers for information about Russia. He occasionally 'summoned' a few intelligenty, and very few praktiki, mostly from St. Petersburg or Moscow, yet his analysis was always based on incomplete information and he was well behind events.

By 1908 the RSDRP claimed 260 local organisations. Some Bolshevik intelligenty led unions, though many socialist workers favoured the SPD's reformist perspective, but the Okhrana recruited a leader of the St. Petersburg metalworkers' union. The Mensheviks' finances were fragile, though a former member of the Bolshevik troika forged banknotes in Finland. Very few copies of the émigré RSDRP CC newspaper reached Russia, but one published by an émigré RSDRP intelligent in Vienna, who stood 'above the fractions', was influential. Bolshevik intelligenty disagreed about whether to abstain from Duma elections, recalling SD deputies and having workers on RSDRP committees. The industrial workforce was being increasingly feminised, but male RSDRP intelligenty marginalised intelligentyki and ignored women workers. Many local committees lacked intelligenty, so workers gave a lead. Revolutionary fighting squads had almost disappeared, the Bund was far weaker, and its leaders emigrated.

By 1909 almost all the RSDRP organisations in Russia were shattered. A former member of the Bolshevik troika and other RSDRP intelligenty organised a school on Capri to train a few male workers to take over the RSDRP leadership from intelligenty. These dissident intelligenty published a paper in Paris, and another former member of troika supported them discretely. In summer, at a Bolshevik conference in Paris, the RSDRP CC member of the troika managed to expel the other two from the Bolsheviks, and made them hand over money from expropriations and inheritances. He could not expel them from the RSDRP, but he co-opted a Bolshevik intelligent who was devoted to him into the émigré CC. An émigré SR intelligent got former leading members of the Okhrana to identify spies in Russian revolutionary organisations, though not those in the Bolsheviks' transport network in Berlin or the Pale. In London a veteran anarchist published the huge official numbers of mainly worker-revolutionaries executed since 1906, and the thousands in prison and exile.

Foreign speculators owned more and more of Russia's industry, and the government's preparations for war had stimulated certain sectors of the economy, especially in and around St. Petersburg and Moscow, and in Ukraine and the Caucasus. The government was deeper in debt, but clamped down on trade unions, especially among metalworkers. One expelled former member of the Bolshevik troika defended his theory of 'proletarian culture', but denied adapting to parliamentarianism. He and his supporters invited a few male party workers from Russia to a school in Bologna to train them to take over from intelligenty. The émigré RSDRP CC tried take over the school or wreck it, and several students were arrested when they returned to Russia.

By 1910 Russian industry had expanded considerably, as had the populations of major cities, largely thanks to peasant migration. The Bolsheviks claimed a few hundred 'members', and an RSDRP *plenum* (top-level meeting) in Paris reined in the émigré CC, though attempts to cooperate with the Vienna paper failed.

During 1911 the Russian government increased the number of primary schools, and their pupils were less socially exclusive. Higher education students demonstrated against government policies, yet RSDRP intelligenty discouraged workers from joining them. The few surviving local organisations were uncoordinated, and the Okhrana made arrests from both factions. In Paris a leading émigré Menshevik intelligent published a devastating critique of the Bolsheviks' robberies, but the émigré RSDRP CC were able to run a school for a few workers near the city. SDKPIL dissidents split and also organised a conference in Paris. Other SD parties in Western European were polarising between reformists and revolutionaries, as their governments continued preparing for war.

Early in 1912 two 'Party Mensheviks' who favoured unity, the émigré RSDRP CC and other Bolsheviks met in Prague, though hardly any represented an organisation in Russia. The meeting was illegal in party terms, and two delegates were spies. In spring the émigré RSDRP CC and a few supporters moved to Kraków in Galicia. A massacre of workers in Siberia provoked a strong reaction among workers and students across the Empire. Hundreds of thousands celebrated the Russian May Day, and inspectors deemed more and more strikes political. The Mensheviks won one more Duma deputy than the Bolsheviks, though the Okhrana acknowledged that the Bolsheviks were the best-organised faction. In summer Menshevik and Bolshevik Duma deputies failed to merge, and the tsar dissolved the Duma and cut the potential number of SD deputies and supporters. French investors owned an increasing amount of Russian industry and the government allied with France. In August a handful of SD intelligenty and workers met in Vienna, but hardly any represented an organisation in Russia, and they got nowhere.

Early in 1913 a Bolshevik member of the Russian RSDRP CC was exiled to Siberia and another was exiled in spring. The RSDRP was more like a workers' party, and some previously factional workers joined the same *kruzhki* (clandestine study circles). Sales and workers' contributions to the Bolshevik paper easily outpaced those to the Menshevik paper, and the émigré RSDRP CC tried to stop the Bolshevik Duma deputies collaborating with the Mensheviks. In Paris dissident party intelligenty built an organisation consisting partly of workers. In spring the émigré RSDRP CC moved to Poronin in south Galicia, and in summer a conference of Bolshevik 'party functionaries' told the Bolshevik Duma deputies to give the Menshevik deputies an ultimatum about equal representation on committees and ensure that as much of their activity as possible was legal. By the end of the year the Russian government's finances were in a critical condition, but its 'Great Military Programme' targeted Germany.

Early in 1914 the tsar was warned that a war with Germany, whoever won, would bring social revolutions in both countries, so Russia's best interests would be best served by allying with Germany; but the Duma approved the enlargement of the Black Sea fleet. By summer the economy was beginning to recover, though the numbers of strikes and strikers officially deemed political were rising sharply. In Brussels an International conference tried to forge unity among RSDRP intelligenty, but a Bolshevik intelligentka argued that 80 percent of 'conscious Russian workers' supported the Bolsheviks. A former leader of the St. Petersburg metalworkers union claimed that Bolshevik intelligenty manipulated workers with a 'slave mentality', and a leading émigré Menshevik intelligent described the Bolshevik workers as an 'intellectual lumpenproletariat'. In spite of Marx's injunction, intelligenty in both factions evidently failed to cadreise many workers, and the factions and the International were powerless to prevent the outbreak of war in August.

1. A summer's day in Sarajevo

(i) The collapse of European Social-Democracy

Early in June 1914 (according to the western calendar) the heir to the Austrian throne provocatively decided to go to Sarajevo near the border with Serbia on the Serb nationalists' sacred day. Late that month Serbian newspapers published his itinerary and at least six Serb nationalists and the Yugoslav Gavrilo Princip, who wanted the region to be free from the dual monarchy of Austro-Hungary, were stationed along the route. The Serb Džemaludin Čaušević had got bombs from an officer in military intelligence in Belgrade, and the Serb student Nedeljko Čabrinović threw one which bounced off the arch-duke's and arch-duchess's car and wounded senior army officers in the one behind. The archduke's driver sped off, but a short time later he wanted to visit the wounded officers in hospital, and the car went past Princip, whose shots fatally wounded the archduke and archduchess, who both died soon after.¹

The assassins were subsequently hanged or imprisoned, but the Austrian government accused the Serb government of planning the assassination and named others it believed had been involved.² The Austrian foreign minister told the German ambassador that he would 'pose such conditions that Serbia's acceptance will be absolutely inconceivable', and the government issued an ultimatum,³ accusing the Serb government of having 'tolerated the machinations of various societies and associations'. The Serb government accepted almost all the Austrian demands except for allowing Austrian police and judges to operate in Serbia;⁴ but the Austrian government broke off diplomatic relations, mobilised its army,⁵ and its artillery bombarded Belgrade.⁶

The German chancellor believed that Russia 'grows and grows and hangs upon us ever more heavily like a nightmare',⁷ and the kaiser had promised to stand by Austria if it attacked Serbia. The Russian General Staff had secretly agreed to put the Odesa, Kazan, Kyiv, Moscow and St. Petersburg military districts under martial law if Austrian troops entered Serbia, and called up reservists to frontier divisions. The German government warned the Russian government that if military preparations did not cease, Germany would 'immediately go over to the offensive',⁸ but the tsar ordered a general mobilisation.⁹ At 1.00am on 1 August the German ambassador handed an ultimatum to the Russian foreign minister, and hours later the German government declared war on Russia.¹⁰ The chancellor invited leading Reichstag deputies to hear the government's position on the war, and SPD deputies assured him and the bourgeois deputies that they would know their position before they announced it in the Reichstag.¹¹ In Berlin a huge crowd cheered the kaiser,¹² and the government banned public gatherings,¹³ reintroduced censorship,¹⁴ and confiscated enemy nationals' money, including that which SPD trustees held for the RSDRP.¹⁵

Rosa Luxemburg, the 43-year-old Polish intelektualistka and founder-member of the SDKPiL, who was also an influential member of the SPD, had returned to Berlin,¹⁶ and the 59-year-old leading SPD intellectual Karl Kautsky told her that there was 'so much enthusiasm amongst our social democrats' for war that many had volunteered for the army. Another SPD leader told her that abstaining on the vote for war credits would mean that the party's Reichstag deputies would 'lose their popularity in the eyes of the workers'.¹⁷ The SPD School where Luxemburg taught was closed for the duration,¹⁸ and SPD congresses were postponed indefinitely.¹⁹ Luxemburg contacted 20 SPD deputies, though only two intellectuals, the 42-year-old Karl Liebknecht and 68-year-old Franz Mehring replied.²⁰ Mehring, Leo Jogisches, a left-wing intellectual in the SDKPiL, and Julian Marchlewski, a Pole who was active in the SPD, who were both in their late forties, and subsequently they and the slightly younger SPD intellectuals Wilhelm Pieck, Käthe Dunker and Herman Dunker met in Luxemburg's apartment. They sent telegrams to 300 or so leading SPD members, hoping to prevent the deputies from voting for war credits,²¹ but the only response was the 57-year-old intellectual Klara Zetkin's letter of solidarity.²² There were 110 SPD Reichstag deputies,²³ but not all of them turned up for the caucus.²⁴ Kautsky believed that there were 'scarcely a dozen' nationalists among them,²⁵ and assumed a majority would vote against war credits, yet they supported them by 78 to 14.²⁶ They asked the chancellor to renounce annexations and not invade neutral countries, but he refused,²⁷ and insisted on the removal of a sentence from their statement. 'From the moment the war becomes one of conquest we will stand up against it with the most decisive measures.'²⁸

All the SPD deputies had to follow the caucus majority position in the Reichstag,²⁹ and on the 4th a spokesman announced that they were 'not called upon to decide for or against the war, but simply to decide about the means necessary for the country's defence,³⁰ against 'Russian despotism'.³¹ A mass strike would make the country more vulnerable to attack and give the government a pretext to destroy the party,³² while a war was in the interests of German workers and 'the future interests of international Socialism'.³³ The majority of Reichstag deputies felt that

they had to 'ward off' the danger of Russian occupation and 'safeguard the independence of our own country'. One deputy left the chamber,³⁴ though there was no vote, and others broke into 'storms of applause'.³⁵ The Reichstag adjourned,³⁶ and the SPD Vorstand (Executive Committee) and union leaders promised civil peace for the duration.³⁷ Luxemburg was 'almost broken',³⁸ since the SPD had become 'a stinking corpse'.³⁹

The French government had received a German ultimatum and proclaimed a general mobilisation on the 2nd.⁴⁰ The German government declared war on the 3rd, and on the 4th the leaders of the Parti Socialiste Français (the French Socialist Party) argued in their newspaper *L'Humanité* that PSF deputies in the Chambre des Députés (parliament) should vote for war credits, and they did.⁴¹ The Belgian government had also received an ultimatum on the 2nd, demanding free passage for its army through to the French border, in return for substantial compensation. After it refused,⁴² German troops entered Belgium late on the 4th.⁴³ The Belgian army resisted,⁴⁴ but the Belgian chair of the International bureau accepted a position at the defence ministry and another leading socialist also became a minister.⁴⁵ In Germany none of the 91 socialist papers protested about German troops entering Belgium.⁴⁶ The British treaty with Russia did not bind the Liberal government to go to war for its sake,⁴⁷ but Belgium was an ally, and at 11.00pm on the 4th the government declared war on Germany.⁴⁸ Labour MPs supported the decision, and trade union leaders promised an industrial truce for the duration.⁴⁹

The Ottoman Empire had a secret alliance with Germany against Russia that did not require them to undertake military action, but its war minister had ordered a general mobilisation on the 2nd,⁵⁰ and mining of the Bosphorus Straits and the Dardanelles. Around half of Russia's exports went that way, and on the 4th the grand vizier warned that a Russian provocation in the Black Sea would trigger the closure of the Straits to Russian shipping.⁵¹

In Stuttgart Zetkin published *Die Gleichheit (Equality)*, the SPD's bi-monthly paper for women, and it printed the last two paragraphs of the pre-war International resolution against supporting war in large type on the front page.⁵² The paper denounced the 'vampire of capitalism' and 'profit- and laurel-seeking warmongers', and praised Russian strikers. Zetkin worried that the war would 'strip the unenlightened masses' of 'their last ounce of rationalism and humanity', and argued for strikes.⁵³ She had a card index of contacts, while Pieck, Marchlewski and Jogisches also had sizeable networks, and Paul Levi, one of Luxemburg's lawyers, was the second secretary of the Berlin SPD organisation. Liebknecht protested against a Bremen paper which claimed that all the SPD deputies had been in favour of voting for war credits. Mathilde Jacob, a 41-year-old typist, produced stencils for the dissenters' *Sozialdemokratische Korrespondenz (Social-Democratic Correspondence)*, and accompanied Luxemburg to meetings, conferences and demonstrations. Jacob later recalled that other newspaper editors read it 'avidly', but only 'a few Marxist papers reprinted articles'.⁵⁴

The Hungarian Diet (parliament) gave unqualified support to the war,⁵⁵ and though the policy of Magyarországi Szociáldemokrata Párt (the Social Democratic Party of Hungary) was anti-war, it was ineffective. The parliamentary deputies of the Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (the Social-Democratic Party of Austria) blamed the government for the war,⁵⁶ but voted for war credits,⁵⁷ and the Reichsrat (parliament) was closed for the duration on the 6th. The SPDÖ central organ, *Arbeiter-Zeitung (Workers' Newspaper)*, argued that Germany was 'united in the struggle for her national honour',⁵⁸ and insisted that the SPD deputies' decision 'fully corresponds to the spirit and mood' of German-speaking Austrian SDs.⁵⁹

(ii) Five percent fewer boots and 11 percent fewer uniforms than were needed

In summer 1914 the population of the Russian Empire, excluding Poland, was estimated at over 178 million, spread across 8.5 million square miles.⁶⁰ The overwhelming majority were peasants, though almost 26.3 million lived in towns and cities.⁶¹ The regular army numbered 1.423 million,⁶² and there were four million reservists.⁶³ Around 27 million men aged 21 to 43 were theoretically liable to be conscripted, though around half were exempt.⁶⁴ Active service for conscripts was three years in the infantry and artillery and four years in the cavalry, engineers and support corps, then seven years in the First Reserve and eight in the Second.⁶⁵ Mobilisation orders were issued to around 20 percent of industrial workers,⁶⁶ including about 17 percent in St. Petersburg, 30 to 40 percent in the Donbass in Ukraine and 50 percent in the Urals in western Siberia.⁶⁷ Many Donbass miners and over 12 percent of Urals workers volunteered,⁶⁸ and some industrial plants lost 20 percent of their workforce.⁶⁹ The General Staff had anticipated mobilising almost 2.53 million;⁷⁰ but soon mobilised 3.1 million reserves, 1.3 million first class territorials and 715,000 recruits.⁷¹ Over 80 percent of factories soon converted to war production,⁷² though managers shortened working hours or the number of days each week; and output often fell by between 25 and 50 percent.⁷³ The government called up political émigrés, hoping to secure their extradition, but Britain and France refused to cooperate, so the Russian government asked the political émigrés to join the Allies' armies.⁷⁴

Across Russia there were 75,000 hired employees such as teachers, doctors and other intelligentsy in Russian villages in 441 districts in 34 provinces, and they had often established a direct link to the peasantry;⁷⁵ but that summer only 30 percent of conscripts were literate,⁷⁶ and almost 94 percent were peasants. Each infantry soldier was supposed to have a brown-green blouse belted over matching trousers, well-greased linen or cotton footcloths, sturdy knee-high boots, a heavy gray-brown overcoat, a five-shot repeating rifle with a bayonet and 120 rounds of ammunition. The total weight, including other kit and rations, was 58 pounds. Their diet of 4,000 calories a day would consist mainly of black bread, soup, meat, groats (husked kernels of cereals), tea and large quantities of sugar;⁷⁷ though the shortage of flour meant that field bakeries would not be able to operate effectively.⁷⁸ There were around five percent fewer boots and 11 percent fewer uniforms than were needed.⁷⁹ Government officials had previously relied on German tanneries for boot-leather, and had no plans for producing more boots. Russian cobblers could not find enough leather to work on,⁸⁰ and only one factory could produce tanning extract. Most boots had previously been imported from Germany,⁸¹ so when the infantry's *bast* (tree bark) shoes wore out, they would have to march and fight without them.⁸² The army had 4.652 million rifles, and though the standard rifle was adequate for veterans, it was inaccurate in the hands of inexperienced soldiers.⁸³ Around 140,000 infantry had no rifles,⁸⁴ and when troops marched through St. Petersburg only the front ranks had them.⁸⁵ New rifles could fire up to 15 rounds a minute with a range of two miles,⁸⁶ and though factories could produce over 58.5 million rifle and machine-gun cartridges a month, every replacement rifle and cartridge would have to travel an average of around 930 miles to the front, while the average in Germany and Austro-Hungary was less than a third of that distance.⁸⁷ The Russian army had 424,000 revolvers and 4,152 machine-guns,⁸⁸ which were portable and could fire 600 rounds a minute,⁸⁹ but there was only one for every 1,000 infantry. Each regiment was supposed to have eight, though most had six. Officers had estimated that 1,000 cartridges per rifle, and 75,000 per machine-gun, would be sufficient, though ordnance depots held only 75 percent of the necessary artillery shells.⁹⁰ Most new weapons and ammunition were produced in state-owned plants, but they lacked the capacity to meet the demands of a modern war. They could produce 27,000 rifles and 9,000 artillery shells a month at best,⁹¹ and though 7,200 light guns, 1,031 medium guns, 4,157 machine-guns and 4,124,000 rifles were under construction, no heavy guns were being manufactured,⁹² though the army had between 6,004 and 6,700.⁹³ Medium guns had 25 percent of the shells they needed and large guns had 61 percent.⁹⁴ The artillery had 5.2 million shells, but would fire 45,000 each day, while 13,000 were being made.⁹⁵ The artillerymen had been well trained,⁹⁶ and barrages could shred men over 25 miles away.⁹⁷ Agricultural machinery plants could produce armaments,⁹⁸ but the lack of gun-repairing capacity would be a serious handicap in a long war.⁹⁹ The General Staff estimated that seven million shells, or about 1,000 for every field gun, would last six months,¹⁰⁰ and they were confident that any shortfall could be met from stockpiles,¹⁰¹ Each gun had 800 shells, but needed 1,500. The army had 679 motor vehicles, and could requisition 475 owned by civilians,¹⁰² plus 418 motor-lorries,¹⁰³ but two motorised ambulances,¹⁰⁴ and the lack of training in trench warfare and a shortage of barbed wire would make for weak defences.¹⁰⁵

The Red Cross organised 2,255 hospitals, and 149 of those near the fronts had 2,000 nurses, 2,450 doctors, 46,000 beds,¹⁰⁶ and two motorised ambulances.¹⁰⁷ Just before hostilities began delegates from almost all the Russian *zemstva* (local authorities) had founded Vserossiyskiy zemsky soyuz (the All-Russian Zemstvo Union) in Moscow,¹⁰⁸ which was under the control of the Red Cross.¹⁰⁹ Most members recruited for the army, and outnumbered those who wanted constitutional reforms.¹¹⁰ They decided to maintain up to 30,000 hospital beds in distribution centres,¹¹¹ plus canteens, workshops, registration and labour offices, and they appointed a committee in New York to procure goods, including 300,000 pairs of boots and 1.7 million pairs of shoes. Just behind the fronts Zemstvo Union hospitals prepared to treat sick and wounded troops,¹¹² and had medical stores, units for dealing with infectious diseases, bacteriological laboratories and disinfection facilities, and could feed over 300,000 construction workers and refugees.¹¹³ Soyuz Gorodov (the Union of Towns) had been placed under the control of the Red Cross,¹¹⁴ and it had hospitals were in Galicia.¹¹⁵ One with 600 beds would soon have to cope with 3,500 Russian wounded and many Austrians.¹¹⁶

The army had 5,854 telephones, though there should have been twice as many, and 500 field telegraphs, instead of the necessary 700.¹¹⁷ The field-telephone system was worse than Germany's, which was notoriously unreliable, and the Russian operators' skills were poor and the codes were the simplest possible. The intelligence system was almost non-existent, so cavalry would have to be scouts. Most of the 263 aircraft were French-made, and the only aero-engine factory in Russia produced five a week, while the only anti-aircraft battery was at the tsar's palace at Tsarskoe Selo near St. Petersburg.¹¹⁸ The Baltic Fleet had three new dreadnoughts to defend the approaches to the capital,¹¹⁹ but altogether Russia had eight battleships, six armoured cruisers, eight light cruisers, 120 destroyers and 32 submarines,¹²⁰ though most were so old that they could not challenge the German navy. Two light cruisers ordered from German ship yards were incomplete, and would not be delivered.¹²¹

A third of the German population worked on the land.¹²² Around 13 million men out of a population of 65 million were liable for military service,¹²³ and almost all were literate.¹²⁴ Austro-Hungary had 414,000 troops and NCOs and 36,000 officers,¹²⁵ whose arms and armaments were up to date.¹²⁶ Together with Germany they had 136 infantry divisions, with twice as many soldiers per division as the Russians, and over six times as many heavy gun batteries.¹²⁷ The Russians had 122.5 infantry divisions, Germany and Austro-Hungary had 157.5 between them, and though Germany and Austro-Hungary had 22 cavalry divisions the Russians had 28. The German army of 597,000 would have to fight on two fronts. It had three times as many howitzers as the Russians,¹²⁸ and they were much more up to date,¹²⁹ while its machine-guns could fire 500 rounds per minute.¹³⁰

In Russia the tsar ceded powers related to the war to the General Staff,¹³¹ who controlled the front line railways which formed a third of the network,¹³² but no military trains could travel more than 200 miles a day and most would be needed to carry horses and fodder.¹³³ The General Staff decided to evacuate Kyiv in Ukraine in July, without informing the war minister, who thought it 'to say the least, premature'.¹³⁴ Large areas of European Russia, mainly in the west, and including St. Petersburg and its province, were placed under martial law, and other regions under 'reinforced security'.¹³⁵

There were 20,000 or so locomotives,¹³⁶ or 40 percent fewer than Germany, and Russia had two-thirds the number of wagons,¹³⁷ yet there was a shortfall of 2,000 locomotives and 80,000 wagons.¹³⁸ Over 11,300 miles of lines were under construction in Russia, and while 18 served the western and south-western borders.¹³⁹ The border of the Polish salient was 1,500 miles long and the only line west of Łódź did not run east to west.¹⁴⁰

Austro-Hungary's network density was 18 times higher than Russia's, while Germany's was 30 times higher,¹⁴¹ and 36 lines served its border. The Russian network covered 45,360 miles,¹⁴² and was one twelfth the size of Germany's, and many Russian lines near the border were the same gauge.¹⁴³ On the White Sea coast the line from the ice-free port of Murmansk to St. Petersburg was incomplete.¹⁴⁴ The port of Arkhangelsk, 1,500 miles from the front,¹⁴⁵ was served by a single-track narrow-gauge line which could cope with one passenger train and three goods trains of 70 wagons a day,¹⁴⁶ while the Trans-Siberian express took a fortnight to cover the 7,000 miles from Moscow to Vladivostok on the Pacific coast.¹⁴⁷

Urals metal plants would not be able to supply all the iron that would be needed. The railways could carry around 30 percent of the available coal,¹⁴⁸ which came from the Donbass in Ukraine;¹⁴⁹ but production was almost 10 percent of Germany's and pig iron output was 25 percent.¹⁵⁰ The Agriculture Ministry would have to supply the army,¹⁵¹ and requisitioned over two million horses,¹⁵² and huge quantities of animal feed,¹⁵³ but mineral fertilisers would soon become scarce.¹⁵⁴ Around 40 percent of St. Petersburg's meat had come from Siberia, but would soon stop arriving.¹⁵⁵ Many new industrial workers came from the villages, so the land under cultivation was set to fall by 20 percent.¹⁵⁶ Zinc from Poland accounted for a third of domestic consumption, and Russia had no aluminium, nickel or tin. It imported around 35 percent of the needs of its electrical engineering industry, 70 percent of machine tools and most textile machinery and steam engines. The government abandoned the gold standard, raised taxes and printed money at an unprecedented rate. It believed its gold and foreign currency reserves would be enough collateral for loans,¹⁵⁷ and it had access to the London and New York bond markets.¹⁵⁸ It suspended the conversion of banknotes into gold,¹⁵⁹ and believed its war materiel was enough for a 12-week campaign.¹⁶⁰

(iii) Tannenburg

Before the war the kaiser had told a leading Polish aristocrat that if the German army was victorious against Russia he would establish an independent Polish state 'linked with us'.¹⁶¹ When war broke out the Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Polish Socialist Party, or PPS), was split between the revolutionary nationalist PPS-Prawica (PPS-Right) and the revolutionary socialist PPS-Lewica (PPS-Left), whose members cooperated with SDKPił left-wingers to form an anti-war committee in Warszawa;¹⁶² but PPS-Left leaders were soon arrested and sent to Russia and many younger members were conscripted.¹⁶³ In Galicia Józef Piłsudski, the 46-year-old leader of the PPS-Prawica *bojówka* (combat organisation), mobilised about 170 infantry, who had old rifles, and carried more for expected recruits, and eight cavalymen, though three had no horse. On 6 August (according to the western calendar), they entered Russian Poland and occupied Kielce, about 75 miles northeast of Kraków, though hardly any Poles joined them. The Russian army mobilised many Polish reservists,¹⁶⁴ but the Germans recruited about 200,000. On the 7th German aeroplanes dropped leaflets behind Russian lines promising 'freedom and independence'.¹⁶⁵ One Russian general had 25 telephones and a few telegraph transmitters, but the operators sent uncoded messages,¹⁶⁶ and by the 11th the Germans were intercepting them and knew the Russians' battle plan. On the 13th German troops broke through the Russian lines at Brest-Litovsk in southwest Biełarus, near the Polish border.¹⁶⁷ Next day the Russian commander promised freedom of religion and language and self-government in Poland, 'under the sceptre of the

Emperor of Russia!¹⁶⁸ The Austrian and Hungarian governments also aimed to unite the independence movements in Poland under their control. Piłsudski merged his riflemen with other paramilitary groups to form the Polish Legion, which had Austro-Hungarian officers.¹⁶⁹ The two brigades had around 2,500 troops, but relied on Austro-Hungary for equipment.¹⁷⁰ There were about 1.2 million Russian troops in the south-west,¹⁷¹ and they attacked Galicia,¹⁷² on a 300 mile front,¹⁷³ reportedly without maps.¹⁷⁴ The General Staff planned to deport German settlers from the western border of Poland, and around 200,000 were sent to Siberia under armed guard.¹⁷⁵

Around 250,000 Ukrainians volunteered for the Austro-Hungarian army. Russian socialist émigrés had formed Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukrainy (the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine) in Lwów, the Galician capital, and supported Austro-Hungary and Germany, though they fled to Vienna as the Russian army approached.¹⁷⁶

The Russian army's northern headquarters had been moved to Баранавічы (Baranovichy) in western Biełarus in the 10th. The Germans had four infantry corps in East Prussia, plus a few reserve divisions, and two Russian armies outnumbered them by 29.5 divisions to 11. The Russian divisions contained 16 battalions, while the Germans' contained 12. Russian cavalry outnumbered German cavalry by 10 to one, and the Russians had 5,800 field guns, compared to the Germans' 774. The Russians invaded East Prussia on the 17th,¹⁷⁷ but were stopped at Gumbinnen, 13 miles inside the border.¹⁷⁸ The Germans took 4,000 casualties,¹⁷⁹ but the Russians took around 25,000,¹⁸⁰ and retreating German survivors burned buildings and destroyed food and forage.¹⁸¹ On the 19th the Germans took 90,000 prisoners near Gumbinnen.¹⁸² The Russians took 6,000, but retreated five miles next day.¹⁸³

On the 22nd the governments of France, Britain and Russia (the 'Allies') agreed not to seek a separate peace with Germany or Austro-Hungary (the 'Central Powers').¹⁸⁴ Next day Japan entered the war on the side of the Allies,¹⁸⁵ but by the 25th German troops in Belgium had destroyed the military headquarters in Louvain, plus the medieval university and the cathedral, and had summarily executed civilians.¹⁸⁶

By the 29th, at Tannenberg in East Prussia, the encircled Russian army had lost 150 field guns and half of their motorised vehicles. The Baltic German General Rennenkampf ordered survivors to retreat to Kovno in Lithuania, and became known as 'Rennen vom Kampf' ('Running from Battle'). Next day, after the Russians had suffered at least 7,000 dead and lost thousands of horses,¹⁸⁷ the commander surrendered;¹⁸⁸ though on the 31st Russian troops attacked the Austro-Hungarian army in Galicia and inflicted at least 5,000 casualties.¹⁸⁹

(iv) Revolutionary socialists in Russia

For 1914 the Okhrana had an annual budget of about five million rubles, and had 387 staff at its headquarters at 16 Fontanka in St. Petersburg.¹⁹⁰ Intelligently formed almost 40 percent of spies among SDs and around 60 percent among SD workers, including artisans, railway, factory, mill workers and printers.¹⁹¹ The spies had to oppose 'any organisational merger' between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.¹⁹² The Okhrana had three agents among the Bolsheviks, and 11 in the region, including three on its committee.¹⁹³

By summer St. Petersburg's population was around 2.1 million,¹⁹⁴ and about half were registered peasants. Factory workers put in 12 to 14 hours a day and there were reportedly almost 1,200 'accidents' a month.¹⁹⁵ Just before the war broke out the 28-year-old émigré Old Bolshevik engineer and rabochy-intelligent (politically educated worker) Alexandr Shlyapnikov had arrived in St. Petersburg with a French passport, used a false name,¹⁹⁶ and met 10 to 15 Bolshevik intelligenty. Reportedly 'party members had long relied' on them for leadership, but some now argued that to 'go against the people's mood would lead to isolation' and those who opposed the war 'had no well worked out view'. The RSDRP committee had 'lapsed into silence' and Bolshevik students criticised it in the first anti-war leaflet.¹⁹⁷

Andrey Bubnov had been born in Ivanovo in 1883. He later attended a secondary school, and was a member of revolutionary kruzhenki (clandestine circles) by 1901. After he graduated in 1903 he went to Moscow Agricultural Institute, joined the RSDRP, became a Bolshevik, and worked as an organiser and propagandist, mainly in the central industrial region around Moscow, and did not graduate from the Institute. He joined the Ivanovo party committee in summer 1905, and was a delegate to the 1906 Stockholm congress and the London congress of 1907, and at the end of that year the CC transferred him to the Moscow party committee. He was arrested in 1908, but released in 1909, and appointed as a CC agent. In May 1910 he was co-opted onto the staff of the Bolshevik 'centre'. He was subsequently arrested, but freed in 1911 and worked in Nizhni Novgorod and its industrial suburb of Sormovo. He was co-opted onto the Organisation Committee tasked with summoning an all-Russia Party congress, and tried to escape abroad, but was arrested. He was elected as a candidate member of the CC, helped to produce six issues of the Bolshevik Volga paper *Povolzhskaya Byl*, and contributed to *Pravda (Truth)* in St. Petersburg in 1912-1913. He was a member of the Duma 'fraction' and the Party committee's EC, though by 1914 he had been

deported to Kharkiv. He was arrested after the Bolsheviks issued an anti-war leaflet in August, and exiled to Poltava, where he joined the organisational bureau created to summon a conference on the lower Volga.¹⁹⁸

A party congress was impossible, and documents could not be smuggled abroad, so two Old Bolsheviks, the 30-year-old former worker and Duma deputy Alexey Badayev and the 50-year-old intelligent Mikhail Alexandrov, buried them in Finland.¹⁹⁹ Peasant Duma deputies called for the defence of Russia,²⁰⁰ though Menshevik and Bolshevik deputies and one from PPS-Lewica did not,²⁰¹ and there was another SD organisation in the capital.

Friedrich Linde had been born in 1881 into the family of a German chemist, and a Polish peasant woman who had grown up in a small farm near St. Petersburg. She later ran an inn that was popular with revolutionaries who were avoiding the police. As a boy Friedrich became involved in the revolutionary underground and later attended a secondary school. In 1899 he enrolled at St. Petersburg University and became a leading figure in the student protest movement. In 1905 he worked with SDs and organised students into an 'academic legion' which spread revolutionary propaganda among workers. He joined the Bolsheviks, but was taken to Kresty Prison. He was later forced to leave for Europe, but returned in 1913, after the tsar's amnesty. When war broke out in 1914 he joined the Finland Regiment, and was soon promoted to sergeant because of his courageous leadership.²⁰²

Lury Larin had been born into a Zionist writer's family in Simferopol, Crimea, in 1882. He supported the RSDRP Second Congress 'minority' in 1903 and escaped abroad in 1904. He returned in 1905 and was an active Menshevik in Crimea, Ukraine and the Caucasus.²⁰³ In 1912, after the split in the RSDRP in Prague, the dissident August bloc in Vienna and the struggle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in St. Petersburg, the initiative for what became the St. Petersburg *Mezhraionka* (inter-district committee) came from Larin, Nikolai Egorov, a former Menshevik Duma deputy from Perm, A.M. Novoselov, an Old Bolshevik and Vasilievsky Island metalworkers' union activist, the Old Bolshevik intelligentka Elena Adamovich and Konstantin Iurenev, a 23-year-old Bolshevik. The worker members were overwhelmingly Mensheviks, and though around 60 percent generally agreed with the Bolsheviks, they refused to join them, but were committed to unity 'from below'.²⁰⁴ Larin was deported from Tbilisi in 1913,²⁰⁵ but by spring 1914 the surviving *Mezhraiontsy* met in forests near St. Petersburg, or behind railway stations, and formed a network of factory *kruzhki* in the city. Usually 15 to 20 attended each meeting, though sometimes 60 to 70. By summer Iurenev had been freed and estimated that there were around 1,000 altogether, and P. Nikolaev, the Old Bolshevik secretary of the metalworkers' union on Vasilievsky Island, was influential. The Bolsheviks were strong in Vyborg district, so the *Mezhraiontsy* did not set up a rival organisation. According to Iurenev there were 'factional loyalties but no factions', and 'all responsible work was carried out by the workers themselves'. There were no city-wide gatherings and only occasional leaflets, though Iurenev had published two small articles in the 57-year old former SR terrorist turned SD defensist émigré Georgi Plekhanov's *Edvinstvo (Unity)*, and Egorov had written for the non-factional *Borba (Struggle)* in Vienna. By July the *Mezhraiontsy* had published four leaflets with print-runs from 800 to 2,000, and early in August one argued that government slogans were smokescreens for rapacious, imperialism and capitalist greed, and theirs should be 'war on war'; but several defensists left.²⁰⁶

Moscow's population was around 1.6 million,²⁰⁷ but the RSDRP lacked an effective national centre.²⁰⁸ Most Mensheviks favoured a quick end to hostilities and a democratic peace without annexations or indemnities,²⁰⁹ and were 'decided defensists'.²¹⁰ Two experienced SRs had founded the Moscow Group. In Tula, the armaments centre south of Moscow, SR and SD workers from shell and firearms plants met in woods outside the town, and the SRs got a press from Moscow. They printed anti-war leaflets,²¹¹ which argued that everyone on Earth were 'brothers and sisters', and someone put one on the gates of a steel rolling mill. Patriots pursued him, but he told reservists that they did not have to fight the Germans. Most SRs were defensists, though in Minsk, the capital of Biefarus, SRs, Bundists and other SDs established *Voenno-Revoliutsionnaya Organizatsya* (the Military-Revolutionary Organisation), and propagandised front line troops.²¹² Ivanovo cotton mill workers had struck in protest at the war, and clashed with the pro-war majority, but police and troops wounded and killed strikers.²¹³

On the Volga the population of Samara factory workers had gone on strike against the war.²¹⁴ Most Samara SRs were also against war, and consulted SRs in Moscow and St. Petersburg to see if they agreed and to ask for instructions. There were disturbances at military induction centres in Tsaritsyn and Volok. In Saratov an SR, an SD worker and a Menshevik opposed the war;²¹⁵ and though workers at the Gantke metal plant went on strike, many others, including some previously thought to be politically 'conscious', celebrated Russian military victories. The government had sent radical Latvian and Polish workers to the city, where only plants with war-related orders operated full-time,²¹⁶ and there were patriotic demonstrations by railway workers.²¹⁷

The only Ukrainian-language paper, *Rada (Council)*, was closed early in August,²¹⁸ even though it supported the war.²¹⁹ In the Donbass Vera and Sofia miners went on strike,²²⁰ and the government warned the Prodogol coal cartel to catch up with demand or it would establish its own pits.²²¹ Mensheviks formed a committee with SRs and Bolsheviks, and published anti-war leaflets, but the police arrested them.²²² Kharkiv locomotive plant workers went on strike to demand the sacking of German and Austrian supervisors,²²³ and RSDRP organisations there and in

Chernigov put out anti-war leaflets and held peaceful demonstrations; but the police arrested them and those in Odesa, and almost all RSDRP organisations in Ukraine ceased to exist.²²⁴ In Iuzovka two Bolsheviks and a Menshevik had tried to organise a counter-demonstration against a patriotic parade of a few hundred organised by an ironworks foreman, but the police and townspeople chased them away. The mobilisation took over 17 percent of the region's metalworkers and almost half of the miners.²²⁵ In Luhansk Mensheviks, SRs and Bolsheviks led the metalworkers' union. The police closed it, but revolutionaries at the Hartmann locomotive factory formed an illegal union and influenced others. In the Black Sea port of Mykolaev, where the shipyard was the main supplier of warships for the Black Sea Fleet, there were groups of SRs, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, and SRs in the port of Odesa agitated against the war. SRs had had a strong organisation in Mariupol, and in Kyiv and Ekaterinoslav. In nearby Taganrog SRs, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks (the largest number) had formed a joint committee, and SRs published anti-war literature in Rostov-na-Donu.²²⁶ Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians had had to sell their land and possessions, and the supply of grain to the rest of Russia fell.²²⁷ In Crimea the police reported that illegal literature calling for workers to 'fight against the war and the autocracy' in and around the naval base of Sevastopol.²²⁸

In Caucasia the national socialist party Հայ Յեղափոխական Դաշնակցութիւն (the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, or Dashnaksutjun), and Սոցիալ Դեմոկրատ Հնչակյան Կուսակցություն (the Social Democrat Hunchakian Party) supported the war because they hoped it would bring about a 'Greater Armenia', and they mobilised four volunteer corps.²²⁹ Their slogan was 'war to final victory and everything for the war'. The Armenian National Bureau was in Tbilisi, and the government gave the mayor 245,000 rubles to recruit Armenian volunteers. There was little support for the war among SDs in Georgia or Azerbaijan, and most refused to support it,²³⁰ though the 36-year-old Menshevik intelligent Grigol Uratadze supported the Allies. When the 46-year-old Menshevik intelligent Noe Zhordania returned late in August he supported the Allies at an SD conference, though the Menshevik Noe Ramishvili called for peace without annexations or indemnities, though a second meeting argued for the 'strictest neutrality'. The 40-year-old Menshevik Akaki Chkhenkeli returned from Berlin and sympathised with the SPD's defensism. Blank spaces appeared in *akhali azri* (*New Viewpoint*), and some articles characterised the war as imperialist, but the paper also published a letter from Plekhanov supporting the Allies. Zhordania argued that self-defence was compatible with internationalism, and socialists could enter bourgeois governments on a temporary basis, since their aims coincided, while a few SDs around the Georgian paper *shadrevani* (*The Fountain*) argued that the war offered an opportunity for an attempt to win national autonomy.²³¹ In Berlin Georgian émigrés promised the German government to take Georgia out of the war in return for supporting a separate kingdom.²³²

During August 27,000 workers had gone on strike in St. Petersburg and their demands included the withdrawal of Cossacks from factories and freedom of the press.²³³ Officially, there had been 24 strikes and 24,688 strikers across Russia,²³⁴ including 1,180 in St. Petersburg.²³⁵ There had been attacks on the *St. Petersburger Zeitung* (*St. Petersburg Newspaper*) and the German embassy.²³⁶ The tsar had banned the use of the German language, closed German-language newspapers, banned meetings of people of German heritage and sacked German officials.²³⁷

By 1 September the tsar had decided that the name of St. Petersburg was too German and changed it to Petrograd.²³⁸ The workers' social insurance campaign had revived the SRs, who claimed to influence a third of the city's workers, though they took little notice of SR émigrés.²³⁹ After those who were adamantly opposed to the war were arrested, SR activity in the capital was brought to a standstill,²⁴⁰ and factory cells disappeared;²⁴¹ though around 64,000 strikers had made political demands.²⁴²

An SR visited Tver, 110 miles northwest of Moscow, and local SRs issued leaflets and a newspaper, *Tversky Listok* (*Tver Sheet*). Moscow SRs published a leaflet for 'peasants, workers, and all honest people' which argued that 'This war is not our war, the German peasant and worker is starving just as we are, and we are not his enemy'. It was time to 'throw off the yoke of oppression and split 'the hydra of autocracy and arbitrary rule'. SRs had also published a lengthy critique of the war which argued that both sides were equally responsible, so 'defensism' was unjustifiable, and though German imperialism was a great danger, a Russian victory would 'strengthen zoological nationalism and impose a political moratorium on the liberation movement'. The police closed the printers' union press which SRs used, but they had type, someone found a roller, a printer acquired a press, and they published *Rabochaya Mysl* (*Workers' Thought*), though the police closed it. A former Petrograd SR committee member arrived from Moscow and met 42 others. They called for extreme measures against the government, including terror, and had contacts in Tver, Tula, Samara and elsewhere.²⁴³

On 14 September government and zemstvo employees were barred from belonging to 'anti-government' parties,²⁴⁴ and the Mensheviks' *Nashe Zaria* (*Our Dawn*) was closed.²⁴⁵ The Bolshevik Shlyapnikov kept his distance from the editors of *Pravda*, and escaped when the police rounded them up. The French government had called on citizens abroad to return, so he could not remain in Russia on his French passport, and left for Sweden with a mandate from the Petrograd Bolshevik committee and the Bolshevik Duma deputies.²⁴⁶ In Stockholm the 53-year-old SD revisionist Hjalmar Branting supported the Allies.²⁴⁷ Shlyapnikov met him and the revolutionaries Fredrick

Ström and Zeth Höglund, who were both in their early thirties.²⁴⁸ They tried to link SDs in northern Russia to the émigré RSDRP CC in Switzerland.²⁴⁹

Maria Ulyanova, a 36-year-old Bolshevik intelligentka, had tried to organise Vologda railway workers, early in 1914, but after the war began many were conscripted,²⁵⁰ so she went to the capital. The police found copies of the Bolshevik *Pravda*, *Rabonitsa (Woman Worker)*, *Prosveshchenie (Enlightenment)* and the Menshevik *Nashe Zaria* in her flat, but she was released and went to Moscow, where the Bolshevik organisation had collapsed. She joined the RSDRP committee, but the police knew she met SDs, including the 44-year-old Old Bolshevik Zinaida Krzhizhanovskaya. In Petrograd Maria's sister, the 50-year-old Bolshevik intelligentka Anna Elizarova, had joined the staff of *Pravda* and *Prosveshchenie*, and was invited to join the committee which was organising an international conference of SD women, though the war made that impossible, and *Rabonitsa* and *Prosveshchenie* were closed.²⁵¹

(v) The Russian revolutionary socialist diaspora

By 1914 the Okhrana Agentura (foreign agency) in Paris had nine agents among émigré SRs, three among SDs,²⁵² plus one in Nice, Menton and Grenoble, two in Cannes and in San Remo, four in Cap Martin, five elsewhere in France, and one in London, Berlin, Corsica, Alassis, Genoa and Zurich.²⁵³

Seven years earlier the 28-year-old émigré non-factional SD intelligent Lev Bronstein lived in Vienna, and other disillusioned members of the August bloc, had launched *Borba (Struggle)*,²⁵⁴ which they published in St. Petersburg. It attacked Bolsheviks and Mensheviks for factionalism, opportunism and legalism,²⁵⁵ and argued for unity.²⁵⁶ His second wife, the SD intelligentka Natalia Sedova, had been born in Romny, Ukraine, in 1882,²⁵⁷ into the family of a wealthy merchant. Her father was of Cossack origins and her mother was from the Polish nobility. Sedova had studied at the Kharkov Institute for Noble Maidens, but was expelled for revolutionary activity.²⁵⁸

Early in August 1914 Bronstein found the Vienna streets 'thronged with excited and patriotic crowds shouting "Death to the Serbs"', and his six-year-old son came back home with a black eye after shouting 'Long live the Serbs!' The police chief wanted the family to leave immediately, and by 6.00pm they were on a train to Zurich.²⁵⁹ Six weeks later *Kyivskaya Mysl (Kyiv Thought)* asked Bronstein to go to Paris.²⁶⁰ He contacted Pierre Monatte, Alfred Griot, Marcel Martinet and other internationalist syndicalists around *La Vie Ouvrière (The Worker's Life)*.²⁶¹

The 40-year-old émigré intelligent and leading Menshevik Iuly Tserderbaum was in Paris. He had felt a 'mighty earthquake had swept over the international proletariat' when the war began, and the SPD's 'enormous authority' 'disappeared'. He 'momentarily wished for some military victories by Russia', but then for no victories by either side.²⁶² He believed cooperation with the Bolsheviks 'would compromise us more than they would help us',²⁶³ opposed underground organization in Russia and favoured a legal workers' party.²⁶⁴ The slogan of Menshevik internationalists in Russia was 'Peace at all costs', though Tserderbaum insisted that this was not defeatism.²⁶⁵

Plekhanov had written from San Remo in the south of France to the printers' union leaders in Russia and advised a Menshevik Duma deputy to vote for war credits.²⁶⁶ He outlined his position in *Rech*, the paper of the Russian liberal Kadets, and the British Social Democratic Party's *Justice*, then went to Lausanne to speak to émigré Russian SDs,²⁶⁷ and denounced the SPD leaders.²⁶⁸ The 63-year-old former SR terrorist turned Menshevik intelligent Pavel Axelrod was in Zurich. He had been stunned when the SPD Reichstag deputies voted for war credits, and worried that the Russian proletariat would succumb to patriotism. He hoped neither side would win, though he accepted that 'contemporary capitalism' and imperialism had caused the war, and that there might be a revolution in Russia. He was sympathetic to the French and Belgians, wished for a speedy peace without annexations,²⁶⁹ and argued that socialists in the belligerent countries should put pressure on their governments.²⁷⁰ Most émigré Mensheviks favoured a prompt end to hostilities and a democratic peace without annexations or indemnities,²⁷¹ but their organisation fell apart.²⁷² Tserderbaum told Axelrod that 'events had driven him to the very verge of insanity',²⁷³ and wanted 'the speediest possible termination of the war and the most radical steps in the direction of disarmament'.²⁷⁴

In Paris the 44-year-old non-factional SD intelligent David Goldendach had been shocked when he heard that Plekhanov and the 64-year-old former SR terrorist turned Menshevik intelligent Vera Zasluch supported the war, though he had not expected the International leaders to 'prove themselves capable of serious revolutionary initiative'.²⁷⁵ He believed that Plekhanov wanted 'to introduce the maximum confusion and interference into the party's ranks' and 'inject the maximum poison into the consciousness of backward workers'. Working-class *cadre* (self-reliant revolutionary activists) were needed, not nationalists 'with a thin varnish of socialist culture'. Bronstein noted that 'patriotism bloomed poppy-coloured' among many Russian émigrés, and particularly SR intelligentsy. When the city seemed in danger from the German army many had volunteered for the French army; but while

some Russian workers who had married French women had 'succumbed' to patriotism, most 'stood firm trying to understand and discover a solution'.²⁷⁶ At the start of the war the 34-year-old former Bolshevik intelligent Grigor Alexinsky had lectured widely in favour of the war in France and Switzerland.²⁷⁷ Reportedly 11 of the 94 Bolshevik émigrés volunteered for the French armed forces,²⁷⁸ including two members of the organisational committee,²⁷⁹ and after one member resigned from the RSDRP,²⁸⁰ the committee disintegrated.²⁸¹ The Menshevik émigrés' daily Paris *Golos* (Voice) appeared on 13 September, and argued against participation in the war on the basis of international socialism.²⁸²

The former revolutionary socialist Paris paper *La Guerre Sociale* (*The Social War*) had become social-chauvinist,²⁸³ and Vladimir Burtsev, a 51-year-old extreme right-wing SR émigré intelligent,²⁸⁴ asked the editor to publish an article calling on radical and revolutionary Russian political parties to support the war without abandoning their programmes. Plekhanov and the 71-year-old anarchist Petr Kropotkin supported him. When German artillery bombarded Paris Burtsev boarded the last train from the city with 48 francs and went to London, where the Russian embassy gave him a train ticket to Newcastle upon Tyne and money, and a *Russkoye Slovo* correspondent gave him an advance of £1,000. From the Tyne he took a steamer to Bergen in Norway, then set off for Stockholm in Sweden, and on 13 September he took the ferry to Rauma in Finland. Gendarmes at the Russian border found nothing incriminating, but arrested him. This was illegal, but the governor-general's protests were ignored in Petrograd. An armed guard took Burtsev by train to the capital, where his carriage was uncoupled and put in a siding, and he was taken to the Fortress. In court the magistrate was worried about publicity, so the trial was held in camera, and he was exiled to Siberia for life.²⁸⁵

VPSR émigrés debated about volunteering and the leaders met at the 59-year-old SR intelligent Egor Lazarev's farm close to Beaugy-sur-Clarens near Montreux in Switzerland. Lazarev argued for Russia's defeat and wanted the party in Russia to focus on propagandising workers and peasants, while the 40-year-old leading SR intelligent Viktor Chernov argued that 'The old International is dead! Long live the International!' After a gruelling debate a majority felt that trying to convene a Europe-wide socialist conference was premature, but they agreed to send a delegation to Russia in order to try to organise a revolution.²⁸⁶

(vi) The émigré RSDRP CC

Zlata Bernstein had been born Drouïa in Vilnius province in 1882. She attended primary and secondary schools in Mitau in central Latvia. In 1902 she became a schoolteacher, joined the RSDRP and went to Bern in Switzerland to study medicine. After the RSDRP Congress in 1903 she supported the 'majority', and from 1905 she was a Bolshevik teacher in St. Petersburg. In 1908 she returned to Switzerland and met the 30-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligent Hirsch Apfelbaum, married him in 1912 and worked for Bolshevik papers and journals into 1914.²⁸⁷

After the war broke out the 43-year-old émigré Bolshevik intelligent and RSDRP CC member Vladimir Ulyanov was in Poronin in Galicia. He asked the 32-year-old Bolshevik transporter Mikhail Kobetsky in Copenhagen if he had, or could get hold of, 'good contacts' in Stockholm, to 'transmit letters, provide an address for money from Russia, etc.'²⁸⁸ Ulyanov got much of his news about Russia from the Swiss *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (*New Zurich Journal*), *Le Temps* (*The Times*) of Paris and *The Times* of London.²⁸⁹ When the Kraków papers carried the news of the Reichstag vote for war credits, he refused to believe them,²⁹⁰ but when *Vorwärts* (*Forward*) published the news he was outraged. 'Those scoundrels, the German bourgeoisie, have specially published such a number of the *Vorwärts* in order to compel us to go against the International'.²⁹¹ When a Galician paper confirmed the news, and his 45-year-old wife, the SD intelligentka Nadezhda Krupskaya, translated it, he still refused to believe it until a Pole confirmed the translation,²⁹² then announced that 'The International is dead'.²⁹³ Ulyanov's RSDRP CC salary had not arrived from Russia, though a local shopkeeper loaned him several hundred kronen. Krupskaya's aunt had left 4,000 rubles to her mother, and Ulyanov, Krupskaya and her mother went to Kraków, where they saw wounded troops arriving from the front, though a banker took half of the rubles,²⁹⁴ for transferring the rest to a Swiss bank.²⁹⁵ Vyacheslav Karpinsky, the 34-year-old intelligent and Bolshevik archivist and librarian, had previously worked on *Sotsial-Demokrat*,²⁹⁶ and Ulyanov sent a letter to him in Geneva by a trusted messenger to ask if he could print a leaflet. Krupskaya later recalled that 'No one had any clear idea whom the war was against and why it was being fought', though they had to leave Galicia. While they were away from Poronin a gendarme and a peasant with a rifle had searched their house.²⁹⁷ The gendarme took a Browning revolver and a manuscript about the agrarian situation in Russia, because he 'thought the statistical tables in it were a secret code', but left the secret correspondence.²⁹⁸ When they returned to Poronin the gendarme told Ulyanov to catch the 6.00am train to Nowy Targ next day. He telegraphed the chief of police in Kraków, and the 35-year-old SDKPiL intelligent Jakub Fürstenberg telegraphed a Galician SD deputy in the Austrian Reichsrat. Ulyanov and Krupskaya wrote to Victor

Adler, a 62-year-old SD Reichsrat deputy, and a member of the International bureau, and to a well-known Polish writer.²⁹⁹ Kraków police told those in Nowy Targ that they did not suspect that Ulyanov was a spy, and after Adler vouched for him, he, Krupskaya, her mother and the Apfelbaums received a permit to leave Galicia.³⁰⁰ By 25 August Apfelbaum had notified émigré Russian SDs in Switzerland that Ulyanov needed money,³⁰¹ and next day he, Krupskaya, and her mother received permission to leave for Vienna.³⁰²

At the start of the war 36-year-old Russian-born SD intelligentka Angelica Balabanoff's allowance from her family ceased.³⁰³ On 27 August she and socialists from several countries met in Lugano in Switzerland. They agreed that the war was imperialist,³⁰⁴ called on the international proletariat to fight for peace,³⁰⁵ and proposed that the International should call a conference, but the British and French delegates disagreed.³⁰⁶ Newspapers printed the resolution which authorised the Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz (Social Democratic Party of Switzerland, or SDPS) to organise a conference,³⁰⁷ to 'uphold the old principles' of the International.³⁰⁸

Early that summer the 40-year-old SD intelligentka Inessa Armand and her children had holidayed in a rented villa in Lovran on Istria's Adriatic coast. When the war broke out she took the children to Genoa in Italy and put them on a ship bound for Arkhangel. She heard from Apfelbaum that Ulyanov needed money, and with Adler's help she telegraphed some.³⁰⁹ Sara Ravich had been born in 1879. She joined the RSDRP in 1903 and worked in Kharkiv and St. Petersburg, then went to Geneva.³¹⁰ Late in August 1914 Armand told her about Ulyanov's need for money and she sent some on the 28th.³¹¹ Ulyanov and Krupskaya left a huge archive,³¹² though the Russian General Staff in Warszawa later got hold of most of it.³¹³ On the 29th the Poronin refugees went to Kraków, then left for Vienna,³¹⁴ where Ulyanov met the famous economist Rudolph Hilferding.³¹⁵ Goldendakh took Ulyanov to see Adler, who took him to see a minister. Adler explained that Ulyanov was 'a more implacable enemy' of the tsar than he was,³¹⁶ and the minister agreed to give Ulyanov papers so he and others could go to Switzerland.³¹⁷

(vii) The SPD opposition

Early in August 1914 the 29-year-old Austrian SD intellectual Karl Sobelsohn had been shocked by the SPD Reichstag deputies' vote for war credits. Writing for the SPD's *Bremer Bürgerzeitung* (*Bremen Citizens' Newspaper*) was now impossible, so he went to Berlin to find organised opposition to the war.³¹⁸ With SPD oppositionists, including Liebknecht, he failed to foment demonstrations and clashes with police to 'force the masses to intensify their efforts', but oppositionists began building an internationalist, anti-war organisation in Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg,³¹⁹ and looked for allies.

Julian Borchardt had been born in Bromberg, Prussia, in 1868. He edited SD newspapers from 1901 to 1906, and was an SPD lecturer by 1907. In 1911 he was elected to the Prussian Landtag (federal parliament), and from 1913 he published *Lichtstrahlen* (*Light Rays*).³²⁰ Sobelsohn later recalled that in 1914 'a private school for Marxist propaganda in Berlin' was 'directed by a very eccentric but very steadfast man called Borchardt', who 'put the school and the paper at the service of the anti-war group'. While pretending to lecture on English imperialism to hundreds of workers 'he outlined the theoretical foundations for our struggle.'³²¹

Alexandra Kollontai, a nonfactional SD intelligentka, had been holidaying in the Bavarian resort of Kohlgrub in July. On the 26th she wrote in her diary that everyone thought that a war would be 'the greatest madness'. She reached Berlin by 2 August, the day after Germany declared war on Russia, to find newly mobilised troops filling the trains and the streets swarming with preparations. Russians had become enemy aliens, though the borders had been closed. Her 20-year-old son was in the city, and sending him back to Russia meant almost certain conscription. On 4th Kollontai and her son were summoned to police headquarters for questioning. She was released, but she did not know where her son was being held, and the only SPD member who tried to get him released was Liebknecht. The police released him on the 7th, along with other Russian émigrés.³²² The SPD's *Vorwärts* had published inflammatory lies about the Russians; but on 7th *Die Gleichheit* called on women to demonstrate against the war and rising food prices, and relieve mothers, pregnant women, the old and the sick.³²³ The SPD Vorstand sent representatives to neutral Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark and Italy, and the Social-Democratic Party of Austria also sent three representatives to Italy; but 31-year-old Benito Mussolini of the Italian Socialist Party, and editor of its central organ, *Avanti!* (*Forward!*),³²⁴ favoured neutrality.³²⁵ In Berlin Mehring, Liebknecht and Zetkin signed a declaration against the war in *Sozialdemokratische Korrespondenz* on the 10th.³²⁶ That day two Swiss papers published the declaration,³²⁷ and one was the SDPS's *Berner Tagwacht* (*Bern Daily Watchman*).³²⁸

On the 11th *Vorwärts* denounced Italian neutrality,³²⁹ and the Vorstand suspended the *Rheinische Zeitung* (*Rhenish Newspaper*) for two days for not supporting the vote for war credits. Over three million German workers were in trade unions, and several union leaders and SPD officials who had formerly been workers in Berlin,

Stuttgart, Halle, Bochum, Chemnitz, Hagen and Remscheid supported the opposition, along with young intellectuals influenced by Luxemburg at the SPD School. The Vorstand censured Liebknecht, and by the 17th he had been charged in a military court with events which pre-dated the war. When the war began he had visited Louvain in Belgium and seen the atrocities which German troops committed,³³⁰ and the hideous damage in Liege.³³¹ On the 20th about 30 Reichstag deputies left the chamber rather than vote for war credits, though Liebknecht stayed and voted against.³³² The first paper to publish his speech was *Avanti!*³³³ In Germany the Bochum *Echo vom Rheinfall* (*Echo from the Rhineland Falls*) was suspended.³³⁴ Members of the SPD in Stuttgart led the first significant breakaway from the party,³³⁵ but on the 21st the military banned their meetings and suspended the publication of *Vorwärts* for three days. Liebknecht went to Bremen and acknowledged that supporting war credits had been a 'serious mistake'. The *Dantziger Zeitung* (*Dantziger Newspaper*) was closed on the 25th,³³⁶ and the SPD Vorstand confirmed their support for the trade union leaders' agreement to civil peace on the 27th,³³⁷ but *Vorwärts* suggested that German workers, and those in other belligerent countries, had been forced to take part in the war against their will. The paper was banned indefinitely on the 28th; but on the 30th, after the Vorstand promised not to publish material on 'class war and class hatred', the ban was lifted.

Luxemburg felt 'cut off from the world, blocked off' by 'the state of siege' and party 'officialdom'. She visited a bookshop and innocently asked for French and English books, which had been hastily removed, and 'the salesgirl looked as if she wanted to slap my face'. Luxemburg knew that some SPD Reichstag deputies did not wholeheartedly support party policy on the war, and that most deputies, officials and newspaper editors did not 'express the thoughts and feelings of the whole party'. She also read *Avanti!* She was against an 'attempt artificially to patch up' the International, since '*internal clarification*' had to be achieved first,³³⁸ and she gave Sunday morning public lectures for workers in the working-class Neuköln district of Berlin,³³⁹ on 'the rise and development of capitalism' in the Bartsch assembly rooms. They attracted large audiences, and Jacob later recalled that while not everyone was convinced, they 'followed the dialectical expositions with keen interest', but then Luxemburg suffered a stomach complaint and entered hospital.³⁴⁰ On the 31st she told Levi that SPD deputies who had voted for war credits unwillingly had done so 'under coercion', and there were six or eight different groupings.³⁴¹ She was due to be tried for a pre-war speech asking troops not to fight, and though about 700 soldiers prepared to testify in her favour,³⁴² her appeal was rejected.³⁴³ At the end of the month SPD supporters of the war published *Internationale Korrespondenz* and were confident that Russia could be defeated.³⁴⁴

(viii) Transform the imperialist war into a civil war

The Russian Bolshevik émigrés had left Galicia on 3 September 1914 (NS),³⁴⁵ and on the 5th Ulyanov wrote to tell Adler in Vienna that he, Krupskaya and her mother had arrived in Zurich. Then they took a train to Bern,³⁴⁶ where the Old Bolshevik émigré Grigory Shklovsky, who was in his later thirties, met them and put them up.³⁴⁷ Next day Ulyanov asked Karpinsky in Geneva if there was a press that could print leaflets in Russian, were there other Bolshevik émigrés in the city and would it be possible to rent two furnished rooms and a kitchen on a monthly basis in Bern.³⁴⁸ The threesome found a room and kitchen for 28 francs a month and lived as cheaply as they could,³⁴⁹ at Donnerhühlweg 11a.³⁵⁰

At the start of the war the 29-year-old SD intelligent Nikolai Krylenko had fled abroad.³⁵¹ There were soon hundreds of other Russian SD intelligenty in Switzerland,³⁵² including 23-year-old Georgi Safarov, who was in his early twenties, and his wife, plus 25-year-old Nikolai Bukharin, 26-year-old Grigory Sokolnikov, 32-year-old Alexandr Troianovsky and the convalescing 32-year-old Duma deputy Fedor Samoilov; but the small groups lost contact with each other and with Russia.³⁵³

Krupskaya and Ulyanov met the Bolsheviks Apfelbaum, Apfelbauma, the Safarovs, Shklovsky and Samoilov in woods outside Bern,³⁵⁴ and Ulyanov persuaded them to agree about the need 'to transform the present imperialist war into a civil war'.³⁵⁵

It is the first and foremost task of Russian Social-Democrats to wage a ruthless and all-out struggle against Great-Russians and tsarist-monarchist chauvinism, and against the sophisms used by the Russian liberals, Cadets, a section of the Narodniks [SRs], and other bourgeois parties, in defence of that chauvinism. From the viewpoint of the working class and the toiling masses the defeat of the tsarist monarchy and its army ... would be the lesser evil by far.

There was an 'urgent necessity' to organise 'illegal nuclei and groups in the armies of all nations' and to propagandise 'for the socialist revolution and about the need to use the weapons, not against their brothers, the wage slaves in other countries, but against the reactionary and bourgeois governments and parties'. He wanted

‘propaganda for republics in Germany, Poland, Russia’ and elsewhere, and to transform them into ‘a republican United States of Europe’. In Russia the slogans should be ‘a democratic republic, the confiscation of landed estates and an eight-hour working day’. They all signed the perspectives as ‘members of the Russian Social-Democratic Party’.³⁵⁶ Ulyanov and Krupskaya sent handwritten copies to émigré Bolsheviks elsewhere,³⁵⁷ established a Bolshevik ‘Centre’ in Bern,³⁵⁸ and Apfelbauma became the secretary of the RSDRP émigrés in the city.³⁵⁹ Ulyanov thought that Bern was ‘a small, dull but quite civilized town’. It had good libraries,³⁶⁰ and he read works by Georg Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach, Aristotle and other philosophers,³⁶¹ to work out how to transform philosophy into a guide to action, and he began writing an essay on Karl Marx to earn money.³⁶²

At Ulyanov’s suggestion Armand arrived in Bern on 7 October.³⁶³ She lived at 23 Drosselweg,³⁶⁴ near Ulyanov, Krupskaya and her mother, and the Apfelbaums were just down the road.³⁶⁵ On the 11th Ulyanov asked Karpinsky if he could print 100 copies of the Bolshevik perspectives for abroad and 200 for Russia in Geneva.³⁶⁶ They had to be anonymous, since ‘at the *first signal* from the Russia or the French ambassador’ he could face expulsion or a military tribunal.³⁶⁷ He visited the *Berner Tagwacht*, but the editor, the 33-year-old SDPS intelligent Robert Grimm, did not agree with his perspectives.³⁶⁸ Ulyanov had heard rumours about Plekhanov’s defensism, but refused to believe them; yet when he heard him speak in Lausanne they proved true. Ulyanov declared that the proletariat had to struggle for the overthrow of the ruling class.³⁶⁹ He spoke against the war in several Swiss cities,³⁷⁰ and described it as fundamentally imperialist.³⁷¹ Ulyanov sent letters to Geneva by courier, and spoke there on ‘The war in Europe and socialism’. Back in Bern he heard that some RSDRP CC members in Russia had approved the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, and he spoke on ‘The proletariat and the war’ in Lausanne on the 17th.³⁷²

The old Ukrainian émigré Andriy Lyakhotsky’s press was the only one in Bern with Russian type, and he worked for various organisations,³⁷³ though only in the evenings, and he drank. Ulyanov wanted to restart *Sotsial-Demokrat*, though the Bolshevik treasury contained 160 Swiss francs.³⁷⁴ He told Karpinsky that he wanted to print around 500. He hoped it could have two pages set in brevier (eight point) type, and sell at 10 centimes, though ‘we cannot reckon on the man in the street’ to buy one. Karpinsky was not to write anything confidential in his letters except in chemicals, and he was to underline the date. Ulyanov enclosed the ‘manifesto’ to be printed, or mimeographed, but by no other means, and sent his address.³⁷⁵ On the 20th he asked Karpinsky and Ravich to print 1,000 more copies, then redistribute the type, and on the 22nd he asked Karpinsky to print half of the extra copies on thin paper which had arrived free from Paris, and 2,000 of the next two issues, dated a week apart, including 250 on the thin paper until more arrived.³⁷⁶

On 17 October Ulyanov wrote to Shlyapnikov in Stockholm that in spite of losing a vote to workers at a mass meeting émigré SD intelligently in Paris had enlisted in the French army, and ‘issued a stupid non-Party’ appeal along with SRs, Alexinsky and other former Bolsheviks were ‘adapting themselves to Kautsky, who is *more harmful than anyone else*’. Bolsheviks should organise ‘mass (or at the very least collective) action among the troops – not only of one nation – and carry on all propaganda and agitation in that direction’. ‘The proletarian watchword must be civil war.’³⁷⁷

Early in September Kollontai and her son managed to leave Germany. After a brief stay in Denmark they went to Stockholm, where Höglund and Ström shared her opposition to the war. She wrote a passionate anti-war declaration to women, which concluded by advocating ‘war on war’. It circulated in Sweden and Denmark and was smuggled into Russia. In October Kollontai fell in love with him, and he wrote to tell Ulyanov that she opposed the war, though Ulyanov mistakenly believed that she agreed with turning the imperialist war into a civil war.³⁷⁸ Ström and Höglund organised a speaking tour for her and Shlyapnikov.³⁷⁹ She was increasingly impressed by the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, and when Shlyapnikov told Ulyanov that they would appear in Switzerland, Kollontai included a note. Ulyanov asked Shlyapnikov if she would translate the perspectives into other languages,³⁸⁰ and persuaded him that defeatism would not benefit the Germans. No RSDRP organisation in Russia would finance transport, so Shlyapnikov used loans from Swedish socialists and sent material in hollow boot heels.³⁸¹ He mobilised every clerk, fisherman, agent and agitator he could find and his hotel room was the headquarters of left-wing Swedish SDs, while Kollontai organised an anti-war demonstration of 60 women and sent an article to Krupskaya in Switzerland.³⁸² Shlyapnikov had smuggled illegal literature to Russia on four occasions;³⁸³ but by then the Russian army had suffered another devastating defeat.

(ix) The Masurian Lakes

On 2 September 1914 the Russian army had entered the suburbs of Lwów in Galicia. Reportedly 60,000 Austro-Hungarian troops surrendered, and next day the Russians captured the city without firing a shot.³⁸⁴ German artillery shelled Kalisz in central Poland,³⁸⁵ but a member of the Russian General Staff betrayed the army to the

Germans,³⁸⁶ who destroyed it at the Masurian Lakes in north east Poland on the 6th.³⁸⁷ They captured 300 guns and took 110,000 prisoners, and around 100,000 Russians were killed or froze to death. The Russians captured 58 guns and 6,000 prisoners.³⁸⁸ Altogether they had suffered 170,000 casualties and a general shot himself.³⁸⁹

The German army's machine-guns had given it supremacy over Cossack cavalry. Heavy mud bogged horses down, so most frontal assaults had suffered heavy casualties, and many Cossacks had become dismounted infantry. Airplanes replaced them as observers,³⁹⁰ though some returned only to be shot down by their own side, and the lack of spare parts kept most of those which landed damaged on the ground.³⁹¹ Orders for artillery and shells placed abroad were not delivered on time, and often in insufficient quantities, or of the wrong kind.³⁹² Overall Russian troops had suffered casualties of about 16.8 percent, though in August and September 54,064 German soldiers had been killed and 81,193 were missing. Germany's losses were higher than on its western front.³⁹³

At the start of the war Germany had had 12 percent of world's merchant shipping while Britain had 48 percent.³⁹⁴ German U-boats sank about a quarter of the merchantmen on which Russia depended,³⁹⁵ though after British warships sank three German cruisers and a destroyer, damaged two light cruisers,³⁹⁶ and sank armed merchantmen, the rest of the German navy stayed in port. Trade between Germany and Russia went on via neutral ships and ports, though the British government pressured neutral governments not to supply food and war materiel to Germany,³⁹⁷ and its navy blocked Germany's Baltic ports.³⁹⁸ The Bundesrat, which represented the 16 Lande (provinces), estimated that the war would last until next harvest,³⁹⁹ and introduced price controls on grain.⁴⁰⁰

Around a quarter of a million Jews had enlisted in the Russian army, and though many were well educated, none were allowed to be officers. Hundreds of thousands of civilians had been driven from Łódź and other Polish cities. German troops crossed the Russian border at four places, and the Russians lost 9,000 men.⁴⁰¹ The Russians encircled the German army near Łódź, though they managed to fight their way out.⁴⁰²

On 8 September Russian military operations ceased in Galicia because stocks of arms and ammunition were a quarter of what was needed,⁴⁰³ and the General Staff called for 100,000 automatic rifles. When the liberal Duma president visited army headquarters the commander told him he had 'no rifles, no shells, no boots',⁴⁰⁴ and troops wore rags on their feet.⁴⁰⁵

After the evacuation of Puławy in eastern Poland, Russia had lost 14 provinces with a population of 35 million;⁴⁰⁶ though Russian municipal policy was extended to the unconquered parts of Poland, and the government annexed Chelm province in the south-east.⁴⁰⁷ By the 14th the Germans had reached the suburbs of Warszawa. On the 18th Russian troops forced them back,⁴⁰⁸ but by then the Russians' stocks of weapons and ammunition were exhausted,⁴⁰⁹ even though contracts worth 66 million rubles for shells and shrapnel had been placed with 16 private plants in Petrograd, including the Putilov, Obukhov, Nevsky and Petrograd works.⁴¹⁰

There were veteran Bulgarian troops in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and Russian troops moved south to the Caucasian border with the Ottoman Empire.⁴¹¹ At least 1.6 million men aged 20 to 45, including 150,000 Armenians, had been conscripted into the Ottoman army, though they were deployed as labour battalions, not front-line troops. Many Armenian families were without an adult male breadwinner,⁴¹² and conscripts feared for their safety. About 100,000 Ottoman troops entered the plain of Erezum, occupied key cities and forced Armenian peasants to provide food and other necessities. The governor of Maresh mobilised Muslims against them, but they searched for arms and army deserters, conducted a campaign of pillage and destruction, and only 600 refugees reached Zeitun. The Ottomans deported leading Armenians to Constantinople and Samsun on the Black Sea coast, though between 8,000 and 10,000 crossed into Georgia.⁴¹³ Ottoman deserters and Dashnak guerrillas had already done that, and on the 31st the Russian commander wanted 25,000 rifles and 12 million cartridges to arm the Armenian guerrillas.⁴¹⁴ In Caucasia the Russian army included 100,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry and 150,000 reservists. Most were stationed in Tbilisi province, but were poorly fed, and suffered frostbite and snow blindness on the Anatolian Plain, where they faced 135,000 Ottoman troops, irregular Kurdish cavalry and 15 battalions of frontier guards on a front around 450 miles long. The region's economy had gone into decline and work had almost stopped in the Chiatura manganese mines. Wages were six or seven times higher than the pre-war level, but basic commodity prices had risen by up to 400 percent, so many workers had left for their villages or the army.⁴¹⁵ The tsar's brother asked Kerensky, through an intermediary, how workers would react if he replaced the tsar.⁴¹⁶

The education minister had limited entry to the universities of Petrograd, Iuriev, Kyiv, Kharkhiv and Moscow, which could not meet demand, so the tsar approved the foundation of new institutions. The Okhrana reported that students were patriotic and the war minister began conscripting them.⁴¹⁷ During October a crowd demonstrated in support of the war in front of the Winter Palace in Petrograd. One group called for an amnesty for political prisoners, and the rest called them traitors, though 500 left singing revolutionary songs, and a similar confrontation took place at the Polytechnic Institute. Students ran hospitals, distributed food and staffed charitable institutions, while technical students worked in war industries and women students worked as nurses.⁴¹⁸

By late October, even though 50,000 Ottoman troops had deserted from Erezum garrison,⁴¹⁹ the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of the Central Powers and proclaimed *jihad* (holy war) against 'infidels'. They released criminal prisoners, and they and troops, while claiming to search for arms, pillaged and plundered Armenian villages.⁴²⁰ The Ottoman government refused an Allied demand to expel German forces, and two new warships, crewed by Germans, sank a Russian gunboat at Odesa,⁴²¹ while Ottoman and German warships bombarded the Russian naval base of Sevastopol in Crimea.⁴²² The Russian army now had to fight on another front, though domestic opposition to the war was very weak.

(x) Siberia

Early in 1914 the 29-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligent and RSDRP CC member, Yakov Sverdlov, was in exile in the notoriously unhealthy Turukhansk district in Siberia, over 900 miles north of Krasnoyarsk, the capital of Yenisei province. His partner, the 38-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligentka Klavdia Novgorodtseva, later recalled that exiles' 'miserly allowance was barely sufficient to stave off hunger, and it was an uncommon achievement if one of them, by dint of backbreaking labour through the summer, earned 40 or 50 roubles'.

They almost never saw bread, cereals or vegetables, and had no meat except game, no eggs and no flour. Butter, potatoes and milk were rare, and sugar, salt, matches and tobacco almost unobtainable

The few with friends or relations who could send them money were, of course, better off. Occasional sums of money and newspapers, magazines and books also reached certain exiles from comrades in Russia. It was usually pointless to send Sverdlov anything, however; money never arrived, books were held up and newspapers confiscated.

But no obstacles, no police control, could prevent him from starting up an extensive correspondence from Turukhansk with his comrades both in Russia and in Siberian exile. He had made several friends among the locals, and used their addresses when writing on Party business; he knew that all letters sent to him personally would be carefully scrutinised and censored. In his letters he discussed major political issues, gave his opinion on Party affairs and passed on information about the exiles.⁴²³

Winter lasted eight months in Turukhansk,⁴²⁴ compared to five in European Russia.

Sverdlov and Ioseb Jughashvili, the 36-year-old exiled Bolshevik intelligent Russian RSDRP CC member, were transferred to a more secure location in Kureika, 50 miles north of the Arctic Circle, which consisted of 15 huts and about 50 peasants. In March Sverdlov wrote to Novgorodtseva that his 'old friend' was a 'good fellow but too much of an individualist in everyday life'. In May Sverdlov told her that Jughashvili exhibited 'petty characteristics', so they lived apart and rarely saw each other. On 31 July Sverdlov wrote again.

My major concern just now is what is happening far away. Practically no information, just occasional telegrams and newspapers. Impossible to grasp so many world shaking events all at once. And no really reliable news at all. ... I know absurdly little and face six or eight weeks' more silence. ... Some comrades here are foretelling the doom of the labour movement, the triumph of reaction, a reverse to our cause that will last for years. I cannot see it. More likely the movement will take a great step forward. The horrors of war and its consequences, the dreadful burden that will fall on the most backward elements, will give a great stimulus to the backward countries too ... The war will almost certainly bring cruel repression, reactionary excesses – but that will get them nowhere, it will be nothing but death throes. ... Discontent, bitter discontent, will inevitably grow, and all the drum-beating will not silence it.

The 'hostilities agitated the whole colony. Questions about the war, its effects on society and its unavoidable consequences were on everybody's lips'.⁴²⁵

Jughashvili was now the only political in Kureika and he received some of his RSDRP salary. Comrades in Russia sent money, and he thanked 37-year-old Olga Allilueva for a parcel, but asked her not to 'waste any more money on me' since her family needed it themselves.⁴²⁶

Suren Spandarian was in his late thirties, and had been the first Bolshevik exile in Siberia to adopt an internationalist position on the war.⁴²⁷ One day he and Vera Schweizer, who was in her late twenties, travelled around 125 miles from Monastyrskoye to Kureika.⁴²⁸ They could receive telegrams and Sverdlov was determined to get closer to the couple. Exiled Bolsheviks did not know how the rest of the party viewed the war, so they worked out a position from the few scraps of information they received in telegrams and letters. Sverdlov's health had slowly improved, though comrades worried about him, and he was transferred south to Selivanikha in Krasnoyarsk province in September.⁴²⁹ Money arrived for him and Jughashvili to escape, but they were too closely guarded.⁴³⁰

In 1908 the 29-year-old Old Bolshevik rabochy-intelligent Semën Kanatchikov had worked for the legal tanners' union in St. Petersburg. In 1909 he was the secretary of the woodworkers' union and an editor of its paper. In 1910

party assignments took him to the Urals and then back to St. Petersburg via Moscow. He was arrested late in 1911, and exiled under police surveillance,⁴³¹ for life, and sent to a village near Irkutsk. In summer 1912 he and the Menshevik Bliuma Landau married, and she bore a son in 1913. When war broke out in 1914 he was a defeatist.⁴³²

The 32-year-old Old Bolshevik rabochy-intelligent and praktik Iosif Tarshis had been arrested in Samara in June 1914, and the police found a copy of *Pravda* in his flat. All they had to identify him with was a photograph, and though he had never combed his hair in the same way or worn a smoking jacket the Okhrana had taken a photograph of him alone, and another of him and his comrades. He recognised none of the documents he was shown, and eventually gave his real name, only to be accused of being a member of the Bolshevik CC who had come to organise an RSDRP conference in the Volga region. He had never been a member of the Bolshevik CC, and though he had been a member of the temporary RSDRP committee in Samara, only two comrades had heard him use the pseudonym that the Okhrana quoted. On the way to prison he exchanged a few words with comrades, then was put a filthy cell with common criminals. At his trial he was sentenced to three months in prison for possessing a false passport, and his lawyer could not get him bail. He was sent to the 'noblemens' prison, where the slightest infringement of the rules meant being sent to a solitary cell. He spent two and a half months in one; but got hold of *Pravda* and the Samara paper, *Zarya Povolzhya (Dawn of the Volga Region)*, which used revolutionary language. He learned about the Bakı strikes, and visiting comrades told him that a large meeting of Samara workers had voted to make the RSDRP committee permanent and were waiting for the 40-year-old Bolshevik Duma deputy Matvei Muranov to sanction it as a Bolshevik organisation and its paper as a Bolshevik organ. When Tarshis noticed someone taking notes in the bushes near his cell, he warned comrades to stop visiting. An inexperienced young gendarme threatened him with five years' katorga, but also told him about the war. That was the first he knew of it, but he was sentenced to three years' exile in Yenisei province, Siberia.⁴³³

The 29-year-old independent-minded SD intelligent Waclaw Woytinsky had been arrested in Irkutsk in spring and put in a solitary cell. A gendarme threatened him with five years' katorga, though Woytinsky pointed out that he had no order from Petrograd. He was freed after a month, but gendarmes charged him with 'criminal propaganda against the war' and put him in a solitary cell until he boarded the steamer to Yakutsk. The captain told him that men were being conscripted, and Woytinsky saw some with 'sullen resignation' on the shore, though he had no definite news about the war until he reached Yakutsk. There was no telephone or telegram connection, and no radios, while newspapers took weeks to arrive from European Russia and even longer to reach the villages. SDs wanted him to produce a magazine to 'help to crystallize public opinion' about the war, though he felt that defeatism would support German imperialism. He went to nearby Usole, where the 32-year-old Menshevik intelligent Irakli Tsereteli argued for joint action by both RSDRP factions and tried to develop an anti-war policy while rejecting defeatism. He wanted a coordinated movement for a peace, without victors, vanquished, annexations or indemnities.⁴³⁴

The 46-year-old non-factional SD intelligent Nikolai Rozhkov had been arrested in April 1914, charged with producing literature intended to incite revolution and exiled to Siberia. In June he and his wife were permitted to live in Usole, so she could receive medical treatment. The outbreak of the war came as no surprise to Rozhkov, and he opposed it because socialist had betrayed international solidarity. He favoured 'one last battle' with the Russian government to build a 'new world' peacefully, including democratisation of government power, an eight-hour day, nationalisation of land, freedom of association and other reforms,⁴³⁵ yet he saw himself as an 'adamant Leninist'. He and Woytinsky in Irkutsk published *Novaya Sibir (New Siberia)*, which went 'about as far as a legal SD paper could go', but after Rozhkov was sent to Chita the paper closed.⁴³⁶

Boris Shumiatsky had been born into a large working class family in Verhneudinsk in 1886, and spent his boyhood in a village near Kansk in Yenesei province, Siberia. In 1897 his family moved to Chita. He got a job in the railway workshops and was active in the RSDRP, though he was sacked for his part in strikes. At some point after 1903 he supported the Second Congress majority, and moved to Irkutsk and then Krasnoyarsk, where he continued to work with railway workers. He met the Menshevik Moisei Uritsky and began to read works by Marx Engels and Ulyanov. In 1905 Shumiatsky was elected to the Krasnoyarsk sovet EC. He was arrested in January 1906, but escaped, and took jobs in Chelyabinsk, Kurgan, Irkutsk, Sliudanka, Harbin and Vladivostok⁴³⁷ At some point he married a *feldsher* (medical assistant). Lidiia had become a revolutionary by 1905, and the couple set up and ran underground printing presses; but in 1911 the couple left for South America to avoid arrest. They became factory workers, but returned to Russia in 1913 after the amnesty.⁴³⁸ When the war began in summer 1914 Boris was in Krasnoyarsk Prison, and was conscripted into a reserve regiment.⁴³⁹ Later he was sent to the front, so Lidiia had to find a job as well as care for their young child, and she did not resume revolutionary activity for three years.⁴⁴⁰

By October Novgorodtseva felt that until her exile ended 'there was no point even in thinking about joining her partner, the CC member Sverdlov, but he wrote to her. 'I have the photographs of the little ones in front of me.' 'I

want so much to see them and you, darling.' You are all continually in my thoughts.' She decided to join him, and Krasnoyarsk comrades promised to find her a job.

The first stage of the journey, made no easier by having two children to look after, ended in a warm welcome from the exiles in Krasnoyarsk. They put us on a steamer for Monastyrskoye, telling me that Sverdlov had already been transferred there.

What an extraordinary childhood our little ones had! Andrei was just four and had already seen his father in prison in Tomsk, lived with his mother in a Petersburg prison, had six months of family exile in Narym, two years in Tobolsk with me, and was now going to a third place of exile. Our two-year-old Vera was going to her second.

My anxiety grew as we neared Monastyrskoye. Over two years had passed since that unhappy February evening when I had last seen my husband, last heard his voice. Andrei had forgotten his father and Vera had never known him. ...

I was appointed head of the local meteorological station: I was its only member of staff. Though the pay was bad, a small house went with the job and we moved in there together. I had to record changes in the temperature and air pressure, and measure the depth of the river, the strength and direction of the wind and the falls of snow or rain. ...

We also gave lessons, and altogether made between 75 and 80 roubles a month. We just managed on that, helped by the occasional fee Sverdlov received for his articles – a little extra not accounted for in our 'economic plan', which enabled us to buy a milch cow to supplement the children's diet.

Sverdlov took almost total responsibility for running the household as he had in Narym. He got up at six or seven and went out immediately to take measurements around the house and by the river. When he came back he chopped the firewood, fed and cleaned out the cow, lit the stove, heated some water and made breakfast. He washed and dressed the children, who got up around eight; much as I protested, he would not let me near them.

We had breakfast at about 8.30, and I went out to give lessons, while Sverdlov's pupils, local children, came to him. He finished at about midday and began lunch, which was always excellent. ...

Sverdlov's working day ended at five or six, and about an hour later the visitors would begin to arrive. There were 15 or 20 exiles in Monastyrskoye at that time, and comrades often came from other settlements, usually staying with us. We also took in Bolsheviks transferred from exile in more distant areas, who had not yet found a place of their own.

It was a three-roomed house. I and the children took the largest room, and Sverdlov studied and slept in the other, which also doubled as a dining room. The third was practically useless, as it was an extension and heated only by a small iron stove; it was always cold there and at night when the stove went out the temperature fell below zero. We only used it when we had a lot of guests and, even though we kept the stove going all night, whoever slept there really felt the cold.

...

Our evenings were dynamic, full of animated conversation, arguments and discussions of current events. Sometimes Sverdlov would arrange a debate or he, or one of the others, would give a lecture. The whole house fell silent as the audience listened to every eloquent word, with rapt attention. Sverdlov usually put forward some proposition, with numerous examples and far-reaching conclusions. He structured his talks so that anybody, even those with no background knowledge at all, could understand the most complex theoretical points. ...

With no idea of how the Central Committee and Lenin stood on the war, with access to only the most meagre information, Sverdlov could not thoroughly analyse the situation or confidently predict all the effects it would have on the international labour movement. Yet his internationalism never faltered.

Once he was convinced that 'escape was practically impossible, he turned his energies to political theory and to literature and produced several articles, essays and letters'.

His theoretical standpoint was refined through further study of Marx, Engels and Lenin, critical analysis of the works of Kautsky, Hilferding and Pannekoek, systematic perusal of political periodicals, magazines and newspapers, and passionate debates with his comrades. ...

He was particularly interested in the international labour movement, the building of the Party, certain historical questions, economics and the potential development of Siberia and Turukhansk territory itself.

When a copy of *Sotsial-Democrat* reached Siberia Sverdlov 'immediately and unconditionally' accepted the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives. He 'found it hard to wish success to any of the nations involved in the war and strongly attacked the chauvinism of the Russian Mensheviks,' and 'sharply criticised' the German Social-Democrats for supporting war credits.⁴⁴¹

2. The RSDRP was half destroyed

(i) All the threads of Party work across Russia were affected

On 1 November 1914 (NS), after a break of a year, and in spite of technical and financial problems, the RSDRP's *Sotsial-Demokrat* reappeared in Switzerland,¹ and it included the core of the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives.

The growth of armaments, the extreme intensification of the struggle for markets in the latest – the imperialist – stage of capitalist development in the advanced countries, and the dynastic interests of the more backward East-European monarchies were inevitably bound to bring about this war, and have done so. Seizure of territory and subjugation of other nations, the ruining of competing nations and the plunder of their wealth, distracting the attention of the working masses from the internal political crises in Russia, Germany, Britain and other countries, disuniting and stultification of the workers, and the extermination of their vanguard so as to weaken the revolutionary movement of the proletariat – these comprise the sole actual content, importance and significance of the present war.

The International was dead, 'overcome by opportunism', so 'long live the Third International'. 'To it falls the task of organising the proletariat forces for a revolutionary onslaught against the capitalist governments, for civil war against the bourgeoisie of all countries, for the capture of political power, for the triumph of socialism.' The paper also included the Petrograd RSDRP committee's resolutions,² and called for replacing the term 'Social Democrat' with 'Communist'.³ The paper's print run included 100 for foreign distribution and 200 for Russia, and around 90 reached Shlyapnikov in Stockholm, and around 157 and about 30 illegal leaflets were smuggled into Russia. Five or six copies of *Sotsial-Demokrat* arrived,⁴ though the Bolshevik Duma deputy Samoïlov, who had returned to Petrograd from abroad,⁵ brought the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives.⁶ The Bolsheviks claimed around 100 'members' in Petrograd,⁷ and the deputy Badayev was trying to re-establish and strengthen RSDRP organisations, walked around the city to avoid spies, then boarded a goods train near Obukhovo station. At a secretly agreed spot in Lyuban, around 100 miles south of Minsk in Biełarus, Samoïlov and his wife, the 38-year-old Bolshevik intelligentka Konkordia Samoïlova, gave him another ticket. He toured cities and gave comrades literature and addresses for correspondence, but when he returned to Petrograd the police were looking for him.⁸

In September, in Petrograd's First Town district, the Mezhraiontsy turned T.K. Kondratev, and Alexey Mashirov, who taught at evening classes for workers, had published *Rabochii Golas* (*Workers' Voice*). The Bolshevik deputies had failed to contact SDs in the districts, though by November Kondratev and Mashirov had organised 10 small groups of bakers, joiners, printers, tailors, metalworkers, railway workers and tram drivers. They had also set up a district committee and a shadowy city organisation that included Petrograd and Vyborg districts. An anti-war leaflet had met a hostile reception, though a strike committee on Vasiliievsky Island linked cells in 11 factories, including the Pipe Works, Siemens, Petrograd Engineering and the Langenzippen plant, and in Narva a joint Bolshevik and Menshevik committee claimed 130 supporters, mostly at the Putilov works.⁹

Samoïlov took the perspectives to Ivanovo in the Moscow region, where the RSDRP organisation made no objections. Others toured the provinces in the greatest secrecy to try to ensure the election of Bolshevik delegates to the upcoming RSDRP congress. The Okhrana agent Limonin, who was a member of the Petrograd RSDRP committee, reported that the congress would take place in Finland. The Okhrana ordered one of their agents not to turn up, and some delegates were prevented from leaving their native cities. Petrograd's railway stations were flooded with spies and a delegate from the Caucasus was arrested when he arrived. Badayev left home in the opposite direction to the meeting place, dodged spies, took a boat across the River Neva, then altered his direction a few times before he got to the apartment of Gavrilov, a factory clerk, at 28 Vyborg Road in the northern Ozerky suburb, and Gavrilova allowed the conference to begin on 2 November. The delegates included five Bolshevik Duma deputies, the 31-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligent Lev Rozenfeld from the city's Bolshevik committee,¹⁰ Nikolai Antipov, who was almost 20, and had trained as a fitter at a nautical technical school and worked in the Moscow's Dynamo factory. In 1912 he had joined the Bolsheviks. He was arrested in 1913,¹¹ but in December 1914 he was a member of the Petrograd RSDRP committee. Ivan Kozlov was a Putilov worker and a member of its insurance board. M. Voronin was from Ivanovo, Nikolai Yakovlev from Kharkiv and Linde from Rīga. They reported about their organisations, agreed with the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives. They agreed to issue a leaflet for students and considered publishing a paper,¹² though they objected to 'revolutionary defeatism' and decided to tone down the sharpness of the formulations.¹³

On the 4th, around 5.00pm,¹⁴ there was a 'deafening knock' on the door and police and gendarmes broke in seconds later. They searched everyone, including Gavrilova,¹⁵ though Gavrilov claimed that they were celebrating their wedding anniversary.¹⁶ The deputies managed to destroy most illegal documents, though the police found the copy of *Sotsial-Demokrat* and illegal pamphlets published abroad, including the 36-year-old Duma deputy Grigory Petrovsky's copy of the RSDRP constitution, the deputy Muranov's account of his activities in the Urals, which he had failed to destroy in the lavatory, and Badayev's false passport. All the delegates were imprisoned, except the Duma deputies, since they had immunity, though spies accompanied them to the tram stop. That evening they met in Badayev's apartment, burned secret documents, including a list of several thousand people classed as party members, and decided to ask the Duma president for protection from the police and make 'as much fuss as possible' next day. On the 5th, when the Bolshevik deputies left the Duma, spies were 'more numerous and more brazen', and police arrested them. Badayev later recalled that 'All the threads of Party work' across Russia were affected'.¹⁷ 'Party cells suffered heavily as well as the legal organisation'. The RSDRP was 'half destroyed', though the 'skeleton still existed'.¹⁸

The Petrograd RSDRP committee issued a hectographed leaflet to protest at the arrest of the representatives of 30 million workers and called for meetings and one-day strikes, while a students' leaflet called it a '*coup d'état*'. Some factory workforces called for a one-day strike, but the police 'fell upon' those at the New Lessner works, deported the most dangerous, and those at other plants, and sent reservists to the front. At the Parviainen works they exiled 10 workers and sent 20 to the front. The Duma deputies were put in solitary cells under a strict regime, though they managed to agree to tell interrogators that they were the Gavrilovs' guests. They were questioned separately and acknowledged that they had discussed workers' insurance and a newspaper, but insisted that the RSDRP literature was to keep them up to date. Rozenfeld did not agree with all the documents about the war, and though the magistrate got nothing else from him or the others,¹⁹ though the next Duma session was postponed.²⁰

The Narva district joint committee of Mensheviks and Bolsheviks had joined the Mezhraiontsy,²¹ and were committed to underground activity. The police closed their presses they used hectographs.²² One leaflet protested at the arrest of the Bolshevik Duma deputies.²³ They claimed the adherence of factory cells with 150 to 200 members, several propaganda kruzhki, district committees and a group of students. They propagandised soldiers, established a military organisation and their leaflets reached sailors in the Baltic Fleet.²⁴

On the 7th Petrograd University students, plus 50 from the Technological Institute and 1,000 from the Bestuzhev Courses sang *Vechnaya Pamyat (Eternal Memory)* to mark the anniversary of the death of the famous writer Lev Tolstoy. They rejected the Bolshevik students' anti-war leaflets, but SD and SR students called for mass protests after the Bolshevik Duma deputies were arrested. They disrupted University lectures on the 12th and police arrested 197, but released 195 who claimed that they had been there for lectures. Across Russia students had marked the anniversary of Tolstoy's death with a one-day strike or a memorial service.²⁵

Petrograd police noted the 'self-appointed nature' of the RSDRP committee and believed that the district committees were not functioning.²⁶ After the government publicly announced the arrest of the Duma deputies on the 15th,²⁷ 180,000 workers went on strike.²⁸ The Okhrana doubled its surveillance in working-class districts and arrested RSDRP members.²⁹ Next day the Police Department ordered Okhrana sections to 'impress on agents in their charge that when attending party meetings they should persistently advocate and convincingly defend the idea of the utter impossibility of any organised merging' between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.³⁰ Bolsheviks in seven of the largest city workforces accepted the émigré RSDRP perspectives, and there were notices in some factories: 'If Russia wins, we'll not be better off, we'll be as oppressed as ever'.³¹ Around 150,000 Petrograd workers had gone on strike in solidarity with the 30 arrested Putilov workers.³² The Okhrana reported that 'conscious' metalworkers were active in Vyborg. Gendarmes arrested members of the RSDRP committee and district organisations, though a new centre was established on Vasilievsky Island.³³ According to the Okhrana the 'Leninists' had been 'unprepared' for the war, yet the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives had been mimeographed and sent to several large provincial party organisations, including Moscow, where the Bolsheviks wrote in code to Shlyapnikov in Stockholm that in spite of their respect for Ulyanov they could not 'sell the house' (accept defeatism), though they agreed with the other perspectives.³⁴

The 41-year-old worker-intellectual, Tsetsilia Zelikson, had joined the RSDRP in 1898, and the Bolsheviks in 1903, when she married the worker-intellectual Vladimir Bobrovsky, who was also 41.³⁵ Bobrovskaya had been in Moscow since the beginning of the war, but after being continually harassed by police she had complained to a senior gendarme officer and threatened to move to another apartment or a hotel. After he assured her that the police would find her wherever she went, she 'swore at him for all I was worth', and the surveillance stopped.³⁶

Shlyapnikov had lost contact with most comrades in Russia,³⁷ so he returned to Petrograd,³⁸ and sent material to *Sotsial-Demokrat*.³⁹ Almost all the city's RSDRP intelligenty had left the underground, and though a few led kruzhki, they refused to shelter him, so he had to move every night. He began forming an RSDRP CC of workers,

and with Ulyanova and Elizarova he recruited students to bring illegal literature from Finland and sent batches to Kharkiv, Ekaterinoslav, the Urals, the Volga region and the Caucasus. Shlyapnikov also surveyed revolutionary work in Nizhni Novgorod, Vladimir and Moscow,⁴⁰ where the largest group of activists consisted of seven defeatists,⁴¹ though workers' medical funds had 21,307 members.⁴² Iakovlev had taken the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives to the Tbilisi and Baki RSDRP committees, and though they reached no position on the war,⁴³ some Georgian Bolsheviks adopted the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, but left the underground and operated legally.⁴⁴

During November 50 or so SR intelligentsy and workers in Petrograd had met at the home of a Menshevik Duma deputy. Most opposed the war, and noted that the 'military dust of the early days had already settled' and people had begun to 'worry about what would come tomorrow', so they decided to print leaflets and newspapers.⁴⁵

Early in December, in Petrograd, after six weeks of questioning, the Bolshevik Duma deputies saw the charges against them, and the Duma president hoped that ministers would 'take the necessary steps in future to protect members from illegal police activities'.⁴⁶ By the end of the year the Mezhrainontsy claimed 300 to 350 members who were mainly metalworkers, printers and students.⁴⁷ Iurenev had been jailed for subversion,⁴⁸ but escaped to Stockholm. He wrote to Axelrod in Zurich on behalf of 'our comrades in Petrograd', who 'very much entreat you to write what you think about the situation and the position that ought to be adopted: I will pass everything along'.⁴⁹

(ii) The RSDRP émigrés

In Paris Tserderbaum welcomed *Sotsial-Demokrat* in *Golos* late in November 1914 and agreed that the factional controversies had lost all significance.⁵⁰ He thought he 'could probably come to an understanding' with Ulyanov, who was 'preparing to appear in the role of a fighter against opportunism in the International', more readily than with Plekhanov,⁵¹ whose criticism of the Bolsheviks was sharper and his hostility to Menshevik 'liquidators' less strident;⁵² but he resigned as an editor of *Nashe Slovo*.⁵³ *Sotsial-Demokrat* welcomed Tserderbaum's announcement that *Vorwärts* and Kautsky were politically 'dead'. It insisted that national pride was not 'alien' to 'class conscious Russians', though overcoming backwardness was one of the RSDRP's main goals.⁵⁴ 'We love our language and our country'. 'We are all full of a sense of national pride' and 'particularly hate our slavish past', but also 'our slavish present'. Ulyanov wrote to Kollontai that the war 'has brought this great benefit to international socialism, that it has exposed for all to see the utter rottenness, baseness and meanness of opportunism, thereby giving a splendid impetus to the cleansing of the working-class movement from the dung accumulated during decades of peace'.⁵⁵

In Stockholm the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives had produced 'perplexity'.⁵⁶ Kollontai wrote to Ulyanov about 'a slogan that will unite everyone', but he called her a pacifist.⁵⁷ She could not accept the idea of turning the imperialist war into a civil war, but understood the need for a Third International.⁵⁸ Ulyanov agreed that she should help Shlyapnikov to smuggle Bolshevik literature to socialists in Western Europe and Russia. Kollontai The couple sent copies of the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives via Finland and Kollontai distanced herself from the Mensheviks.⁵⁹ Her translations of the perspectives were sent to French, German and English papers, and the daily *La Sentinelle* (*The Sentinel*) in Chaux-de-Fonds in Switzerland.⁶⁰ Shlyapnikov told Ulyanov that Kollontai was against the war,⁶¹ and he asked them to contact socialists across Scandinavia and arrange permanent contacts with the Bolsheviks in Switzerland.⁶² Kollontai published the perspectives in Swedish in the Stockholm *Fösvärnihilisten* (*Defense Nihilist*).⁶³ She noted that the Germans claimed that they wanted to overthrow tsarism, not to eliminate rivals on the world market. The Russians claimed that they wanted to liberate Galicia and Serbia and protect republican France and Belgium, even though Russia was an imperialist autocratic state, and the British and French governments were equally hypocritical. Workers' parties in the belligerent states had underestimated the danger of militarism, and should agitate for the 'most rapid possible peace'.⁶⁴ After she delivered an anti-war speech an arrest warrant was issued,⁶⁵ just before the annual congress of Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetareparti (the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Sweden).⁶⁶ The SSDA denounced the arrest, but the government decided to expel her, for turning her apartment into a 'revolutionary club, interfering in Sweden's internal affairs,⁶⁷ and threatening state security.⁶⁸ As she was taken away she hid Shlyapnikov's papers behind the toilet cistern and told him where to find them. She was interrogated for hours in a police station, charged with being a Russian spy and taken to a women's prison. Shlyapnikov and Branting got her extradition order rescinded, and she was transferred to Malmö Prison, then police took her to Copenhagen in Denmark,⁶⁹ where she was under surveillance and found few like-minded SDs.⁷⁰

In Sweden, on the 13th, the SSDA won over 266,000 votes in the elections to the Rikstag (parliament),⁷¹ and 87 of the 230 seats, making it the largest party, though it remained in opposition.⁷² On the 14th Ulyanov told Shlyapnikov that his speech on behalf of the RSDRP at the SSDA congress should stress that the Bolshevik Duma deputies represented the position of Russian workers, that illegal leaflets were being issued in Petrograd, Moscow, Riga and the Caucasus, and *Sotsial-Demokrat* was against 'international opportunism'.⁷³ 'The epoch of the *bayonet*

has begun'.⁷⁴ Shlyapnikov replied that his authority came from the Petrograd RSDRP committee, not the émigré CC, and he was worried that revolutionary defeatism would benefit the Germans. At the SSDA congress his address was translated and delivered by a Swede, since he could not speak Swedish. It called the SPD Reichstag deputies' approval of war credits 'treason' and caused controversy.⁷⁵ He won Höglund's support, and he and other left wingers challenged Branting's authority,⁷⁶ but Höglund and two other Swedish socialists were arrested.⁷⁷

In December Ulyanov told Shlyapnikov that Luxemburg had been right about Kautsky being 'a time-serving theorist',⁷⁸ and he was a danger to the workers' movement.⁷⁹ Kollontai wrote to Ulyanov. 'Officially my arrest and expulsion are the result of my article published in the anti-militarist Swedish youth magazine, but 'the real reason was my speech on the same theme delivered at a closed party meeting'.⁸⁰ After Ulyanov challenged her about disagreeing with turning the imperialist war into a civil war she wrote only to Krupskaya.⁸¹ Ulyanov criticised Shlyapnikov for moving to Denmark,⁸² though he had reported about the Petrograd strikes; and on the 31st Ulyanov asked if illegal publications could be printed in Sweden.⁸³

(iii) The troops go hungry

On 2 November 1914 the Russian government had declared war on the Ottoman Empire, and the British, French, Belgian, Serbian and Montenegrin governments followed.⁸⁴ By the 10th Russian troops had cleared almost all German and Austrian troops from the Polish salient, but had taken 12,000 casualties, most of them prisoners of war, and the commander was sacked.⁸⁵ During November the Germans lost 120,000 killed and wounded and 15,000 captured, while the Russians lost 17,000 killed, 53,000 wounded and over 30,000 captured in Poland alone. Some divisions were down to half their original strength or even less. One elite regiment was down to nine officers and 500 men, another was at 40 percent of normal strength, and another had lost 20 officers killed and 10 wounded and 500 men, making 3,000 since the beginning of the war. One corps had lost all but 6,500 of its original complement of 32,000 and another had lost 9,000 out of 14,000.⁸⁶ Many units had taken casualties of up to 70 percent,⁸⁷ and around 40,000 officers had been killed,⁸⁸ and a Red Cross report was grim. 'The troops go hungry. Many have no boots. Their feet are wrapped in strips of cloth.' 'Particularly alarming is the shortage of ammunition for the artillery.' A commander had ordered each gun to fire no more than five shells each day, so the infantry, 'which is under constant shelling, has no artillery protection'.⁸⁹ The chief of staff complained that 'many men have no boots, and their legs are frostbitten. They have no sheepskin or warm underwear, and are catching colds'. In regiments with no officers, 'mass surrenders' had taken place.⁹⁰ Only 4.6 million of the 6.5 million front-line infantry had rifles,⁹¹ and those without one fought with bayonets at night.⁹² The army had lost hundreds of thousands of weapons,⁹³ and it used 45,000 bullets a day, though production in Russia was 13,000. Stocks of rifles and shrapnel shells were exhausted,⁹⁴ and many field guns had fallen silent.⁹⁵

On 3 December the Germans took Łódź,⁹⁶ 50 miles from Warszawa, whose population included 100,000 Polish and Jewish refugees.⁹⁷ Around 18,000 wounded Russian troops were taken in goods wagons to a Warszawa railway station and left on the platforms 'in the cold rain and mud without as much as straw litter', though Polish nurses attended them.⁹⁸ General Rennenkampf was accused of treason,⁹⁹ and relieved of his command.¹⁰⁰ There were 25,000 Latvians at the front, and 15,000 reservists,¹⁰¹ though the Germans occupied Liepāja and Königsberg.¹⁰² By the end of the year the Russians had forced ethnic Germans in a 250-mile wide belt near the border to sell their land or face expropriation.¹⁰³ The Germans had driven Serbia out of the war, but taken 227,000 casualties,¹⁰⁴ to 35,000 square miles of Russian territory, and had begun transferring 10 million Poles to Germany.¹⁰⁵ In five months 142,502 German troops had been killed. Russian artillery had caused 58.3 percent of German casualties and small arms 41.7 percent.¹⁰⁶ Warszawa University had reopened under German control,¹⁰⁷ though the 434 Estonian students at Tartu University in Estonia formed one-sixth of the total.¹⁰⁸ The Germans had opened schools in occupied Poland, where Polish children were taught in Polish, but Jews were taught in German.¹⁰⁹ There was one gymnasium for every 42,000 Polish children, and one for every 520,000 in Ukraine, so wealthy Ukrainians had funded eight more.¹¹⁰

The Austro-Hungarian mobilisation had gone at 10 mph, or about the same speed as a bicycle, and most of its army had been sent to Galicia.¹¹¹ Most Russians fought with rifles and bayonets,¹¹² pressed them back to the Carpathian Mountains,¹¹³ and inflicted 360,000 casualties.¹¹⁴ The Russians captured Lwów,¹¹⁵ and reportedly had killed 600,000 Austro-Hungarian troops and captured 400,000,¹¹⁶ but had lost many stores of materiel and field guns, and survivors withdrew to the east of Kraków.¹¹⁷

In the south the Russians had defeated the Ottoman army,¹¹⁸ but when around 65,000 Russians faced 95,000 Ottoman troops in Eastern Anatolia, they retreated.¹¹⁹ Ottoman troops occupied southern Georgia,¹²⁰ and the oil port of Batumi;¹²¹ but then halted, and 10,000 Armenian volunteers joined 100,000 regulars in the Russian army.¹²²

Around 7.17 million Russian troops had reportedly been mobilised, but at least 90,900 had been killed and 134,800 of the 368,400 wounded had died, as had 16,400 from disease, plus 13,300 of the 371,700 prisoners of war.¹²³ Almost half of the trained troops up to the age of 32 had become casualties. Total losses were probably at least 1.8 million, including 908,000 wounded and 486,000 captured, though it may have been 2.4 million.¹²⁴

There was a serious manpower shortage in Russia.¹²⁵ In some villages 20 percent of peasants aged 20 to 50 had been conscripted, and their few letters from the front spoke of hunger, stale bread that 'we feed to pigs at home', cold, and fears of facing winter without boots or adequate clothing. Tens of thousands who had been treated in a hospital near the front had limped home, many with self-inflicted wounds.¹²⁶

(iv) The feminisation of Russia's industrial workforce

During 1914 the Agriculture Ministry budget had been 146.2 million rubles.¹²⁷ The Peasant Land Bank had given peasants mortgages amounting to 660 million rubles,¹²⁸ and over 25 million acres had been added to allotments in 47 provinces, though kulaki had bought most of them.¹²⁹ During the last five months of the year 97,900 of the 120,300 heads of households who had applied to convert communal allotments into private holdings had been successful,¹³⁰ making 6,174,000 in all,¹³¹ or about 40 percent of the total, and many had established farms.¹³² Peasants had received three million rubles for horses, 146 million for other sales to the army, 442 million for conscripted family members, and peasants' cash income was reportedly 1.5 billion.¹³³ Peasants cultivated over 89 percent of arable land in holdings mainly ranging from 30 to 75 acres.¹³⁴ Children, youths, women and old men had brought in the harvest.¹³⁵ Almost 40 percent came from kulaki and another 40 percent from middle and poor peasants, but only a quarter of it went onto the market.¹³⁶ Gentry land had produced 12 percent of bread grains, and half was sold, or over 20 percent of total production,¹³⁷ which had fallen by a third, and poor peasants had sold animals when there was no one to look after them.¹³⁸ Nationally an average of 273 babies out of 1,000 had died, especially in peasant families, though wives who left their husbands had won the right to an internal passport.¹³⁹ Officially there had been 265 peasant disturbances, though troops put down 13 percent.¹⁴⁰

The government had spent 93 million rubles on new railway lines and 95 million on improving the network,¹⁴¹ though the manufacturers of railway wagons had found making munitions more profitable. By the end of the year imported goods had begun to pile up at Vladivostok, and around 60,000 tons of freight and 3,000 military vehicles remained at Arkhangelsk, because the line to Moscow could cope with three pairs of goods trains and two pairs of passenger trains a day, though horse-drawn wagons took some goods to Petrograd over 600 miles away.¹⁴²

The mobilisation of 15 million men had severely strained industry.¹⁴³ There were three million or so permanent industrial workers in the Empire,¹⁴⁴ though most still had ties to their villages.¹⁴⁵ The number of inspected enterprises had fallen to 14,146, but their aggregate workforces had grown to 1,960,860, and the cotton mill workforce to 556,000. The number of enterprises employing under 100 had fallen to 11,117, and their workforces totalled 348,876. Those employing 101 to 500 had fallen to 2,253, though their workforces totalled 504,440. Those employing 501 to 1,000 had grown to 432 and their workforces totalled 296,347, while 344 with over 1,000 had aggregate workforces of 811,197.¹⁴⁶ Nationally around 732,000 (26.6 percent) of the workforce was female, and 31.8 percent in manufacturing industry, including 39.4 percent in the central industrial region,¹⁴⁷ and 49.5 percent in cotton mills.¹⁴⁸ Around 27 percent in manufacturing industry were adolescents,¹⁴⁹ about 2,000 aged 12 to 15 worked small manufactories, and eight percent of inspected workers were aged 15 to 17.¹⁵⁰ Nationally workers averaged almost 60 hours a week,¹⁵¹ and they produced goods worth the equivalent of \$700 a year.¹⁵²

Petrograd's 183,800 inspected workers included over 56,200 women and over 16,500 youths, and over 2,000 children worked in Petrograd province plants.¹⁵³ Most workers put in 10 hours a day, and inspectors had reported 180 'accidents' at the Lessner plants.¹⁵⁴ In Moscow annual wages varied from 243 rubles for woollen workers to 231 for mixed textile workers, 223 for cotton workers, 176 for silk workers and 172 for flax and hemp workers. In Moscow province wages varied from 403 rubles for metalworkers to 391 for paper and graphic workers, 367 for woodworkers, 344 for animal workers, 287 for chemical workers, 252 for mineral workers and 241 for food workers. Flax and hemp workers' wages had risen by 25 percent, wool workers' by 11 percent, animal workers' and others by nine percent, mineral workers' by eight percent, woodworkers' by six percent, chemical workers' by four percent, and cotton workers' and paper and graphic workers' by two percent, though metalworkers' had fallen by one percent, food workers' by five percent, mixed textile workers' by 11 percent and silk workers' by 17 percent. Nationally average wages had risen by one percent, but food prices by five percent, and they were rising by 15 to 20 percent at the end of the year.¹⁵⁵ Women earned an average of 51.1 percent men's wages, but that varied from 44.1 percent in metal plants to 72.1 percent in cotton mills.¹⁵⁶ Most workers averaged 206 rubles a year, but those

in defence industries averaged 408.¹⁵⁷ The average annual wage was barely a third of that in Germany,¹⁵⁸ where industry contributed almost 60 percent of the gross national product.¹⁵⁹

Foreigners owned most of the cotton crop, and around 20 percent of the industry, including almost a third of the largest mills, plus large parts of the electrical, chemical and machine-building industries and a third of big commercial banks. They played an influential role in woollen manufacture, insurance, merchant shipping, much of the Donbass coal industry and the Azerbaijan oil wells,¹⁶⁰ where output had fallen by 7.8 percent compared to 1913.¹⁶¹ In the Donbass all but 0.5 percent of coal was cut by hand,¹⁶² and the number of miners had fallen from 203,000 to 138,000.¹⁶³ Almost 65 percent of male metalworkers and 0.1 percent of women were skilled, while 32.8 percent of men, 1.8 percent of women and the 0.5 percent were children were unskilled.¹⁶⁴ A diet of milk, nine eggs, a herring, mushrooms and other vegetables cost 11.34 rubles a month, while meat consumption had more than halved.¹⁶⁵ German troops occupied the Dąbrowa coalfield in Poland, and thanks to the German blockade of Baltic ports, Russian imports of British coal had plummeted by almost 90 percent,¹⁶⁶ to around 330,000 tons.¹⁶⁷ On 9 December the German military governor of occupied Poland called for volunteers for the army.¹⁶⁸

No strike was officially deemed political in November, and only three strikes and 785 strikers were deemed economic.¹⁶⁹ Since July, officially, there had been 248 strikes and 134,212 strikers across Russia, and eight strikes and 20,543 strikers had officially been deemed political,¹⁷⁰ though another account listed over 187,000 strikers.¹⁷¹ Eight of the strikes and 20,543 strikers had been officially deemed political in the capital, and 240 strikes and 113,669 strikers deemed economic.¹⁷² The main cause was the shortage and price of food.¹⁷³ A pound of second quality meat cost 24 kopeks, a pound of melted tallow 28, eight gallons of potatoes 60, a pud (36.11 pounds) of sauerkraut 95, a pud of sour rye bread 1.35 rubles, a pud of sweet rye bread 1.55, a pud of buckwheat 3.28 and a pud of sunflower oil 5.65. During 1914, nationally, annual money wages had gone up by one percent, but food prices in industrial centres by five percent, and by an average of 36 percent since 1913, while in Moscow province some wages had fallen, others remained stable or had increased by no more than nine percent, and only those of the 689 flax and hemp workers' had increased by 25 percent, but from a very low base.¹⁷⁴

During 1914, nationally, 87,773 metalworkers and 115,532 textile workers had officially gone on economic strikes and 160,336 textile workers and 661,426 metalworkers on political strikes.¹⁷⁵ Only 19 percent of strikes had been successful,¹⁷⁶ but by late that year the proportion of strikes deemed political was almost 80 percent.¹⁷⁷

In Donbass factories there had been 435 'accidents' per 1,000 workers, and 1.5 per 1,000 had died, while there had been 174 'accidents' per 1,000 mineworkers, and 3.2 per thousand had died.¹⁷⁸ The average length of strikes was 1.2 days.¹⁷⁹ The luzovka workers' cooperative's had almost 58,000 rubles, and made a profit of 29,792 rubles. It spent 2,000 to educate children and a library held evening classes for adults.¹⁸⁰

Nationally there were reportedly 100,000 trade union members by December, including up to 30,000 in Petrograd, and though the number of officially-recorded strikes had fallen to nine,¹⁸¹ three strikes and 1,020 strikers were deemed economic, none were deemed political.¹⁸² There were 16,000 wholesale societies across Russia. The Cooperative Union linked 1,000 of them and had an annual turnover of 800 million rubles,¹⁸³ while 2,800 sick funds had over two million members.¹⁸⁴

Two of the Okhrana's 23 agents among SRs had been exposed, but none of the two among anarchists or the 42 among SDs.¹⁸⁵ The Okhrana had spent around 600,000 rubles on conspiratorial apartments and agents, paid 18 of them 1,000 rubles a year, 18 rather less than 3,000 and 10 over 8,000. On 31 December a surveillance clearing house was established at 18 Moika Embankment in Petrograd,¹⁸⁶ though leading liberals were disassociating themselves from the autocracy.

(v) In opposition to His Majesty

The government had floated a loan of 500 million rubles in October 1914, but by the end of the year its finances were fragile. The loss of territory had reduced its pre-war income by 3.7 percent. It had spent 10 million rubles a day on the war, including 1.5 rubles for each soldier, amounting to 1.655 billion rubles. Its ordinary revenue was 2.961 billion, though long-term domestic debt was 709 million, overseas borrowing 82 million, short-term debt 805 million and the deficit was 1.898 billion. Total government expenditure had been 12.745 billion.¹⁸⁷ The ban on vodka had cost it 800 million rubles.¹⁸⁸ In December it sold the equivalent of £8 millions' worth of gold to the British,¹⁸⁹ and the ruble had lost 20 percent of its value on some foreign exchanges.¹⁹⁰ Exports were worth around one billion, though imports had cost almost 1.1 billion.¹⁹¹

The government had reportedly spent over 381 billion gold rubles on education, and zemstvos had spent 104 million of their 336 million ruble budgets on education, or 2.25 rubles per child.¹⁹² Around 22 percent of Petrograd children had completed primary school and most factory workers had had two or three years' schooling.¹⁹³

Ulyanov's *Sputnik Rabochego na 1914 God (The Worker's Companion for 1914)* had sold 20,000 copies.¹⁹⁴ There were 2,300 students at the city's Polytechnical Institute, 4,000 at the Commercial Institute,¹⁹⁵ and 5,000 at the University. Nationally, during 1914, 3,111 periodicals had been published,¹⁹⁶ and 32,338 books and pamphlets, but there had been fewer than 25 publications in Ukraine,¹⁹⁷ since the government had banned Ukrainian-language newspapers and literature.¹⁹⁸ Hundreds of Jews had been expelled from Kyiv, though there were 15,000 higher education students,¹⁹⁹ and over 400 Russians attended Swiss universities.²⁰⁰

The Moscow publisher Ivan Sytin had published 225 million books and periodicals, as well as newspapers, during 1913. The outbreak of the war surprised him, though he expected it would last three months at most. In September the military censors accused his daily *Russkoye Slovo* of publishing news of military operations in advance, and ordered it not to pre-empt official communiques. The paper argued that Germany wanted 'new colonies both for the profit of their trade and for distribution of the excess population'. Censors were ordered to watch the paper closely, even though its presses produced patriotic posters which demonised the kaiser and idealised the tsar. One in full colour portrayed German troops impaling infants on their bayonets and shooting priests. By October, when the paper was selling 500,000 copies a day. The editors complained that the censors in Moscow and at the front prevented news appearing until the following day; though a request for a direct telegraph line was rejected. The clerical staff were paid 1,725 rubles a year. Sytin also employed 300 inmates of a Moscow prison as bookbinders. He owned a dozen bookshops and stalls, and three large stores in the city centre, plus shops in Kyiv, Warszawa, Kharkiv, Ekaterinburg, Rostov-na-Donu, Odesa, Voronezh, Irkutsk and Sofia in Bulgaria. By the end of the year the circulation of *Russkoye Slovo* had reached 619,500.²⁰¹

A British timber merchant had visited Petrograd earlier that year and prominent liberals supported the war and the government's imperialist policy. Many believed that after an Allied victory the Ottoman Empire would be broken up, and Russia would control the Straits and have a navy base in the Mediterranean. When the merchant returned late that year the idea that Germany would be easily beaten was dissipating. Liberals were angry,²⁰² and the city duma, which was composed mainly of Kadets, took a stand 'in opposition to His Majesty'.²⁰³

(vi) A national socialist reforming party

By December 1914 (NS), in Berlin, Luxemburg was convinced that the SPD and the International were 'kaput' (broken).²⁰⁴ On the 4th Liebknecht lost his appeal against sentence.²⁰⁵ Next day the SPD Vorstand took control of the *Bremer Bürgerzeitung*,²⁰⁶ and the military banned SPD meetings in München-Gladbach.²⁰⁷ On the 6th Liebknecht was taken to Luckau Prison east of Berlin.²⁰⁸ His hair was shaved and he had to cobble shoes. Sophia and their children would be able to visit him only once a month.²⁰⁹

On the 7th *Die Gleichheit* appealed to socialist women to oppose the war of 'conquest and world power in all of its naked ugliness' and called for 'Permanent peace'; but censors blanked out the article.²¹⁰ The output of many factories could not be distributed regularly because the railways had insufficient rolling stock. Each civilian was allowed around 7.7 pounds of potatoes a week, 9.5 ounces of jam or honey, 5.65 to 7.76 ounces of flour (partly as bread), 3.5 to 8.8 ounces of meat, seven ounces of sugar, 4.2 ounces of fish, 2.1 to 2.65 ounces of fats, 1.23 pints of milk and one egg. This was well below subsistence level and everything was not always available.²¹¹ The potato crop had failed and the bread ration fell, as had real wages,²¹² though the armed forces were exempt from food restrictions.²¹³ On the 17th, in Berlin, the military handed *Vorwärts* over to the SPD Vorstand,²¹⁴ which demanded price ceilings and threatened to end the civil peace,²¹⁵ On the 24th the military banned SPD meetings in Leipzig and the Vorstand sacked the editor of the *Schwabische Tageblatt (Swabian Daily Paper)* and installed a supporter.²¹⁶ Zetkin's appeal appeared in a Swiss socialist paper and copies were distributed in Germany illegally.²¹⁷ On the 27th the SPD journal *Die Neue Zeit (The New Times)* argued that 'there can be no difference of party, class and nationality within the army or the population'.²¹⁸ On the 29th the military banned SPD meetings in Altona, and party officials refused to call meetings elsewhere.²¹⁹ In Berlin 751 of the 4,010 officials held 12,000 key positions, and many former workers earned up to 10,000 marks a year,²²⁰ but 30,000 items of oppositionists' propaganda appeared.²²¹

On the night of 1 December a few SPD oppositionists met in Georg Ledebour's Berlin apartment. Liebknecht had bombarded Reichstag deputies with appeals to vote against war credits, but next day the caucus supported them by 82 to 17,²²² and on the 3rd all the SPD deputies voted for them,²²³ though Liebknecht voted against. He demanded a speedy peace without conquests,²²⁴ because the war was 'for capitalist domination of the world market'.²²⁵ Halle comrades supported his stand.²²⁶

Zetkin knew her correspondence was being monitored, and since envelopes had to be posted unsealed for the censors she had had to write 'infrequently and in a noncommittal way'. She wrote from Wilhelmshöhe, over 220 miles north of Stuttgart, to a female member of the Netherlands Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij (Social-

Democratic Workers' Party, or SDAP.) She had been 'shadowed' and wanted to check if a letter had arrived after a fortnight. She was concerned that her letters should not be published verbatim, or 'all of my national and international work in Germany would be totally suspended'. She acknowledged that the Vorstand bore 'the main guilt' for failing to give a lead to the International, and the SPD had become 'a national socialist reforming party'.

Our organisations are more than decimated. Our treasuries are being emptied ... [and] membership meetings may only take up what the authorities approve of. Some of the party leaders and party bureaucrats go even further than the authorities and use the organisational apparatus to prevent a discussion of the causes and the character of this war, which could lead to a criticism of our party's attitude and the demand: Peace, no annexations, etc. Of the 91 organs of our party press, of the many trade union journals, the overwhelming majority is nationalistic, even chauvinistic, through and through, and not a few surpass the jingoist sentiments of the more decent and respectable bourgeois press.

The 'state of siege is not bound by any rules', and *Die Gleichheit* was 'subject to the most arbitrary harassment by the censors and the military command'. An issue printed before the war had been confiscated. 'It would be great if you could locate somebody reliable near the German border who could mail important letters' to Miss Marie Plettner, c/o Fink, in Altenbergstrasse, Stuttgart. The letters should be placed in a separate envelope and marked 'For Clara'. Her son had served as an army doctor in Belgium, but she did not know where he was, and she had just heard that the Reichstag had agreed war credits of five billion marks.

Luxemburg's trial had been postponed.²²⁷ Stuttgart comrades invited her to speak, and Berlin comrades invited Liebknecht, but officials prevented them.²²⁸ An editor of *Vorwärts*, who was Berlin a bookbinder, secretary of the Niederbarnim district and leader of the city's SPD women's organisation, duplicated and distributed documents with the oppositionists' views. Late that year the Magdeburg *Volkstimme* (*People's Voice*) was suspended, and the *Bergische Arbeiterstimme* (*Bergische Workers' Voice*) and the Remscheid *Sozialdemokratische Zeitung* (*Social-Democratic Paper*) were banned.²²⁹ *Sozialdemokratische Korrespondenz* contained only an economic survey,²³⁰ and the last issue appeared on 21 December,²³¹ but *Zur Information* (*For Information*) appeared on the 27th.²³²

The émigré Bolshevik intelligentki Krupskaya, Apfelbauma, Armand and 42-year-old Ludmila Stahl suggested to Zetkin, the secretary of the International women's bureau, that she should call a conference of socialist women from belligerent countries;²³³ but the International bureau was hostile and the SPD Vorstand barred members from attending.²³⁴

The German government had not prepared for feeding the population during a long war.²³⁵ Largely thanks to the British navy's blockade of German ports its exports had shrunk to around 20 percent of the 1913 figure and its imports to around 14 percent. One day in October the price of a pound of salt had risen from 11 to 60 pfennigs, and a pound of flour from 15 to 40 pfennigs. By the end of the year maximum prices for grain, milk, sugar, potatoes and animal feeds were in force, and civilians were suffering.²³⁶

(vii) The War and the International

In Bern, late in 1914, Armand had argued that the war had placed greater responsibility on women workers, especially if their husbands were in the armed forces, and while women could not lead a revolution, they could help to replace the International.²³⁷ Ulyanov had written to his sister Maria in Moscow. 'We are living fairly well, quietly and peacefully'. 'The libraries here are good, and I have made quite decent arrangements as far as the use of books is concerned. It is even pleasant to read after my daily newspaper work. There is a pedagogical library here for Nadya and she is writing something on pedagogy.'²³⁸

Sobelsohn left Germany for Bern,²³⁹ since he was an Austrian citizen and was liable to conscription. He largely agreed with the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, but did not write off the SPD opposition.²⁴⁰ He believed the Bolsheviks were 'the only revolutionary party in Russia',²⁴¹ and his wife, a hospital doctor in Berlin, organised clandestine communications to and from the Bolsheviks in Switzerland, where Grimm published the SPD opposition's correspondence in the *Berner Tagwacht*.²⁴² Sobelsohn wrote for it under a pseudonym, lectured on imperialism and met Axelrod, Balabanoff and Bronstein.²⁴³

Bronstein's *La Guerre et l'Internationale* (*The War and the International*) had begun appearing in the Menshevik's Paris *Golos* in serial form on 31 November 1914. He argued that capitalism had 'outgrown the limits of nation and state' and this would mean 'the collapse of the national state as an independent economic unit'. The war was basically between Germany and Britain for the exploitation of colonies, but there was no reason for socialists to despair since it was 'putting this alternative to the capitalist world: *Permanent War or Permanent Revolution*'. 'Real national self-defence now consists in the struggle for peace' without reparations, plus the right

to self-determination for every nation, a United States of Europe without monarchs, 'ruling feudal castes', standing armies or secret diplomacy. Capitalism had 'outgrown the limits of nation and state' and this would mean 'the collapse of the national state as an independent economic unit'. The war was basically between Germany and Britain for the exploitation of colonies, but there was no reason for socialists to despair since it was 'putting this alternative to the capitalist world: *Permanent War or Permanent Revolution*'. 'Real national self-defence now consists in the struggle for peace' without reparations, the right to self-determination for every nation, a United States of Europe without monarchs, 'ruling feudal castes', standing armies or secret diplomacy. Efforts to revive the International were 'quite hopeless', and a new one was needed.²⁴⁴ He believed an Allied victory would be best for socialists in Russia,²⁴⁵ though liberal papers and parties, and 'official socialism and syndicalism' in France were 'moulding the consciousness of the toiling masses to suit the needs of French militarism'.²⁴⁶ Bronstein's pamphlet appeared as *Der Krieg und die Internationale* in Switzerland in November,²⁴⁷ and copies reached Germany and Austria.²⁴⁸ The German distributors were prosecuted, and SPD leaders insinuated that it was written on behalf of the Allies, and others accused him of whitewashing 'social-patriots'.²⁴⁹ Bronstein left Paris to report on the war for *Kyivskaya Mysl*, and was sentenced to prison in his absence for *lèse majesté* (offending the kaiser).²⁵⁰ When he returned Sedova had run out of money, but it was impossible to transfer theirs to Paris, so he asked Axelrod to help to get her a short-term loan and *Kyivskaya Mysl* to send her a cheque.²⁵¹ When Sedova arrived in Paris the family lived in rue Oudry, and she later recalled that there were so many women in mourning that it seemed like black was the latest fashion.²⁵²

(viii) Helphand

Late in 1905 the 38-year-old RSDRP intelligent Israel Helphand had chaired the second St. Petersburg sovet, but was imprisoned in the Fortress early in 1906.²⁵³ In summer he was exiled to Siberia, but escaped and went to Berlin. In 1910 the SPD punished him for using Gorky's royalties to support his failing businesses, but in 1913, during the Balkan wars, he dealt in corn and other commodities, reportedly including Krupp's military products, and supplied the Ottoman army and government with intelligence.²⁵⁴ In 1914 he wanted to stand above the Bolshevik-Menshevik controversy.²⁵⁵ In June he and four émigré Mensheviks arrived in Copenhagen,²⁵⁶ and worked in Helphand's institute for the study of the social consequences of the war.²⁵⁷ He believed it was necessary to fight Russian absolutism at any cost.²⁵⁸ After the war began trade between Germany and Russia took place via Scandinavia, and Helphand established an import-export business in Copenhagen, with Fürstenberg as managing director. Helphand visited Germany. He could rely for support on the editor of the Munich *Münchener Post*, acquired a majority interest in the paper, founded Verlag für Sozialwissenschaft (the Social Science Publishing House) and told a government contact that he intended to publish *Die Glocke (The Bell)*, a 'Socialist Bi-Monthly'. He was welcomed at the Foreign Ministry, and claimed that he could foment a strike in Petrograd on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in January 1915, and was promised a large amount of money to propagandise Russian troops.²⁵⁹ Helphand formed a small network of trusted agents to distribute it.

Alexander Kesküla had been born in Spain in 1882. He later attended Western European universities and considered himself a Bolshevik by 1905, but by 1913 he was an Estonian nationalist.²⁶⁰ He aimed for a federation of Estonia, Finland and Sweden, after the Swedish army annexed Estonia and Finland, the German army crushed the Russian army and the Bolsheviks controlled Russia. In 1914 he contacted the German ambassador in Bern, and met Ulyanov in autumn, then went to Stockholm. The Bolshevik Jacob Bogrovsky introduced him to Kollontai, who later claimed that he offered her money and arms, though he denied it. Bogrovsky had met the Estonian Bolshevik Artur Zifeldt in Switzerland and given him money, which he reportedly passed to émigré Bolsheviks, and gave Kesküla inside Bolshevik information which he passed to the Germans. Bogrovsky was in charge of the Bolshevik transport network in Shlyapnikov's absence. Albert Kruse, who was in his mid-twenties, had been appointed as editor of a Norwegian socialist paper in spring, but was expelled, and he and his wife went to Stockholm in autumn. He met socialists and Bolsheviks, including Bukharin, plus Bogrovsky and Uritsky, who both supported Bronstein.²⁶¹ Kruse organised clandestine courier services to Russia by a Polish lawyer.²⁶² Late in September the German Minister in Bern reported that Kesküla had found out 'the conditions on which the Russian revolutionaries would be prepared to conclude peace in the event of the revolution being successful. Kesküla, who had become a member of the Estonian National Committee, worked in Switzerland and Sweden, and later with a German agent. By November it was clear to Germany's leaders that they had failed to achieve a decisive victory, and the chief of the General Staff argued that the shortest way to victory was to conclude a peace with one of the Allies. The Foreign Office concurred, and this policy was followed in cooperation with the political section of the Deputy General Staff in Berlin.²⁶³ In December a senior government official had a plan for 'revolutionising' Russia.²⁶⁴

3. The Great Retreat

(i) *Comrade soldiers!*

By 1915 around private landowners in Russia had debts of over 3.25 billion rubles.¹ Around 2.73 million of the 12.3 million heads of peasant households owned land,² almost two million owned 14 percent of all the cultivatable land,³ and about 10 percent had independent farms.⁴ Two-thirds held village strips, and though rents had increased, so had wholesale grain prices.⁵ Government commissions regulated the transport of food and fuel,⁶ and though the government had promised that peasant soldiers would return by New Year, they did not do so. Tensions began to rise in the countryside, and peasants migrated to the towns and cities.

In Petrograd one male worker in seven had arrived in under a year,⁷ and the population was around 2.32 million. People wanted wheat flour, not rye, and meat, but were often disappointed,⁸ and in two months the number of waggons of coal from the Donbass had fallen from over 9,200 to 4,500.⁹ Around 80 percent of workers were engaged in war-related production,¹⁰ and overtime was standard. Many workers in food, tobacco, leather and shoe plants were female, including girls aged 12 to 15,¹¹ while 3,233 females worked in metal plants.¹² Food prices were rising rapidly and continued to outpace wages.¹³

The Okhrana's budget for 1915 was 72 percent of the Police Department budget,¹⁴ some 4.9 million rubles, and though that had increased by less than the rate of inflation,¹⁵ its former independence had been restored,¹⁶ and it had orders to check the 'political reliability' of conscripts.¹⁷ The Police Department headquarters was restaffed with experienced people, and especially those who dealt with 'perustration' (opening suspect letters).¹⁸

Arrests had almost wiped out the Mezhraintsy in Narva district, and its committee was arrested on 8 January,¹⁹ but an RSDRP committee had been re-established and had links to the districts.²⁰ It addressed leaflets to female and male workers,²¹ yet no surviving leaflet called for the defeat of the Russian armed forces,²² claimed that it would be a lesser evil, mentioned fraternisation at the front, denounced defensists as 'social patriots' or described the war as imperialist.²³ Most activists had been charged with 'anti-war agitation',²⁴ but survivors conducted 'an intense agitation at factories and works'. They issued a leaflet for the 9th, the anniversary of Bloody Sunday,²⁵ though only 14 small plants with 2,595 workers went on strike,²⁶ and there was no demonstration. The Bolsheviks claimed 55 cells in the city,²⁷ and led a few district committees.²⁸ Communications with the émigré Bolshevik intelligentsy were precarious and intermittent, though *Sotsial-Demokrat* sometimes arrived.²⁹

Riga, the capital of Latvia, was the fourth largest city in the Empire, and two-thirds of its population of 530,000 were ethnic Latvians.³⁰ The strikes on 9 January were mainly for better wages and conditions and shorter hours.³¹

On the 10th the imprisoned Duma deputies, other Bolsheviks and the Gavrilovs were put on trial in Petrograd.³² It could have been a court martial, since the Gavrilovs' house was in a district subject to martial law, but the tsar was worried about political strikes, so it took the form of a special session of the High Court. There was a strong police presence at all major factories and police patrolled the streets. The Bolsheviks were charged with belonging to a 'criminal association', subordinated to the RSDRP CC, which 'aimed at the overthrow' of the autocracy 'by means of an armed insurrection', and its replacement with a democratic republic. The law allowed a sentence of up to eight years' *katorga* for this offence, and Gavrilova was charged with aiding and abetting them and failing to inform the authorities. All the defendants pleaded not guilty, and the deputy Petrovsky delivered their agreed position.³³ Rozenfeld argued that the Petrograd RSDRP committee had not approved the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives,³⁴ and repudiated 'revolutionary defeatism', as did the deputy Muranov,³⁵ who insisted that his notes referred to legal organising. The main prosecution witnesses were police agents,³⁶ and the main documentary evidence came from abroad.³⁷ Antipov and Gavrilova were sentenced to 18 months and eight months in a fortress respectively,³⁸ while the Bolsheviks were exiled to the Turukhansk region of Siberia for life.³⁹

Petrograd's railway goods yards were full of unloaded waggons of wood and coal, owing to the mobilisation of workers,⁴⁰ and the army had commandeered a third of the rolling stock. There were reserves of almost 6.4 million tons of grain, but the supply to civilians had dropped, and the city got around two-thirds of what it needed. Rents had risen by up to 300 percent, and factory wages by 142 percent, but their real value had fallen to 70 percent of their pre-war value. The price of butter had risen by 220 percent, flour by 265 percent and meat by 332 percent,⁴¹ and the government stopped giving rations to wives of deserters and of troops who surrendered.⁴² There were heavy arrests of SRs,⁴³ and of Bolsheviks in the First Town district,⁴⁴ but after a Putilov metalworker was beaten his mates went on strike.⁴⁵ During January two strikes and 115 strikers in the capital were officially deemed economic, and 14 strikes and 2,595 strikers deemed political.⁴⁶

In Ukraine Ekaterinoslav SRs, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks worked together in workers' sickness funds. Those in Chernihiv also had a joint organisation and a leaflet announced that 'we do not want to be cannon-fodder!' Revolutionaries in Mykolaev had a joint organisation, and SRs issued anti-war leaflets in Baki in Azerbaijan.⁴⁷ Nationally 1.18 million workers had been conscripted.⁴⁸ Police agents submitted monthly reports on criticisms of the government at public meetings, and the Interior Ministry and provincial governors collected information about the attitude of Jews to the army and to Germany.⁴⁹

Yakov Drobnis had been born into the family of a poor Jewish shoemaker in Glukhov, Chernigov province, in 1890. He had some schooling, then went to Astrakhan in 1903 without a permit and he was sent back home. The shoemaker Boris Rogashevsky, who had been banished from Baki for propagandising, introduced Drobnis to revolutionaries. In 1905 he hectographed and distributed leaflets aimed at peasants and stored weapons for the RSDRP, but spent six of the next 10 years in jail. In January 1915 he was banished to Poltava in central Ukraine for anti-war propaganda, but went underground.⁵⁰

In February Donbass workers demanded a rise of around 30 percent; but the police arrested the committee at the Petrovsky works in Yenakiyev and thwarted a strike. Workers were sacked or conscripted, though 10 to 15 percent rises ended other strikes. Many miners risked being sent to the front if they changed jobs or returned to their villages.⁵¹ There were 500 workers' mutual aid societies in towns and villages near Kyiv, but none in the city, and the *duma* opened a bakery and bread shops.⁵² The Bolsheviks claimed 15 members in Kharkiv.⁵³

The RSDRP's national organisation was almost broken, though individuals propagandised, and Petrograd RSDRP committee survivors sent delegates to Moscow to restore the committee and prepare a conference.⁵⁴ Moscow's population was around 1.8 million.⁵⁵ On the trams 79 women were conductors, 85 operated points and signals, 11 were couriers, two were telephonists and two were delivery workers, and 30 women were taxi drivers.⁵⁶ Around 74 percent of married male metalworkers' wages went on food and 12 percent had to draw on savings. A third of families could not eat meat every day, and textile workers spent more on food and clothing than they earned, so they had to use their savings or find extra sources of income.⁵⁷ On 19 February a strike celebrated the anniversary of the end of serfdom.⁵⁸ There were 400,000 factory workers in the province. Metalworkers formed 15 percent of the total, compared to 10 percent a year earlier, and almost 47 percent were women.⁵⁹ In Moscow Ulyanova made a living by teaching French and translating short works of French and German fiction. She also found safe flats, organised meetings for visiting comrades, and kept in touch with her brother and Krupskaya in Switzerland, but police agents followed her, so she began training as an army nurse in order to propagandise at the front.⁶⁰

In Petrograd the cost of living had risen by 40 percent above pre-war levels, without an equivalent rise in wages. The price of bread had risen by two-thirds and there were long queues in the ice and snow outside bakeries.⁶¹ There were deferments and exemptions for conscripted skilled workers,⁶² and by the 22nd 3,500 of the 5,000 Putilov workers who had been sent to the front had returned.⁶³ There were many textile factories in Vyborg, where one house was home to 30 workers' families. Ten men were metalworkers, 13 were unskilled labourers and one unskilled woman was married to a peasant from Yaroslavl province, though the other women were single.⁶⁴ During February, officially, 4,630 workers had gone on political strikes across Russia.⁶⁵

Early in March hundreds of Petrograd University students protested at the exile of the Bolshevik Duma deputies and the closure of the Free Economic Society, and 600 police were sent to tackle them on the 4th.⁶⁶ An RSDRP committee leaflet called for strikes and demonstrations and students followed suit. When the Duma reconvened there were insufficient votes for an appeal on behalf of the Bolshevik deputies, since the Kadets refused to sign it. Nikolai Chkeidze and Alexandr Kerensky devoted large parts of their speeches to the issue, yet the president would not let newspapers publish them.⁶⁷ The government floated a long-term loan,⁶⁸ and on the 29th the Duma passed a war budget without difficulty, though the government's relations with liberal deputies were rapidly deteriorating.⁶⁹ Liberals demanded the sacking of unpopular ministers and more control of the war, and the tsar invited members of 'society' to join a 'council of defence'.⁷⁰ An SR had returned from Petrograd to Nizhni Novgorod with a leaflet for soldiers and sailors. At the end of the month Moscow SRs published 'Comrade Soldiers!' which argued that they could 'only profit by turning your arms against those who rule over you'.⁷¹

In the Donbass just over 49 percent metalworkers were skilled men, while 31.4 percent were unskilled, around 8.2 percent were prisoners of war, 7.4 percent were children, 3.2 percent were unskilled women and 0.3 percent were skilled women.⁷² In the Caucasus 1,100 Caspian-Black Sea Company workers, including a large number of Muslims, had gone on strike.⁷³ Georgian towns and cities were short of food, and letters from front-line troops complained about the lack of food and weapons.⁷⁴

On 4 April 15,000 Petrograd strikers commemorated the anniversary of the Lena massacre, and about 400 were arrested.⁷⁵ On the 6th, when the sale of meat was suspended for a day, women looted a large meat market. On the 8th similar scenes took place in Moscow over the shortage of bread, and the military commander was hurt by flying cobblestones.⁷⁶ Average monthly pay at Moscow Metalworks had fallen from 48.3 rubles to 34.1 since the

beginning of the war. On the 15th 80 rolled metal shop workers rejected a 10 to 30 percent rise, demanded 50 to 100 percent and went on strike, and managers conceded 52.5 rubles a month.⁷⁷

In spring the 32-year-old Bolshevik Vladimir Antonov took the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives from Paris to Saratov on the Volga, and the Old Bolsheviks 34-year-old Vladimir Alexandrov, 37-year-old Viktor Nogin, 38-year-old Mikhail Vasiliev and 45-year-old Sergey Mitskevitch arrived.⁷⁸ The RSDRP committee hegemonised the Maiak (Lighthouse) club, and the authorities knew that 100 exiles met local SDs there. Only plants which supplied the army had worked at full capacity for months, while the number of lumber, cement, flour mill and metalworkers had decreased, and many wages had fallen behind the cost of food and consumer goods. Almost all the large plants went on strike on the 19th, the Russian May Day,⁷⁹ the membership of the Maiak club swelled,⁸⁰ and the Bolsheviks recruited workers.⁸¹

On 19 April there were one-day strikes in Petrograd, Tver, Samara, Rostov-na-Donu, Kharkiv,⁸² and Nizhni Novgorod, where Bolsheviks and SRs cooperated.⁸³ The Petrograd Workers' Insurance Group published a journal.⁸⁴ The Bolsheviks claimed now 500 or so 'members' in the city,⁸⁵ and though most limited their activity to collecting money for banished comrades, some revived the Petrograd district committee,⁸⁶ and the RSDRP committee's military organisation contacted troops and sailors at Kronstadt, Sveaborg and Helsinki.⁸⁷

In Mariñë in Bielarus one of the two SR organisations close to the front addressed a leaflet to 'Comrade Peasants'. It argued that all the land should belong to them and included the slogans 'Down with the war and the autocracy! Long live socialism!' In Ukraine there were joint committees of revolutionaries in Kherson and Odesa, where SRs had published anti-war May Day leaflets. In the small town of Rostova-Nachichevansk, an important railway centre, SRs had published anti-war leaflets, including one on 4 April and another on May Day. Police raids in Stavropol and neighbouring villages the northern Caucasus found 'large quantities of revolutionary literature summoning the labouring masses' to 'struggle against the imperialistic war and autocracy'.⁸⁸ In Georgia the prices of bread and potatoes had risen by 33 percent in six months in Tbilisi, and meat by 78 percent,⁸⁹ while the price of cooking oil had risen steadily,⁹⁰ then bread ran out.⁹¹ The region's trade had dried up and the economy had declined, and there were riots in Tbilisi and in other towns and cities.⁹²

A civilian and a soldier had given anti-war leaflets to Stepan Lysenkov, a sailor in the Baltic fleet. Petrograd SDs' and SRs' leaflets called for sailors and soldiers 'to end the war by means of an armed rising'.⁹³ During April two strikes and 4,064 strikers in Petrograd were deemed economic, but none were deemed political.⁹⁴ Nationally around 950,000 workers had been conscripted,⁹⁵ including 12 spies,⁹⁶ and émigré Russian SDs were divided.

Since the beginning of the war imports at Vladivostok had strained the capacity of the Trans-Siberian railway,⁹⁷ and by spring reserves of butter and oats were exhausted in Petrograd.⁹⁸ The price of beef had doubled, rye flour and firewood cost half as much again, and prices were rising faster than wages. Over two million shipments to the city were stuck in sidings en route.⁹⁹ The government had not mobilised private industry,¹⁰⁰ but the Association of Industry and Trade advocated its use,¹⁰¹ and Petrograd factories had the highest priority for fuel and raw materials after the army.¹⁰²

(ii) A slogan that would unite us all

Vladimir Kasparov had been born in the village of Xankändi in Azerbaijan in 1884. He later became a revolutionary in Caucasia and then in European Russia. He studied law at St. Petersburg University, where he joined the RSDRP Second Congress 'majority' in 1903, then attended the Higher Commercial School in Berlin. From 1907 to 1912 he was successively a Bolshevik member of the Baki, Petrograd and Rostov-na-Donu RSDRP committees. He emigrated in 1913, but later returned to St. Petersburg and worked on *Pravda* until the war broke out in summer 1914, when he moved to Switzerland. By 1915 he corresponded with Bolsheviks in Russia on behalf of the émigré RSDRP CC.¹⁰³

From Bern, on 3 January, Ulyanov had told Karpinsky in Geneva that a Paris typographer had offered to set up *Sotsial-Demokrat* for 35 francs an issue if there was a press and Russian type; but a press in Bumplitz near Bern had Russian type, and printed *Sotsialist-Demokrat* and other SD material from the 13th.¹⁰⁴

Kollontai had sent Krupskaya and Ulyanov a draft of *Kto poluchayet pribyl ot voyny* (*Who Profits from the War?*) Ulyanov's response was critical. 'Apparently you do not entirely agree with the slogan of civil war and assign it, so to speak, a subordinate (and perhaps even a conditional place) to the slogan of peace'. 'The thing I fear most at the present time is indiscriminate unity', which would be 'most dangerous and harmful to the proletariat'.¹⁰⁵

On the 17th delegates from SD parties from neutral countries met in Copenhagen. Three came from Scandinavia but none from Switzerland, Italy or the USA. The Bund CC wrote to the organisers and argued for peace negotiations, disarmament of the belligerents' navies, replacing standing armies with people's militias, complete democratisation, the transfer of international policy to 'people's representatives' and 'complete freedom of

cultural and national development for all nationalities'.¹⁰⁶ The 46-year-old Mikhail Pokrovsky and other émigré Mensheviks also wrote. They did not oppose national self-defence, organisation of dissent behind the lines or publishing anti-war slogans, and would fight the government and struggle for peace, but believed that if the Central Powers won the war it would strengthen 'semi-absolutism, especially in Germany. Russia's economic development 'would be arrested or slowed down', and the proletariat 'would sink into a condition of lethargy which would preclude any vigorous or widespread movement', while an Allied victory would 'unshackle the national movement' in belligerent countries, and might 'lay the foundation for a process of democratisation'.¹⁰⁷ Kollontai and Shlyapnikov had the grudging permission to represent Danish SDs, though their perspectives did not convince nationalistic delegates. Kollontai reported to Bern,¹⁰⁸ and argued that SDs 'must put forward a *slogan that would unite us all*'.¹⁰⁹ Kollontai was invited to move to Kristiana (today's Oslo) in Norway. She became a correspondent of the Paris *Golos*, which was published by Mensheviks and Bolsheviks who included Axelrod and Balabanoff.¹¹⁰ During January some contributors to the émigré SRs' Paris *Mysl (Thought)* praised Liebknecht and Luxemburg.¹¹¹

Golos was closed on 26 January, but *Nashe Slovo (Our Word)* appeared two days later.¹¹² The chief organiser was Antonov, and the journal argued for a revolution in Russia and the restoration of socialist internationalism.¹¹³ The 31-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligent Dmitry Manuilsky linked the Bolsheviks to Bronstein's group.¹¹⁴ Tserderbaum and other Menshevik internationalists helped to produce *Nashe Slovo*, and the 64-year-old former SR terrorist turned SD intelligent Pavel Axelrod contributed from Switzerland, though he and Tserderbaum sometimes differed. Axelrod argued that socialist workers in all countries had to initiate a 'war against war' to 'put an end as soon as possible to the international slaughter', and socialist parties from neutral countries had to 'agree on conditions of peace, organise an international conference and devise an acceptable program and course of action'. Antonov invited Tserderbaum and Bronstein to edit *Nashe Slovo*, though they and the contributors would receive no fees. Bronstein refused,¹¹⁵ though the 38-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligent Lunacharsky agreed,¹¹⁶ and Manuilsky contributed,¹¹⁷ as did Bronstein. He soon became its driving force, befriended Antonov, got to know Lunacharsky better, and every day he went to the Café Rotonde to read the major European papers and talk with Tserderbaum, Goldendach and others.¹¹⁸

Kollontai contributed to *Nashe Slovo*, and acted as a liaison for Ulyanov, Krupskaya and Armand, and Ulyanov invited her to contribute to his planned paper, *Kommunist*.¹¹⁹ Kollontai and Shlyapnikov found Copenhagen unbearable, and he visited Stockholm to raise money.¹²⁰ Friends helped Kollontai and Shlyapnikov to get to a village just outside Kristiana (today's Oslo),¹²¹ and Shlyapnikov went to the city every day to make new contacts in riverside cafes. He contacted the leader of the transport union and others who knew the uninhabited regions. Some agreed to take illegal literature to the Finnish border on skis,¹²² along with letters between Ulyanov and the Petrograd Bolsheviks.¹²³ Shlyapnikov asked a socialist publisher to take a letter from Ulyanov written in invisible ink between the lines of a book to a corset factory in Petrograd, and gave him money. He wanted no more jobs like that, since it risked hanging, but he ordered hundreds of thousands of contraceptives.¹²⁴

Armand was in Copenhagen, but wanted to study. She went to Bern, rented an apartment near Ulyanov and Krupskaya, and they gathered at Apfelbaums' in the evenings. Armand attended the University, but later left for the mountains to work on the 'family question'. When she returned Ulyanov advised her to alter her draft,¹²⁵ since 'freedom of love' was 'not a proletarian but a bourgeois demand'.¹²⁶ When she argued he sent a disdainful reply. On 22 January the Bern authorities wanted 1,100 francs as a deposit for her residence permit, but her money was in Russia. They agreed to accept a 100 and 75 a month after that, but she did not have it.¹²⁷

On 1 February Ulyanov asked Karpinsky for addresses for Russian prisoners of war.¹²⁸ *Sotsial-Demokrat* accused Western SD parties of 'borrowing their Marxist terminology and avoiding any clear cleavage of principles. The previous September the émigré Bolshevik CC had decided that 'unity of the proletarian struggle for the socialist revolution demands that the worker' parties separate themselves completely from the parties of the opportunists', and this now appeared in *Sotsial-Demokrat*.¹²⁹ Ulyanov told Shlyapnikov that he had passed his letter about the splits in the SPD to the secretary of the 'dispatch committee'.¹³⁰ On the 9th Ulyanov asked his sister Maria in Moscow for information about defensists, and told her about 'a growth in the anti-chauvinist mood among the Germans' and the splits in the Stuttgart and Frankfurt-am-Main SPD organisations.¹³¹ He asked Karpinsky if the delay in printing the next *Sotsial-Demokrat* was because the typesetter had 'taken to the bottle again', or was doing 'outside work',¹³² and the paper was set up at the press of a nationalist Ukrainian paper.¹³³

Elena Rozmirovich had been born into a noble family in Kherson province in 1886. She graduated from Elizavetgrad high school and joined the RSDRP in 1904. By 1910 she was a Bolshevik and was exiled abroad, but returned in 1913 and became the Bolshevik Duma deputies' secretary. From 1914 she worked for the Moscow RSDRP committee and edited publications,¹³⁴ but had escaped to Beaugy-sur-Clarens by spring 1915.¹³⁵ The Bolshevik dissidents had not told the *Sotsial-Demokrat* editors about their plan for a paper,¹³⁶ but Armand had informed Ulyanov. *Sotsial-Demokrat* was in financial difficulties, but the aim was to publish it more frequently.¹³⁷

Bukharin pointed out that their paper would be 'a *supplement*'. 'What can you have against another party newspaper which in the very first editorial states that it stands on the viewpoint of the Central Organ?', but Ulyanov was opposed on financial grounds.¹³⁸

On 27 February nine Bolsheviks met six SDs from Beaugy-sur-Clarens in a cheap room at Lenggassstrasse Café in Bern. Armand represented a non-existent 'Women's Group' and Shlyapnikov the Paris Bolsheviks,¹³⁹ while others arrived from Paris, Zurich, Geneva and Lausanne. London comrades were represented by proxies, and the Toulouse and Montpellier groups sent suggestions.¹⁴⁰ Most supported *Sotsial-Demokrat*, and agreed about turning the imperialist war into a civil war, but Bukharin, Rozmirovich and Krylenko did not support the slogan of the United States of Europe, or the defeat of the Russian army being the 'lesser evil'. They objected to putting democratic demands before socialist ones, Ulyanov's refusal to damn all belligerent nations equally and his attempts to marginalize Bronstein and Menshevik internationalists.¹⁴¹ Bukharin argued that the slogan of the 'self-determination of nations' was '*utopian* (it cannot be realised *within the limits* of capitalism), and *harmful*' as it 'disseminates illusions'. 'The imperialist epoch is an epoch of the absorption of small states by the large state units,' so it was 'impossible to struggle against the enslavement of nations otherwise than by struggling against imperialism' and 'capitalism in general' and the "liberation of nations within the realm of capitalist civilisation' would mean 'diverting of proletarian forces from the actual solution of the problem'. Ulyanov noted that 'Bukharin's perspective was 'imperialist economism', and 'played into the hands of Russian chauvinists', since it 'was inconceivable that a social revolution could take place without revolts of politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses in colonial countries as well as Western Europe'. A proletariat 'not schooled in the struggle for democracy' was 'incapable of performing an economic revolution', which was the only way to topple capitalism.¹⁴² Towards the end of the conference two more comrades arrived.¹⁴³

The 35-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligentka Evgenia Bosch had spent 18 months in a Russian jail by 1914, and had developed heart disease and tuberculosis, before being sentenced to a lengthy exile in Siberia,¹⁴⁴ as was her partner, the 24-year-old intelligent Georgy Pyatakov. They set off in April,¹⁴⁵ escaped at Kachuga in Irkutsk province, travelled via Vladivostok and Japan to the USA, returned to Europe, reached Switzerland,¹⁴⁶ and attended the Bern conference in February 1915 after it was underway.¹⁴⁷ The delegates approved the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives,¹⁴⁸ except for a United States of Europe.¹⁴⁹ They elected Krupskaya, Armand, Shklovsky, Kasparov and Apfelbauma from Bern, M.M. Kharinotov from Zurich, Evgeni Movshovich from Lausanne, Ravich from Geneva, Bukharin, Krylenko, Rozmirovich and Troianovsky from Beaugy-sur-Clarens, Grisha Belenky from Paris, and Bosch and Pyatakov were to draft a manifesto. Belenky, Moisei Movshovich and Ilin would edit it,¹⁵⁰ and Armand and Apfelbaum would decide the final wording.¹⁵¹ The delegates elected Kasparov as their treasurer and as a member of the propaganda distribution committee,¹⁵² with Krupskaya as secretary. They were to seek to unify Bolsheviks in Western Europe, while Shklovsky and Armand were to contact Russian prisoners of war in Germany and Austria. After the conference there was an extensive correspondence and a long telephone call between Ulyanov and Bukharin, and the Beaugy-sur-Clarens group backed down.¹⁵³ Kollontai sent a conference report to *Nashe Slovo*.¹⁵⁴

At the beginning of April Shlyapnikov sailed from Sweden to Newcastle and on to London by rail. He found a job in the Fiat factory and contacted the 38-year-old émigré Old Bolshevik intelligent Maxim Wallach, who raised £50 to liquidate émigré Russian workers' debts.¹⁵⁵ Shlyapnikov obtained money and identification papers from Belgian refugees,¹⁵⁶ spoke at workers' clubs, joined the engineers' union and corresponded with the émigré RSDRP CC in Switzerland.¹⁵⁷ The 31-year-old Menshevik internationalist intelligent Jan Lachowiecki shared a house with Wallach.¹⁵⁸ In Paris Tseuderbaum was unable to obtain a passport.¹⁵⁹

Late in April the British government signed a secret treaty with the Romanian government and promised that it would get Constantinople if it entered the war, but it refused.¹⁶⁰ The arrival of the Paris *Golos* and then *Nashe Slovo* reoriented the socialist movement. The former SR Khristian Rakovsky was a member of the CC of the Partidul Social-Democrat al Muncitorilor din Romania (the Romanian Social-Democratic Party, or PSDMR) in Bucharest. He was a respected anti-militarist, and changed the name of his paper to *Jos Răsboiul* (*Down with the War*). He helped to finance *Nashe Slovo*, went to Paris and contributed. He argued for 'Peace without indemnities or annexations' and 'without conquerors or conquered', and exhorted Swiss and Italian SDs to ask the International bureau to convene an international socialist conference.¹⁶¹

(iii) The RSDRP diaspora

By spring 1915 Sobelsohn had contacted Ulyanov and Apfelbaum in Switzerland.¹⁶² He had reservations about a United States of Europe,¹⁶³ but hoped the SPD opposition would be effective, and the émigré RSDRP CC hoped that he would link them to Borchardt.¹⁶⁴ Stanislav Lapińsky of the SDKPiL contributed to *Nashe Slovo*,¹⁶⁵ and supplied

the 24-year-old Russian SD émigré Ilya Ehrenburg with copies. Ehrenburg had several conversations with Antonov, and sometimes met Tserderbaum, who was 'wretchedly unhappy' about the collapse of the International.¹⁶⁶

Other contributors to *Nashe Slovo* included the PSI's Balabanoff,¹⁶⁷ the 44-year-old Russian SD émigré intelligent Fedor Rotshteyn in London, Rakovsky, Lachowiecki, Sobelsohn and an émigré Menshevik intelligent in Norway. They opposed the war and 'social-patriotism', but differed on other issues,¹⁶⁸ as did Uritsky, who had moved to Copenhagen.¹⁶⁹ The 37-year-old Bolshevik Solomon Dridzo wrote on French politics and trade unions. Bronstein opposed revolutionary defeatism, civil war and a two-stage revolution, and argued for the 'struggle for peace,' proletarian revolution and a 'socialist dictatorship'.¹⁷⁰ He thought some Bolshevik Duma deputies had made 'a step forward towards political precision and revolutionary irreconcilability', but others were limited to 'passive internationalism' or accepted the war,¹⁷¹ and he began developing an argument for a republican United States of Europe.¹⁷² The workers' section of Russian SDs in Paris 'tightened its ranks' around *Nashe Slovo*,¹⁷³ though some articles were censored.¹⁷⁴

The Petrograd Mezhraiontsy sent two delegates to meet émigré SDs in Western Europe, since Plekhanov's arrogance and defencism repelled them. In Paris the *Nashe Slovo* group believed they would join the Mensheviks, and though Ulyanov charmed them in Switzerland he privately described one as a 'hopeless chatterer' and the other was 'always silent', so it was 'impossible to discover what is on his mind'.¹⁷⁵ Someone wrote anonymously from Zurich to the former address of the Okhrana's Paris Agentura about a planned meeting of members of the RSDRP factions, and included false information about the Bund; but the letter fell into Ulyanov's hands.¹⁷⁶

On 9 February the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives appeared in *Nashe Slovo*. They insisted that socialists had to leave the French and Belgian cabinets, soldiers at the front had to be organised, Russian women had to begin anti-war agitation, and aid had to be sent to revolutionaries. The Bolsheviks agreed to discuss the editors' plan for joint action.¹⁷⁷ Wallach was the Bolsheviks' London representative in the International bureau, and Ulyanov told them to consult him about 'all pressing matters' on international issues.¹⁷⁸

In Paris Bronstein was at the offices of *Nashe Slovo* by 11.00am each day to discuss the next issue.¹⁷⁹ He agreed that revolution had to begin 'on a national basis', but 'in view of the economic and military-political interdependence of the European states, it cannot be concluded on that basis'. On the 14th he published his disagreements with the Mensheviks pseudonymously in *Nashe Slovo*,¹⁸⁰ and called Plekhanov 'ideologically and politically dead'.¹⁸¹ The PSI invited Rakovsky to an anti-war meeting in Milan, and on his way home he met SDPS leaders and Ulyanov in Switzerland.¹⁸²

On the 14th about 40 members of Western European reformist and revolutionary socialist parties met in London, though the organisers had invited only SDs from Russia. In Paris the *Nashe Slovo* group denounced the conference. In London Wallach heard about it the night before and arrived uninvited, but was not allowed to say why he would not participate, so he handed the chairman a statement which registered the Bolsheviks' objections to the conference and its decisions, then picked up his papers and left. The Latvian SDSP CC representative agreed with the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, and Ivan Lachowiecki represented the Mensheviks and PPS-Lewica.¹⁸³ A majority voted for an Allied victory, but Chernov and Mark Natanson abstained.¹⁸⁴

On the 27th the declaration Wallach had wanted to make appeared, badly mutilated by the censors, in *Nashe Slovo*, but the full version appeared in *Sotsial-Demokrat*. It noted that there had been 11 delegates from Britain, 16 from France and three from Belgium.¹⁸⁵ He criticised their 'timid, irresolute step'.¹⁸⁶ Workers could 'advance towards their world-wide revolution only through a series of defeats and errors, failures and weaknesses, but they are advancing'.¹⁸⁷ He claimed 40,000 Russian workers bought the Bolshevik paper, and 'many more read it',¹⁸⁸ though the Duma deputies had shown 'insufficient firmness' at their trial.¹⁸⁹ Grimm visited Paris and told the *Nashe Slovo* group about left-wing socialists in Switzerland and Germany.¹⁹⁰ Late in March he asked the International bureau to call an anti-war conference, and a PSI delegate discussed it with English and French socialists.¹⁹¹

In Switzerland the Socialist Youth League organised an international conference, without sanction from the International bureau,¹⁹² and it opened in Bern's Volkshaus (People's House) on 5 April. Armand and Safarov represented the émigré RSDRP CC,¹⁹³ and there was one Menshevik, three German SDs, two from Switzerland, and one each from Bulgaria, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Sweden, Norway,¹⁹⁴ and Poland.¹⁹⁵ Apart from the Germans, the delegates claimed to represent 34,000 socialists.¹⁹⁶ Next day it was proposed that each delegation should have one vote and the Bolsheviks walked out, but returned when it was agreed that they could have two. The Polish delegate generally supported the Bolsheviks, and though their motion was defeated by 14 to four, a majority renounced civil peace in wartime, agreed that the 'imperialist policies of the ruling classes of all the capitalist countries' had caused the war and called for its immediate end.¹⁹⁷ The Scandinavian delegates' proposal to demand disarmament in the programmes of belligerent country's workers' movement passed with three votes against, though the Bolsheviks' proposal for a revolutionary policy on the war was defeated.¹⁹⁸

Willi Münzenberg later recalled that delegates were afraid of the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives. 'Politically we approved these demands, but for tactical reasons we did not support' them, since when 'all the world was armed to the teeth we thought it insane to demand still more arms'.¹⁹⁹ The Bolshevik delegates telephoned Ulyanov who suggested that they support the majority's motion if theirs was in the minutes.²⁰⁰ The delegates established an international youth secretariat in Zurich, with Münzenberg as secretary, and launched the 'Liebknecht fund'. Soon after the first issue of the quarterly *Jugend-International (Youth-International)* appeared with articles by Liebknecht and Ulyanov,²⁰¹ and Ulyanov and Apfelbaum published *Sotsializm i vojna (Socialism and War)*.²⁰² Münzenberg read it and Ulyanov invited him to visit his and Krupskaya's modest little flat in Zurich's Neumarkt;²⁰³ but then they moved,²⁰⁴ to Waldheimstrasse 66.²⁰⁵

In Paris the PSF's *L'Humanité* reported that German front-line troops were forbidden to read the *Berner Tagwacht*,²⁰⁶ though an International womens' congress in Den Haag in the Netherlands had had no Russian, German, French or English delegates.²⁰⁷

The Italian government had eventually signed a pact with Britain and France which gave Italy the right to all the land in Austria and Hungary that was populated by people of Italian heritage, plus territory in the Balkan Peninsula and that gained by the Allies from Germany in Africa. During May the PSI split. One group wanted to prosecute the war. The majority favoured no participation in the war effort but no sabotage; and the third took a more militant stand, but did not agree with turning the imperialist war into a civil war.²⁰⁸ The PSI consulted the SDPS and sent a parliamentary deputy to try to convince French and British socialists to reconvene the International bureau, but the French refused to meet Germans.²⁰⁹ Tseuderbaum worked with Odino Morgari of the PSI to prepare an international conference, and urged the SDPS leader Grimm to invite socialists who favoured peace.²¹⁰ The British SDP split and internationalists opposed the war,²¹¹ and the SPD was splitting in Germany.

(iv) The Crisis of Social Democracy

On 2 February 1915 there had been demonstrations in front of empty food shops in Berlin.²¹² Liebknecht denounced the government's imperialist intentions and was arrested,²¹³ and on the 6th he learned that his militia duties 'for reinforcement purposes' would begin next day. He would be 'given leave' only to attend the Prussian Landtag and the Reichstag.²¹⁴ He became a construction worker,²¹⁵ and was transferred from unit to unit.²¹⁶

The SPD opposition launched a paper, *Die Internationale*, with a print run of 9,000, and though the police arrived at the press after the copies were distributed,²¹⁷ they banned it, and the SPD Vorstand suspended the *Königsberg Volkszeitung (People's Newspaper)*.²¹⁸ Sobelsohn argued in *Lichstrahlen* that imperialism 'cannot let the productive forces of society develop completely', but 'only strives for the longer life of capitalism'.²¹⁹

On 8 March 77 SPD Reichstag deputies voted for war credits at the caucus, though 23 were against.²²⁰ Next day the Vorstand allowed deputies who could not vote for war credits to absent themselves during the vote,²²¹ and 31 did so on the 10th,²²² but Liebknecht and Rühle stayed, voted against and were excluded from the SPD caucus.²²³ On the 11th Luxemburg heard that only 30 SPD union officials at a meeting of about 600 members in Berlin's Charlottenburg district had agreed with the vote for war credits, while members in other districts had a 'truly ravenous craving for a Social Democratic word spoken in the old spirit'.²²⁴ Next day the court gave her two days' leave to settle her affairs and her lawyers Liebknecht and Levi arrived with Mehring and Jogiches. Luxemburg could not afford a housekeeper, but Jacob offered to look after her flat, and a wealthy comrade agreed to pay her rent and other expenses. On the 18th the deferment of her prison sentence was cancelled,²²⁵ and she entered Barminstrasse Women's Prison.²²⁶ She had to undress and 'be groped about', and had no nightdress or comb.²²⁷ She had to rise at 5.40am and be in bed by 9.00pm,²²⁸ but she had no soap. The Vorstand paid for her food, though it was sometimes inedible, so Jacob was allowed to bring some, though only 'once a week and not much'. She and Liebknecht brought illegal literature and smuggled out manuscripts.²²⁹ Luxemburg could send two letters a month, though they could take up to three weeks to arrive, since the military censor took time to decide whether to release them or not.²³⁰ She was occasionally allowed out to arrange her affairs,²³¹ and the SPD paid so that she could write, rather than perform the usual prison tasks,²³² and by the 23rd she had her books.²³³

Zetkin had asked Balabanoff to help to arrange international conference of socialist women from belligerent and neutral countries. Krupskaya and Apfelbaum showed great interest,²³⁴ Rozmirovich and Ravich became delegates,²³⁵ and Armand corresponded with Zetkin, Balabanoff, Stahl, Kollontai and some English women. On the 26th the conference opened in Bern Volkshaus, and SPD delegates attended in spite of the Vorstand's ban. Balabanoff and Irina Izolskaya represented the Mensheviks, while Anna Kamenskaya, who represented the left-wing Rozlowmowcy (Splinter Group) of the SDKPiL, voted with the Bolsheviks. Armand raised the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives but was accused of 'splitting'.²³⁶ A majority condemned the war,²³⁷ and wanted an immediate

break with the defensist majorities in socialist and labour parties, but preferred to stay in them and fight. The Bolsheviks proposed that the conference manifesto should oppose the 'defense of the fatherland' and voting for war credits, but for supporting fraternisation in the trenches. Some delegates drafted an explanation about the causes of the war and its consequences,²³⁸ though the Bolsheviks and a few supporters criticised it for not going beyond a pacifist framework or attacking socialist leaders in most belligerent countries,²³⁹ and not arguing for turning the imperialist war into a civil war or attacking the International.²⁴⁰ Most delegates supported Liebknecht and Luxemburg, though Zetkin was prepared to make concessions to pacifists among the French, Dutch and English delegates,²⁴¹ and her motion on achieving peace was accepted by 21 votes to six.²⁴² According to Balabanoff Ulyanov sat 'for days on end in the corner of a coffeehouse where the women delegates of his fraction came to report everything that happened' and 'ask for instructions'. 'At each ballot, with each attempt at the slightest modification of a resolution, the meeting was interrupted to allow the Bolshevik delegates to hear Ulyanov's opinion.'²⁴³ Zetkin suffered a heart attack,²⁴⁴ but after several hours she spoke with the Bolshevik women and Ulyanov in another room. They agreed to vote for the majority motion,²⁴⁵ if their proposals appeared in the final report.²⁴⁶ After Zetkin returned to Germany she was charged with treason, but protests and bail paid by the SPD publisher Johann Dietz secured her release.²⁴⁷

Around 200,000 copies of the Bern conference report circulated.²⁴⁸ On the 25th the head of the Paris Okhrana agentura wrote to his superior that he had a letter describing 'some sort of a conference' of RSDRP factions, but Ulyanov managed to get hold of it.²⁴⁹ Next day Bronstein announced in *Nashe Slovo* that the tsarist regime had lost the war,²⁵⁰ then left for Switzerland.²⁵¹

In Germany Luxemburg had completed *Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie (The Crisis of Social Democracy)*, under the pseudonym of 'Junius'.²⁵² She acknowledged that the International had collapsed,²⁵³ and argued that it would remain 'a heap of rubble after the war' or be re-established 'on the basis of class struggle',²⁵⁴ 'loyally upholding its international solidarity throughout all imperialist storms'. Kautsky had replaced the slogan of 'Workers of the World Unite' with 'Workers of the World Unite in peace, but slit each other's throats in war!'²⁵⁵ Jacob smuggled out the manuscript, but could not find a publisher.²⁵⁶ The SPD oppositionists' *Die Internationale (The International)* criticised the International, but was confiscated and banned.²⁵⁷ The group's clandestine publications included a Liebknecht pamphlet which explained why he had voted against war credits,²⁵⁸ though the military censors seized every copy they could find and banned it,²⁵⁹ and the public prosecutor indicted the editors, printer and publisher.²⁶⁰ On 1 May, in Berlin, Ledebour, who opposed the call for a Third International and was a pacifist, had joined 10 other SPD deputies, including Liebknecht and Eduard Bernstein, and over 1,000 other SPD members, in signing an appeal calling on the Vorstand to resume class struggle,²⁶¹ because the government and army were turning the war into one of conquest.²⁶² When Liebknecht appeared in court 55,000 Berlin munitions workers went on strike, and there were strikes in in Brunswick and demonstrations in Bremen.²⁶³

In Stockholm Kollontai met contacts in cafes and sent messages to Switzerland in code. Three letters indicated the page, line and letter in Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backwards*, and the password was 'Grüß von Olga' (Greetings from Olga). The postal address for most correspondence was that of a Russian woman and her husband, an alcoholic unemployed watchmaker. Early in May Kollontai travelled 300 miles to attend the congress of Det Norske Arbeiderparti (the Norwegian Labour Party, or DNAP), where she and an old acquaintance, Carl Wiik, persuaded delegates to send greetings to the exiled Bolshevik Duma deputies.²⁶⁴

On 1 June in Switzerland, a *Sotsial-Demokrat* supplement had included the émigré RSDRP CC motion at the recent international socialist women's conference.

The working woman will attain her aim in this struggle only through a revolutionary mass movement, and a strengthening and sharpening of the socialist struggle. Consequently, her first duty is to support the trade union and socialist organisations and break the civil peace by fighting against the war credits, against entry into bourgeois ministries, by supporting and spreading the idea of soldiers' fraternisation in the trenches on the field of battle, by setting up illegal organisations wherever the government had abolished the constitutional freedoms, and finally, by drawing the mass into manifestations and revolutionary movements.²⁶⁵

Ulyanov asked Armand to ask Kasparov for an address for sending money to prisoners of war.²⁶⁶ By June Kollontai accepted the need to turn the imperialist war into a civil war, and considered herself a Bolshevik, but in her letters to Ulyanov she called for disarmament and disagreed with his theory about imperialism.²⁶⁷

On the 4th, in Paris, Bronstein refused to contribute to the émigré Bolshevik CC's *Kommunist* since he did not agree that the defeat of Russia would be a 'lesser evil',²⁶⁸ because it side-lined the role of revolutionary struggle.²⁶⁹ Next day *Nashe Slovo* argued against supporting either Bolsheviks or Mensheviks; but on the 6th Antonov, Lunacharsky, Manuilsky and Zalewski called for 'rallying' all internationalist SDs around *Sotsial-Demokrat*.²⁷⁰

Bukharin and Stahl were now in Stockholm.²⁷¹ Moisei Uritsky, a Menshevik internationalist, had broken with the defensist Mensheviks and moved to Copenhagen.²⁷² Kollontai wrote to Tserderbaum in Paris and broke from the Mensheviks.²⁷³ She had written articles about the working women's movement and the war for *Nashe Slovo*, and considered herself a Bolshevik.²⁷⁴ Together with left-wing Norwegians she drafted a motion for the planned international socialist conference.²⁷⁵ Morgari, the secretary of the socialist deputies in the Italian Camera dei Deputati (Chamber of Deputies) arrived in Paris. He met Bronstein and PSF members of the Chamber of Deputies, but they left when Morgari suggested they should get false passports and go to Switzerland.²⁷⁶

In Bern Krupskaya and Ulyanov's landlady asked them to leave so she could rent their rooms to Christians.²⁷⁷ Krupskaya's health had worsened, and a hotel in Sörenberg in the Alps offered cheap accommodation. There were no servants, so the couple had to tidy their room and Ulyanov cleaned their shoes,²⁷⁸ though they could borrow books from Bern and Zurich libraries free of charge.²⁷⁹ On the 16th a Bern socialist councillor offered to pay for 'any damages which Mme Armand might cause the state'. She received a residence permit,²⁸⁰ and joined Krupskaya and Ulyanov at Sörenberg.²⁸¹ On the 19th Ulyanov told Sobelsohn that the émigré RSDRP CC's official address was 'Bibliothèque Russe, 7 Rue Hugo de Senger, 7 Genève'.²⁸² Krupskaya's mother died on the 20th and her pension lapsed, so Krupskaya and Ulyanov lost a source of financial support.²⁸³

(v) The revolutionary exiles in Siberia

By 1915 many Bolsheviks and other revolutionary socialists were exiles in Siberia. Late in February Jughashvili had written to the Okhrana agentura in Paris, but used an out-of-date address.²⁸⁴ He had read the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, and wrote to tell Ulyanov that he had read Kropotkin's articles and thought 'the old fool must have completely lost his mind'. He had also read an article by Plekhanov in *Rech*, and hoped that a Bolshevik paper would 'lash' him and other 'liquidators' 'across their mugs, and do it regularly, without getting tired'.²⁸⁵ He told Rozenfeld that he had two articles 'almost ready', and enclosed outlines; yet neither appeared.²⁸⁶ In March Jughashvili, Spandarian and other Bolshevik exiles sent money for *Voprosy Strakhovaniya* to the Old Bolshevik worker Sergey Alliluev in Petrograd.²⁸⁷ In April Jughashvili secretly visited Badayev in Yeniseisk, and all the local exiles escaped police and guards to join them.²⁸⁸

The SR intelligent Burtsev had been sent to a transit prison early in 1915, where half his head was shaven and he had to wear a convict uniform. He set off in a convoy and had heated arguments with Bolsheviks who supported the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives. A week later they were in Krasnoyarsk, and stayed for two months until the ice melted on the Yenisei River, then continued their journey to the Turukhansk region which was reserved for the most dangerous exiles,²⁸⁹ over 900 miles to the north.²⁹⁰ Krasnoyarsk police had noted that 'numerous politically unreliable elements', including SRs and SDs, were 'writing and printing revolutionary proclamations in a strictly defeatist spirit', and threatened the loyalty of 2,000 workers on the Trans-Siberian railway.²⁹¹ In May 20 politicals and 200 other prisoners in Krasnoyarsk boarded the steamer to Yeniseisk, where they spent a week in the notorious transit prison. It took three weeks to reach Monastyrskoe, where Burtsev joined 25 other politicals, including Jughashvili and Sverdlov.²⁹² When there were around 100 'politicals' the police made arrests.²⁹³

The war had come 'like a bolt from the blue' to the Menshevik intelligentka Eva Broido in Petrograd, but she was an internationalist. One night in January 1915 the police had arrested her 'irrespective of the result of the house search' and charged her with agitation against the war. She later learned that 'a great many Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, mainly workers', were arrested that night. She spent four months in the House of Preliminary Detention - her fourth visit - and was later sentenced to three year's exile in Siberia without trial, at a place to be chosen by the governor of Krasnoyarsk. She took her two younger children with her, but had to pay their train fares. She was allowed to make a brief stop in Moscow to settle her affairs, including delivering a translation of a book to a publisher and receiving her fee, and she agreed to translate Jack London's *The Iron Heel*. Broido and her children spent a few days in Minussinsk, where Eva met other political exiles. The governor 'allowed them to visit each other freely, even from one village to another', 'exchange books and newspapers' and 'hold well-paid jobs'. The Broidos were sent to Kuragino in Minussinsk district, where the only political exile was an anarchist, though he helped Eva to rent a peasant house with two spacious rooms, a kitchen, a flower and vegetable garden, a large yard with a barn and a bathhouse for three rubles a month. Most peasants had cattle, horses, sheep and agricultural machinery, and subscribed to Minussinsk, Moscow and Petrograd papers. A few with two or three horses were farm hands and searched for gold, which was very lucrative. The school was large and well kept. It had a good library and a large hall for theatrical performances, and a pharmacist and postal clerk put on entertainments. Most teachers were Siberians and borrowed Eva's books. Life was 'extraordinarily cheap'. A pound of meat or fish cost three kopeks.²⁹⁴

After the war began the 71-year-old SR terrorist Ekaterina Breshkovskaya had insisted she was not a 'chauvinist'. She 'did not desire the destruction of the German people', but wanted the German army to be defeated, and was indignant at their ferocity. She expected to be sent to Kirensk in Siberia, though after six months she could settle in any city in the region except Irkutsk. She chose Balagansk, 200 miles or so north of Irkutsk, and around 65 miles from the best medical help, but she was sent to Yakutsk, over 1,300 miles further north, where the temperature could reach 55 degrees or more below zero. There was no spring, and summer lasted two months. She met a 'good colony of hearty political exiles', though communication with European Russia was difficult and food was expensive. Soon after she was told that she could return to Irkutsk. She destroyed letters, since senders were persecuted, and boarded the last boat before the Lena River froze. The population of Irkutsk was about 150,000 and it was 'the centre of the intelligent forces' in the region, though the police and gendarmes in her yard day and night frightened everyone who came and went. She could not 'make a step alone' outside, and the police captain forced his way in even when she was ill in bed. She recalled a bizarre incident.

Once I wrote to an old woman friend of mine asking her to send pumpkin seeds, which doctors say are a good remedy for tape-worm, which abound on the shores of the Lena and Lake Baikal. Owing to her correspondence with me, a search was made at the old woman's, and the gendarmes decided that 'tape-worms' meant 'gendarmes', and 'pumpkin seeds', 'explosive substances'. The old woman was sentenced to exile, and only after long and urgent solicitations and explanations, was the 'penalty' reduced to two years' police surveillance.

In May Breshkovskaya was sent to Minussinsk and met a 'congenial society of political exiles', and though the 'common brain' of the Russians was 'dark' and needed 'thunder blows to be awakened and begin to think',²⁹⁵ she impressed young Vera Broido.²⁹⁶ Peasants, workers and soldiers read the exiled SRs' *Narodnaya Sibir (People's Siberia)* and the more radical *Otgosloski zhizni (Echoes of Life)*.²⁹⁷

The Bolshevik Tarshis had been strip-searched in the freezing cold in Samara Prison on 30 January, then he and 84 others were put on a train to Chelyabinsk in Siberia. He and 10 to 15 'politicals' left on foot. The Bolsheviks did not know each other, and they met many Latvian and Polish SD exiles on the way, but none had a clear opinion about the war, and the Bolsheviks argued until they were hoarse with exiled Mensheviks, Bundists, 'opportunists' and 'defenders of the fatherland' in Yeniseisk. When Tarshis heard about the exile of the Bolshevik Duma deputies and other Bolsheviks he was convinced that they had opposed the war. He and 21 other 'politicals' were sent about 450 miles to the Angara valley, and found politicals in almost every village on the way, including the worker-intelligent Sergey Malyshev, who was aged around 37, and had worked on Bolshevik newspapers, Anna Nikiforova, who Tarshis had known in Samara, and others, were against the war. Tarshis was sent north to Fedino and arrived on 15 March. It was a fairly prosperous village of 40 or so peasant households who owned their land. In May they shipped grain to Yeniseisk, though they required 1.2 to 1.5 paper rubles for each gold ruble on account of inflation. Apart from the exiles, only the guard was literate, and the nearest school was about 30 miles away, so no children went there. Three other politicals lived around 25 miles away. One was an SD, and through him Tarshis subscribed to newspapers and received letters from European Russia. In summer more politicals arrived, including an SD Petrograd student, a member of the SDKPiL and his wife (who was not an exile), an SR compositor from Kharkiv, an SR Maximalist, a soldier, a Tolstoyan who had refused to join the army, a German worker and others. They sent new legal and illegal literature to other colonies of exiles, and a Bolshevik in the French army, who Tarshis had known in Paris, wrote to tell him about the war and the Bolshevik émigrés in Switzerland.²⁹⁸

(vi) The War Industries Committees

When the war broke out in 1914 the 40-year-old RSDRP intelligent Alexandr Malinovsky, a former member of the leading Bolshevik troika, had been sent to the front as a doctor.²⁹⁹ He wrote revolutionary pamphlets calling for proletarian struggle and an end to the war, and was convinced that mass organisation was best effected by slogans that were 'short and simple, so the masses can assimilate them'.³⁰⁰ He was not convinced that the German political order had rotted sufficiently to make a revolution probable, so he envisaged a peaceful, legal struggle for peace and a democratic revolution in Russia.³⁰¹ He was recommended for a medal for leading a medical convoy out of the line of fire in the absence of his senior officer, but did not receive one. He was given leave, though family matters prevented him asking about the 'infinitesimal sales' of *Nauka sotsialnogo soznaniya (The Science of Social Consciousness)*. He had a 'very peaceful existence for a month and a half', but by 31 October he was back at the front and by the end of December he was in a mobile unit attached to prisoner of war camps. He was again recommended for a medal for leading a medical convoy out of the line of fire, but did not receive one. He published

Desyatiletie otlucheniya ot Marxsizma (A Decade of Excommunication from Marxism) about his differences with Ulyanov and Plekhanov, under a pseudonym. Early in 1915 Malinovsky went to Moscow for treatment for a nervous disorder, and by May he was a junior surgeon in a military evacuation hospital. In summer he worked on the second part of *Tektology*,³⁰² a 'universal organisation theory' based on the processes shared by natural and human phenomena, which aimed to 'embrace all human experience and assumed the same structural principles at every level of reality'. He synthesised 'the abstract symbolism of mathematics with the experimental character of the natural sciences', conceptualised a world in which contending forces were overshadowed by universal harmony and saw 'disorganisation' as organisation. He aimed to prepare 'proletarian leaders' to run a socialist state.³⁰³

In Petrograd Leonid Krasin, another former member of the leading Bolshevik troika, rejected the RSDRP CC perspectives, and believed a Russian defeat would bring economic ruin. The owner of the Putilov plant hired him to reorganise his gunpowder factory and recommended him to the Russo-Asian Bank as a director.³⁰⁴ Krasin was a director of other firms, and the family moved out to Tsarskoe Selo. In May Krasin was instrumental in founding the War Industries Committee,³⁰⁵ in Petrograd, to help the war effort. It was dominated by large industrialists and the leader of the moderately constitutionalist Soyuz 17 Oktyabrya (the Union of 17 October, or Octoberists),³⁰⁶ though the military was represented.³⁰⁷ Most émigré Menshevik leaders argued that no comrades in Russia should seek election to the workers' section, but the leading Menshevik intelligent in Russia, Fedor Gurvich, who was in his mid-forties, argued that they should do so to agitate for peace and protect workers from exploitation.³⁰⁸ There were few Menshevik 'social-patriots',³⁰⁹ and internationalists supported the election, particularly those who promoted strikes and anti-tsarist agitation.³¹⁰ A Petrograd Bolshevik leaflet noted that the authorities 'put guns into our hands. Good. We will show our courage and use these guns to fight for better living conditions for the Russian working class'.³¹¹

By May some Petrograd socialists worked in cooperatives, though Gorky believed others were developing an individualist outlook. The censors were 'outrageously savage',³¹² but with Sytin's help he established the publishing house Parus (The Sail) to produce books to clarify 'unresolved contradictions of two world outlooks: the intellectual-empirical and the emotional-religious', and inform workers about the social and historical sciences.³¹³ He was angry that up to half a million Polish Jews had been deported, and 15,000 to 20,000, including sick children, women about to give birth, and old men and women, had been forced to leave the western border region in 24 hours, and many had died on the long walk eastwards.³¹⁴ He had promised to publish Bolshevik articles, though he returned one by Apfelbaum.³¹⁵ Elizarova, who had accused her brother of 'terrorising' her, warned him against getting a legal publisher to issue the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, since that would show that a legal organisation was connected to an illegal one.³¹⁶

Around 450 men and women textile workers demanded a pay rise and refused to leave the mill. An inspector demanded that they return and called in the police, who forced them back to work and looked for ringleaders, though the inspector awarded a 10 percent rise.³¹⁷ Across Russia there were riots against firms who were believed to be influenced by enemy aliens.³¹⁸ Factory workers demanded the removal of German prisoners of war and went on strike. Gendarmes checked the 'political reliability' and moral character of employees of peasant administrative institutions.³¹⁹ Late in May there were violent attacks on Jews' shops in Moscow.³²⁰ Ten people were killed and 30 wounded, and governors were ordered to take the 'most decisive measures' to nip anti-Jewish agitation in the bud.³²¹ By then almost 800 Jewish homes and businesses had been destroyed and there was 70 million rubles' worth of damage, though troops had not been deployed for three days. Some people with German names were mistreated, though 90 of the 735 victims had Russian names,³²² and Germans' shops and factories were attacked.³²³

During May 1,259 Petrograd workers had gone on strike,³²⁴ including some from the Putilov works,³²⁵ and the owner muttered that 'The days of tsarism are numbered'.³²⁶ In Moscow 19,000 workers from 74 enterprises had struck,³²⁷ though 300 had been arrested.³²⁸ Nationally inspectors had deemed seven strikes and 2,571 strikers economic, and 10 strikes and 899 strikers political,³²⁹ but reportedly there had been almost 60,000 strikers.³³⁰

The Petrograd RSDRP committee had ordered 25-year-old Vyasheslav Skryabin and three other Bolshevik intelligently to go to Moscow to restore the party organisation in April. Skryabin stayed with Ulyanova, used her contacts and worked in a reserved occupation for the Union of Towns. He and the former SR Nikolai Maltsev organised students, particularly at the Commercial Institute, where the 26-year-old SD student Viktor Tikhomirov agreed with the RSDRP CC perspectives. The situation was more difficult than in Petrograd, but Skryabin built the 'Group of Organised Social Democrats' in Lefortovo district, and the police noted the appearance of *Proletarskii Golos (Proletarian Voice)*. The Bolsheviks published a leaflet on the anniversary of the Lena massacre, which called for protests against rising prices and the war, opposed civil peace and argued for a democratic republic. A leaflet for May Day demanded protests against rising prices and the war. On May Day a leaflet called for a 'European United States' and a boycott of the War Industries Committee. Skryabin put five district organisations in touch with each other, but failed to revive the city committee. Early in June eight of the 10 SDs due to meet in Sokolovsky Park

to discuss the war and the economy, including Skryabin and Maltsev, were arrested the night before, thanks to a spy. Police searched Maltsev's apartment they found Petrograd RSDRP committee and Moscow Group literature.³³¹

In Kostroma, about 200 miles northeast of Moscow, police had fired at striking weavers on 5 June, killing at least four and wounding nine,³³² though another report gave 14 dead and many wounded.³³³ Liberal Moscow entrepreneurs had formed a War Industries Committee,³³⁴ which was empowered to award military contracts,³³⁵ and they invited defensist workers to join it.³³⁶

Almost two million heads of peasant households owned 6.67 million acres, and around 500,000 held 37 million acres of hereditary land.³³⁷ Smallholders could claim exemption from conscription,³³⁸ but up to 400,000 labourers had been called up. Less than half of gentry land was cultivated,³³⁹ and the scarcity of consumer goods meant there was little incentive for peasants to produce a surplus.³⁴⁰ Since 1913 the share of peasant grain on the market had almost halved,³⁴¹ to 7.4 percent.³⁴² The price of buckwheat had risen by 119 percent in industrial regions, second quality meat by 41 percent, potatoes by 33 percent, sour rye bread by 29 percent, sunflower oil by 28 percent, sweet rye bread by 24 percent, melted tallow by 12 percent and sauerkraut by six percent.³⁴³ The harvest was 10 percent higher than pre-war,³⁴⁴ yet there were food shortages in around 500 of the 659 cities.³⁴⁵ Food riots shook Moscow and Ivanovo,³⁴⁶ where it began as a 'flour strike',³⁴⁷ and several Moscow SRs were arrested. The governor of Tula province reported that strikers' demands were economic. Their leaders were members of leftist parties, but 'organised in a surprisingly friendly, orderly way and showed a great deal of experience'.

In Petrograd three Mensheviks, three Bolsheviks and three SRs were elected to the council of workers' sickness funds. SRs conducted widespread agitation in Vyborg, Nevsky, Vasilievsky Island and Kolpino districts and workers went on the first large strike since the beginning of the war.³⁴⁸

From April to June there had been 440 strikes and 181,000 strikers, especially in large factories.³⁴⁹ During June, nationally, inspectors had deemed nine strikes and 1,141 strikers economic, but none political;³⁵⁰ yet there had reportedly been 80,000 strikers,³⁵¹ and political strikes had cost over 596,000 workdays.³⁵²

(vii) Who really is my enemy?

At the beginning of 1915 the Russian General Staff had wanted 500,000 more infantry, plus 350,000 rifles and 1.5 million shells each month,³⁵³ and ordered the artillery to fire no more than 12 shells a day.³⁵⁴ Front line medical services were understaffed and lacked most medicines, the wounded were dumped on the floors of goods wagons and died by the hundreds, bottlenecks choked the railways and wagons were burned to clear the tracks.³⁵⁵

Crimean military censors intercepted a Sevastopol SR's letter. 'Enough fighting, there are already an endless number of orphans and cripples.' 'In May we will begin to punish our highest officials' and 'smash the land owners', so the recipient should 'desert the front and head for the interior of Russia'. Russian soldiers and sailors had received large quantities of anti-war literature,³⁵⁶ and even elite regiments were 'contaminated'.³⁵⁷

Many Finnish students had joined the Russian army,³⁵⁸ but 200 who spoke Swedish had joined a German battalion, while others from peasant and workers' families would fight only against Russia.³⁵⁹

Soon after the evacuation of Tbilisi in Georgia Russian troops had surrounded the Ottoman army at Sarikamish and taken 7,000 prisoners, but suffered 30,000 casualties, including many from frostbite.³⁶⁰ In mid-February Ottoman troops surrounded Dort Yol and demanded the surrender of all males over the age of 12. Almost 1,600 were taken to Entili where they were forced to work and brutalised by gendarmes. Subsequently most were murdered, and though about 20,000 were deported to Aleppo in Syria, survivors managed to return home.³⁶¹ Partisans had expelled the Ottomans from Van and erected barricades. Armenians, Kurds and Turks took no prisoners, and the Ottoman interior minister ordered the 'relocation' of Armenians. On the 24th 240 notables were arrested in Constantinople,³⁶² and almost 20,000 were deported to the deserts. Late that month between 2,000 and 3,000 Ottoman troops entered Zeitun and arrested Armenian political and religious leaders. Only 18,000 Ottoman troops survived an offensive,³⁶³ and Russian troops chased them from Tabriz in northern Persia, though the Ottoman government closed the main Dashnaksutiun newspaper *Ազատամարտ* (*Liberation War*).³⁶⁴

By March flogging had been reintroduced in the Russian army,³⁶⁵ and the General Staff ordered 4,000 telegraphs and 120,000 telephones.³⁶⁶ The Allies had delivered 88 of almost 9,000 ordered field guns, though rifle production in Russia was fewer than 1,000 a day.³⁶⁷ The Austrians sent their best troops to the Carpathians,³⁶⁸ and on the 9th the Russians took 120,000 prisoners and captured 1,200 guns, but had few bullets, and there were no rifles at the depots.³⁶⁹ In south-eastern Poland, between Tarnow and Gorlice, the German army used a massive number of heavy artillery, and the Russian guns ran out of shells.³⁷⁰ The garrison of Przemyśl Fortress on the San River in Galicia had surrendered by the 22nd.³⁷¹ The Austrian and German troops had destroyed the fortifications.

Reportedly both sides had lost up to 115,000 killed, wounded or missing,³⁷² though according to another account both had taken around 150,000 casualties. The Russians had taken 126,000 prisoners and captured 700 guns.³⁷³

There were reportedly 892,600 refugees in Russian territory, and a commander had ordered the evacuation of Plock in central Poland.³⁷⁴ The number of refugees from the Baltic and Black Sea regions was estimated at up to 13 million.³⁷⁵ Plants had been dismantled and taken to Russia,³⁷⁶ where demand for labour had increased as the mobilisation of private industry was in full swing, though there was a serious shortage of fuel and raw materials.³⁷⁷ The General Staff had tried to stop Jews joining the army,³⁷⁸ but 200,000 were fighting bravely at the front. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish civilians near the border were uprooted.³⁷⁹ Others were forced into labour brigades, or had their shops and homes looted, while rabbis and rich Jews were taken hostage.³⁸⁰ Over 600,000 Latvian Jews had been displaced,³⁸¹ and forced to leave without possessions,³⁸² and Germans, Austrians and Hungarians had been robbed.³⁸³

The British navy illegally blockaded ships across the North Sea to stop neutral trade with Germany,³⁸⁴ and especially coal.³⁸⁵ After British warships sank a German heavy cruiser, the German navy stayed in port.³⁸⁶ The government declared British waters a war zone where allied ships would be sunk without warning,³⁸⁷ though only three of the 27 U-boats were available at any one time.³⁸⁸ Prisoners of war flooded into Germany. Jews, Moslems, Ukrainians and ethnic Germans and Russians were put in separate camps all over the country, in the hope that they might be persuaded to help the war effort.³⁸⁹

In Russia the iron and steel industry had worked almost entirely on government contracts.³⁹⁰ It forced farmers to declare their stocks and forbade the use of wheat and rye for fodder.³⁹¹ The Imperial Grain office took over grain and milling businesses,³⁹² and the government introduced ration cards for flour and bread.³⁹³ By April it had taken over a vast number of companies which produced war-related materiel,³⁹⁴ but the troops' morale was in crisis.

Dmitry Oskin had been born into a Russian peasant family in 1892.³⁹⁵ He later attended a primary school,³⁹⁶ and became literate.³⁹⁷ As a young man he 'could not get used to the idea that they would put a soldier's greatcoat on me and make me over for a few years into a "gray ox"'.³⁹⁸ However, in 1913, to escape poverty, he enlisted in an artillery regiment and was sent on a training course for potential NCOs. In summer 1914 he was put in charge of a platoon.³⁹⁹ Younger peasants were enthusiastic, but family men were utterly depressed. He believed the war 'will do nothing for us and the Germans will lick us good', and 'it doesn't make sense for the soldier-muzhik to fight on account of the Serbs'. Reservists went on a drunken spree, and at the mustering point in Tula train loads overwhelmed Oskin's platoon, surged through the city, breaking shop windows, throwing merchandise into the streets and foraging for spirits.⁴⁰⁰ On the Galician front officers ordered Oskin's platoon to undertake reckless attacks,⁴⁰¹ and promised him a medal. One officer they knew to be a syphilitic coward, ordered them to cut three rows of barbed wire in front of well-entrenched Austrian artillery on a hill.⁴⁰² They crawled there under heavy fire, and when Oskin looked up he saw many corpses hanging on the barbed wire, but led the survivors back to safety.⁴⁰³ On a forced march the same officer pleaded dysentery. His commanding officer ordered him to get well, but he lagged behind and shot himself in the finger.⁴⁰⁴ An officer who was too fat for his uniform gluttoned ice-cream in his dug-out and sent men out on midnight attacks. One raid almost destroyed the whole battalion, and the survivors of Oskin's platoon came back in a terrible state, only for the officer to shout at them for half an hour for not cleaning their boots. One soldier wrote to his local paper in Russia. 'Look at the way our high-up officers live, the landowners whom we have always served.' 'They get good food, their families are given everything they need, and although they may live at the Front, they do not live in the trenches where we are', but up to three miles away.⁴⁰⁵ During the storming of the Carpathians Oskin's platoon were battered and frozen, and had not eaten a warm meal for days, but they pushed through deep snowdrifts to reach the summit of a hill where the Austrians were strongly entrenched. One morning the captain lined up the platoon and had two large sides of lamb brought out and told them that they would have them after they had taken the ridge, but they sustained heavy losses.⁴⁰⁶ Another day, after climbing for five hours in icy winds, Oskin's captain put him in charge. In April 1915 Oskin asked,

What are we doing in the war? Several hundred men have already passed through my platoon and at least half of them have ended up on the field of battle either killed or wounded. What will they get at the end of the war? ... My year and a half of military service, with almost a year at the Front, has stopped me from thinking about this, for the task of platoon commander demands strict discipline and that means, above all, not letting the soldier think freely for himself.

Some men cut off fingers or hands to get discharged, and others surrendered or deserted. Every day they came across food and munitions, yet 'they were all just left there or destroyed,' since the officers 'screwed it up'.⁴⁰⁷ On the 19th, after a retreat, Oskin's platoon openly criticised their officers,⁴⁰⁸ and there was resistance elsewhere.

The peasant F. Starunov later recalled his experience after conscription.

They drove us and we went. Where was I going and why? To kill the Germans. But why? I didn't know. I arrived at the trenches, which were terrifying and appalling. I listened as our company commander beat a soldier, beat him about the head with a whip. Blood poured from the poor man's head. Well, I thought, as soon as he begins to beat me, I'll skewer him with my bayonet and be taken prisoner. I thought who really is my enemy: the Germans or the company commander?

During the retreat he was taken prisoner.⁴⁰⁹

(viii) Lusitania

By May 1915 the German General Staff had moved their headquarters to Poland,⁴¹⁰ and on the 2nd the army went on the offensive. The Russians took 70,000 casualties in two days, and by mid-May they had taken 410,000, and retreated 100 miles.⁴¹¹ German and Austrian troops breached the Russian front between the Vistula River and Gorlice.⁴¹² A four-hour bombardment of 1,000 shells a minute reduced Russian trenches to rubble and when German troops stormed them next morning they found a handful of shocked survivors, because the rest had run away.⁴¹³ The Germans broke through the Russian front at Gorlice,⁴¹⁴ though the Russians counter-attacked.⁴¹⁵ The Austrian government authorised a third brigade of the Polish Legion,⁴¹⁶ made up almost entirely of men from conquered Polish provinces.⁴¹⁷ Russian commanders ordered all the Jews in Kaunas and Kurland provinces to move east.⁴¹⁸ On the 7th, off the Irish coast,⁴¹⁹ German U-boats sank the liner *Lusitania*. Aboard were 1,266 passengers and a crew of 696. Of the 1,962 passengers and crew, and while most of the 1,198 who drowned were British or Canadian, 128 were US citizens.⁴²⁰

By the 10th over 140,000 of the 200,000 Russian troops in Galicia had become casualties,⁴²¹ and by the 13th the survivors had fallen back to the San River.⁴²² On the 19th a German U-boat sank another liner, with the loss of US citizens, and the German government banned similar attacks.⁴²³ On the 22nd the Russians launched an offensive on the south-western front,⁴²⁴ but by late that month they had lost 400,000 men.⁴²⁵ A general reported: 'We have no guns'.⁴²⁶ The survivors retreated on the 26th.⁴²⁷ The Central Powers had a 40 to one superiority in artillery in central Poland, and on the 28th they blasted the remaining Russian troops out of their shallow dugouts and inflicted heavy casualties, including most regular officers. The Russians abandoned Poland which had included 13 percent of the Empire's population. Secondary school graduates and students replaced killed and wounded Russian officers, but the government ignored German peace overtures.⁴²⁸ The Supreme Command had not been able to coordinate the northern and southern armies, and senior officers were very reluctant to promote able men out of the ranks. Desertion had become a serious problem and prisoners of war were extremely reluctant to escape.⁴²⁹ Russian casualties reached 1.4 million and a million had become prisoners.⁴³⁰

Russian factories produced 50,000 rifles a month, yet over two million front-line troops had 307,000 between them.⁴³¹ Shell production was 550,000 a month,⁴³² but artillery batteries had an average of 200 and fired five every two days, though seven were needed for a successful offensive and 10 to hold the lines.⁴³³ The Allies had accepted orders for munitions, but had not fulfilled them on time. Cannon and shells had run out and the infantry had no rifle cartridges.⁴³⁴ Some officers sent infantry into no-man's land to retrieve rifles from the dead and wounded.⁴³⁵ There were insufficient inefficient gas masks, so many troops suffered from German chlorine and mustard gas attacks.⁴³⁶ By the end of the month 60,000 officers had been killed. Since August 1914 nine million men had been called up,⁴³⁷ yet recruits in training camps had one rifle among three.⁴³⁸

The British and French governments agreed that Russia should annex Constantinople, the Dardanelles and a strip of Turkish territory along the Black Sea, and in April Italy was promised the Austrian Tyrol, Trieste, northern Dalmatia and the Adriatic Islands, plus a protectorate over Albania.⁴³⁹ Italian troops invaded Austria on 23 May.⁴⁴⁰

On the 24th the Allies condemned the deportation and murder of Armenians, but others were arrested en masse and their property plundered on the 26th. Turks and Kurds attacked Armenians in Erezum, and on the 29th the Ottoman government sanctioned wholesale deportations. Thousands of refugees were scattered from Aleppo to the desert and community leaders were murdered. Between 10,000 and 15,000 were deported, and around 25,000 were killed on their way to Kharpert. Others died of disease or starvation, as did tens of thousands elsewhere.⁴⁴¹ Almost all Armenians had been driven from their homes,⁴⁴² and about 70,000 were refugees,⁴⁴³ though at least one million had been killed.⁴⁴⁴ Russian officers had compelled 200,000 Muslims to dig trenches, when cotton picking was at its height in Turkestan, and there was an uprising.⁴⁴⁵

At the beginning of June Austrian and German troops had captured Łódź in Poland.⁴⁴⁶ Russian casualties were averaging around 150,000 a month,⁴⁴⁷ and a Russian divisional commander reported that the Germans used metal as much as Russians 'use up human life'.⁴⁴⁸ Almost all the survivors had left Galicia and conducted a scorched-earth policy and mass expulsions of civilians to central Russia. They destroyed crops, slaughtered animals and set homes

on fire.⁴⁴⁹ By the end of the month total Russian casualties reportedly amounted to 3.8 million,⁴⁵⁰ and increasing numbers of peasant troops distrusted their officers.⁴⁵¹ Since January the Russian government had spent an average of 17.4 million rubles a day on the war, including 2.9 rubles per soldier.⁴⁵² The head of the war department was later charged with accepting bribes from the Germans for leaving the army unprepared and having had relations with traitors, and a friend of his was charged with sending military secrets to the Germans.⁴⁵³

4. Only sticks to fight with

(i) At least one third of the men had no rifles

By July 1915 the Russian army had fielded 6.5 million men since the beginning of the war, including 4.4 million reserves and 700,000 new recruits.¹ Around 2.33 million had been mobilised so far that year, including half of all schoolteachers and many agricultural labourers and factory workers,² but the army had lost around 1.5 million, killed or wounded, and another million taken prisoner.³ Its current strength was 4.8 million, but around 40,000 infantry had poor quality or obsolete weapons,⁴ and some had only sticks to fight with.⁵ A general told the French ambassador that in 'several infantry regiments which have taken part in recent battles at least one third of the men had no rifles. These poor devils had to wait patiently under a shower of shrapnel, until their comrades fell before their eyes and they could pick up their weapons'.⁶ Around 40 percent of the 100,000 weekly casualties had surrendered, and troops who refused to fight had been shelled by their own artillery. Most regular officers were dead,⁷ and 70 percent of new ones were from peasant families.⁸ A general called them 'an army of ignoramuses'.⁹ There were eight battalions of Latvian volunteers in the army,¹⁰ but the Germans had dug in 25 miles from Rīga,¹¹ where around 150 factories had been evacuated, including 25 to Petrograd.¹² In north-east Poland the Germans had captured four million cattle,¹³ and had taken Kaunas in southern Lithuania.¹⁴

In Moscow *Russkoye Slovo's* war coverage had been optimistic until the editors saw a telegram from the interior minister to the General Staff. 'It is necessary that unofficial articles be widely circulated in the press to prepare public opinion for a possible offensive' in Warszawa military district.¹⁵ On 4 August Russian troops left Warszawa,¹⁶ and next day German cavalry entered the city,¹⁷ and ordered the remaining 5,000 workers to produce war materiel. (Around 275,000 Poles would be sent to Germany, voluntarily at first, but later by coercion.¹⁸)

The 36-year-old leading Bundist intelligent Vladimir Grinberg, who had been shuttled between filthy prisons and diagnosed with a fatal illness, was freed from Warszawa Citadel,¹⁹ and demanded Jewish national-cultural autonomy.²⁰ Russian ministers abolished what was left of the Pale of Settlement,²¹ and allowed Jews to live in most of Russia until the war ended,²² though not in Petrograd, Moscow, the Caucasus, Cossack territory, or villages, and they could not buy land or urban property.²³

The Russian army needed over 3,000 field guns, though fewer than 800, and around 10 percent of shells, had arrived,²⁴ and commanders complained about anti-war propaganda circulating behind the lines.²⁵ Russian troops were driven out of Poland,²⁶ and coal shipments to Russia almost halved.²⁷ By the end of August ethnic German and gypsy civilians near the front were being deported,²⁸ as were around 1.5 million Poles, 100,000 Lithuanians and 500,000 from the northern Baltic provinces.²⁹ Brest-Litovsk fell on the 26th.³⁰ A general reported that 'contemporary demands of military technique are beyond our powers' and 'cannot keep up with the Germans'.³¹

In the south Russian troops had entered Ottoman territory, where one million Armenians had been killed or starved to death. Between 150 and 400 had died in Erevan each day, as had around 20 percent of those en route to Caucasia, though 250,000 or so had made it.³² Van was evacuated, and pro-Ottoman guerrillas operated near Batumi in Georgia.³³ Secret talks in Stockholm between a major German industrialist and the vice-president of the Duma had come to nothing;³⁴ but the tsar regretted agreeing to the war, and claimed that the Germans were no longer a danger, so Russia should conclude a peace.³⁵

Hrodna in western Biełarus fell to the Germans on 2 September,³⁶ then Baranovichy.³⁷ Despite ministers' protests, on the 5th the tsar went to the new army headquarters at Marilėŭ in eastern Biełarus,³⁸ and took his son with him.³⁹ The chief of staff took the military decisions, but the tsar's reputation suffered after defeats.⁴⁰ There was not enough oats and hay, and the War Ministry cut rations for horses and men.⁴¹ Near Vilnius in Lithuania two Cossack regiments withstood an artillery bombardment until casualties reached 72 percent,⁴² but on the 17th the nun Rimma Ivanova noticed that all the officers in one trench were dead, led a charge and captured a German position.⁴³ Vilnius fell on the 19th,⁴⁴ and many of the 180,000 residents fled to Russia.⁴⁵ In Biełarus all the Jews in Minsk province were ordered to leave.⁴⁶ The Germans occupied Lithuania and Courland,⁴⁷ and took over chemical, cotton, linen, leather and rubber plants.⁴⁸ The head of Dvinsk hospital in south-eastern Latvia complained that anti-war literature was being distributed behind the lines.⁴⁹ In Ukraine the Russian military commander ordered refugees to leave Kyiv. There were 35,000 registered refugees in Petrograd, and around 10,000 in Irkutsk in Siberia.⁵⁰ By the end of September there were around 10 million refugees, and 750,000 prisoners in German and Austrian camps. The Russian army had been pressed back 300 miles,⁵¹ and had lost 20 provinces. The German advance stopped,⁵² but some troops fraternised with Russians.⁵³

Two reporters and an illustrator had orders to focus on the bravery of Russian soldiers, but on the way they met huge numbers of refugees heading east without food. They camped in forests, sold their horses, abandoned carts and starved. Some died and survivors put up crosses on the roadside.⁵⁴

(ii) There is no more army, only an armed people

In July 1915, at a socialist conference in Oranienbaum, west of Petrograd, the 50 delegates including SRs, Mezhraiontsy, who claimed 60 to 80 'members', while the Mensheviks claimed 200 and the Bolsheviks 1,200.⁵⁵ The Petrograd Bolshevik committee had links with First Town and Vyborg districts,⁵⁶ and formed a Russian Centre.⁵⁷

When the young Bolshevik worker Ivan Naumov arrived in Petrograd he felt that 'To work in Piter – that is happiness. To work on the Vyborg Side – that is my longstanding dream'.⁵⁸ The Bolsheviks had a committee in the central industrial region and sent Naumov to Moscow to invite them to join an armed rising on 8 or 9 August, but his contact was a police informer, and Vladimir gendarmes arrested him and several of his contacts on the 10th.⁵⁹

Over 1,500 New Lessner workers had struck for higher pay on the 4th, and by the 11th there were strikes at 23 plants, including the Neva shipyard and the Putilov and Erikson works, where the strike committee included Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and SRs. The Neva strike committee and 103 Erikson workers were arrested on the 12th,⁶⁰ but an army commission at the New Lessner plant browbeat the director into giving a 'wartime allowance'.⁶¹ Next day police and gendarmes were ordered to mediate in strikes, 'work closely' with inspectors, 'ascertain the mood of the workers' and arrest agitators. Workers called for conscripted men to be allowed to work on war orders, but some were sent to the front and nine leaders were exiled.⁶²

When Ulyanova returned to Moscow the Bolshevik press had been confiscated and she and others had to type copies of illegal literature from abroad.⁶³ There were economic strikes, mainly by metalworkers occupying their workplaces, though 20 were killed or wounded during 'disturbances'.⁶⁴ Bolshevik cooperative members collected money at the Agricultural Institute for their planned legal paper, allowed a leading SR internationalist to join its editorial board, and agreed to publish SR articles that did not contradict Bolshevik policy.⁶⁵ At Moscow Metalworks 159 foundry workers were mobilised.⁶⁶ In Ivanovo in the Moscow region there had been a demonstration against the war and a call to free political prisoners.⁶⁷ There were strikers at all the cotton mills, though many others refused to come out.⁶⁸ After delegates were arrested, the Bolsheviks organised a demonstration with banners reading 'Down with the War', and 'Down with the Autocracy', but troops killed 30.⁶⁹ There were big sympathy strikes in Moscow, Ekaterinoslav and Kharkiv and 150,000 strikers in Petrograd and 25,000 in Nizhni Novgorod.⁷⁰

The Union of Towns was dominated by Octobrists, Kadets and Progressives,⁷¹ and that month it had received 1,282 rubles from towns, 1,846 in donations and almost 32,300 from the government.⁷² It and the Zemstvo Union were promised concessions, and trade unions were no longer officially regarded as political associations.⁷³ The Zemstvo Union had organisations in 474 towns and cities, and 208 surgical hospitals. In two years it had spent 2.5 billion rubles, fed millions of soldiers and supplied them with three million items. It had supplied 78 million linen items to the War Ministry, issued 50 million more, and had an order for four million tent awnings and three million sandbags. So far that year it had spent 1.3 billion rubles and had 31 million left.⁷⁴

Miron Chernomazov had become an Okhrana agent in 1913, but edited a Bolshevik paper in Paris and then *Pravda* in Petrograd.⁷⁵ By 1915 he was secretary of the New Lessner workers' sickness fund and a member of the RSDRP committee, and the police arrested 23 Bolsheviks, six SRs and one Menshevik,⁷⁶ on the 20th.⁷⁷

On the 21st ministers lamented that 'There is no more army, only an armed people',⁷⁸ and most wanted the Duma to form a government.⁷⁹ The interior minister and others told the tsar that the government did not have the confidence of the army, towns, cities, zemstvos, gentry, merchants or workers.⁸⁰ 'We must have either a dictatorship or a conciliatory policy.'⁸¹ By the 24th the Okhrana was convinced that city workers 'accepted the necessity of internal unity',⁸² yet Putilov workers went on a go-slow strike and demanded the release of the five Bolshevik Duma deputies, universal suffrage, freedom of the press and an extension of the forthcoming Duma session.⁸³ Workforces of 500 to 1,000 and over could elect members to the workers' section of the War Industries Committee.⁸⁴ The Petrograd Mezhraiontsy were against participation,⁸⁵ though the Bolsheviks intended to run candidates in the first stage of the elections, to explain their anti-war views, and 95 of 176 delegates at a conference supported them.⁸⁶ In the second stage the electors would elect 10 to join the workers' section.⁸⁷

On the 27th the Duma opened in Petrograd,⁸⁸ and many deputies came straight from the front. Some wore military uniform and others had worked for the Red Cross. They 'assumed a tone of sharp, indignant opposition' to the government,⁸⁹ and attacked its handling of the war.⁹⁰ A leading Kadet insisted that the 'people wish to take their own affairs into their own hands and to correct what has been neglected'.⁹¹ The Duma established a Special Council for Food Supplies, led by the Agriculture Ministry, with representatives from the Transport Ministry, the

Industry Ministry, the Zemstvo Union, the Union of Towns and liberal economists. The situation improved a little, though Petrograd food shops opened only two or three times a week, and queues of up to 3,000 were common.⁹² When the British timber merchant visited the city again it was obvious that 'without substantial aid from the west, Russia's economy must break down and the threat of revolution increase'.⁹³ In the south Muslim demonstrations against conscription had escalated into a rebellion,⁹⁴ and Baki workers in Azerbaijan protested at arrests of SRs.⁹⁵

By the end of the month, nationally, 16 strikes and 11,640 strikers had been officially deemed economic, and 24 strikes and 23,178 strikers deemed political,⁹⁶ as had around a third of the 180,000 strike days.⁹⁷ Since January 231,794 workers had been involved in 523 strikes for 920,000 days.⁹⁸

After weeks of negotiations,⁹⁹ Kadet, Octobrist, Centrist, Nationalist, Polish, Lithuanian, Muslim, Jewish and other Duma deputies,¹⁰⁰ formed the 'Progressive Bloc'.¹⁰¹ They aimed to form a government that 'enjoyed the confidence of the country'.¹⁰² They were liberal on domestic issues, but more belligerent about the war than right-wing parties.¹⁰³ On 1 September they called for a new government, an amnesty for political prisoners, an end to martial law and interference in unions and other workers' organisations.¹⁰⁴

The Petrograd RSDRP committee now had links with eight city districts, and with Kolpino, Sestroretsk and Peterhof.¹⁰⁵ The Bolsheviks claimed 109 cells in the city,¹⁰⁶ and on the 2nd sweeping arrests of workers provoked strikes.¹⁰⁷ After the arrest of 30 Putilov workers, 6,000 workmates voted to strike for three days. Their demands included reinstating arrested workers, a 15 percent rise,¹⁰⁸ freeing the exiled Bolshevik Duma deputies, drafting police into the army and a responsible government. An all-party city strike committee appealed to workers to create a sovet, and 82,700 workers from 70 factory workforces came out on strike,¹⁰⁹ mainly from medium-sized, privately-owned defence plants in northern districts. Employers asked the military to close strike-bound plants and call up strikers who were reservists,¹¹⁰ and a general threatened them with courts martial and exile. Mensheviks and Bolsheviks on the strike committee wanted to continue, and though SRs and Mezhrainsy won the vote to return,¹¹¹ the RSDRP committee and others called for the strike to continue.¹¹² There were many searches and arrests in Moscow.¹¹³ A minister believed that Moscow workers were 'gripped by some sort of madness' and were 'like gunpowder'.¹¹⁴ The tsar was warned that the situation was 'explosive' and 'blood will flow tomorrow',¹¹⁵ and prorogued the Duma until 1 November.¹¹⁶

On the 4th the tsar approved the mobilisation of second-tier militiamen, and next day there were 70 riots from Astrakhan to Petrograd, where there was a strike at a munitions plant.¹¹⁷ In Petrograd there were meetings of 15,000 at the Putilov works, between 6,000 and 7,000 at the New Lessner plant and mass meetings at the Erikson works. The police did not disperse them,¹¹⁸ since there was a shortage of labour.¹¹⁹ Putilov workers demonstrated and sang the *Marseillaise*, 70,000 other workers went on strike,¹²⁰ and there were demonstrations.¹²¹ Next day, when the mobilisation of second-tier militia men began,¹²² the military announced that strike-bound plants would close and reservists would lose their exemption from active duty if they did not return in 24 hours,¹²³ yet most voted to stay out for one more day. Reportedly 150,000 workers had gone on strike.

On the 10th an open letter to 'conscious' Russian workers, signed by Plekhanov and 11 other émigrés, called labour disputes tantamount to 'treason'. Plekhanov argued for participating in the workers' section of the War Industries Committees and his letter to a Menshevik Duma deputy appeared in *Rech* on the 14th.¹²⁴

A Moscow SR leaflet argued for revolutionary unity in action. 'Organise forces! Don't ask for freedom, take it!' 'Create at once factory committees, district groups' and 'all-city centres'. SRs gave leaflets to soldiers which argued that after beating the Germans they should take their arms to Petrograd and 'purge it of the people's enemies'.¹²⁵ Up to 90,000 workers went on strike,¹²⁶ including 3,000 at Moscow Metalworks,¹²⁷ and food shops were looted in several districts.¹²⁸ On the 19th and 20th an SR conference called for building the party, a new press, a committee to organise conferences and more activity in legal organisations. The police had closed most unions, so SRs and SDs propagandised at the labour exchange and in cafés in workers' districts. When the 48-year-old Menshevik Yosif Kogan arrived in Moscow from Siberia he found no anti-war activity, and 45-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligent Ivan Skvortsov had signed a leaflet arguing that the war was against German militarism,¹²⁹ but there were anti-war protests in the armaments centre of Tula.¹³⁰

In Petrograd workers at 23 medium-sized engineering and defence factories in Vyborg and Petrograd districts stayed out until the 20th. The Okhrana found no evidence of revolutionary agitation,¹³¹ yet strikers had demanded the release of the exiled Bolshevik Duma deputies, the withdrawal of Cossacks from factories, freedom of the press,¹³² and the vote for 18-year-olds.¹³³ Menshevik internationalists and many SRs favoured participation in elections to the workers' section of the War Industries Committee to organise a revolution.¹³⁴ The army had ordered five million artillery shells from the Putilov, Lessner and other privately-owned metalworks,¹³⁵ though around 9,000 workers had left the Putilov plant so far that year.¹³⁶ Lessner workers announced that they would 'stand up for our fatherland' but only 'when we are given complete freedom to form labour organisations,

complete freedom of speech and the press, freedom to strike, full equal rights for all nations of Russia, an eight-hour day', and when landlords' lands were handed to poor peasants.¹³⁷

Iuzhnaya Pravda (Southern Truth), *Pravda Truda* (Labour Truth) and *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* (Voice of the Social-Democrat) circulated in Ukraine,¹³⁸ and there were 85 SDs in Kharkiv,¹³⁹ including a large group of Mensheviks. Railway workers and SR students at the Agricultural Institute issued joint leaflets,¹⁴⁰ and SRs and Bolsheviks boycotted the elections to the workers' section of the War Industries Committee. The Menshevik chair of the electoral conference claimed he had lost a motion condemning it, but the SRs and Bolsheviks raised a ruckus and marched through the city singing the *Marseillaise*. There were strikes there and in Ekaterinoslav,¹⁴¹ and revolutionaries agitated against joining the workers' section in Luhansk.¹⁴²

On the Volga around 25,000 workers had struck in Nizhni Novgorod.¹⁴³ Agricultural labourers were scarce in Saratov province and in spring private landowners had sown 8.3 percent less land than before the war, while peasants had sown 1.6 percent less.¹⁴⁴ In the city of Saratov some SRs and Bolsheviks had formed a bloc, and the government later falsified the results of the elections to the workers' section of the War Industries Committee.¹⁴⁵ Wounded troops and 113,667 refugees from Latvia and Poland had been sent to Saratov province, as had students from Kyiv University, the Commercial Institute and higher courses for women, and some were teachers and propagandists. After *Nasha Gazeta* (Our Newspaper) criticised the workers' section of the War Industries Committee many enfranchised workers decided not to vote.¹⁴⁶

Alliluev and his family had left Petrograd in May, but working nights at an electricity station became too much for him, so he asked the 43-year-old former Bolshevik intelligent Gleb Krzhizhanovsky in Moscow to find him an easier job. He found one at Russia's first peat-burning power station at Bogorodsk, just south of Nizhni Novgorod, and Alliluev went there with his young daughter Svetlana; but working nights became too much and one day he could not get out of bed. Krzhizhanovsky and another comrade helped him get to Lipetsk, 290 miles south of Moscow, to recuperate. The rest of the family had to leave their cottage, but the 45-year-old Old Bolshevik Zinaida Krzhizhanovskaya found them a place to live. By August Alliluev worked at a power station on the outskirts of Petrograd and asked his family to join him. It was difficult to get train tickets, but they succeeded by autumn. Alliluev had abandoned revolutionary activity, but his 38-year-old wife Olga was a nurse at the 1886 Company works, where wounded soldiers asked 'What are we dying for?' all the time, and growing numbers talked about betrayal. At her midwifery course Olga met Dominika Petrovskaya, who told her about the arrest of her husband and the other Bolshevik Duma deputies. All the Alliluyevs knew Badayev, and Sergey knew them all. A map at Svetlana's school showed advances of the Allied forces, and the girls knitted scarves and mittens and sewed warm underwear for the soldiers. Svetlana and her sister learned addresses by heart and picked up envelopes of money for the exiles. Their brother Pavel had been mobilised early in 1915, but worked at a military car repair works, where the sons of well-to-do families bribed their way out of front-line duty and got cushy jobs in the rear. He was ordered to the front in autumn, and when his family saw him off at the station, other recruits waved and shouted jokes and seemed unaware of what they would face.¹⁴⁷

(iii) The imperialist war is ushering in the era of social revolution

In July 1915, in Switzerland Axelrod discussed an international socialist conference with Grimm, Morgari, and a Dutch SD and Tsederbaum in Paris,¹⁴⁸ and there was a preliminary meeting in Bern on the 11th. The delegates also included Balabanoff, Apfelbaum, 47-year-old Jerzy Warszawski of the SDKPiL, 37-year-old Maximilian Horwitz of PPS-Lewica, Dimitar Blagoev from Българска работническа социалдемократическа партия (the Bulgarian Workers' Social Democratic Party), Högländ from the Swedish SDP, and others from Det Norske Arbeiderparti, the Lithuanian SDP, the *Lichstralen* group from Germany and Zetkin from the SPD. They agreed to invite moderate leftists,¹⁴⁹ from all socialist parties or their sections and labour organisations which opposed civil peace, adhered to class struggle and were willing to fight for 'an immediate peace which neither forced annexations nor changes of state boundaries against the will of the people',¹⁵⁰ though only organisations which had members in the International bureau would be eligible.¹⁵¹ The Bolsheviks had wanted to invite only organisations which favoured turning the imperialist war into a civil war and a Third International.¹⁵²

Apfelbaum reported to Ulyanov that the conference would include 'conciliators' and 'social-chauvinists'.¹⁵³ Ulyanov told a Dutch SD that the time was not yet ripe for a split in the SPD,¹⁵⁴ since Kautsky and others had made 'a turn to the left' to continue 'swindling the masses'.¹⁵⁵ (Kautsky had opposed the war in *Die Neue Zeit* and *Vorwärts*.¹⁵⁶) Ulyanov bombarded Sobelsohn with questions about the German Left and a Third International,¹⁵⁷ and argued that émigré Bolsheviks should become delegates to the international socialist conference.¹⁵⁸ He sent draft articles for *Kommunist* to Apfelbaum at his summer residence at Hertenstein near Lucerne, and asked if he

knew Koba's real name.¹⁵⁹ (Letters to exiles had to use their full names.¹⁶⁰) Ulyanov asked Ravich to print 2,000 copies of *Sotsial-Demokrat* on the cheapest paper or 1,000 on thin paper.¹⁶¹ It reported that the Petrograd RSDRP committee was in touch with all the city districts, which elected a committee member for each 200 workers.¹⁶²

Rakovsky had returned to Bucharest in summer, where he stood for parliament, but received only 109 votes. He organised a conference of SDs from the Balkan states,¹⁶³ including the Bulgarian Tesniaks and the Greek Sozialistikí Omospondía (Socialist Federation, or SO), and Serbian SDs sent a telegram of solidarity.¹⁶⁴ The conference reaffirmed its commitment to the International, but condemned members who supported the war, and especially the SPD.¹⁶⁵ The policy of *Revolutsionna rabotnicheska sotsial-demokratichna federatsiya na Balkanite* (Revolutionary Workers' Social-Democratic Federation of the Balkans) wanted class struggle against the war¹⁶⁶ and Rakovsky was elected as secretary.¹⁶⁷ On the 27th the Romanian government declared war on Austro-Hungary. Next day Germany declared war on Romania,¹⁶⁸ and Rakovsky was briefly arrested.¹⁶⁹ On the 30th the Ottoman Empire declared war on Romania,¹⁷⁰ whose army rapidly collapsed.¹⁷¹ On the 31st the International bureau called a conference of delegates from non-belligerent countries in Den Haag.¹⁷²

Vasily Kolarov had been born into a shoemaker's family in Şumnu, Bulgaria, in 1877. After graduating from Varna high school he was a teacher in Nikopol up to 1897. He joined the Bulgarian WSDP and later studied law in Aix-en-Provence and Geneva. He worked as a lawyer in Şumnu from 1900 and in Plovdiv from 1904. He later supported the revolutionary socialist Tesniak (Narrow) faction of the Bulgarian WSDP and led its Plovdiv organization. By 1905 he was a member of the CC and a delegate to congresses at Stuttgart in 1907 and Copenhagen in 1910. During the Balkan wars he was a second lieutenant in the army, and in 1913 he was elected to the Народно събрание (National Assembly).¹⁷³ In 1915 he propagandised troops and was court martialled, but escaped and worked underground. In summer a Tesniak conference agreed to contact other revolutionary organisations in Western Europe, and Kolarov became a delegate to the international socialist conference.¹⁷⁴

In Italy Mussolini was convinced that his country should enter the war on the side of the Allies, and had been expelled from the PSI,¹⁷⁵ but the French government and industrialists reportedly funded his *Il Popolo d'Italia* (*The People of Italy*), which argued against neutrality.¹⁷⁶ Thousands of Russian revolutionaries, many with false papers, left Genoa for Odesa and Archangelsk,¹⁷⁷ and Italy joined the war on the side of the Allies on the 29th.¹⁷⁸

In *Kievskaya Mysl* Bronstein made distinctions between working class leaders.

The *doctrinaire* becomes frozen to a theory whose spirit he fortifies. The opportunist '*practico*' acquires certain tricks of the political trade but then after a turning point in the situation feels himself to be like a hand weaver made redundant by the mechanical loom. The full-blooded *ideologist* is powerless only at the moment when history disarms him ideologically but he is capable of rapidly rearming himself and by assimilating the ideas of the new era he can come out on top.¹⁷⁹

On 4 August Ulyanov denounced Bronstein and Rakovsky as the 'most harmful Kautskyists, since they favoured 'unity with the opportunists',¹⁸⁰ but thanked Kollontai for helping to persuade left-wing Swedish and Norwegian SDs to support the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives.¹⁸¹

In Britain, on the 12th, the Independent Labour Party wanted to rebuild the International, but 'if that is impossible, we agree with the Italian comrades that direct efforts must be tried in order to build a new International representing the anti-war Socialists of belligerent Countries'. A British passport was required only for Russia and Turkey,¹⁸² but the government refused to give passports to ILP and British Socialist Party delegates to attend the international socialist conference.¹⁸³

In Switzerland Sobelsohn agreed that a Third International was needed,¹⁸⁴ and he had the support of the SDKPiL's Warszawa secretary.¹⁸⁵ He saw the Bolsheviks as 'the only revolutionary party in Russia'. He had no principled disagreements with Ulyanov. He and his wife had contacts with north German and Swedish left-wingers. Ulyanov suggested that he, Bronstein and Balabanoff should draw together leading internationalists.¹⁸⁶ It was 'a disgrace' that 'Zetkin and Co.' had 'done nothing in 10 months to unite the International Left'.¹⁸⁷

In Norway the wife of an unemployed clock-maker received letters from émigrés to the RSDRP CC in Russia. Kollontai and Shlyapnikov met Norwegian and Swedish comrades going to the international socialist conference.¹⁸⁸ Branting and Ulyanov provided funds,¹⁸⁹ and Shlyapnikov returned to Stockholm with enough cash to resuscitate the underground network.¹⁹⁰ He had RSDRP journals and pamphlets printed for 'wholesale' transport to Russia, took *Sotsial-Democrat* to contacts in Haparanda in northern Sweden, which was connected by rail to the Finnish border post at Tornio, and Lulea fishermen also took illegal literature to Finland.¹⁹¹

In Paris the veteran former SRs turned SDs Plekhanov, Axelrod, Lev Deutsch, who was aged around 60, and other Menshevik intelligentsy, the former Bolsheviks Alexinsky and Alexey Lyubimov, who was in his mid-thirties, the 37-year-old Bundist Moissaye Novominsky and several leading SRs published *O Voine* (*On the War*). Plekhanov acknowledged that wars stemmed from capitalism, and that Germany had caused the present one, but while its

defeat would shift the SPD significantly leftwards, a Russian victory would be a serious setback to the progressive movement. This alienated Zasulich, Balabanoff, Kollontai and the Bolsheviks,¹⁹² and *Sotsial Demokrat* called him a 'smug and unscrupulous opportunist and chauvinist'.¹⁹³ Tsederbaum was marginalised on *Nashe Slovo*.¹⁹⁴

In Zurich Kollontai's anti-war pamphlet appeared in German as *Wer Profitiert vom Krieg*,¹⁹⁵ and the editors of *Sotsial-Demokrat* published it in Geneva.¹⁹⁶ Early in September Ulyanov's book about socialism and war appeared in German in Zurich. He denounced the German state and the SPD for supporting it.¹⁹⁷

Jan Berzin was born into a Latvian peasant family in 1881. He later took a teacher-training course and then worked in a village, but began spreading revolutionary propaganda among the peasants. He joined the RSDRP in 1902, but was arrested and exiled to Olonets province in northwest Russia in 1904.¹⁹⁸ That year Latvijas Sociāldemokrātiskā strādnieku partija (the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, or LSDSP) was founded.¹⁹⁹ In 1905 Berzin escaped and worked as a political agitator in the Baltic region during the revolution.²⁰⁰ During the second LSDSP congress the party adopted the programme of the RSDRP, and at the RSDRP congress in 1906 the LSDSP entered the RSDRP as a territorial organisation. Afterwards it changed its name to Latvijas teritorijas sociāldemokrātija (the Social-Democracy of the Latvian Territory, or LTSD).²⁰¹ In December Berzin was arrested again, by a punitive expedition. Released from prison in 1907, he settled in St. Petersburg and became the secretary of the RSDRP committee, and was a delegate to the party congress in London. He emigrated in 1908, and lived in Switzerland, France, Belgium and Britain. In 1915 he was a delegate to the international socialist conference.²⁰²

On 19 August Ulyanov told Kasparov in Bern that the conference would take place there on 5 September, and by the 20th he had received a mandate from Berzin in London.²⁰³ On the 23rd Ulyanov wrote to Shlyapnikov.

It is clear that the advanced section of the Pravdist workers ... has survived, in spite of terrible devastations in its ranks. It would be extremely important for leading groups to come together in two or three centres (*most conspiratively*), establish contact with us, restore a Bureau of the Central Committee (one exists, I think, in Petersburg already) and the C.C. itself in Russia. They should establish ties with us (*if necessary*, one or two persons should be brought to Sweden for this purpose). We would send news-sheets, leaflets, etc. The most important thing is firm and constant relations.²⁰⁴

Sotsial Demokrat argued for a 'United States of Europe'.²⁰⁵ The 'victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country', and then the victorious proletariat could 'rise against the rest of the world', though the abolition of classes would be impossible 'without the dictatorship of the oppressed class'.²⁰⁶ Because of the different levels of capitalist development, if a revolution broke out in only one country it would have to 'stand up against the rest of the capitalist world, attract to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, arousing them to insurrection against the capitalists, and if necessary using military forces against the exploiting classes and states'.²⁰⁷ The only Russian paper Ulyanov could read was the Kadets' *Rech*.²⁰⁸

In Berlin 36 SPD Reichstag deputies voted against war credits at the caucus,²⁰⁹ and Liebknecht wrote to the organisers of the international socialist conference. He opposed civil peace, called for a civil war against the bourgeoisie and on socialists in belligerent countries to struggle against the imperialist war and break with the social-chauvinists.²¹⁰ 'The peace of peoples in the future! Long live antimilitarism! Long live revolutionary socialist internationalism, the emancipator of the peoples!', 'Proletarians of all countries unite!'

The émigré Bolsheviks in Switzerland had issued a draft resolution for the conference by 2 September.

The imperialist war is ushering in the era of social revolution. All the objective conditions of recent times have put the proletariat's revolutionary mass struggle on the order of the day. It is the duty of socialists, while making every use of every means of the working class's legal struggle, to subordinate each and every of those means to this immediate and most important task, develop the workers' revolutionary consciousness, rally them in the international revolutionary struggle, promote and encourage any revolutionary action, and do everything possible to turn the imperialist war between the peoples into a civil war of the oppressed class against their oppressors, a war for the expropriation of the capitalists, for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, and the realisation of socialism.²¹¹

They sent copies to all the left-wingers they knew, and asked those who could not attend the international socialist conference to assign proxies to Ulyanov.²¹² Krupskaya asked Ravich in Geneva to send 200 copies to Stockholm, and Kollontai asked Höglund and another Swedish socialist to go to the international socialist conference.²¹³

Pavel Lebedev had been born into a poor noble family in Melenki in Vladimir province in 1881. He joined the RSDRP in 1902, and eloped to Geneva with his sweetheart in 1908. In 1914 he revived the RSDRP dissenters' *Vpered* (*Forward*), which argued that the reason so many European socialists supported the war was because socialist ideology was weak, though that could be addressed by education.²¹⁴ Lunacharsky left Paris for Geneva in May 1915 to work on *Vpered*, and on 25 August it attacked defensists, especially Plekhanov. Lunacharsky aimed to unite all

internationalists,²¹⁵ though he and Lebedev decided not to attend the international socialist conference.²¹⁶ It was a crime for citizens of belligerent countries to meet each other.²¹⁷

(iv) Zimmerwald

Very early in September 1915 Apfelbaum, Armand and Ulyanov met the left-wing international socialist conference delegates in Bern Volkshaus.²¹⁸ They included, Sobelsohn, Höglund, Ture Nerman and Fritz Platten from Switzerland, Berzin from the Latvian TSD, Borchardt from the *Lichtstrahlen* group,²¹⁹ and Bronstein from *Nashe Slovo*,²²⁰ and they accepted a resolution based on the Bolsheviks' perspectives.²²¹ On the 5th most delegates travelled to the nearby small Swiss village of Zimmerwald,²²² and 'joked about the fact that half a century after the founding of the International it was possible to seat all the genuine internationalists in four coaches.'²²³ There were no Russians on the coaches, but near Zimmerwald they spotted Ulyanov, who 'looked like a Swiss mountaineer with a rucksack.'²²⁴ He was lodging on a farm on the outskirts.²²⁵

The delegates registered at their hotel as members of an orthinological society.²²⁶ The 38 SDs included observers without votes. The centre group included Bronstein, Grimm, Balabanoff and the Dutch delegate Henrietta Roland-Holst.²²⁷ The Georgian émigré Old Bolshevik Mikha Tskhakaya had been a delegate to the RSDRP Congress in 1907, but had later left for Geneva,²²⁸ and in 1915 he was the only delegate who had lived in the Caucasus.²²⁹ The 10 Germans included three SPD Reichstag deputies and one from the Prussian Landtag,²³⁰ who had official permission to attend.²³¹ Bertha Thalheimer, Meyer, and Roland-Holst represented the *Die Internationale* group,²³² and Hyacinthe Dubreuil the French metalworkers' union.²³³ Rakovsky came from the Bulgarian WSDP and Kolarov from its Tesniak faction. Balabanov, Morgari, Giuseppe Modigliani, Giacinto Serrati and Constantino Lazzari came from the PSI, Berzin from the LSD, Warszawski from the Main Presidium of the SDKPiL, Sobelsohn from an SDKPiL regional presidium, Lapinsky from PPS-Lewica, Pesach Hersch, using a pseudonym, was an observer from the Bund, Natanson and Chernov from the VPSR, Axelrod and Tsederbaum from the émigré Mensheviks,²³⁴ and Ulyanov and Apfelbaum from the émigré RSDRP CC.²³⁵ According to Tsederbaum the 'Leninists' attempted unsuccessfully to challenge his and Axelrod's mandates, and 25 of the 40 would-be delegates from overseas had failed to obtain passports or been unable to cross the Swiss border.²³⁶ The 19 or 20 delegates who refused to break with social patriots or split the International included most Germans, Dubreuil, some Italians and Poles, the Mensheviks,²³⁷ and Rakovsky.²³⁸ Ulyanov and Apfelbaum distributed copies of *Sozialismus und Krieg (Socialism and War)*,²³⁹ and they and eight supporters formed a closely knit group, sometimes with two or three others.²⁴⁰ Borchardt was the only German to support the Bolsheviks, and though the 31-year-old German journalist Paul Frölich criticised both the SPD centrists and the supporters of *Die Internationale*,²⁴¹ Ledebour remarked that that it was all very well to issue revolutionary appeals to the masses from abroad,²⁴² though the German delegates were going back there.²⁴³

Berzin reported that before the war there had been four mass strikes in Riga, including one of 80,000, and many mass demonstrations. After the war began the LSD had published 11 issues of an illegal paper, distributed tens of thousands of copies of 40 anti-war leaflets and opposed the war in legal trade unions. Lapinsky reported on Poland.

Half a million factory workers and a million rural labourers are in an indescribable plight. Austrian Poland [Galicia] has been turned into a bloody wasteland. A territory inhabited by thirteen million people is completely ruined – trampled over by armies of millions. Certain cities pass over again from one side to the other. This happened in Łódź three times, and in other cities as many as five times.²⁴⁴

Sobelsohn argued that 'Civil war, not civil peace, between the classes – that is our slogan',²⁴⁵ and he and Ulyanov proposed that only 'by attacking the insatiable beast head-on, through street demonstrations, political strikes, and yes, even insurrections, can the workers hope to subdue it'. This required agitation and slogans 'to make the most conscious workers aware of the essential characteristic of the struggle for peace'.²⁴⁶ Axelrod argued that the RSDRP should aim for a 'democratic assembly for the liquidation of the war and the absolutist regime' in Russia, but since the proletariat could not achieve this by itself, it should appeal to bourgeois liberals who were determined to win the war, and to Western European workers.²⁴⁷ Tsederbaum argued that a bourgeois revolution might stimulate the peace movement in Western Europe and begin to create a social movement which might become revolutionary.²⁴⁸ He favoured the re-conquest of the International's constituent parties and the reformation of the International from within.²⁴⁹ The 'only way to fight the war is to sabotage it morally'. 'Our duty is to see that the soldiers no longer fight with enthusiasm.'²⁵⁰ Goldendakh, a contributor to *Nashe Slovo*, was close to Bronstein,²⁵¹ who called for an end to the war 'without victory or vanquished'.²⁵² He wanted an alliance between Russian

revolutionary workers and poor peasants, though a proletarian-peasant revolution could not be maintained or developed without massive support from proletarian revolutions in advanced Western European countries, and 'permanent revolution' was necessary for the transition to communism, because of Russia's backwardness.²⁵³

Sobelsohn failed to persuade Bronstein to sign the Bolshevik draft manifesto,²⁵⁴ though it was defeated by 19 votes to 12.²⁵⁵ The majority's draft manifesto called for a 'ruthless struggle against social imperialism', the 'mobilisation of the proletariat and the restoration of the International', and inveighed against the Russian RSDRP CC, which was 'apt to mislead the non-class-conscious element of the proletariat'.²⁵⁶ A majority favoured peace and did not want to sabotage the war effort, but to make it clear to soldiers that the war was 'opposed to the interests of the people'.²⁵⁷ Bronstein, Rakovsky, Ulyanov, Grimm, Ledebour, the 44-year-old French trade union leader Alphonse Merrheim and Modigliani were elected to produce another draft. Most of them agreed about peace without annexations, though Ulyanov voted against.²⁵⁸ (He was often in a minority of one.²⁵⁹) The draft did not call for civil war or a Third international,²⁶⁰ though a majority called for rejecting war credits, exposing the war's anti-social nature, demonstrations, economic strikes and a continuous effort to turn them into political strikes, plus propaganda in the trenches, the slogan of 'Civil war, not civil peace',²⁶¹ and denouncing the war as the 'outcome of imperialism'.²⁶² Bronstein and Grimm were elected to edit the draft,²⁶³ and the final version stated that 'In no way must the impression be created that this conference aims to provoke a split in or to establish a new International'.²⁶⁴ Sobelsohn criticised it for not mentioning some socialist leaders' compliance with capitalist regimes.²⁶⁵ Almost all the SPD delegates refused to sign it if he did, and Fürstenberg signed instead.²⁶⁶

The leftist delegates met in the nearby village of Kienthal. A minority wanted a Third International, the majority were for the 'recovery' of the Second.²⁶⁷ They agreed to sign the manifesto, but would publish it with a critique of its 'half-heartedness', and form a separate organisation with Sobelsohn as secretary. He later recalled that

Vladimir Ilyich contributed twenty francs on behalf of the Bolshevik Centre, Borchardt another twenty francs in the name of the German radicals, and I borrowed ten francs from Hanecki [Fürstenberg] to contribute for the Polish social democrats. The future Communist International, therefore, had fifty francs at its disposal to conquer the world, but ninety-six francs were needed to print a pamphlet about the conference in German. So forty-six francs were borrowed from Shklovsky, a manufacturer of mineral salts, who employed Zinoviev [Apfelbaum] and Safarov.²⁶⁸

Ulyanov wanted the return of the 5,000 francs 'incorrectly and illegally' held by the SPD trustees, to organise internationalist socialists, but Zetkin refused.²⁶⁹ The conference agreed that the headquarters of the International Women's Committee would be in Bern,²⁷⁰ as would the International Socialist Commission, which included Grimm and Charles Naine from Switzerland and Balabanoff and Morgari from the PSI,²⁷¹ who would take over from the International bureau on a temporary basis. Soon after the conference its International Socialist Commission was 'enlarged', and Ulyanov proposed Apfelbaum, with himself and Armand as alternates.²⁷² Ulyanov believed that the conference represented 'a step toward an ideological and practical break with opportunism and social chauvinism',²⁷³ but he was irritated by the slow progress.²⁷⁴ On the 11th the SDPS ratified the Zimmerwald decisions by 399 votes to 51,²⁷⁵ and included a left amendment that 'peace can be achieved only through revolutionary actions by the working class'. The PSI, Bulgarian and Romanian SDs, the ILP and part of the BSP also supported the manifesto.²⁷⁶ Berzin published it in the Latvian SD organ *Proletariāta Cīņa (Proletarian Struggle)*.²⁷⁷

On Bronstein's journey back to France his luggage was opened at the border. It contained the Zimmerwald documents; but after an inspector picked up *Vive le Tsar (Long Live the Tsar)* he waved him through.²⁷⁸ In Paris Bronstein and Armand joined the Committee for the Resumption of International Relations,²⁷⁹ and Bronstein persuaded small anti-militarist groups, mainly trade unionists, to support the Zimmerwald manifesto.²⁸⁰

In Paris Potresov and other émigré Menshevik intelligentsy had supported Plekhanov's perspective on the war.²⁸¹ The French papers were ordered to ignore the Zimmerwald conference,²⁸² though Tserba convinced most émigré Mensheviks to support its manifesto. He had disagreements with Ulyanov and Apfelbaum, but befriended Lunacharsky.²⁸³ The Bolshevik supporters on the editorial board of *Nashe Slovo* agreed that the groups in touch with Ulyanov were 'the only complete and coherent international force in Russia today' and were the potential basis of RSDRP unity.²⁸⁴ Ulyanov wrote to Shlyapnikov. 'Conciliationism and consolidation is the worst thing for the workers' party in Russia, not only idiotism, but ruin to the party'.²⁸⁵

The pro-war SD press across Europe ignored the conference or dismissed it contemptuously. The governments of Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary banned publication of the Zimmerwald resolutions, and SD parties in France, Austro-Hungary and Germany were hostile.²⁸⁶ In Italy the resolutions appeared in *Avanti!* and also in Germany,²⁸⁷ while the *Berner Tagwacht* published them in German in Switzerland. *Nashe Slovo* published them in Paris and Bronstein praised the conference as 'a giant step forwards for authentic revolutionary-socialist internationalism',²⁸⁸ but attacked the idea of including all socialist tendencies in future conferences. Axelrod

believed a socialist revolution would not eradicate nationalism among workers, and advocated reorganising the International and giving it authority over national parties, including those led by 'social-chauvinists'. He wanted a sustained effort to persuade all parties to agree to 'neither victory nor defeat', and persuaded some Mensheviks.²⁸⁹ On the 15th the Paris authorities banned *Nashe Slovo*,²⁹⁰ allegedly because copies had been found on soldiers at Marseilles who had stoned their colonel to death.²⁹¹ *Nachalo (The Beginning)* appeared immediately, and Drizdo continued as an editor,²⁹² but Bronstein was ordered to leave France.²⁹³

Few copies of *Sotsializm i vojna (Socialism and War)* had reached Russia, though workers copied it by hand. *Sozialismus und Krieg* had reached Berlin, Leipzig, Bremen and other German towns and cities, and Armand's translation, *Le Socialism et la Guerre*, was distributed in France.²⁹⁴ Ulyanov and Krupskaya returned to Sörenberg,²⁹⁵ and Ulyanov wrote to Armand. 'We are very short of cash! That is the *main* trouble!²⁹⁶ Ulyanov asked Shlyapnikov to tell 'Belenin' that he had been co-opted onto the RSDRP CC. ('Belenin' was Shlyapnikov). 'It is necessary to set up groups in Russia (of old, experienced, sensible Pravdist workers who have fully mastered the question of the war) and take the best of them (2 or 3)', 'into the CC'. There were 'a number of candidate members (workers) and arrested CC members'. In Norway a socialist in Vardö told Shlyapnikov about Russian newspapers, 10,000 pamphlets, and Russian type left there since around 1906.²⁹⁷ Ulyanov congratulated Shlyapnikov on the transport route and asked him to send the old literature to Russia. The Bolsheviks in Switzerland had 'incredibly little information', so could he arrange for 'at least two or three leading workers' to get to Stockholm for 'detailed talks and correspondence?'²⁹⁸ Shlyapnikov smuggled the useful Vardö literature into Russia.²⁹⁹ he and his family holidayed in a borrowed villa in Sèvres in the Paris suburbs, then moved into Paris,³⁰⁰ which was 'growing more and more deserted. One by one the street clocks stopped'.³⁰¹ Shlyapnikov sailed to Newcastle and on to Kristiana, where Kollontai helped him. He later went to Stockholm and wrote to the émigré RSDRP CC, who approved his plans for literature 'dumps' near the Swedish-Finnish and Norwegian-Russian borders, so comrades could 'transmit news, correspondence and reports back to our foreign centre and central organ'.³⁰²

In Switzerland Bukharin refused to join the *Sotsial-Demokrat* editorial board,³⁰³ so Ulyanov proposed making *Kommunist* an international organ of left-wing SDs.³⁰⁴ Bosch and Pyatakov agreed,³⁰⁵ if he and Apfelbaum were on the board.³⁰⁶ Rothstein contributed from London,³⁰⁷ Pyatakov and Bosch financed the first double issue, and Bukharin and Pyatakov edited it.³⁰⁸ Ulyanov told Karpinsky in Geneva and the Bolshevik Moisei Kharitonov in Zurich that he intended to give lectures, since he was 'devilishly hard up'.³⁰⁹ He insisted that the 'Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution is now not only the prologue to, but an indivisible part of, the socialist revolution in the west'.³¹⁰ From Russia Ulyanova reported that Elizarova had been arrested.³¹¹ Ulyanov replied: 'Send me at least once a week any Russian newspapers you are finished with, as I have *none at all*'.³¹² He had to get money by writing.³¹³ He had written an article about the collapse of the International',³¹⁴ and it appeared in *Kommunist*. It excoriated Kautsky,³¹⁵ and pointed out that it was 'usually insufficient for "the lower classes not to want" to live in the old way', it was necessary that 'the 'upper classes should be unable' to do so.³¹⁶ Kollontai's article about why German workers were silent in summer 1914 appeared under a pseudonym,³¹⁷ and concluded they had not 'thrown off the benumbing shackles [*sic*] of social-reformism'. Ulyanov asked her to draw revolutionary-minded Scandinavian youths away from the International, and it was easier than she thought,³¹⁸ since Adam Egede Nissen, and Ellisi Vessel, who lived near the North Pole, greatly admired Ulyanov. The American Socialist Party invited Kollontai to make a four-month speaking tour of the USA, as did Russian revolutionaries in New York who agreed with the émigré Bolshevik RSDRP CC perspective on the war, but balked at Ulyanov's dogmatism. Ulyanov asked her to translate her anti-war pamphlet into English, and suggested that Charles Kerr might publish it in Chicago.³¹⁹ Could she contact émigré Bolsheviks and collect money?³²⁰ She considered herself a Zimmerwaldist,³²¹ and on 15 September money for her US tour arrived. She left Kristiana on a Norwegian vessel on the 26th,³²² with Shlyapnikov.³²³ In New York she distributed Zimmerwaldist literature with little success,³²⁴ and mistakenly informed Ulyanov that Bronstein supported right-wingers, and the Zimmerwald Left's platform had not been adopted.³²⁵

(v) We won't be any better off if Russia wins – They'll squash us even harder

By September 1915 the working day had been lengthened in Petrograd factories. Armaments plants employed more women and children, and women formed almost a third of cotton workers, four times as many as before the war.³²⁶ Basic commodity prices were rising, though many employers met workers' wage demands.³²⁷ The Bolsheviks tried to establish 'food commissions' in factories. They now controlled RSDRP committees at Kolpino and Kronstadt,³²⁸ and revived the Petrograd committee.³²⁹

Vladimir Zalezhsy had been born into a family with noble ancestors in the village of Achi in Tatar territory in 1880. In 1900 he was an organizer of the Revolutionary Workers' Group in Kazan. He joined the RSRDP in 1902 and

later worked in Astrakhan, Tsaritsyn, Ekaterinoslav, Kyiv, Nizhny Novgorod and St. Petersburg.³³⁰ Vasily Schmidt had been born into a St. Petersburg worker's family in 1886, and joined the RSDRP in 1905.³³¹ In July 1915 he and Zalezsky called for armed attacks on the police and a workers' sovet. In September they used the mandates of two Putilov electors, without their knowledge, to attend a meeting about the election workers' section of the War Industries Committee, and persuaded other Bolsheviks to argue against. By the 23rd 213,000 workers had chosen 218 electors, including Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and SRs.³³² Around 219,000 workers aged 25 or over in 101 plants had voted, though only 21 workforces had discussed the elections beforehand.³³³ A Bolshevik told a friend that they had been poorly organised and had 'suffered a fiasco'. SRs and Mensheviks had decided to participate in the elections, and many were among those elected to the workers' section in the second stage.³³⁴

Solomon Monoszon had been born in 1883. From 1903 he was a Bolshevik in his hometown of Vilnius and then in St. Petersburg, and from 1907 to 1915 he studied law abroad. He returned to Petrograd as a Menshevik defensist and became secretary of the workers' section.³³⁵

Georgian Mensheviks had met secretly in Guria. A majority of the 15 SDs in Akhali Senaki claimed to represent 1,000 members, including around 500 in Guria. They supported limited participation in the workers' sections of War Industries Committees, an all-Russian workers' congress and a 'responsible' government. They rejected Zhordania's proposal that the SD Duma fraction should vote for war credits,³³⁶ and he attended a Georgian nationalists' conference.³³⁷ Nationally, in 70 of the 239 elections, workers won 36 seats,³³⁸ and though one was a police agent,³³⁹ some SRs, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks organised strikes to undermine the war effort.³⁴⁰

Rosalia Zalkind, a 39-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligentka, had been on the steering committee of *Pravda* in St. Petersburg in 1914, along with members of the illegal workers' insurance centre. She became one of the Bolsheviks elected to the insurance centre in March 1915,³⁴¹ and during September, when Shlyapnikov formed a Russian Bolshevik bureau, it included her, Elizarova and the Old Bolshevik Yevlampy Dunayev, who was in his late thirties,³⁴² and was a veteran of the 1905 Ivanovo sovet.³⁴³ Shlyapnikov received 100 rubles and was told to fend for himself, but he could not find a job, so he borrowed more money. SD intelligenty showed no initiative, so he trained workers to smuggle illegal literature and 'set about reinforcing' the Bolsheviks in Stockholm.³⁴⁴

Across Russia two-thirds of university students were not from gentry or officials' families.³⁴⁵ A Petrograd University student brought a copy of the Zimmerwald manifesto and SRs produced copies for city factory workers. Several slogans became the battle cries of SRs at home and abroad.³⁴⁶ Jewish students in Russia organised a meeting to demand the same opportunities for military service as non-Jews, and though other students heckled, some non-Jews defended them.³⁴⁷ There were 400 Russian Jews at Zurich University, and Jews formed over 85 percent of the 500 at Bern University.³⁴⁸

By the end of September Petrograd Mezhrainka had been re-established.³⁴⁹ Slogans on walls included 'Comrades: we won't be any better off if Russia wins – They'll squash us even harder'.³⁵⁰ SRs had a sizeable following in the assembly shops at the Izhorst plant and sent the Zimmerwald manifesto to Luhansk, where copies were distributed in the Hartmann plant, hung on gates, and posted in nearby streets.³⁵¹ SRs also had organisations in Moscow, Kyiv, Kharkiv and Tomsk in Siberia.³⁵²

(vi) Siberia

By summer 1915 the exiled Old Bolshevik Spandarian was gravely ill in Siberia. Jughashvili met him in Monastyrskoe,³⁵³ in the house that Petrovsky shared with Rozenfeld, who faced a party tribunal for disagreeing with part of the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives at his trial. Jughashvili had a vote, but left without casting it.³⁵⁴ Sverdlov presided,³⁵⁵ though Rozenfeld produced a document which cleared him.³⁵⁶ During August Spandarian died in Krasnoyarsk.³⁵⁷ In Switzerland Ravich told Ulyanov that 'Koba' was well,³⁵⁸ and Ulyanov wrote to Karpinsky. 'Find out Koba's surname (Joseph Dzh-----? We've forgotten. Most important'.³⁵⁹

The 29-year-old Old Bolshevik Lev Sosnovsky had been arrested in August 1914 and exiled to Chelyabinsk in Siberia. He was held in 'strict isolation' for months, and he later recalled that 'it was only on my release' that he 'discovered who was fighting with whom'. In 1915 he was briefly arrested, then moved to Ekaterinburg, where he attended a small conference and contacted comrades in other Urals towns. 'Still lacking documents from the CC relating to the Party's attitude towards the war and deprived of information, we did, however, instinctively adopt the correct position, and our resolution, subsequently printed in the émigré journal *Sotsial-Demokrat*, received the approval of the CC as one of the first reactions from local Party organisations'. When his term of exile ended he earned a living by writing for the 'relatively radical' *Uralskaya Zhizn* (*Urals Life*), which was mainly defensist, and argued discretely for a boycott of the workers' sections of the War Industries Committees;³⁶⁰ yet the 58-year-old Old Bolshevik Vasily Artsybushev had joined the workers' section in Ufa.³⁶¹

In September Skryabin was exiled to the village of Manzurka in Irkutsk province, and en route he was put in a Irkutsk Prison cell with six or seven other politicals. They were deprived of their money and often had no breakfast, and when Skryabin asked for a fork he was put in a punishment cell overnight. After three weeks they reached Manzurka in stages on foot, and some did not recover for a month. Skryabin received 4.2 rubles for food, though since he had a privileged social status he ought to have had 12.5. The 12 politicals included the Latvian Bolshevik Martin Latsis. They received newspapers at third hand, but Skryabin wanted warm clothes, books, and 'anything solid, especially Marxist', including works by the 48-year-old Petr Maslov Menshevik economist, Kautsky, and the 1860s radical Nikolai Chernyshevsky. Skryabin enquired about a large protest in Petrograd and the attitude of workers. Maltsev had been exiled to a village in Irkutsk province. He shared a cell with six others and received government money. After a month, shackled and on foot, the Manzurka politicals were taken to that village.

Broido's son had visited her in Kuragino in summer, until school restarted in Petrograd, though her other children had stayed with her husband Mark, who was a defensist.³⁶² Eva heard that a daughter was seriously ill, but was not allowed to go to see her, and the child died soon afterwards.³⁶³ Eva was put in charge of the Kuragino dispensary, which was well-paid, and she employed a maid. As she carried food home from Minussinsk she compared her situation favourably to that of people in European Russia. She was an excellent cook, and often invited other Mensheviks and a Bolshevik for a meal. The SD exiles' 'grapevine worked perfectly', and they 'always knew whom to expect and when and even what the newcomers would be bringing by way of books and journals, and letters from friends and relatives'.³⁶⁴ They received little news except about the war, but the large number of exiles in Irkutsk heard about the Zimmerwald conference from other exiles, passed it on, and the Menshevik Gurvich drafted a document supporting the manifesto.³⁶⁵ He was the head of the Minussinsk district hospital, and Broido spent much of her spare time with his family. His wife Lydia, Tsederbaum's sister, taught Vera Broido with her own daughter, though when winter set in the Gurvich family were transferred to near Irkutsk. Tsereteli visited Minussinsk to get the exiles to sign an anti-war declaration,³⁶⁶ and Broido later recalled that their 'stagnant little pool was much stirred by all this and after several evenings of hot discussion a few of us, including myself, appended our names'. When Austrian prisoners of war arrived women exiles fed them. Some were SDs, though Broido was prevented from talking with them.³⁶⁷ She had translated a book by John Maynard Keynes,³⁶⁸ and next was *The Iron Heel*. She and her children were allowed to move into Minussinsk and Eva ran the dispensary.³⁶⁹

The Old Bolshevik intelligentka Elena Stasova had been exiled to the village of Rybnoe in the Yenesei province of Siberia in 1914 when she was 41. She formed a commune with other exiles, wrote to her relatives and to *Novy Mir* in New York for money. She persuaded Gorky to send socialist literature and began teaching locals, including the postmaster, so he could pass a civil service examination. Early in 1915 she was transferred to Beia, a town of 4,000 in the Minusinsk region. By spring she was depressed and ill, but her father persuaded well-placed friends to get her transferred and she contacted Bolshevik, Menshevik and SR exiles in Minusinsk who published a newspaper.³⁷⁰ She discovered that exiles who had completed part of their sentence could visit their elderly parents in European Russia. By September she was in Petrograd,³⁷¹ and became secretary of the Bolshevik CC.³⁷²

Konstantin Ermolaev had been an outspoken Menshevik 'liquidationist' in 1910, and had refused to serve with Bolsheviks on the RSDRP CC; but by autumn 1915 he belonged to a group of 'Siberian Zimmerwaldists'.³⁷³ Irkutsk SRs, SDs and other revolutionary exiles had formed a joint organisation and published defeatist literature. When the Zimmerwald manifesto arrived in Krasnoyarsk a few SRs and Mensheviks supported the war, but most, including the Bolsheviks, formed an anti-war bloc, and Bolsheviks and SRs formed a military organisation.³⁷⁴ In Turukhansk Sverdlov 'immediately advised' Bolsheviks 'to begin a serious study of the international revolutionary movement and lectured on the history of the International and the potential of the Third'.³⁷⁵

In February Rozhkov had argued in *Vostochnaya Sibir (Eastern Siberia)* that 'Revolutionary upheaval is all in the past and, in the future, Russia will await the peaceful development of the growth of civilised capitalism'. On 9 April Rozhkov was arrested and charged with possessing illegal literature, and in June the police sent him to Novo-Nikolaevsk, where he joined a number of SDs, mostly Mensheviks, including Tsereteli, the 19-year-old Bolshevik intelligent Evgeny Preobrazhensky and the Bolshevik rabochy-intelligent Kanatchikov.³⁷⁶ In summer a police report from Ufa noted that poor living conditions had 'created fertile ground for agitation by leftist elements' among the miners. Some exiled Bolsheviks had been defensists when the war broke out,³⁷⁷ but defeatism had spread rapidly after the disaster at Tannenberg.³⁷⁸ At the end of September Rozhkov was transferred to Tomsk, and with the Mensheviks Gurvich, Tsereteli and others from literary groups in Irkutsk, plus Woytinsky and the Bolsheviks Frunze, Iaroslavsky, Sokolov and Preobrazhensky, he helped to found the legal weekly *Zabaikalskoe Obozrenie (Transbaikal Review)*, which was edited by I.A. Dubov, a former Putilov steelworker, and appeared on 5 October. The police noted that its views were becoming close to those of the émigré Bolshevik CC.³⁷⁹ Tsederbaum resigned from *Nashe Slovo* on 9 November.³⁸⁰

(vii) Helphand

In January 1915 the German foreign office had reported that Helphand believed that Russian recruits had to arrive at the front 'already contaminated' with revolutionary ideas, and a Permanent Assistant met him in Berlin.³⁸¹ Helphand also met the German ambassador in Constantinople and argued that Germany's interests and those of the Russian revolutionaries were identical. He wanted to 'organise a rising on a broad basis', but this would require a large amount of money. The ambassador told the foreign minister that Helphand was 'definitely pro-German',³⁸² and he agreed to finance revolutionary propaganda.³⁸³ On the 9th Helphand met Rakovsky in Bucharest, who reportedly accepted German money for the Bulgarian WSDP. Next day, in Sofia, an audience of 4,000 greeted Helphand with 'tumultuous applause'; but when he argued that Bulgaria should enter the war on the side of the Central Powers there was an icy silence, since both factions of the BWSDP considered him an agent of German imperialism; but on the 12th the German ambassador in Constantinople gave him 100,000 lei.³⁸⁴

In Paris Helphand's Odesa school friend Goldendakh supported the Petrograd Mezhrainitsy, who shared the émigré RSDRP CC perspective on the war, though he disagreed with them on organizational questions, and particularly their refusal to unite with the Menshevik internationalists.³⁸⁵ He sympathised with the SDs around *Nashe Slovo*, though French socialist parties were highly critical of the RSDRP. Helphand gave him 5,000 marks.

Early in February Helphand visited Vienna and met the Menshevik CC member and leading Bundist Raphael Rein, and Serrati, the editor of the PSI's *Avanti!* At the end of the month Helphand suggested to the German Foreign Ministry that they should support nations who were striving for independence from Russia, especially Finland, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and encourage the Ottoman Empire to mobilise Muslims. He proposed sending propaganda to Russia and conducting an international press campaign, including via *Nashe Slovo*. Exiled Russian revolutionaries should be encouraged to return to Russia to forge links with strike committees, and especially with Putilov, Obukhov and Baltic metalworkers in Petrograd. Only the Bolsheviks were capable of organising strikes, though they and the Mensheviks, Bundists, Spilka (a left-wing breakaway from Revoliutsiina Partiiia Ukrayiny, the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party or RUP), the SDKPiL, PPS-Lewica and the Finnish and Latvian SDs would cooperate in a campaign of mass strikes. Helphand visited Luxemburg in Berlin twice, but she showed him the door without speaking, and Liebknecht, Zetkin and Jogiches received him coldly. The German government gave Helphand one million marks, which was to be transferred 'exclusive of losses incurred during exchange', and a police pass, which freed him from the restrictions on enemy aliens. He visited Bucharest to try to persuade Rakovsky to send money to Russian SDs, including Bronstein in Paris.³⁸⁶

Early in March the restrictions on Helphand's movements in Germany were lifted, and he was given a passport so he could travel in neutral countries. Late that month the Under Secretary of State asked the Treasury for two million marks to support revolutionary propaganda in Russia.³⁸⁷ Helphand went to Vienna and met Goldendakh, then went to Berlin and told senior government officials about his plan for nationalist and revolutionary socialist parties to overthrow the tsar.³⁸⁸ He told them that Finns could contact revolutionaries in Russia, set up information and transport services and smuggle arms and explosives.³⁸⁹ He received one million marks, which he deposited in banks in Bucharest, Zurich and Copenhagen, and sent Bronstein some for *Nashe Slovo*. After Helphand arrived in Bucharest a German official told the Foreign Ministry he could give him money in 'an inconspicuous manner', and Helphand gave Rakovsky 100,000 lei.³⁹⁰

In May Helphand arrived in Zurich,³⁹¹ where he stayed in the most expensive hotel and gave a former mistress money to distribute to poorer Russian political exiles. He visited Ulyanov, who later claimed that he told him that he was a German agent and wanted nothing to do with him. Late that month Helphand visited Ulyanov again. Ulyanov later claimed that he told him never to return, though Helphand met SD émigrés, including Sobelsohn.³⁹² He was reportedly linked to both Ulyanov and the German authorities via Fürstenberg.³⁹³ Early in July the State Secretary at the German Foreign Ministry asked the Treasury for five million marks. In August the German minister in Copenhagen reported favourably about Helphand.³⁹⁴

In summer Uritsky gave Kruse newspapers to deliver to Petrograd and asked him to meet an economist in the Russian Trade Ministry who favoured post-war trade with Germany.³⁹⁵ Kruse evidently did not do so,³⁹⁶ but he met leading Bolsheviks and Mensheviks and his mission was largely successful. During August a Bolshevik 'court of honour' expelled Bogrovsky.³⁹⁷ Alexinsky published *Rossia i Svoboda (Russia and Freedom)* and a book in which he accused Helphand of being a German agent who was trying to link the Bolsheviks with the Austro-German war effort, and *Nashe Slovo* of accepting German money.³⁹⁸

By autumn Kesküla was in Stockholm. Reportedly he contacted Ulyanov on behalf of the German General Staff to find out on what conditions Russian revolutionaries would conclude peace after a successful revolution. Kesküla sent examples of Bolshevik propaganda to the Germans, and they financed printing and smuggling operations, which were carried out by Finnish nationalists. Kesküla also sent reports to Ulyanov.³⁹⁹ *Die Glocke* appeared in

September and Helphand wrote most of it. It glorified right wing SPD leaders, but criticised their lack of revolutionary preparedness. It praised socialists who supported the war, vigorously defended them against the criticisms of the SPD oppositionists, called Kautsky a 'lunatic' and the journal became popular with SPD officials and schoolteachers. He gave the editors a free rein, though he did not agree with some articles. He believed that the Bolsheviks needed a newspaper in three languages and he and Fürstenberg made arrangements with businessmen to raise money. Helphand told Romanian and Bulgarian socialists that an Allied victory would strengthen tsarism and damage the revolutionary movement, and his house in Constantinople became the headquarters of nationalists and socialists who wanted to undermine the autocracy.⁴⁰⁰ He was accused of selling out,⁴⁰¹ but insisted that the autocracy had to be replaced by a 'free union of all the nations of the large Empire', and socialists should use the war to start a social revolution.⁴⁰² How much of all this is true remains unclear.

5. The Zimmerwald Left

(i) *Imperialism and the World Economy*

On 7 October 1915 (NS) Ulyanov wrote from Switzerland to his mother in Petrograd. 'Nadya has put on quite a lot of weight; the palpitation has gone; she has even been up the mountains,' and they had 'a nice room' 'with electricity and a bath for 30 francs'. 'I should be very grateful for a subscription to *Rech*' and the books he had asked Maria to send a long time ago.¹ Shlyapnikov told Ulyanov that he was leaving Scandinavia for Petrograd and he asked him to meet Elizarova.² She had been sentenced to exile in Astrakhan province, but had been allowed to stay in the capital until she recovered.³ Shlyapnikov found that she was too ill for political work,⁴ and the transport network was in tatters.⁵ On the 10th Ulyanov wrote to Shlyapnikov. 'News from Russia testifies to the growing revolutionary mood and movement, though to all appearances this is not yet the beginning of the revolution.'⁶

In France Plekhanov was hostile to the Zimmerwaldists, and with Alexinsky, other SDs and a group of SRs in Geneva, he published the weekly paper *Prizyv (The Call)* in Paris.⁷ On 11 October Plekhanov lectured in Geneva and émigré Bolsheviks came from all over Switzerland. Ulyanov listened calmly, but when Plekhanov argued for the defence of the 'fatherland', Ulyanov rose, with a glass of his beer in his hand, and challenged him.⁸ Next day Ulyanov and Sobelsohn discussed publishing a Zimmerwald Left journal, and on the 13th *Sotsial-Demokrat* argued that 'the fundamental division among European SD parties was between 'internationalist' and 'social patriot' tendencies.⁹ Ulyanov told Shlyapnikov that the Zimmerwald Left included a Serb, a Frenchman and three Swiss. Two Germans had supported them on many questions, and the manifesto represented a break with 'social patriots'.¹⁰ On the 14th Ulyanov won over a packed meeting at the Maison du Peuple (House of the People) in Geneva. Shlyapnikov wrote to him about the RSDRP in Petrograd and elsewhere. Menshevik Duma deputies had refused to vote for war credits, but had not opposed the war.¹¹

In Stockholm Bukharin had completed *Imperializm i Mirovaya Ekonomika (Imperialism and the World Economy)*. It reinterpreted the Marxist theory of the state and argued that there was a causal connection between monopoly finance capitalism and imperialism. The world was divided between advanced state-capitalist industrial countries and backward agrarian countries, and the social crisis and 'the iron heel of the *militaristic state*' made a proletarian revolution possible without a democratic revolution.¹² Ulyanov found it 'topical and important' and 'highly scientific', and he agreed that a 'new phase of capitalism', 'ultra-imperialism', was conceivable in the future.¹³ The manuscript remained unpublished,¹⁴ but Bukharin sent an article to *Sotsial-Demokrat* which argued against 'the right of nations to self-determination'.¹⁵ Bosch and Pyatakov supported him,¹⁶ and the three of them planned to publish an anti-war periodical, to 'revolutionise the consciousness of the proletariat' by 'continually tossing' it 'into the arena of *world struggle*', but when Ulyanov insisted on editorial control, they refused, and Ulyanov told Shlyapnikov that Bosch had no brain and Bukharin was a 'complete piglet'.¹⁷ They objected to the émigré RSDRP CC position on the role of democratic demands and to the minimum programme. In Switzerland, at the *Sotsial Demokrat* editorial board, Ulyanov denounced them as factional, and sharply criticised Apfelbaum's and Shlyapnikov's conciliatory attitude towards them.¹⁸ Together with Bogrovsky the dissenters asked the CC to appoint them as a 'special commission' to channel émigré RSDRP CC information to Russia, publish and transport literature and liaise with left-wing Swedish SDs, but the CC refused. The group dissolved itself, but asked for a CC representative to come to Sweden.¹⁹

Shlyapnikov had taken a considerable amount of illegal literature to Haparanda on the Swedish-Finnish border. Finnish comrades contacted others in Helsinki and railway workers took parcels via Kemi and Viipuri to Beloostrov in Russia. Shlyapnikov set off,²⁰ with a false passport, and reached Petrograd late in October.²¹ He never slept in the same place two nights in a row and hid the location of eight conspiratorial apartments from comrades.²²

By early November Krupskaya and Ulyanov had taken their belongings in one suitcase to their new room in Zurich. When Shklovsky and his wife visited they demonstrated the electric light, but the landlady burst in and demanded that they move, since she could not tolerate it being on during the day, and next day they moved to a cheaper room on the third floor. They sent Kollontai 500 copies of *Sozialismus und Krieg* and *Le Socialism et la Guerre* for distribution in the USA.²³ She had arrived on the 8th and been met by émigré Russian SD intelligenty.²⁴

On the 9th Ulyanov told Kollontai that he hoped to publish a small pamphlet about Zimmerwald in German, French and Italian, if money was available. Could she collect some from Bolsheviks in the USA?²⁵ He added that left-wing Poles, Swedes, one Norwegian, one German and one Swiss now called themselves the 'Zimmerwald Left'.²⁶ On the 11th Ulyanov spoke about Zimmerwald in Geneva.²⁷ On the 20th *Sotsial-Demokrat* noted that the 'quick-firing guns' at the front were 'killing opportunism and anarchism' and the war was 'stripping the mask off

the adventurers and renegades of socialism',²⁸ while Helphand's *Die Glocke* was the 'organ of renegades and dirty lackeys' in the 'cesspool of German chauvinism'.²⁹

In Germany the SPD Vorstand considered the Zimmerwald conference 'meaningless',³⁰ but the Socialist Youth International broke with pacifists and centrists and, with other 'Left elements', 'tried to 'organise work among the masses'.³¹ The SPD oppositionists' *Politische Briefe (Political Letters)* gave one sentence to the Bolsheviks' position at Zimmerwald,³² and noted that the 'great majority' of delegates rejected it as a 'tactical error'.³³ In *Lichstrahlen* Sobelsohn called the right of nations to self-determination a 'petty bourgeois formula that has nothing in common with Marxism'.³⁴ Ulyanov responded. 'The Socialist revolution is by no means a single battle; on the contrary, it is an epoch of a whole series of battles around *all* problems of economic and democratic reforms, which can be completed only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.'³⁵

Armand rented a flat opposite Rubakin's library in Beaugy-sur-Clarens.³⁶ Ulyanov thanked her for translating an article about the Zimmerwald Left into French, which he would send to the 30-year-old émigré French socialist Henri Guilbeaux in Geneva and the 35-year-old Russian Bundist and leading Menshevik Raphael Rein in Petrograd. The Zimmerwald Lefts had met in Zurich, and though 'only 2 Swiss + 2 foreigners (Germans), 3 Russ-Jew. Polish' turned up, there would soon be another meeting. 'It's difficult for them, because what it *actually* amounts to is a war with Grimm, and their forces are too small.'³⁷

Late in November the International bureau reported the adherence of the US Socialist Party and the US Socialist Labor Party, plus the Partido Socialista Português, (the Portuguese Socialist Party) and Sosialistikí Omospondía Thessaloníkis, (the Socialist Federation of Salonika) in Greece.³⁸

(ii) The mobilisation of exempted strikers

By October 1915 around 500 Russian cities had shortages of one kind or another, and over half had insufficient rye or wheat flour. There had been several strikes in Petrograd against the suspension of the Duma and the call-up of reservists.³⁹ The city needed over 400 railway wagons of provisions a day, but two-thirds of butchers had no meat and women attacked their shops, while the lack of flour and oil had led to the closure of over a third of bakeries.⁴⁰ The Bolsheviks were setting up 'food commissions' in Narva, Petrograd, Moscow and Vyborg factories. On the 9th legal restrictions on night work for females and children were lifted and an 11 to 12 hour day in metalworking plants and 12 to 13 hours in textile mills became common,⁴¹ though workers with good time-keeping received a bonus.⁴² Over half of war materiel was produced in the region, and senior Okhrana officers pressed the city's employers' association to sack activists, but establish canteens and allow some pay rises. Many people Shlyapnikov had known had left the underground in Petrograd, but there were workers' groups in every district. Two Okhrana agents who were members of the RSDRP committee opposed his plan for the CC,⁴³ even though he had a supportive letter from Ulyanov, and demanded that it had to be chosen from their number. They refused to call a plenum if Shlyapnikov attended, and wanted control of contacts with the provinces and abroad.⁴⁴ After visiting England to pick up valid identification papers from a Belgian refugee, Shlyapnikov returned.⁴⁵

On the 17th 30 SRs from Petrograd districts met in Kerensky's flat. The janitor told them that spies were in the area, and some left, but others set up a commission to work out their position on the war and lay the groundwork for a city organisation.⁴⁶ Factory cells would elect delegates to the districts which would elect the committee.⁴⁷ On the 19th, after 2,000 workers at the Phoenix engineering plant stopped work and demanded that a foreman be sacked, 430 reservists were mobilised in spite of their exemptions. Bolsheviks in a Vyborg factory proposed a general strike and demonstration, but SRs and Mensheviks defeated them. After a strike at the Mines Factory, 160 were not rehired.⁴⁸ Strikers called for an end to the war, hurled stones and fired revolvers at the police, and a regiment called to reinforce the police turned their guns against them. After 150 soldiers were executed there were protest strikes.⁴⁹ The Okhrana noted unrest among students over the suspension of the Duma,⁵⁰ and warned about 'riots of the lower classes of the Empire enraged by the burdens of daily existence'.⁵¹

The Okhrana decided to liquidate the Mezhraintsy, and though they moved their press to Nizhni Novgorod, Sergei Markov and Andrey Gusev were arrested with printing materials and revolutionary leaflets at a Moscow railway station. Their interrogation led to the arrest of seven other members and non-members, who were mainly young, skilled male workers. The Bolsheviks tried to recruit 15 to 18 Latvians from Rīga who had become Mezhraintsy, but the 'hard Bolshevik' L. Leonteva joined them because 'it was impossible for me to sit and do nothing' during the RSDRP's 'darkest moment'. She became their secretary, chose conspiratorial apartments very carefully and tried to link district committees.⁵²

In Moscow there had been several strikes against the suspension of the Duma and the call-up of reservists.⁵³ The RSDRP claimed 500 members, including the Old Bolshevik intelligenty Skvortsov, Zalkind, Nogin, Alexanderov,

41-year-old Petr Smidovich, 44-year-old Vladimir Obukh, 53-year-old Olga Varentsova and Ulyanova,⁵⁴ who told her brother in Switzerland that strikers were not using political slogans. The Bolsheviks had tried to give a lead, and many had been arrested, but in spite of police searches Elizarova and Ulyanova had continued working.⁵⁵

In Nizhni Novgorod the RSDRP claimed 150 to 200 'members' in 14 factory *kruzhki* and four others on the outskirts. The 'college of propagandists' included six workers, though intelligentsy did 'not take a close part in the work for a variety of reasons' so there was an 'almost total lack of theoretically knowledgeable and experienced people', and a 'dreadful shortage of literature'. Few copies of *Sotsial-Demokrat* arrived.⁵⁶ In the major Volga port of Saratov 10 issues of *Nasha Gazeta* had supported strikes by tailors, bakers, printers and factory workers,⁵⁷ but two had been confiscated. It was closed on 15 October and the editors were arrested, but SDs issued appeals and printed leaflets articulating workers' demands. A sharp rise in the price of flour prompted railway workers, Bering and Gantke metalworkers, Iakovlev printers and Medvedev lumber yard workers to strike.⁵⁸

In Baki in Azerbaijan one Bolshevik from Tbilisi, a Bolshevik Kutaisi worker and 37-year-old Armenian Old Bolshevik intelligent Stepan Shahumyan took the chair. The RSDRP claimed about 60 members in legal organisations, including the unions of tailors, printers and office workers, over 15 cooperatives and the committee for aiding refugees, which was organising a labour exchange. Soon after Shahumyan was arrested.⁵⁹ During October, nationally, 10 strikes and 11,268 strikers were officially deemed political, and 21 strikes and 13,350 strikers deemed economic.⁶⁰

The 44-year-old Old Bolshevik intelligentka Olga Lepeshinskaya had returned to Russia in 1906 and settled in Orsha in Biełaruś. She continued her revolutionary work and later moved to the Crimea and then Moscow, where she attended the University,⁶¹ to study medicine,⁶² and was elected to a teaching post during 1915.⁶³ The Old Bolshevik intelligentka Vera Menzhinskaya had been Krupskaya's assistant in Petrograd and contributed to *Pravda* between 1905 and 1907, and she agitated during 1915. Rahil Abramovna had been born into a Jewish family in Kyiv in 1865. She later graduated from the St. Petersburg Bestuzhev courses and became a full-time revolutionary, but was arrested in 1886 and deported to Kazan. In 1887 she attended Paris University and worked in Marxist circles. She returned to St. Petersburg in 1897, but was imprisoned for two years and then exiled to Eastern Siberia for five. In 1915 she worked for various SD organisations, including the Bolsheviks.⁶⁴

The number of women workers in Ivanovo factories had quadrupled.⁶⁵ The former soviet deputies A.M. Krupitchikova, who was in her early thirties, and Elena Razorenova, who was aged around 35, were active in the anti-war movement. During 1915 they had organised a demonstration, but four women were shot, including the other organiser Matrena Lushnikova.⁶⁶ When Evdokiia Poliakova learned that her soldier husband had been killed, she felt she 'had lost any purpose in life'. Comrades argued that she should join the Party and 'then there won't be time to miss him',⁶⁷ though she hesitated. The 42-year-old Old Bolshevik worker Anna Boldyreva had been exiled to Eastern Siberia in 1910, where she worked in a farm commune and later as a hospital cook, and did other jobs. During 1915 she was allowed to move to Chita, where she propagandised peasants. Sarra Brodskaya had been born in 1887. She became a revolutionary in 1905 and worked in Odesa and Kyiv. She was in prison from 1909, but during 1915 she became a Bolshevik, and worked underground in Kyiv and Moscow, but was exiled to Siberia.⁶⁸ In Siberia Klavidia Kirsanova, a middle-class girl from Perm aged around 29, decided to join the Party, even though all she knew about it was that they were against the tsar, and that one of her male friends was a member.⁶⁹ Krylenko and his wife, Rozmirovich, secretly returned to Russia on a mission for Helphand's Copenhagen 'Research Institute'. They settled in Moscow, but they were arrested and exiled on 4 November.⁷⁰

On 20 November, in Petrograd, Putilov workers discussed the elections to the workers' section of the War Industries Committee. Some Mensheviks were opposed,⁷¹ but the meeting agreed to take part by 95 votes to 81.⁷² After some Bolsheviks were arrested, Mensheviks insisted on another meeting, and 153 attended. The Bolsheviks opposed participation, then most walked out and the SRs followed them. One Bolshevik stayed behind, but when he opposed participation the Menshevik chair threatened to call the police and had him thrown out.⁷³ The rest elected three SRs and seven Mensheviks.⁷⁴ In Kolpino SRs, Mezhraintsy and Bolsheviks cooperated, and the émigré VPSR CC had a four to two majority against the war.

In Moscow 7,000 workers spoiled their ballot papers for the election of the workers' section and only half voted. In the Moscow region SRs, Menshevik internationalists and Bolsheviks issued anti-war leaflets in Tula. Across Russia SRs and Bolsheviks prevented elections in most industrial cities, though the government used devious tactics to create them. SRs in the key southern railway town of Rostova-Nachichevansk had published anti-war leaflets since the beginning of the war, and in November 1915 they published one about the arrest of the Bolshevik Duma deputies.⁷⁵ On the Volga Tsaritsyn workers went on strike for higher wages, and there was a political strike in Saratov,⁷⁶ where the Bolsheviks claimed every factory workforce included between 10 and 20 'members'.⁷⁷

In Ukraine Mykolaev revolutionaries agitated in a 'powerfully defeatist' way and membership grew rapidly, and the Bolsheviks claimed 200 'members' in Ekaterinoslav.⁷⁸ When the young Bolshevik Pavel Alferov arrived in

luzovka, the 63-year-old Old Bolshevik Petr Moiseenko and others were distributing revolutionary literature. Thanks to an engineer the police weren't on to us', but an ironworks foreman 'went about his dirty work'.

All the workers under his supervision were inclined to pogroms, and we could in no way influence them. We got to a few of the sorters, but the coke workers absolutely would not listen to the socialists. From the plumbing shop they had been mobilised for the war. Disaffection with the war was growing. The newspapers carried stories of misappropriations of contributions, goods, and supplies.

Some striking Donbass miners had been sent to the front, though generally the region was 'silent'. Bolsheviks held workers back from 'anarchistic and spontaneous outbreaks' in case the police destroyed their organisation; but there were strikes, mainly because of economic grievances, and their average length was 4.8 days.⁷⁹

The Old Bolshevik expropriator Simon Ter-Petrosian had been transferred to a cell in Kharkiv Prison with ordinary criminals. He spent many hours a day sewing dresses and underclothes, and making boots and baskets. He wore no cap, so he did not have to doff it to warders, but his mental health deteriorated.⁸⁰ The Chernihiv Bolsheviks had no press, so they had joined SRs and SDs who had one, but Zalkind arrived and told the Bolsheviks that the CC disapproved of joint organisations. They 'expelled' SRs from their military organisation, but without the press anti-war work 'fell through'. In Ekaterinoslav and Baki SRs, Menshevik internationalists and Bolsheviks issued anti-war leaflets, and a south Russian SR committee consisted mainly of leftists.⁸¹

Since 1903 Nikolai Veretsky, the son of a Pevlograd priest in central Ukraine, had informed the Okhrana about fellow pupils. He had joined the RSDRP by 1905 and was sent to St. Petersburg to help to smuggle arms to Finland. When others became suspicious he spent three months in the secret section of the Okhrana, then had himself exiled abroad 'to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the revolutionaries'. He later became a full-time agent and gave a large part of his 150 rubles a month to his parents, and after he withdrew from the Okhrana in 1915 he received 12 monthly payments of 75 rubles.⁸²

(iii) Letopis

By December 1915 women workers in Petrograd formed between 52 and 74 percent of textile mill workforces, and the number of female metalworkers had risen by between 300 and 400 percent.⁸³ Children and adolescents formed seven percent of the industrial workforce but suffered almost 15 percent of 'accidents'.⁸⁴ On the 18th 39 women at the Treugolnik rubber plant fell ill. Two days later a woman collapsed, then 11 others, and eight were taken to the dispensary.⁸⁵ Women stood in queues for hours to buy pitiful quantities of sugar and flour. There were shortages of candles, kerosene, firewood, soap,⁸⁶ meat and fats, and there were disturbances.⁸⁷ Since September 29 wagons of Donbass coal had reached the city. Nationally state plants received most of what they needed, but other factories' stocks were almost exhausted,⁸⁸ and steel production had fallen.⁸⁹

Mensheviks had made significant gains in the networks set up by the workers' section of the War Industries Committee,⁹⁰ while the Menshevik Duma deputies supported the Allies and dissociated themselves from Zimmerwaldists.⁹¹ Since 1 May the Petrograd RSDRP committee's income had been 2,417.79 rubles,⁹² though the Bolshevik organisation had almost been wiped out, since 411 were in prison,⁹³ and the survivors found contacting the émigrés in Switzerland almost impossible.⁹⁴ The Bolsheviks had failed to persuade Putilov workers to go on political strikes, but successfully promoted economic strikes. The 84 workers' mutual aid funds had 108,000 members and 97 more were being formed. Members of the RSDRP committee and Bolsheviks were officers of workers' legal societies, and though the Okhrana arrested them, a Bolshevik leaflet called on workers to strike on 9 January the following year.⁹⁵ SRs had cells at the Putilov plant, Baltic and Neva shipyards, the Pipe Works and the Obukhov plant.⁹⁶ They formed the Petrograd Group of SRs,⁹⁷ and 20 leaders met to discuss the war and elect a new city committee of six, who reportedly had contacts with SRs in Moscow, Kharkiv, Tver, Rostov-na-Donu, Nizhni Novgorod, Penza, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk and other cities. Late in December the Petrograd SR committee called for a general strike on 9 January, or failing that a massive demonstration. The police arrested SRs, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, and in Moscow, Tula, Mykolaev, Voronezh and other cities.⁹⁸ The national conference of the workers' sections of the War Industries Committees attracted delegates from 12 cities, and some Duma deputies demanded the democratisation of the government.⁹⁹ The Moscow Bolsheviks had been penetrated by spies.¹⁰⁰

Vladimir Miliutin had been born into a Jewish family in the village of Alexandrovo, Kursk province in 1884. He joined the RSDRP in 1903 and was initially a Menshevik, but probably joined the Bolsheviks in 1910. He was a 'conciliator' who hoped to reunite the factions, and was co-opted onto the CC, but was arrested almost immediately afterwards.¹⁰¹ By late 1915 Moscow and Petrograd intelligenty, right-wing Mensheviks and others,

including Skvortsov, Smidovich, Sokolov and Miliutin agreed to try to reunify the RSDRP and let Menshevik Duma deputies speak for the Bolsheviks.¹⁰²

Gorky had donated 6,000 rubles to 'revolutionary causes', and agreed to be the literary editor of *Prosveshchenie*.¹⁰³ He told Peshkova that 'well-dressed women' in Petrograd 'can be seen begging. It is very cold. People have nothing to burn in their stoves. Here and there, at night, they tear down wooden fences'. A 'horribly large number of underage prostitutes' were 'scurrying along the sidewalks like cockroaches' at night. 'We will soon have a famine', and he advised her to 'buy ten pounds of bread and hide it'.¹⁰⁴ 'The bourgeoisie is consolidating, becoming stronger and, of course, is robbing the country, robbing – as it has never robbed before'. The people 'labour, but there is nothing to eat. Petersburg is short of bread; there is no wood, no sugar, etc. Of course, the country has both bread and sugar, and everything that's needed, but most of all it has swindlers. Thence, the high cost of living'.¹⁰⁵ He intended to publish a bi-monthly political-literary magazine.¹⁰⁶ Preparations were 'going full speed ahead', though the authorities might close it after the first issue. He told an eminent physiologist and botanist that he aimed to show a 'moderating element of a rational and critical attitude towards reality', and requested an article on 'the global significance of experimental science for all mankind'. He asked another writer for a story, if only a short one, some verses, and a longer story for the January issue.¹⁰⁷ He told the writer George Bernard Shaw in London that he opposed the 'senseless' war and asked him to send an article about 'the present state of England and your thoughts and forecasts' to 'the address in Stockholm'.¹⁰⁸ *Letopis (The Chronicle)* appeared in December and opposed nationalism and the war. There was an official editor, but in practice it was Gorky, and he included literary, scientific and political material.¹⁰⁹ The head of the Okhrana called it 'bolshevik and defeatist in tendency', though the editors had distanced themselves from political organisations and were 'more cultivated and materially better off' than RSDRP workers.¹¹⁰

Solomon Drizdo had been born into the family of a poor teacher of Hebrew in Ekaterinoslav province in 1878. His mother was illiterate, but his father taught him to read Hebrew, pray, and read Russian. He left school at the age of 11, but went back to complete his education when he was 20, and then served two years in the army. He joined the RSDRP in Ekaterinoslav in 1901, and spent two years organising railway workers, under a pseudonym. He moved to St Petersburg in August 1903, but was soon arrested, and held in prison without trial for a year, before being exiled to Kazan. In November 1904 he learned about the split in the RSDRP, and joined the Bolsheviks. He was detained in October 1905 for allegedly taking part in a raid on Kazan police station, but released after three weeks, arrested again in St Petersburg in December, and after escaping to Kharkiv he was arrested twice in quick succession. He was in prison from July 1906 to May 1908, then deported to Irkutsk, but escaped in transit. From 1908 he lived in Paris where he ran an employment bureau for Russian émigrés, schools for electricians, a bakers' co-operative and a garage. He was a prominent Bolshevik 'conciliator', which brought him into conflict with Ulyanov. By 1914, he had either left or been expelled by the Bolsheviks,¹¹¹ but during the war he worked on internationalist publications.¹¹² SD intelligentsy in Paris, including Drizdo, helped to launch Gorky's *Letopis*.¹¹³

Late that year Elizarova reported to Ulyanov in Switzerland that the Bolshevik campaign about the workers' section of the War Industries Committee elections had been successful.¹¹⁴ Ulyanov had chaired a meeting which aimed to call an International conference,¹¹⁵ but complained that he had great need of money.¹¹⁶ Krupskaya wrote to Ulyanova. 'We shall soon be coming to the end of our former means of subsistence and the question of earning money will become a serious one'. 'I don't want that side of our affairs to be Volodya's worry alone. He works a lot as it is.' Could Maria find a publisher for her pamphlet about elementary schools and democracy?¹¹⁷ Ulyanov told Armand that Gorky was dissatisfied with the attacks on Kautsky in his pamphlet on imperialism.¹¹⁸

Ulyanov and Apfelbaum had scrutinised Sobelsohn's draft Zimmerwaldist *Internationales Flugblatt (International Leaflet)*, then since Sobelsohn could not 'afford the luxury of a typewriter' he made copies by hand and distributed hectographed copies.¹¹⁹ Ulyanov spoke in Geneva and Zurich about Zimmerwald, and about imperialism, the sovereign rights of nations, the war and the future of Russia to students and émigrés in Basel.¹²⁰ He had to ask Shlyapnikov for the address of a comrade in Moscow.¹²¹

The RSDRP CC member Jughashvili wrote from Siberia to Apfelbaum. 'How am I? What am I doing? I'm doing almost nothing. And what can I do with a complete lack of serious books?' 'In all my exiles, I've never had such a miserable life as here.'¹²² In December he and Sverdlov received enough money to escape,¹²³ but the Police Department ordered the Yeniseisk province governor to stop them.¹²⁴ That year Sverdlov had written 'The Downfall of Capitalism', 'Siberia and the War', and 'The Schism in the German Social Democratic Party', for *Priliv (Flood-tide)*, a Moscow miscellany published by Bolsheviks attached to the RSDRP CC, and Alexanderov, Nogin, Skvortsov, and Ulyanov had also contributed.¹²⁵ Since the beginning of the war Jughashvili's *Collected Works* contain no manuscripts or publications,¹²⁶ and not all of his letters.¹²⁷

(iv) The home front

During 1915 the production of agricultural equipment in Russia had halved,¹²⁸ but peasants had deposited 199 million rubles in co-operative credit associations,¹²⁹ which had 10.5 million members and a capital of 682.5 million rubles.¹³⁰ Women formed over 70 percent of agricultural workers and almost 60 percent on gentry-owned estates,¹³¹ and there were no men to be seen in some Ukrainian villages.¹³² The consumption of bread had been over 990 pounds in Kherson province, but 474 in Kostroma and Tula provinces,¹³³ and at the end of the year women peasants rioted in some provinces,¹³⁴ yet Siberian cooperatives had exported 100,000 tons of butter.¹³⁵

Prisoners of war had completed the line from Murmansk to Petrograd,¹³⁶ and the line from Arkhangel had been double-tracked.¹³⁷ The network had grown to 42,755 miles,¹³⁸ and almost 1,817 had been completed that year, though Moscow manufacturers demanded higher prices, long-term contracts and cash in advance to build railway wagons.¹³⁹ Nationally there was no shortage of food, but distribution was poor and prices reached 'unheard of dimensions'.¹⁴⁰ Since mid-November there had been a steep and unbroken decline in the supply of fuel and food to Petrograd,¹⁴¹ and the amount of flour had fallen by over 11 percent since 1914.¹⁴²

During 1915 foreigners speculators had invested 2.2 billion rubles in Russian industry and banking.¹⁴³ Since the war began 55 plants had received government contracts, and the number of smaller plants had shrunk from 2,410 to 1,977.¹⁴⁴ Factory inspectors noted large increases in the number of female workers in Petrograd, including 15,903 in metal plants.¹⁴⁵ In Petrograd province there were around 164,200 male factory workers, 78,500 women, 31,500 adolescents and 3,000 children. Managers had asked inspectors to mediate on 249 occasions with 38,850 workers, though other employers had broken the law 1,351 times. In Tver province half of factory workers were women. In Ukraine there were 12.7 percent more male factory workers in Kherson province than in 1914, but 47 percent more females.¹⁴⁶ In Moscow 700 of the 1,250 telegraph workers were women. The 550 men were exempt from conscription, yet only 20 of the 120 trainees were men.¹⁴⁷ Women were tram conductors, traffic controllers and cashiers, and 58 had passed the Zemstvo Union's automotive service examinations.¹⁴⁸ In Ukraine 84 percent of industrial workers in Ekaterinoslav had become ill and 32 percent had been injured.¹⁴⁹ In the Caucasus the employment of children was common in Elizavetpol province.¹⁵⁰

That year the Zemstvo Union had distributed medicines costing 1.2 million rubles,¹⁵¹ but over a quarter of the babies born in Petrograd had died before the age of one. In Narva, Vyborg and Kolomenskaya districts the death rate was 22.82, 24.8 and 26.5 percent respectively, though in the Admiralty, Kazan and Liteinaya districts it was 8.7, 11.2 and 11.7.¹⁵² Around 84,100 refugees had settled in the city,¹⁵³ and formed 17 percent of metalworking and machine-building workers.¹⁵⁴ In Vyborg 15 of the 21 large plants built machines, and inspectors had received reports of 312 'accidents' from both Lessner plants. Inspected workers' averaged 322 rubles a year, while workers on arms contracts averaged 594, though real wages had continued to fall.¹⁵⁵ For two years some company profits had been over 100 percent and the court jeweller had never done as much business.¹⁵⁶ In November five strikes and 11,020 strikers in Petrograd had been officially deemed political and 19 strikes and 6,838 strikers deemed economic. In December seven strikes and 8,985 strikers were deemed political and 26 strikes and 13,284 strikers deemed economic.¹⁵⁷ Since July the total number economic strikes each month had varied between 13 and 29. Strikers had demanded the reinstatement of their representatives, rehiring sacked workmates and better working conditions, including ventilation, roof repairs, soap in the toilets and polite treatment.¹⁵⁸ Since August 292,282 workers had been involved in 420 strikes for a total of 963,000 days.¹⁵⁹ Around 450 female workers in a Petrograd textile mill had gone on strike and won a rise of 10 percent.¹⁶⁰

That year, nationally, there had been 1,034 strikes and 539, 538 strikers.¹⁶¹ Economic strikes had lasted for a total 34,000 days, and others for almost 1,654,000.¹⁶² Inspectors had deemed 715 strikes economic and 213 political or non-economic.¹⁶³ During 1915 715 of the 928 strikes had been deemed economic and 213 involving 155,941 deemed political.¹⁶⁴ The average monthly number of strikers had been four times higher than in 1914,¹⁶⁵ and workers had won 19 percent of them. There had reportedly been 170 strikes and approaching 173,833 strikers in Petrograd province, or 15 percent of the national total, while 26 percent had been in Vladimir province and 31 percent in Moscow province. In Petrograd the Mezhraiontsy's legal union journal, *Tekstilshchik* (*Textile Worker*), had appeared twice. (The intelligenty's illegal *Vypred* had appeared once.)¹⁶⁶ In Ukraine there had been 10,000 strikers in Gorlovka. The Bolsheviks claimed 92 'members' in Kharkhiv, and strikes there and in Ekaterinoslav had increased in intensity.¹⁶⁷ There had been strikes in many other towns and cities to protest against strikers being sent to the front and the employment of prisoners of war in factories.¹⁶⁸ By the end of the year, nationally, average factory pay was 34 percent higher than in 1913, but real wages had fallen by 15 percent.¹⁶⁹ During 1915 49 applications for the legal registration of trade unions had been rejected,¹⁷⁰

The Police Department had reported that terrorist acts were 'unlikely', since the VPSR leaders advocated combating 'the foreign enemy first, then the internal enemy'. The Okhrana had arrested 29 SRs and 210 SDs,¹⁷¹

including virtually all the SR and Bolshevik committee members, and other left-wing socialists, and had begun to arrest Mezhraiontsy,¹⁷² plus the Bolsheviks' technical group and organisers. Some plants, including the Old Lessner works, had stores of weapons, and the Petrograd Metals strike committee had formed an armed detachment.¹⁷³

Gendarmes had been ordered to monitor the mood of lower military ranks in the rear and report breaches of discipline.¹⁷⁴ There were anti-war soldiers' *kruzhki* in Kazan military district, and, at the instigation of SRs, Kronstadt sailors had formed a secret military organisation which included some SDs.¹⁷⁵

Pavel Dybenko had been born into a peasant family in the village of Lyudkov, Chernihiv province, in 1889. His parents farmed around 7.4 acres and had 10 children, a horse and a cow. At the age of six Pavel and four other children had been sent to a priests' daughter for lessons in a cold kitchen, which was home to calves and lambs. She boxed their ears and hit them with a ruler, and Pavel stopped going after four months. At seven he entered a primary school, where the headmistress was an SD. In summer he worked with his father and grazed cattle for small landowners who the family hated. In 1899, with Davydovich's support, but not his parents', he attended a *zemstvo* secondary school, and worked for small landowners to pay for his textbooks and uniform. In 1903 he became a clerk in Stavropol province, where the *zemstvo* treasurer was a relative. In 1905 he supported strikes at the *zemstvo* technical and modern schools, and the police insisted that he be sacked for belonging to an illegal organisation, though he was acquitted early in 1906. He went to Riga and worked as a stevedore for two summers, saved money, and took electrical and technical courses in winter. Early in 1910 he worked in a cold store and took part in Bolshevik activities. In summer he worked on a building site, but after a strike began he went to the port of Liepāja to escape the police. In spring 1911 he returned to Riga and worked as a stevedore again. Late that year, after failing to report for the call-up, he was arrested, taken under escort to his home village and conscripted into the Baltic Fleet. Early in 1912 he joined the Bolsheviks,¹⁷⁶ and on 22 July he helped to organise the mutiny on a Baltic Fleet battleship and it spread to other warships in the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets;¹⁷⁷ but the police charged 52 sailors with conspiring to mutiny.¹⁷⁸ In 1913, after graduating from the Gunnery and Mining School, Dybenko was assigned to a battleship known as the 'prison ship', but he propagandised and agitated.¹⁷⁹ By autumn 1915 there was an SD organisation in the Baltic Fleet,¹⁸⁰ led by a committee. There were major disturbances on two warships, and the peasant Ivan Orlov, a member of the Bolsheviks' Vyborg committee in Petrograd, liaised with them,¹⁸¹ but they had few contacts with sailors in Helsinki or Tallinn. In December they contacted the Petrograd RSDRP committee, which warned them against taking action on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday the following January.¹⁸² Dybenko was one of the SD sailors' leaders,¹⁸³ but when a revolt took place on a battleship the police found SR literature on many of the 95 sailors they arrested,¹⁸⁴ and 26 were court martialled, 14 sentenced to *katorga* and two to death.¹⁸⁵ Kronstadt police reported that the garrison 'would not be willing to oppose the workers', but wanted to 'square accounts with the government',¹⁸⁶ and liberals were turning against the war.

During 1915 the Holy Synod had run 34,000 primary schools and the Education Ministry and *zemstvos* almost 81,000.¹⁸⁷ There were 90,000 teachers in the countryside,¹⁸⁸ and over 122,000 primary schools had around eight million pupils,¹⁸⁹ while 7,000 of the 16,000 male secondary school pupils were not from the nobility.¹⁹⁰ Almost 92 percent of men and over 89 percent of women in cities were literate, as were 70 percent of men and 52 percent of women in rural areas.¹⁹¹ The Moscow Literary Society had supplied rural Russia with newspapers, and a Chernigov province teacher recalled that peasants formed reading circles.¹⁹² Because of the rise in the cost of food Petrograd University, Bestuzhev Course and Mining Institute students had formed a cooperative which cost 50 kopeks to join.¹⁹³ The authorities had permitted 600 Jews to attend the University, and attendance had risen from about 1,900 to 2,600.¹⁹⁴ There had been a one-week strike at Moscow University and other institutes of higher education to protest at anti-Jewish policies and the repression of workers' organisations. Students had demanded the reopening of the Duma, the replacement of ministers and a general amnesty.¹⁹⁵ In Estonia the number of Estonian students at Tartu University had risen to 434, or about one-sixth of the total, and though around 1,000 Estonians were at other universities, about 40 percent of graduates had sought jobs outside the Baltic region.¹⁹⁶ In Ukraine Kyiv University had 5,300 students.¹⁹⁷ The tsar had approved measures for 'mobilizing youth',¹⁹⁸ and about 10 percent of students had volunteered for officers' training schools.¹⁹⁹ The government had drafted many SR and SD Kharkiv students and sent them to Tsaritsyn Military School, though others agitated outside and their leaflet called for a general strike.²⁰⁰ The Moscow publisher Sytin had given his country estate to the Red Cross. He had 6,000 pedlars selling books in villages and his *Russkoye Slovo* had 655,400 subscribers.²⁰¹

(v) On the verge of defeat

By autumn 1915 Oskin had been promoted to staff captain,²⁰² but was wounded in one knee. He was forced to march, but was eventually evacuated to a hospital in Moscow,²⁰³ and his leg was amputated above the knee.²⁰⁴

After he was discharged a general shouted at him in Kyiv station. 'Don't you know it's forbidden to enlisted men here, *Svoloch?* [Bastard]'. He deserted and went to a friend's farm in Siberia. Cossacks had burned the buildings, raped his friend's wife and mother, and driven off the cattle for the government. Oskin joined underground SRs.²⁰⁵

Medical services were understaffed and under-supplied. Wounded men were dumped on the floors of goods wagons and hundreds died. Bottlenecks choked the railways and goods wagons were burned to clear the tracks.²⁰⁶ Many draftees were physically and mentally unfit and did not 'meet the demands presented by the modern conditions of war either in their general physical development or in their hardiness and discipline'. In Russia physical education specialists had asked sports organisations and schools to conduct pre-draft training for students aged 16 and above, and promised 20 rubles to graduates and 50 for qualified instructors.²⁰⁷ Five percent of the adult male population of Russia had been mobilized, compared to 12 percent in Germany. Regular Russian troops had almost been wiped out, and raw recruits, some of whom could not load or fire a rifle, had taken their places,²⁰⁸ while the educational requirement for officers had been cut to six years at school.²⁰⁹ The army had lost territory in Galicia that it had conquered the previous year, and all the important industrial centres in Poland. Around one million soldiers had been killed and around a million were prisoners.²¹⁰ The German government had proclaimed the independent kingdom of Poland.²¹¹ Warszawa University and Polytechnic had been reopened and local self-government had been introduced in Poland and Galicia.²¹² German troops occupied most of the Pale.²¹³ They had raided Minsk, Pinsk, Kovno and Kaunas,²¹⁴ and were 'Germanising' Lithuania and Courland.²¹⁵

Bulgaria had entered the war on the side the Central Powers,²¹⁶ and Bulgarian, German and Austro-Hungarian troops had launched a successful offensive against Serbia.²¹⁷ A US journalist travelled across southern Serbia. In Belgrade he was told that members of a secret student society at the University had assassinated the archduke the previous year. He saw a photograph of the bodies of over 100 village women and children with their heads in a separate heap. In another village 50 people had been driven into a cellar and burned alive. There had been atrocities in 42 villages, though Hungarian soldiers had reportedly committed most of them. Near Tarnopol in south-east Poland long wagon trains headed west, 'with immense quantities of flour, meat, and canned food' for Russian troops, but no ammunition. Around 3,000 men, women and children had been held in the Grand Hotel without food or water for four days, then one group was sent to Austria as prisoners of war and others were driven ahead of the army as it marched south. Around 12,000 of the 60,000 prisoners of war had died of typhus.²¹⁸

In the south the Ottoman army had butchered hundreds of thousands of Armenians, yet the Caucasian viceroy had liquidated the volunteer Armenian units in the Russian army.²¹⁹ Around 1.2 million Armenians had been deported,²²⁰ and 10 million were refugees.²²¹ The US consul estimated that up 15 percent had been killed.²²² Around 75,000 remained in Ottoman territory, though almost 200,000 had crossed into Caucasia.²²³ In Tbilisi, together with previous inhabitants, there were over 300,000 Armenians,²²⁴ though bread was rationed.²²⁵ By 9 December a British journalist in the city was convinced that the most important part of the war was the rear. Russia was consuming more than it produced, since 'the greater part of her population is employed in unproductive labour', but the SDs' numbers were 'too small to be of any account'. On the 16th he was in Kutaisi, where food was obtainable, but he understood that towns in European Russia were 'threatened with starvation'. The censor blacked out 'No sugar, no meat often no bread' in newspapers, but left bread in when it was available, even though it was 'sour and black'. Around 250,000 Muslims and Christians between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea had become refugees.²²⁶ Around 75,000 Latvian workers and 145,000 dependants had fled east. The population of Pskov in north-west Russia had had risen from 50,000 to 90,000 in six months. Around 228,000 refugees had reached the southern Urals, and 70,000 had settled there.²²⁷ Ethnic Germans had been deported from the western border to the Caucasus, European Russia, Finland, and the Amur region in the Far East, and 200,000 in Volynia province had been forced to make way for 40,000 Russians. Altogether there were at least 3.3 million refugees,²²⁸ including around 2.7 million who had been forcibly deported from Latvia. Russian military commanders suspected that Jews living near the border were spies. Anti-Jewish propaganda had begun in the army and Jews were threatened with deportation to concentration camps. By the end of the year there were 11,252 Jewish émigrés in Canada.²²⁹ Around 250,000 had left Latvia for North America, mainly for the USA,²³⁰ where there were over three million altogether, including around 1.335 million in New York, where Jewish trade unions were prospering and the socialist daily paper *Forverts (Forward)* sold 200,000 copies.²³¹

By late December the Russian army was retreating on the south-western front,²³² and the kaiser complained that, except for the Field Railway Department, the General Staff told him nothing and never asked for his advice.²³³ The German government secretly offered him control of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus if he would agree to a separate peace, but he did not respond.²³⁴ That year 628,445 German troops had been killed,²³⁵ though the army had captured 1,231,406 Russians.²³⁶ Some in Berlin had published *Russki Vestnik (the Russian Messenger)*, and distributed copies to over 100,000 others, claimed that the Germans were Russians' friends.²³⁷

The Russian government acknowledged that there had been had been 4.36 million casualties since the start of the war, including 2.62 million killed and wounded and 1.74 million prisoners. Desertion had become a major problem,²³⁸ and those who were captured were shot.²³⁹ That year at least 226,700 had been killed and 842,100 wounded, while 308,600 had died of their wounds and 88,400 of disease. The loss of territory had cut 12.4 percent of the government's pre-war income, including 10 percent from iron and steel plants and textile mills, and 40 percent from chemical works,²⁴⁰ while cement production was 56.5 percent lower and plants worked at 69 percent of capacity.²⁴¹ Foreign trade was just over 26 percent of the pre-war level.²⁴² Exports were worth almost 402 million rubles, while imports had cost over 1.138 billion. The government's ordinary revenue was three billion rubles, though long-term debt was 2.879 billion, overseas borrowing was 2.14 billion and short-term debt was 3.176 billion. That year it had spent 11.562 billion, including 8.724 billion on the war. Since July it had spent 27.9 million rubles a day, including 4.1 per soldier.²⁴³ Since August 1914 it had borrowed the equivalent of £50 to £60 million, and a further £100 million was promised.²⁴⁴ The upper chamber of the Duma supported liberal demands,²⁴⁵ but warned the tsar of an impending economic disaster.²⁴⁶

In Berlin the charges against Zetkin had been dropped by 12 October 1915. She was released,²⁴⁷ on account of ill health,²⁴⁸ but took little part in opposition activity.²⁴⁹ Borchardt had signed the Zimmerwald Left platform and the *Lichtstrahlen* group was withering away.²⁵⁰ Jogisches' address was known to Mehring, Liebknecht, Levi and Jacob, and anyone who wanted to meet him had to ask her. He rarely appeared in public, but if he agreed to meet somebody he dressed smartly and met them at a fashionable café.²⁵¹

On 8 December a letter from Luxemburg to Jogisches was smuggled out of prison. She had not known about the Zimmerwald conference in advance, but understood that it had been 'a nearly catastrophic mistake that has placed the further development of the opposition and the International on the wrong track'.²⁵² On the 21st 43 SPD Reichstag deputies voted against war credits at the caucus.²⁵³ On the 29th 18 other deputies joined Liebknecht and Rühle in voting against war credits in the Reichstag,²⁵⁴ and 22 had left during the vote.²⁵⁵ One of those who voted against was Bernstein. He had voted for war credits with a 'heavy heart' in 1914,²⁵⁶ and had repudiated those who refused;²⁵⁷ but after he criticised deputies who supported the war he had been denied the right to publish in *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (the *Socialist Monthly Bulletin*).²⁵⁸ Kautsky,²⁵⁹ Haase and Ledebour also voted against war credits,²⁶⁰ though Kautsky argued that SDs should 'rally behind' the war 'to fend off enemy invasion', since the International could not help.²⁶¹ He and Haase wanted socialists in belligerent countries to put pressure on their governments for a peace without annexations,²⁶² as did Bernstein. He and others left the SPD voluntarily, but Haase was expelled.²⁶³

The German minister in Copenhagen had reported to Berlin that a military victory was impossible, and that Helphand had estimated that about 20 million rubles would be required to organise a Russian revolution completely. One million should be immediately put at the disposal of his confidential agent, who was going to Petrograd in the next few days. The Treasury agreed to hand over one million rubles.²⁶⁴ An official in the political section of the General Staff passed the money to his brother, who gave it Helphand on the 29th. He bought copper, rubber, tin and corn for Germany, traded with Russia in a variety of goods including machinery, raw materials, women's stockings and contraceptives, and then returned to Stockholm.²⁶⁵

That year, officially, there had been 137 strikes and 14,000 strikers in Germany,²⁶⁶ and the numbers had risen towards the end of the year.²⁶⁷ Exports were just over 70 percent of the pre-war figure and imports just over 30 percent, while wholesale prices had risen by 38 percent.²⁶⁸ Some farmers slaughtered pigs, and though the government established an Imperial Potato Office and forbade the use of potatoes as animal fodder, many farmers ignored the law.²⁶⁹ Maximum prices for pork, butter, fish, milk, fruit and vegetables were in force.²⁷⁰ Ration cards entitled holders to 3.3 pounds of bread, 5.5 pounds of potatoes, 8.8 ounces of meat, 2.8 ounces of butter, 6.35 ounces of sugar and half an egg a week, or around a third of the necessary calories,²⁷¹ and women in Berlin and other places had demonstrated against the rising cost of living.²⁷² Stuttgart workers had demonstrated against the high cost of living, and Leipzig police had put down attempts to demonstrate against the price of meat. On 2 December the Reichstag enacted a law that tied workers aged 17 to 60 to their places of work, and if they moved without a certificate from their current or previous employer they were liable to up to a year in prison.²⁷³ Both Germany and Russia were on the verge of defeat.²⁷⁴

6. Make the Revolution!

(i) The Bloody Sunday anniversary in 1916

By 1916 around 2.5 million of the 15.3 million heads of Russian peasant households owned former communal land, and 1.3 million had enclosed theirs into a farm,¹ but the Agriculture Ministry ordered land-consolidation to cease.² Around 1.1 million heads of households had sold all or part of their communal holding,³ and though about 61 percent of land was held under communal tenure,⁴ the commune was withering.⁵ The annual production of agricultural equipment had fallen to 8,200 items, compared to 46,000 in 1913,⁶ and purchases averaged around 10 percent of pre-war levels. In some villages women outnumbered men by 60 percent.⁷ In Saratov province, where there had been an average of 102.5 women to every 100 men, there were now 121.8 to every 100.⁸ With the lack of seed and draught animals, some peasants burned manor houses, and whole villages refused to pay rent.⁹

For some time an average of almost 1,700 peasants had settled in Petrograd and Moscow each month.¹⁰ Petrograd's population was over 2,400,500, Moscow's 1,835,500, Kyiv's 615,000, Tbilisi's 330,900, Kharkiv's 308,790, Tashkent's 272,600, Baki's 238,900 and Saratov's 237,800.¹¹ The Empire's urban population had reportedly risen to 26 million,¹² or around 21 percent of the total.¹³

Privately-owned arms plants received only 50 to 60 percent of the raw materials they needed. The workers' section of the War Industries Committee had revived the metalworkers' union, though the printers' union had lasted a month, and Petrograd and Moscow employers' associations had refused to accept arbitration or recognise workers' representatives.¹⁴ French speculators had invested 1.1 billion rubles in the main joint stock banks, or about 22 percent of their capital, and owned over 60 percent of mines and metallurgical plants.¹⁵ Two-thirds of engineering plants and around 30 percent of other heavy industries were devoted to military production, compared to five percent in 1913.¹⁶ There were 393,000 industrial workers, compared to 150,000 in 1914.¹⁷ Around 50,000 were women,¹⁸ and 40,000 to 50,000 were refugees.¹⁹ Strikers were conscripted into the army, and several hundred youths at Petrograd's Putilov works were sent to punishment battalions. Searches and arrests took place daily, and workers were afraid to elect representatives,²⁰ though two million belonged to mutual insurance funds.²¹

Since 1914 food prices had risen by over 50 percent in Petrograd and 131 percent in Moscow.²² Nationally the average wage was equivalent to 84 percent of pre-war buying power.²³ Wages in war-related industries had risen by up to 21 percent, though the real wages of textile and woollen workers had fallen by 3.4 percent and 16.4 percent respectively, and it was hard for a single woman worker to support herself.²⁴ The price of rye flour had risen by 87.5 percent since the start of the war, wheat flour by 111 percent, meat by 112.5 percent and buckwheat by 131 percent.²⁵ In six months the price of potatoes had risen by 33 percent, bread by 78 percent and cabbage and candles by 100 percent, while the cost of apartments, shoes, underwear and other necessities was unprecedented.²⁶ Nationally coal shipments were 1.8 million tons a month, or 20 percent below requirements. Freight accumulated at stations and in sidings, and north-western lines were clogged with waggons commandeered by the military. A general suggested giving workers cheap food and other necessities, but the tsar ignored him.²⁷

An agent of the German General Staff reported plans to establish a small publishing firm to spread revolutionary literature in Scandinavia, using socialist youth organisations, including the one that was 600 strong in Sweden. Helphand had left Stockholm for Copenhagen, where the German minister reported that he had dissuaded him from encouraging revolutionary action on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday the following January.²⁸ Helphand was a member of the SPD and had applied for full citizenship, but had had to settle for Prussian citizenship, and had assured the foreign minister that Russia had changed. He received a million rubles and took it to Stockholm, then sent some to Petrograd to encourage strikes on Bloody Sunday, and telegraphed the German government. 'All is going as desired. Expecting reports from Petrograd.'

In Petrograd over 45,000 workers went on strike on 9 January (OS), and each reportedly received the ruble equivalent of around three shillings from Helphand.²⁹ Strikers protested against the banning of meetings and arrests of their representatives.³⁰ They included workers from small and medium-sized plants, including many in Vyborg, but though there were demonstrations at seven plants, there were none in the city centre.³¹ More soldiers had been stationed at telephone exchanges, though some told those going on patrol not to shoot workers, while others went out and supported the strikers.³² Petrograd police reported that 'hostile feelings have attained a power among the masses which is without precedent, even in 1905-1906'. The morale of troops in the rear had fallen.³³ There were almost 500 conscientious objectors, and one was sentenced to 12 years' *katgora*.³⁴

In Switzerland the SR leader Chernov had recently ended an article with the slogans 'Strike at once! Make the Revolution!'³⁵ Petrograd SRs had adopted the Zimmerwald manifesto,³⁶ and claimed from 30 to 35 factory cells

with 500 to 600 members. The largest were at the Neva and Baltic shipyards and the Obukhov, Putilov and Trubochnyi plants, though the turnout on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday was disappointing. The Kronstadt RSDRP military organisation was 'poorly connected' to the Petrograd committee. Soldiers used a workers' cooperative Shapitograph to print anti-war leaflets for nearby garrisons, and Mezhraiontsy distributed anti-war literature.³⁷ Bolshevik sailors were arrested in Kronstadt and Helsinki;³⁸ but at 6.00pm on the 10th some soldiers carried a red flag on a Vyborg demonstration.³⁹

Maria Kostelovskaya had been born into a junior civil servant's family in Ufa, western Siberia, in 1878. She later attended the Moscow women's higher courses and joined the RSDRP in 1903. From 1905 she worked in Crimea and St. Petersburg, and from 1906 she organised illegal border crossings to and from Finland. By 1916 she was one of the senior organisers in the Presnya district of Moscow,⁴⁰ where Anarchists supplied the printers', leatherworkers' and railway workers' unions, and cells in the largest factories, with leaflets calling for turning the war into a socialist revolution,⁴¹ and on 9 January 30,000 workers from 51 factories went on strike. There were strikes in Tula, Tver, Nizhni-Novgorod, Tallinn in Estonia, while around 10,000 reportedly demonstrated in Kharkiv in Ukraine, and 14,000 in the Baki oilfield in Azerbaijan.⁴²

When Shlyapnikov returned to Petrograd he found that the Bolshevik committee faced a revolt from mutual insurance fund organisers over the coordination of workers' kruzhs. He joined them, and proposed expelling Chernomazov and Leonid Stark, but after they proposed expelling him, the Okhrana carried out 'devastating' arrests,⁴³ which severely damaged the Mezhraiontsy.⁴⁴ The Bolsheviks had previously claimed 3,000 members in the city,⁴⁵ and though that had fallen to less than 500,⁴⁶ 39 of the 70 workers' mutual insurance funds voted for the Bolshevik list of board members.⁴⁷ Nationally there had been 128,000 officially-recorded strikers,⁴⁸ and another estimate claimed that 61,447 were in Petrograd.⁴⁹ The Trade Ministry estimated that managers had ended three-quarters of disputes with concessions,⁵⁰ though 377 strikers had been arrested. In Moscow, after heavy arrests of SRs, Agricultural Institute teachers and Medical School students strengthened their organisations. SR and Bolshevik leaders of the city's strike committee contacted railway workers in Poltava and Mykolaev and held a conference in Poltava. In Kazan SR and SD workers and students coordinated their activities and propagandised troops. In Biełarus the Minsk socialists' military organisation, which had suffered heavy arrests, stopped producing propaganda and focussed on building the organisation.⁵¹ In Ukraine Ekaterinoslav SRs and Bolsheviks had joined forces to prevent elections to the workers' section of the War Industries Committee. In Lugansk provocateurs betrayed leading workers, but a Menshevik led the survivors who 'acted to a considerable extent jointly' with other revolutionaries.⁵² A strike at the navy plant in Mykolaev had begun with economic demands but soon became political. The strike committee included an SR, a Bolshevik and a non-party leftist from the joint revolutionary committee, whose headquarters were in the workers' insurance fund office. Inspectors claimed that 'extreme Left parties' terrorized patriotic workers into silence. On the 24th the authorities mobilised all 6,500 Mykolaev workers, and managers subsequently recruited a new workforce.⁵³ On the 30th a British journalist reported from Kharkiv that the price of meat had quadrupled and was 'practically unobtainable', even on the three days a week when its sale was allowed. The prices of manufactured articles had risen more than food, and imports were 'practically restricted to articles of immediate war necessity'.⁵⁴

The Zemstvo Union had spent seven million rubles on medicines for the troops, though the government had banned its conventions and those of the Union of Towns and the War Industries Committees,⁵⁵ whose workers' sections had drawn up a programme of reforms, including a minimum wage, the election of representatives, the right to hold factory meetings without police being present, arbitration, labour exchanges, legal trade unions and workers' cooperatives, democratic local self-government, unemployment benefit, and an All-Russian Congress of Labour, and the All-Russian Congress of War Industries' Committees supported them.⁵⁶ Newsreels no longer focussed on heroic deeds but on the suffering and endlessness of the war,⁵⁷ which cost the government 33.3 million rubles a day,⁵⁸ and the ruble's value on the Stockholm stock market had declined to 56 percent of its pre-war level.⁵⁹ The Duma passed a budget, but the government suspended its implementation until 16 May.⁶⁰ An advisor told the tsar that the economy had been 'completely destroyed' and 'threatens to undermine the armed forces'.⁶¹

By February the Putilov works in Petrograd employed 30,000 and was an SR stronghold,⁶² and on the 4th 230 electrical shop workers went on strike for a 70 percent rise.⁶³ They turned off the electricity, and workers in other shops joined them.⁶⁴ Some shouted 'Down with the Romanov monarchy' and 'Down with the war'.⁶⁵ Next day striking reservists were called up, but several shops downed tools at lunch time, and that evening a mass meeting voted for a strike, and next morning 80 strikers went out to test support for a city-wide stoppage.⁶⁶ Putilov workers demanded the RSDRP minimum programme, and 100,000 other workers came out in solidarity,⁶⁷ but 150 were arrested. After a pay dispute at the Russian-American Rubber factory, 350 women were sacked. At the Erikson plant 4,230 electrical shop workers demanded a 70 percent rise and went on strike. The 80 to 100 Bolsheviks and Mensheviks tried to bring out the entire workforce, and after Bolshevik and Mezhraiontsy speakers addressed a

mass meeting in the yard 5,800 went on strike. Managers closed the factory and announced that strikers who did not return to work immediately would be sacked, but the strike leaders met at the insurance fund office and sent the Bolshevik I. Egorov to bring out Vyborg workers. Putilov managers granted rises of from three to 28 percent for those earning less than 100 rubles a month, and the strikers returned on the 10th, but the Okhrana conducted a purge, and managers closed the plant. Work resumed on the 14th,⁶⁸ and though some shops walked out to protest at the arrest of the Kronstadt sailors, 565 were arrested. Once again an inspector claimed that members of 'extreme left parties' were terrorising patriotic workers into silence.⁶⁹ On the 17th 650 instrument and small shell shop workers at the New Lessner plant went on strike, and 1,950 from other shops joined them next day, demanding a rise, better conditions and polite treatment. Reportedly the Bolshevik N.V. Kopylov led the strike committee. The entire workforce was on strike by the 21st, but managers enforced a lockout and sacked the strikers. About 800 were not rehired and 600 were drafted. The government put the factory under the control of the artillery administration, though the workers, and those at three other Vyborg plants, came out in protest. On the 23rd the military closed the Putilov plant,⁷⁰ and next day 6,500 striking reservists were mobilised.⁷¹

The Petrograd Bolshevik committee had been reformed,⁷² and Andrey Andreyev, a 20-year-old insurance clerk with little formal education, but who had read illegal literature, represented the Narva district.⁷³ Some SDs had stopped operating, and though *kruzhki* had resumed, they lacked cadre.⁷⁴ The new SR committee issued a leaflet with the slogans 'Down with the war! Long live the second Russian revolution! Long live the International', and called for a 'civil war against the bourgeoisie and the land owners'.⁷⁵ Yurenev was freed,⁷⁶ and the *Mezhraiontsy* had committees in the Town, Petrograd and Vasilievsky Island, and cells in the Baltic shipyard, Franco-Russian Works, Pipe Works and Nail Works, and some Menshevik workers had resumed underground work. On the 25th the Bolshevik committee called for a city-wide strike, and the district committees of other socialist groups organised strike committees.⁷⁷ The Bolshevik committee was arrested, but quickly replaced.⁷⁸ The government warned that 'any person interfering with legitimate activities will be subject to immediate arrest and exile'.⁷⁹ That month, officially, there had been 3,200 strikers in the city.⁸⁰

On 1 March SRs called for a strike, but Mensheviks and *Mezhraiontsy* refused to participate. The police made a massive number of arrests,⁸¹ but 63,000 workers from 49 plants were out by the 3rd.⁸² Next day SR and Bolshevik University students went on strike and issued a leaflet with the slogan 'Down with the government'. By late that month the police had arrested several SR and SD students, but demonstrations continued. A strike broke out at the New Lessner plant, and the strike committee included SRs, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks; but at least 500 strikers,⁸³ and possibly up to 800, were sacked.⁸⁴ According to one account 61,000 workers from 68 factories had struck and demonstrated on Sampsonievsky Prospekt, and a lorry load of soldiers had driven into mounted police who were attacking them.⁸⁵ According to another account 100,000 had downed tools.⁸⁶ Yet another account claimed that almost 150,000 from over 100 factories had demonstrated, led by 40,000 metalworkers, including many from the Obukhov works.⁸⁷ Inspectors reported that economic strikers outnumbered those politically-motivated by less than two to one,⁸⁸ and 'the cause of the upsurge of economic unrest lies in the significant and universal rise in the cost of living'. The Bolsheviks claimed 60 members in Petrograd district, 90 in Moscow district, and between six and 10 at the Putilov works, yet the Okhrana believed that they were finding it hard to recruit.⁸⁹ Where incriminating evidence was weak, political activists who were liable for active service were freed;⁹⁰ but the police confiscated the workers' Shapirograph, typewriters, ink, paper, illegal leaflets, other literature and a file of VPSR correspondence, and arrested 16,⁹¹ including some Bolsheviks.⁹² Demonstrations continued,⁹³ and the military ordered factory owners to close plants if strikers refused to accept their conditions and return.⁹⁴

Members of 48 University *zemliachestva* (fellow-countrymen's associations) and other groups signed a petition calling for a boycott of lecturers who had helped the police to arrest five students accused of attending an illegal meeting.⁹⁵ The city was suffering shortages of fuel and raw materials,⁹⁶ and the Okhrana reported that people wanted revenge on the tsar and his ministers. Over one million militiamen and reservists were sent to the countryside to help villagers sow crops, with over 400,000 prisoners of war and 100,000 refugee families,⁹⁷ yet the amount of sown grain was half the pre-war level.⁹⁸

Average workers' real wages had halved since 1913,⁹⁹ while prices had risen by 40 percent,¹⁰⁰ and women raided food shops.¹⁰¹ Metalworkers earned an average of 51 rubles a month, compared to 42 in 1913, and chemical workers earned 33.8 compared to 30, but printers earned 38 compared to 56.5, and the wages of wood, leather, food and textile workers had fallen.¹⁰² ¹⁰³ On 3 April Petrograd RSDRP committee distributed a few leaflets, but only 600 workers went on strike next day, on the anniversary of the Lena massacre.¹⁰⁴

Several Saratov SRs had been arrested for possessing illegal literature.¹⁰⁵ Further arrests disrupted coordination between underground revolutionaries, and though there were plans for a May Day demonstration on with the slogans 'Down with the War', 'The Eight-Hour Workday' and 'One Hundred Percent pay Increases', the police arrested all the revolutionaries they could find. Survivors met at the Maiak club, but spies watched the premises.

By May Saratov's population included 56,500 male and over 66,500 female workers, and around 25,000 worked in 150 industrial plants, including 450 in Bering metalworks, 560 in creameries, 650 in Gantke metalworks, 1,000 in 10 brick factories, 1,000 in tobacco works, 1,100 in print plants, 1,500 in the flour mills and 2,000 on the railways. The cost of food and manufactured goods had shot up by 40 percent, and were unaffordable, while the cost of sugar and kerosene had risen by up to 200 percent, and long queues were common. Workers' diets were high in starch, but contained very little meat, fish, eggs or sugar, and over 43,000 refugees ate better.¹⁰⁶ During March 16 officially-recorded economic strikes had involved 11,811 strikers, and 51 political strikes had involved 77,877.¹⁰⁷ Only 340 workers from six Petrograd factories had struck in support of the SPD deputies.¹⁰⁸

Moscow Okhrana had 11 agents in the Bolshevik organisation.¹⁰⁹ At Moscow Metalworks the number of teenagers had risen from 15.7 to 26.6 percent since the beginning of the war and the number of women from 193 to around 400. On 2 May 3,000 went on strike for a rise in the minimum daily rate of from 2.5 to four rubles. Next morning some went back, but others brought out the entire workforce and handed a list of demands to management, including doubling sick pay, minimums of 15, 25 and 30 kopeks an hour respectively for apprentices, women and skilled workers, a 2.30pm finish on Saturdays and the day before customary holidays, and for wages and bonuses to be paid on Saturdays.¹¹⁰ In Moscow 15 of Sytin's 23 presses and 20 typographers were German-made. The tsar undertook to check why his ministers refused to help Sytin, whose biggest worry was getting paper, since its price had quadrupled. He donated 100,000 rubles hoping to prod merchants into giving 10 percent of their income to provide millions for an 'army of national salvation', but met no response.¹¹¹ The Bolsheviks claimed about 600 members in the city. Hundreds of Moscow Metalworks employees had been mobilised, including over 300 skilled workers.¹¹² By March the Moscow Okhrana had 11 agents in the Bolshevik organisation.¹¹³ In Tver a Bolshevik committee had been elected in autumn 1915, but was inactive until March 1916, when *kruzhki* were established. No work was done until mid-April when the committee produced three leaflets, including one for May Day, on 19 April, and two strikes were successful.¹¹⁴

In Ukraine the Donbass coalmining workforce included 31,361 prisoners of war, 5,649 women, 12,601 children, 1,695 refugees, 540 Chinese and 47,926 others. Most women and children were among the 65,580 surface workers, while the 74,560 underground workers included 38,235 face workers. Overall 78,603 male mineworkers were liable to be compulsorily drafted. From March to early April Donbass coal production had fallen from around 2.1 to 1.2 million tons, and at least 10 colliery workforces had demanded a 40 to 50 percent rise and won between 10 and 15 percent. A Russian-French consortium had bought the New Russia Company and granted its miners a 15 percent rise if they fulfilled a set amount of production. In Gorlovka-Shcherbinovka district 30,000 miners struck and the governor brought in 1,000 police, troops and Cossacks. They dispersed the strike committee, arrested 300 workers, but other strikers received a 25 percent rise and some up to 30 percent. Conscripts reported en masse, though four were killed in a clash with Cossacks when they tried to free arrested comrades. Workers' militias protected strike meetings and some soldiers refused to act against workers and expressed sympathy. Around 30,000 striking miners were threatened with conscription, but the threat was not carried out, since their work was too important to the war effort. On the 16th 300 *luzovka* workers ended their shift early, demanding the same rise as the Company's miners, plus a cost-of-living allowance of 50 percent. The director agreed, increased the amount of subsidised food in the cooperative and offered to subsidise shops for clothing and other goods, if there was increased productivity, and the strikers returned to work. Three days later workers at the Bosset-Gennefeld mining equipment factory demanded a rise, and a police inspector supported them. Elsewhere 957 miners at three pits went on strike.¹¹⁵ Bolshevik leaflets circulated, and 50,000 miners in 20 districts came out. Troops refused to fire on them, but others later shot four and defeated the strike.¹¹⁶ Almost 72 percent of the 95,000 metallurgy workers in the Donbass were men, 13,000 were women and children, though 16,000 were prisoners of war. Around 43 percent of the men were skilled and 29.6 percent were unskilled, though 7.3 percent were children, 5.1 percent were unskilled women and 0.5 percent were skilled. Over half the refugees arriving in Mariupol had been sent to *luzovka*,¹¹⁷ where 1,000 miners were sent to the front, exacerbating the coal shortage.¹¹⁸

In Orel SRs and a Mensheviks had led a strike at the Briansk works on 8 May, since the Bolsheviks had no talented speakers. By the 18th the strikers had voted to continue against an SR's advice, but on the 20th, after the arrests he predicted, he argued for the strike to continue. Next day the police sent over 3,000 workers to the front and exiled strike leaders to Siberia.¹¹⁹

(ii) In extreme need of earnings

Early in 1916 (NS) Ulyanov had applied for an extension to his and Krupskaya's permit to stay in Switzerland.¹²⁰ Belligerent countries were imprisoning Zimmerwaldists and the movement had begun to split,¹²¹ but thanks to

Dutch SDs the Left produced the German-language monthly *Vorbote (The Herald)*,¹²² to clarify the theoretical basis for the struggle against imperialism. Antonie Pannekoek was the editor in Holland and the editorial board included Roland-Holst, Borchardt and Ulyanov,¹²³ who argued that defence of the fatherland was 'opportunism in its finished form' and condemned Kautsky's 'prostituted Marxism'.¹²⁴ He sent Gorky a pamphlet about capitalism and agriculture in the USA, via the *Letopis* address. He hoped to be paid soon, since he was 'in extreme need of earnings'. He intended to write a pamphlet about German imperialism.¹²⁵ On 15 January he told Armand that he was sorry she was not in Switzerland. After she responded, he told her that Bronstein refused to write for *Vorbote*. 'It looks like there is no avoiding a fight'.¹²⁶

On the 29th, in Paris, *Nashe Slovo* included a letter from the émigré RSDRP CC condemning Kautsky's proposed 'amnesty' for social-patriots after the war.¹²⁷ Ulyanov 'sensed the influence' of 'Bogdanov' (Alexandr Malinovsky) and Luxemburg in the Stockholm émigrés' perspective, which had '*nothing in common either with Marxism or revolutionary social democracy*'. Pyatakov wrote to ask if 'all extreme Lefts who have a well-thought-out theory', but disagreed with national self-determination, were 'traitors?'.¹²⁸

Sotsial-Demokrat reached Russia in small numbers, but according to Apfelbaum the links between the émigré Bolshevik CC and Russia had grown 'firmer'. 'We started to receive correspondence from workers' who 'were definitely swinging against the war'.¹²⁹ Illegal kruzhs were oversubscribed and the 'demand for illegal socialist literature was so great that the poor illegal technology could not meet it', so publications had to be copied by hand or typewriter, then loaned, sold or rented. Moscow workers' 'level of awareness' was 'considerably lower than that of the Petersburgers', but there was 'so little of the intelligentsia left' there that they 'barely sufficed to meet the needs of the Duma faction and the daily paper'. After a police raid no survivor on the Petrograd RSDRP committee could write a leaflet. Shlyapnikov was contemptuous of 'doctrinaire', 'impractical' and cowardly intelligentsy, and when he and his supporters refounded the 'leading centre' they generalized this attitude.¹³⁰ There had been 77 police raids on workers' insurance funds, though 80 still had over 176,000 members.¹³¹

In Switzerland Krupskaya's legacy had almost run out and the couple rented a small, dark room up a dingy staircase, overlooking a dark courtyard, at 14 Spiegelgasse. It contained a table, a sofa, two chairs, two beds and a sewing machine, but they did not open the windows because of the smell from a neighbouring sausage factory.¹³² They could have found a better room for the same rent, but the shoemaker Kammerer's family condemned the imperialist war, and Frau Kammerer exclaimed indignantly that the 'soldiers ought to turn their weapons against their governments', so Ulyanov would not move,¹³³ and Frau Kammerer taught Krupskaya how to cook.¹³⁴ Ulyanov got to the library at 9.00am, when it opened, worked until noon, when it closed for lunch, walked home, which took 10 minutes, and had lunch. He set off at 12.50 for the library, which reopened at 1.00pm, and stayed until it closed at 6.00pm.¹³⁵ Ulyanov had few acquaintances, since most former collaborators found his views too extreme,¹³⁶ though he tried to organise young workers.¹³⁷ There were many SD workers in Zurich and key members of the SDPS were moving left. At Zum Adler, a small café, the couple often met Platten, the son of a worker, a member of the Zimmerwald Left and the SDPS secretary, Ernst Nobbs, the editor of the SD paper *Das Volksrecht (The People's Law)*, Advyev, an émigré Russian metalworker, Turkin, an émigré Urals worker, and Boytsov, an émigré Bulgarian worker.¹³⁸ Ulyanov sent Krupskaya's book about public education to Gorky in Petrograd,¹³⁹ though it was not published.¹⁴⁰ Ulyanov told Sobelsohn that joint work in Switzerland was possible, but one on Russian and Polish affairs was '*ruled out*',¹⁴¹ and enclosed all his letters.¹⁴²

On behalf of the International Socialist Commission, Grimm had successfully proposed a conference of Zimmerwaldists, and on 5th there was a preliminary meeting in Bern. The ILP and BSP delegates were denied passports, but an ILP member was a guest. Five delegates, including Platten, were from the SDPS. The Germans included Thalheimer, Ledebour and Adolph Hoffman, a worker from the Berlin SPD opposition, Münzenberg from the International Union of Socialist Youth, and one each from the Gruppe Internationale and its Bremen supporters. Eight came from the Italian Chamber of Deputies, and the PSI members included Serrati, Modigliani and Balabanoff. The Russians included Apfelbaum, Armand, Axelrod, Goldendakh, Natanson and Ulyanov. Sobelsohn, Mieczysław Broński and Jakub Dombrowski represented the SDKPiL opposition, Edward Lipiński PPS-Lewica and Warszawski the PPS CC. Three were from Serbia, one from Lithuania, Franz Koritschoner from Austria, Guilbeaux from France, and Edmundo Peluso from the Partido Socialista Português. They issued an appeal for the conference that stress the need for struggle against the war and congratulated German strikers and 100,000 Petrograd workers who refused to join the War Industries Committees.¹⁴³

Kolarov had not joined the Zimmerwald Left;¹⁴⁴ but he had smuggled important documents by Ulyanov to Russia.¹⁴⁵ He later recalled a meeting of the International Socialist Commission where Ulyanov 'rose and 'leaning over the table in his characteristic manner and, deeply incensed', shouted at Tserderbaum. 'In the international arena you speak as an internationalist, but your comrades in Russia are dyed-in-the wool social-patriots. You are

pursuing a dual policy. You are only trying to deceive the workers!’¹⁴⁶ On the 29th *Sotsial-Demokrat* reported that Moscow Bolsheviks had adopted the Zimmerwald manifesto, except for the defeat of Russia.¹⁴⁷

On 1 March Ulyanov spoke about peace and the national question to an audience of 200 in Geneva.¹⁴⁸ Afterwards 50-year-old Tskhakaya asked him if they would live to see a new revolution in Russia. Ulyanov, who was almost 46, replied that if they did not live that long then younger comrades would.¹⁴⁹ He spoke in Bern about the war and the tasks of the Russian proletariat, and argued that strikes and demonstrations foreshadowed the revolution that would follow the end of the war. He asked Ravich in Geneva how much he would be paid for another lecture, since he was ‘very short of money’.¹⁵⁰

In Stockholm Kesküla printed Bolshevik leaflets and sent them to revolutionaries in Russia with copies of his correspondence with Ulyanov. He told the German General Staff that was printing one of Bukharin’s pamphlets without his agreement. He sent Kruse as a ‘confidential agent’ to Petrograd, and he contacted Bolsheviks, including Shlyapnikov and one of Ulyanov’s sisters, but also ‘circles far removed from socialism’, and an interview with him appeared in a bourgeois paper. Shlyapnikov discovered from Nadezhda Lukina, who had married Bukharin, that Bogrovsky was offering financial support. Shlyapnikov believed he had received money from Kesküla, given receipts on CC notepaper and used Shlyapnikov’s CC stamp. Kruse visited Moscow and Helsinki,¹⁵¹ and after he left the police arrested most of the Bolsheviks, and the transport network collapsed.¹⁵² Shlyapnikov returned to Stockholm,¹⁵³ and chastised Ulyanov.

What moved you to contact me in Petrograd requesting a ‘direct’ channel of correspondence? Indeed the organisation was set up ‘directly’ and even through people you recommended. It was already impossible to change it when I was in Petrograd. Clearly, you do not imagine the difficulties of arranging correspondence without people. In the future, refrain from making sudden changes, otherwise it will be impossible to arrange anything.¹⁵⁴

He added that Ulyanov’s treatment of the *Kommunist* group had ‘produced an extremely bad impression’.¹⁵⁵

Shlyapnikov had found sailors who would smuggle literature, and with 500 rubles a month he could have ‘showered our working class organisations in Russia’ with literature, and ‘maintained a regular monthly contact with every corner of the country’, but the Bolsheviks could not raise the money; so he relied on ‘passing emigrants’ and Finns,¹⁵⁶ to organise transport via the railway from Haparanda to Tornio in Finland, then left for Petrograd.¹⁵⁷

On 25 March *Sotsial-Demokrat* argued that the war was ‘the continuation, by violent means’ of ‘policies pursued by the ruling classes of the belligerent powers long before’, and those who promised a democratic peace without ‘preaching the socialist revolution’ deceived the proletariat.¹⁵⁸ Ulyanov stopped the publication of *Kommunist*.¹⁵⁹

From Petrograd Elizarova told her brother that Bolsheviks had been instrumental in a strike of 21,000 at the Putilov works, and asked if he had received her letter asking for a ‘popular article about the “civil war” slogan’, which was ‘incomprehensible to many’. She distributed *Kommunist*, and though Ulyanov sent her ‘scolding’ letters, she protested that it ‘strongly fitted the mood and helped to raise money’. Shlyapnikov asked her to end the dispute and wrote to Ulyanov. ‘We all, including James (!!) [Elizarova], demand that you restore *Kommunist* and come together with the colleagues and editorial board’.¹⁶⁰ Ulyanov replied that the periodical had served its purpose, and was ‘harmful’, and the CC would publish *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrat (Social-Democrat Collection)*.¹⁶¹ The ‘fundamental thing is a split’ with leading Mensheviks, including Axelrod, Tserdobaum and ‘Chkeidze and Co’.¹⁶² ‘James’ was a ‘wonderful person’ but like many other ‘good people’ had ‘never understood politics’, and a ‘compromise here would be a crime’. ‘All who waver on this subject are *enemies* of the proletariat, and we must be most uncompromising’.¹⁶³ Shlyapnikov wrote to Apfelbaum about Ulyanov.

Terribly harmful tales about Ilyich are circulating in Russia. His attempts to dissociate himself from any Bolshevik because of the smallest disagreement have made practical people shun us. Pawns, ready to carry out Ilyich’s will, are not valued there and now under the noise of war they have all hidden away. Maybe they’ll emerge when it will be profitable. Our party grows. The possibility of internal disagreements, with solidarity on basic questions, is fully permissible. I respect him. But this respect makes me (as well as many others in Russia) very demanding towards him. Lenin should not fly off the handle over trivia. He should support his proposals with evidence, not curses, and should not divide Bolsheviks into sheep and goats.¹⁶⁴

Ulyanov had been doing that for years.

By April Fürstenberg’s contacts at the Russian mission in Stockholm were using diplomatic bags to transport illegal literature. Bukharin, Pyatakov and Kruse were arrested for attending a workers’ peace congress, and Högländ was charged with treason and imprisoned,¹⁶⁵ as were other young Zimmerwaldists.¹⁶⁶ When he was released Bukharin went to Kristiana in Norway,¹⁶⁷ and Pyatakov and Shlyapnikov followed him.¹⁶⁸

(iii) The British and French RSDRP diaspora

Peter Petroff had been born into a Jewish family in Ostropol in Ukraine in 1884. In 1898 he informally attended Odesa University and organised a workers' kruzhek. In 1901 he joined the RSDRP and spent several stints in prison, but by 1905 he was a party organiser. He set up an illegal organisation in the army and led an armed insurrection in Voronezh. He was severely wounded and exiled to Siberia, but escaped to Geneva, before going to Glasgow,¹⁶⁹ where he stayed with the SD John Maclean for two months. In 1907 he attended the London RSDRP conference and had joined the Kentish Town branch of the Social Democratic Party by 1908, but in 1909 and 1910 he challenged the party leader and his articles stopped appearing in the party press. He became the London correspondent of the RSDRP paper *La Voix du Social Démocrate* (*The Voice of the Social Democrat*) in Paris, and, reportedly, of the Moscow *Russkoe Slovo*. In 1913 he represented the RSDRP at the SDP conference as a fraternal delegate, and successfully proposed an anti-war perspective. In 1914 he seconded Maclean's motion to control the SDP central organ, *Justice*, and in 1915 he went to Glasgow with his German-born wife. He spoke against the war to large indoor audiences, and an outdoor speech about the Russian revolution attracted over 1,000. He wrote about Clydeside events and the Zimmerwald conference for *Nashe Slovo* and *Berner Tagwacht*. On 22 December he was fined £3 for contravening the Aliens Restriction Order, and sentenced to two months in prison on 3 January 1916, which enraged the large crowd outside.¹⁷⁰ The ILP blamed the war on 'aggressive colonialism and imperialism',¹⁷¹ and wanted to invite German and Austrian SDs to a London conference, though French delegates refused to take part if they did, and the delegates agreed to invite only those from Allied countries.¹⁷²

In Paris Bronstein wrote in *Nashe Slovo*. 'The national state has outgrown itself – as the frame for the development of productive forces, as the basis for the class struggle and especially as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat'.¹⁷³ Armand arrived and organised Old Bolshevik workers to propagandise workmates.¹⁷⁴ Bronstein insisted on a merger of the RSDRP factions, and on the 19th *Nashe Slovo* acknowledged that in Russia, 'in the thick of political action, so-called Leninism is freeing itself from its sectarian features'. The workers led by Old Bolsheviks that were connected to *Sotsial-Demokrat* were 'the only active and consistent force',¹⁷⁵ and all internationalists should join them. Manuilsky agreed,¹⁷⁶ though Bronstein believed that the Bolsheviks had no co-thinkers in Germany, Britain or France.¹⁷⁷ On 18 March Tseberbaum acknowledged that he was 'quite isolated, even within the narrow circle of my colleagues' on *Nashe Slovo*.¹⁷⁸ By then Armand had recruited socialists in the Seine region, and workers in the mechanics' union affiliated to the Zimmerwald Left nominated her as their delegate to the meeting of Zimmerwaldists; though Ulyanov he ridiculed her.¹⁷⁹ *Nashe Slovo* and *La Vie Ouvrière* issued a joint manifesto with slogans. 'Down with the war! Down with annexations! Down with war credits! Long live the liberty and independence of nations! Long live the economic union of people!'¹⁸⁰ Bronstein urged Russian socialists to spread their ideas among troops and turn the war into a revolution. He was prevented from going to the Zimmerwaldists' conference, but supported it in *Nashe Slovo*.¹⁸¹

Ivy Low had been born in London in 1889. Her father, the son of a Hungarian Jewish revolutionary, who had written books, translated two Norwegian novels and edited the *Educational Times* with H.G. Wells. Ivy's mother was the daughter of an Indian army colonel,¹⁸² though the couple made a living by reviewing books then selling them.¹⁸³ Ivy's father died when she was five, and her mother later married a man with conservative views,¹⁸⁴ so Ivy lived with an uncle when she was 13. She later wrote for the *Manchester Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *Evening Standard* and *Country Life* about the London's East End slums, and she also published a novel;¹⁸⁵ but in 1907 her uncle made her take a job as an insurance company clerk.¹⁸⁶ By 1908 she was a member of the ILP, secretary of the Plebs League, and a founder-member of the National Labour Education League, and of the Central Labour College in 1909. She became assistant secretary of the Russian Political Prisoners and Exiles Relief Committee and contacted Russian workers. By May 1914 25,000 to 30,000 Russian Jewish émigrés in Britain had not been naturalised, but the Military Service Act authorised universal conscription.¹⁸⁷ In June Ivy spent a few weeks with David and Frieda Lawrence in Tuscany, then returned to London. After the war began she met Wallach, and they were lovers by 1915.¹⁸⁸ Wallach lived in a boarding-house at 70 High Street in Hampstead,¹⁸⁹ and accepted the RSDRP CC perspectives, as did most Russian émigrés in the city.¹⁹⁰ He worked for a publisher for £3 10s a week, then went to another publisher, and another, but subsequently went back to his first employer. He taught Russian at Berlitz schools in London and Amsterdam, where he met German revolutionaries. He worked for the purchasing commission of the Russian Delegation in London, and was naturalised.¹⁹¹ In July the chief of the Okhrana's London Agentura reported that Wallach spied on military installations and passed information to the Germans. He corresponded with German SDs via Holland, and had 'lots of money in the bank the origin of which is not known'.¹⁹² In February 1916 Lowe married Wallach at Hampstead Town Hall,¹⁹³ though he dashed off on account of urgent business, and Ivy ate her wedding lunch alone. They lived in the Hampstead boarding-house and she never

complained when he gave a large part of his income to the RSDRP.¹⁹⁴ He told her that if duty called he would abandon his family responsibilities, and 'his happiest hours were spent in drawing up itineraries'.¹⁹⁵

(iv) The Gruppe Internationale

On 1 January 1916 Luxemburg was still in Barminstrasse Women's Prison in Berlin, but called for a national conference of left-wing members of the SPD,¹⁹⁶ and international proletarian unity.¹⁹⁷ Reichstag SPD deputies barred from the caucus met in Liebknecht's office.¹⁹⁸ Between 12 and 15 were present,¹⁹⁹ and they adopted Luxemburg's manuscript *Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie* as their policy,²⁰⁰ and founded the Gruppe Internationale.²⁰¹ They decided to make a 'merciless disclosure and discussion' of differences in the SPD and the 'sharpest criticism' of government spending,²⁰² but stay in the party as long as possible and recruit. Jogisches had had the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives printed and the Gruppe adopted them.²⁰³ They had contacts in over 300 places and sent copies to reliable comrades and received replies from Dresden, Duisberg and Munich.²⁰⁴ Zetkin, Mehring and Marchlewski were arrested,²⁰⁵ and charges against them, Luxemburg and Peter Berten were pending in Dusseldorf.²⁰⁶ On the 12th the SPD Reichstag caucus expelled Liebknecht.²⁰⁷ Rühle declared in *Vorwärts* that a split in the SPD was inevitable,²⁰⁸ and called on troops to 'lower their rifles and turn them against the common enemy'.²⁰⁹

In Berlin Luxemburg was sure 'the preparatory internal process of the shearing-off of the opposition' in the SPD would last months.²¹⁰ On the 18th, when she left prison,²¹¹ over 1,000 women escorted her home and gave her flowers, fruitcakes, canned goods, tea, soap, cocoa, sardines and the finest vegetables.²¹² The manuscript of *Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie* was on her desk, though she could not find a printer or publisher.²¹³

On the 19th 17 SPD oppositionists met in Berlin.²¹⁴ Some Reichstag deputies voted against war credits for a second time,²¹⁵ and the Vorstand expelled 20.²¹⁶ An article in *Vorwärts* supported a split in the SPD,²¹⁷ and the court hearing for the editors of *Die Internationale* on the 22nd was cancelled.²¹⁸ One Berlin SPD district included 320 officials, and the leading committee approved official policy by 41 votes to 17. Similar votes took place in Leipzig, Halle and Bremen. On the 24th an SPD Reichstag deputy made a fierce speech against the state of siege, and he and 32 others voted against its renewal. The caucus expelled them by 53 votes to 33, but they formed the Sozialdemokratische Arbeitsgemeinschaft (the Social-Democratic Working Group).²¹⁹ Late that month a secret conference of socialist youth in Jena overwhelmingly backed the opposition,²²⁰ and the Greater Berlin SPD adopted Luxemburg's perspectives. Their resolution appeared in *Vorwärts* next day, but was mostly blacked out by the censors.²²¹ The German government had stopped promoting subversion in Russia,²²² and late in March high-level Russian and German officials met in Stockholm to discuss a separate peace.²²³

The independent-minded émigré Russian SD Eugen Leviné, who had had a hideous time in a Russian prison from 1906,²²⁴ had become a German citizen at the outbreak of the war in 1914. He lived in Heidelberg, where townspeople were fervent patriots, but he reckoned that the war would last no more than two years. In May 1915 he married, which outraged his wealthy mother, though she eventually sent him money. He found it 'easier to convert thousands of workers than one single well-meaning intellectual', but he met SPD oppositionists. He was called up as an interpreter for high-ranking prisoners of war at a camp on the outskirts of Heidelberg, though he was uncomfortable about censoring their letters. After a woman denounced him, the commandant discovered his revolutionary past and dismissed him. He was sent to Karlsruhe for military training and posted to Belgium in March 1916; but was accepted as a lecturer at Heidelberg University. His lectures on 'War Lyrics in Ancient and Modern Times' demonstrated that people had always abhorred wars and those who profited from them, and dispelled the legend that Germany had been attacked first. Reportedly his lectures fooled the censors and the SDP leaders.²²⁵

Early in April Luxemburg's *Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie* was published illegally as by 'Junius' (a republican hero in ancient Rome),²²⁶ by an SPD paper in the Ruhr.²²⁷ It insisted that imperialism was 'the final phase of life and highest stage in the development of world political domination of capitalism' and 'the common mortal enemy of the proletariat of all countries'. 'Either we betray the International', or 'we take it seriously and make it a solid fortress', even if that meant a Third International, and 'if the modern leaders of the proletariat, Social Democracy, does not know how to learn, it will go under "to make room for those who grow up in a new world"'.²²⁸ Jacob sent a copy to Levi, who had joined the army and was recovering from an injury.²²⁹ It was secretly distributed, achieved an unparalleled success and became known as the *Junius Brochure (Junius Pamphlet)*.²³⁰ *Lichstrahlen* was banned, but Bremen SPD oppositionists broke from the centrist *Bremer-Bürgerzeitung (Bremer Citizens' Paper)* and collected money from navy dockyard workers for a press to publish the legal *Arbeiterpolitik (Labour Policy)*. Oppositionists produced the legal *Sozialdemokrat* in Stuttgart and the illegal *Der Kampf (The Struggle)* in Duisberg and Hamburg, which appeared quite regularly. The network now included the youth organisations in Dresden and

Stuttgart and some infantry.²³¹ Kautsky and Haase refused to go to the international socialist conference,²³² though Dutch SDs allowed Sobelsohn to represent them if they were unable to attend.²³³

(v) The Kienthal conference

On 5 April 1916 (NS) Ulyanov lectured in Zurich on the tasks of Russian SDs.²³⁴ He was convinced that the SPD had split,²³⁵ and was pleased that the *Junius Brochure* agreed that a 'civil war *against* the bourgeoisie and for Socialism' was needed, though it 'should have been *proclaimed* in the name of the revolutionary classes'.²³⁶ He had planned to attend the international socialist conference without a mandate,²³⁷ but the Gruppe Internationale sent him one. On the 24th 44 delegates, from seven countries,²³⁸ met at Bern Volkshaus.²³⁹ Ulyanov proposed issuing a manifesto calling for a Third International, but accepted Rakovsky's suggestion of a circular, and Tserderbaum, Apfelbaum, Rakovsky, Serrati and three others were elected to prepare a draft. It criticised social patriots in France and Germany and the International for its inactivity, favoured the 'open economic and political struggle of the masses against ruling class governments, but did not support breaking with the International'.²⁴⁰

Next morning most delegates travelled 40 miles or so to the Hotel Bären in Kienthal.²⁴¹ The Left had grown to 12 since Zimmerwald, and the conference demanded that there should be no support for war.²⁴² The Bolsheviks, three from the SDKPIL opposition, three Swiss and three others called for soldiers to turn their weapons against their governments, but were outvoted, though a majority supported the Left's motion supporting the imprisoned socialist youths in Sweden.²⁴³ The Gruppe members were among the majority who voted against recalling the International bureau, but Frölich criticised them and the Reichstag centrists for not breaking from the SPD.²⁴⁴ Tserderbaum held to the Zimmerwald manifesto,²⁴⁵ as did Axelrod, who argued for the convocation of the International bureau, since it had shown signs of favouring a peace campaign,²⁴⁶ though most delegates had given up hope of convincing it to act decisively and were willing to struggle with party executives controlled by social patriots.²⁴⁷ Frölich, one Italian, one Serb, two Swiss and three Poles supported a Third International,²⁴⁸ and 21 delegates vigorously condemned the International bureau, refused to participate if it met and agreed the slogans 'Down with the war! Long live peace! – a peace without annexations,' and 'Long live international socialism!'²⁴⁹ Balabanoff later recalled that the Bolsheviks 'were eager to create a minority movement, whereas most of us aimed to win over as many workers as possible and create a mass movement'; though 'the events of the past seven months had disillusioned many who had formerly believed that the Second International would be able to function'.²⁵⁰ Tserderbaum argued it was too early to issue a manifesto, and though the Italians vacillated, the delegates elected a commission to draft an appeal. It condemned German, French and Russian social patriots, demanded votes against war credits, 'regardless of the strategic situation', and recommended strikes, demonstrations and other mass actions, though a few, including Axelrod, abstained.²⁵¹ The appeal affirmed that imperialism was 'the latest phase of life and the highest stage of capitalism'.²⁵² The Left accepted it with misgivings,²⁵³ and it was published on 1 May.²⁵⁴

In Berlin Luxemburg had written leaflets to go into factories for May Day.²⁵⁵ The Gruppe summoned their supporters to the Potsdamer Platz,²⁵⁶ and up to 20,000 reportedly responded.²⁵⁷ Most members of Arbeitsgemeinschaft opposed the demonstration, though a few attended and others looked on from a balcony.²⁵⁸ Liebknecht wore his uniform and shouted 'Down with the war! Down with the government!'²⁵⁹ Uniformed and plain-clothes police arrested him, and though Luxemburg tried to free him all the way to the police station, she failed. She and Jacob returned to the Potsdamer Platz, where they saw police beating prisoners with rubber truncheons,²⁶⁰ and driving horses into the crowd, who sang revolutionary songs for two hours. It was the first major workers' demonstration since the beginning of the war. Early next morning Luxemburg and Liebknecht's wife discussed how to get into his locked study to remove compromising documents, but detectives broke in first and found May Day leaflets,²⁶¹ and Liebknecht was taken to a military prison.²⁶² On 5 May the Gruppe met in Pieck's Berlin apartment and discussed how to improve their network, but Pieck was arrested soon after.²⁶³ On the 11th most SPD Reichstag deputies refused to support Liebknecht on account of his opposition to the war. Luxemburg had to 'chase up a few eggs, rolls, and the like so that a reasonable "dinner" will happen', and this had 'become a more complicated problem every day'.²⁶⁴ There had been hunger riots,²⁶⁵ and the government had established a Food Control Office, introduced a profits tax,²⁶⁶ and implemented 'protective custody' without trial on a large scale.²⁶⁷ On the 28th Liebknecht was sentenced to two and half years of hard labour,²⁶⁸ and other opposition leaders were arrested; but next day 55,000 Berlin workers went on strike in protest and 25,000 demonstrated in Potsdamer Platz.²⁶⁹

In Switzerland Armand limited her contact with Ulyanov to letters and an occasional telephone call. She reserved the right to criticize him, but took on party assignments.²⁷⁰ The Kienthal appeal appeared in French in *La*

Sentinel in La Chaux-de-Fonds in Switzerland and in German in the *Berner Tagwacht*,²⁷¹ but Grimm refused to publish Sobelsohn's articles, so he moved to the mountain town of Davos and wrote anonymously for *Arbeiterpolitik*. He contributed more articles than all the other writers combined and dismissed the SPD leaders and most centrists as 'social imperialists', though he still had some hope in 'Left Centrists'.²⁷² He recalled that SPD oppositionists and PSI CC delegates at Kienthal had voted with the Left on fundamental questions, and believed that this was the beginning of significant Bolshevik ideological influence in several countries.²⁷³

Vorbote included 'The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination'.²⁷⁴ Ulyanov welcomed its efforts to become an 'international social democratic journal to combat 'opportunistic traits',²⁷⁵ though *Sotsial-Demokrat* noted that *Nashe Slovo* 'rises against Socialist-Nationalism, but only to its knees'.²⁷⁶ The Dutch SDs demoted Ulyanov and Apfelbaum to the status of contributors of *Vorbote*, leaving Sobelsohn as the sole editor. Ulyanov broke off relations with him, though the second *Vorbote* proved to be the last.²⁷⁷ Ulyanov and Krupskaya received permission to extend their stay in Zurich.²⁷⁸ Ulyanov did not want to hold on to the word "Bolshevism", since he knew 'some "Old Bolsheviks" from whom may God preserve me'.²⁷⁹

(vi) The war

By 1916, officially, almost a million Russian soldiers had been killed,²⁸⁰ and there had been over 1.5 million deserters,²⁸¹ and some troops had advanced over 150 miles into eastern Turkey and along the Black Sea coast.²⁸² The population of the Van region had fallen, though only 11,000 Armenians, 3,000 Kurds, 400 Jews and 85 Turks remained. Around 105,000 Armenians from Erevan were refugees, though reportedly 221,000 had reached the Russian Caucasus,²⁸³ though around 40,000 died on the way.²⁸⁴

In February the Russians captured Erzerum and Trebizond.²⁸⁵ Armenian volunteers had joined Russian regiments, though Armenian commanders were discharged, and the Ottoman army massacred Armenians in Anatolia. The Russian army occupied Eastern Anatolia, and Russian government officials contemplated the possibility of an 'Armenia without Armenians'.²⁸⁶ On the northern front revolutionary Russian soldiers, including the Old Bolshevik Frunze, Menshevik internationalists and the SR poet Alexandr Blok distributed anti-war literature from Petrograd SRs and Riga SDs.²⁸⁷ Around 3.3 million people had been forcibly removed from Russia's western territories, including 600,000 Jews, though 22 percent were moved so quickly that they were unable to take anything, and their estimated losses were equivalent to between \$350 and \$400 million.²⁸⁸

Kollontai had addressed English and German-speaking audiences in the USA about the situation in the USA and Europe. She sought support for the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives among émigré Russian socialists, though Mensheviks called her a 'Leninist agent'.²⁸⁹ Berzin edited the Latvian SD journal *Strādnieks (Construction Worker)* in Boston, and contributed to *Novy Mir* in New York.²⁹⁰ In February, after visiting over 80 US towns and cities, and giving 123 lectures in four languages, Kollontai left the USA.²⁹¹ When the Norwegian vessel was off the Welsh coast, British officers came on board and took most passengers to the Orkneys, so Kollontai did not reach Holmenkollen near Kristiana until 6 March.²⁹² Days later Ulyanov wrote to her. 'I am very distressed that we do not see eye to eye on self-determination. Let's try to argue this out in detail *without a squabble*'.²⁹³ He asked for a pamphlet on the war and she sent *Komu Nuzhna Voyna? (Who Needs War?)* It argued that belligerent governments were equally to blame, and were intent on acquiring as many colonies as possible, while capitalists profited, so 'our enemy is in the rear' and 'the structure of society must be changed'. Ulyanov edited it,²⁹⁴ and the Tkachev sisters worked on it for a week in a hut in Petrograd's suburbs, then dismantled the press, but were arrested. Kollontai had written *Obshchestvo i materinstvo (Society and Maternity)*,²⁹⁵ before the war, and the Old Bolshevik Vladimir Bonch-Bruевич's Petrograd publishing house, Zhizn i Znaniye (Life and Knowledge), published it. It argued for laws on health insurance for working mothers like those in Western Europe, so that childcare was not a mother's sole responsibility, and she could 'fulfil her natural calling without abandoning her professional obligations, losing her economic independence' or 'withdrawing from active participation in the struggle for the ideals of her class'.²⁹⁶ (The pamphlet later appeared in several languages,²⁹⁷ and was widely distributed in Western Europe and the USA.²⁹⁸)

In Russia the annual rate of rifle production was over 1.3 million and over 1.5 billion cartridges, enough for each soldier to have 400, and though 30 percent of front line infantry had no rifle, better-trained conscripts arrived.²⁹⁹ Over 11,000 machine-guns and 4,727 field guns had been produced in Russia,³⁰⁰ and almost 12 times as many shells a month than at the start of the war,³⁰¹ though the guns needed 100 a day.³⁰² The army was larger and better-equipped than ever. Early in March,³⁰³ when 350,000 Russian troops with almost 1,000 field guns attacked fewer than 100,000 Germans east of Vilnius in Lithuania, the Russians took 100,000 casualties,³⁰⁴ and an offensive near Dvinsk in south-eastern Latvia also resulted in heavy losses.³⁰⁵ Another offensive resulted in up to 120,000 Russian and 20,000 German casualties.³⁰⁶ Around 3,500 German prisoners of war had been sent to four camps in Russia.³⁰⁷

On 18 March the Russians went on the offensive in Bieľarus. They gained little ground and eventually took 70,000 casualties, and another 30,000 around Riga.³⁰⁸ By spring there were reportedly 3.8 million refugees in Russia, including 100,000 in Petrograd.³⁰⁹

In April men aged 27 to 37 were conscripted and the first category of trained men aged around 40 were mobilised. Around 500,000 family men rioted at induction centres, jumped off troop trains and balked at training exercises.³¹⁰ By May the army was six million strong,³¹¹ and though it had been driven out of most of Eastern Galicia, it had arrested several hundred leading Ukrainians and there were thousands of refugees.³¹² At the end of May well over 600,000 Russian troops attacked the Austrians in Galicia. They captured almost 3,000 officers, 200,000 infantry, over 200 field guns and 645 machine-guns;³¹³ but the tsar cut soldiers' and sailors' meat rations by a quarter,³¹⁴ and required non-Russians to enlist for service in the rear.³¹⁵ Muslims in Samarkand in central Asia called a mass protest,³¹⁶ and there were disturbances among recruits and food riots from the south up to Kronstadt.³¹⁷ At the front three officers and 39 privates were executed for circulating the Kienthal appeal.³¹⁸

German U-boats had sunk 120,000 tons of enemy shipping in the four months to January, and though the policy of sinking without warning was abandoned, in February the kaiser had approved an 'intensive' U-boat campaign,³¹⁹ especially against armed merchantmen. In April U-boats sank a passenger vessel without warning and the US government threatened to break off diplomatic relations.³²⁰ On 31 May the German navy faced the British navy off the Danish coast, and sank and damaged several British warships, but lost some. After that most German warships stayed in port, and a leading admiral warned the kaiser that only U-boats could defeat the British navy.³²¹

On 4 June a Russian attack on the Austro-Hungarian army in Galicia was successful, and 60 percent of Austro-Hungarian losses were deserters. The Russian offensive stalled, but surviving Austrian and Hungarian troops were demoralised.³²² Russian troops broke the Austro-Hungarian army at Lutsk in north-west Ukraine, taking 25,000 prisoners, and drove the survivors back 37 miles,³²³ but at the cost of 50,000 killed, wounded or missing. They had received 30,000 motorised vehicles, not including motorbikes. The Zemstvo Union hospitals, clinics, bathhouses, disinfection centres, libraries, barbers, tearooms, cafeterias, officers' messes, construction teams and factories employed over 24,000 workers behind Russia's western front, and anti-war leaflets were distributed at hospitals and clinics.³²⁴ The Lake Van region in Armenia was in Russian hands, but much of the population had fled.³²⁵ By summer Russian victories had reportedly cost 1.2 million casualties,³²⁶ The Austro-Hungarians may have lost a million, including 300,000 taken prisoner, so the Germans transferred 15 divisions from their western front to support the survivors.³²⁷

Trade between Russia and Germany via Scandinavia was worth 11.22 million rubles a year, and Helphand's business handled much of it.³²⁸ He bought the pro-war *Internationale Korrespondenz*, but his *Sozialdemokratische Feldpost* (*Social-Democratic Field Post*) reached German front line troops.³²⁹ On the 25th the Russian war minister announced the draft of non-Russians from 19 to 43 years of age,³³⁰ and the 'requisition' formerly exempt Muslims, but demonstrators denounced the tsar.³³¹

By summer over 10 percent of the population of some large Russian towns and cities were refugees, including 15 percent in Nizhni Novgorod, 25 percent in Pskov and 13,000 in the Volhynia region. In Ukraine the 30,000 in Ekaterinoslav formed almost a quarter of the population.³³² Food prices had rocketed and meat was unobtainable.³³³ In Ekaterinoslav 15 delegates representing 300 SDs re-established and RSDRP committee after a break of eight years. Relatively inexperienced Bolsheviks formed the core,³³⁴ and reportedly remained dependent for political analysis on the few copies of *Sotsial-Democrat* that arrived, though they copied an anthology called *Protiv techeniya* (*Against the Current*) by hand.³³⁵ Galloping inflation and food shortages fuelled workers' discontent, and half a dozen Bolsheviks from mining villages formed the Makeeva district committee. It was the first such meeting since the beginning of the war, though no organised activity seems to have taken place. At the Vosnesensky mine Trofim Kharachenko printed two issues of *Pravda Truda* (*Labour Truth*), taking slogans and articles from other SD publications, but nothing about local workers' economic problems; yet workers at the Enakievo Petrovsky plant and Makeeva pipe works went on frequent and sometimes violent strikes.³³⁶ The New Russia Company's luzovka hospital had 200 beds, nine doctors, 20 feldshers and seven midwives, and two mining settlement hospitals had 75 beds between them, though almost half of the over 1,500 Ekaterinoslav province workers who had contracted cholera had died.³³⁷

In Siberia Ekaterinburg Okhrana reported that bad working conditions had 'created revolt in workers' circles' which 'disloyal persons can utilize to attain their ends'. In the Caucasus an SR conference adopted a programme aimed at 'struggling for peace by re-establishing the international solidarity of the working class'. They adopted the Zimmerwald manifesto and agreed that their main task was 'to organise the working classes for revolution, since only their seizure of power will liquidate the war and all its consequences' in 'the interests of labouring democracy'. The Taganrog joint revolutionary committee led a strike,³³⁸ and though Azerbaijani workers had formed an SD organisation,³³⁹ Bakı police arrested many SRs and seized their presses.³⁴⁰

Viktor Shklovsky had been born in St. Petersburg in 1893. He became interested in futurist art at secondary school and studied philology at the University in 1913, but often frequented the Stray Dog café, where his lectures on art became influential. In summer 1914 he volunteered for the army, trained in vehicle maintenance and was posted to Galicia. By 1916 he was in Ukraine, but was posted to Petrograd to train armoured car personnel. He joined avant-garde artists and became an SR, though he agreed with the Bolsheviks on several points. He claimed to be a Freudian, not a socialist, and contributed to *Letopis*. The city had been turned into 'a military camp', though soldiers in the barracks 'rotted on bunks with nothing to do', and being 'hunted down in the streets' after the 8.00pm curfew 'stirred up' the garrison 'more than the constant reversals of the war and the persistent rumours of "treason"'. 'The barracks had lost faith in the old order'. Most soldiers were either dissatisfied peasants or dissatisfied city-dwellers,' and it was rare to see one aged between 22 and 25. Men with two years of secondary education who were junior officers and behaved 'no better and perhaps worse than the career officers', and 'fought tooth and nail to stay in the reserve battalion'. 'There was no one to distribute propaganda' and the few SRs had almost no contacts. Food supplies 'continued to dwindle' and some civilians broke into bakeries for bread. Others bought bread from soldiers, and 'the rusty iron hoops binding the masses of Russia grew taut'.³⁴¹

Since January, officially, there had been 816 strikes and 620,675 strikers across Russia, of which 101 strikes and 140,349 strikers had been deemed political and 715 strikes and 480,326 strikers deemed economic.³⁴² Some ministers informed carefully-selected Duma deputies about their treasonable intention to form a dictatorship.³⁴³

7. A rapid revolutionising of the army

(i) To forestall a revolution from below

After forcible conscription began in July 1916,¹ opposition to the mobilisation of non-Russians took place in Khojent in Kazakhstan.² Riots across Turkestan were put down by force on the 4th, and the region was put under martial law on the 17th.³ The Ataman of Don Cossacks warned that Cossacks, peasants and workers were incensed by the 'exorbitant rise in the cost of living' and had been agitated by 'extreme leftist elements'.⁴

Alexandr Ilyin, Fedor's younger brother, had been born in 1894. In 1912 he took part in clandestine meetings at his St. Petersburg secondary school, but after a police raid he was banned from attending a Russian university. He went to Geneva, entered the University, joined the émigré Bolsheviks and met Ulyanov at Karpinsky's in summer 1913. In summer 1914 he holidayed in Petrograd and worked for *Pravda*, but was conscripted in December and sent to a military school. After he graduated he was appointed as a junior infantry officer and sent to the front. He was gassed in May 1915 and had hardly recovered when he was sent back, but was severely shell-shocked in June. He could not move his arms or legs and lost his hearing and memory. He was in hospital until July 1916,⁵ and other patients told him about a 'rapid revolutionising of the army'. Junior officers and some regulars agreed not to order shooting at unarmed crowds. When Ilyin was discharged he was sent to the Chemical Battalion in Petrograd.⁶

The army had around 50 French aeroplanes, 80 English armoured cars, 85,000 rolls of barbed wire, 150 heavy guns, 500 trench mortars, two million hand grenades, 170 million rifle cartridges, a third of a million trench bombs, and two million pounds of explosives and chemicals,⁷ and the Zemstvo Union ran 317 hospitals on the northern front, 1,043 on the western front and 1,631 on the south-western front.⁸ During July Romania entered the war on the side of the Allies. On the 27th Russian troops attacked the Austro-Hungarian army, captured around a million troops and reduced its strength to 70,000, though from 7 August German troops stiffened the Austrian's resistance.⁹ The Russians had taken 15,000 square miles of territory and captured 400,000 prisoners, but suffered 450,000 casualties, and eight soldiers had been executed for beating an officer to death.¹⁰ The tsar appointed a finance minister who was well-disposed towards Germany,¹¹ and when the British timber merchant met Kharkiv some University economists told him that Russia 'could not carry on the war without substantial assistance from outside, because the industrial and transport system was too weak' to support an army of 12 million. Most White Sea ports were ice-bound for six months of the year, though Murmansk was open all year round. The Zemstvo Union could probably import food and other vital supplies, but the interior minister would not let them.¹²

In the countryside the sown area varied from 90 percent in to almost 100 percent in Siberia.¹³ One south Russian village had had a population of 3,307 in August 1914, but by summer 1916 829 men had been mobilised, 10 killed, 34 wounded and 71 were missing.¹⁴ Hundreds of peasants in grain-producing regions looted shops for scarce goods.¹⁵ The grain harvest was just over 91 percent of pre-war levels, and that of rye was slightly higher.¹⁶ More bread grains were harvested than previously,¹⁷ though famine threatened in Guria and Samegrelo in the Caucasus,¹⁸ because the harvest was poor.¹⁹ Grain exports had almost ended,²⁰ and though there was enough for everyone, many peasants refused to sell grain because they hoped for higher prices,²¹ so the government fixed maximum prices. Salt now cost 5.54 times its pre-war level, meat 3.32 times, butter 2.24 times, rye 1.99 times and sugar 1.47 times,²² and about half of the expected provision trains arrived at the front-lines.²³

In Azerbaijan workers at almost all Baki factories went on strike,²⁴ and the revolt against forcible conscription had spread to Syr Daria in Central Asia. Between 5,000 and 8,000 Kirgiz attacked Russian troops and by September nearly all the steppe was in revolt and loyal troops were sent to deal with it.²⁵ The Russian garrisons in Finland included 100,000 infantry and marines, but the Okhrana had an efficient espionage system and gendarmes and military police were ready to crush opposition. Around 55 percent of enfranchised Finns voted in the parliamentary elections, and over 47 percent supported SD candidates, who won 103 of the 200 seats. Many young Finns favoured independence, but the tsar did not summon the Eduskunta.²⁶ A soldier from the front asked sailors and soldiers in Finland for literature to take back.²⁷

In September the former head of Odesa Okhrana left to lead the Petrograd Okhrana, and toured major cities to encourage railway workers to infiltrate illegal organisations whose defeatist propaganda was increasingly effective. Socialists who controlled Irkutsk railway workshops were in touch with those in Petrograd, and led cooperatives. Revolutionaries were weak in the Vladivostok railway workshops, but those in Chita thought a revolution was imminent.²⁸

Late in September the Progressive Bloc in the Duma secretly decided to replace the tsar with his 12-year-old son, to 'forestall a revolution from below'.²⁹

(ii) Neither independent thinking nor organizational base

In Siberia exiled revolutionaries had sung the *Marseillaise* at New Year 1916. Skryabin's group had got hold of beer, vodka, and *samogon*, and sang the *Internationale*, though the moonshine and hunger made them ill. In May the police considered Skryabin a 'party professional', but he escaped with a false passport and reached Kazan. He stayed with Tikhomirov, who was in touch with Ulyanov, and got Skryabin a better passport. They set out for Petrograd, where they published *Osvodomitelnyi List (Information Bulletin)* with Latsis and others. Skryabin sometimes left to stay with a friend in Orel, to avoid arrest, and when he returned to Petrograd he became a paid party agent and the secretary of *Sovremennyi Mir (Modern World)*. He contributed to the legal Bolshevik *Voprosy Strakhovaniya (Insurance Problems)* and he and Tikhomirov distributed illegal publications.³⁰ The Petrograd Mezhraiontsy claimed 150 'members', but the Bolsheviks claimed 2,000.³¹ They had links with Moscow, Tula, Ivanovo, Kharkiv, Nizhni-Novgorod, Sormovo, Tver, Tallinn and Narva in Estonia, Samara, Saratov, Tsaritsyn, Ekaterinoslav, Ekaterinburg and Perm.³² The Okhrana noted that the Bolsheviks had led a 'marked upsurge in the revolutionary spirit of the local Social Democratic underground organisation'. They were preparing an illegal newspaper, though police harassment led to their disintegration. Skryabin, Latsis, 'Comrade Emma' and others tried to rebuild it, and issued a bulletin, but the police got uncomfortably close.³³

When Shlyapnikov arrived in Petrograd in autumn arrests had decimated leading party bodies. Some cells continued to operate, but avoided the surviving central organisation for fear of police spies. He aimed to rebuild the CC and the transport route for literature and collect information about the revolutionary movement; but the Petrograd RSDRP committee could not spare anyone. Shlyapnikov insisted that comrades who disagreed with the émigré RSDRP CC should not be barred from contributing to CC publications in Russia.³⁴

Petr Zalutsky had been born into a peasant family in Krucha, Mogilev province, in 1887. He became a revolutionary in 1904, took part in the 1905 revolution and joined the RSDRP in 1907. He worked illegally in Vladivostok before moving to St. Petersburg in 1911. He worked in a factory, distributed *Pravda* and *Zvezda (The Star)*,³⁵ and attended the Prague Bolshevik conference in 1912. In 1916 he met Skryabin,³⁶ a member of the Petrograd RSDRP committee. Shlyapnikov had met Skryabin in Irkutsk,³⁷ but most of the CC had been arrested. K.M. Shyedchikov was the only one that Shlyapnikov found in Petrograd, though he had been sentenced to exile,³⁸ so Shlyapnikov formed a new one with Skryabin and Zalutsky.³⁹

Valerian Kuibyshev had been born in Omsk in south-western Siberia in 1888. While very young he worked with SDs, joined the Bolsheviks in 1904 and was responsible for the transport and storage of arms in St. Petersburg in 1905. In 1906 he was elected to the Omsk RSDRP committee, but the police exiled him to Kainsk in central Siberia. He escaped to Tomsk in 1907 and joined the committee, and later that year he went to Kamchatka in the Far East and led the Petropavlovsk organisation. He was back in St. Petersburg by 1908, but was arrested in July and taken to Kainsk Prison. He was freed early in 1909, but imprisoned again in April. After his release he worked underground, but was arrested in Tomsk in February 1910 and gendarmes sentenced him to two years' exile in Narym in Siberia without trial. He was arrested for organising kruzhs in November, but organised a May Day demonstration in 1911. He was freed in March 1912 and returned to Omsk, but was arrested for his involvement in the May Day demonstration the previous year. In 1913 he was a labourer in a St. Petersburg sand quarry, but later that year he went to Vologda and went to Kharkiv with a letter to Bubnov. In 1914, after a May Day demonstration, Kuibyshev was being shadowed so he returned to St. Petersburg. He was arrested in June 1915 and sentenced to three years' exile in Siberia in the village of Tutury in Irkutsk province, but escaped at the end of the year and went to Samara. He wanted to go to Petrograd, and though Bubnov refused to give him any money, he got there, used a pseudonym and got a job as a milling machinist at the Pipe Works which employed 21,000 workers.⁴⁰ One of them was Nikolai Shvernik, who had been born into a Russian working-class family in St. Petersburg in 1888. His father was a retired sergeant major, who had become a factory worker, and his mother was a weaver. Nikolai became a turner, joined the Bolsheviks in 1905, and worked at the Pipe Works in 1915.⁴¹ His machine was opposite Kuibyshev's, and there were other Bolsheviks in the plant. On 13 September 1916 the Bolsheviks Golubov and Bogdanov from Saratov, Ignaty Fokin and Miliutin from Nizhni Novgorod and others from Penza and Orenburg met in Philip Rabinovich's Petrograd flat. Kuibyshev deliberately arrived last and spotted a suspicious individual watching the building. He knew the comrades were going to formulate an anti-war motion for a Bolshevik conference in the Volga region, and had dangerous documents, so he warned them. Bubnov accused him of 'detective mania', but Kuibyshev persuaded them all to destroy the documents. An hour later detectives entered the building, though Miliutin and others managed to escape. Fokin had been asleep and jumped out of the window in his underwear and spent three hours in the driving rain. Kuibyshev started his night shift, and gendarmes found nothing incriminating where he lived because he had hidden illegal documents in the attic.⁴²

Skryabin, and probably Shlyapnikov, went to Moscow to strengthen the organisation and improve links with provincial and military organisations.⁴³ The Moscow Bolshevik committee had merged its Lefortovo and Rogozhsky district organisations, whose 33 members included 10 at the Dinamo plant.⁴⁴ Some were arrested on the 22nd and more on the 28th.⁴⁵ Moscow Metalworks casting and steel foundry workers went on strike and were followed by bolt and cable shop workers. Over 1,000 workers, including 33 teenagers and 12 women, came out, elected delegates to meet management, and stayed in the plant to prevent a lockout, though the outcome of the strike is unknown.⁴⁶

(iii) Beat the police

By October 1916 the Russian RSDRP CC included Ulyanova, Zalezhsy, Osipov, Shyedchikov, Fokin and 35-year-old Kliment Voroshilov, and they were responsible for the transport of illegal literature from Finland to Russia.⁴⁷ Shlyapnikov had contacted Yuri Litovinov at the Aviaz factory,⁴⁸ the Bolshevik district committees had contacts with 50 or so veteran skilled metalworkers in Sormovo, the industrial suburb of Nizhni Novgorod, and with SDs in Estonia and Latvia. Petrograd Bolsheviks were converting food committees into strike committees, and on the 7th they and Mensheviks and SRs discussed a joint bureau. When eight New Lessner strikers were conscripted 5,000 workmates downed tools,⁴⁹ and next day, after 150 were shot, more strikes broke out.⁵⁰ The Mezhrailontsy suggested a conference to leading Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Bolshevik cells in Vyborg favoured unity,⁵¹ though the police noted that many workers joined co-operatives and insurance and sickness funds.⁵²

Only members of the tsar's security service were immune to conscription, though there were 15,718 gendarmes across Russia. Around 100 had joined counterespionage units at the front, but many others had taken up highly paid administrative jobs in Russia.⁵³ The head of the Foreign Agentura reported that one agent had been of 'great value', though they were now a rarity, since 'revolutionary groups have representatives who vigilantly watch every unnecessary change of linen or drink from a wine bottle', which risked being charged with provocation. The rumour that revolutionaries had informers in the Police Department was spreading, though many agents in revolutionary organisations refused to report.⁵⁴

Conscription had depleted the agricultural labour force, but the remaining peasants had surplus grain. Police reported that they were 'contented and calm',⁵⁵ but a senior government official noted 'a marked increase in hostile feelings' among the peasants, 'not only against the government but against all other social groups'.⁵⁶ Flour, bread, sugar and eggs cost almost double their pre-war prices, that of butter had more than trebled and that of salt had more than quadrupled.⁵⁷ On 17 October 45 factory workforces in Central Asia went on strike to protest at the high cost of living, and Cossacks refused to shoot them.⁵⁸

The Bolsheviks claimed 10,000 'members' across Russia.⁵⁹ In Petrograd they had issued 2,500 agitational leaflets,⁶⁰ and instructed party workers to 'demonstrate to the masses that the problem of the cost of living increase' was 'closely related to the struggle for a democratic republic and the end of the war'. Workers at the New Lessner, Erikson and Phoenix plants tried to organise a public demonstration. On 17 October, the anniversary of the tsar's 1905 manifesto, New Lessner and Renault workers took to the streets, and though police attacked them with whips and sabres, soldiers who had been cheering the workers threw bricks and rocks at them,⁶¹ and hundreds helped the strikers to fend off the police in Vyborg.⁶² Strikers demanded rises of up to 60 percent, and demonstrated on Sampsonievsky Prospekt. A crowd of soldiers watched them through their barrack fences. Some had formerly been strikers and when police attacked the demonstrators some jumped over or crawled under the fences and joined them shouting 'Beat the police'. Demonstrators took the police's sabres and revolvers, and only when Cossacks arrived was 'order' restored. Altogether 27,300 workers from 10 Vyborg plants had taken part,⁶³ and an infantry regiment had joined almost 30,000 workers at the Finland Station to sing the *Marseillaise*.⁶⁴ Loyal troops arrested 130 soldiers and moved the rest of their regiment out of the city,⁶⁵ except for 120 who were to be court martialled.⁶⁶ There were riots over food shortages and attempts to organise a demonstration in Vyborg. The Bolshevik committee exhorted them to return, but they stayed out three more days, sang revolutionary songs and shouted slogans including 'down with the autocracy' and 'down with the war'.⁶⁷

On the 18th 46,300 Petrograd workers from 34 plants in Vyborg, Petrograd, Vasilevsky Island and Moscow districts went on strike, and by next day 75,400 from 63 factories were out. On the 26th Bolsheviks called on workers to demonstrate against the trials of the soldiers and the Baltic Fleet sailors, and around 25,800 came out. That rose to 52,000 from 47 plants next day and then to 79,100 from 77 plants on the 28th.⁶⁸ By the 29th 48 factory workforces had been locked out,⁶⁹ and on the 30th the military commander ordered the closure of 11 Vyborg defence plants with 32,000 workers, and called up 1,750 reservists. The Bolsheviks called on strikers to stay out, but they returned.

Between 17 and 21 October around 89,000 Petrograd workers had struck over food shortages, but some members of the manufacturer's association had not molested them, since the shortage of metalworkers and their importance to the war effort gave those in work a powerful bargaining position.⁷⁰ The head of Petrograd province Okhrana reported that 'relations between officers and soldiers' were 'extremely tense' and 'bloody encounters are taking place'.⁷¹ Nationally 115 of the 119 officially-recorded political strikes involving 138,531 workers had been in the capital.⁷² Workers' leaders had been arrested and networks had been broken, but attacks on food shops had escalated. An Okhrana agent reported that the SRs were 'completely disorganised' and had no functioning links to émigré leaders,⁷³ but while 'a revolutionary elite would not necessarily be the impetus for a revolution', they 'would take advantage, given the opportunity'.⁷⁴ The population had an 'exceptionally threatening character'.⁷⁵ 'Even if wages have doubled, the cost of living has trebled.' 'The proletariat in the capital is on the verge of despair' and 'the slightest disturbance, on the smallest pretext, will lead to uncontrollable riots with thousands of victims'.⁷⁶

Moscow Okhrana reported that food shortages and 'exorbitant prices' were 'bringing tensions to a point where the population exhibited 'acute discontent'.⁷⁷ The managers of Moscow Metalworks had complained that 800 workers, mostly skilled men, had been mobilised, and 206 were sent back from the front, though only the Bolsheviks' Dinamo factory cell survived.⁷⁸ Nationally 174,592 strikers had come out, mainly for political reasons.⁷⁹

(iv) Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism

Up to summer 1916 Maria Ulyanova senior had lived in Petrograd,⁸⁰ but she died on 25 July (OS).⁸¹ After the funeral the police raided Maria junior's flat and arrested her sister Elizarova, since she had 'played a distinguished role among the Leninists', but not Maria.⁸² Ulyanov's first letter about his mother's death from Switzerland has reportedly not been traced, though his second acknowledged that it had been a 'heavy blow'.⁸³ Her pension lapsed, so Ulyanov and Krupskaya lost a key source of financial support, though he received several hundred rubles, presumably as his legacy.⁸⁴ He did not know why his correspondence with Elizarova had ended, what had happened to others he had written to, or of the orders he had given to Samoïlov.⁸⁵

Ulyanov drafted an article which argued that the crisis in Russia and socialist revolution in the west were inextricably linked, though no solution of revolutionary problems was 'possible in any single country'.⁸⁶ He also wrote about the relationship between capitalism and imperialism.

Capitalism in general, and imperialism in particular, turn democracy into an illusion – though at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations in the masses, *creates* democratic institutions, aggravates the antagonism between imperialism's denial of democracy and the mass striving for democracy. Capitalism and imperialism can be overthrown only by economic revolution. They cannot be overthrown by democratic transformations, even the most 'ideal'. But a proletariat not schooled in the struggle for democracy is *incapable* of performing an economic revolution.⁸⁷

Ulyanov was editing a series of articles, and expected a contribution from Bukharin. He had moved to Copenhagen in Denmark, and his 'Toward a Theory of the Imperialist State' called for the destruction of the 'bourgeois state'. Ulyanov found it 'undoubtedly not suitable', since the treatment of Marxism and the state was 'decidedly incorrect', and he had taken quotations from Engels out of context. The section on state capitalism was 'good and useful, but nine-tenths legal', and should be published elsewhere with a few 'very small' corrections. Bukharin published his essay elsewhere, and Ulyanov asked Shlyapnikov if he had offended Bukharin permanently. Bukharin told him that some socialists interpreted Ulyanov's campaign against him was because he could not 'tolerate any other person with brains'. Ulyanov praised Bukharin, who went to Kristiana in Norway early in October.⁸⁸

Ulyanov wrote to Shlyapnikov.

The most pressing question now is the weakness of contacts between us and leading workers in Russia! No correspondence! No one but James [Elizarova], and now he is gone! We can't go on like that. We *cannot* organise the publication of leaflets or transport, either agreement about manifestoes or sending over their drafts, etc., without regular *secret* correspondence.

Two-thirds of the contacts, as a minimum, in each city, should be with leading *workers*, i.e. they should write themselves, *themselves* master secret correspondence (artists are made, not born), should themselves train up 1-2 'heirs' in case of arrest. This should not be entrusted to the intelligentsia alone. Certainly not. It can and must be done by leading workers. Without this it is *impossible* to establish continuity and purpose in our work – and that is the main thing ...

As for myself personally, I will say that I need to earn. Otherwise we shall simply die of hunger, really and truly! The cost of living is devilishly high, and there is nothing to live on. The cash must be drawn *by force* out of the publisher of Letopis [Gorky], to whom my two pamphlets have been sent (let him pay *at once* and as much as possible!) The same with

Bonch [Bonch–Bruevich]. The same as regards *translations*. If this is not organised I really will not be able to hold out, this is absolutely serious, absolutely, absolutely.⁸⁹

Pyatakov and Kollontai joined Bukharin in Kristiana. Shlyapnikov reported to Ulyanov that Bagotsky, who transported illegal literature from Stockholm to Russia, had contacted a 'suspicious group' of Estonians, including Kesküla. They had accepted money for 'party purposes' and used RSDRP CC notepaper and Shlyapnikov's French stamp as a party representative. When Bukharin and Pyatakov found that Kesküla worked for the German General Staff, they avoided him, but the Swedish authorities deported them.⁹⁰ Kesküla's relations with the General Staff had cooled, and after Zifeldt quarrelled with Ulyanov contact ceased.

Illegal literature went to Haparanda on Sweden's northern border with Finland, where Axel Rönmark, who had associates in Tornio in Finland, sent it by rail to close to the Russian border. Finnish socialists took Shlyapnikov to Oula to arrange for forwarding literature from the Swedish port of Lulea, then he went to Helsinki, where the socialists Wiik and Kustaa Rovio, a former Petrograd metalworker, helped to get him a genuine Russian passport. He went to Petrograd and lived underground, with some financial help from Gorky, and Ulyanova and Elizarova, who had been freed, helped to organise couriers to bring literature from Finland.⁹¹

Ulyanov asked Elizarova to publish his pamphlet on imperialism as soon as possible, since it was particularly important.⁹² *Imperializm, Vysshaya Stadiya Kapitalizma (Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism)* drew heavily on John Hobson's 1902 *Imperialism* and Rudolph Hilferding's 1910 *Das Finanzkapital (Finance Capital)*.

To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc. ... is to *repudiate social revolution*. So one army lines up in one place and says, 'We are for socialism', and another, somewhere else says 'We are for imperialism', and that will be social revolution? ...

Whoever expects a 'pure' revolution will never live to see it.⁹³

Ulyanov sent Karpinsky his draft, but stressed that it needed corrections. When it went missing and Ulyanov told Pokrovsky that he was scared.⁹⁴ The French military censor had intercepted it, but when a second copy reached Petrograd Pokrovsky described it as 'Plekhanovite'. Other Menshevik editors at Gorky's publishing house wanted to delete the criticisms of Kautsky. (Ulyanov initially refused, but eventually had to give in,⁹⁵ though it did not appear in print in Petrograd until a year later.⁹⁶)

In Petrograd the contributors to *Letopis* included Lunacharsky and 36-year-old philosopher Nikolai Valentinov. Gorky did not agree with all they wrote, but never asked for changes. He generally kept away from politics, and focussed on the people's cultural backwardness and the war 'against the inner enemy', 'Asianism'.⁹⁷ After Alexandr Malinovsky watered down Ulyanov's criticism of Kautsky, Ulyanov called Gorky a 'silly fool'.⁹⁸

In Kristiana Shlyapnikov met the VPSRs' transporter,⁹⁹ then used his French passport and engineering union card to get tickets on a steamship to the USA, where he got involved in émigré Russian socialists' factional struggles.¹⁰⁰ He sold information about Jews in Russia to socialist Jews for \$500 dollars,¹⁰¹ but other attempts to raise money met little success. Kollontai was in Detroit,¹⁰² and was active in the socialist movement,¹⁰³ but she wrote a letter ending her relationship with Shlyapnikov which he would find on returning to Russia. Shlyapnikov had sailed to Scandinavia.¹⁰⁴ He met Finnish nationalist smugglers and was arrested, but escaped,¹⁰⁵ and reached Petrograd in the second half of October.¹⁰⁶ He put RSDRP membership in the city at 10,000,¹⁰⁷ though no more than 5,000 were active, including a few Old Bolsheviks, whose average age was 35.¹⁰⁸ A third had joined in 1905 aged around 15,¹⁰⁹ but many after 1914.¹¹⁰ Another account put membership at 2,000,¹¹¹ though they had failed to provoke mass actions,¹¹² and Bubnov had been arrested.¹¹³ Ulyanov and Apfelbaum depended on Shlyapnikov for information about Russia, but for weeks they had received no letters or newspapers.¹¹⁴ On the 20th Ulyanov wrote to his brother-in-law Mark Elizarov in Petrograd: 'please send Russian papers once a week after you have read them, because I have *none at all*.' By the 22nd he expected 500 rubles for his pamphlet on imperialism.¹¹⁵ On the 25th he told a socialist that he was 'not at all against political murder,' but 'individual terrorist activities can and must be beneficial only in direct immediate connection with the mass movement'.¹¹⁶

The transport of illegal literature had become fairly successful,¹¹⁷ and Shlyapnikov was in regular contact with Ulyanov, Apfelbaum and Rozenfeld.¹¹⁸ Ulyanov's review of the *Junius Brochure* appeared in the first *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*. He thought it was a 'backward step', since it was silent 'regarding the connection between social-chauvinism' and opportunism, and did not agree with him that colonial wars were 'inevitable'. However, 'Junius's adherents have managed, in spite of their isolation, to begin the publication of illegal leaflets and to start the war against Kautskyism', and they 'will succeed in going further along the right road'.¹¹⁹

During October around 5,000 troops had demonstrated in sympathy with strikers in Ukraine,¹²⁰ and the Union of Soldiers' Wives had been established in Ivanovo in the Moscow region.¹²¹ From June to October three million men had been mobilised,¹²² including around 40,000 industrial workers,¹²³ but the army had lost a million.¹²⁴

(v) Cuts in the bread ration and watery soup

On 1 November 1916 the leader of the Kadet Duma deputies asked if Russia's unhappy situation was caused by 'stupidity' or 'treason'. After a majority supported the second reason,¹²⁵ he was given refuge in the British Embassy.¹²⁶ The publication of deputies' speeches was forbidden, but this was 'mimeographed in millions of copies on the machines of the ministries and staffs', 'scattered to all parts of the country',¹²⁷ and sold for a ruble or more.¹²⁸ The loyalty of the Petrograd garrison was uncertain,¹²⁹ and right-wing Duma deputies warned the tsar.¹³⁰

The liberals are so weak, so disunited, and – we must speak frankly – so lacking in talent that their triumph would be as brief as it would be unstable ... What would the installing of a 'responsible ministry' yield in these circumstances? Final and complete destruction of all the parties of the Right, the gradual swallowing up by the Cadet Party of the intermediate parties – the Centre, the Liberal-Conservatives, the Octobrists and the Progressists – the parties which at the beginning would have a decisive importance. But the Cadets would be threatened by the same fate ... Then would come the revolutionary mob, the Commune, the downfall of the dynasty, and pogroms against the propertied classes.¹³¹

On the 3rd some Petrograd SDs were arrested.¹³²

Petrograd Okhrana believed that the RSDRP was recruiting inexperienced teenagers.¹³³ In reality the 15 city committee members included eight metalworkers, two clerks, one tram worker, one doctor, one student and one party full-timer. Seven were aged between 20 and 24, four between 26 and 30, four between 31 and 47, and there were two women.¹³⁴ Tikhomirov was in charge of smuggling illegal literature from Finland and had organised a team of women to pick it up and drop it off at addresses in Petrograd, where it was stored, then distributed to the provinces.¹³⁵ Despite help from Gorky, money was short,¹³⁶ but Bolsheviks and SRs had formed a joint information bureau.¹³⁷ The Mezhrayonisty had links with soldiers on the outskirts,¹³⁸ and claimed 400 to 500 members in the city,¹³⁹ including 200 workers in 14 cells, and students at the University and Psychoneurological Institute. Their seven district committees printed anti-war leaflets and tried to draw revolutionaries together.¹⁴⁰ They and the Bolsheviks were barely distinguishable; though some SDs feared provocateurs.¹⁴¹ The Mensheviks claimed 400 supporters in their 25 to 30 factory cells.¹⁴² There were long silent queues waiting interminably in the cold for bread, milk or whatever food was on sale, while the moderately affluent queued for tickets for the ballet and the wealthy bought fine wines, champagne, whisky and other alcoholic drinks in the best restaurants and hotels.¹⁴³ From mid-November there began a steep and unbroken decline in the supply of food and fuel.¹⁴⁴ By the end of the year the death-toll of Armenians has been reliably estimated at 664,000,¹⁴⁵ and there were reportedly six million refugees in Russian territory who had to be fed.¹⁴⁶

In Moscow women led the Emergency Relief to Refugees Committee.¹⁴⁷ The Okhrana had 20 agents in the RSDRP,¹⁴⁸ and 17 of its 55 agents were among SRs,¹⁴⁹ though they denied that the party existed,¹⁵⁰ since they believed it had gained hardly any new members during the war.¹⁵¹ In reality SR leaders in Moscow, Petrograd and Kharkiv planned a national paper, and a congress had called for a revolutionary government.¹⁵² A joint group of SRs and SDs had a base in the largest factory in Taganrog and a military organisation on Kronstadt, and there were SR branches behind the northern front. The VPSR was probably the largest revolutionary socialist organisation in the Empire, but moved its headquarters to Nizhni Novgorod.¹⁵³

In Georgia workers remained quiescent in Tbilisi.¹⁵⁴ Zhordania attended a nationalist conference and his motion that only a constituent assembly elected after a revolution could end the war was successful.¹⁵⁵ Delegates also voted against war credits and for a workers' congress.¹⁵⁶ The 20th, the anniversary of Tolstoy's death, was marked with a one-day strike or a memorial service by students across Russia.¹⁵⁷

The Zemstvo Union had supplied five million boots, five million pairs of gloves and 10 million pairs of socks to the army, at a cost of 75 million rubles, and had bought 1,261 motor vehicles, 201 motorcycles and 60 motor boats.¹⁵⁸ The Zemstvo Union, the Union of Towns and the Red Cross employed 40,000 people between them.¹⁵⁹ The army's need for flour and grains had almost doubled, and though 1.34 million tons of meat had been imported, troops wrote home about cuts in the bread ration and watery soup.¹⁶⁰ When provincial authorities were given orders for compulsory quotas for cereals for the army they were not always carried out.¹⁶¹

An anonymous memo to the tsar suggested that he should withdraw important loyalists from the front to help to stave off a rebellion, remove supporters of the Progressive Bloc from the Duma, dissolve it indefinitely, continue

suspending the State Council and left-wing papers, support right-wing papers, declare martial law in major cities, militarise plants with war-related contracts, appoint commissars in zemstvos in cities away from the front, empower governors-general, governors and representatives of higher provincial administrations to dismiss officials who participated in anti-government activities, end revolutionary propaganda among lower ranks at the front and send loyal troops more machine-guns and artillery.¹⁶² On the 30th a new dreadnought joined the Black Sea Fleet,¹⁶³ though the Okhrana believed SD propaganda 'had not yet reached a planned level'.¹⁶⁴

(vi) Beans for dinner and supper

On 9 December 1916 Moscow police had dispersed a Zemstvo Union meeting,¹⁶⁵ and by the 11th the authorities had closed zemstvo and дума congresses.¹⁶⁶ On the 13th the workers' section of the Petrograd War Industries Committee adopted a policy of peace without annexations and indemnities and struggle against the government.¹⁶⁷

The Moscow publisher Sytin was paying six percent interest on bank loans of 1.65 million rubles, and others owned shares worth 2,193,000 in *Russkoye Slovo*. It had 739,000 subscribers and supported the Progressive Bloc. On the 14th it announced that the 'bureaucracy is cracking up completely' and 'no one is running the country'. Sytin owned the rights to Gorky's works, but barred *Russkoye Slovo* from endorsing his politics.¹⁶⁸

Gorky edited the internationalist review *Annaly (Annals)*.¹⁶⁹ He told H.G. Wells in London that he had translated *Mr Britling Sees it Through*, and he and two friends had organised a publishing house for children's books. He would write about Giuseppe Garibaldi. Could Wells write about Thomas Edison, and did he know someone who could write about Charles Dickens? He was going to ask Romain Rolland to write about Beethoven and Fridtjof Nansen to write about Columbus.¹⁷⁰ Gorky asked a Moscow cabman about the war. 'Why should I think 'bout it at all? He replied. 'It's the Tsar who's fighting – so it's his job to do the thinking.' Did he read newspapers? 'No – we're not reading folk. At times we chance to hear bits of news in a bar-room: advanced – retreated – and so on. But what's the good of the Press? There's a fellow in our village who lies a lot – he's called "The Newspaper"'.¹⁷¹

In mid-December Shlyapnikov went to Moscow to respond to calls from Bolsheviks for demonstrations on 9 January, the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in 1905, and also met comrades in Nizhni Novgorod and Vladimir. Through other Bolsheviks he set up communications with Bolsheviks in Tula, Voronezh, Kyiv, the Donbass, the Urals and Siberia, though lack of money meant that they often depended on 'chance visits' or 'strokes of luck'.¹⁷²

On the 17th the tsarina's highly influential adviser Grigory Rasputin was murdered.¹⁷³ The assassins were 'regarded literally as heroes' by many in court circles,¹⁷⁴ and the tsarina banished one to his estate and another to house arrest.¹⁷⁵ Courtiers, senior military officers and politicians had secretly agreed to remove the tsar. When the Kadet leader was asked if the Duma would take over, he replied that it would do so if the military sent two regiments to the Tavrishesky dvorets.¹⁷⁶

Next day Petrograd police seized three revolutionary presses.¹⁷⁷ On the 19th 996 of the 1,293 women at a munitions store met in the canteen at lunch time. They wanted a wage rise, but after they learned that their wages were under review, 952 went home. On the 20th an Okhrana colonel reported that 35 women had fallen ill at the Pipe Works, because of carbon monoxide from the heating system.¹⁷⁸ Governors were ordered to mediate in labour disputes, but quash strikes and summon troops in case of violence.¹⁷⁹

As more workers went on strike and worked with the RSDRP, the organisation began to recover,¹⁸⁰ but its military committee entrusted contacts with Baltic Sea sailors to Limonin and arrests followed. The Bolsheviks had averaged about five leaflets a month during the war,¹⁸¹ and several hundred copies of 15 issues of *Sotsial-Democrat* and a few of *Kommunist* had reached the city.¹⁸² A.K. Petrov later recalled that except for occasional information they had received no instructions on basic policy from the Bolshevik CC.¹⁸³ In Petrograd, Vyborg Bolsheviks organised factory meetings and printed 4,000 copies of an agitational leaflet.¹⁸⁴

The Duma reconvened for five days to pass a budget.¹⁸⁵ A liberal reported that the troops' bread ration had been cut from three pounds to one pound a day and they had 'beans for dinner and supper'. The army had changed and 'armed mobs' were 'capable at any moment of exercising their own will and their demands'.¹⁸⁶ There was a crisis of morale because they felt that the war would never end, Germans ruled Russia and the police had not been conscripted. Letters from families and friends in Russia described strikes and disturbances in military units, and helped to lower morale. There had been at least a dozen major mutinies.¹⁸⁷ A prominent civic leader knew that soldiers had begun to demand peace a long time ago, but 'never was this done so openly and with such force as now'.¹⁸⁸ The Okhrana reported that 'a threatening crisis was about to explode', and 'all those who have had any contact with the army are convinced that it is only a step from complete demoralisation'. At the front officers had refused to lead attacks, since they were in fear of 'being shot in the back' by their own troops.¹⁸⁹ The mood of the

army was 'very, very disturbed', and two-thirds of troops would support an insurrection. Russia was on the brink of revolution, 'beside which 1905 was child's play', but the report was filed away.¹⁹⁰

(vii) Leaflets in boxes of grenades

Up to the end of 1916 26.4 percent of 318 women Bolsheviks were from workers' families, 10.4 percent from those of peasants, 10.4 percent were daughters of intelligenty, 9.4 percent were daughters of nobility and six percent were from white-collar workers' families. Over 31 percent were Russian, another 21.7 percent were probably Russian or Ukrainian, while 7.9 percent were Jews and 4.4 percent were Latvian. Around 24.8 percent were teachers and 30.8 percent were urban workers, while 25.8 percent were aged 15 to 19, 42.4 percent 20 to 24 and 13.5 percent 25 to 29. Of 254 men, 34.2 percent were from peasant families, 27.9 percent from those of workers, 15 percent from intelligenty's, 11.8 percent from white-collar workers' and 4.3 percent from the nobility, while 42.4 percent were Russian, 13.2 percent were Jews, 11.1 percent were Latvian, 4.9 percent were Ukrainian, 4.9 percent were 'Asian' and four percent were Polish. Over 49 percent had joined the RSDRP aged 15 to 19. Over 36 percent were aged 20 to 24, 4.9 percent 25 to 29 and four percent 30 to 34.¹⁹¹ Women were increasingly important.

Elizaveta Pylaeva had been born in 1898,¹⁹² north of Moscow. Her father later worked in a Petrograd inn, but died in 1914. Liza and her mother moved to Moscow, but struggled to survive. Liza's brother had joined the Bolsheviks, unbeknown to his family, and distributed anti-war literature, but was exiled to Irkutsk. Liza was aware of political exiles in the Moscow region, and saw the hardships experienced by a neighbour whose husband had been killed at the front and the tears of a young bride when her husband was conscripted. She went to Petrograd and worked in a china and glass shop, and the contact with wealthy customers politicised her. Late in autumn 1916 her brother escaped to Petrograd and set up a press for *Pravda*. Liza was not a party member, but distributed party leaflets, collected money, acted as a courier and stored large packages of literature at the shop. Arishina Kruglova's parents had worked in a Petrograd tobacco factory. Arishina joined the Bolsheviks in 1905, and during the war she had propagandised reservists and packed Bolshevik leaflets into boxes of hand grenades. Alexandra Singer had been a student at the higher courses for women in Leskov, and in 1912 she attended meetings led by a woman Bolshevik in her flat, distributed illegal literature and took parcels to political prisoners. During 1916 she joined the Bolsheviks and worked in a Petrograd factory.¹⁹³ Serafima Gopner had been born in Kherson in 1880. She later studied law on the Odesa higher courses for women, joined the RSDRP in 1903 and worked in Odesa, Mykolaev, Kyiv,¹⁹⁴ and Ekaterinoslav. She participated in the 1905 revolution and was arrested several times. In 1910 she went to Paris, joined the Bolsheviks,¹⁹⁵ and studied at the University.¹⁹⁶ In 1916 she returned to Russia and held various party positions.¹⁹⁷ A.E. Rodianova had been born into a working class family in Petrograd. Her mother was a laundress and her father worked in a vinegar factory. Both were illiterate. Rodianova became a horse-tram conductor in 1914 and hired a student to help her to become literate. She was upgraded to a mechanical tram, but worked 12 to 14 hours a day with no breaks and low pay. During 1916 she participated in a successful strike for higher wages and the engineer in charge was sacked.

Nina Agadzhanova had been born into a merchant's family in Ekaterinodar in south Russia in 1889. She later studied to be a teacher at the Moscow higher courses for women, joined the RSDRP in 1907 and worked in Moscow, Voronezh, Ivanovo, Orel and St. Petersburg. From April to July 1914 she joined the Vyborg and Petrograd district committees and the Bolshevik committee.¹⁹⁸ After the war began she was a member of the Vyborg and City district committees, and Elizarova recommended her as an editor of *Rabotnitsa*, but in 1915 she was exiled to Irkutsk. She escaped to Petrograd in autumn 1916, became a machine operator in a metal factory, under a pseudonym, rejoined the Vyborg and City district committees and organised meetings of male and female workers.¹⁹⁹

Dusia Alekseeva, the daughter of a stocking-maker and street-cleaner, had been born in 1889. She was a dressmaker's apprentice from 1900, and in 1905, after she qualified, she went to Voronezh where she joined the tailors' and dressmakers' trade union 'Needle'. Until 1916 she worked in a small shop, but also in the union and the RSDRP, and met Maria Vydrina. She had been born into a working-class family in Moscow in 1895. By 1912 she was a seamstress in a small shop, raised money for *Pravda* and distributed Marxist literature, but in 1913 she was sacked for urging workmates to strike. In 1915 she joined the RSDRP.²⁰⁰ Late in 1916 she helped Alekseeva to distribute Bolshevik literature and collect funds, then went to Petrograd, worked in a machine-tool factory and continued her revolutionary activity.²⁰¹

Lury Lutovinov had been born in Luhansk in 1887. He worked in metals factories in the Donbass as a teenager, and joined the Bolsheviks in 1904. He became an activist in the metalworkers' union and during the war he worked at the Aivaz factory in Petrograd and helped to arrange the transport of Bolshevik literature to the Donbass.²⁰² Raisa Borisova had been born in 1890. She became a revolutionary in 1905 and joined the Bolsheviks in 1912. She

was imprisoned several times,²⁰³ but later worked in Dvinsk in Latvia,²⁰⁴ and in the Donbass from 1915.²⁰⁵ At the end of the year she went to Petrograd, contacted the Bolshevik Centre and brought back Lutovinov, who prepared a leaflet for the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in January 1916, then left for the Hartmann cartridge works in Luhansk, which had no Bolshevik organisation.²⁰⁶ During 1916 a Latvian scholar claimed that a 'politically minded' Latvian worker was 'inevitably a Social Democrat'.²⁰⁷

Lazar Kaganovich had been born to Jewish parents in the village of Kabany, Radomyshl uyezd, Kyiv province, in 1893. His older brother had become a Bolshevik in 1905. Around 1911, Lazar joined the Bolsheviks, and he became a Bolshevik organizer at a shoe factory where he worked in 1915, but was arrested and sent back to Kabany.²⁰⁸ In 1916 he escaped to Ekaterinoslav, organised a strike of shoemakers, and escaped. Veniamen Ermoshenko had tried to circulate the Zimmerwald manifesto, but was arrested with his fellow Bolshevik 28-year-old Emmanuil Kviring, and they were exiled to Irkutsk.²⁰⁹ Dmitry Grazkine had been born in 1891. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1909 and worked in St. Petersburg, Arkhangelsk and Siberia. He was arrested several times and was conscripted in 1916. The Bolshevik engineer Mikhail Kalinin had been arrested in November 1914. In 1916 he was exiled to Siberia and his wife went with him. In Siberia the exiled Bolshevik Duma deputy Grigor Petrovsky was transferred to Irkutsk.²¹⁰ Ivan Smirnov had been born in Gorodishche in Moscow province in 1881. He joined the RSDRP in 1899, and later became a Bolshevik. He led party activity in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vyshniy Volochok, Rostov-na Donu and Kharkiv, but was repeatedly arrested.²¹¹ In summer 1916 he was an exile in Tomsk in Siberia, as was Nikolai Yakovlev. They were ordered to join a unit about to be sent to the front, and along with an SR they organised among the 70,000 troops in the garrison. SDs and SRs had organised a military-socialist union, and late that year Yakovlev told Krupskaya that the work 'proceeded smoothly'. SRs, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks in the Urals town of Orenburg had carried out anti-war propaganda and agitation throughout 1915 and 1916.²¹²

The Bolshevik intelligent Alexandrov had moved to Moscow and been co-opted onto the RSDRP regional bureau. He edited the paper *Golos pechatnogo truda* (*Voice of the Print Worker*) and contributed to *Letopis*.²¹³

Mikhail Reisner had been born into a wealthy landowning family in Latvia in 1868. In the 1880s he studied law at the universities of Warszawa, Kyiv and St. Petersburg, where he attended socialist meetings and became a Marxist. Larissa was born near Vilnius in 1895. In 1898 her father became professor at Tomsk University, attended meetings of the RSDRP and Siberian SD Union and supported strikers. In 1903, when peasants rioted, he was expelled from the University and the family moved to Berlin, where he had socialist contacts. The family lived very poorly, though they had a servant. Larissa attended a primary school in a working-class district, and German became her first language. Her father befriended SPD leaders, including Bebel and Liebknecht, and their defence lawyers consulted him. In 1905 he joined the Bolsheviks. He wrote for *Proletary* and briefly corresponded with Ulyanov. He attended the RSDRP conference in Tammerfors in November. In 1906 the Reisners settled in Paris, where Mikhail helped to establish the First Internationalist University and wrote anti-tsarist articles for the socialist press, but gradually distanced himself from the Bolsheviks. In 1907 he became an assistant professor at St. Petersburg University, supported protesting students and strikers who had been sacked, and was put under surveillance. Larissa attended a private girls' gymnasium, which was 'a real agony', and she was frequently reprimanded for expressing revolutionary views. In 1912 Mikhail lectured about literature and politics at the Sampsonievsky Society workers' clubs. Larissa studied Marx, Engels and other Western European socialists until late at night, but passed her final examinations, and her parents managed to get her permission to study law and philology at the University in 1913. She challenged her professors, and her essays on Shakespeare's heroines were published in Riga under a male pseudonym. In summer 1915 she and her father published the journal *Rudin*, which attacked government figures by name and caricatured believers in 'legal Marxism'. It claimed to have been 'Passed by the Military Censor', but in spring 1916 the city governor banned it from sale on Vasilevsky Island, where the University was situated, though it was available at station bookstalls and more articles were censored. When Larissa's brother and many of her male student friends were conscripted, the family had nothing left to pawn. The ninth *Rudin* became the last, but letters poured in. In autumn Larissa wrote to her mother from a Volga steamer.

In the little sentry-boxes and market villages – along all the moorings of this vast rover – everything is irrevocably decided. Here they know everything, forgive nobody and forget nothing. And when the time comes, they will pass sentence and exact punishments such as have never before been seen. ... I am sometimes exhausted by hopeless sentiments. ... But it's everywhere – beyond the yellowing forest edges, beyond the islands and rapids.

Late that year she contributed to *Letopis*.²¹⁴

Nikolai Himmer had been born in Moscow in 1882. His father was a railway worker and his mother was a midwife.²¹⁵ Nikolai joined the VPSR in 1903, but left in 1906. He was exiled to Arkhangelsk, but returned to Petrograd in 1913, after the amnesty. By 1914 he edited the nonparty periodical, *Sovremennik* (*The Contemporary*),

which took an internationalist line. He was banished in May, but went underground. In autumn 1915 he became a Zimmerwaldist,²¹⁶ and in 1916 he was an economist at the Agriculture Ministry, and on the staff of *Letopis*.²¹⁷ He lectured Poles and Ukrainians who hoped to gain their nations' independence. *Sovremennik* was closed, but Sergei Mstislavsky, the General Staff's librarian, may have helped Himmer to publish anti-war pamphlets.²¹⁸

(viii) A revolution is, I fear, inevitable

By the end of 1916 the number of waged agricultural labourers in Russia had fallen by around two-thirds since 1913. The supply of agricultural equipment had halved,²¹⁹ and the number of farm animals had fallen by 20 percent since 1914.²²⁰ In autumn the grain harvest was 20 percent lower than in 1913, and the amount put on the market was 30 percent lower,²²¹ but 20 percent lower in the south and 40 percent in the north. Women reportedly formed 72 percent of labourers on peasant farms and 58 percent on landowners' estates.²²² Across Russia 10 million labourers had been conscripted and sown areas had been reduced by 25 to 30 percent,²²³ and since 1914 gentry had marketed 47 percent of the pre-war level.²²⁴ Estates in the central agricultural region had reduced their productive area by two-thirds, though peasants had increased theirs by almost a third.²²⁵ There were serious shortages of consumer goods,²²⁶ and inflation made peasants reluctant to sell grain.²²⁷ Their average annual income exceeded 1,000 rubles and they had deposited 219 million rubles in cooperative credit associations,²²⁸ which had 10.5 million members and capital of 682.5 million rubles.²²⁹ The government had introduced compulsory requisitioning,²³⁰ though that led to less grain on the market,²³¹ so the bread ration had been reduced.²³² There had been at least 557 outbreaks of agrarian violence since the beginning of the war,²³³ and in 1916 there had been 263 incidents of peasants looting shops,²³⁴ and 294 rural disturbances,²³⁵ though peasant troops had put down only 30 percent of the most serious.²³⁶ In Siberia cooperatives were responsible for half of commodity circulation and many had united,²³⁷ while 922 creameries produced over 47,000 tons of butter.²³⁸

During 1916 3,006 miles of new railways had been completed,²³⁹ though the number of serviceable locomotives had fallen to 16,800,²⁴⁰ so the government had ordered locomotives and wagons from the USA.²⁴¹ Rail traffic had decreased by 22 percent, and was around 60 percent of what it had been in the Donbass in 1914.²⁴² Around 60,000 wagons of food, forage and fuel were buried under snowdrifts,²⁴³ and food supplies to Petrograd were about a quarter of what was needed.²⁴⁴ Women spent an average of 40 hours a week queuing for food, whose quality was continually deteriorating.²⁴⁵ Queues sometimes reached a mile long, four abreast, and the daughter of a maid of the British consul's only job was to queue for milk and bread.²⁴⁶ Coal had to travel 1,000 miles from the Donbass to Petrograd, but only half of the necessary wagons were available,²⁴⁷ and 35 Donbass blast-furnaces were for lack of fuel.²⁴⁸ Vyborg women had organised an anti-war demonstration in the city centre.²⁴⁹ Flour mills were operating at 40 percent capacity,²⁵⁰ several had stopped working, and some bakers sold their allocations of rye to feed horses.

Almost 3.9 billion rubles had been invested in industry that year.²⁵¹ French speculators had been responsible for 32.6 percent, Britons 22.6 percent, Germans 19.7 percent, Belgians 14.3 percent and US citizens 5.2 percent.²⁵² Annual dividends averaged 15 percent, almost twice as much as in 1914, and some after-tax annual profits reached 31 percent.²⁵³ In Petrograd the Electrical Society of 1886 had received a government guarantee for a four billion ruble loan.²⁵⁴ Since 1913 the net annual profits of the city's 21 largest companies had risen from 1.5 million rubles to 54 million, but 79 plants were at a standstill,²⁵⁵ including 50 for lack of power.²⁵⁶ Since 1913 coal production had risen from 28.6 to over 33.8 million tons, and petrol production from just over 145,000 tons to 9.7 million, though more was available since it could not be exported. The output of pig-iron and copper had declined, and though that of wool and cotton had increased, it was not enough to meet demand. The army had needed two million pairs of boots in 1913, but 30 million in 1916, and the shortage of boot leather was especially acute.²⁵⁷

Nationally the average number of working days in factories had been between 241 and 258.²⁵⁸ There were over a million male and female metalworkers.²⁵⁹ In metalworking plants 20 percent of employees were women,²⁶⁰ and at least a third in metal and chemical plants in and around the city were women and children.²⁶¹ Since 1914 the workforces of large plants had increased by 20 percent and averaged about 170. Around 310,000 worked in state plants, and around 2.19 million in manufacturing, where almost 40 percent were female and 14 percent were juveniles.²⁶² Women in the arms industry earned 40 rubles a month compared to 105 for men.²⁶³

Gross industrial output was worth 8.5 billion rubles,²⁶⁴ apart from Finland, had reportedly grown by 1.211 billion, almost entirely from metalworks, which had risen by 1.26 billion rubles, and chemical works, which had risen by 541 million, though the value of cotton production had fallen from 1.093 billion to 893 million.²⁶⁵ Overall production was 20 percent higher than in 1913, largely because of the demand for armaments.²⁶⁶ Around 81 percent of factories and 98 percent of workers fulfilled military orders worth 1.5 million rubles; though declining supplies of fuel and raw materials made it hard to maintain output,²⁶⁷ and heavy industry starved light industry.²⁶⁸

Shortages had reached a critical point in Moscow,²⁶⁹ where around 90 percent of workers were in war-related industries.²⁷⁰ The Duma president had told the tsar that there was not enough coal in Moscow and Petrograd.²⁷¹

During 1916 700 of Moscow's 1,250 telegraph operators were women. Women were tram conductors, cashiers and traffic controllers, though the conditions of the overwhelming majority of 50,000 women workers had not improved.²⁷² Metalworkers' wages had risen by 20 percent and chemical workers' by 13 percent, but real wages had fallen by between 15 and 20 percent since 1913.²⁷³ The national average annual wage was 206 rubles, though in defence industries it averaged 442,²⁷⁴ and inspected workers averaged 478,²⁷⁵ though that was 15 percent lower in real terms than before the war. Some metalworkers earned 912 rubles, over twice as much as in 1914, and 24 percent higher in real terms. Almost 40 percent of adult workers were women, and 12.5 percent were male and female juveniles,²⁷⁶ but overtime was unlimited and legislation on female and child labour was ignored.²⁷⁷ By the end of 1916 the number of women factory workers exceeded the number of men.²⁷⁸

Wholesale and retail prices had risen by at least 66 percent since 1913,²⁷⁹ and possibly by almost 230 percent,²⁸⁰ and another claimed that they had almost trebled.²⁸¹ In 1916 prices had risen by 94 percent.²⁸² Butter, meat, wheat flour and sugar had disappeared and matches, soap, candles and kerosene were scarce,²⁸³ as were clothes, fuel and housing.²⁸⁴ Average rents had increased to 12 rubles a month, compared to three or four in 1913.²⁸⁵ Towns, cities and industrial regions were suffering a severe grain shortage,²⁸⁶ and the government provided 25 to 50 percent of Moscow's food, 75 percent of Petrograd's and 100 percent of Finland's.²⁸⁷

Since July, officially, 359,000 workers had been involved in 485 strikes for a total of 1,052,000 days, and an average of 2.9.²⁸⁸ There had been 401 strikes and approaching 514,000 strikers, and 82 percent of strikes and 56 percent of strikers had been in Petrograd, where workers formed 96 percent of political strikers.²⁸⁹ An average of over 80,000 had gone on strike each month that year, a five-fold increase on 1915.²⁹⁰ Since August, officially, 1,410 strikes had involved 1,086,364 workers.²⁹¹ Economic strikes accounted for the loss of 673,000 workdays, but political and other strikes for 4,076,000.²⁹² Since September there had been 311 strikes and 258,643 strikers, and 134 strikes and 149,408 strikers had been deemed political.²⁹³ Prisoners of war who resented making munitions to fire at their compatriots had gone on strike.²⁹⁴ Since October 177 strikes and 109,235 strikers had been deemed economic, and 134 strikes and 149,408 strikers deemed political.²⁹⁵ Moscow, Kostroma and Vladimir provinces had been responsible for 48 percent of economic strikers, including 176.1 percent of metalworkers and machine-builders, 133.4 percent of workers with animal products and 130.8 percent of textile workers.²⁹⁶ In Petrograd workers at large state-owned munitions works had rarely or never participated in political strikes before 1916, but 20 manufacturing plants with workforces of 2,000 to 5,000 and 10 employing 2,000 to 6,000 had been involved in three or more of the eight large political strikes that year. By winter the number of skilled metalworkers in Petrograd was plummeting, though over half of the political strikers were in Vyborg.²⁹⁷

In Ukraine women constituted 30 percent of Kyiv's 225 factory workforces, boys 17 percent and men aged over 45 12 percent. The rest were prisoners of war and the Greter and Krivaneck plant employed 750.²⁹⁸ During 1916 luzovka church records show that 28 of 502 females and 52 of 700 males had died of natural causes, but the rest died violent deaths.²⁹⁹ The average length of strikes in luzovka was 5.5 days, and 71 officially-registered strikes involved just over 73,000 workers. Throughout the war there had been about 10 Bolsheviks in the town.³⁰⁰

The Bolsheviks claimed some form of organisation in 200 towns and cities. Some worked in garrisons, among troops at the front and navy sailors. They had issued 18 illegal publications and almost two million copies of over 700 leaflets.³⁰¹ By the end of 1916 Ekaterinoslav Bolsheviks claimed 400 members,³⁰² and the RSDRP claimed almost 1,000 across Ukraine. There had reportedly been 92 strikes in Kharkiv, and strikes there and in Ekaterinoslav had increased in intensity.³⁰³ In October over 10,000 workers in the navy's Mykolaev shipyard had gone on strike,³⁰⁴ and there had been increased revolutionary agitation, while 10,000 had gone on strike in Gorlovka. There was increasing revolutionary agitation in Smolensk, and in Baki in Azerbaijan.³⁰⁵ That year, nationally, 221,136 workers had been involved in strikes deemed economic and 256,253 in those deemed political.³⁰⁶

Nationally, over 20,000 new primary schools had opened in the five years to the end of 1916, making a total of 122,123, and in 1916 there were 8,146,632 pupils.³⁰⁷ Most workers' sons and some daughters attended, and though most did not complete the course, 10,480 went on to secondary schools.³⁰⁸ Nationally around 90 percent of young workers who had spent three or four years at school were fully literate. The Ivanovo weaver Ivan Belousov later recalled that when he came home from work he 'picked up a book, lit a candle and read until he could no longer keep his eyes open'. At first he read 'tales of adventure and scandal', but he gradually moved to those describing a world of social justice which 'taught me how to think'.³⁰⁹ A 'reading cottage' of 20 to 30 in one Penza province village included several soldiers' wives and a priest or a literate peasant read the papers, and works by Gogol and Tolstoy aloud, and the local zemstvo supplied maps and pamphlets.³¹⁰ Student newspapers, journals and articles contained everything from nationalist to socialist sentiments.³¹¹ The education minister had granted women free access to universities and broadened opportunities for women graduates after all the men had found

a place. The demand for engineers in rail and water transport was so great that the Transport Ministry had given graduates of the women's Technical Institute the same rights as men.³¹²

The Police Department had spent 261,000 of its 2.7 million rubles on its Foreign Agentura.³¹³ The Russian RSDRP CC was based in the Vyborg district of Petrograd, and Shlyapnikov believed there were 3,000 'members' in the city. The CC reported to the émigré CC that workers were establishing groups in factories, and they had links with Moscow, Ivanovo, Kharkiv, Ekaterinoslav, Nizhny-Novgorod, Sormovo, Samara, Saratov, Tsaritsyn, Perm, Ekaterinburg, Tallinn, Narva, Tver and Tula.³¹⁴ According to Shlyapnikov the Petrograd Bolsheviks had recognised the revolutionary situation and there were unsuccessful attempts to form a committee of intelligentsia, though the SR Petr Alexandrovich believed it was 'long past time to send all the intelligentsia riff-raff off to the devil. We'll get by with workers'. Over 500 people from factories, cooperatives and unions met at the War Industries Committee's hall to debate and hear anti-war agitation.³¹⁵

The leading Petrograd Bolsheviks met on New Year's Eve. They arrived one by one, so as not to attract the attention of the police. Gorky and the famous poet Demyan Bedny shook hands with everyone, then left to meet other writers. The 49-year-old Bolshevik worker-intelligent Vasily Shelgunov was almost blind, but managed to read extracts of Gorky's works, including *Burevestnik (The Stormy Petrel)*. The Alliluev family had not seen much of Shelgunov, but he told them about the strikes, especially those in Vyborg.³¹⁶ Petrograd Okhrana had about 600 employees and up to 200 agents,³¹⁷ and a card index of three million suspects.³¹⁸ There were 3,500 police, and most of the RSDRP committee were arrested at a restaurant in Petrograd district.³¹⁹ Black Hundreds, other reactionary groups and government officials pressed the tsar to seek a separate peace with Germany.³²⁰ The Police Department warned that it would take little provocation for economic grievances to take political forms,³²¹ and the Okhrana predicted the 'wildest excesses of a hunger riot'. The US ambassador noted that the air was 'thick with talk of catastrophe, and the British ambassador was convinced that if the tsar 'continues to uphold his present reactionary advisors, a revolution is, I fear, inevitable'.³²²

(ix) Golos Sibiri

In spring 1916 the exiled SD Rozhkov had been forced to return to Irkutsk. By summer the literary group had disbanded, though he joined forces with the exiled Bolshevik rabochy-intelligent Kanatchikov. On 18 August the first *Golos Sibiri (Voice of Siberia)* appeared, and on 14 October it lamented that the war had held back the development of 'civilised capitalism'. In December Woytinsky wrote to Gorky from Irkutsk, outlining his and Rozhkov's plans for a weekly magazine about current affairs, and asked him to contribute. *Sibirsky zhurnal (the Siberian Journal)* appeared soon after.³²³ Woytinsky worked as an economist and statistician, and purchased meat for the army in Siberia and Mongolia. The 'high brass' in Petrograd did not know this, and when important people from the War Ministry visited Irkutsk Woytinsky's boss suggested that he might be more comfortable working from home. Woytinsky drafted a book, and local SDs were enthusiastic, so he sent the manuscript to a St. Petersburg publisher, who sent it to a printer. A month later 60 galley proofs arrived in Irkutsk with a large stamp reading 'Forbidden by the Censor of the First Military District'. Woytinsky, Tsereteli, and others decided to publish a magazine in which contributors could argue for differing perspectives on the war, and Rozhkov agreed to contribute articles on internal affairs. Woytinsky still had a licence for his paper, signed by a middle-aged woman SD sympathiser. He explained that there would probably be only one issue, and she might go to jail for a year, but she quietly replied 'Make it worth that sentence'. The first issue appeared on 23 December, and was duly closed. The responsible publisher was arrested, though copies were widely read in European Russia and by socialists abroad. Woytinsky managed to get a new licence, and a schoolteacher stricken with polio volunteered to be the responsible publisher. Woytinsky demurred, but she replied that for her 'the difference between freedom and prison is less than to others. And the sacrifice is smaller too'. The first issue was immediately banned, and the schoolteacher went to prison,³²⁴ but the joint revolutionary organisation in Irkutsk published defeatist literature.³²⁵ Every home Woytinsky visited had 'a map of the theatre of military operations' and people realised that the army was losing every engagement from the Baltic to the Black Sea.³²⁶ By the end of the year *Golos Sibiri* was in financial difficulties, but survived.³²⁷

In autumn the Bolshevik rabochy-intelligent Tarshis had found exile 'unbearably dull' in Fedino in Irkutsk province, because of the low level of local culture; but constant study was 'beyond one's endurance'. The government had increased the allowance for exiles from six to seven rubles a month to 10 to 12, and they elected a committee. Membership dues were 10 kopeks a month, and they supported each other financially, formed small libraries, sent new items to other districts, exchanged information on what was happening in European Russia and

organised escapes. In winter Tarshis 'began to teach the children of a peasant family to read, though this was illegal. He organised a co-operative, 'for by then even the peasants of Fedino had begun to feel the pinch of war'.³²⁸

In December the government decided to conscript political convicts,³²⁹ including about 20 in Turukhansk district. Novgorodtseva was 'astounded'.

We realised that the autocracy was in a serious predicament if it was being forced to call up its own declared enemies.

The entire village came out to see off the conscripts, who were glad of this. They knew that as political exiles they would have an unpleasant time in the army but were looking forward to the end of their enforced idleness among the snowdrifts of Turukhansk and the chance to take up their revolutionary work again.

Twenty sledges were waiting for our comrades and their few belongings. The entire police force was there, including the police officer, but no one had any time for him. The air was filled with courageous speeches; no thoughts or feelings went unvoiced.

Sverdlov hated having to stay behind, although it was clear from the course of events that he would not be in Monastyrskoye much longer. He bade each of the conscripts goodbye until their next meeting – in Petersburg.

The crowd began to sing the *Warszawianka*, a revolutionary song, as they followed the moving sledges, and on the steep banks of the Yenisei we parted with our comrades. We waved goodbye and stood watching for a long time.³³⁰

The doctors found Jughashvili's left arm was 'warped. It will not open,'³³¹ so he was 'unfit for military service'.³³²

(x) Have us shot, but we just aren't going to fight any more

During 1916 Russian producers' associations had reportedly supplied troops with 150 million rubles' worth of boots and clothing.³³³ The army's fortunes were at their lowest ebb,³³⁴ and a fighter pilot seriously considered flying his aircraft into the tsar's car.³³⁵ The workers' sections of the War Industries Committees had organised a conference which attracted progressive Duma deputies and representatives from 12 cities who demanded the complete democratisation of the government, since it had brought Russia to 'the edge of disaster'.³³⁶

That year Cossacks had quelled mutinous Cossacks. Kirghiz tribesmen who had lost their land to Cossacks had refused to register for military service and attacked Cossack settlements, slaughtered garrisons, captured 5,000 colonists,³³⁷ destroyed around 9,000 Russian homesteads, and killed 24 officials, 97 soldiers and 3,588 Russian settlers, though Kirghiz losses probably numbered tens of thousands.³³⁸ In Turkestan 14 battalions and 33 Cossack hundreds had tried to mobilise 250,000 men for labour service near the front, but several hundred thousand Muslims escaped, while a similar number fled to Chinese territory.³³⁹ Over 2.3 million troops were stationed in the rear,³⁴⁰ including 160,000 to 270,000 reserves, 99,000 guards, 47,000 cavalry, 3,200 Cossacks and 10,000 military students. Almost 200,000 guarded the tsar's palaces, including 69,800 at Tsarskoe Selo, 70,300 at Peterhof, Oranienbaum and Strelna, 33,900 at Krasnoe Selo and 21,700 at Gatchina, all within 30 miles of the capital.³⁴¹

During 1916 the monthly delivery of three inch artillery shells to front-line troops had averaged 950,000.³⁴² It was over 1.5 million by November, though factories had produced only half of the 200 million necessary rifle cartridges. Five million pairs of boots had been ordered from the USA in spring, though the last did not arrive until the end of the year. Factories had produced over 5,000 field guns and repaired more than seven times as many as the year before. They had produced over 20 million artillery shells and 1,100 machine-guns, though two-thirds of shells, machine-gun and rifle cartridges had come from the Allies. Each shell travelled an average of over 4,000 miles and cartridges almost 2,500. The army had 1,200 machine-guns, though not all of them fired the same cartridges.³⁴³ French factories had supplied less than 10 percent of the ordered aeroplanes and less than 15 percent of motorized vehicles.³⁴⁴ Bulgaria had been driven out of the war,³⁴⁵ and though the Russian army had almost 4,000 telegraphs and 120,000 telephones, the General Staff wanted 300,000 more.³⁴⁶

Around 14 million troops had been mobilised since 1914,³⁴⁷ reportedly including 37 percent of peasant men.³⁴⁸ Around 3.09 million had been mobilised in 1916,³⁴⁹ including 50 percent of men aged 16 to 60.³⁵⁰ Around 16 percent were under 20, 49 percent were 20 to 29, 30 percent were 30 to 39 and five percent were 40 or older.³⁵¹ Around 164,000 had formerly been exempt from military service, and 115,000 had worked in industry, including many in armament plants. Around 40,000 had been mobilised each year of the war,³⁵² including around 17 percent of Petrograd factory workers, while around 40 percent were raw recruits.³⁵³ Almost all possible men had been conscripted,³⁵⁴ including 36 percent of the able-bodied,³⁵⁵ but the army had suffered huge casualties,³⁵⁶ including around 1.3 million killed, 4.2 million wounded and over 2.4 million taken prisoner.³⁵⁷ Tens of thousands had died from cold or disease,³⁵⁸ and probably fewer than 180,000 working class conscripts remained alive.³⁵⁹ Four percent of junior officers were from noble families, but 70 percent had peasant origins,³⁶⁰ and most regular officers, NCOs and troops had been killed, seriously wounded or captured. Around four million remained on the front lines.³⁶¹

The army had consumed 234 million tons of cereals in 17 months,³⁶² and over 77.5 million tons of grain, and between 650,000 and 900,000 tons of meat, in 1916.³⁶³ Soldiers' and sailors' meat rations were 0.45 pounds a day.³⁶⁴ By the end of the year the army suffered from an extreme lack of food.³⁶⁵ Commanders considered many soldiers unreliable, and tensions between navy officers and men were even greater.³⁶⁶ In the last weeks of the year over 12 regiments mutinied, some saying they would hold the front, but not attack until they had boots and warm clothing. One company telegraphed the tsar: 'have us shot, but we just aren't going to fight any more.'

During 1916 the war had cost the government 19 billion rubles.³⁶⁷ Since July it had spent an average of 46.3 million rubles a day.³⁶⁸ Loans had failed to keep pace with expenditure since autumn. It had introduced a tax on profits with a top rate of 20 percent and an income tax with a top rate of 12 percent,³⁶⁹ but while its revenues that year amounted to 5.7 billion rubles, its expenditure had been 18.1 billion. Exports had brought in 400 million,³⁷⁰ or 36 percent of the 1914 level.³⁷¹ The cost of imports had risen by 33 percent to almost 7.7 billion rubles,³⁷² and imported goods worth about nine million had come from Germany indirectly,³⁷³ but German people were suffering.

(xi) The German turnip winter

In July 1916 there had been strikes in German munitions workshops,³⁷⁴ Ruhr coal miners had struck for higher pay and strikes had broken out elsewhere.³⁷⁵ On the 7th the kaiser privately suggested a separate peace with Russia.³⁷⁶ Leipzig SPD members invited Luxemburg to join their discussions, but when she returned to Berlin she was sentenced to two and a half years' 'penal servitude' (hard labour) for being 'dangerous to the state'. Some Berlin workers went on strike, but shop stewards and other organisers were sent to the front.³⁷⁷ On the 10th Luxemburg was taken to Barnimstrasse Womens' Prison. After Meyer was arrested on 3 August, Jogisches led the oppositionists,³⁷⁸ though Mehring was arrested on the 15th.³⁷⁹ Liebknecht's appeal was rejected and his sentence increased to four years and one month penal servitude and six years' loss of civil rights.³⁸⁰ Delegates from all the SPD tendencies attended a national conference on the 21st, though they had been appointed by right-wing officials,³⁸¹ who gerrymandered representation in their favour, but allowed Käte Duncker to put the opposition's perspective.³⁸² The *Chemnitzer Volkstimme* (*Chemnitz People's Voice*) and the *Hamburger Echo* supported the SPD Vorstand,³⁸³ though the international SD youth movement had distributed 80,000 copies of *Jugend-Internationale*,³⁸⁴ and on 1 August it included contributions from her, Liebknecht, Mehring, Kollontai and Sobelsohn,³⁸⁵ while the cyclostyled *Politische Briefe* (*Spartakus*) replaced *Zur Information*.³⁸⁶ (Spartacus had led slave rebellion in ancient Rome.³⁸⁷) Luxemburg's health was deteriorating in prison,³⁸⁸ but copies 'found their way into factories, into the shops, the armies of the reserves, and even troops at the front',³⁸⁹ and the Gruppe Internationale became known as the 'Spartacists'.³⁹⁰ Luxemburg was transferred to an interrogation cell at police headquarters in Alexanderplatz, where her 'hell-hole' measured 11 cubic metres.³⁹¹

The industrial labour force consisted of 4.3 million women and 4.7 million men,³⁹² and around 1.2 million men had been exempted from military service,³⁹³ and the governor-general of occupied Poland had called for volunteers.³⁹⁴ Tens of thousands of Jews had been sent to Germany, but half relied on charity. Cholera had ravaged Vilnius in occupied Lithuania, and the death rate had almost trebled to over 68 per 1,000. The German authorities in occupied Poland ordered schools to reopen with German as the language of instruction for Jewish children, and Polish for Poles, though they later allowed Jewish children to be taught in Yiddish or Hebrew.³⁹⁵

The output of several German factories had not been delivered because of insufficient rolling stock, and rationing was in force. Each person was entitled to around 7.7 pounds of potatoes a week, 0.35 to 0.48 pounds of flour (partly as bread), 0.22 to 0.55 pounds of meat, 0.13 to 0.16 pounds of fats, 0.44 pounds of sugar, 0.59 pounds of jam or honey, 0.26 pounds of fish, 1.23 pints of milk and one egg. This was well below subsistence level and some was not always available, though the armed forces were exempt. Exports had recovered to around 83 percent of the pre-war figure and imports to around 38 percent.³⁹⁶ On the 22nd a German admiral told a US journalist that U-boats would blockade British waters, even though 12 of the 21 which used petrol could not go that far.³⁹⁷ On the 27th *Vorwärts* suggested that German and French workers were fighting against their will, and the military censor banned the paper for promoting class hatred and class struggle.³⁹⁸ From the 29th the General Staff took over more government powers.³⁹⁹

Vorwärts reappeared on 1 October,⁴⁰⁰ and Kautsky openly criticised the war and the SPD Vorstand,⁴⁰¹ so the military authorities handed over *Vorwärts* to the SPD Vorstand.⁴⁰² Luxemburg had been transferred Wronke Fortress, an hour's train journey from Posen in Prussia.⁴⁰³ Her cell door was left open and she could walk in the grounds.⁴⁰⁴ The military censor checked her letters and books,⁴⁰⁵ but Jacob often slipped a letter into her hands.⁴⁰⁶ They knew 'how to exchange news without looking at each other, and 'discussed everything essential from notes made in advance'. Luxemburg needed 4.2 marks a day for her upkeep, books, clothes, soap and a flower bowl, and

asked Jacob to send her letters via the Berlin military censor, with an envelope inside addressed to her, to save three or four days' delay.⁴⁰⁷ Jacob smuggled out Luxemburg's introduction to her book on political economy.⁴⁰⁸

On 1 December Bremen and Hamburg Spartacists argued for building a revolutionary party.⁴⁰⁹ Wholesale prices had risen by about eight percent. The meat ration had fallen to less than a third of the pre-war average, the egg ration to less than a fifth, the bread ration by almost half, and milk was available only on the Black Market. The weekly diet of most workers was four pounds of bread and half a pound of meat, and its calorific value was half of the minimum needed.⁴¹⁰ By late that month the German army had defeated the Romanian army, occupied Bucharest and captured two million tons of grain, a million tons of oil, 200,000 tons of timber and over 250,000 cattle, goats and pigs.⁴¹¹ That year the potato harvest of 23 million tonnes was half of the pre-war figure, and six million tonnes never reached the market. In the terrible winter food froze in cellars,⁴¹² and much of the population subsisted on Swedish turnips, so it became known as the 'turnip winter'.⁴¹³ That year there had been an average of 10,000 strikers a month.⁴¹⁴

In Petrograd the former leading Bolshevik Krasin had founded a number of hospitals with funds from his employer, the expropriated German company Siemens,⁴¹⁵ and he was reportedly a millionaire.⁴¹⁶ At the behest of German industrialists he met one of the most senior generals, and explained that since their armed forces could not win the war, it was necessary to propose honourable peace terms as soon as possible.⁴¹⁷ Yet when the German government did so,⁴¹⁸ the tsar refused to negotiate.⁴¹⁹

The SDKPiL leader Felix Dzierżyński had been transferred to Moscow's Butyrki Prison in August 1914, but was hospitalised because his chains caused severe cramps in his legs. At the beginning of 1915 he was hospitalised with a high fever; but in February he heard from his wife, who had escaped to Zurich. In April he was transferred to Orel Katorga Prison, where typhus was rife. He had a sunny cell, his bed was free from vermin and he could write one letter and have baths three times a month, but was barred from reading the government news bulletin. His fellow inmate Sobelsohn recalled that Dzierżyński represented prisoners to the governor, but was often put in a solitary cell for from three to seven days and was beaten by the guards for what they considered insubordination. They permanently disfigured his mouth and he began to lose a lot of weight. In May 1916, when he appeared for trial, he reportedly looked like a skeleton and was too weak to stand, but was sentenced to three years' katorga in Butyrki Prison.⁴²⁰ On 26 September Piłsudski of PPS-Pravica resigned his command of his brigade of 12,000 men, but told other officers to remain at their posts and await his orders.⁴²¹ On 30 October the SDKPiL factions elected leaders on a parity basis.⁴²²

On 5 November the German and Austrian governments announced their intention of creating a 'self-governing' kingdom of Poland based on captured Russian territory.⁴²³ Around 1.9 million Poles had been in uniform that year. During November SDKPiL and PPS-Lewica agreed that only the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of socialism could end the war.⁴²⁴ Dzierżyński was released in December and the SDKPiL factions united. They claimed around 500 members in occupied Warszawa, though some leaders were arrested. There were few members elsewhere, but prospects for SD unity looked hopeful.⁴²⁵ German troops entered Romania and took over a million tons of oil, two million tons of grain, 300,000 animals and 200,000 tons of timber. On the 25th the Romanian government left for Iași, and German troops entered Bucharest.⁴²⁶

(xii) Russian revolutionaries in the USA

Vincas Mickevičius had been born into a family of wealthy farmers in the Latvian village of Wyłkowyszki in 1880. He was taught at home from 1888, and his uncle, who had founded illegal schools, showed him the old nationalist magazine *Auszra* (*Dawn*). In 1892 Vincas entered Marijampolė gymnasium, and in 1895 his brother introduced him to a secret society that had books printed in East Prussia and smuggled across the border. After graduating in 1897 Vincas enrolled at Sejny Seminary, but was expelled after a year for illegal political activity. By 1899 he taught at a Lithuanian school run by a nationalist and promoted the Lithuanian language and culture. In 1900 he attended Jelgava gymnasium, but in 1901 he was expelled for possessing illegal literature. He escaped via East Prussia to Bern and studied philosophy, sociology and political economy at the University. In 1902 he became one of first members of Lietuvių demokratų partija (the Lithuanian Democratic Party, or LDP), and by 1903 he was a co-editor of *Varpas* (*The Bell*) and editor of *Ūkininkas* (*The Farmer*) in Tilsit. The LDP sought autonomy within Russia, so he joined the LSDP. In 1905 he organized anti-tsarist peasant demonstrations and strikes in Suvalkija and northern Lithuania, and was elected to the LSDP CC, but was arrested. In December he was convicted of revolutionary activity, but managed to escape from Suwałki Prison hospital in 1906. He founded and edited the magazines *Draugas* (*Friend*) and *Darbininkas* (*The Worker*), and contributed to and edited *Naujoji Gadynė* (*The New Era*) and *Skardas* (*The Echo*). In 1907 he was sentenced to three years in prison, and in 1909, after the authorities found out

about his escape in 1906, to eight years of *katorga*. He was in prisons in Vilnius, Suwałki, Warszawa, and was released in 1913 under the amnesty, but was exiled to the Yenisei region of Siberia. In December he escaped with fake documents, and early in 1914 he hid in Latvia. With the help of local activists he travelled to Kraków, where he met Ulyanov. He stayed until the war broke out in summer, then left via Switzerland for London,⁴²⁷ where the 44-year-old émigré Russian SD intelligent, Georgy Chicherin,⁴²⁸ organised the Russian Political Prisoners and Exiles Committee and wrote about Russian prisons. Mickevičius met him and leading Scottish SDs, including Maclean.⁴²⁹ Early in 1915 Mickevičius arrived in Bellshill in Lanarkshire. He edited *Rankpelnis (Worker)* and *Socialdemokratas*, the organ of the émigré LSDP CC. They propagandised against the war, and in September he sent an article about the Zimmerwald conference to *Nashe Slovo* in Paris.⁴³⁰ At some point in 1916 he left for the USA, where he joined the Lietuviu Socialistu Federacija (the Lithuanian Socialist Federation) and managed left-wing presses in Philadelphia.⁴³¹

Bukharin had arrived in New York early November (NS) and edited the Russian Socialist Federation's magazine, *Novy mir (New World)*,⁴³² along with Kollontai. She was one of 40 socialists in the city who had pledged to form a Third International, and had drafted a militant anti-war manifesto for the Russian and German émigrés in the American Socialist Party.⁴³³ During December she made plans to return to Europe.⁴³⁴ Moisei Goldstein had been born into a poor Jewish family in Volhynia in 1891. He joined the Bund in 1905, and later joined Spilka, which was aligned to the RSDRP Mensheviks, and worked in Volhynia. In 1911 he was exiled to Arkhangalsk, but in 1913, after the amnesty, he was freed, and managed to get to the USA. He worked as a tailor in a Philadelphia sweatshop, joined the International Garment Workers' Union and the American Socialist Party. By late 1916 he had moved to the left, joined Bukharin in New York and worked on *Novy Mir*.⁴³⁵

In September, Bronstein had received an order for his expulsion from France. *Nashe Slovo* was closed, and Bronstein was convinced that a provocateur had distributed the issues of *Nashe Slovo* which included one of his articles to Russian soldiers in transit who had stoned an officer to death in Marseilles.⁴³⁶ On 30 October Bronstein was ordered to leave France immediately, and two gendarmes escorted him to the Spanish border. He went on to Madrid, and days later he was arrested as a 'known anarchist'.⁴³⁷ The Partido Socialista Obrero Español (the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain, or PSOE), was 'completely under the influence' of 'patriotic socialism', and he was taken to Cadiz Prison. On 25 December he and his family sailed from Barcelona to New York.⁴³⁸

8. A general feeling of despondency

(i) Botchkareva's war

Leonti Frolkov had been born a serf in the village of Nikolsko in Novgorod province around 1846, but was legally emancipated in 1861. In the early 1870s he was conscripted into the army, served in the war against the Ottoman Empire from 1877, learned to read and write and was promoted to sergeant. After the war ended in 1878, on his way home, he met 19-year-old Olga Nazarev near Nikolsko. She was the eldest daughter of the most destitute fisherman in the village, worked from dawn to sunset for prosperous peasants for 10 kopeks a day, or begged barefoot in neighbouring villages Frolkov bought her a pair of shoes, and they married. They lived in Nikolsko, where Frolkov had inherited a small plot of land which they tilled together. He also fished, but could not afford a horse to take his catch to the nearest city, so he had to sell it to a travelling merchant at below market price. After two daughters arrived the couple could not make ends meet, and Frolkov drank and mistreated Olga. Maria was born in 1889, and in 1890 Frolkov went to St. Petersburg to find work, but wrote no letters home for five years and sent no money, so Olga struggled. In 1895 he wrote to tell her that he had broken his leg and was coming home. A fourth daughter arrived in 1896, but there was no bread in the house. Local peasants were migrating to Siberia for the free use of land and Maria later recalled that a former neighbour wrote glowingly about it.

Most of the men would go alone, obtain grants of land, till them, build homesteads, and then return to their families. Those of the peasants who took their families with them had enough money to tide them over. But we were so poor that by the time we got to Tcheliabinsk, the last station in European Russia, and the government distribution point, we had not a penny left. At the station my father obtained some hot water to make tea, while my two elder sisters were sent to beg for bread.

Towards winter Frolkov brought a little money, and though the whole family fell ill, villagers took care of them until spring, then they set off in rags and barefoot for Tomsk, where they slept above a stable.

We were assigned to Kuskovo, eighty miles beyond Tomsk. At every station my sisters would beg food, while our father filled our tea kettle with hot water. Thus we got along till Tomsk was reached. Our grant of land was in the middle of the *taiga*, the virgin Siberian forest. There could be no thought of immediately settling on it, so my father remained in Tomsk, while the rest of us were sent on to Kuskovo. My sisters went to work for board and clothing. My mother, still strong and in good health, baked bread for a living, while I took care of the baby.

Frolkov worked two days a week, then idled and drank. The two elder daughters were nurse-maids, and eight-year-old Maria cared for a five-year-old boy for her board and 85 kopeks a month, but was anxious about her mistress, 'since I had heard so many things about Jews'. From late 1903, after her 16-year-old sister married, Maria became the family's 'mainstay', and by 1904 she was a housekeeper for a lieutenant and his wife. She was paid seven rubles a month and they taught her 'how to behave at table and in society'. Another lieutenant promised to marry her, and they lived together, but when orders came for him to leave he did so alone.

On 1 January 1905, during the war with Japan, Maria met Afanasi Botchkarev, a soldier just returned from the Manchurian front. She was 15, and he was at least 10 years older and 'of rough appearance and vulgar speech', but Maria married him in spring. They loaded and unloaded barges and made asphalt floors in the Prison, the University and public buildings, and paved streets in summer. Maria started at 70 kopeks a day, but in a few months she was a 'foreman' earning 1.5 rubles, though Afanasi remained a labourer. By 1907 he drank heavily and beat Maria regularly; so she saved 20 rubles, took her mother's internal passport and set off to live with a sister. A policeman at the railway station demanded to see her internal passport, but her 'simple peasant speech' convinced him that she was not a 'dangerous political,' though he did not let her go until next day. When she reached Barnaul her sister got her a job on the steamship that she and her husband worked on. Afanasi eventually found her, and she tried to commit suicide, but failed. They lived together, but he gradually resumed his old ways. In 1908 she applied for an internal passport; but Afanasi flogged her repeatedly. By Christmas, when she 'was ready to swing the axe at him', her father arrived with a policeman and her passport. She decided to join another sister, but had no money, so she boarded a train without a ticket. The conductor offered to turn a blind eye in return for sex, so she got off, boarded another train and hid under a seat. The conductor found her, but let her off after he heard her story. When she reached Irkutsk her sister was ill and her husband was unemployed. Maria got a job as a dishwasher in a 'filthy den patronised by drunkards,' but left after a day, and two days later she got a job washing from 5.00am to 8.00pm. She later became an assistant 'foreman' in charge of 10 men and women labourers, laying

asphalt in the prison. After a year she collapsed and spent two months in hospital, then found a job for 25 rubles a month in Stretensk, but it turned out to be a 'house of shame' (brothel).

Yakov Buk, the son of a butcher, had had some secondary education, and was aged around 24. He had met many 'politicals' in prison and they had converted him, and he had been released after a year for lack of evidence. Maria married him bigamously and his parents gave him 100 rubles for a butcher's shop. In May 1912 there was a 'peculiar knock on the door'. A well-dressed man, aged about 30, who 'showed signs of agitation', stood whispering with Buk, who told Maria that he was an old friend who had assassinated the governor of Siberia and had escaped from prison. Buk hid him in a secret compartment, but the police arrived that night, ransacked the house and took the man away. They let him go after two hours, and Buk gave him peasant clothes and food and drove him out of town before dawn. The police arrested Maria and interrogated her, and when she refused to betray her husband one hit her with a rubber truncheon, but they released her a week later. Meanwhile Buk had been sent to Nerchinsk. When Maria got there she found that he had been sent to Irkutsk, then learned that he had been sent to Alexandrovsk, almost 3,100 miles away. When she arrived she was told to go back to Irkutsk for a residence permit, and when she returned Buk had been sentenced to four years' exile. She found work as a labourer for 50 kopeks a day, then deliberately got herself arrested and was sent to Alexandrovsk at Easter. She spent two months in the women's prison, then the couple set off to walk around 130 miles, though their baggage was in wagons, and they received a daily allowance of 20 kopeks from the second day. At Katchugo they and 1,000 other exiles boarded a huge barge, then changed to another, and arrived at Yakutsk, 280 miles south of the Arctic Circle. In autumn. Political exiles gave Maria money and new clothes, but Buk was to be sent to Kolymsk near the Arctic Ocean. The governor offered Maria land and 1,000 rubles for a butcher's shop, 'if you will agree to belong to me', and when she refused he drugged and raped her. She took poison, but survived, and the governor released Buk and gave him 500 rubles for a butcher's shop. When he learned what had happened he went to kill the governor, but guards found a long knife, and the governor sent him away. Maria handed the shop to a political, who undertook to pay for it later, and left with Buk. In Amga in south Siberia five of the 15 politicals were graduates and one was a prince.

In August 1914 there were rumours about the war and Maria noticed a 'gigantic wave of popular enthusiasm'. One evening in September, when Buk was away, she cut off her long hair, dressed in a man's clothes, took two loaves of bread, set off on foot and covered 33 miles by dawn. She sheltered during the day and found drinking water and slept in 'hidden nooks' at night. She reached Yakutsk 200 miles away after six nights, and asked an acquaintance to write a letter to Buk telling him she that she was going to Tomsk to enlist as a soldier. It took her almost two months by foot, water and rail to cover the 4,100 miles, and in November she visited the headquarters of a reserve battalion. A clerk asked why she wanted to see the commander, and when she told him she wanted to volunteer he burst out laughing. So did the commander, but he suggested that she should telegram the tsar. She asked her mother for the money, and the commander wrote the telegram, and when the tsar gave his permission her mother vowed never to pray for him again. Maria received 'two complete undergarments made of coarse linen, two pairs of foot-rags, a laundry-bag, a pair of boots, one pair of trousers, a belt, a regulation blouse, a pair of epaulets, a cap with an insignia on it, two cartridge pockets and a rifle'. Her daily allowance included 2.5 pounds of bread and a few cubes of sugar, and she asked other soldiers to call her 'Yashka'.

By early 1915 the bread was often burned on the outside, the meat was often bad, and the evening meal was buckwheat soup or half a herring. The regiment was ordered to the front, and it took two weeks to get to Polotsk in Bietarus by train. Three miles behind the first line of trenches the commander refused to let her go there, but the tsar's telegram changed his mind. After three days the regiment was ordered forwards, but the artillery had failed to cut the barbed wire, so they retreated. Only 70 out of 250 got back to their trenches, but Maria volunteered to bring the wounded from No Man's Land and rescued about 50. Around Easter she was wounded in the leg and taken to a Kyiv hospital, but was soon deemed fit enough to return to the front. Every 12 days troops were sent to the rear for six days' rest, and when the regiment returned to the front and attacked, she bayoneted a German. Towards winter they moved, and one day a general stooped at places where the barbed wire was broken and the fortifications were weak. He wiped his face with a handkerchief, then left. Half an hour later enemy artillery targeted those places. Maria received a medal for helping to reconstruct the fortifications and was promoted to corporal in charge of 11 men. She had learned to read, and a former schoolteacher had taught her how to sign her name and write the alphabet. By the end of the year supplies were breaking down and it was difficult to get a pair of boots. Medical equipment was seriously deficient and many soldiers had their frozen feet amputated. Behind the lines they saw films, built a theatre and put on plays, and the schoolteacher's wife taught Maria to improve her reading and to write better.

In March 1916, during the retreat, Maria's regiment suffered 2,000 casualties, including the schoolteacher, who had asked her to send a letter and his ring to his widow if he was killed. Maria was sent to the divisional hospital for three days' rest; but back at the front a bullet shattered one of her leg bones, and she was sent to a Moscow

hospital. In June, back at the front, she suffered a shrapnel wound in her back and could not move a finger. She was sent to a Kyiv hospital and was later transferred to one in Moscow. She lay paralysed for four months, but her Jewish doctor did not give up hope and she began to recover by autumn. She was told that she could not go back to the trenches, but had regained her strength by December. On the train to Kyiv she noticed that the people's mood had changed. 'The government machinery was breaking down. The soldiers had lost faith in their leaders, and there was a general feeling that they were being sent in their thousands merely to be slaughtered. Rumours flew thick and fast. The old soldiers had been killed off and draftees were impatient for the end of the war. She was captured, but escaped hours later.

On 1 January 1917 Maria's platoon was resting two miles behind the front lines.

The older officers, trained in pre-war conditions, were no longer to be found. The new junior officers, all young men taken from civil life, many of them former students and school teachers, were liberal in their views and very humane in their conduct. They mixed freely with the men in the ranks and allowed us more liberty than we had ever enjoyed. At the New Year festival we all danced together. These new relations were not entirely due to the new attitude from above. In a sense, they were generated from below by a dumb and yet potent undercurrent of restlessness.

Up to this point her translated diary had not mentioned Bolsheviks, Mensheviks or SRs.¹

Not all the women who wanted to join the army had been accepted, though 5,000 or so had succeeded. Before the war both of Anna Krasnilkova's parents had worked in Urals mines. As a child Anna was sent to learn needlework, became a factory worker as a young woman and was a novice nun for a short time, before working in a paint shop. When the war broke out she tried to volunteer in Kazan, but was rejected, so she pretended to be a man and was successful. She became an officer's orderly, but later moved to the front as a medical orderly. She took part in 19 battles, but was injured in a leg while leading men into an attack, and was unable to return to the front. Marina Yurlova was from a well-to-do family. In 1916, at the age of 15, she joined the army and fought at the front. She later became a Cossack officer's orderly, but was dismissed after she refused to respond to his advances. Most women at or near the front were nurses,² though not all of them were Russians.

(ii) Farmborough

Upper-class Russians' first language was often French, but many wanted their children to be able to speak English, since they regarded Russian as the language of servants, though writing in English was a lesser priority,³ and they often employed governesses from Britain.

Florence Farmborough had been born at Steeple Claydon in Buckinghamshire, England, in 1887. She was named after the famous nurse Florence Nightingale, who sometimes waved at the Farmborough children from an upstairs window of a nearby gentleman's house. In 1908 she went to Kyiv to be a governess, and in 1910 she moved to Moscow to teach the daughters of a leading heart specialist to speak English. In August 1914 the family were at their dacha, and after the first wounded arrived Farmborough began training as a military nurse.

By February 1915, after passing seven examinations in Russian, she was assigned to a Zemstvo Union surgical field hospital. The *letuchka* (flying column) consisted of four surgical sisters, one housekeeping sister, two doctors, a feldsher, about 30 ambulance orderlies, an officer and his assistant who were in charge of the stores, feeding arrangements, 24 two-wheeled light carts with canvas hoods with a large painted red cross, horses, grooms and drivers, several large drays drawn by three horses and two motor cars. The *letuchka* set off by train on 11 March, and took five days to get to a town in Galicia which had been captured from the Austrians the previous autumn. On 11 April they reached Gorlice in the lower ranges of the Carpathian Mountains in southern Galicia. German troops were supporting the Austrians, but the *letuchka* distributed food to 300 or so Austrian civilians who were hiding in cellars. On the 16th the German artillery opened up and hundreds of wounded arrived at the *letuchka*. They were ordered to retreat on the 19th,⁴ and leave behind all the wounded and equipment that might hinder them. In May a soldier told Farmborough about troops who had had fought with rifle butts, clubs, or bare fists for three days, before they were forced to retreat. Whole regiments were said to be without a single cartridge and few field guns had shells.⁵ By June the army had suffered more heavy losses, and the *letuchka* had been forced back into Russian Poland.⁶ A young officer, whose father had joined the revolution in 1905 and had later died in prison, had been a Moscow University student, and complained that 'the autocracy has us by the throat'; but a member of the *letuchka* pulled Farmborough away, saying that he was a 'red hot revolutionary and will come to a bad end one of these days'. Cossacks forced villagers from their homes and devastated the countryside, and troops and refugees were soon in full retreat. Only 2,000 of the division's 25,000 *shtykov* (bayonet men) were still alive.⁷

Ammunition was still in short supply, and though hundreds of thousands of cartridges from Russia's allies reached them they were incompatible with their rifles, and fewer than 300 of the 3,000 shells were serviceable. The young officer was killed and buried without a coffin. On 6 July the *letuchka* reached Zaniche and set up two tents, one for wounded soldiers who might survive, and another for the fatally wounded, though some wounded were sent east on trains. In between nursing duties, Farmborough prepared bandages and medicines. After five days, when the mud was a foot deep and the air was thick with flies and other insects, the horse-drawn transport was insufficient for all the wounded, but when motor ambulances arrived they set off. They spent six days in Belopolye, then retreated. Soldiers destroyed everything that might be useful to the enemy, though sometimes enemy shells did the job for them.⁸ On 1 August the *letuchka* was ordered to Białystok in north-eastern Poland,⁹ where the Germans used dum-dum bullets,¹⁰ and captured the town.¹¹ By the 17th the *letuchka* had reached Hrodna in western Biełarus, which had been destroyed, so they pushed on through congested roads to Minsk.¹² By the end of the month one regiment had been reduced from 4,000 to 600, another from 4,000 to 150, and the entire division had 13,000 left. Some days, early in September, the *letuchka* had no bread,¹³ because the enormous Zemstvo Union depot and the army could not feed them and the masses of refugees.¹⁴ The enemy's advance had been halted, and the Russian soldiers began digging themselves in for winter, but fought for bread at Jewish bakeries. Farmborough was granted a month's leave in Moscow, but was back at the front by November and there was heavy fighting into December.¹⁵ When hostilities ceased the *letuchka* dug themselves in at Chertoviche to prepare for blizzards. At Christmas the medical staff put on events for refugee children, organised musical evenings for the soldiers and gave the transport drivers 'high tea', while officers entertained them at divisional headquarters.¹⁶

On 12 January 1916 the *letuchka* left by train and arrived at Volochinsk in western Ukraine on the 17th, where companies of raw recruits were passing through.¹⁷ By the 27th the *letuchka* had reached Chortkiv. They treated civilians, though it was virtually impossible to control diseases like typhoid. The troops were issued with gas masks. Weeks later the *letuchka* heard that German troops had been transferred to their western front. By May the Austrians were retreating rapidly and the Russians advanced past their empty trenches. In June Russian artillery bombarded the enemy and gained ground, but many wounded died. At Buchach Farmborough took a photograph of five fatally wounded men outside a building, and round the corner, just out of sight, were empty coffins.¹⁸ That month Russian troops killed 600,000 Austro-Hungarians and captured 400,000, thereby eliminating around two-thirds of its army, though Russian losses amounted to 1.4 million killed, wounded or missing, leaving no reserves, and the survivors had run out of supplies.¹⁹ By July the *letuchka* was treating gangrene and tetanus, and learned that enemy shrapnel was filled with rusty nails. Some days the number of wounded reached 800 and there were many amputations. Limbs were taken to a store, pending burial, but one leg was so heavy that Farmborough could not lift it. Late that month the *letuchka* was ordered forward.²⁰ Near Barish Russians and Austrians were buried together, and sometimes, in the absence of a priest, orderlies carried out the rites. At the beginning of August, at Khutanova in Galicia, German troops replaced the retreating Austrians and halted the Russian advance, and Russian artillery failed to break their lines.²¹ Russian casualties were hideous and deserters were common.²² There were many boy soldiers,²³ and Farmborough later recalled that newcomers told her about the situation in Russia.

In some places there is such a shortage of foodstuffs that, unless the authorities build up sufficient stocks, there could be famine during the coming winter. Dissatisfaction is still rife in many cities. There have been rumours of strikes and even riots in Moscow, but nothing has been officially confirmed. In the city of Petrograd, there is such unrest; and there is severe criticism regarding the Imperial Family.²⁴

By the end of August Farmborough was severely ill with paratyphoid and was sent to Crimea for a month to recover,²⁵ but she did not reach Yalta until early October.²⁶ In November she went to Moscow and 'encountered a general feeling of despondency',²⁷ but returned to the front in December. On 3 January 1917 she heard that her former employer in Moscow had had a heart attack. She got there by the 7th, but he had died on the 4th.²⁸ Up to this point her translated diary had not mentioned Bolsheviks, Mensheviks or SRs.

(iii) Dune and Saponov

Eduard Dune was born in Riga in 1899. His father worked at the large Franco-Russian Joint-Stock Rubber Company plant. Once he was poisoned by lead dust, and was off work for six months, so Eduard collected iron and other scrap metal, which he sold for 10 to 15 kopeks to help the family's finances. His father read revolutionary leaflets to his wife, and told Eduard about when they had carted foremen out of the factory during strikes.

In summer 1914 the rubber plant received many War Department orders. Eduard's father was not conscripted; but as the front came closer the plant was ordered to evacuate to Moscow, and he was promised moving expenses and higher pay. The family had a whole railway wagon with a stove for their possessions, and they reached the village of Tushino, about 10 miles from Moscow, where they had a big room 'complete with bedbugs'. They ate black bread with crushed hemp instead of butter, and fishing was a necessity. Eduard helped other workers lug machine parts to the factory, and they sang a revolutionary song from 1905. By January 1915 men earned double what they had earned before the war, and women, who had earned 15 kopeks a day at small textile mills, now got up to two rubles. The average monthly wage for an unskilled labourer was 30 to 40 rubles, but 100 to 150 for those on piece rates. Conscripts from Turkestan and hundreds of Chinese worked in the yard, though none could speak Russian. If a foreman got out of line workers nailed a sack on his office door. If he did not heed the warning, someone would 'come up from behind and throw the sack over his head', though 'the guilty person was never discovered'. If he had been the foreman would have been 'carried into the yard, and dumped into a wheelbarrow and, amid general mirth, wheeled through puddles or to the dung heap in the stable yard'. Strike-breakers and management 'stooges' received similar treatment. Dune was one of the few who could read technical drawings, and earned five rubles a day, twice as much as his father. One day, as he sat on a park bench, an older man offered to lend him something 'interesting' to read and gave him the SPD reformist Lily Braun's *Memoiren einen Sozialisten (Diary of a Socialist)*. Dune went to the Sukharevka market in Moscow and bought Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England* and the Webbs' *History of Trades Unionism in Britain*, presumably as translations. One evening, as Eduard went home after work, a colleague told him that he attended evening classes at a Moscow technical institute, and subsequently, after completing his shift, Dune walked three miles to the station, took the train to Moscow, changed trams twice, attended the technical institute and got back to the factory hostel at 11.00pm. In November 1916 he learned that a painter-activist had arrived at the factory.²⁹

Timofei Saponov had been born into an impoverished peasant family in the village of Mostaushka in Tula province in 1887. At the age of seven he attended the village school, where classmates called him 'the beggar'. By the age of 12 he could read, and was a shepherd, but a noble family hired him as a servant for bed and board and took him to St. Petersburg. The doorkeeper gave him books and new ideas, and he stopped believing in god and became aware of the plight of factory workers. In winter 1900 he saw police attacking a student demonstration. At the end of the year he asked for wages, and was sacked, so he returned to Mostaushka and worked as a shepherd. In 1902 he was a painter for a building subcontractor, but in 1905 he went to Moscow, joined demonstrations and met SDs. In summer 1907 he joined a building workers' union, and read Marx, Lassalle and the SPD's Erfurt Programme, but did not understand them. The police spotted him, and after a search of his lodgings they deported him from the city. He returned in 1910 and joined a building workers' *artel* (cooperative living association), and another in 1911. In April 1912, after the Lena massacre, he joined workers who wanted to form a union, but did not know how. Late that year he met A.E. Nikolaev, a leading Bolshevik member of the printers' union, who knew that A.A. Postkrebukhin held 'the entire Moscow organisation in his hands', but did not know that he was an Okhrana spy. By summer 1914 the union had been legally registered, though after the war broke out most leaders were mobilised. In September representatives of 10 unions tried to form a city-wide bureau, and by November the building workers' union had 225 members including an RSDRP cell of 10.

In January 1915 Saponov was called up, but went underground in St. Petersburg and organised contact between the RSDRP and the Moscow central bureau of trade unions. In March he left for Moscow with a large quantity of illegal literature. Two weeks later he fled to Orel, but was arrested and imprisoned. He was released in September, and was back in Moscow by December, where he went underground and took part in efforts to restore the RSDRP committee which had been decimated by arrests. By January 1916 Saponov represented the central bureau of trade unions on the RSDRP committee. The fusion of trade union and party groups was almost complete, and the central bureau was composed almost entirely of Bolsheviks, though the police suppressed it. Party cells continued to operate, but the six members of the City district committee included two spies, Nikolaev, and the metalworker Sergei Sokolov, who had joined the RSDRP in 1904. Saponov was betrayed in April and charged with writing a leaflet. He was drafted into the army, but released on account of ill-health, and sent back to his birthplace. In June he went to Saratov where RSDRP factory cells no longer functioned. A. Martsinovskiy, another newcomer, reported that many workers were patriotic and unaware of trade unions. The two men met the workers Plaksin, Ignat, Bukin, Gulbis and Vorobev, and RSDRP committee survivors, at the Maiak club, and tried to re-establish the committee through metalworkers', carpenters', lumberyard and railway workers', tailors and Latvian workers' medical funds. They joined the illegal political Red Cross, which included mainly Menshevik and Kadet intelligentsy who helped political prisoners, and linked up with Bundists allied to the Mensheviks. Bolshevik intelligentsy refused to lecture or write leaflets, and the workers failed to resurrect the committee. Saponov returned to Moscow illegally in November, but heavy surveillance forced him to leave. He went to Tushino, and used a pseudonym to get

a job at the rubber plant.³⁰ The trade unionists were either Bolsheviks from Latvia or had participated in the 1905 revolution. They organised a meeting, and though some Bolsheviks refused to attend, they elected a bureau, with Sapronov as secretary. By January 1917 the 250 union members included three RSDRP cells of five or six workers.³¹

(iv) The Russian Empire is run by lunatics

By 1917 almost half of heads of peasant households had hereditary ownership of former communal land;³² yet hardly one-third of it in Kherson province could be sown because there was often one male worker for every two farms.³³ Nationally up to six percent of households had no livestock,³⁴ Around 10 million women worked in agriculture and related industries,³⁵ since almost half of men aged 19 to 45 had been called up,³⁶ and now formed a huge majority of the 15 million conscripted since the start of the war.³⁷ Around 626,000 had been killed, around 2.6 million had been wounded and over 3.6 million had been captured, or listed as missing.³⁸

There were around 3.5 million industrial workers.³⁹ Approaching two million were involved in war-related production,⁴⁰ and over 40 percent were women.⁴¹ Women formed over 14 percent of engineering workforces, compared to one percent in 1913, and 34 percent in manufacturing, compared to 27 percent.⁴² There were 28 women for every 100 men in metalworking plants and 17 for every 100 in machine construction, although almost all were unskilled.⁴³ Wages had risen by up to 260 percent during the war, though they were worth about a third of pre-war levels,⁴⁴ since the paper ruble had lost two-thirds of its value.⁴⁵ Goods which cost 100 rubles in 1914 now cost 1,100.⁴⁶ Armaments plants were producing sufficient ammunition,⁴⁷ but disorders were breaking out everywhere,⁴⁸ and the French ambassador reported that 'the Russian Empire is run by lunatics'.⁴⁹

During the war, in spite of a decline in the annual birth-rate from 55,460 to 38,700, and a rise in the death rate from 47,587 to 61,000, Petrograd's population was estimated at 2.42 million, though half of over 382,000 factory workers were immigrants. Around 15 percent had been born in Tver province, nine percent in both Petrograd and Pskov provinces, seven percent in Vitebsk province and six percent in both Novgorod and Smolensk provinces.⁵⁰ The number of metalworkers had more than doubled and chemical workers had almost doubled. Around 237,000 worked in 379 metal plants, 44,000 in 100 textile mills and 40,000 in 58 chemical plants. The average workforce was 626 in metalworking plants and 441 in textile mills. There were 134,414 workers in 31 state plants and 6,768 in two government railway workshops. The number of male workers had risen by 46 percent since 1914, while that of women had more than doubled to 130,000. Over 20 percent of metalworkers were female and 6.6 percent were youths. Together they had increased by over 18 percent since 1913, while the number of males in textile mills had dropped from 32 percent to less than 19. There were over 392,000 workers in over 1,000 plants,⁵¹ and over 15 percent were involved in war production.⁵² Around 150,000 temporary 'wartime workers' were in metalworks and 20,000 in chemical plants. There were 68,932 workers in Vyborg, 51,876 on Vasilevsky Island, 38,784 in Narva, 38,208 in Nevsky, 36,148 in Peterhof and 32,789 in the First City district. There were 57,978 metalworkers in Vyborg, 37,530 on Vasilevsky Island, 33,753 in Peterhof, 26,641 in Nevsky, 24,444 in Petrograd, 13,299 in the First City district and 6,549 in Narva. Sixty-eight percent of plants employed 1,000 or more and 38 employed over 2,000, including Okhta Gunpowder (5,725), Petrograd Cartridges (8,292), Izhora armaments works (8,902), Okhta Explosives (10,200), Petrograd Pipe Works (19,046) and the Putilov Works (24,449). In three years the Izhora armaments plant workforce had increased by 194 percent to 8,900, Petrograd Pipe Works by 186 percent and Obukhov steelworks by 77 percent. Heavy industry employed 60 percent of industrial workers.⁵³

Together with 24,000 workers in nearby plants that were economically and politically connected to the capital, factory wages were generally higher than anywhere else.⁵⁴ The average monthly wage had fallen from 85.5 rubles to 38 (equivalent to around £8 1s and £3 16s respectively).⁵⁵ The cost of the staple black bread had doubled during the war,⁵⁶ and the price was rising by two percent a week, cabbages by three percent and milk by five percent. Most workers had long since stopped eating eggs, meat, sugar, milk and fruit,⁵⁷ and the supply of grain was barely half of what was needed. Many small food retailers' shops had closed and others limited their hours of business. This affected even relatively well-paid skilled workers, and the cost of an unskilled worker's food had doubled since 1913.⁵⁸ The population of Moscow was over two million,⁵⁹ and 43 percent of those involved in war production nationally were in the city,⁶⁰ including 57,000 metalworkers.⁶¹ In the central industrial region around Moscow 192,000 metalworkers formed 18.6 percent of the workforce of 1,030,000. Over 42 percent were in cotton mills, while around 33,800 were under 16.⁶²

The Bolsheviks claimed a national membership of 35,000.⁶³ Others put it at 24,000, and though over 60 percent were reportedly workers,⁶⁴ their influence was largely restricted to a few industrial centres.⁶⁵ In Petrograd they claimed 3,000 members in 115 cells,⁶⁶ though an Okhrana agent was active in the Vyborg committee.⁶⁷ At the beginning of January the Okhrana reported that, according to the workers' section of the War Industries

Committee, 'the proletariat in the capital is on the verge of despair' and the 'slightest disturbance, on the smallest pretext', would 'lead to uncontrollable riots with thousands of victims'.

In fact the preconditions for such an explosion already exist. The economic condition of the masses, in spite of large raises in wages, is near the point of distress. ... The impossibility of obtaining goods, the loss of time queueing up in front of stores, the increasing mortality rate because of poor housing conditions, the cold and dampness resulting from lack of coal ... have created such a situation that the mass of industrial workers is ready to break out in the most savage of hunger riots. ...

The legal restrictions which weigh on the workers have become unbearable and intolerable. Forbidding changes of employment from one factory to another or from one job to another has reduced the workers to a chattel [serf] state, good only for 'cannon fodder'. Restrictions on all meetings, even for the purpose of organising cooperatives or canteens, and the closing of unions are the reasons why the workers, led by the more educated and perhaps the more revolutionary among them, adopt an openly hostile attitude to the government and protest against the continuation of the war.⁶⁸

Revolutionary organisations were unifying, and a 'decisive' assault on the regime was highly likely.⁶⁹ There were reportedly 367,000 refugees in Caucasia,⁷⁰ who had to be fed, as had many elsewhere.

On the 5th the Okhrana report was even more pessimistic.

The mood in the capital is extremely tense. The wildest rumours are circulating in society, both as to the plans of the governing authority, for taking various kinds of reactionary measures, and as to the projected aims of groups and layers of the population hostile to the government, implying the possibility and likelihood of revolutionary initiatives and excesses. Everyone expects some sort of extraordinary actions from one side or the other.

Next day the report was even more alarming.

The situation we are now in is very similar to the time just before the first revolution of 1905. The liberal parties believe that in view of the imminence of terrible and inevitable events the governing authority ought to move in the direction of concessions and should hand over the totality of power to the Cadets. The left parties, for their part, argue that the government will not make any concessions, that a spontaneous and anarchic revolution will come and that then the basis will be laid for transforming Russia into a state free from tsarism and conducted upon new social principles.⁷¹

Since 1914 Petrograd had lost 40,000 men to the army.⁷² Reportedly, frontline troops were filthy and suffered from epidemics, including scurvy and typhus. Anarchy was widespread and officers were being murdered. There had been over 1.3 million deserters and some had commandeered trains to get home.⁷³ The economy was fragile. The State Bank's gold reserves were over 3.61 billion rubles, though 2.14 billion was held abroad, and the government's short-term debt was 800 million.⁷⁴ On the 7th the Duma chairman advised the tsar not to make the people 'choose between you and the good of the country'.⁷⁵

The Bolshevik sailor Dybenko's battalion had been sent to the Riga front late in 1916, where they were 'stirred by revolutionary propaganda', refused to obey orders and won over a Siberian infantry regiment. The sailors were sent to Helsinki under escort, and many were arrested, and though Dybenko feigned illness, and spent two months in a Riga hospital, when he reached Helsinki in January 1917 he was imprisoned for two months.⁷⁶

Vladimir Perazich was a 49-year-old Petrograd textile worker and trade unionist.⁷⁷ He later recalled that skilled male activists had been conscripted, while women worked 'on the mules where they had never worked before' in textile mills. 'Our masses in general' were 'totally benighted' and 'very few had managed to become conscious proletarians', though some young workers had become militants. Vyborg's population was 150,000 and several factory workforces were well over 500. The district was home to 18 percent of the city's workers, and 84 percent worked in metal plants and in 15 of the 21 large machine-building works.⁷⁸ Because of police harassment RSDRP district committees often led day-to-day operations, and especially in Vyborg, which claimed 500 to 600 members, while the joint Petrograd-Narva district organisation claimed 800.⁷⁹ The police raided the Bolshevik print shop. They had planned a demonstration on the 9th, the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in 1905,⁸⁰ but were unable to produce a leaflet,⁸¹ though the workers' section of the War Industries Committee called for a strike.⁸² Bolshevik workers argued with Mensheviks about taking action, and the SRs were split.⁸³

The tsar ordered the commander of Petrograd military district to suppress disorder, and he readied 12,000 troops, Cossacks and police.⁸⁴ By the 9th there were 1,200 gendarmes at strategic points,⁸⁵ with British machine-guns that had been intended for the front.⁸⁶ Some factory workforces which came out had not been on strike since 1905, and some soldiers tipped their hats at those with carrying red banners.⁸⁷ The Mezhrailonsy and Mensheviks had published leaflets, and according to one account, 142,000 workers, or 36 percent of factory workers, came out, including those from huge armaments plants like the Franco-Russian works, Nevsky Shipyard, and the

Petrograd, Obukhov and Putilov metalworks. Most heavy industry was shut down,⁸⁸ and the strikes in Vyborg and Nevsky were the largest of the war so far.⁸⁹ Another report claimed that over 150,000 from 114 plants came out,⁹⁰ including 40,000 from Vyborg, and soldiers took off their caps and shouted 'Hurrah!'⁹¹ Yet another report claimed that up to 300,000 demonstrated.⁹² They assembled on Sampsonievsky Prospekt, sang revolutionary songs and shouted 'Down with the war!' Shlyapnikov reckoned that a third of the demonstrators were soldiers and the police kept their distance.⁹³ Other Bolsheviks reported that the strikes 'very much raised the spirits of the masses. In the factories, the mood is very buoyant and politically conscious; this opens wide revolutionary possibilities',⁹⁴ yet Shlyapnikov later recalled that no Bolsheviks 'thought that the movement then underway would be the last decisive battle with the czarist regime'.⁹⁵

There were 371 gendarmes in Moscow,⁹⁶ and neither Bolsheviks nor SRs gave a lead,⁹⁷ but on 9 January several workforces went on strike.⁹⁸ There were 31,000 strikers, including 272 from Moscow Metalworks, and around 2,000 demonstrated. There were 14,000 strikers in Baki in Azerbaijan and 10,000 in Kharkiv in Ukraine,⁹⁹ where SRs and Bolsheviks had issued joint leaflets.¹⁰⁰ Nationally at least 270,000 went on strike.¹⁰¹

(v) Roman Malinovsky

In May 1914, in Galicia, Ulyanov had heard that Roman Malinovsky had been accused of 'provocation', but 'there is a possibility of slander'.¹⁰² After the war broke out Ulyanov and Krupskaya had 'hundreds of pages' which related to Malinovsky's party tribunal, which he had promised to publish, though he left it all with Polish comrades.¹⁰³ Malinovsky left Poronin in Galicia for Kraków and went on to Warszawa, where he was called up as a reservist.¹⁰⁴ In summer the SR intelligent Burtsev had been sent to the remote Siberian village of Boguchanskoe, where most politicals opposed the war. Weeks later he was released and was asked where he would like to settle, apart from Petrograd, any university city or near the front. He chose Vyborg in Finland, but that was forbidden too, so he went to Tver. Surveillance continued, though police and gendarmes sympathised with his views on the war.¹⁰⁵ A senior Okhrana officer told him that someone close to Ulyanov was an agent and he would give details to someone he could trust. After Burtsev told Malinovsky, and he told the head of Moscow Okhrana, the official was exiled to Siberia.¹⁰⁶ Burtsev was allowed to go to Petrograd and surveillance stopped.¹⁰⁷ After an Okhrana colonel confirmed that Malinovsky had been an agent Burtsev published the information, but did not name his source.¹⁰⁸

In July 1915 Jughashvili wrote from Siberia to Malinovsky that 'rye bread costs 4 ½ kopeks a pound, kerosene 15 kopeks, meat 18 kopeks and sugar 25 kopeks'. The temperature could reach 37 degrees below zero, so he needed firewood. All his money had gone, and he hoped that the Bolshevik Duma deputies could send him 60 rubles from 'the fund of the repressed'.¹⁰⁹ Malinovsky fought in 11 battles that year until he was wounded, captured and put in a prisoner of war camp near Magdeburg in Germany. From Switzerland Krupskaya sent him linen, food and agitational literature, and he became one of the Bolsheviks' most active agents. His camp had over 1,000 books and he circulated the Bolshevik *V plenu (In Captivity)* and lectured on political economy and the Erfurt Program.

In the first half of 1916 'Very enthusiastic reports' about Malinovsky reached Ulyanov, who asked for his advice.¹¹⁰ Ulyanov established a 'Commission to Help Russian War Prisoners', run by Krupskaya and Shklovsky, who were tasked with distributing defeatist literature in the camps. In his camp Malinovsky argued for defeatism, though Russian intelligence subsequently became aware of this activity. In September *Russkoe Slovo* reported that he had been killed in battle.¹¹¹

In Switzerland Ulyanov worried about Gorky, and complained about Bolsheviks who were 'talking *another* kind of balderdash,' especially that associated with 'Bogdanov' (Alexandr Malinovsky).¹¹² By November Ulyanov knew about negotiations between Russia and Germany for a separate peace.¹¹³ He had failed to find a steady income, though Krupskaya had become the secretary of the Bureau of Political Emigrant Relief run by veteran Polish SD Feliks Kon. She could not remember when Ulyanov had been more irritable. He had fallen out with Bukharin, Pyatakov, Luxemburg, Dutch comrades and others, and had had differences with Kollontai,¹¹⁴ Apfelbaum,¹¹⁵ and Shlyapnikov.¹¹⁶ Krupskaya was in touch with prisoners of war in 20 German camps,¹¹⁷ and had sent 4,000 copies of Gorky's pamphlet about pogroms, and Kollontai's *Wer braucht den Krieg?*¹¹⁸ (Eventually seven million German and Russian soldiers read it.¹¹⁹)

On 4 November, in Petrograd, the Duma learned that Malinovsky had been a provocateur and had run off with strike funds in 1914.¹²⁰ On 14 December Ulyanov told Malinovsky that he thought he had 'gone away to work' (escaped). 'Times are hard everywhere. And things are so damned expensive!', though Krupskaya, who had found a 'modest-paying job', sent her 'warm greetings'.¹²¹

During December an Okhrana colonel confirmed to Burtsev that Malinovsky had been an agent, and he published this information without mentioning his source.¹²² On the 22nd Ulyanov told his 'dear friend' Malinovsky that everything he had asked for had been sent. He was glad to hear that the prisoners of war had a library and gave lectures, and was keen to know their 'political views and sympathies' in relation to their social status. He asked Malinovsky to 'give his regards to all the friends you certainly have'.¹²³ By the end of the year the émigré Bolsheviks had sent over 2.4 tons of literature,¹²⁴ to 21 prisoner of war camps in Germany, and wanted to contact the exiled Bolshevik RSDRP CC members in Siberia.¹²⁵ Ulyanov insisted that Malinovsky was 'an honest man' and the 'accusations of political dishonesty were filthy fabrications'. He wrote to Ulyanov and pledged his personal loyalty and his devotion to socialism.¹²⁶

In Switzerland Krupskaya had the addresses of 26 Bolsheviks in Russia, though 23 were in Petrograd, Moscow and Siberia, and only 10 of the 26 were active.¹²⁷ She complained to Shlyapnikov that she was getting almost nothing from Russia, though letters to and from her relatives got through.¹²⁸ The Finland transport route had never been interrupted for long that year, though it needed money.¹²⁹ Ulyanov told Armand that Gorky disliked the attacks on Kautsky in his pamphlet on imperialism,¹³⁰ and remained aloof.¹³¹ Ulyanov acknowledged that 'the revolutionary movement grows extremely slowly and with difficulty. This has to be put up with'.¹³² He wrote to his sister Maria in Petrograd. 'Prices are rising more than ever. Many thanks for the money (I have written to M.T. [Mark Elizarov] acknowledging the receipt of 500 rubles = 869 francs.) If it is not too much trouble send me three or four times a month the Russian newspapers after you have read them – tie them up tightly with string or they will get lost. I have no Russian newspapers here.'¹³³ The second *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrat* announced that the émigré RSDRP CC had refused to attend a conference of socialists from Allied countries, even though the war was 'coming to a crisis'. 'Our allies, our friends, are Karl Liebknecht, John McLean in Scotland, Höglund, and the German, French, English, Swedish, Russia and other workers who struggle against the governments of their own countries', though the differences between the Zimmerwald Left and Right were too great for them to remain in the same organisation,¹³⁴ though by the 30th Sobelsohn had squeezed Ulyanov off the editorial board of *Vorbote*.¹³⁵

On 4/17 January 1917 Ulyanov filled in a questionnaire from the Zurich authorities. He was engaged in 'literary and journalistic work for a Petrograd publisher' and had no fortune. He was not a deserter, but had been 'a political émigré since the revolution of 1905'. Two days later he wrote to Armand. 'We need (1) translators (2) more money.'¹³⁶ On 9/22 January, the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Petrograd, he lectured on the 1905 revolution to youngsters in the Volkshaus. He argued that it was 'the beginning of the Russian revolution,' since 'uneducated workers' had 'proved by their deeds that they were straightforward people awakened to political consciousness for the first time,' though cadre were thin on the ground.

Several hundred revolutionary organisers, several thousand members of local organisations, half a dozen revolutionary papers appearing not more frequently than once a month, published mainly abroad and smuggled into Russia with incredible difficulty and at the cost of many sacrifices – such were the revolutionary parties in Russia, and the revolutionary Social-Democracy in particular. ...

Within a few months, however, the picture changed completely. The hundreds of revolutionary Social-Democrats 'suddenly' grew into thousands; the thousands became the leaders of between two and three million proletarians. The proletarian struggle produced widespread ferment, often revolutionary movements among the peasant masses, 50 to 100 million strong; the peasant movement had its reverberations in the army and led to soldiers' revolts, to armed clashes between one section of the army and another. In this manner a colossal country, with a population of 130,000,000, went into the revolution.

1905 had been 'a *bourgeois-democratic* revolution, but a *proletarian* revolution in its methods of struggle', and 'the principle factor in this transformation was the *mass strike*'. The fundamental reasons for its defeat were the atomisation and political under-development of the peasantry, and the fact that that the state had enough loyal troops to crush the Moscow rising in December. There had been 'not more than *eight thousand*' insurgents in the city, and their suppression 'marked the beginning of the ebb of the revolution'; but it had encouraged revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China, and was 'the *prologue* to the coming European revolution'. 'We must not be deceived by the present grave-like stillness'. 'Europe is pregnant with revolution,'¹³⁷ though Krupskaya recalled that he concluded sadly. 'We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution'.¹³⁸

A working conclusion

For several years before 1914 the governments of major Western European countries had prepared for a war to win more territory by increasing the size of their armed forces, and in summer 1914 the assassination of a Serbian prince in Sarajevo provided a spark by triggering the various alliances. In Berlin 17 SPD Reichstag deputies opposed war credits at the caucus, but only one voted against in the Reichstag. The SPD Vorstand, party officials and the police banned meetings of oppositionists, who were 'more than decimated', and trade union leaders promised civil peace for the duration. The Hungarian and Austrian governments declared war on the side of Germany, and SDs in their parliaments voted for war credits. In Belgium two members of the Second International bureau accepted government posts, and in London socialist MPs supported the war and trade union leaders promised civil peace. In Russia the tiny number of SD Duma deputies, all of whom had been workers, voted against war credits, while in France, where socialists in the Chamber of Deputies supported the war, some émigré Bolshevik intelligently volunteered for the French army.

In Russia intelligently controlled what was left of the RSDRP organisation, but CC members were arrested, so there was no effective leadership. Menshevik intelligently wanted peace without annexations or indemnities and a legal workers' party, and the Okhrana tried to prevent the merger of the RSDRP factions. Some revolutionary workers tried to give a lead in Petrograd, Moscow and major industrial centres, and worked with SRs in cooperatives and mutual aid associations, though leaders were arrested. Many RSDRP activists were conscripted, and married women revolutionaries had to give up activity to look after children and earn a living.

In autumn Russian peasant women, adolescent girls and boys, children and older men brought in the harvest. The army, which consisted overwhelmingly of peasants, was seriously underequipped and suffered two massive defeats. Increasing numbers of peasant women, adolescents and children worked in factories in major cities, though the cost of food outpaced wages. In spite of foreign loans and investments the economy was fragile, and some liberals began distancing themselves from the tsar's policy.

One émigré RSDRP CC member in Galicia had been briefly imprisoned in summer, but both managed to get to Switzerland. They were Bolsheviks, and persuaded a few carefully-selected émigré Old Bolshevik intelligently about their policy of 'revolutionary defeatism'. The CC members' main sources of information were liberal Western newspapers, but late that year they published the RSDRP central organ, *Sotsial Demokrat*. It included their theses, but reportedly only around 90 copies reached Stockholm and no more than six reached Russia. In Siberia exiled RSDRP intelligently and praktiki produced newspapers, though not the two Bolshevik CC members. In Petrograd the RSDRP claimed 100 'members', though many were probably occasional supporters. The Bolshevik Duma deputies and one intelligent had a copy of *Sotsial Demokrat* and a list of several thousands who they considered to be 'members', and tried to re-establish the RSDRP committee; but the police raided, thanks to a spy, and imprisoned everyone except the deputies, who had immunity. Next day the police arrested the deputies, and though a few workers struck in protest, some were deported and reservists were sent to the front. The Petrograd Mezhraionka, an inter-district group consisting mainly of Menshevik SD workers, agreed with most of the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, but did not join the Russian organisation. Elsewhere the party was a 'skeleton', though some workers propagandised and agitated. By the end of the year *Sotsial-Demokrat* had a print run of 2,000, though few copies reached Russia.

The Ottoman Empire had joined the war on the side of the Central Powers, and its army occupied southern Georgia and the oil port of Batumi. Russia's vital grain exports from Black Sea ports were threatened. Its army lacked sufficient rifles, machine guns, cartridges and shells, and many infantry lacked adequate winter clothing. Around 7.17 million troops up to the age of 32 had been mobilised, but 225,000 had been killed, wounded or were missing, 371,000 were prisoners, and tens of thousands limped home with self-inflicted wounds. The German army occupied the Polish coalfield, though the British navy's blockade of German ports had caused shortages of essential raw materials, finished goods and basic foodstuffs, and the Reichstag imposed maximum prices on food.

By 1915 Russian peasant soldiers had not returned from the front as the government had promised, and there was considerable resentment. Tens of thousands of young male and female peasants had moved to industrial regions and cities, but on 9 January there was a low turnout of Petrograd workers for the anniversary of Bloody Sunday in 1905, and next day the imprisoned Bolshevik Duma deputies and Bolshevik intelligently were exiled to Siberia for life. In European Russia food was dearer, riots spread, and women in Petrograd and Moscow took direct action, though some employers gave in to economic strikes. More SD and SR workers collaborated in legal workers' organisations, and some propagandised soldiers and sailors. Many Russian heads of peasant households owned their land, and in spring peasants sowed less grain than before the war.

In Paris émigré SDs from several countries wrote for a Menshevik journal which published the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives, and though they failed to win hegemony at an international conference of socialist youth in Switzerland, they got them into the minutes. Émigré Bolshevik intelligentki suggested that a leading woman SPD member should organise a conference of socialist women from belligerent countries. The International bureau was opposed and the SPD Vorstand barred members from attending, but it took place, and the Bolsheviks got the émigré RSDRP CC perspectives into the minutes. In Scandinavia an educated émigré Old Bolshevik male worker and a recently recruited Bolshevik intelligentka sent illegal literature to Russia and passed on information about what was happening there to Switzerland.

The German government controlled most of the country's heavy industry and imposed restrictions on workers, yet they were producing sufficient war materiel, and the army forced the Russians to retreat from Poland. The German government paid huge sums to an émigré Russian businessman who was former leading RSDRP intelligent to break the British navy's blockade of German ports and spread anti-war propaganda in Russia. In Berlin a few SPD oppositionist intellectuals adopted the slogan 'the main enemy is at home'. In summer the government gave the Russian businessman another huge amount of money, and he gave some to RSDRP members and other SDs in Russia and abroad. The émigré RSDRP CC members denounced him as a German agent, and refused to accept money directly, though they reportedly allowed intermediaries to pass it on.

In Russia the Petrograd RSDRP committee had links to some districts and cooperated with Mensheviks and SRs, though strikers were arrested, as they were in Moscow and Ukraine. Officially the number of strikes and strikers was low, though strikes in uninspected workplaces had increased. The tsar ordered more conscription, including only sons, though Russian and Muslim workers resisted. The prices of basic foodstuffs led to food riots and strikes, especially in Petrograd, and though troops shot strikers, some employers granted wage rises. The Okhrana clamped down on revolutionaries, though some SD workers formed military organisations. The rate of manufacture of war materiel had risen, though state plants were unable to produce enough, so private factories received orders. The government removed SD military exemptions from factory workers and conscripted huge numbers of raw recruits, and the tsar suspended the Duma. Radicalised and revolutionary workers went on strike, and though the RSDRP was fragile, the Petrograd Mezhrayonka and SD and SR workers in other major cities organised. One major Petrograd employer was convinced that the days of the autocracy were numbered, and factory owners sought to recruit 'patriotic' workers to a section of their War Industries Committees. Menshevik intelligenty split over participating in the two-stage elections, while the Bolsheviks decided to take part in the first stage to make propaganda. Liberal intelligenty and employers were increasingly unhappy with the tsar's conduct of the war and his domestic policies, and liberal Duma deputies who demanded co-ordination of the war effort formed the 'Progressive Bloc'.

More soldiers and sailors in the rear had formed secret military organisations. At the front rifles, machine guns, cartridges, field guns and shells were running out. Around 40,000 infantry had obsolete weapons or only sticks to fight with, and their own artillery shelled those who refused to fight. Between 7.2 and 8.5 million troops had been killed, wounded, captured, were missing or had deserted. Two government officials betrayed the army, and a major defeat in Poland triggered a massive retreat, though the Russians conducted a scorched earth policy and evicted Jewish and ethnic German civilians from the borders, while German troops entered the Baltic provinces and forced tens of thousands of civilians to leave. The tsar ignored German peace overtures and unofficial talks came to nothing, though there was a forcible call-up of previously exempt Russian workers.

In autumn a few SD intelligenty from belligerent and non-belligerent countries met in Zimmerwald in Switzerland. The émigré RSDRP CC failed to win hegemony, but had a little more support. They prevented other émigré intelligenty from issuing a supplement to *Sotsial-Demokrat* on the grounds of cost, but sent money for the CC members in Siberia to escape. That proved to be impossible, but some exiled Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and SRs formed joint military organisations, and the émigré RSDRP CC members contacted prisoners of war through a former Okhrana agent.

By winter the German army had gained ground in the Pale at the cost of huge casualties, though the blockade of German ports had led to higher food prices at home and there were strikes and demonstrations. A 'revolutionising process was underway', and a few more SPD Reichstag deputies refused to vote for war credits, while the Ottoman army forcibly 'relocated' tens of thousands of Armenians.

The Russian economy was even more fragile, food was scarcer and dearer, factory wages had fallen well behind prices and more key workers went on strike. The police, Okhrana and loyal troops were increasingly ineffective in quelling dissent and arresting revolutionaries. At the front most regular troops and officers had been killed or wounded, and some peasants had become NCOs and men with a secondary education were junior officers.

By 1916 the Russian village commune was withering and the price of food continued to rise. The number of peasant factory workers had increased considerably, and on 9 January there were large strikes in Petrograd. Some

troops cheered demonstrators. The Okhrana had penetrated revolutionary organisations in Petrograd and Moscow, but SDs and SRs there and elsewhere cooperated, especially in the Donbass, where there were strikes though strikers were sent to the front. Bolshevik literature from Switzerland was copied by hand or typewriter. Unofficial peace talks in Copenhagen failed, and some Russian liberals discussed a coup, while the Okhrana warned the tsar of a possible 'revolution from below'. The manufacture of war materiel had increased, but many thousands of front-line soldiers in both armies read a Bolshevik anti-war pamphlet, written by the intelligentka transporter, and there was unrest, while revolutionary leaflets were distributed among Russian prisoners of war. In Paris émigré RSDRP intelligenty had hardly any contacts in Russia, while those in Scandinavia resented the émigré RSDRP CC's authoritarianism, though the émigré intelligentka transporter translated their manifesto into French and German.

In Germany SPD oppositionists were building a national network, and a few more Reichstag deputies refused to vote for war credits, but 'protective custody' was widely used to imprison oppositionists. The war was going badly for German civilians, though U-boats sank Allied merchant shipping and passenger liners. In spring a slightly larger international socialist conference took place at Kienthal in Switzerland and the émigré RSDRP CC gained a few more supporters, including some from Germany.

In summer there were many more strikes in Russia, especially in and around Petrograd, Moscow, Tver, the Donbass and the Volga, where cooperation between SD and SR workers had increased. Basic foods were getting even scarcer and dearer, and there were bread riots and strikes. Some troops in the rear had 'lost faith in the old order', yet the government introduced forcible conscription, and more and more reservists were sent to replace losses at the front. In Petrograd some troops supported workers' demonstrations and attacked the police, while Cossacks refused to attack strikers. Some government ministers secretly discussed a dictatorship.

By autumn many Russian front-line troops were exhausted, demoralised and angry, and officers feared being shot in the back when they led attacks. There were tens of thousands of deserters, and though those who were captured were shot, but there was a 'noticeable revolutionising of the army', some troops still refused to attack. In Russia forcible conscription met stern opposition in Kazakhstan. The RSDRP remained weak in several major cities, but was reorganised, and the émigré CC made the émigré male transporter a CC member tasked with build a Bolshevik centre composed of workers in Petrograd.

In Germany the SPD Vorstand backed the government crackdown on oppositionists, though they managed to publish propaganda. The government reduced its financial support for subversion in Russia, and introduced rations for civilians that were below subsistence level, though not those for troops.

By winter fuel was scarce in major Russian cities. There were very serious food shortages and strikes across the Empire, and queues for basic foods were enormous. Many more women and adolescents had taken jobs previously held by men, and women revolutionaries played an increasingly important role. The tsarina's influential advisor was assassinated, though the assassins were treated gently. More workers were literate, those in armaments plants were restive and a battleship crew mutinied. The economy was in crisis, yet the government banned meetings of liberal organisations, including those supporting the war, and liberal Duma deputies declared their lack of confidence in the government. The tsar spurned a German offer of a separate peace, and an ambassador regarded the tsar's ministers as 'lunatics', while the Okhrana compared the situation to just before 1905.

By the beginning of 1917 the Russian government's finances were desperate, and it relied on loyal troops to crush dissent, but the demonstrations on the anniversary on 9 January were the largest of the war. The RSDRP claimed 35,000 'members' nationally. Others put the total at 24,000, and though they believed that 60 percent were workers, there may have been fewer Bolsheviks than in early 1905. Revolutionary socialist factory workers organised, but intelligenty gave little or no support. In Petrograd the recently appointed RSDRP CC member believed there were 10,000 'members', though half were inactive. He later acknowledged that he had not understood the significance of the rise in socialist workers' cooperation and combativity and did not expect a revolution.

Up to this point the memoirs of a female member of the front line Russian infantry and a foreign medical nurse had not mentioned Bolsheviks, Mensheviks or SRs. At no point during the war had there been a monolithic cohort of Bolshevik, Menshevik or SR workers in Russia, since the distinctions were increasingly blurred or non-existent, yet though the Petrograd Mezhrainontsy workers' perspective had become almost identical with that of the émigré RSDRP CC, they maintained their distance from those in Russia, where the main political gaps were between unsectarian, internationalist revolutionary socialist workers and abstentionist intelligenty. The émigré RSDRP CC members had insufficient accurate information about what was happening in Russia, since they had the addresses of 26 supporters in Petrograd, Moscow or Siberia, and only 10 were active.

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